Certified Nonprofit Professional

6-month Program
Start Date: January 26, 2026

Nonprofit Leadership Alliance

Our World. Only Better.

Program Outline

Course 1: Management and Leadership in the Nonprofit Sector (1/26-3/1)

- Introduction to the Nonprofit Sector
- The Nonprofit Organization Context
- Nonprofit Human Resources
- Ethics and Values in the Nonprofit Sector

Assignments:

- Discussion Posting: Introduce Yourself (Due: 2/1)
- Discussion Posting: Reflection on Learning and Application (Due: 2/8)
- Exam (Due: 3/1)
- Applied Project: Case Organization Overview (Due: 3/1)

Elevate 2026 is a three-day conference that takes place in February 2026. As a CNP learner on the Professional Track, your seat at Elevate is already reserved. You can expect to receive attendee messaging for the conference in late January.

Course 2: Designing Programs for Long-Term Sustainability (3/2-3/29)

- Developing the Program's Theory of Change
- Resource Allocation for Nonprofit Programs
- Basics of Effective Program Design

Assignments:

- Discussion Posting: Reflection on Learning and Application (Due: 3/15)
- Exam (Due: 3/29)
- Applied Project: Program Design (Due: 3/29)

Course 3: Nonprofit Marketing and Communications (3/30-4/26)

- Understanding Your Target Audiences
- External Messaging and Advocacy
- Crisis Messaging and Using Social Media

Assignments:

- Discussion Posting: Reflection on Learning and Application (Due: 4/12)
- Exam (Due: 4/26)
- Applied Project: Marketing Plan (Due: 4/26)

Course 4: Nonprofit Budgeting and Financial Management (4/27-5/24)

- The Financial Model of Nonprofit Organizations
- Components and Procedures for Nonprofit Budgeting
- Nonprofit Monitoring, Compliance and Accountability

Assignments:

- Discussion Posting: Reflection on Learning and Application (Due: 5/10)
- Exam (Due: 5/24)
- Kaleidoscope Case Study (Due: 5/24)
- Applied Project: 990 review (Due: 5/24)

Course 5: Nonprofit Fundraising and Resource Development (5/26-6/21)

- Structure and Responsibility of the Fundraising Role
- Know Your Donors
- Creating a Culture of Philanthropy

Assignments:

- Discussion Posting: Reflection on Learning and Application (Due: 6/7)
- Exam (Due: 6/21)
- Applied Project: Fundraising Plan (Due: 6/21)

Course 6: Nonprofit Trends and Innovation (6/22-7/20)

- External Factors that Impact Nonprofit Decision-Making
- Emerging Trends in Organizational Governance and Structure
- Advanced Technologies and the Global Nature of the Nonprofit Sector

Assignments:

- Discussion Posting: Reflection on Learning and Application (Due: 7/6)
- Portfolio: Applied Projects FINAL DOCUMENTS with conclusions/recommendations (Due: 7/20)
- Live Session: date and time to be determined

Assignments

Discussions: A Discussion Post is due at the end of the second week of each course for learners to share a reflection on learning. Just as it sounds, the purpose is for you to share with your course colleagues what you learned thus far from the course materials and how this learning connects to your own experience. You are encouraged to continue these conversations, sharing additional resources and experiences.

Exams: Each exam consists of 25 multiple-choice and true/false questions derived from the assigned readings and PowerPoint slides. The exams are "open book" with no time limit. There are no trick questions, but you do need to read each question thoughtfully to be successful. Find a time when you can devote at least 45 minutes of uninterrupted time to complete the exam. You will have three attempts to pass the exam (76% or higher). If you do not pass the exam on the first attempt, please take some time to review the course materials before retaking.

Applied Projects: Applied projects are work products that relate to course content and offer substantive application of course concepts. You will submit an applied project at the end of the first 5 courses. Complete instructions are included in the appropriate course. Each project will be reviewed by the course facilitator, providing feedback so that you can continue to improve the project before final submission during the final course. In the 6th course, you will submit a revised and complete project. Don't hesitate to ask questions of your course facilitator about strengthening your work throughout the program.

Portfolio: Applied Project Outline

Management and Leadership of the Nonprofit Sector

1. Select a nonprofit organization of focus (You can work individually or in small teams)
2. Analysis of organization's mission
3. Profile of organization's structure/human capital
4. Talent recruitment plan
5. Code of ethics
6. Brief SWOT analysis

Designing Programs for Long-Term Sustainability

1. Program purpose, theory of change, and logic model
2. Resource attainment and allocation plan
3. Program evaluation plan

Nonprofit Marketing and Communications

1. Marketing goals and objectives
2. Competitive analysis and advantage
3. Market segmentation, targeting, and metrics

Nonprofit Budgeting and Financial Management

1. Review organization's IRS 990

Nonprofit Fundraising and Resource Development

1. Fundraising goals
2. Strategies, action steps and calendar of activities
3. Evaluating the plan

Nonprofit Innovation and Trends

1. Final version of all applied projects
2. Summary and recommendations