



**WORKFORCE  
LEADERSHIP  
ACADEMIES**  
aspen institute

**Workforce Leadership Academy**

# **2022 RFA: Informational Webinar and Q&A**

**Informational Zoom Session**

**Wednesday, June 8, 2022**

# Welcome!

Thank you for joining us today! Please feel free to answer via chat:

*Where are you joining from?*

# Economic Opportunities Program

The Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program advances strategies, policies, and ideas to help low- and moderate-income people thrive in a changing economy. We recognize that race, gender, and place intersect with and intensify the challenge of economic inequality and we address these dynamics by advancing an inclusive vision of economic justice. For over 25 years, EOP has focused on expanding individuals' opportunities to connect to quality work, start businesses, and build economic stability that provides the freedom to pursue opportunity.

Learn more at [as.pn/eop](https://as.pn/eop).

# Today's Agenda

- Welcome!
- WLA Overview
- Evolution of WLA
- Questions
- Application Process
- Budget Template
- Questions & Discussion

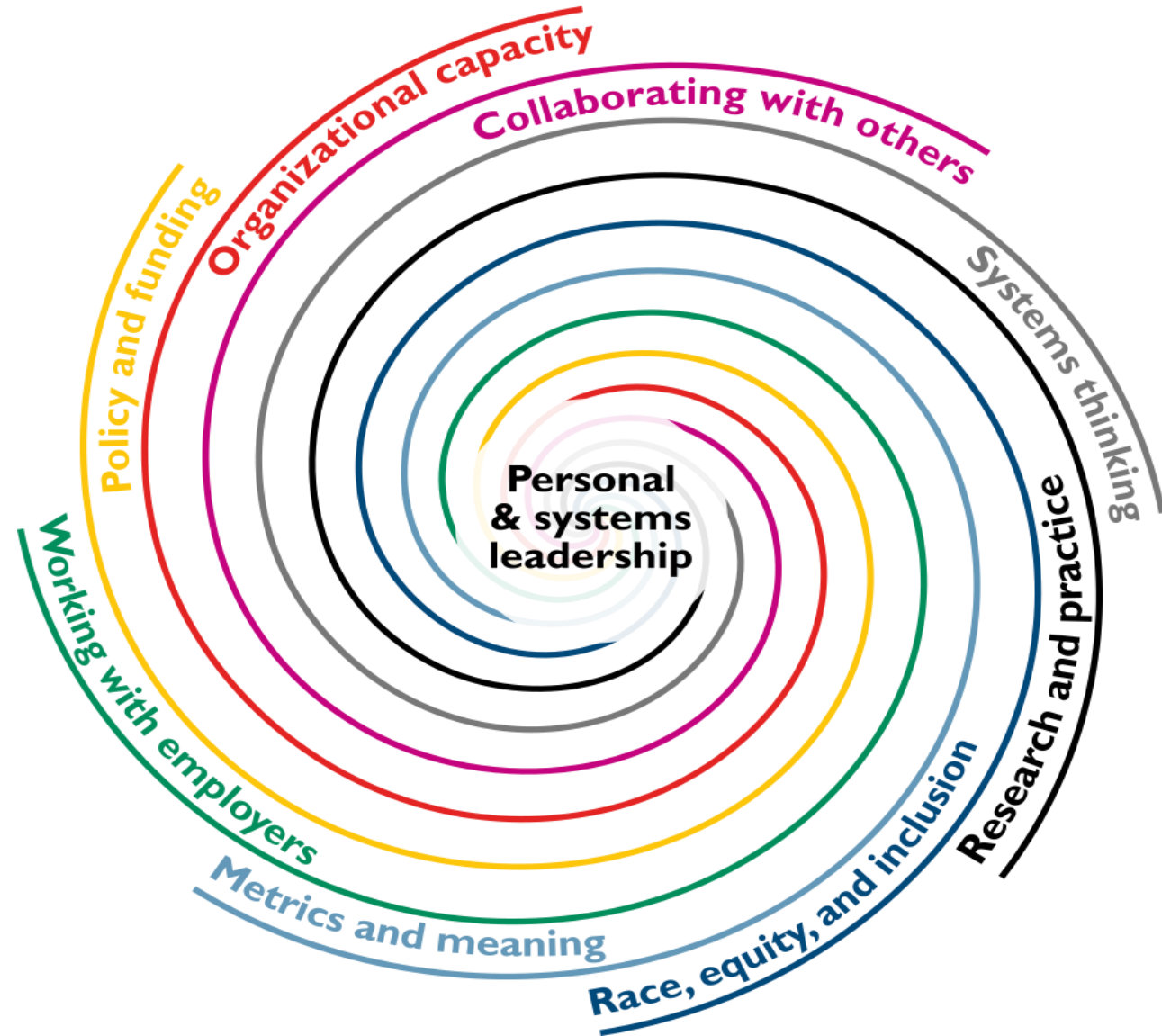


# WLA Overview

# Goals & Themes

The Academy engages leaders in a ten-month peer learning cohort to:

- 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; and
- deepen understanding of **effective strategies and programs**.



# Fellows

**By investing in leaders' knowledge, skills, and relationships, the Workforce Leadership Academies are well-positioned to build nimble collaboration so important to the ecosystem's success.**

Fellows represent...

Capacity-building organizations

Educational institutions

Industry intermediaries or sector partnerships

Local government agencies (city or county)

