



## **Workforce Leadership Academy Applicant Overview**

The Scranton Area Community Foundation, the Aspen Institute, and local stakeholders are partnering to offer a Workforce Leadership Academy (WLA) for workforce development professionals in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

### **Why offer a Northeastern Pennsylvania Workforce Leadership Academy?**

A high-capacity, responsive, agile workforce ecosystem is critical for a region's sustainable, equitable economic growth. The workforce ecosystem is inherently interdisciplinary, involving many fields of practice, types of organizations, and government policies across various industries, firms, educational institutions, nonprofits, and public sector agencies. Workforce Leadership Academies bring together leaders from across local workforce ecosystems. Academies target experienced senior-level managers of nonprofit organizations, public agencies, businesses and business associations, union-based training efforts, and community colleges and universities. By investing in leaders' knowledge, skills, and relationships, the Workforce Leadership Academies are well-positioned to build nimble collaboration so crucial to the ecosystem's success.

### **What is the Northeastern Pennsylvania Workforce Leadership Academy?**

Workforce Leadership Academies strengthen Fellows' capacity to develop and sustain effective workforce strategies, collaborate more deeply with employers and other strategic partner organizations, and expand the number and quality of leaders who advance opportunities for workers while meeting the talent needs of employers. Participants in local academies work with leading practitioners throughout the country, are introduced to practical planning tools, and have the rare opportunity to reflect on and strategize about how to apply principles that underlie effective workforce strategies to their local economic and social context. Fellows bring systems thinking and racial equity to all aspects of their work, including their organizations, the labor market, and the local ecosystem. Participants also engage in leadership development activities, including a 360-degree leadership assessment. Through Collaborative Learning Labs (CoLabs), local academies provide a forum for local leaders to collaborate to identify local and regional systems-based challenges and create shared solutions. Participants are recognized as Fellows of the Workforce Leadership Academy and become part of the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Fellows Network upon completion.

Since 2014, the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program has worked with local organizations to deliver 14 Workforce Leadership Academies in 11 cities with over 200 participants. Workforce Leadership Academies bring together leaders from local workforce ecosystems into a 10-month Fellowship to deepen networks; strengthen systems leadership skills; apply race, equity, and systems change frameworks to leaders' work; and deepen understanding of effective strategies and programs. WLAs provide a forum for local leaders to work collaboratively to identify local and regional systems-based challenges and create shared solutions.

## **What are the goals of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Workforce Leadership Academy?**

The Academy will:

- Expand and deepen professional networks and partnerships;
- Strengthen organizational and systems leadership skills;
- Apply a race and equity lens to assess and improve workforce services and strategies;
- Apply systems change framework to Fellows' work;
- Deepen understanding of effective strategies and programs; and
- Provide a forum to work collaboratively to identify local and regional systems-based challenges and create shared solutions

## **Who is qualified to participate?**

Applicants need to be:

- Located and working within Lackawanna County or Luzerne County, PA.
- Working within nonprofit organizations, business associations, community colleges and universities, union-based training efforts, public agencies, economic development, or workforce development organizations.
- In a position of leadership and decision-making authority related to workforce development efforts, with the capacity and ability to execute strategies on behalf of their organization.
- Engaged in or planning workforce development efforts in Northeastern Pennsylvania related to connecting workers to quality jobs and/or career pathways.
- Interested in designing and implementing effective strategies to strengthen their local workforce system.
- Committed to achieving equity across race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation.
- Eager to collaborate with others in their local workforce system, reflect on their current work, explore leadership practices, and gain feedback from colleagues.

Inclusivity and diversity are core values of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Workforce Leadership Academy. Applicants of color are strongly encouraged to apply. The cohort of Fellows will be selected to represent the diversity of organization type, industry focus, as well as race, ethnicity, and gender.

## **What is my commitment?**

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Workforce Leadership Academy is a significant investment of time (outlined below) as well as a commitment to constructively engage with colleagues from across the workforce ecosystem. Fellows also commit to preparation before sessions (readings, assessment, videos) and continued learning, application, and collaboration between workshop sessions. In addition, Fellows will engage in collaborative project work across a small team of Fellows.

