

Seattle Federal Executive Board Associates Program



Overview

The Seattle Federal Executive Board's (SFEB) Associates Program is a dynamic and unique leadership development program for high performing federal employees. The SFEB has run this program for over 20 years, and the SFEB Associate Alumni Network remains active.

SFEB Associates serve a two-year term during which they partner collectively and individually, with fellow Associates and participating Advisors from within the SFEB Executive Leadership Council. Each Associate is mentored by an Advisor in addition to working with the SFEB staff. Each year the Associates develop, implement, and execute a significant annual project focused on ambitious goals benefiting the federal workforce, the larger community, and the Associates' leadership goals.

The program is optimal for GS-9 through GS-11 or equivalent federal employees within the Seattle Federal Executive Board's 177 member agencies. Each Associate is enrolled for two consecutive years. Staggered cohorts provide additional learning and exposure and replicate real-world staff changes and turnover.

Program Components

- Two-day orientation and initial training meeting
- Year-long group project¹
- Monthly in-person meetings (all day)
- Regular mentor meetings with program Advisor
- Participation in group activities: training, outreach, and service projects
- Study of federal-relevant leadership materials
- Reflection on professional progress & personal growth
- Job shadows
- Participation in SFEB Executive Leadership Council meetings

Competency Building

The program seeks to build deep and lasting competencies in future federal leaders. Throughout the program, Associates will further their:

- leadership skills
- expanded competencies in project management
- group facilitation skills and methods
- consensus building decision-making skills
- communication skills
- personal development and self-assessment

Selection Process

Associates are chosen in a competitive process emphasizing the following factors:

- Nominee's learning goals for participating in the program
- Commitment of the nominee and their immediate supervisor to dedicate ten to twenty percent of the Associate's work time to the program (one full day monthly plus assignments in between)
- Current capabilities the nominee would bring to the program
- Nominee's potential for professional growth and leadership
- Written recommendation from the nominee's immediate supervisor or agency official

¹ Past projects are archived here: <https://www.feb.gov/locations/seattle/committees-councils/>

SFEB Associates Program Requirements

For Associates

Each Associate must:

- attend all monthly meetings for their entirety (currently, the third Thursday of each month). **Attendance is critical.** If an Associate cannot attend a meeting, they must immediately inform the FEB staff and their Advisor. Repeated unexcused missed meetings may be grounds for dismissal from the program;
- connect regularly with their Advisor;
- fully participate in
 - the group project, including presenting on it at the Annual Meeting,
 - Committee planning and projects;
- complete a written self-evaluation and meet with the Advisors each December.

Also, each Associate agrees to:

- attend all Executive Leadership Council meetings (currently occurring quarterly) and the Annual SFEB Executives' Meeting;
- keep their supervisor apprised of their progress in the program, and
- remain in contact with FEB staff if they have any concerns or conflicts.

Time commitment: Associates usually spend between ten and twenty percent of their total work time on Associate efforts. The group project, which takes the most time, is always focused on a project that

1. Contributes to Associate leadership and learning
2. Adds value to the federal community
3. Adds value to the wider community
4. Is feasible within the Program's resources

For Nominating Agencies

Tuition: For Associates Class 2024-2026, participating agencies will be asked to contribute either (1) a tuition fee per calendar year if feasible²; or (2) in-kind donations such as leadership serving as Advisors or meeting with the group, monthly meeting space and in-house resources such as trainers or facilitators.

Agencies agree to the program parameters as written above, including the Associates' time commitment.

Supervisors are invited to check in with the Federal Executive Board Director if they have any questions or concerns about the Associates' participation.

Executives are invited to join the group for discussions or particular efforts, depending on their availability. Sending an Associate to the program is a great way for senior leadership to get more involved with the Seattle Federal Executive Board.

² In past years, tuition was \$1000 per Associate per year. Comparable programs cost at least \$2500 for a 10-month session.

SFEB Associates Program Syllabus—CY2024 (subject to change)

January

- 1/17/24 (10:00am-12:00pm) -- Class of 2023 Graduation. Graduates, all Associates, supervisors, families, leadership are invited.
- Meet and Greet for the incoming cohort and Advisors.
- 1/23/24, 1/24/24, 1/25/24 (all day) Foundations Week: The new cohort of Associates and Advisors convene. Skills: pitching a project, devising project teams, consensus decision making, mapping the year for the Group Project. Attendance for both days is mandatory for program participation.