Non-profit organizations

Philanthropic organizations or funders' collaboratives

Professional, business, or industry associations

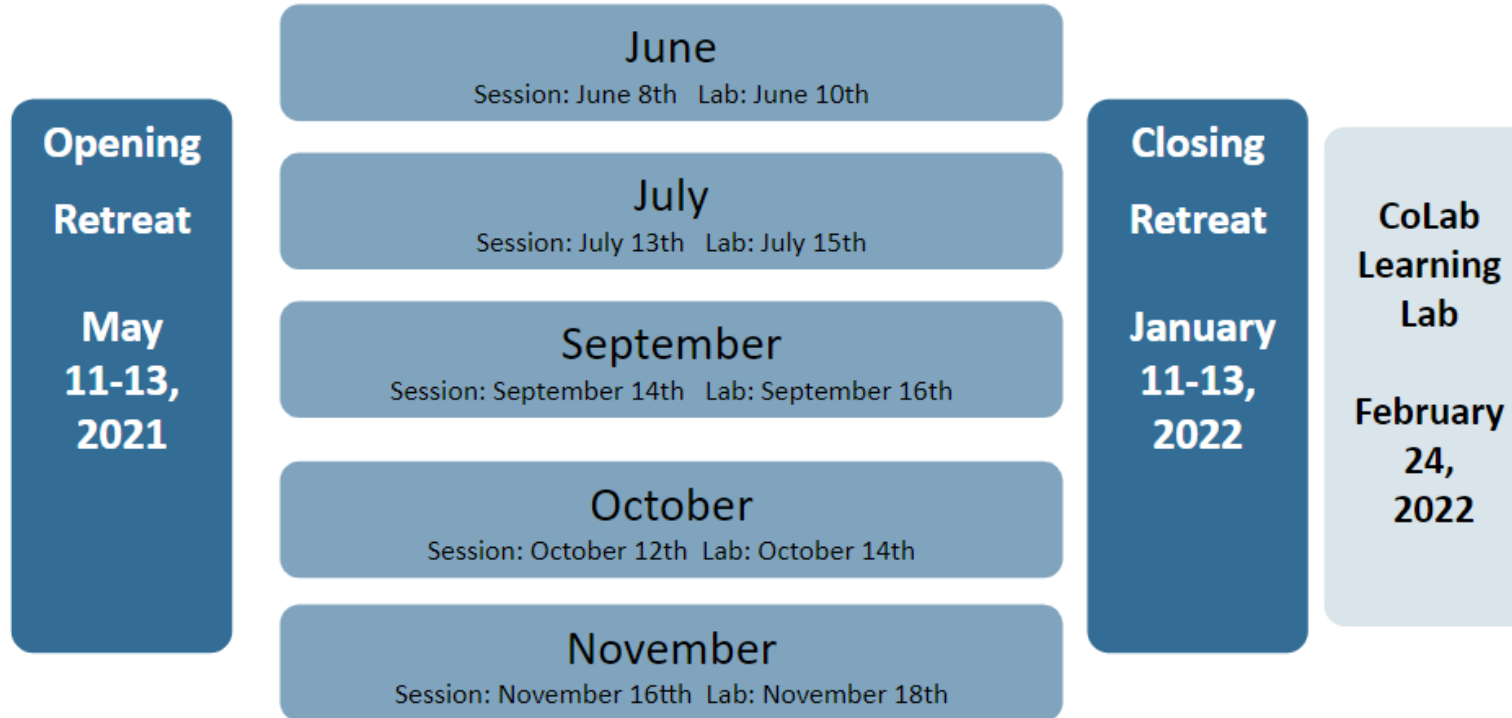
Research

State government agencies





# Academy Structure



*January - April 2021: Application Process, Selection, Notification*

**Over their academy year, Fellows participate in:**

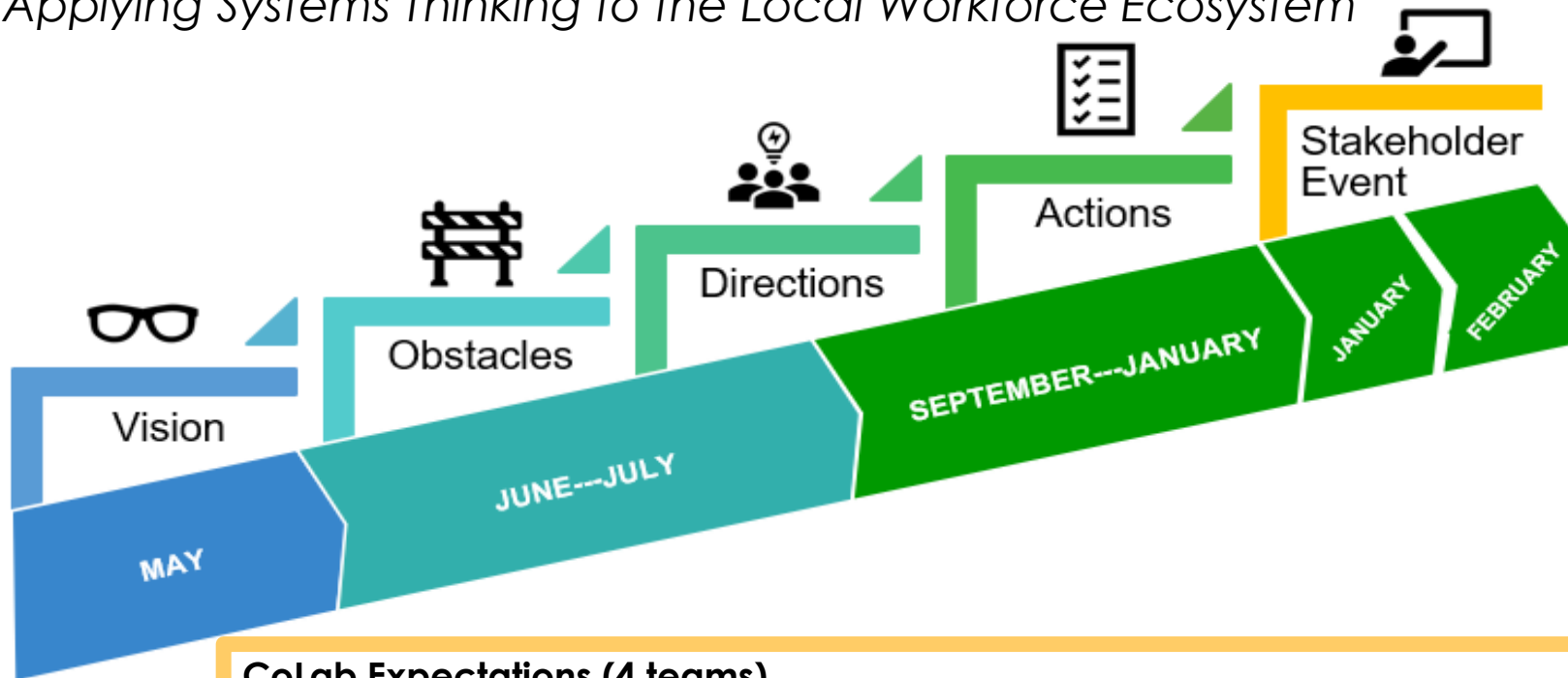
- An opening in-person three-day retreat (two overnights)
- Five academy sessions (5 hours) and 5 academy labs (3 hours)
  - held during the same week approximately every 4-6 weeks,
  - conducted virtually for four virtual session/lab sets and in person for one set.
- One leadership 360 assessment debrief workshop
- A closing in-person three-day retreat (two overnight stays)
- Collaborative Learning Lab presentations at an in-person stakeholder event
- Local partners may also decide to offer additional networking and social events.

