

b | LEADERSHIP
INCUBATION
PROGRAM



b | ainabblankson
ATTORNEYS



*Preparing Young Leaders for Global Relevance
by Promoting Character, Leadership,
Professionalism and Innovation
through Imaginative
Thinking.*





"...we seek and groom talented individuals with the intellectual capability, passion for leadership and commitment to service for global impact."



WELCOME NOTE



"In AB, we share a conviction that if we think imaginatively, work creatively and lead with integrity, we will make the world a better place."

Dear Applicant,

We appreciate your interest in the Aina Blankson Leadership Incubation Program (AB-LIP); designed to promote the professional values of: Excellence, Character, Leadership and Innovation in young and exceptional talent.

As a member of the program, you will be exposed to the operations of Aina Blankson, our distinctive style of doing business and the overall essence of being an authentic leader. Our Mantra "Leaders-Thinkers-Minds" (LTM) supports this vision, and the program aims to identify, engage and groom authentic visionary leaders who can compete in any sphere.

As a member of the AB Team, you will need skills beyond legal concepts. AB-LIP is premised on Our Credo "Imaginative Thinking" because creativity is today's global resource capital. You must demonstrate an interest in business and have a working understanding of profit-making practices. As our Clients are at the core of everything we do, you will need to implement innovative solutions that address their specific challenges and work closely with them to help them achieve their legal and commercial goals.

Our commercial mindset is our asset and one of the elements that our clients consistently find unique

about our service. To compete in today's digital landscape, it is imperative to leverage on new technological developments and present cutting-edge ideas that integrate global standards. In AB, we share a conviction that if we think imaginatively, work creatively and lead with integrity, we will make the world a better place.

From the way we answer the phone, the documents we prepare, to the way we shape our advice, we strive for excellence. In the course of this program you should expect to be challenged, supported and empowered to be the best version of yourself. You will work with a dedicated team to tackle several projects and will have to operate well out of your comfort zone at times. Your ideas are invaluable and you will be required to hone your listening, communication and presentation skills, put forward suggestions and play an active role in your assigned teams. We want fresh creative ideas which can make a difference to our clients, our firm and society at large.

I hope you find the experience memorable and enjoyable.

Best Wishes.

Kehinde Aina

A white staircase leads up to an open window showing a blue sky with clouds.

**STEP INTO LIMITLESS
OPPORTUNITIES**



AB-LIP: THE ESSENCE

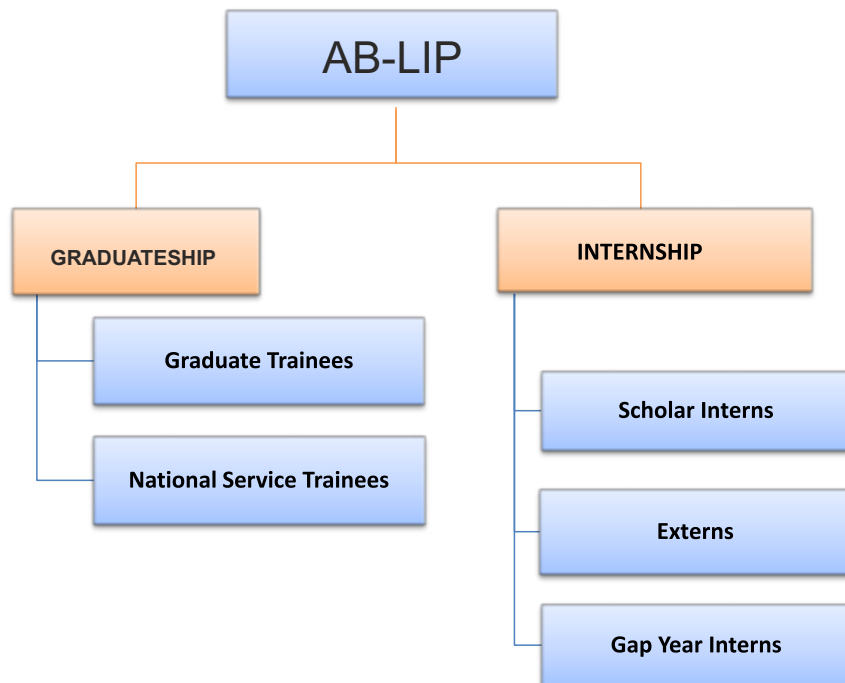
The primary objective of the AB Leadership Incubation Program is to provide challenging opportunities for talented undergraduate and graduate students from Nigeria and international institutions to gain practical insights into the operational environment of Aina Blankson, LP as a leading global law firm.

