



Program Description

February 2018

Executive Leadership Development Program of the Pacific and Virgin Islands

Pacific and Virgin Islands Training Initiatives (PITI-VITI)
Graduate School

<http://eldp.pitiviti.org>

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1. BACKGROUND

The Executive Leadership Development Program (ELDP) was developed in response to the insular areas' growing concerns for continuity in management and technical expertise as senior leaders retire or leave government service.

Why is the Executive Leadership Development Program Important?

The insular areas have experienced many challenges to developing and retaining qualified, skilled staff. Additionally, many career senior leaders and managers in the insular governments are expected to retire within the next several years, leaving a potential gap in leadership, managerial and technical capability. The insular areas need to establish a pool of staff with potential for promotion into these key positions and groom them through training programs, special assignments, and systematic mentoring.

Who organizes and manages the ELDP?

The insular governments recognize the need to identify and develop staff to ensure that turnover of key individuals does not adversely impact government operations. However, the insular governments lack the funding and resources to establish an inter-governmental initiative. The U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs (DOI-OIA) has turned to its partner, the Graduate School USA, to assist with developing and managing the Executive Leadership Development Program (ELDP) through the Pacific and Virgin Islands Training Initiative (PITI-VITI).

Which insular governments can participate?

All of the US-affiliated insular areas are invited to participate in the ELDP, including the flag territories (American Samoa; Guam; U.S. Virgin Islands; Commonwealth of Northern Marianas Islands) and freely associated states (Republic of the Marshall Islands, Republic of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia). The ELDP is open to all government agencies and government enterprise organizations.

2. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE INSULAR AREAS

The insular areas must play a key role for the continued success of the ELDP. The governments can tailor many aspects of the participant developmental process to their unique needs. For example, governments may identify projects that are important to the government that can also serve as a developmental assignment for participants. Government mentors will provide insular-specific career guidance and advice. Participants may be required to bring government data, policies, and other public information to use in training sessions.

What is required from the insular governments?

Since the initial class was offered in 2008, the insular governments have been very supportive of the participants and instructors. The future success will not be possible without the continued support of the insular governments. In 2018 the insular governments are expected to:

1. Disseminate information on the program and application process throughout the government and independent agencies.
2. Encourage potential candidates to apply.
3. Support the participants throughout the year by encouraging projects, developmental assignments, and other professional experiences.
4. Ensure the participants have support from their immediate supervisors to participate in both the on-island and off-island activities.
5. Establish clear expectations for participants' continued employment after completion of the program and communicate those expectations in writing to the program participant.

Who is eligible to participate in the ELDP?

ELDP application criteria are flexible. The selection panel will evaluate applicants based on their:

- Potential for professional development.
- Formal education.
- Likelihood of remaining with the government after the program.
- Commitment to government service and personal growth.

Highly qualified candidates typically:

- Hold a bachelor's degree or have equivalent professional experience.
- Completed a minimum of two years employment with the insular government prior to the start of the program.
- Received outstanding performance evaluations for the past two years.
- Received a nomination to the program by the highest level official in the department and the immediate supervisor.
- Expressed an interest in, and demonstrated personal commitment to, public service.

3. COMPONENTS OF THE ELDP

The ELDP will offer five major components: formal training, mentoring, developmental assignments, reading assignments, and a major project. Each training session, scheduled one time per quarter for approximately twelve months, will blend technical knowledge with managerial and leadership concepts and skills. Participants will be assigned projects and activities that must be completed between training sessions. Projects and assignments will have a strong practical application, and reports will be delivered in the next meeting.

What are the components of the ELDP?

Participants in the ELDP will experience five major components:

1. **Formal training.** ELDP participants will meet as a cohort approximately four times over a twelve month period for one week of training each time. The training will focus on managerial and leadership skills, as well as technical training in areas such as audit, project management, and financial management.
2. **Mentoring.** During the first formal training session each participant will complete a self – evaluation and identify one or two individuals within the government that he or she thinks would be a good mentor for them throughout the program. The program participant and the mentor will meet regularly to discuss the individual’s progress, challenges, or other topics of interest. The program participant will be encouraged to learn how the mentor achieved success and think about how the mentor’s characteristics, habits, or philosophies can be incorporated into the mentee’s own style. Participants will be asked to report on the mentoring experience when they meet as a cohort for formal training.
3. **Developmental assignments.** As part of the self-assessment in the first training session, participants will identify and describe possible developmental assignments that they would like to complete during the twelve months. The developmental assignment will focus on real-world issues in their organization and give participants the opportunity to hone technical skills and apply their learning in selected areas.
4. **Reading and group assignments.** Participants will be provided with books and reading assignments to be completed prior to the formal training sessions. Participants will be provided with a reading list from which they can choose books of interest. Participants will also be tasked to complete group assignments between cohort training sessions. This will encourage cross-government sharing of information and provide participants with the opportunity to work closely with other members of the cohort.
5. **Team project.** Under the supervision of the PITI/VITI Project Coordinator, the ELDP Program Manager and ELDP faculty, each ELDP participant will participate on a team to define and complete a major project. The project will be applicable to

What formal training is planned for the ELDP participants?

