

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Administrative and Logistical Support Services Delta Leadership Institute Executive Academy Fiscal Year 2027

Delta Regional Authority

RFP Issue Date	July 8, 2026
Questions Due	July 23, 2026, 5:00 p.m. Central Time
Proposals Due	Original: August 24, 2026, 5:00 p.m. CST EXTENDED: September 2, 2026, 11:59 p.m. CST
Anticipated Period of Performance	Fiscal Year 2027 Academy Cycle
Finalist Interviews	September 14, 2026, Memphis, Tennessee

I. Overview

The Delta Regional Authority seeks proposals from qualified organizations to provide administrative operations and logistical support services for the Delta Leadership Institute Executive Academy beginning in Fiscal Year 2027.

This procurement is for administrative and logistical support services only. The selected organization shall be responsible for managing the administrative operations of the program, including payment of approved program expenses, managing the program budget, submitting detailed documentation of program-approved expenses to DRA for reimbursement, and handling program planning and logistics.

The selected organization will not be responsible for curriculum development, speaker selection, program instruction, substantive facilitation, Fellow selection, or evaluation design unless separately authorized in writing by DRA. DRA will retain responsibility for program direction, substantive content, and final decision-making.

II. About the Delta Regional Authority and the Delta Leadership Institute

A. About the Delta Regional Authority

The Delta Regional Authority is a federal-state partnership established to promote and encourage economic development in the lower Mississippi River Delta and Alabama Black Belt regions. DRA works to create jobs, build communities, and improve the lives of residents across its service area. DRA's region encompasses 255 counties and parishes in parts of Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee.

DRA fulfills its mission by investing in projects and programs that support transportation infrastructure, basic public infrastructure, workforce training, business development, capacity building, health initiatives, and regional leadership. This procurement supports DRA's broader commitment to regional leadership, community capacity, and cross-sector collaboration by ensuring that the Delta Leadership Institute Executive Academy is administered and executed in a professional, accountable, accessible, and fiscally responsible manner.

B. About the Delta Leadership Institute

The Delta Leadership Institute is DRA's executive leadership development program. Through the Delta Leadership Institute Executive Academy, DRA invests in regional leadership by convening Fellows from across the eight DRA states. Fellows are selected from a competitive pool of applicants representing public, private, nonprofit, and community sectors.

The Executive Academy is a multi-session leadership development experience held over several months in different communities throughout the DRA region and in Washington, D.C. The Academy focuses on issues important to regional development, including public infrastructure, transportation systems, government relations, workforce development, coalition-building, economic development, community capacity, and leadership across jurisdictions and sectors.

Alumni of the Executive Academy may continue their engagement through the Delta Leadership Network, which provides a platform for ongoing professional development, communication, and collaboration among leaders committed to the region.

For FY 2027, the selected organization will support the administrative operations and logistics necessary to implement the Executive Academy. The selected organization's role is limited to administration and logistics, including payment of approved program expenses, budget management, reimbursement documentation, hotel negotiations and contracts, tour bus reservations, meal planning and selection, program supplies, vendor payments, invoices, participant reimbursements, and on-site logistical coordination.

III. Estimated Program Size

The FY 2027 Academy is expected to include approximately 35 Fellows, along with DRA staff, presenters, speakers, invited guests, and partners who may participate in individual sessions.

The selected organization should anticipate providing administrative and logistical support for approximately 35 Fellows per session, with additional planning support for DRA staff, speakers, guests, and other participants as directed by DRA.

IV. FY 2027 Academy Schedule and Locations

The anticipated FY 2027 Delta Leadership Institute Executive Academy schedule is as follows:

Session	Dates	Location
Orientation	January 25–28, 2027	Demopolis, Alabama
Session II	March 1–4, 2027	West Memphis, Arkansas
Session III	April 26–29, 2027	Natchez, Mississippi
Session IV	June 7–10, 2027	Washington, D.C.
Session V	July 26–29, 2027	Rolla, Missouri
Graduation	September 13–16, 2027	Paducah, Kentucky

Dates and locations are subject to change at DRA's discretion. The selected organization must demonstrate the ability to support multi-city, multi-state convenings, including meetings in rural and smaller-market communities.

