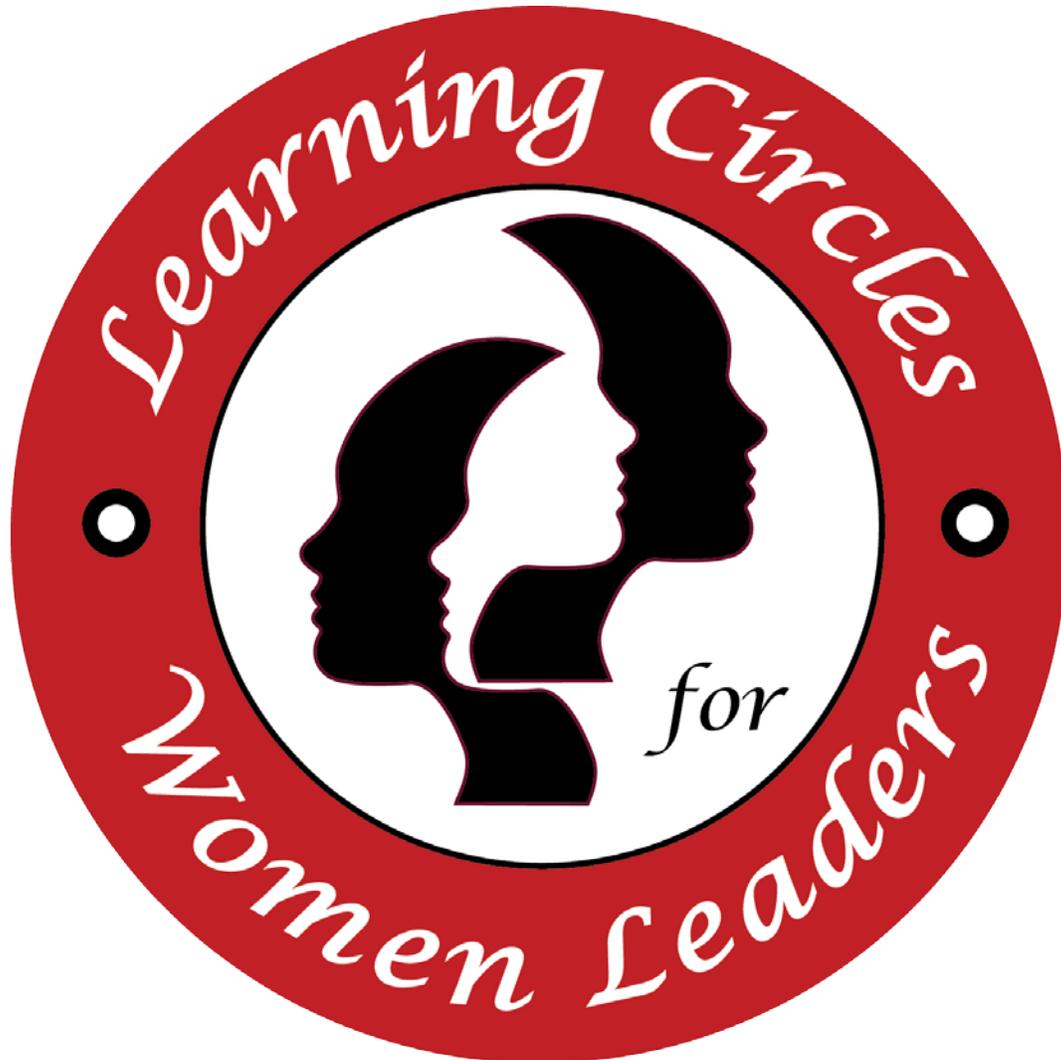


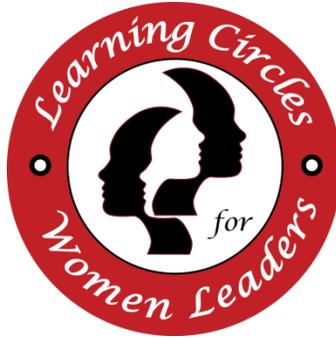
# *Learning Circles for Women Leaders*

*(LCFWL)*



## **INFORMATIONAL PROGRAM GUIDE**

Sponsored by the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer and  
The Office of Learning and Workforce Development  
Department of Energy



