

Announcement Title: NOAA LCDP IX Call for Applications
Announcement Number: 02-18-2014 NOAA LCDP IX
Opening Date: Tuesday, February 18, 2014
Closing Date: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time
Maximum Number of Candidates to be Selected: 26

NOAA Leadership Competencies Development Program Overview

NOAA's Leadership Competencies Development Program (LCDP) is a competitive 18-month leadership development program. It provides a series of training and learning experiences for a cadre of NOAA employees who have high potential for assuming greater leadership responsibilities in the agency. The program promotes cross-line, multidisciplinary experiences that broaden participants' understanding of NOAA's strategic vision, mission, and goals, as well as our business processes. The LCDP, a key component of NOAA's Strategic Human Capital Management Plan, is our premier succession planning initiative.

LCDP is expected to be an important source of candidates for NOAA senior and/or executive level positions. Successful completion of the program, however, does *not* guarantee selection for such jobs, nor is it a substitute for the Department of Commerce Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program. LCDP graduates interested in future senior or executive level positions may compete for them under merit promotion procedures when openings occur.

Eligibility

You must meet the qualification requirements outlined in this section to be considered for selection into the LCDP. You must *currently* be employed at one of the following grade levels in a permanent (not temporary) position:

- GS-13, GS-14, or GS-15
- Pay Band: ZA-4, ZA-5, ZP-4, ZP-5, or ZT-5
- Commissioned Officer: O-4, O-5, or O-6

In addition, you must have been employed a minimum of two years in a full-time, permanent NOAA Federal position as of the closing date of this announcement (March 11, 2014.)

Lastly, you may not be a current participant in any other long-term developmental program (that is, a program lasting 12-months or longer) funded by NOAA or the Department of Commerce.

To apply to LCDP Class IX, you must submit your online application by the closing date, Tuesday, March 11, 2014 at 11:59 p.m.

Please note that *no exceptions* have ever been made to these eligibility requirements. Pay Band III employees (equivalent to the GS-11 or GS-12) are *not eligible* to apply to the LCDP. Eligibility is verified before applications are reviewed.

Program Goals

The goals of the LCDP include:

- Developing your core leadership competencies;
- Increasing your knowledge of, and experience with, NOAA business processes;
- Enhancing your knowledge of NOAA's current environment and challenges;
- Increasing your opportunities to work across organizational lines; and
- Expanding your network.

LCDP leadership competencies are selected from the Office of Personnel Management's Executive Core Qualifications, which are [defined online](#).

Benefits to Line/Staff Offices and Participants

Line/Staff Office Benefits

The LCDP provides Line/Staff Offices with:

- Program participants who bring new approaches to their permanent positions and their developmental activities;
- Employees who possess exceptional leadership skills;
- Employees capable of assuming broader NOAA leadership roles; and
- Potential candidates for filling critical positions within the organization.

Participant Benefits

You have the opportunity to:

- Participate in a formal, NOAA-wide leadership development program with a cross-agency cohort group;
- Develop your leadership competencies through customized leadership training, developmental assignments, and professional development opportunities;
- Gain increased visibility within your Line/Staff Office and across NOAA;
- Expand your knowledge and understanding of our corporate vision, mission, goals; and
- Strengthen your ability to communicate in and across NOAA.

LCDP graduates interested in future senior or executive level positions may compete for them under merit promotion procedures when openings occur.

Program Components

The LCDP provides the following key developmental components:

- A formal mentoring relationship with a NOAA senior leader who provides guidance throughout the program;
- A pre-program individual 360-degree assessment to determine leadership development needs;
- An Individual Development Plan (IDP) to lay the groundwork and plan how you will gain appropriate skills and experience;
- A formal core leadership training program covering a range of subjects and issues;
- A series of career-broadening developmental assignments and activities; and
- An opportunity to participate in specific corporate NOAA and Line/Staff Office initiatives.

Formal Core Leadership Training

Mandatory core leadership training includes a 5-week split session at the Federal Executive Institute (FEI) in Charlottesville, Virginia. The curriculum, which varies slightly from class to class, emphasizes a range of topics and issues facing today's leaders. Required sessions are as follows:

Participants MUST attend all sessions.

Dates	Session Title
July 13 – July 18, 2014	Orientation Week at FEI (Sun. – Fri.)
January 25 – February 6, 2015	Leadership Course #1 at FEI (2 weeks, starts Sun., ends Fri.)
July 12 – 17, 2015	Leadership Course #2 at FEI (Sun.-Fri.)
January 24-28, 2016	Leadership Course #3 at FEI (Sun.-Thurs.)
January 29, 2016	Graduation in Silver Spring, MD (Fri.)