# Approaches & Methods



# The CoLab

*Applying Systems Thinking to the Local Workforce Ecosystem*



## CoLab Expectations (4 teams)

As leaders of the local workforce ecosystem, what innovative, substantial actions do you recommend to deal with the underlying contradictions and move us toward our vision over the next 12-18 months?

### Presentation to Stakeholders

- Short presentation (10-15 minutes)
- Recommendations: 2-4 strategic actions, based on research and analysis in teams
- Catalytic Actions: tangible focus over next 90 days after presentations that could really help recommendations take off

## Sample HMW Questions

### *How might we...*

...support a competency-based hiring approach that is valued by employers and empowering for job seekers?

...better incentivize "high road" employment practices by local businesses?

...make it easier for stakeholders to navigate the workforce system?

...ensure collaboration in planning and delivery of workforce services?

...support employers with addressing racial equity and inclusion in the workplace?

## Organizational Individual

8:30	Welcome and Check-in	15 mins	<b>ACADEMY SESSION</b>
8:45	What is Job Quality? An Overview	45 min	Job Quality Game in triads
9:30	Intro to Job Quality	30 min	<b>Guest Faculty:</b> Jenny Weissbourd, The Aspen Institute
10:00	Break	10 mins	<b>Reminder:</b> place Door Dash order
10:10	Local Innovation and Challenges	45 min	<b>Guest Faculty:</b> Representatives from local employer partnership
10:55	Job Quality by Stakeholder Type	35 min	<b>Reading:</b> “Race, Risk, and Workforce Equity in the Coronavirus Economy,” PolicyLink
11:30	Lunch	45 min	Breakout rooms open for Fellows if desired
12:15	Practical Application	30 min	<b>Tool:</b> Job Quality Organizational Self-Assessment In triads
12:45	Reflection	15 min	<b>Individual journal reflection:</b> how can I exercise leadership of job quality efforts for my organization?
1:00	Assignments and Closing Activity		
1:30	Close		

8:30	<b>COLLABORATIVE LEARNING LAB</b> <b>PRACTICAL VISION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the Practical Vision created at the Opening Retreat</li> </ul>
9:00	<b>UNDERLYING OBSTACLES:</b> What systems obstacles contradict what we say our vision is? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual brainstorming</li> <li>Generating themes in Groups</li> <li>Debrief: Implications for my own work in the ecosystem</li> </ol>
11:15	<b>ASSIGNMENTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Come to next Lab having discussed the Vision and Obstacles with your team and colleagues. What insights do you hear?</li> <li>Next Lab will focus on generating Strategic Directions to reach the Vision—what are the possibilities???</li> </ul>
11:30	<b>TIMELINE REMINDER:</b> CoLab Groups will form after next Lab!

