



Seattle Federal Executive Board 2021 Associates Program Application

Overview

Federal Executive Boards

On November 10, 1961, President John F. Kennedy signed a Presidential Memorandum directing the establishment of Federal Executive Boards (FEB). These organizations serve as field level structures comprised of the highest-ranking official of each federal agency (civilian, military, and postal service) in that given area. Seattle is one of twenty-eight FEB locations.

Seattle Federal Executive Board

The Seattle Federal Executive Board (SFEB) is comprised of the top executives of federal agencies with offices in Clallam, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Lewis, Pierce, Mason, Skagit, Snohomish, Thurston and Whatcom counties in Washington State. The Board's Chair, Vice Chair and Officers are elected annually. They oversee the Executive Leadership Council, a forum for interagency discussions among federal executives based in Seattle. The Seattle FEB sponsors numerous activities, seminars, committees and programs, one of which is the Associates Program.

Associates Program

SFEB Associates participate in a leadership learning laboratory. Through the year Associates will work as a team that approximates the work of a management team attempting to develop and carry out a new program. The learning boundaries of the program allow each Associate to experiment with new skills, practice giving and receiving feedback, and take risks in order to develop their talent.

The SFEB Associates Program is a two-year professional development program. It is designed to provide experiential opportunities for emerging leaders (GS-9 through GS-12 or equivalent) through collaborative projects. The program enables Associates to gain a broader perspective of project management and leadership responsibilities through interaction with federal executives and participation in SFEB programs and activities.

Program Characteristics

The SFEB Associates Program Advisors provide oversight for the program. Associates participate in the program for two consecutive years. Overall, from ten to twenty percent of an Associate's time will be devoted to tasks, projects, and professional development related to this program. Some activities may require a greater time commitment. Associates will not be asked to work overtime or outside of regular working hours for this program; they should have time allocated from within their regular work hours.



The program provides a unique opportunity for agencies to develop motivated staff. This program maintains a commitment to excellence and enthusiasm for public service. A benefit for both the Associates and for their home agencies is the exposure to peers and Advisors from many other agencies. The program becomes a natural opportunity for sharing best practices and building capabilities for doing things differently.

Activities and Opportunities

- ❖ **Networking:** The program provides an opportunity to network with other federal agencies on special projects and SFEB programs. All Associates work together as a team and as smaller committees. As a group, the Associates decide on the projects they will complete and the training they will schedule for the group. Associates organize and run their monthly meetings. Each year they organize and carry out key events including an annual training conference, various group-training sessions, and a major project. All of these activities are carried out with general guidance and direction from the program Advisors.
- ❖ **SFEB Executive Leadership Council:** Associate participation in Executive Leadership Council meetings is a core activity that provides Associates the opportunity to learn from federal executives.
- ❖ **Executive Job Shadow:** Each Associate identifies at least one job shadow assignment each year to observe the work of a federal executive, private sector, state and local government, and not for profit leaders in the community for one or two days. This experience provides opportunities to discuss the nature of leadership, career development and an understanding of the responsibilities of higher management.
- ❖ **Professional Development:** Associates participate in a variety of professional development experiences. The Associates participate directly in developing the training program. Topics include leadership training, team building, creative problem solving, meeting skills, risk taking, personal skill inventories, project management, and general public administration.
- ❖ **Study and reflection:** The curriculum each year includes the study of selected books and articles on leadership, resilience, and management. Associates will lead and join in group discussions.
- ❖ **Public Service Recognition Week:** Though traditionally this has been a formal in-person gathering, for 2021 this program may need to be reimagined. The Associates will be encouraged to help the SFEB Director to plan a safe way to celebrate public service that recognizes employees while maintaining safety for all.
- ❖ **General support of the SFEB:** Associates help with the planning and execution of events sponsored by the SFEB, and may join other SFEB committees (i.e., Emergency



Preparedness, Communications, Diversity & Inclusion, and the Combined Federal Campaign). Associates help in planning the Annual Executive Leadership Meeting. Associates may be involved in ad hoc projects that come up such as, most recently, the social media restart for the SFEB.

- ❖ **Advisor and Associate Relationship:** Associates are assigned an Advisor at the beginning of each of year of the program. The Advisor serves as a mentor and assists the Associate with defining realistic developmental objectives, developing strategies for accomplishing goals, and identifying resources that are available to fulfill program requirements. Advisor/Associate assignments change for the second year so each Associate gets to work with two different Advisors.
- ❖ **Continuous Improvement:** Associates will have opportunities to assist in the continuing improvement of the Associates Program itself.. The Advisors maintain ongoing responsibility for the program's continuous improvement, with input from the Associates welcomed.