V. Scope of Services

The selected organization shall provide comprehensive administrative and logistical support for each Academy session. Services shall include, but are not limited to, program budget management, payment of approved expenses, vendor coordination, travel and participant reimbursement support, hotel and venue coordination, transportation arrangements, meal planning, materials management, and on-site logistical support.

A. Administrative Operations

The selected organization shall be responsible for managing the administrative operations of the program. This includes coordinating program logistics, maintaining administrative records, tracking approved expenses, managing vendor payments, processing invoices, supporting participant reimbursements, and submitting detailed documentation of program-approved expenses to DRA for reimbursement.

The organization shall maintain complete, accurate, and organized records of all expenses, invoices, receipts, contracts, payment confirmations, reimbursement requests, and related documentation. All expenses must be allowable, reasonable, necessary, properly documented, and approved in accordance with DRA requirements.

B. Program Budget Management

The selected organization shall manage the program budget in coordination with DRA. This includes developing session-specific budgets, tracking projected and actual costs, monitoring spending against approved budget categories, identifying potential cost overruns, and providing regular budget updates to DRA.

The organization shall not incur expenses outside the approved scope or budget without prior written authorization from DRA. The organization shall be responsible for paying approved program expenses and submitting detailed reimbursement documentation to DRA in the form and manner required by DRA.

C. Program Planning and Logistics

The selected organization shall handle all program planning and logistics for each Academy session. This includes developing session-specific logistics plans, maintaining planning timelines, coordinating vendors, preparing materials, supporting participant communications, and providing on-site logistical support.

Logistical responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to:

- Hotel negotiations and contracts;
- Meeting venue coordination;
- Tour bus and ground transportation reservations;
- Meal planning and menu selection;
- Catering coordination;
- Ordering and managing program supplies;
- Preparing name badges, signage, printed materials, and related items;
- Paying approved vendors, invoices, and program-related expenses;
- Managing participant reimbursement processes as approved by DRA;
- Coordinating on-site registration and check-in;
- Supporting room setup, audio-visual needs, and session flow;
- Resolving logistical issues during each session.

D. Hotel Negotiations, Contracts, and Lodging Coordination

The selected organization shall identify, negotiate, and coordinate hotel arrangements for Fellows, DRA staff, speakers, and guests as directed by DRA. This includes securing room blocks, managing hotel contracts, tracking reservation deadlines, coordinating rooming lists, monitoring attrition provisions, and serving as the primary logistical point of contact with hotel staff.

Hotels should be safe, professional, accessible, conveniently located, fiscally responsible, and appropriate for an executive-level leadership program. Final hotel selection and contractual commitments must be approved by DRA.

E. Venue Coordination

The selected organization shall identify, negotiate, reserve, and coordinate meeting venues, reception spaces, meal locations, and other facilities needed for each Academy session. The organization shall coordinate room setup, seating arrangements, registration areas, signage, accessibility accommodations, Wi-Fi, audio-visual support, and other facility needs.

F. Ground Transportation and Tour Bus Reservations

The selected organization shall coordinate all approved ground transportation needs, including tour bus reservations, shuttle services, airport transfers where applicable, transportation to and from hotels, site visits, receptions, meeting venues, and other official Academy activities.

Transportation plans must be timely, safe, accessible, and appropriate for the number of participants. The organization shall prepare and distribute transportation schedules and coordinate closely with DRA staff before and during each session.

G. Meal Planning and Selection

The selected organization shall coordinate meal planning and selection for each Academy session, subject to DRA approval. This includes identifying catering options, preparing menu recommendations, collecting dietary restrictions, confirming meal counts, coordinating service times, and ensuring that food and beverage arrangements are reasonable, appropriate, and compliant with DRA requirements.