LCDP class members are also required to participate in specific NOAA leadership training sessions conducted outside of FEI, including hour-long LCDP Leadership Learning Series sessions, conducted via telephone at three-four week intervals throughout the program. Each participant must lead and facilitate one of these sessions.

Developmental Assignments

During the 18-month LCDP program, you will be expected to be involved in two or three developmental (rotational) assignments, each lasting 3–4 months. These opportunities may be in other parts of NOAA, DOC, other agencies, or appropriate public/private sector organizations. At least one assignment should be in an NOAA Office outside of your Line/Staff Office.

Other Developmental Activities

Additional leadership development activities are based on your needs and are documented in your IDP. Activities may include, for example, specific NOAA-wide or Line/Staff Office projects, shadowing higher-level NOAA leaders, readings on leadership development, and other training as appropriate.

Program Funding

For clarification on how the LCDP is funded in your office, please contact your [LCDP Line/Staff Office Coordinator](#).

The estimated cost of LCDP participation is twofold:

- The required leadership development training at the FEI — a 5-week split session — will range from \$21,194 - \$26,865 depending on the number of slots filled. In addition to the formal training, this cost includes the LCDP orientation and graduation, pre-program individual assessment, and lodging and meals at FEI. Travel to and from FEI, however, is not included in this cost.
- Additional costs (estimated at \$10,000) are variable and highly dependent upon both the location and the duration of your developmental assignments and your additional training expenses, including:
 - All participant travel;
 - Additional training (other than FEI); and
 - Per diem (lodging and meals) associated with developmental assignments and additional training (other than FEI).

Role of the Supervisor

You are strongly advised to discuss your interest in LCDP with your supervisor before applying. A statement of supervisory support from your immediate supervisor is part of the application process.

Supervisor support is critical for success in the LCDP, as full participation in the program requires a significant amount of time away from the home office (see Program Components section above for expected time commitments). Your supervisor, your mentor, and your LCDP Executive Sponsor (typically the Deputy Assistant Administrator of each Line Office) play key roles in guiding and supporting you in the creation and implementation of the IDP.

Selection Criteria and NOAA Leadership Competencies

LCDP selection is based on NOAA's criteria and follows merit principles. These criteria address the applicant's potential for achieving the Six NOAA Leadership Competencies critical to senior leadership positions within the organization. You must address each competency in writing to demonstrate how your background, experience, and potential meet these criteria (see Tips for Writing a Quality Response below for additional information). The Six NOAA Leadership Competencies are:

Competency 1 — Leads People

Demonstrates skill or potential for leading people, such as:

- Fosters a culture of teamwork and respect with internal and external customers that improves results and/or achieves goals;
- Resolves conflicts effectively;
- Reflects organizational core values through clear and consistent actions;
- Promotes diversity goals and/or outreach efforts;
- Works effectively in matrix-managed organizations; or
- Leads initiatives across NOAA to identify scientific issues to be researched.

Competency 2 — Continuous Learner

Demonstrates skill as a continuous learner, such as:

- Pursues advanced or continuing education;
- Participates in training and developmental opportunities;
- Seeks out projects and/or assignments outside current job responsibilities; or
- Adapts behavior and work methods in response to new information and changing conditions.

Competency 3 – Business Proficiency

Demonstrates skill or potential for business proficiency, such as:

- Aligns financial planning with performance goals;
- Ensures procurement and acquisition procedures are properly used;
- Understands budget formulation and execution processes; or
- Plans and integrates new technology proactively to meet organizational and customer needs.

Competency 4 – Problem Solver

Demonstrates skill or potential for complex problem solving, such as:

- Anticipates, identifies, and diagnoses barriers to a goal;
- Develops innovative alternatives to existing operations;
- Creates contingency plans to ensure a goal is met;
- Integrates disparate concepts and/or issues; or
- Solves complex research problems at the national or regional level by leading teams and/or building scientific coalitions with universities and other partners.

Competency 5 – Strategic Thinker

Demonstrates skill or potential for strategic thinking, such as:

- Understands the roles and relationships of a variety of organizational functions and missions;
- Develops strategies for integrating diverse interests of multiple stakeholders;
- Identifies and integrates key political, economic, social, scientific, and technological issues affecting the organization;
- Advocates change to meet anticipated customer demands or to promote the use of new technologies in the office;
- Participates in complex research or operational problems/activities; or
- Develops strategies for approaching or resolving short and long-term problems.