# Previous Local Academy Partners

## Local Academy Partners

**Baltimore**

The Baltimore Workforce Funders Collaborative

**Seattle**

SkillUp Washington

**Hartford**

United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut

**Toronto**

The Metcalf Foundation

**Detroit**

Corporation for a Skilled Workforce

**Chicago**

Chicago Jobs Council

**New Orleans**

New Orleans Business Alliance

**Jersey City**

Hudson County Community College

**Dallas**

Corporation for a Skilled Workforce

**Jackson**

City of Jackson

**Phoenix**

Center for the Future of Arizona

# Evolution of WLA

# Evaluation Highlight

In an evaluation of three academies held between 2019-2021:

**88%** of Fellows shared that they were **collaborating with other organizations in new ways.**

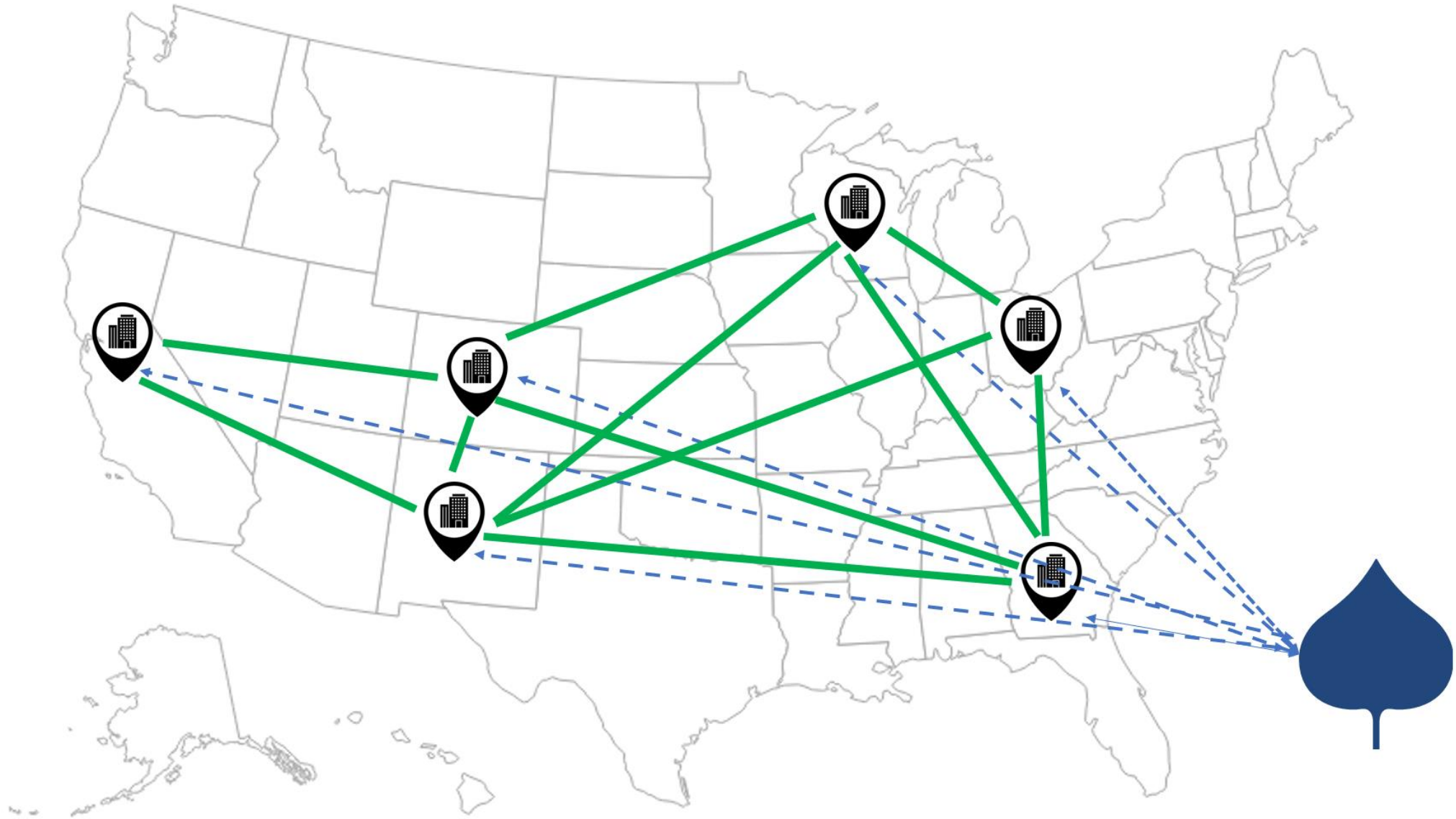
**82%** of Fellows indicated that they were **approaching racial equity in new ways.**