Four formal training sessions are planned throughout the twelve months. All members of the cohort will meet for one week for each of the four sessions. During the first week participants complete several self-assessment activities and plan for some of their assignments. For example, they identify potential mentors, project topics, and unique government issues or challenges. The second week develops core leadership skills and explores ways to balance professional and personal priorities. During the third week participants complete an intensive case study that explores fiscal and economic challenges of a fictitious island government. In the last week participants hear from guest speakers, ponder their respective futures, a present their team projects, and discuss their accomplishments during the previous twelve months.

What are the Proposed Modules and Course Descriptions?

The ELDP schedule, course descriptions, session modules, and graduation requirements can be found online, under the program description of the ELDP website. Please visit <http://pitiviti.org/initiatives/eldp/program.php> for additional information.

4. MANAGING THE ELDP

The ELDP will require shared responsibility for insuring smooth and successful implementation. All travel and administrative expenses associated with the ELDP class of 2019 will be funded by OIA and managed on a day-to-day basis by the Graduate School USA, PITI-VITI. The ELDP will draw heavily on the expertise and interests of the insular areas when curriculum is developed and courses are organized.

What are the tuition costs?

All costs associated with ELDP will be funded by the Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs, including travel, instructional materials, and program administrative costs. In future years the insular governments may be expected to pay a portion of the program expenses, such as travel, lodging, and meals for participants from their respective governments.

What is the anticipated size of each cohort group?

Ideally, each insular government will send two to three individuals to each cohort, resulting in a class of approximately 20-25 individuals.

Are all applicants accepted into the ELDP?

Not all individuals who apply to the program will be accepted. ELDP applicants undergo a rigorous review and selection process, and only the most highly qualified applicants will be admitted into the program.

How are ELDP Participants Selected?

Completed applications must be received by the PITI-VITI office no later than April 27, 2018. Applicants submit five documents to complete an application—the application form itself, a resume, a letter of intent, a brief biography suitable for public release, and a letter from their supervisor. An optional letter of support from an ELDP graduate is recommended, but not required. Applications are first reviewed by the application screening committee. The 2018–2019 application screening committee consists of two representatives from the Graduate School, PITI-VITI program. The screening committee reviews the applications to ensure they are complete and the applicants meet minimum qualification standards. If more than fifty applications meet these criteria, the screening committee rates the applicants and narrows the pool of applicants to the fifty most highly rated candidates. The applicants cleared by the screening committee are forwarded to the final selection committee.

The selection committee comprises two representatives from the Graduate School, PITI-VITI program, two representatives from DOI/OIA, and one independent reviewer. The selection committee members independently review and rate each application package. Although rating applicants is inherently a subjective process, the selection committee uses structured scoring guidelines to rate each application. The scoring guidelines are intended to provide a broad framework within which to make the acceptance decision. The scoring system and guidelines for each document comprising the applications are presented below:

| Document | Maximum Points Possible |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Application Form | 10 |
| Resume | 25 |
| Letter of Intent | 25 |
| Letter from Supervisor | 10 |
| Biography | 10 |
| Assessment of Potential | 20 |
| <i>Maximum Total Points Possible</i> | <i>100</i> |

The selection committee strives to create a diverse class that appropriately represents all of the insular governments, technical areas, gender, and ethnicity.

What is the timeline for implementing the second cohort and the schedule for subsequent cohorts?

Currently, cohorts will meet one time per quarter over a twelve month period. The number of training sessions and overall timeline will be adjusted to meet the needs of the insular governments and other factors that could influence the schedule. The schedule for the 2018-2019 ELDP cohort is included below.

5. SCHEDULE FOR EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

What is the schedule for the 2018-2019 ELDP?

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| February 1, 2018 | Announce the ELDP 2018-2019 application process |
| April 27, 2018 | Application process closes |
| June 15, 2018 | Candidates for the ELDP class of 2019 announced |
| August 13-18, 2018 | <u>Session #1</u> - Assessment and Kickoff. (Class hosted by Govt. of Guam) |
| November 5-10, 2018 | <u>Session #2</u> - Leadership. (Class hosted by Republic of Palau) |
| February 11-16 2019 | <u>Session #3</u> - Managing Government – Micro-Poly Case Study (Class hosted by the Federated States of Micronesia) |
| June 10-15, 2019 | <u>Session #4</u> - Capstone - Facing the Future. (Class held in Honolulu, HI) |