Program Requirements

Each Associate is expected to complete the following requirements:

- Associates are required to attend Foundations Week in January for both years they are in the program. (If it is not feasible to meet in person in January 2021, the program will plan an immersive experience to bring the group together, if remotely, for at least two days in January 2021).
- Collaborate in developing a team development plan.
- Plan, conduct and attend monthly meetings, held the third Thursday of each month.
- Meet regularly with their Advisor.
- Fully participate in various Associate group activities, including training, service projects, and other events approved and planned by the group as a whole.
- Initiate and complete a minimum of one job shadow assignment each year.
- Participate in the Associates' group project (one per year).
- Complete training, either individually or with the group that addresses competencies in meeting management, facilitation, working as a team, communication skills, personal development and self-assessment.
- Read and discuss selected books and articles.
- Complete at least two service activities with the SFEB (depending on local circumstances).
- Participate in the self-evaluation process with the Associate Advisors each December.
- Keep his/her supervisor apprised of activities and accomplishments.
- Keep the SFEB Director, or the Board Chair or Vice-Chair, apprised if any personal circumstances arise that cause problems for their participation.



Nomination and Selection Process

Nominations for the Associates Program should be supported by the local agency executive. The target candidates for the Associates Program include high-potential GS-9 through GS-12 (or equivalent) employees. ***Special note for 2021: Because it is possible that many of the activities in 2021 will take place remotely, the SFEB is especially interested in reaching out to our partner agencies who are located outside of Seattle but within the SFEB coverage area, and who may have been unable to participate in the past due to the distance. Employees with disabilities are encouraged to apply as well.***

The selection process includes the review of the application packet and an interview to screen for basic qualifications. The selection committee will consider the following factors:

- ❖ The nominee's interest in participating in the program.
- ❖ The commitment of the nominee and their immediate supervisor to dedicate from ten to twenty-five percent of the Associate's work time, which could ebb and flow, over a year to the program.
- ❖ The potential and capabilities the nominee would bring to the program.
- ❖ The written recommendation from the nominee's supervisor or division manager.
- ❖ Due to the high level of interest in the Associates Program, the SFEB asks that each agency pre-screen their candidates. Small and midsize agencies should submit no more than two candidates for consideration. Large agencies should submit no more than three candidates.

Note: Selections will be made in accordance with merit factors, without regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental disability.

The success of this program depends on these elements

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- ❖ Great candidates;
- ❖ Support of SFEB activities by the agency;
- ❖ Agency financial commitment of \$ 1,800.00 for the two-year program (payable upon acceptance). \$ 1,800.00 directly supports an Associate's training activities. This is a reduction in fee for 2021. Also in 2021, the SFEB will cover the administrative support;
- ❖ An endorsement by the immediate supervisor of the Associate's participation in SFEB activities and programs.

QUESTIONS?

Please contact Diana de Forest, Executive Director of the SFEB, at diana.deforest@gsa.gov or call at (206) 384-2689



Important Dates

Nominations due the SFEB Office	October 23, 2020
Individual interviews to be completed	November 16, 2020
Nominees notified of selection by	December 4, 2020
Initial orientation meeting	January TBA, 2020
Associates Monthly Meetings	Third Thursday of each month, starting February

Frequently Asked Questions:

- ❖ What is the time commitment of an Associate?
 - The time commitment is approximately 10-25% of your work time overall, not daily.
 - In January of each program year there is a mandatory training. It seems likely we will plan this as a remote session which may be partial day commitments over several days.
 - There is usually one full day meeting, once a month (this could change in 2021). In addition, the Associates are invited to observe Executive Leadership Committee calls.
 - Special projects may involve additional time, though usually these activities are conducted from the Associate's regular agency office.
 - Monthly meetings with your Advisor.
 - Each associate has a role and responsibility in the planning and execution in each year's group project.

- ❖ What are you looking for in a candidate?
 - A highly-motivated employee who is seeking personal, professional and leadership development.
 - The best candidates will have curiosity and flexibility, and a willingness to try new things.
 - Special note for 2021: Because it is possible that many of the activities in 2021 will take place remotely, the SFEB is especially interested in reaching out to our partner agencies who are located outside of the Seattle area but within the areas covered by the SFEB coverage area (Clallam, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Lewis, Pierce, Mason, Skagit, Snohomish, Thurston and Whatcom counties) and who may have been unable to participate in the past due to that distance. Employees with disabilities are encouraged to apply as well.