The Program is designed to provide an enriching experience characterized by measurable on-the-job training, designed to help you succeed. It is an avenue to develop leadership traits in young individuals and assist them in realizing their potentials. You'll work on client projects, develop technical skills and experience our unique and vibrant culture. During the Leadership Incubation Program, you will develop accurate analytic skills, gain the ability to take decisions and advise clients in a professional, constructive and commercial manner. You will also learn the importance of client care and begin to develop lasting relationships with clients and people in general.

Participants within the program are exposed to a significant level of responsibilities, opportunities and adequate support towards self actualization. Our inclusive culture in Aina Blankson will ensure you feel welcomed and valued. All trainees and interns are guaranteed close interactions with industry experts, learning a great deal about the firm and how we do business. As you will be under the tutelage and mentorship of a senior lawyer/ team lead/ group head, you will be generally exposed to all the operations of the Firm.

As part of the training benefits, from time to time some of our trainees may enjoy exchange program opportunities with a few of our major clients. The objective of this opportunity is to afford our trainees a platform to experience the client's business first hand and understand the operations of a large commercial organization and its use to lawyers.

- **Graduateship**
- **Internship**





Graduateship:

Students who graduated with a First class or Second-Class Upper degree from a reputable institution are eligible for the Graduateship. An LIP Graduate Trainee is expected to be a high academic achiever. It is unlikely we will admit applicants with less than a second-class upper degree. However, academic excellence is only the starting point as we admit only candidates with demonstrated thinking ability, promising minds, good work attitude and the ability and willingness to take on a high level of responsibility. The duration of the program as a Graduate Trainee is usually 9 - 12 months.

An aspiring LIP Graduate Trainee must convince us he/she possesses good judgment which is sine qua non of responsibility; have very good communication skills and an international perspective on life. We want interesting applicants with the following qualities:

- achieved outstanding results in their studies
- can think analytically and creatively
- strive towards professional growth
- good communication skills- oral and written English: other International languages are an additional advantage
- ability to work independently and as a member of a team
- prepared for active work
- can work a full day within the Firm's operational work hours

The LIP Graduateship is classified into two; **Graduate Trainee and National Service Trainee.**

To qualify as a Graduate Trainee, the applicant must have completed his/her Bachelors and/or Master's Degree program from a reputable tertiary institution. Intending law applicants must be qualified legal practitioners with about 1 - 3 years' cognate work experience or post call to the Nigerian Bar Association or any other recognized qualifying Bar or such other **Professional Institution** with requisite reputation.

The National Service Trainees are candidates seeking to complete their compulsory National Youth Service Program in Aina Blankson. Interested applicants are advised to visit the Firm's website and send in their application and CV in the format indicated at least 3 months before the commencement of their service year. Shortlisted applicants will be interviewed and if successful, will be engaged with the Firm for the entire period of their National Youth Service year. The minimum duration is 9 months. Applicants for both categories must not be more than 30 years in age, unless exceptional circumstances necessitate a reconsideration by the recruitment team.

Internship

We offer internship opportunities to students studying both in Nigeria and overseas willing to gain practical work experience in an international law firm in Nigeria. The duration of the internship scheme is dependent on any of the three categories you choose, these are:

Scholar Intern
Extern
Gap - Year Intern

Scholar Intern: This provides internship opportunities for candidates currently pursuing a college/university degree. The prospective candidate must have completed at least the second year of university as an international applicant or must have completed the third year of study as a national applicant. We invite candidates with an outstanding interim academic record and an interest in the firm's service offerings, across all divisions. As a scholar intern, you will be part of the team working on live transactions, receive the same training as the lawyers, and be involved in the various practice areas. We aim to expose our engaged interns to a broad range of transactions in different practice areas through rotational learning. Aina Blankson takes particular interest in our Scholar Interns to prepare them for excellence in their examinations. There is limited availability of internship positions and the competition for available slots is fierce. Selection is based on a number of criteria, including excellent oral and written communication skills, strong academic ability, commercial awareness, legal knowledge, etc. the minimum duration is 30 days.