# *Learning Circles for Women Leaders*

## **Table of Contents**

<a href="#">Welcome</a> .....	3
<a href="#">Overview</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Background</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Program Benefits</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Strategic Goal</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Objectives</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Participants / Participant Requirements</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Mentors / Mentor Requirements</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Key Messages</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Program Outcomes</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Measurement</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Program Outline and Expectations</a> .....	7
<a href="#">Interagency Opportunity</a> .....	8
<a href="#">Registration</a> .....	9
<a href="#">For More Information</a> .....	10

## *Welcome*

Welcome to the Learning Circles for Women Leaders (LCFWL) Program, sponsored by the Chief Human Capital Officer and the Office of Learning and Workforce Development.

Learning Circles for Women Leaders offers a unique opportunity to incumbent and aspiring leaders within DOE (at the GS-14 level and above) to be part of a dynamic group process that focuses on introspection, empowerment, personal and professional talent development (with an emphasis on the Executive Core Qualifications, ECQs), networking, and mentoring.

LCFWL brings together women of like interest who aspire to join the executive ranks. The program is designed to explore unique challenges, barriers and successes that women face in the workplace. Quarterly group sessions will explore participants' thinking around leadership paradigms and existing knowledge about leadership competencies – and will provide new skills and tools that they can use to reshape their perspectives and strategies as they advance in their careers. Throughout the program, participants will be encouraged to capitalize on their strengths and create greater alignment between their skills set and core responsibilities.

This Informational Program Guide provides detailed information that will answer specific questions about the program.

Thank you for your interest in DOE's Learning Circles for Women Leaders.

## Overview

DOE Learning Circles for Women Leaders is a new initiative developed by the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer and the Office of the Learning and Workforce Development to strengthen participants' personal and professional leadership talents in order to be more effective and fulfilled at work, while helping to lead our organization to achieve greater efficiency and impact in accomplishing mission requirements. Participants in this new leadership development program will take into account women's unique perspectives as they increase their leadership knowledge and develop additional skills to support their careers.

There are currently two Learning Circles underway and three more scheduled to begin in January, February and March, with a total of 100 participants, to date. (More Circle sessions will be scheduled in the future.) Each Circle will have a maximum of 20 participants and meets quarterly at the Headquarters Office for training, discussions and networking for a period of one year, with the option to continue. All sessions will be facilitated by women executives. There will be "Stretch" assignments coming out of each meeting, with Circle members taking on increasing responsibility for presentations and learning at future meetings.

### **Background:**

This new initiative came about as a result of comments, feedback and questions from the July Leadership Development Series, "Confidence Matters: Why are Women Less Self-Assured than Men and Why it Makes a Difference." The material for the July session was based on an article in *The Atlantic* (May 2014) that argued that there is a confidence gap between men and women and, that confidence is just as important as competence in workplace success. This article has received tremendous attention both in the public and private sector and, our program was no exception.

DOE Learning Circles for Women Leaders expands on the knowledge shared during this discussion by reshaping the leadership paradigm to focus on the unique challenges and successes of women. Participants have the opportunity to capitalize on their strengths and create greater alignment between their skills set and core responsibilities.

Thus far, five Learning Circle sessions have been planned with the following start dates:

- Circle #1 - September 11, 2014
- Circle #2 - November 12, 2014
- Circle #3 - January 14, 2015
- Circle #4 - February 11, 2015
- Circle #5 - March 10, 2015

**Program Benefits:**

- a. Participants have an opportunity to:
  - Discuss unique challenges and risks with other aspiring leaders within a safe-haven comprised of their peer group of current and aspiring women professional leaders.
  - Participate in a myriad of training activities, group discussions and one-on-one mentoring which will strengthen introspection, confidence and self-awareness.
  - Expand their DOE community contacts and network circles.
  - Participate in individual and leadership skill-building activities with motivation to implement change.
  - Understand the alignment between their skill sets and core responsibilities
  - Utilize a learning platform to establish new relationships based on trust and goodwill
  - Expand their sphere of influence across the DOE enterprise and consult with other talented and accomplished women.
  
