Emerging Leaders Program 2021

Emerging Leaders is an interactive and innovative program that connects and empowers young leaders and prepares them to apply their leadership to nonprofit boards and committees.

The program offers 360-degree value in Greater Portland: by sending employees through the program businesses build brand awareness, demonstrate their commitment to community, and offer a dynamic development opportunity to rising stars; individuals who participate build leadership skills, develop meaningful peer networks and deepen their service to community; and Maine nonprofits benefit from a pipeline of energized, well-equipped leaders ready to help advance their missions.

Program Goals

The program is designed to:

1. Create a network of resourceful young leaders. Participants establish strong and lasting relationships that are personally and professionally beneficial and founded on a shared commitment to the common good.

2. Prepare younger leaders (under 40) for board and committee service with Maine nonprofits. Research shows that younger leaders are underrepresented on nonprofit boards, and boards report challenges in identifying, attracting and retaining young leaders.

3. Develop sustained commitment to Maine communities. Studies also show that young leaders who are actively involved in their communities are more likely to stay and contribute to the economy and well-being of our state.

Program Format

Each year 25-30 applicants are accepted to complete the program, which takes place between September and December and includes a combination of hands-on and classroom learning. Led by skilled facilitators, guest speakers, and leaders in the nonprofit field, the curriculum weaves together:

- Leadership development, including new awareness of community assets and challenges; development of self and social awareness; reflection on identity, power and equity; and increased readiness to investigate, understand, and solve challenges in teams.

- Board responsibilities and recommended practices, including approaches that contribute to board cultures of inclusion, engagement and inquiry.

- Board connections: Participants learn about a diverse range of nonprofit organizations and gain access to tools and support to find nonprofit board or committee service opportunities that are a fit for their goals, interests and availability.

After the core program, MANP staff provide ongoing coaching and support to help participants bridge the classroom work to their board or committee experience.

“The Emerging Leaders program reshaped the way I contribute to my community and to my workplace. It not only showed me how I could make a difference as a board member of a nonprofit organization, but it also connected me with a network of inspiring, civic-minded peers.

~2019 EL Alum
2021 Schedule

For the first time, we are piloting a schedule that includes both in person and virtual programming. Participants are expected to attend every session and complete some assignments between sessions. Virtual sessions will be recorded to provide additional flexibility for those with busy schedules.

Please note that we are taking extra time to confirm speakers and venues within the context of public health guidance, so the following is a tentative schedule. A final schedule will be available at the time of acceptance to the program.

- Program Orientation: September 22, 3:30-6:30pm (date tentative)
- Session #1 (in person, Portland): September 25, 8am–9pm – this long full-day session will take place on Cow Island off the coast of Portland, but will not include an overnight this year.
- Session #2 (virtual): September 28, 1-2:30pm
- Session #3 (virtual): October 7, 1-2:30pm (date tentative)
- Session #4 (in person, Wells): October 14, 3:30-6:30pm (date tentative)
- Session #5 (virtual): October 21, 1-2:30pm (date tentative)
- Session #6 (virtual): November 4, 1-2:30pm (date tentative)
- Session #7 (in person, Lewiston): November 18, 3:00-6:30
- Session #8 (virtual): December 2, 1-2:30pm (date tentative)
- Session #9 (virtual): December 9, 1-2:30pm (date tentative)
- Session #10 (in person, South Portland): December 16, 3:30-6:30, followed by a celebration

Tuition and Application Information

Thanks to generosity of program supporters, participants pay just a fraction of true program costs and MANP offers tuition assistance, which can be requested as part of the application process. MANP works hard to ensure that cost is not a barrier for anyone accepted.

The 2021 program fee is $1,200; employees of MANP member/Friend organizations* pay just $950! (Visit NonprofitMaine.org/join/our-members-friends/ to see if your organization is a member.) The program fee includes a retreat on Cow Island, all training sessions, coaching to join a board/committee, and ongoing support.

Employers may be able to help their employees with some or all of the program cost. MANP encourages prospective participants to begin those conversations with their employers as soon as possible—see the FAQs later in this document for more.

2021 Participant Selection

- By June 11 – Applicants deferred from 2020 confirm whether they would like to be considered. They will not need to submit a new application, but will have the opportunity to note changes/updates.
- By June 30 – Based on the response from deferred applicants, MANP will determine if we will accept any additional applications for the 2021 class.
- By July 30 – All applicants will be notified whether they have been accepted to the program.
- By August 31 – For those accepted, a non-refundable deposit of $250 is due.
- September 17 – Tuition due in full. (If this deadline presents a barrier, a payment plan can be arranged at the time of acceptance.)
Frequently Asked Questions About MANP’s Emerging Leaders Program

Why is MANP offering this program? What is its purpose?