H. Program Supplies and Materials

The selected organization shall order, prepare, transport, and manage program supplies and session materials as approved by DRA. This may include printed agendas, folders, name badges, signage, table tents, notebooks, pens, supplies for Fellows, and other logistical materials necessary for session execution.

I. Vendor Payments, Invoices, and Reimbursements

The selected organization shall be responsible for paying approved vendors, processing invoices, and managing approved participant reimbursements. The organization shall ensure that all payments are supported by appropriate documentation and are consistent with the approved program budget.

The organization shall submit detailed reimbursement requests to DRA, including invoices, receipts, proof of payment, reimbursement forms, vendor documentation, and any other supporting materials required by DRA.

J. Participant Communications and Registration Support

The selected organization shall support DRA with participant-facing logistical communications before, during, and after each session. This may include travel reminders, hotel information, venue addresses, transportation schedules, attire guidance, meal information, emergency contacts, reimbursement instructions, and session-specific logistical updates.

DRA will retain responsibility for official program communications, curriculum content, policy communications, and substantive direction to Fellows.

K. On-Site Support

The selected organization shall provide sufficient on-site staffing at each Academy session to manage logistics, troubleshoot issues, coordinate vendors, support registration, monitor transportation, confirm meal service, distribute materials, and assist DRA staff with session execution.

On-site staff must be professional, responsive, organized, and capable of representing the program appropriately in interactions with Fellows, vendors, speakers, and guests.

VI. Deliverables

The selected organization shall provide, at minimum, the following deliverables:

1. Master administrative and logistics workplan for the FY 2027 Academy cycle.
2. Session-specific logistics plans for each Academy session.
3. Session-specific budgets and budget tracking reports.
4. Hotel, venue, catering, transportation, and vendor recommendations for DRA approval.
5. Hotel room block summaries, rooming lists, and reservation trackers.
6. Tour bus and ground transportation plans.
7. Meal planning documents, menu selections, and dietary accommodation trackers.
8. Program supply lists and materials coordination plans.
9. Participant registration lists, attendance records, and logistical trackers.
10. Draft participant logistical communications.
11. Vendor contracts, invoices, receipts, and payment documentation.
12. Participant reimbursement documentation and tracking records.
13. Detailed reimbursement requests submitted to DRA for approved program expenses.
14. On-site staffing and support plan for each session.

15. Post-session reports summarizing attendance, expenses, vendor performance, logistical issues, and recommendations for improvement.

VII. Reimbursement and Documentation Requirements

The selected organization shall be responsible for paying approved program expenses and submitting reimbursement requests to DRA. Reimbursement requests must include detailed documentation of all program-approved expenses, including applicable invoices, receipts, proof of payment, contracts, reimbursement forms, and other supporting documentation required by DRA.

DRA will reimburse only approved, allowable, reasonable, necessary, and properly documented expenses. Expenses incurred without required approval, outside the approved budget, or without sufficient documentation may be deemed ineligible for reimbursement.

The selected organization shall maintain records in a manner that supports transparency, audit readiness, fiscal accountability, and compliance with applicable federal and DRA requirements.

VIII. Contractor Qualifications

Offerors should demonstrate experience managing administrative operations and logistics for multi-day convenings, leadership programs, public-sector events, nonprofit programs, federally funded activities, or comparable multi-location initiatives.

Preference may be given to organizations with demonstrated experience in:

- Managing program budgets;
- Paying vendors and invoices;
- Processing participant reimbursements;
- Preparing detailed reimbursement documentation;
- Negotiating hotel and venue contracts;
- Coordinating tour buses and ground transportation;
- Planning meals and managing dietary accommodations;
- Ordering and managing program supplies;
- Supporting multi-city or multi-state convenings;
- Working in rural or smaller-market communities;
- Supporting public-sector, federal, nonprofit, or regional programs;
- Maintaining records for reimbursement, compliance, and audit purposes.