- b. Mentors have an opportunity to:
  - Share their wisdom with current and aspiring leaders.
  - Capitalize on a mutually rewarding developmental opportunity by helping “shape” and influence the next generation of leaders.
  - Expand their DOE community contacts and network circles.
  - Provide and receive leadership skill-building with motivation to implement change.
  - Discuss talent management with a focus on the woman’s perspective.

**Strategic Goal:**

The goal of the DOE Learning Circles for Women initiative is to leverage the depth of diverse experience, professional advice/guidance, and influence of senior professionals and executive women within DOE to empower aspiring leaders to reach their full career potential.

**Objectives:**

- Develop a professional cadre of 110+ aspiring women leaders within DOE within the next 12 months.
- Leverage internal executives by ensuring a 100% match of mentors to participants.
- Socialize and promote the DOE Learning Circles for Women Leaders Program.
- Create a Best Practice model of Learning Circles for Women Leaders for other Federal agencies.
- Improve and expand program participation to all interested program eligible women employees.

**Participants / Participant Requirements:**

The program is designed for GS-14/GS-15/EJ/EK women who are currently or aspiring DOE senior leaders in the DOE headquarters office, who want to engage in a dynamic process that will help them to more fully develop their talents and to realize their talents and goals.

Participants will be expected to attend all scheduled quarterly meetings, actively participate during training sessions, seek out and select an executive mentor, and complete all assignments on time.

Participants are required to sign a Participant Agreement Form, which outlines expectations of their role in the program.

### **Mentors / Mentor Requirements:**

This background and experience of executive mentors varies; however, they share a strong commitment to helping aspiring women and minorities succeed in the workplace. Mentors will be invited to join group sessions as well as encouraged to meet regularly with protégés. Additional information and guidelines will be provided once the registration process is complete.

Mentors are required to sign a Mentor Agreement Form, which outlines expectations of their role in the program.

### **Key Messages:**

- *Women have unique professional experiences and challenges that only other women can relate to.*
- *Women can/should leverage the experiences of one another to develop and advance in the workplace.*
- *Women have a strong presence and foothold in the Federal government.*
- *Women are capable leaders and deserve equal respect and treatment as their male counterparts.*
- *DOE recognizes the opportunity to strengthen its base of women leaders and executives and, is taking proactive steps in this regard.*

### **Program Outcomes:**

By the end of the program, participants will:

- Have a heightened self-awareness of their own professional and leadership potential
- Be empowered to take control of their careers
- Develop and implement a career learning plan
- Have a mentor to help plan and guide them through leadership development activities
- Be a mentor to another aspiring professional or aspiring leader
- Demonstrate mastery of individual and mentor-selected ECQ competencies
- Have significantly expanded their DOE and other federal community contacts

### **Measurement:**

The success of the program will be measured via feedback, ideas, and suggestions received through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods throughout, and, at the end of each cohort of DOE Learning Circles for Women Leaders program. In addition, participant accomplishments of program outcomes will also be assessed. This information will be used to continually improve upon our delivery.

## *Program Outline and Expectations*

**Program Kick-off Event:** Each Learning Circle for Women Leaders session will kick-off with an informal meet and greet session to give participants an opportunity to learn more about program expectations, roles and responsibilities, and expectations – and get acquainted with one another.

**Circle Meetings:** Learning Circle group meetings will be held quarterly, and will run concurrently with other Circles for a period of one year. Participants are required to attend all meetings with their assigned cohort group. Substitutions and/or other changes to join other Learning Circle sessions cannot be accommodated due to high demand.

**Program Activities:** Each Learning Circle meeting will center around unique topics of the participants' choosing – and will be facilitated by two to three SES members. Topics and discussions will take into account specific developmental needs, and identified challenges, barriers and issues identified within each Circle.

**Small Circle Meetings and Activities:** During each Learning Circle meeting, participants will be divided into small working groups, and will collaborate on selecting one topic per small circle group from which to research, build upon and present to the group during subsequent sessions.

