



Senior Leaders Institute

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR 2026-2027

The Senior Leaders Institute (SLI) is a cohort-based leadership development program that focuses on preparing more experienced managers and directors for higher administrative roles in leadership. The content fosters creativity and innovation in state government and builds leadership skills. SLI equips leaders with the tools they need to positively impact the complexity of public issues in today's challenging environment.

For 2026, SLI will be hosted primarily in-person on Fridays, September through December.

Application deadline is June 18, 2026 by 4:30 p.m.

Please work with your Human Resources and/or Training teams to find out if your agency has an earlier application deadline. Late and incomplete or emailed submissions will not be accepted. Your agency will be able to help you with any questions on your agency's application process. You can also email the ETD team at ETD.Leadership.Shared.Mailbox.MMB@state.mn.us.

Selection committees will be held during the month of July. Applicants will be notified of acceptance into the program between Aug. 3-7, 2026.

Application materials are attached or can be downloaded on the [ETD website](#).

Eligibility

- Candidates must be employed by the state of Minnesota for at least two years by Sept. 18, 2026.
- Candidates must be in a managerial role or higher.
- Agency and supervisor/chain of leadership support and sign-off is required.
- Candidates must commit to attend all classes and complete all assignments (see class schedule below).

Application Process

Step 1: Follow Agency Internal Process

Applicants are expected to follow their agency's internal process and deadlines for being nominated to apply for SLI. Unless otherwise instructed by your agency, please complete the form on the pages below in addition to any other required agency documents.



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Step 2: Obtain Letter of Recommendation

Obtain the required letter of recommendation to accompany your application. The signed letter of recommendation must be submitted on agency letterhead from your agency's commissioner, deputy commissioner, assistant commissioner, or equivalent role.

The letter must include the name of the applicant, the name and contact information of the writer, specific examples of why the applicant is a good candidate for SLI, and a brief description of how the applicant exhibits these characteristics in the workplace:

- Considered a thought leader by others.
- Actions and decisions characterized by initiative and proactive behavior.
- Utilizes emotional intelligence to build effective relationships.
- Established a pattern of noteworthy results.
- Possesses the potential for leadership opportunities with greater depth and breadth of responsibilities.
- Continually seeks personal and professional growth.
- Values inclusion, equity, accessibility, and diversity.
- Valued contributor and strong performer in current position.
- Demonstrates a strong commitment to use knowledge gained in service to the citizens of the State of Minnesota.

The letter should also describe why this person is being recommended for SLI (i.e. how the applicant, the agency, or work unit benefit if this individual participates).

Please only send the required letter (above) with your application. Additional letters or materials are not required for consideration.

Step 3: Review SLI Session Dates

Review and acknowledge SLI session dates. Participants are required to attend all classes on the dates below.

2026 Program Dates

- Friday, Sept. 18
- Friday, Sept. 25
- Friday, Oct. 2
- Friday, Oct. 9*
- Friday, Oct. 23
- Friday, Oct. 30
- Friday, Nov. 6



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- Friday, Nov. 13*
- Friday, Nov. 20
- Friday, Dec. 4

Note: All classes run from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Dates with an asterisk (*) are tentatively planned to be virtual, all non-asterisk dates are planned for in-person.

Step 4: Complete Application Form

Complete the application form via the link provided by your agency. An accessible PDF can be provided upon request through [ETD's Leadership Program inbox](#).

Questions

If you have any questions on the SLI application process, please email ETD's Leadership Program inbox at etd.leadership.shared.mailbox.mmb@state.mn.us.