Extern: This is an experiential learning opportunity organized by AB that allows students apply lessons from their course work to practical real-life situations. Our externship program is currently offered in partnership with select Law Schools and Educational Institutions to give engaged students short practical experiences in their field of study and as part of a requirements for their course of study. The duration for the externship program is usually 1-3 months. As we believe no one should pass through AB without exceptional performance in the University and Law School, we have instituted adequate time for capacity development, coaching, mentoring and tutorship to enable our externs understand the nuances of the law school examination. All externs are closely supervised by an assigned lawyer who is responsible for walking them through daily routines at the Firm.

Gap-Year Intern: This program is aimed at graduate level students, seeking an interim job, whilst awaiting National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) deployment, admission into Law School or onward educational or career pursuits. During the gap-year internship, candidates are given the chance to get valuable work experience while building a career. This program provides selected candidates with a platform to gain new skills, develop a more exciting resume, and have a better understanding of their area of interest.



EXCELLENCE IN INNOVATION



...IMAGINATIVE GLOBAL LEADERS

WE WANT LEADERS, THINKERS AND GREAT MINDS...

In AB, we apply imaginative thinking to the way we look at challenges or situations, often times from a fresh perspective that suggests unorthodox solutions. We focus on exploring ideas, generating possibilities and diverse approaches towards solving any challenge we encounter.

As Imaginative thinkers, we are intuitive, innovative, and conceptual. At all times, we look at the big picture, take initiative, challenge assumptions and come up with creative solutions to problems. Applying creative thinking to our everyday life unleashes our full potential.

We seek to build Leaders, thus the major requirement under the Leadership Incubation Program is creativity and critical thinking. In AB we stretch your mind, expand your horizon to discover new frontiers of knowledge...and put no limit to your capacity!

People say "think outside the box" in AB we say; abolish the box...go beyond what you have been taught and think further!

WHAT WILL WORK DURING THE PROGRAM BE LIKE?

The precise nature of your work will vary from department to department but as you gain

experience, you will be given increasing responsibility with less direct supervision. The Firm's philosophy is to give interns and trainees as much responsibility as they can individually manage and a full role in servicing the needs of the clients. This ranges from our peculiar style of writing letters, drafting agreements to the conduct of matters in court or tribunals.

An important part of your training program is learning to identify the limits of your abilities or expertise and in those moments seeking assistance where necessary. Throughout the program you will be treated as part of the AB Team and will be expected to play an intelligent and active role in each assignment you are involved in, to observe, listen, learn from your supervisor and contribute to the successful completion of every assignment.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW

We will periodically review your progress and development, identifying those areas of your work which you need further attention and the report will form the basis for your appraisal. The appraisal process is a 2- way process, trainees are encouraged to express their own views and concerns.

PEOPLE MAKING THINGS HAPPEN



Oluwaseyi Bioku

AB's impressive range of clients and work, coupled with the professional yet informal nature of the work environment, made an immediate impact on me. From the beginning of the graduate program, I was involved in the highest quality of legal work, providing litigation and general corporate advice. Much of the experience I gained during the graduate program was real 'hands-on'. I have been given a high level of responsibility and the opportunity to work on several high-level transactions and proposals with the senior lawyers, that has meant the work has always been stimulating and rewarding.

One of the exciting things for me in AB is that no two transactions are ever quite the same and you can never tell the next assignment. Despite AB's significant growth throughout the years; the Firm has remained committed to preserving its imaginative thinking approach to advising and serving clients. The Firm is quick to recognize opportunities for staff to develop their legal acumen and practice which in turn contributes to the development of the Firm as a whole.



