

ARE YOU A FUTURE LEADER?



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Since 1998, the NFI Future Leaders Program has been broadening horizons for burgeoning leaders in the seafood industry through networking, programming and unique experiences. The vision remains to bring the seafood industry's next generation into the National Fisheries Institute community; today, more than 650 individuals are alumni of this illustrious program. Currently, many of the alumni of this program are the CEOs of major U.S. seafood companies. The Future Leaders Program provides skills and experiences that help emerging leaders grow. It also serves to help these individuals establish a network of industry contacts.

Host cities are selected based on the following criteria: importance to the U.S. seafood industry and representation of the global industry; the presence of NFI companies, as well as other seafood companies; opportunities to tell the story of imports, aquaculture and the domestic industry; how seafood is brought to market; and the opportunity to share something unique. The group will always visit Washington, D.C., to better understand NFI's role in shaping policy.

The 2026 Future Leaders Program will kick off with a Sunday morning orientation breakfast in Boston prior to the Seafood Expo North America, and four two-day sessions running from May through August. Each session is designed to enhance knowledge and leadership skills in the areas of government relations, production, sales, marketing and the industry in general. The 2026 Future Leaders will visit: Williamsburg, VA/Washington, D.C.; Houston, TX; Seattle, WA; and St. Andrews, New Brunswick, Canada. The class is also asked to attend the 2027 Global Seafood Market Conference in Scottsdale, AZ, to be recognized as graduates of the program.

A valid passport will be required for Session IV in Canada



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WHAT TO EXPECT

The seafood industry is diverse and has many different working components. This program seeks to expose participants to many facets, while including ample opportunities for networking with classmates. Prior to the last session, the class will elect a president to represent them at Future Leader Alumni meetings. There will also be a class project that runs from May through December. In addition to facility tours, each class is shown several one-of-a-kind experiences. Participants should expect long days, including early mornings. Be prepared for a rewarding experience with a full and engaging agenda.

WHAT IS EXPECTED

NFI is proud to offer the Future Leaders Program, which boasts more than 650 alumni. Future Leader participants are expected to conduct themselves professionally and with integrity at all times when traveling with NFI, including after-hours social outings. Participants are held to the highest standards and are expected to treat each other and all others with respect and consideration. A successful Future Leader will be prepared, on-time, and professional throughout each session. NFI expects all Future Leaders to adhere to their own policies and code of ethics (including sexual harassment). A copy of NFI's Sexual Harassment Policy is included.

APPLYING

Tuition is \$4,225 for NFI Members and \$6,225 for non-NFI Members. Participants are responsible for hotel, travel, and some meal expenses, as well as the cost of any additional activities.

The class size is limited to 40; NFI Members have priority. To apply:

1. Complete the attached application form.
2. Attach a one-page written bio on yourself, your seafood experience and why you would like to be a Future Leader.
3. Include tuition payment made payable to NFI (\$4,225 for members / \$6,225 non-members). Please note there is a 3% surcharge for credit cards.
4. The deadline for applications is December 19, 2025. If you are selected to be in the Future Leaders class of 2026, you will be notified no later than January 23, 2026. In the event that you are not selected, your tuition payment will be refunded. There will be no refunds allowed after attending one or more sessions:
 - 75% refund if the class has been announced (after January 23).
 - 50% refund if less than 30 days prior to the first session.



FUTURE LEADERS CLASS OF 2026 DATES AND PRELIMINARY CURRICULUM

ORIENTATION BREAKFAST: BOSTON, MA MARCH 15, 2026 (optional)

Join the Class of 2026 for an Orientation Breakfast on Sunday morning prior to the start of Seafood Expo North America.

Note: Not required for those not attending SENA.

SESSION I

Williamsburg, VA/
Washington, DC
May 17-20

SESSION II

Houston, TX
July 16-18

SESSION III

Seattle, WA
July 21-23

SESSION IV

St. Andrews, NB
Canada
August 18-20

SESSION I WILLIAMSBURG, VA/ WASHINGTON, D.C.

May 17-20

3 nights/4 days

The itinerary includes:

- Overview of Regulatory Agencies
- Day on the Hill
- Communications Training
- Networking Event



Arrival: Sunday, May 17 by 5:00pm (Recommended airports: Richmond International Airport (RIC) and Norfolk International Airport (ORF))

Departure: Leave for airport no earlier than 8:00am on Thursday, May 21 (Recommended airports: Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) and Dulles International Airport (IAD))

SESSION II HOUSTON, TX

June 16-18

3 nights/ 3 days

The itinerary includes:

- Networking Event
- Seafood Distributor Tour
- Industry Presentations
- Oyster Eco-Tour



Arrival: Tuesday, June 16 by 3:00pm

Departure: Leave for airport no earlier than 8:00am on Friday, June 19



SESSION III SEATTLE, WA

July 21-23

2 nights/ 3 days

The itinerary includes:

- Safety at Sea Survival Training
- Networking Event
- Community Service Project
- Cold Storage Facility Tour



Arrival: Tuesday, July 21 by 5:00pm

Departure: Leave for airport no earlier than 3:00pm on Thursday, July 23

SESSION IV ST. ANDREWS, NB CANADA

August 18-20

2 nights/ 3 days

The itinerary includes:

- Hatchery & Farm Tour
- Networking Event
- Processing Plant Tour
- Packaging Facility



Arrival: Tuesday, August 18 by 5:00pm

Departure: Leave for airport no earlier than 3:00pm on Thursday, August 20

For questions, contact
Gerrie Thomas at
703.752.8888 or
gthomas@nfi.org

2026 KEY DATES



Prior to applying to the program, please make sure you are available to attend all sessions, from the beginning to the end of each session. The key to your success will be full participation in the program.

