



Emerging Leadership Institute 2026

January 7-9, 2026 leading up to the APAP|NYC conference (January 9-13, 2026)

Guidelines & Application Preview

Deadline to apply: 11:59 p.m. (EDT) on Friday, July 25, 2025.

"I enjoyed learning about the other participants and their organizations. It was refreshing to meet so many others who share the same passion and love for what we do, but also face similar challenges; it is a reminder that we are not alone and are a part of a community." - Jonathan Serret, City of Thousand Oaks, ELI 2017

"ELI gave me the chance to meet and work with people who are at similar points in their career...I left with a renewed energy for what I'm doing and the difference I can make at my workplace and in the industry." – Erin Jepson, Walton Arts Center, ELI 2011

"It was refreshing. ELI enabled me to look at myself as a person and a professional. It taught me that leadership grows naturally out of self awareness." - Carly Shank, University of Illinois- Springfield, ELI 2009

"I was looking for an experience that would stretch my thinking and understanding. I was looking for enlightenment. I was looking for an opportunity to build community. This program delivered each of these things and more."

"As a natural funnel into the APAP|NYC conference, ELI really makes the most of your time investment; for roughly 2.5 days worth of professional development programming, you are able to connect with so many people 1:1, warm up your critical thinking skills with big picture discussions, and get yourself comfortable in the environment before moving into the hustle of the main conference."

Program Description

The **Emerging Leadership Institute** is an intensive two and a half-day interactive workshop that provides participants with critical leadership skills they need now and in the future. A group of approximately 25 emerging leaders will be invited to participate. The workshop is a collaborative process, where learning from each other is highly valued. APAP encourages leaders in all areas to apply and understands that real collaboration between artists, presenters, and managers creates success. When the ELI class is filled with professionals from every area of our field, the participant's experience is enhanced, and the knowledge gained is magnified.

ELI is a rare opportunity for each participant to reflect on and develop their ideas about leadership and on their own career. This workshop provides a space to discover what each individual believes great leadership looks like and how that can influence their own



development as a leader. ELI is an opportunity to engage in new professional relationships, become part of an expanding network of ELI alumni (now over 400 individuals), and have an enhanced presence at the conference.

Benefits

- Complimentary full conference registration to APAP|NYC 2026
- Join the ELI alumni network which includes access to performing arts professionals in the presenting and touring field, helpful resources, and professional development opportunities.



Eligibility Criteria

Eligible applicants are:

1. Employed (full-time, part-time, or long-term contract) by an active APAP member organization or be an Individual member of APAP. Applicants/their organizations must be active APAP members through at least March 2026. We welcome applications from people who:
 - a. work for presenting organizations
 - b. are individual artists or artists in a performing arts company
 - c. are managers for a performing arts company
 - d. work for booking agencies
 - e. work for service organizations
2. In the first three to seven years of their career in the presenting, performing, booking, and/or touring field.

Participation Restrictions

1. No more than two individuals from any one organization may apply.
2. Selected participants are required to attend the entirety of ELI and encouraged to attend the APAP|NYC 2026 conference. Participants will be expected to pay for their own travel, lodging, ground transportation, and meals while in New York.
 - a. Typical Hours of ELI:
 - i. Wednesday, January 7, 2026 – 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
 - ii. Thursday, January 8, 2026 – 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
 - iii. Friday, January 9, 2026 – 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
3. Selected participants must pay a \$700 program fee to participate in ELI.

Review Criteria

All applications are reviewed by APAP staff and ELI facilitators. Applicants who can demonstrate specific professional accomplishments in the first three to seven years of their careers and a commitment to a career in the presenting, performing, booking, and/or touring field will be the most competitive.

How to Apply

1. Review the *ELI 2026 Guidelines and Application Preview* (this document).
2. Prepare an updated resume and your responses to the short answer questions.
3. Submit your application and all required documents through the [ELI 2026 online system](#) no later than 11:59 p.m. (EDT) on Friday, July 25, 2025. All candidates will be notified with the status of their application no later than August 10, 2025. *Please note, applications submitted via email will not be accepted.*



Need assistance with this application? Contact Willie Santiago at wsantiago@apap365.org.

Emerging Leadership Institute 2026 Application Preview

The information below and an updated resume must be submitted through the [online application system](#) no later than 11:59 p.m. (EDT) on Friday, July 25, 2025.

Please note that any applications submitted via email will not be accepted.

Applicant Information

Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization _____

Are you (or your organization) currently an APAP member? Yes No

Please Note: All applicants must be APAP members or employed by an active APAP member organization through at least March 2026. If you/your organization is currently not an APAP member, you/your organization must join before July 25, 2025 in order for APAP to review your application and consider your participation in ELI 2026.

Organization Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____



Number of years in the presenting, performing or touring industry: _____

Have you ever attended the APAP conference?

_____ Yes, I've attended APAP|NYC as a registered participant.

_____ Yes, I've attended APAP|NYC as a volunteer.

_____ No, I've never attended APAP|NYC.



Please provide the following information regarding your direct supervisor:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Optional Applicant Information

Gender: _____ Age: _____

How do you identify your race/ethnicity: _____

Organizational Information

Please provide the following information regarding the head of your organization (ED/CEO/President/Board Chair):

Name: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

Please select which option most closely corresponds to your organization's work in the presenting, performing and/or touring field:

Presenting
Performing
Artist Management
Other, explain _____

Presenting Support
Consultant
Producing

Please select which option most closely corresponds to your organization's legal status:

Commercial (for-profit enterprise)
Nonprofit (incorporated)
Public college/university

Private college/university
Government (local, regional or state)
Unincorporated



Please select which option best describes the type of area in which your organization is located.

Urban

Suburban

Small city

Rural

What populations or community constituency does your organization serve?

Which performing arts discipline(s) does your organization primarily present/represent?

Please supply the following information about your organization:

- Annual budget: _____
- Number of staff employed: _____
- Number of staff in your department: _____
- Number of staff you supervise: _____

Please list one reference from within the performing arts industry, and their email and/or phone number.

Name: _____ Email/Phone: _____

Please address the following questions (limited to 100 words max per response).

1. Reflect on what you believe to be exceptional leadership, both in and out of our field.
2. Briefly describe your role at your organization.
3. What are some of the main challenges in your work; what are the rewards?
4. Briefly describe achievements or accomplishments that have been a direct



result of your work at the organization over the past 2-3 years.

5. Briefly list and describe your career goals. How do these relate to your current position?