Competency 6 – Communicator

Demonstrates communication skills, such as:

- Delivers clear and convincing oral presentations to individuals and groups within and outside the office;
- Writes reports and other documents that reflect the position and work of the organization in a clear, convincing and organized manner;
- Establishes and maintains working relationships with internal organizational units;
- Engages in cross-functional activities;
- Develops and enhances alliances with external groups;
- Considers and responds appropriately to the needs, feelings and capabilities of different people in different situations;
- Gains cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals.

Tips for Writing a Quality Response

It is highly recommended that applicants follow the “Challenge-Context-Action-Result” (CCAR) model in documenting their qualifications under each NOAA Leadership Competency.

Components of the CCAR model are:

- **Challenge** — describe a specific problem or goal;
- **Context** — describe the individuals/groups you worked with and/or the environment in which you worked to tackle a particular challenge;
- **Action** — discuss specific actions you took to address the challenge;
- **Result** — give specific examples of the results of the actions you took to demonstrate the quality and effectiveness of your leadership skills.

CCAR a results-oriented approach that requires you to focus on the leadership skills needed to manage programs, processes, and people. This approach provides a more complete picture of your leadership competencies and what specific role you played in your organization’s success. The focus is on what you accomplished, not what the organization accomplished.

You may use all of your past experience to demonstrate your knowledge, skills, and abilities. This can include professional experience in the public and private sectors as well as volunteer experience, education and training, awards, and other accomplishments.

Online Application Process

To apply, you must complete and *submit* the online application (active only during the announcement period). A link to the application will be added to the LCDP website the day the application launches. We strongly recommend that you first prepare your responses in MS Word, and then cut-and-paste your responses into the online application. This will allow you to spell check your responses and maintain a record of your application as the online system will not allow you to print a copy. The online application does not allow bolding, underlining, indenting, or use of bullets. You must submit the online version of the application to be considered for LCDP Class IX.

You can work on your online application during multiple sessions prior to submitting it. However, you must start, work on, and complete the online application from one computer – it is not possible to switch between your home computer and work computer. PLEASE NOTE: You must click on the “Next” button at the bottom of the page to save your data before exiting the application. You must enter data (even if it is a few random characters) into all required fields on the page you are currently on before exiting, or you will lose all data on that page. You can exit the application at any time by clicking on the "Exit the application" button on the top right side of the screen, and then re-enter the application by re-launching the web link.

When you are ready to submit your application, you must respond affirmatively to the final question, certifying that your LCDP application is complete as submitted. Then click the "Done" button. You must hit the "Done" button when you are ready to submit, or your application will not be considered.

Please keep in mind the following:

- Applications must be submitted online by the close of the application period (Tuesday, March 11, 2014 at 11:59 p.m., Eastern time);
- Incomplete applications will not be considered;
- No changes will be accepted after the application has been submitted.

You and your supervisor will be notified by e-mail that your application has been SUBMITTED. (Note: These e-mail messages are not generated automatically, so please allow up to 72 hours after the application has been submitted for the confirmation e-mail message to be received.) The e-mail message to the supervisor will include a request that the supervisor complete a Supervisor Statement, due by Friday, March 14, 2014.

Supervisor Statement

A statement of support from an LCDP applicant's immediate supervisor is required as part of the application process. **The Supervisor Statement is due by close of business, Friday, March 14, 2014.** The purpose of this statement is for the supervisor to indicate his or her:

- Assessment of the applicant's qualifications for participation in the LCDP;
- Approval of the time required for the applicant to fully participate in the program;
- Agreement of the funding required for the applicant to participate in the LCDP (see "Program Funding" above for estimated costs).

The supervisor and applicant will be notified by email that the Supervisor Statement was received. Please note that this email is not automatically generated, so allow 72 hours processing time.

Selection Process

Your application will be rated and ranked, and best qualified applicants will be interviewed via telephone. Your supervisor may be contacted during the selection process to discuss his or her evaluation of your potential for participation in the LCDP. Final selections will be approved by the NOAA Deputy Under Secretary.

You will be notified of your selection or non-selection in the LCDP IX class by Friday, May 23, 2014. The LCDP IX class will begin with Orientation Week at FEI from July 13-18, 2014. .

Additional Information

For questions on funding, please contact your [LCDP Line/Staff Office Coordinator](#). For all additional questions, contact the NOAA LCDP Program Manager, Tracy Levstik, at: Tracy.Levstik@noaa.gov or: 303-497-4231.

The NOAA LCDP does not discriminate in selection on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, membership in an employee organization, or other factors.