Ifeanyi Nwokolo

It is indeed an interesting and invaluable learning experience. Few months into the program, I can confidently say that being an AB National Service Trainee has showed me how leading global law firms operate, it has taught me how professional lawyers work and interact, what service standards are required by clients, and which projects are handled by the different practices. As an intern in AB, I am happy to know we are not restricted to a particular practice area. There is always an opportunity to move around if you show significant interest and you have exhibited requisite skills.

As incubatees, we naturally experience some difficulties but the lawyers here are always ready to help, which is really valuable. You can always ask someone for help or advice. We have a really friendly team of colleagues- You cannot imagine how important this is. For many of us this is our first experience working in a firm with such high standards. Therefore, the professional support allows us obtain vital knowledge, skills and experience. At the moment, I'm putting in my best and trying really hard to give a good impression, maintain a commendable standard of performance and increase my chances of joining AB as an associate someday.

Afam Ikeakanam



After the completion of my Bachelor of Laws degree programme, I decided to intern in a top tier law firm to garner top-notch transactional and litigation experience before proceeding to the Nigerian Law School. I applied to quite a number of top law firms in Lagos, Aina Blankson, LP (the "Firm") inclusive and after the application process, I was offered a position at the Firm. Being my first internship experience, I was quite nervous and had quite a lot of expectations. Contrary to my thoughts, from my resumption day, my nerves were calmed by the welcoming ambience and friendliness of the staff and I was fully integrated into the Aina Blankson family and began work in earnest. Over the course of my internship, I built and nurtured my relationship with members of staff who have become family to me.

Though the working environment was cordial and conducive, it was a demanding and stimulating one. At the Firm, I was challenged to always put on my thinking cap so as to proffer unorthodox solutions to clients' problems and to exceed their expectations. Professionalism and excellence are at the centre of the Firm's practice. In all, I am pleased to have commenced my legal career at the Firm. I went on to achieve a First-Class grade at the Nigerian Law School, undoubtedly the support and tutelage I received from the Firm was helpful to my achievement and I remain ever so grateful.

Daphne Ekpe



Upon completion of my degree course, I had a clear idea on the sort of Firm I wanted to work in- a firm with a wide range of commercial practice areas with an international perspective. I also wanted to enjoy the best training and enjoy going to work. It was therefore important for me that I joined a successful and highly regarded Firm that I believed to have the working environment that I would want to be part of.

The interview at Aina Blankson was truly two-way process for me, it afforded me a chance to decide whether I liked the culture of the Firm. It also revealed that whilst it was a friendly and relaxed Firm, it still sought to maintain its excellent reputation. I was immediately impressed by the direct, no-nonsense approach of the interview process, it conveyed the impression of a confident Firm that knew what it was looking for.

It is difficult to gauge how life in practice will be compared to the experiences of university and law school. In this respect, I took something of a leap of faith joining Aina Blankson because it was the Firm that best suited what I was looking for in a law firm. I have never for once regretted my decision. The Aina Blankson's ethos and culture is exceptionally attractive. I found myself looking forward to work on Mondays because the people I work with have vision, perception, and a sense of enterprise that is truly inspiring. I was given challenging levels of responsibilities when I resumed and yet I was never left without any support. Following the completion of my internship program, I proudly moved on from an Upper Second-Class degree at the University to a First-Class degree at the law school! Thanks to my senior colleagues who were all very supportive, approachable and willing to offer practical advice during and after my internship.

LIFE BEYOND LAW

Working in AB may not always be a walk in the park, but it isn't all long hours. Once in a while we try to 'get a life'. Apart from the annual end of year party, Team building sessions, departmental functions, periodic TGIF, movie nights and many other one-off events do take place every now and again. AB organizes bi-annual get together parties to welcome new intakes along with various social events throughout the year. And we do throw an amazing annual beach party as part of the Firm's yuletide festivities whenever our schedule allows.

Our staff are encouraged to participate in communal sporting activities like the Lagos Marathon Race, Copa Lagos, Annual Bikers' festivals, etc. We are also very active in community development programs.