**Fellows also shared that they gained new knowledge from each other about existing resources in the system, which facilitated opportunities for engaging more practically and immediately in systems**

*In one city, the Mayor's Office and the Housing 4 Authority began working on ways to better align their youth engagement activities toward creating more meaningful out-of-school time experiences. Fellows said that the academy strengthened their ability to build their understanding of industry sectors and regional labor market trends including how to engage with employers in new ways.*

*In another city, Fellows developed a new approach to working with retail and hospitality employers that was subsequently implemented. Fellows also increased their capacity to disaggregate data and generate insights about disparities in outcomes related to hiring, job quality, and advancement. One Fellow revamped their organization's paid time off policies that improved conditions for its workers of color.*







# Timeframe for academy activities

Local Launch				Local Academies Delivery												What's Next?			
Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
Advisory Councils		Fellows Outreach and Recruitment		Selecting Fellows		Opening Retreat		5 Sessions + 5 Labs 360 Leadership Debrief Social and Networking Activity							Closing Retreat		CoLab Stakeholder Event  All-Academy Assembly		
Monthly online Facilitator Forum sessions, 3-day in-person training retreat and bi-weekly check ins																	Evaluation		

# Local Partners

## **...are responsible for:**

- positioning the academy within the local workforce ecosystem
- guiding recruitment and outreach
- providing links to local innovation, policymakers and workforce leaders
- developing an advisory council
- facilitating all in-person and virtual academy sessions and activities
- positioning Fellows' proposed systems recommendations for maximum chances of gaining traction
- leading communication and community care with Fellows before, during, and between sessions
- securing and preparing all local guest faculty
- logistics for all in-person events and virtual events
- administering all travel and honoraria expenses for national guest faculty

## **...and will receive the following supports:**

- challenge grant of \$50,000 toward local academy costs (estimated to be between \$100-160K)
- access to curriculum and administrative resources (e.g., annotated agendas, slide decks, and pre-session review materials) under a Creative Commons licensing agreement
- Facilitator forum: biweekly coaching, monthly virtual half-day sessions, and in-person intensive 3-day retreat before local academy launch
- WLA application platform for review and selection of Fellows with local advisors
- 360 leadership assessment process
- CoLab working groups
- Advisory Council planning meetings
- Pre-enrollment, midpoint, and session evaluations administered by EOP; process for integrating feedback
- Templates for external communications related to the academy
- Support in identifying and preparing national guest faculty
- Training and technical assistance for the local facilitation team in the use of all materials

# Questions so far?

# Application Process

# Criteria for Partner Selection

Potential partners will be considered using the following criteria:

- ☐ knowledge of the city or region's workforce development system
- ☐ has connections to senior workforce stakeholders
- ☐ explicitly committed to racial equity and inclusion

## Strategic Alignment

- ☐ able to secure local funding match for the challenge grant.