- ❖ How are the agencies' financial contributions used?
 - Agency funds are used to support the Associate's participation in the program during the two year period, including purchasing books, paying trainers, materials if needed for the group project, and event costs for off-site meetings.

- ❖ How many applicants are accepted each year?
 - Seven to nine new Associates are accepted each year.



- ❖ What does an Associates' meeting look like?
 - Monthly meetings are comprised of each Associate providing an update on their learning and experience, a two hour special leadership training session, a book, podcast, or Ted Talk discussion, and group project planning.
 - Monthly meeting are planned and led by Associates in consultation with the Advisors.
 - Advisors are in attendance to provide experience and feedback to Associates.
 - Expect an energetic group and dynamic conversations.
 - Sometimes, they feature presentations on leadership by current federal or non-federal executives.

- ❖ What does the Foundations Week consist of?
 - The Foundations Week was traditionally a three-day in person meeting that covered program expectations, orientation and training, and relationship-building.
 - The rising Second-Year Associates, along with the SFEB Director, plan, organize, and produce the program.
 - For 2021, we are planning a Foundations Week event which may be conducted virtually.

- ❖ What is involved in the Associates' group project?
 - Each year the Associates develop a group project.
 - The group project ideas are a result of all Associates' contributions.

- ❖ What kinds of group projects have the Associates done in the recent years?
 - *Promoting federal service to young adults:* The project for 2016 was an outreach project to local schools and educational programs to promote federal service. Associates made presentation in local high schools about careers in federal service, sharing their personal career stories. Associates cultivated contact with local school career counselors so the SFEB can be an ongoing point of contact for presentations on federal service.
 - *Prisoner Re-entry:* In 2017 the Associates organized a community summit for federal agencies, local government and non-profit agencies involved with assisting formerly incarcerated persons re-entering the community.
 - *Surprising Success:* 2018 video production of topical issues and inspiring messages by prominent speakers, for dissemination among federal employees and the general public.
 - *Tiny House for a Homeless Person:* In 2019 Associates worked with a local non-profit housing group to construct a "tiny house" that provides temporary shelter for a homeless person, as part of a City of Seattle-sanctioned homeless encampment.
 - *B.R.A.C.E.:* 2020 Associates developed a program with expert speakers on developing personal readiness for emergencies.

- ❖ If the program does not meet my needs may I withdraw from the program?
 - Given the level of commitment asked of the Associate and sponsoring agency, any decision to withdraw from the program needs to be reviewed by the SFEB Executive Director, the SFEB program Advisors and the Associate's direct supervisor.



To the Nominee:

Working through your supervisor, please provide a complete nomination package.

Checklist for Associate Nominations:

- 1. Nomination Form (attached)** *(Signed or reviewed by the Nominee, Nominee's Supervisor and Agency top regional official)*
- 2. Nominee's current resume**
- 3. Personal statement (by Nominee)** Please answer the following, in no more than 2 pages, and save your file with your name in the subject (e.g., "*de_forest_SFEB_statement_2021*").
 - Why are you interested in joining the Associates Program?
 - What skills do you hope to build through participation in the program?
 - What else should we know about you?
- 4. Nominating Official Letter of Recommendation (by Supervisor or Agency Official)**

To Agency officials:

Please send your selected completed packets via email to:
diana.deforest@gsa.gov by Friday, October 23, 2020



Seattle Federal Executive Board Nomination Form for 2021 Associates Program

Nominee's Name:

Title and Grade:

Direct Supervisor's Name and email:

Agency and Agency's Address:

Telephone Number:

Email address (provide additional email if agency emails have significant firewalls):

(Please note: electronic signatures or </s/> notations are fine, we just want to ensure that nominees, supervisors, and agency leaders are in agreement on nominations).

Signature of Nominee

Date

Signature of Nominee's Supervisor

Date

Signature of Agency Top Official

Date



To the Nominating Official:

Please provide a brief letter of recommendation. Include your reasons why you are nominating this individual and how you expect the nominee to benefit from involvement in the SFEB Associates Program.

In making this nomination, the nominating official and the nominee acknowledge that, if selected, the nominee will spend approximately ten to twenty percent of his/her work time with the SFEB Associates Program.

The nominating agency will be expected to pay \$1,800 for the two-year period of the program to support professional development activities.