SALARY AND BENEFITS

For us at Aina Blankson, our People are our most valued asset. We believe the interest of our clients are only best addressed when our people are comfortable and adequately motivated. To this end, we provide a most welcoming environment that nurtures creativity.

Graduateship: AB offers a competitive remuneration and associated benefit to our Graduate trainees. The National Service Trainees are provided a definite but reasonable allowance for the period of their engagement under the Leadership Incubation Program.

Internship: We afford our interns invaluable learning opportunities and a platform to become the best version of themselves. We do not offer remuneration to scholar interns and externs. However, Gap-Year Interns will be paid a stipend for their duration in the program. All interns will be personally responsible for their accommodation and transportation during the course of their internship program, however it is not unusual to provide support for select Interns whenever there is a justification to so do.



APPLICATION PROCESS

How to apply

All applications should be made online in accordance with the Leadership Incubation Program format which should be accompanied with a letter addressed to the Director; Aina Blankson Leadership Incubation Program. Please note, all prospective graduate trainees are required to send their application to graduateship@ainabblankson.com, while internship applicants should have their application sent to internship@ainabblankson.com.

Your application should include a detailed CV while the cover letter should provide a short introduction, including details on why you have chosen to pursue law or your chosen career. It should also state why you ought to be considered for the Leadership Incubation Program. Due to limited availability of spaces, it is advisable to send in your application in good time and specify your intended period for internship. Please note, all graduate trainee and internship openings are often announced on the Aina Blankson website www.ainabblankson.com.

Your CV should include a full account of your school/ university results, academic activities, extracurricular activities, linguistic skills, amongst others. We expect our applicants to demonstrate the ability to achieve a 2:1 degree or higher at the university and/or in Law school. Applicants with second class upper divisions in both University and Law School are given priority in the selection process. Nonetheless, as we look beyond academic achievements, those who have not met the 2.1 requirement may be considered in exceptional circumstances. ***However, as this is the exception and not the rule, such applicants must demonstrate capacity for originality, creative thinking, proven track record of excellence over the years and such other attributes which demonstrate dogged determination in the face of adversity.***

Interview Process: Applicants that meet the requisite application criteria and minimum consideration threshold are short-listed for the first stage of the interview process. Thereafter, the short-listed candidates are required to write an online virtual examination and successful applicants are subsequently scheduled for the second level interview at our offices with the Head, Human Capital and a Team Lead/ Group Head from our recruitment committee.

At this point, recommended candidates are scheduled for a meeting with the Managing Partner or his designate, following which they are engaged by the Firm. Upon engagement, our trainees are given a comprehensive induction/ orientation of the Firm and its values and are assigned to a buddy. Our trainees are encouraged to raise questions with other members of the Firm whenever the need arises.

Trainee and Intern Recruitment and Development: Trainee and Intern recruitment and development is handled by the Director, AB Leadership Incubation Program and the recruitment team. This effectively means there is a team responsible for ensuring only the most suitable candidates are engaged and adequately looked after. This is further facilitated by a structured and customized training and capacity development plan for each trainee or intern during the course of the program.

**A LEADING GLOBAL LAW FIRM
WITH DISTINCTIVE WORLD CLASS STANDARDS**





Aina Blankson, LP: **THE FIRM**

Over the years, Aina Blankson has grown to become a leading global law firm renowned for professionalism and excellence in service delivery. We are consistently regarded as one of the foremost Nigerian law firms in the areas of arbitration, dispute resolution, litigation, corporate commercial law, oil & gas, transaction advisory amongst others.

We have achieved our laudable feats through selective recruitment and engagement of only the best minds. This we believe is crucial to the quality and consistency of the AB brand. Our existing and prospective clients choose us not for our size, but for our ability and output, and the confidence that whatever jurisdiction, we will deliver high quality service with recognizable commercial and practical approach.

We provide expert practical advice that assist in solving our clients' challenges. AB staff are expected to be imaginative and unorthodox in proffering acceptable alternatives rather than merely pointing out legal objections.

