



## FY 2020-2021: Innovative Water Infrastructure Workforce Development Grant Program

# FACT SHEET

### American Water Works Association (AWWA): *The Transformative Water Leadership Academy*



#### INTRODUCTION

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) authorized the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to award grants to nonprofit professional or service organizations, nonprofit labor organizations, nonprofit community colleges, institutions of higher education, or other nonprofit training and educational institutions to (1) assist in the development and use of innovative activities relating to water workforce development and career opportunities in the drinking water and wastewater utility sector, and (2) expand public awareness about drinking water and wastewater utilities and to connect individuals to careers in the drinking water and wastewater utility sector.

A total of 9 organizations were recently selected by EPA to receive grant funding under this program. EPA has developed Fact Sheets on each of these projects that includes the language from the grant submission.

To learn more about the range of activities EPA is undertaking to support our Nation's water workforce, please go to [Sustainable Water Infrastructure-Water Sector Workforce](#).



#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

AWWA will develop a 10- month in-depth leadership training program focusing on the fundamental concepts of sustainable community leadership to prepare a diverse set of up to 50 individuals currently employed at water sector utilities for higher-level supervisory or

management positions.

Unlike most existing water utility training programs, this program will emphasize innovative sustainable community leadership concepts and techniques to enable the participants consider and balance social, environmental, equity, and financial concerns as they become next generation leaders who can look beyond immediate short-term needs and enhance their ability to deliver sustainable results and bring about meaningful change for the communities they serve.

The project will incorporate a range of experiential learning strategies through a combination of in-person sessions, small group discussion, and a Capstone project by each participant describing an actual experience in applying the leadership skills and knowledge gained in the program. Finally, participant will be asked to make a presentation about their Capstone project at an appropriate state, local, or national conference.



#### MAJOR ACTIVITIES

- ◆ Course completion by an initial cohort of 50 participants, including small group and individual participant assignments
- ◆ Completion of a Capstone project by each participant
- ◆ Collection of data regarding the retention and advancement of the participants



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<https://www.awwa.org/>



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### MAJOR ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

- ◊ Transfer of results through a dedicated website and corresponding social media platforms that will ultimately be used to host stories of individual success and advancement by participants
- ◊ Publication of written articles in various print and digital publications across the water sector.



### OUTCOMES

- ◊ A professional and comprehensive curriculum for use by other water sector utilities and professional associations
- ◊ A fully trained cohort of approximately individuals with transformative leadership skills needed to become utility leaders in support of their communities
- ◊ Increased resiliency and sustainability of water systems throughout the country
- ◊ Improved relationships between community members and the utilities serving them



### PARTNERS

The Water Now Alliance (WNA) will serve as the main partner with AWWA. WNA is a network and forum for local water leaders supporting environmentally sustainable, affordable, equitable, and climate resilient water strategies, with over 700 members in 43 states. WNA will play an important role in helping to design the Academy's curriculum, recruit a diverse set of candidates from around the country, and share products and results from the project through its own members and others in the water sector.