IX. Proposal Requirements

Proposals should include the following:

1. Executive Summary describing the offeror's understanding of the requested administrative and logistical services.
2. Organizational Experience with comparable administrative operations, event logistics, public-sector programs, or multi-location convenings.
3. Proposed Administrative Approach for managing program expenses, budget tracking, vendor payments, invoices, reimbursements, and documentation.
4. Proposed Logistics Approach for coordinating hotels, venues, transportation, meals, supplies, registration, and on-site support.
5. Staffing Plan identifying key personnel, administrative support staff, fiscal management staff, and on-site support personnel.
6. Workplan and Timeline showing how the organization will prepare for each Academy session.
7. Budget Proposal including administrative fees, logistical coordination fees, staffing costs, travel costs, and any other anticipated expenses.

8. Reimbursement and Documentation Process explaining how the organization will document approved expenses and submit reimbursement requests to DRA.
9. Relevant Experience in Rural or Multi-State Settings, if applicable.
10. References from at least three comparable clients.
11. Compliance Experience, including familiarity with public-sector procurement, allowable costs, recordkeeping, audit readiness, and cost control.

X. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals may be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Weight
Demonstrated experience with administrative operations and logistical services	25%
Quality and practicality of proposed administrative and logistics approach	25%
Budget management, reimbursement, and documentation capacity	20%
Staffing capacity and on-site support plan	10%
Experience with public-sector, nonprofit, federal, regional, or rural programs	10%
Cost reasonableness and budget clarity	5%
References and past performance	5%

DRA reserves the right to conduct interviews, request additional information, negotiate scope and budget, or reject any and all proposals.

XI. Procurement Timeline and Interviews

The anticipated procurement timeline is as follows. DRA reserves the right to modify the timeline, issue amendments, request clarifications, conduct interviews, negotiate scope and budget, or cancel the procurement in accordance with applicable requirements.

RFP Publication Date	July 8, 2026
Written Questions Due	July 23, 2026
Responses to Questions / Addendum	July 29, 2026
Proposal Submission Deadline	August 24, 2026, 5:00 p.m. Central Time (45-day response period from the July 8 publication date).
Anticipated Finalist Interviews	During the Memphis 2026 DLI Session, Memphis, Tennessee [September 14-17]]. DRA may offer a virtual option if needed.
Anticipated Selection / Award	October 1, 2026

Finalist interviews, if conducted, are anticipated to be held on site during the Memphis 2026 DLI Session. Interviewed offerors should be prepared to discuss their administrative approach, budget management process, reimbursement documentation procedures, staffing model, and ability to support multi-city DLI sessions. Participation in an interview does not guarantee award.

XII. Period of Performance

The anticipated period of performance shall begin in FY 2027 and cover planning, coordination, delivery, administration, reimbursement documentation, and closeout activities for the FY 2027 Delta Leadership Institute Executive Academy cycle.

The contract may include an option for renewal or extension, subject to DRA's needs, contractor performance, availability of funding, and applicable procurement requirements.

XIII. DRA Responsibilities

DRA will retain responsibility for overall program direction, Fellow selection, curriculum, speakers, content, strategic partnerships, official approvals, and final decision-making.

The selected organization shall provide administrative and logistical support but shall not make programmatic decisions or incur expenses outside the approved scope or budget without written approval from DRA.

XIV. Important Limitation on Scope

This RFP is intentionally limited to administrative operations and logistics. The selected organization shall not be responsible for designing the Academy curriculum, facilitating leadership sessions, developing substantive program content, selecting Fellows, determining speakers, or evaluating Fellow performance unless separately authorized by DRA in writing.

The intent of this procurement is to secure an experienced organization capable of managing the administrative, financial, and logistical functions necessary to support a professional, well-executed, fiscally responsible FY 2027 Delta Leadership Institute Executive Academy.

XV. Source References

The background descriptions of DRA and DLI were prepared using publicly available DRA materials and should be reviewed against final agency-approved language before publication.

Sources: dra.gov; [DRA Mission](#); [Delta Leadership Institute](#)