## Financial Capability

- ☐ can attract leaders from various organizations that make up the local workforce ecosystem
- ☐ can operate as a neutral stakeholder working on behalf of common interests

## Credible Convening Capacity

- ☐ can organize and facilitate in-person and virtual events
- ☐ can support a robust cohort-based learning experience
- ☐ has identified a team and the needed organizational administrative supports to ensure academy success
- ☐ capacity to customize session agendas, identify and prepare local and national guest faculty, lead all sessions, coach CoLab working groups, and administer 360 leadership assessment

## Facilitation Capability

*Final selection of partners will also include consideration of diversity of geography and organizational type, as well as capacity and interest in replicating or adapting Academies over multiple years or across local regions beyond the grant year.*

# Application Process

**The application process will consist of two steps: a Letter of Intent to Apply, followed by an invitation to selected organizations to submit a full proposal. An overview of the process is listed below:**

- June 8 (2:30–3:30 PM EST): Informational webinar
- June 24: Letter of Intent to Apply survey due
- July 11: Invitations for full proposals issued
- August 1: Full proposals due
- August: Finalist interviews
- September 1: Selected partners notified
- Mid-September: Kickoff Partner Network virtual meeting
- September-April: Advisory councils, outreach and recruitment, Fellows selection
- April-December 2023: 10-month academies operate
- January-March 2024: Virtual academy alumni assembly with Fellows from six regions

# Budget Template





# Questions & Discussion

# Thank you so much for joining us today!

Be sure to visit and bookmark [our webpage](#) to stay up to date on WLA.

If additional questions, comments, or concerns arise, please contact Dee Wallace at [Dee.Wallace@aspeninstitute.org](mailto:Dee.Wallace@aspeninstitute.org).

# Appendix: Resources

# Full RFA Document

Review the RFA requirements by copy-pasting this link in your browser: [as.pn/wlarfa](https://as.pn/wlarfa)

# Application Overview: Eligibility

Organizations eligible to apply include nonprofits, city or state entities, community colleges, and intermediaries. Independent consultants and for-profits are ***not*** eligible.

# Application Overview: Letter of Intent to Apply

*EOP invites interested organizations to complete the Letter of Intent to Apply, which requests the following information on the next several slides:*

## **Organizational Overview**

1. Organization name
2. Organizational type
3. Number of employees
4. Geographic focus
5. Contact person, title
6. Organizational chart
7. W9 form
8. Please provide a short overview of your organization (include links).
9. How many years have you been in operation?
10. Who are your primary constituents and/or audiences?

# Application Overview: Letter of Intent to Apply

## Strategic Alignment

11. How does your organization engage with workforce development in your city/region? What geographic area (city, county, region) would this academy serve?
12. How do the academy goals align with your organization's strategic priorities?

## Credible Convening Capacity

13. Workforce development ecosystems typically include nonprofit organizations, public agencies, business associations, union-based training efforts, intermediaries, and community colleges and universities. Among the mix of institutional types in your community, where does your organization have strong connections? Weak? Whom might you engage on your advisory council to offset that weakness?
14. Provide the names and titles of three workforce ecosystems leaders outside of your organization who are interested in bringing an Academy to your city/region.

# Application Overview: Letter of Intent to Apply

## Facilitation Capability

15. Describe your organization's prior experience in facilitating cohort-based learning communities and include any relevant examples.

## Financial Capability

16. Identify potential match funding sources.

## Other

17. Please share any other information, including questions, that might help in this application process.



# Application Overview: Full Proposal

*If selected, EOP will invite organizations (by July 11<sup>th</sup>) to complete the full proposal, which requests the following information on the next several slides:*

## **Organizational Overview**

Please name the organization executive who, if selected, will authorize the Agreement.

## **Strategic Alignment**

1. What do you see as opportunities and challenges in the ecosystem that are ripe for change? Please provide links to relevant reports on your local ecosystem.

2. In what ways has your organization worked to advance racial equity and inclusion internally as an institution? Externally in relation to program service delivery, community collaborations, or other efforts?

# Application Overview: Full Proposal

## Credible Convening Capacity

3. List advisory council members (including titles and organizations) that you have invited or that you will pursue.

## Facilitation Capability

4. Identify the facilitation team members who will deliver the Academy and participate in the partner network, including attending the three-day intensive training event. Provide link to their bios (LinkedIn or organization website). Provide a one or two sentence description of each person's role.

5. Describe two examples of convenings, meetings, or other events your organization has hosted that engaged multiple stakeholders or partners in your city or region.

## Financial Capability

6. Submit the [budget template](#) with confirmed sources described.