February

- Persuasiveness, Active Listening, finalize Group Project and roles. Leadership interview with Board members. Introduce Independent Development Plans for Associate/Advisor conversations.
- Associates participate in SFEB Executive Leadership Council meeting.

March

- Panel with Associate Alumni, Leadership Lessons, Skills building related to project.
- Associates help SFEB plan the Public Service Recognition ceremony in May.

April

- Monthly meeting will include Executive Core Qualifications.

May

- SFEB presents Annual Public Service Recognition.
- Associates meet to discuss progress on project (specifically, resource needs and stakeholder investment, DISC or similar assessment).

June

- Finish Executive Core Qualifications discussion. Check in on IDP progress.
- Associates participate in SFEB Executive Leadership Council meeting.

July

- Project management; consensus decision making and productive conflict. Applications are invited for the next year's cohort of SFEB Associates.

August

- Reverse deadline check in on the Annual Project. Professional networking. Improvisation skills.

September

- Associate alumni skills sharing; effective communication.
- Associates attend SFEB Executive Leadership Council's Annual Meeting.

October

- Annual project is executed.
- Associates participate in SFEB Executive Leadership Council meeting.
- Top SFEB Associate Applicants are interviewed.

November

- Associates prepare to report on the Annual Project to the Executive Leadership Council in December. Monthly meeting includes planning for the January Foundations Week agenda.

December

- Associates formally report on their Annual Project to the Executive Leadership Council
- Associates write self-evaluations and meet with the Advisors' group for individual year-end conversations.

General Policies of the SFEB Associates Program

Equal Opportunity Policy

It is the policy of the United States Government to provide equal opportunity for all employees and applicants in every aspect of their employment and working conditions. The United States Government supports the concept of affirmative employment to ensure that personnel policies and practices provide equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, genetic information, or retaliation/reprisal.

Reasonable Accommodations

It is the policy of the United States Government to fully comply with the Reasonable Accommodation requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Under the law, Federal agencies must provide Reasonable Accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities, except in cases where this would cause undue hardship, which is always made on a case-by-case basis, considering factors that include the nature and cost of the Reasonable Accommodation and the impact of the Reasonable Accommodation on the operations of the Agency, including the impact on the ability of others to perform their duties. The United States Government is committed to providing Reasonable Accommodations in a timely and efficient manner to all who qualify. Please notify Diana de Forest, Seattle FEB Executive Director, 202-936-1902 or diana.deforest@opm.gov if you need any assistance.

Decisions on Acceptance

The FEB staff and the Associate Advisors will make all decisions on program acceptances. Nominating agencies may request feedback if a candidate is not accepted.

SFEB Associates Application for 2024-2026 (due Oct. 6, 2023)

Applicant Instructions:

Complete Sections I and II below, submit it to your supervisor to complete Section III. (Supervisor's section includes apprising your senior leadership).

Once you have your supervisor's recommendation, send:

- the completed form
 - your recent resume
- to: diana.deforest@opm.gov

Applicants or agency leadership—please contact Diana with any questions at diana.deforest@opm.gov or call at 202-936-1902

I. Applicant's Information and Agency Contacts

Applicant's name:

Applicant's agency:

Current grade level or equivalent:

Applicant's work email:

Applicant's phone:

Immediate supervisor's name:

Immediate supervisor's email:

Other agency contact (for payment or in-kind donation):

Other agency contact email and phone:

II. Applicant's Personal Statement for 2024-2026 SFEB Associates Program

Applicants: Please tell us in no more than 300 words what you hope to learn from participating as a SFEB Associate. If you have applied to the SFEB Associate Program in the past but were not accepted, please include that in your application. After we receive all applications, we will invite the top candidates for interviews.

(After completing your statement in the box below, please forward the application to your supervisor for Section III).

Applicant's attestation: (check box)

My participation in the SFEB Associates program is dependent on participation in the Foundations Week three-day meeting in January 2024 and meeting attendance. I agree that, if accepted, I will attend all Associates mandatory meetings unless a serious conflict arises.

III. Agency Recommendation

Supervisor: Describe how you recognize the leadership potential of this applicant.

(Please add your supervisory statement in the box below, and check the box assuring that senior leadership is in agreement with this nomination. Then, return the completed application to the applicant or directly to the SFEB at diana.deforest@opm.gov).

This recommendation was written by:

I attest this recommendation is approved by local senior leadership.

Thank you for applying to the SFEB Associates Program! We look forward to meeting you.