

ISM 2025 Emerging Leader Program and Application Details

2025 Theme: Innovate to Elevate: Leadership for a Changing World

Introduction to the Emerging Leader Program

In 2016, APHSA, in partnership with the Human Services Information Technology Advisory Group (HSITAG), started the APHSA Emerging Leaders Program. The goal of the Program is to promote and strengthen collaboration among health and human services and IT professionals through:

- Improving Leadership Skills
- Enriching Networking Acumen
- Enhancing Presentation Abilities

Overview of the Emerging Leader Program

Each year the cohort class is comprised of 30 nominated junior and mid-level professionals from state and local government and private sector who are on track for leadership roles in the next 3-5 years of their career. In addition to attending the conference, Emerging Leaders engage in a tailored conference within a conference experience uniquely crafted to their leadership development including:

- Closed sessions with Human Services Leaders
- Private networking receptions
- Curated sessions with industry leaders
- Opportunity to showcase their own leadership journey
- Special recognition at the conference

* [Emerging Leaders Roadmap](#)

* [Emerging Leaders Program Flyer](#)

Fellowship Opportunity

State and local government employees selected for the Emerging Leader Program will have the opportunity to apply for ISM Fellowships. ISM Fellowships offer travel assistance for state and local government individuals to attend the Annual ISM Conference. These ISM Fellowships are intended to help ensure that the Emerging Leader Program is accessible to nominated and selected individuals that would not be able to participate due to budget restrictions within their agency of employment.

Application

We are now accepting nominations for the 2025 APHSA Emerging Leader Program. Please consider nominating an up-and-coming leader within your organization for this opportunity. Nominations close on May 30, 2025. You can complete the application [here](#).

Nominee Criteria

Nominees should meet all or most of the following criteria:

- The nominee is interested in pursuing professional growth and leadership development through this experience.
- Demonstrated high performance over a sustained period.
- Seen as a future business or technology leader within the organization.
- Likely to assume a leadership role within the next 3-5 years.

- 5-10 years of experience preferred.¹

Why Nominate an Emerging Leader?

The APHSA Emerging Leaders Program is a premier opportunity to cultivate the next generation of health and human services and IT professionals. Designed for high-performing professionals on track to assume leadership roles within the next 3-5 years, this program provides an exclusive platform to enhance leadership skills, enrich networking acumen, and strengthen presentation abilities—all essential competencies for shaping the future of our field.

Participation in the program is embedded within the larger ISM Conference, offering emerging leaders access to cutting-edge insights, industry trends, and best practices that directly support innovation and transformation in human services. Attendees engage in high-impact sessions, expert-led discussions, and peer networking that broaden perspectives and introduce solutions that can be implemented within their organizations.

Additionally, the Emerging Leaders Program supports succession planning by investing in the professional growth of rising talent. Through exposure to executive leadership, curated development sessions, and real-world leadership experiences, participants gain the confidence and competencies needed to step into key leadership roles. This ensures a pipeline of skilled, knowledgeable, and well-connected professionals prepared to drive organizational success.

Consider nominating an up-and-coming leader within your organization who demonstrates high performance, is committed to professional growth, and is poised to take on future leadership roles. By doing so, your organization actively invests in the development of professionals who will elevate their teams, strengthen cross-sector collaboration, and lead with innovation and impact.

Nomination and Selection Process

Each state and local dues-paying member agency and each sponsoring organization will be eligible to nominate one individual. 30 individuals will be selected. The goal is to have a balance between industry and government participation. Organizations must coordinate and may not submit more than one nominee.

Nomination Schedule and Timeline

Nomination Schedule and Timeline	Deliverable	Deadline
1	Nominations Opened	May 1
2	Nominations Closed	May 30
3	Nominations Reviewed	By June 13
4	Accepted Nominees Notified	By June 16

¹ 5-10 years in a junior/mid-level position on track to a leadership role
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Acknowledgements and Agreements - Public Sector

- If selected, the nominee acknowledges and agrees to fully participate in **ALL** scheduled **Emerging Leaders Program** activities. This includes attending **ALL** pre-conference virtual meetings (3-5), completing **ALL** required pre-conference assignments—including work for Ignite Presentations—and actively engaging in **ALL** Emerging Leaders Conference sessions.
- If selected, I understand this will require in-person attendance by the nominee at the 2025 ISM Annual Conference & Expo September 14-17, 2025, in Reno, NV.
- If accepted and requested, APHSA may provide conference registration, airfare/train stipend, and/or lodging for three (3) nights. If airfare/train is selected, there is a **stipend** for airfare/train travel (not to exceed \$500). I understand I should only request the level of travel assistance needed for the nominee to attend if my organization cannot cover costs.
- The nominee is aware that they have been nominated for this program.
- If selected, I understand this is a non-transferable nomination should the nominee not be able to participate in the full program.
- If selected, the nominee understands that they are expected to attend State and Local Forum sessions during the ISM Education Conference & Expo.

Travel Acknowledgements - Public Sector

- I understand that a fellowship, if requested and approved, may cover up to a 3-night stay (room & tax only) at the conference hotel, registration and/or roundtrip travel (by air or train).
- I understand, if air/train travel is approved for a fellowship, APHSA will provide a **stipend up to \$500** for airfare or train travel. Any overage will be the responsibility of the traveler and/or their employer.
- I understand the nominee is responsible for registering themselves with a registration discount code provided by APHSA.
- I understand no meals, outside of the conference functions, or ancillary expenses (bag fees, mileage, parking, etc.) will be covered during travel or at the conference. These are the responsibilities of the traveler.
- I understand NO miscellaneous travel expenses will be covered by the fellowship offered for the Emerging Leaders Program and are the responsibility of the traveler.
- I understand, as part of receiving any travel or registration assistance, I will be expected to attend the State and Local Forum and participate in sessions through the end of the conference.
- I understand that any exceptions to these guidelines must be made in writing to APHSA for review, two weeks prior to the conference.

Acknowledgements and Agreements - Private Sector

- If selected, the nominee acknowledges and agrees to fully participate in **ALL** scheduled Emerging Leaders Program activities. This includes attending **ALL** pre-conference virtual meetings (3-5), completing **ALL** required pre-conference assignments—including work for Ignite Presentations—and actively engaging in **ALL** Emerging Leaders Conference sessions.
- If selected, I understand this will require in-person attendance by the nominee at the 2025 ISM Annual Conference & Expo September 14-17, 2025, in Reno, NV.
- If accepted, I understand my organization is responsible for registration, airfare, and lodging for the nominee to attend the conference.
- The nominee is aware that they have been nominated for this program.
- If selected, I understand this is a non-transferable nomination should the nominee not be able to participate in the full program.

Travel Acknowledgements - Private Sector

- I understand, if selected, my organization is responsible for conference registration, airfare and lodging to attend the conference.
- I understand that my organization may not use one of their complimentary sponsor registrations for my registration.
- I understand that any exceptions to these guidelines must be made in writing to APHSA for review.

Nominations close May 30, 2025
