



Request for Applications: Service-to-Career Pathways Policy Academy

In partnership with the Schultz Family Foundation and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) is launching a Policy Academy to support states and territories in developing service-to-career pathways as a pathway of opportunity in key sectors for young people, especially from historically underrepresented or marginalized communities. States and territories are invited to assemble an interagency state team led by their Governor's office to apply for a grant award of up to \$50,000 and technical assistance over a 12-month period. State teams will receive support to execute their proposed scope of work; participate in a technical assistance curriculum designed to meet the needs of the Policy Academy cohort; and engage in multiple virtual and in-person peer learning opportunities.

Service as a Pathway to Economic Opportunity: A Roadmap for Governors

Published in November 2023, the NGA Center's [Service as a Pathway to Economic Opportunity: A Roadmap for Governors](#) identifies five key elements with related policy options for Governors to consider as they develop and execute a vision for service-to-career pathways in their states, including:

- Surveying the landscape and setting a statewide vision
- Championing service-to-career pathways
- Aligning service, workforce development, and other state partners
- Developing a governance and funding strategy
- Engaging public, private, and philanthropic stakeholders

Policy Academy Period: January 2025 – December 2025

Eligibility: All U.S. states, commonwealths, and territories in good standing with NGA are eligible to apply.

Application Due Date: Please email your completed application in a PDF file to Sophia Yager at syager@nga.org by Friday, November 22, 2024.

Point of Contact: Sophia Yager, Senior Policy Analyst, syager@nga.org, 202-624-5346

Virtual Information Session for Interested Parties: The NGA Center and the Schultz Family Foundation will hold an informational webinar on Thursday, November 14, 2024 at 3:00 pm ET. Register [here](#).

Policy Academy Activities and Assistance

States selected for the Policy Academy are expected to participate in the following activities:

- Develop and implement a set of policy priorities and a ready-for-implementation action plan to advance one or more service-to-career pathways in your state or territory. Action planning may be informed by the five elements detailed in the NGA Center's [*Service as a Pathway to Economic Opportunity: A Roadmap for Governors*](#), as well as employer and young adult perspectives.
- Participate in an in-person, facilitated action planning session in your state/territory ("site visit") with NGA Center staff to support your state team's goals.
- Hold monthly technical assistance calls with your state team and NGA Center staff to coordinate activities and make progress on achieving your project goals as well as make requests of NGA Center staff for research, action planning facilitation, or other customized assistance.
- Engage in peer learning with fellow Policy Academy state teams, including bimonthly webinars.
- Attend and present at an in-person convening of Policy Academy states and other state and national policymakers and subject matter experts in the fall of 2025.
- Submit a brief final report to the NGA Center, the Schultz Family Foundation and the Annie E. Casey Foundation that details the progress made toward your goals and your next steps to implement the service-to-career pathway(s).

Expected Outcomes

- Progress towards achieving your Governor's service-to-career pathways policy goals.
- Development of a set of policy priorities and a ready-for-implementation action plan to advance service-to-career pathways in alignment with the Governor's broader policy agenda.
- Policy and systems change that advance service-to-career pathways.
- Increased collaboration with subject matter experts to help inform states' policy priorities and action plans.
- Engagement with peer states through NGA Center-facilitated opportunities designed to help states advance policy priorities and action plans.
- Stronger relationships among key policymakers and constituents across the service-to-career pathways ecosystem.

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Policy Academy Timeline

October 21, 2024	NGA Center issues request for applications
November 14, 2024	Virtual information session for interested parties (optional)
November 22, 2024	Applications due
By December 20, 2024	NGA Center notifies states/territories of their application status
January-December 2025	States/territories receive customized technical assistance, participate in a curriculum of programming on service-to-career pathways policy, and engage in peer learning
Fall 2025	In-person culminating convening held in one of the states selected for the Policy Academy
December 2025	Policy academy concludes and final grant reports due

Required Application Content and Selection Criteria

Applications may receive up to 100 points, *should not exceed five (5) pages*, and must include each of the following items:

- **Contact Information:** Name, title, organization, and email address of the state team lead and the state’s fiscal agent.
- **Letter of Support from the Governor (10 points):** A letter of support from the Governor is required and *should not exceed two (2) pages*. The letter should state the Governor’s interest in and desired outcomes for the state’s participation in the Policy Academy and how those outcomes fit within the Governor’s broader policy agenda.
- **Statement of Interest (10 points):** Briefly describe why your state is interested in participating in the Policy Academy and what your team hopes to gain from participation.
- **State Team Leadership and Membership (20 points):** List the name, title, organization, and email address for up to five (5) individuals on your proposed state team and indicate who will serve as the team lead/primary liaison to the NGA Center and Schultz Family Foundation. State teams should be comprised of staff who can drive activities required to make tangible progress on policy goals related to service-to-career pathways. The proposed state team must include a representative from the Governor’s office, a state workforce development system leader, and a state service commission leader. Additional state team members may include, but are not limited to, representatives from: K-12 education, postsecondary education, employers, state apprenticeship agency, or a youth adult or program participant.
- **Current Policy Landscape (20 points):** Describe any current or pending policy initiatives on service-to-career pathways in your state; any relevant working groups or task forces; strategic planning efforts; related grant-based projects,

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cohort participation, or other partnerships with national organizations; or state funding that supports service-to-career pathways; any recent successes as well as the biggest challenges your state is facing in this policy area; and how your state’s participation in the Policy Academy will help to accelerate momentum on designing and launching a service-to-career pathway.

- **Goals and Strategies (30 points):** Outline 3-5 policy or strategic goals on which your state would like to make progress during the 12-month project period; the steps necessary to achieve these goals; how these goals fit into the current policy landscape; and the role NGA Center technical assistance will play in achieving these goals. Priority will be given to state teams that outline an achievable scope of work and the capacity to enact policy or programmatic change in the 12-month project period. Priority will also be given to states who indicate:
 - Which element(s) of the NGA Center’s [Service as a Pathway to Economic Opportunity: A Roadmap for Governors](#) have informed past policy goals or will inform future policy goals.
 - In-demand sector(s) that your service-to-career pathway(s) will prepare participants to enter, including but not limited to: infrastructure, energy, state/local government, climate, healthcare, and information technology.
 - How the perspective and needs of youth from underserved communities and employers/industry sectors will inform your service-to-career pathway(s).
- **Budget (10 points):** Outline the expenditures for which grant funds will be used and provide a description for each item. Use the template below to outline a budget of up to \$50,000. Among these costs, include state team travel for up to five (5) team members to attend the in-person culminating convening.

Category	Estimated Expense	Narrative
Personnel		
Travel & Transportation		Travel & lodging for in-person culminating convening
Communications		
Sub-Contracted Services		
Other		