

# Moderator Spotlight



## CRYSTAL COATS

Director of Programs and Initiatives  
IFF  
Director  
Social Responsibility Chicago

Crystal Coats is the Director of Programs and Initiatives at IFF, a leading Midwest nonprofit lender. Her work focuses on creating programmatic infrastructure that is data-informed, culturally inclusive, and carries strategic value to both her organization and the communities they serve.

Crystal has almost 20 years of community engagement experience. Prior to joining the IFF, Crystal was the Interim Director of Lyric Unlimited, the community engagement arm of the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Her professional history also includes roles as the Director of Civic and Campus Engagement at the University of Chicago's Institute of Politics; Senior Manager of Corporate and External Partnerships at the Chicago Housing Authority, and the Assistant Director at the University Community Service Center at the University of Chicago to name a few. In all her experiences, Crystal has focused on strategic impact, developing necessary social/emotional skills such as personal empowerment and active listening, as well as being an advocate for communities of color, youth, and low-income communities.

Crystal received her Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Missouri – Columbia and her master's degree from the University of Chicago Master of Arts Program in the Humanities. Crystal was a 2016 Civic Leadership Academy Fellow and continues to look for ways to build equity across the city of Chicago and beyond.