



FPSSA's
Emerging
LEADERS

FPSSA Emerging Leaders Program

2026 Program Application

This paper form was created for planning purposes only. Please submit your formal application online at <https://form.jotform.com/260564332833153>

The Food Production Solutions Association (FPSSA) invites you to apply for the 2026 Emerging Leaders Program. This 6-month hybrid leadership development experience is built for future leaders in the food production industry who are ready to step into — or grow within — a management role. Our cohort is limited to 15 participants, selected through a competitive review process.

All applications are reviewed on the same criteria: leadership potential, readiness for growth, and the ability to contribute meaningfully to the cohort. Scholarship consideration is handled separately and has no bearing on admissions decisions.

Eligibility Requirements

- Minimum 5 years of professional experience in the food production industry
- Currently aspiring to transition into a management role, OR currently in a people management role within your first two years
- Organizational support for participation, including schedule flexibility to attend both in-person events and all virtual sessions (financial sponsorship is not required — scholarships are available)

Applications that do not meet all eligibility requirements will not be considered.

How to Apply

Please complete all sections of this application thoroughly and honestly. Incomplete applications will not be considered. This application must be submitted with a required letter of recommendation from your direct supervisor or a senior leader within your organization (HR director, VP, or CEO). The letter should speak to:

- Your organization's support for your participation, including schedule flexibility for both in-person events and virtual sessions
- Their perspective on your leadership potential and readiness for this program

Completed applications and letters of recommendation should be submitted to:

membership@fpsa.org

Subject Line: FPSA Emerging Leaders Application – [Your Name]

Questions? Contact FPSA at 703-761-2600 or info@fpsa.org

Application Deadline: April 17, 2026

Cohort Notification: May 4, 2026

** Required field*

Section 1: Applicant Information

Full Name *

Preferred Name (if different)

Email Address *

Mobile Number *

LinkedIn Profile *(optional)*

Birth Date

FPSA Membership Status

Your membership status determines your program tuition rate (\$3,200 for FPSA members; \$3,700 for non-members).

- Yes, my organization has an active FPSA membership
- No, my organization is not currently an FPSA member
- Unsure — I will confirm before submitting

Section 2: Organization Information

Organization Name *

Your Job Title *

Number of Staff at Your Organization *

Annual Revenue (approximate range acceptable) *

Company Type * *(e.g., OEM, Food Producer, Consultant, Associate, Other)*

Section 3: Professional Background

How long have you been with your current organization? *

Total years of experience in the food production industry *

Current Management Status

Select one:

- I do not currently manage staff but am seeking to transition into a management role
- I am a new people manager (managing direct reports for 2 years or less)
- I have been managing people for more than 2 years

If you currently manage staff, how many direct reports do you have?

If you currently manage staff, how long have you been in a management role?

Highest level of education completed

Relevant certifications or specialized training

Section 4: Leadership Goals and Development

Please describe your leadership goals and career trajectory within the food production industry. If you are not yet in a management role, describe your path toward management. If you are a new manager, describe your transition into leadership and where you hope to grow. * (250–300 words)

Why are you interested in participating in the FPSA Emerging Leaders Program? What do you hope to gain from this experience? * (200–250 words)

What specific leadership challenges are you currently facing or anticipating as you transition into or grow in a management role? * (150–200 words)

How do you plan to apply what you learn in this program within your organization? * (150–200 words)

What unique perspectives, experiences, or skills would you contribute to the cohort? * (150–200 words)

Section 5: Professional Development History

Please list any leadership development programs, professional training, or industry conferences you have participated in during the past three years:

Section 6: Program Commitment

The FPSA Emerging Leaders Program requires active participation in all components. Please confirm you are able to commit to the following:

- Pre-Launch Intro Session - May 18, Noon - 1 PM EDT
- Two In-Person Leadership Retreats
 - June 15–16, 2026, Chicago, IL
 - November 4-6, 2026 - Lexington, KY (includes Cultivate: Leadership Growth Lab)
- Two virtual workshops (via Teams)
 - July 30, Noon - 2 PM EDT
 - September 10, Noon - 2 PM EDT
- Three individual virtual coaching sessions (1 hr. For each session, choose one of the two dates)

- Group Coaching Session 1: June 30 or July 2, Noon - 1 PM EDT
- Group Coaching Session 2: August 11 or August 13, Noon - 1 PM EDT
- Group Coaching Session 3: September 22 or September 24, Noon - PM EDT
- Individual and group assignments between sessions
- Active participation in the FPSA Connect online community throughout the program

By signing below, I confirm that:

- I am committed to attending and actively participating in all required program components
- I have discussed this opportunity with my supervisor and have their full support, as evidenced by the required letter of recommendation
- All information provided in this application is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge

<i>Applicant Signature</i>		<i>Date</i>

FPSA Emerging Leaders Program

Optional Scholarship Consideration

About the Scholarship

FPSA is committed to ensuring this program is accessible to high-potential professionals across organizations of all sizes. Five full scholarships are available for the 2026 cohort, funded through the FPSA Foundation. Scholarships are awarded to admitted program participants — scholarship consideration plays no role in the admissions review. Please note: active FPSA organizational membership is required to be eligible for scholarship funding.

Each scholarship covers:

- Full program tuition (\$3,200 for FPSA members)
- Up to \$1,400 in flight reimbursement (\$700 per in-person event)
- Hotel accommodations for the Chicago kickoff (2 nights, valued at \$600)
- Hotel accommodations for the Lexington closing summit (3 nights, valued at \$900)
- Cultivate: Leadership Growth Lab conference registration (November 5-6, 2026, Lexington, KY, valued at \$995)

Note: Incidentals, meals outside of what is provided, and additional hotel nights are not covered.

This section is entirely optional. Completing or skipping it will not affect your admissions review. The scholarship committee reviews this section separately, only after cohort selection is complete.

If financial support would make your participation significantly more feasible — whether due to company size, limited professional development budget, or other circumstances — we encourage you to apply. Scholarships are not reserved for any one type of candidate; they are designed to expand access for high-potential professionals who might not otherwise be able to participate.

Scholarship Interest

Do you wish to be considered for a scholarship?

- Yes, I would like to be considered for a scholarship
- No, I do not need scholarship assistance at this time

Scholarship Essay

If you selected yes above, please respond to the following:

Please describe how a scholarship would support your participation in this program. You might address your organization's capacity to fund professional development, what financial support would make possible for you, and any other context that would help the scholarship committee understand your situation. (150–200 words)

Is there anything else you'd like the scholarship committee to know as they consider your request? (100–150 words)

Scholarship Acknowledgment

By completing this section, I confirm that:

- The information I have provided in this scholarship section is accurate and complete
- I understand that scholarship funds will be provided as reimbursement for approved expenses and will not be disbursed as direct payments
- I understand that scholarship decisions are made separately from and after admissions decisions

<i>Applicant Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>

Scholarship recipients will be notified no later than May 4, 2026. Questions about scholarship eligibility may be directed to FPSA at 703-761-2600 or info@fpsa.org.