**Presentations / Assignments:** Once in smaller assigned teams, participants will meet and prepare presentations/assignments, which will be presented during Circle sessions II, III and IV. Circle participant team assignments will rotate each quarter to enable everyone to work on different teams.

**Time Commitment:** Time commitments for Circle participants will vary based on small group learning objectives and assignments. At minimum, however, attendance is required four times a year during group sessions.

**Resources and Information:** Tools, resources and information will be provided, as pertinent, to Circle participants to enhance their professional development.

**End of Program Evaluations:** Circle progress evaluations will be conducted quarterly and a full program assessment will be completed at the conclusion of each Learning Circle.

**Mentoring:** Mentoring is a key component of the Learning Circles for Women Leaders Program. All participants will be expected to seek out, interview and form at least one mentoring relationship with a member of the Senior Executive Service by the end of the program. Mentor training will be provided during the first session. Participants will receive guidance and support in finding mentors.

## *Interagency Opportunity*

Learning Circles for Women Leaders (LCFWL) is designed to become a Federal-Service-wide opportunity to proactively engage Senior Executives with incumbent and aspiring federal women leaders to grow personally and professionally, while supporting others to do the same. Once the DOE Learning Circles for Women Leaders Program has completed one full year-long cycle – and appropriate lessons learned have been incorporated to strengthen and refine subsequent sessions, DOE will offer the program to OPM and other Federal agencies to consider incorporating into their respective leadership development programs.

Strategic socialization and interagency coalition building will begin informally by inviting representatives from other agencies to sit in and observe various Circle sessions and presentations where participants are fully engaged. Concurrently, the Office of Learning and Workforce Development will actively promote the program via various communications channels, including emails to its extensive distribution list of colleagues , informational session(s), and marketing materials.

Once the DOE Learning Circles for Women Leaders Program has completed one full year-long cycle – and appropriate lessons learned have been incorporated to strengthen and refine subsequent sessions, DOE will offer the program to OPM as a “Model of Excellence” for other Federal agencies to consider incorporating into their respective leadership development programs.

Strategic socialization will begin informally by inviting representatives from other agencies to sit in and observe various DOE Learning Circles for Women Leaders presentations where participants are fully engaged. Concurrently, the Office of Learning and Workforce Development will actively promote the program via various communications channels, to include: a dedicated website, emails to its extensive network of colleagues with information about the program, informational session(s), and marketing materials.

## *Registration*

### **To Register for the Learning Circles for Women Leaders Program:**

Should you sign up? We have vetted the idea of this program with many executives, managers and senior employees. Without exception, all think it's a great idea and opportunity. Don't sign up because it's a great idea; sign up – only if you are committed to personal development and willing to be a full partner in the assignments and efforts that will be integral to the success of each Learning Circle.

### **Registration Procedures:**

All interested Department of Energy EJ, EK, GS-14 and GS-15 women may register for this event.

- To join an upcoming Learning Circle as a participant, [click here](#) to complete a short survey. Once your application is complete, a member of the LCFWL team will contact you by phone.
- To join an upcoming Learning Circle as a mentor or facilitator, [contact David Rosenmarkle](#).

# *For More Information*

Visit the LDRC website: <http://energy.gov/dvu/learning-circles-women-leaders-overview>

## **Contact us:**

### **David Rosenmarkle**

SESCDP Program Manager  
Executive Learning and Development  
Office of Learning and Workforce Development  
U.S. Department of Energy  
[David.Rosenmarkle@hq.doe.gov](mailto:David.Rosenmarkle@hq.doe.gov)  
(202) 586-7978 Office  
(202) 586-8052 Fax

### **Jacqueline D. Jones**

Leadership Development and Event Program Manager  
Presidential Management Council (PMC) Interagency Rotation Program  
Office of Learning and Workforce Development  
U.S. Department of Energy  
[Jacqueline.Jones@hq.doe.gov](mailto:Jacqueline.Jones@hq.doe.gov)  
(202) 586-8395 Phone/Voicemail  
(202) 586-8052 Fax

**Rev. 11/25**