- A virtual 90-minute orientation on March 2, 2023 at 2:00 pm
- An opening three-day retreat (two overnights) on March 22-24, 2023 at [The Village in Pocono](#) in Long Pond, PA (must stay over the two nights)
- Five Academy sessions and five Collaborative Lab meetings held during the same week:
  - four sessions held online (5 hours) on April 11, May 9, June 20, and October 17, 2023

- o four labs held online (3 hours) on April 13, May 11, June 22, and October 19, 2023
- o one combined session with lab held in person (6 hours) on September 27, 2023
- One leadership 360 assessment process and debrief workshop (4 hours) on June 27, 2023
- A closing three-day retreat (two overnights) on November 28-30, 2023 in Northeastern PA (must stay over the two nights)
- Collaborative Learning Lab presentations at an in-person stakeholder event on December 14, 2023
- Reception event for supervisors and advisors on July 13, 2023
- Partners may also decide to offer additional networking and social events.
- Continued learning, application, and collaboration between workshop sessions (self-directed time of up to two hours between sessions as well as nine to 12 hours of collaborative project work across a small team of Fellows)

**Is there a cost to participate?**

The program cost per participant is \$500 from the organization where the Fellow works, which assists with meeting costs (including the two retreats) and program materials. Financial assistance is available to those with financial needs to ensure that cost is not a barrier to participation.

**Application Process and Deadline**

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Workforce Leadership Academy application deadline is February 3, 2023 at 5:00 pm. Please go ahead and indicate your interest as soon as possible by completing a short Intent to Apply Survey; you can then complete the full application by the deadline.

All applicants will be notified of the status of their applications by February 17, 2023.

Applications will be reviewed and approved by members of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Workforce Leadership Academy Local Advisory Council.

The Application and Intent to Apply Survey are available [here](#) or at [www.safdn.org/WLA](http://www.safdn.org/WLA).

A PDF version of the Application with supporting forms is available [here](#) or at [www.safdn.org/WLA](http://www.safdn.org/WLA) for your review before starting the online submission.

The submission materials include:

- A completed Intent to Apply Survey and Full Application submitted online
- Your resume and/or link to your LinkedIn page
- Organizational chart
- Letter of reference from a supervisor or external collaboration partner
- Commitment to Participate form signed by you
- Authorization to Participate form signed by your supervisor

## **Informational Webinar**

Get more information about the Northeastern Pennsylvania Workforce Leadership Academy by watching [this recording](#) of the January 12th applicant information session webinar.

## **Northeastern Pennsylvania Workforce Leadership Academy Local Advisory Council**

Karla Carlucci  
Director  
Career Technology Center of Lackawanna County

Lori Chaffers  
Executive Director  
Outreach

Eileen Cipriani  
Director  
Office of Economic and Community Development  
City of Scranton

Bob Durkin  
President & CEO  
Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce

Yosara Gonzalez  
Executive Director  
Downtown Hazleton Alliance for Progress

Lindsay Griffin-Boylan  
President & CEO  
Wyoming Valley Chamber of Commerce

Christine Jensen  
Administrator  
PA CareerLink, Luzerne County

Rashida Lovely  
Director of Operations  
NEPA Black Chamber of Commerce

Jill Murray  
President  
Lackawanna College

Teri Ooms  
Executive Director  
The Institute

Carolyn Quinn  
Executive Director  
Educational Opportunity Centers of PA

Drew Simpson  
Regional Manager  
Eastern Atlantic States  
Regional Council of Carpenters

Jocelyn Sterenchock  
Director of Economic Development  
CAN-DO Greater Hazleton

Virginia Turano  
Executive Director  
Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board

Debra Youngfelt  
Executive Director  
Northeast PA Area Health Education Center

**Academy Facilitation Team**

Jana Nelhybel  
NEPA Thrives Manager  
Scranton Area Community Foundation  
jana@safdn.org

Maggie Martinelli  
VP, Administration and Operations  
Scranton Area Community Foundation

Vivian Williams  
Community Initiatives Manager  
Scranton Area Community Foundation

**About the Scranton Area Community Foundation:**

The [Scranton Area Community Foundation](#) is on a mission to enhance the quality of life for all people in Northeastern Pennsylvania through the development of organized philanthropy. With over \$90 million in assets under management and more than 290 charitable funds, the Scranton Area Community Foundation has served as a steward, grant maker, charitable resource, and catalyst for change since 1954. The Foundation leads various initiatives including Women in Philanthropy, the Center for Community Leadership and Nonprofit Excellence, NEPA Moves, NEPA Thrives, and the NEPA Animal Welfare Collaborative. Additionally, the Foundation hosts and facilitates NEPA Gives and the NEPA Learning Conference.

## **The Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program**

The Aspen Institute is an educational and policy studies organization based in Washington DC. Its mission is to spark intellectual inquiry and exchange, create a diverse worldwide community of leaders committed to the greater good, and provide a nonpartisan forum for reaching solutions on vital public policy issues. The Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program advances promising strategies and policies to help low- and moderate-income Americans connect to and thrive in a changing economy. Over its 25 years of work, the [Economic Opportunities Program](#) has focused on expanding individuals' opportunities to connect to quality work, start businesses, and to build assets and economic stability.