Nationally, only seventeen percent of nonprofit board members are 40 or younger. Maine has a powerful population of young people who are energized, educated and eager to be engaged in their communities like never before. But they need support, both in learning the skills needed to serve and also in overcoming stereotypes that suggest young people have limited attention spans, shallow pockets and lack of time for service due to building careers and families. Meanwhile, nonprofit organizations consistently report challenges with attracting qualified board members and engaging younger leaders.

The Emerging Leaders program, launched in 2010 by the Institute for Civic Leadership—which later became Lift360—was the direct result of feedback from young leaders, nonprofit organizations and other advisors. MANP is proud to continue Lift360’s work in connecting young leaders in our community with meaningful nonprofit committee or board experience.

Can you tell me more about MANP?

MANP’s mission is to enrich the quality of community and personal life in Maine by strengthening the leadership, voice and organizational effectiveness of Maine’s nonprofits. We empower people with purpose.

Since 1994, Maine Association of Nonprofits (MANP) has grown to become Maine’s comprehensive resource for the tools, knowledge, and connections nonprofits need to be effective and well-run. With a growing statewide membership of more than 980 nonprofit and 140 for-profit organizations, MANP is a vocal advocate for the work and worth of Maine nonprofits, championing their vital contribution to the economy and quality of life in our state. MANP builds the capacity of individual organizations through leadership and management training, online resources, and cost-saving member benefits. By weaving connections among new and seasoned nonprofit professionals and volunteers, MANP lifts up effective, innovative practices and fosters collaboration. MANP cultivates productive relationships across the nonprofit, business, government, and philanthropic sectors so together they can advance solutions to pressing issues and opportunities facing Maine.

Who should participate in the Emerging Leaders Program?

The Emerging Leaders Program was designed for people under age 40 who want to deepen their peer and professional networks and deepen their community involvement through the work of nonprofit organizations. While this age range includes a wide variety of professional and personal proficiencies and experiences – from those just graduating from college to those who are professionally established as leaders within their organizations and beyond – it reflects a segment of the population that statistics show is underrepresented on nonprofit boards.

I heard there is an outdoor, experiential component in the program. Are you going to make me camp out?

Not in 2021! In the past, the leadership training portion of the program included an overnight on Cow Island in Casco Bay co-led with a local nonprofit partner organization called Rippleffect.

In 2021, we will still head to Cow Island for our first session, but it will be a single (long) day format including a variety of outdoor activities. For individuals with limited physical strength, endurance and/or mobility, or with cultural, religious or dietary requirements, MANP and Rippleffect will work in partnership with the individual to ensure safe and meaningful participation during this session.
every activity led by Rippleffect, there are many ways to participate and contribute to the group experience. Participants will be encouraged to make the choice about their participation level in a way that is right for them.

**Can I select the board I am matched to?**

Joining a board or committee is not mandatory, but is encouraged. In 2021, MANP is piloting a new process for connecting graduates to nonprofit boards that will put the match process fully in the hands of participants and nonprofits. MANP will compile information to facilitate connections and offer coaching and support to navigate the process, but will not formally match participants.

**What is the selection process for the program?**

Applications will be reviewed by a team and evaluated based on motivation and commitment to grow as a leader, alignment between stated goals and the program’s intended outcomes, desire to deepen community engagement, and whether the applicant is able to meet the program requirements (ability to attend the sessions and complete assignments).

It is not required that participants be nominated before applying. Nominations by employers, program alumni, or other friends and colleagues help MANP staff identify leaders to engage in the program, and help staff better understand the leadership roles applicants play in their organization and/or community.

**How can I encourage my employer to let me participate in the program?**

The *Emerging Leaders Program* has been designed with special sensitivity to the schedules of its participants whose personal and professional commitments may result in limited flexibility. As a result, the majority of the trainings are scheduled so that employees do not miss a lot of time on the job. And thanks to underwriting from sponsors, program participants pay only a fraction of the total training cost, lessening the financial burden on participants and their supporting employers.

Once the training program is complete and graduates move on to their nonprofit service, participants and their employers will continue to benefit. Board service provides an opportunity to reinforce existing skills and to develop new professional and leadership skills. Board service by staff raises employer’s visibility in the community, and the experience opens doors to new connections, contacts and clients.