At Aina Blankson, our aim is to help clients achieve their objectives efficiently while minimizing the legal and regulatory risks, both within Nigeria and Internationally. Although first-class legal advice is always important, the ability to

deliver that advice in a coherent and relevant way, combined with excellent transaction management and presentation skills, is essential to the supply of high-quality legal services. When your destination is clear but the path is unfamiliar, it helps to have an experienced guide. The combination of knowledge and foresight is fundamental for any meaningful guide. With the surge of interest in Africa, the need for high-quality legal advice and appropriate guide at the local level and, in cross-border transaction management has never been more profound.

Aina Blankson has an experienced and well-recognized wealth of talented senior lawyers and associates with qualifications and work experience in Africa, Asia, Europe and the United States of America. Our lawyers work on domestic matters and transactions, and on international and cross-border advisory mandates for a wide range of clients.

Corporate & Commercial

As a result of our knowledge of practical matters such as the structuring of negotiations, tendering processes and the conduct of due diligence, we are able to add substantial value to the efforts of an in-house or external advisory team seeking to bring a complex transaction to a successful and cost-efficient conclusion. We assist enterprises in structuring and restructuring their domestic and international transactions and operations with a view to securing the best possible strategic advantage.

Litigation & Dispute Resolution

The global litigation practice of Aina Blankson has a track record of dealing with many major financial and commercial crises over the past 25 years. Whenever and whatever difficult and critical business, political and financial disputes arise, Aina Blankson will be there fighting the client's corner, as well as advising on the commercial implications of the dispute. Our aim is not only to take charge of our clients' disputes but to vigorously pursue and protect our clients' interests until a successful closing, whether through negotiation, settlement or a judicial or arbitral decision. A number of our landmark cases are contained in the Nigerian Law Reports.

Global Arbitration Practice

The Aina Blankson Global Arbitration Group represents clients in high-stakes international arbitrations around the world. Our members have extensive experience in investment treaty arbitration and a broad range of international arbitration rules, including the UNICITRAL Arbitration Rule, ICC Rule, Rule of the London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA), Rules of the Singapore International Arbitration Centre, and the AAA International Rules for the International Centre for Dispute Resolution (ICDR). The group's clients include multi-nationals and industry leaders across a wide variety of businesses, investors, financial institutions and state-owned enterprises

Energy & Resources

Successful financing of large-scale energy infrastructure projects depends on coordination of multiple resources, talent, and capital flows. Our service to clients is founded on the depth of our industry knowledge, which enables us to effectively act as a value-added extension of our clients legal and business teams on practice areas ranging from onshore and offshore exploration projects, Oil Mining Lease (OML), Joint Operations transactions, Joint Ventures, various technical partnerships amongst others.

Corporate Services and Tax

Our Corporate Services and Tax work comprises of specialized professionals providing services ranging from start-up incorporation, tax audit, public revenue management, tax planning, company secretarial to regulatory advisory services, perfections and laws guiding foreign investments. The results we have achieved over the years have distinguished us as a front-line corporate service provider locally and internationally. One distinguishing feature of the Group is the provision of specialized services for small and medium entrepreneurs including private clients.

AFTER THE PROGRAM: AINA BLANKSON LEADERSHIP ALUMNI

Every incubatee will have created an impression and established a reputation at the end of the program. Trainees who have maintained commendable performance throughout the program stand a chance of being promoted within the program or assimilated into AB as an associate. This is dependent on availability of vacancy.

As a people-centric Firm, all members of the AB-LIP are automatically admitted into the AB-LIP Alumni. The AB-LIP Alumni provides the opportunity for those that have been through the program to continue adequate network with each other, whilst maintaining relationship with the Firm. In effect, our relationship with those attending the AB-LIP is sustained through the AB-LIP Alumni as we monitor their progress, provide requisite assistance where needed and ensure the continued pursuit of excellence is sustained.

At the end of the AB Incubation Program, every participant should have developed leadership skills, creative abilities, analytical thinking, requisite technical and soft skills that will equip them to meet and surpass the demands and expectations of today's workplace. Ultimately, they should be a better and improved version of themselves.

The world is your oyster... step into limitless opportunities!





- ✓ Character
- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Innovation
- ✓ Professionalism



IMAGI NATIVE THINKING





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