***Application
Process Opens***

October 6, 2025

***Application
and Payment
Deadline***

December 19, 2025

***Future Leaders
Class of 2026
Announced***

January 23, 2026

***Orientation
Breakfast,
Boston, MA at
SENA (optional)
March 15, 2026***

***Williamsburg, VA/
Washington, DC***

May 17-20, 2026

Houston, TX

June 16-18, 2026

Seattle, WA

July 21-23, 2026

***St. Andrews, NB
Canada***

August 19-21, 2026

**Graduation
NFI Global Seafood Market Conference
January 18-21, 2027
Fairmont Scottsdale Princess
Scottsdale, AZ**



FUTURE LEADER CLASS OF 2026 APPLICATION

Name _____

Company _____

Position/Title _____

Years in the Seafood Industry _____

Business Mailing Address _____

Cell Phone & Email _____

Sponsoring Member _____
(for Non-NFI Members)

Emergency Contact and Phone _____

If accepted into the Future Leader Class of 2026, I agree to attend and actively participate in each session, from start to finish. I commit to conduct myself professionally and with integrity, treat all with respect and consideration, and be prompt.

Applicant's Signature/Date _____

Supervisor's Signature/Date _____

Send Application, Biography and Payment to:

National Fisheries Institute Attention: Gerrie Thomas
1900 Campus Commons Drive, Suite 160, Reston, VA 20191

Please indicate shirt size: Woman _____ Man _____



NATIONAL
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NFI Policy Regarding Harassment & Discrimination

THE NATIONAL FISHERIES INSTITUTE FULLY SUPPORTS THE RIGHT OF ALL PEOPLE TO SEEK, obtain and hold employment without being subject to harassment or discrimination based on any legally-protected class such as race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age or disability. NFI is specifically committed to maintaining a work environment free of inappropriate and disrespectful conduct and communication of a sexual nature. Toward that end, NFI adopts the following policy:

- No employee may harass another. Anyone who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, discharge.
- Any employee or supervisor who learns of harassment and fails to take corrective action pursuant to this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, discharge.
- It is the policy of NFI to encourage employees who feel that they have been subjected to discriminatory treatment or harassment, including sexual harassment, to bring these problems immediately to the direct attention of management.
- No NFI Future Leader Participant may harass another. Anyone who violates this policy will be subject to dismissal from the Program.

DEFINITION

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when:

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; and
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a person's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Prohibited acts of sexual harassment can take a variety of forms ranging from subtle pressure for sexual activity to physical assault. Examples of the kinds of conduct included in the definition of sexual harassment are:

- threats or intimidation of sexual relations or sexual conduct which is not freely or mutually agreeable to both parties;
- unwelcome continual or repeated verbal or physical abuses of a sexual nature including graphic commentaries about the person's body, sexually suggestive objects or pictures placed in the work area that may embarrass or offend the person, sexually degrading words to describe the person, or propositions of a sexual nature; and
- threats or insinuations that the failure to submit to sexual advances may affect a person's employment, wages, promotional opportunities, assignments, or other conditions of employment.

These examples are by no means all inclusive of the types of conduct that can constitute sexual harassment.

ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURE

1. Any employee or Future Leader participant who believes he or she has been the subject of discrimination or harassment should report the alleged act immediately to the president or senior authority.
2. If a complaint involves the president, or, if for any reason, the employee is uncomfortable bringing the complaint to the attention of the president or senior authority, then he or she shall file the complaint with the NFI attorney.
3. NFI will handle all complaints in a timely manner. NFI will endeavor to maintain the complaint and the investigation as confidential as circumstances reasonably permit. NFI will not release information concerning a complaint to third parties or to anyone within NFI who is not involved with the investigation. Nor will NFI allow anyone involved in the investigation to discuss the subject outside of the investigatory process. The purpose of this provision is to protect the confidentiality of the employee who files a complaint and to encourage the reporting of any incidents of discrimination or harassment.
4. Investigation of a complaint will normally include conferring with the parties involved and any named or apparent witnesses. Employees shall be guaranteed an impartial and fair hearing.
5. NFI will make its best efforts to protect all employees from coercion, intimidation, retaliation, interference or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation. The purpose of this provision is to encourage the reporting to management of any incidents of discrimination or harassment.
6. If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, NFI will take appropriate disciplinary and/or remedial action designed to stop the discrimination or harassment immediately and to prevent its recurrence.

I affirm that I have read and understand NFI's Policy Regarding Harassment & Discrimination in relation to both NFI Employees and my fellow Future Leaders; and agree to abide by the policy and failing to do so will result in dismissal from the Future Leaders Program.

Applicant's Signature/Date