

## Frequently Asked Questions

<b>What is the VSP Vision Future Leaders Academy?</b>	The VSP Vision Future Leaders Academy is a leadership program that strives to equip early career optometrists with the skills, knowledge, and network to excel in their profession and become influential leaders in the field.
<b>How many participants will be selected?</b>	The Future Leaders Academy aims to maintain a small and focused cohort, so we will select approximately 30 doctor participants. This ensures a prominent level of engagement, personalized mentorship, and meaningful interactions among participants. We strive to create a diverse group of early-career optometrists who are eager to grow their leadership skills.
<b>Who is eligible to apply?</b>	<p>The Future Leaders Academy is designed for early-career optometrists who have been practicing for 1-7 years and are interested in advancing their leadership skills. We strongly prefer applicants who have previous leadership experience (e.g. student club leader) and a desire to continue to develop their leadership skills.</p> <p>This program is available for ODs within various VSP network and non-network locations including private practice, retail, corporate, medical, and onsite clinics.</p>
<b>Can I apply if I do not have prior leadership experience?</b>	Yes. The program is designed to help emerging leaders develop the skills they need to succeed, regardless of their current level of experience. We look for candidates who demonstrate potential, a strong desire to grow, and a commitment to learning and development.
<b>How do I apply to the program?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Application Submission: Candidates submit their applications, which include a personal statement, resume, and any other required documentation.</li> <li>2. Initial Screening: The program team conducts an initial review of applications to ensure all required materials are complete and meet basic eligibility criteria.</li> <li>3. Evaluation: Applications are evaluated on a rolling basis based on criteria, such as leadership potential, professional achievements, alignment with the program's goals, and personal motivation.</li> <li>4. Interviews: Selected candidates will be invited for an interview to further assess their leadership qualities, communication skills, and fit for the program.</li> <li>5. Rolling Admission Decision: Final decisions are made on a rolling basis, meaning that candidates are notified of their acceptance, or rejection as their applications are processed and evaluated.</li> <li>6. Ongoing Notifications: Accepted candidates will receive prompt notifications, and the rolling process allows applicants to know their status sooner without waiting for a final deadline.</li> </ol>

<b>When is the application deadline?</b>	The application deadline is January 25, 2025. Please ensure that all materials, including your completed application and resume, are submitted by this date. Late submissions will not be considered, so we encourage you to apply early to be considered for the program.
<b>What costs are associated with the Future Leaders Academy?</b>	There is no cost to participate in the program. The program is fully funded covering all expenses including hotel and airfare for their kickoff and graduation events, leadership materials, workbooks, and training seminars.
<b>What type of mentorship will be provided?</b>	Program participants will receive personalized mentorship from experienced leaders in the optometry field. Each participant will be paired with an OD mentor who will provide guidance throughout the program.
<b>What support is provided throughout the program?</b>	<p>Participants will receive comprehensive support to ensure their success, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentorship</li> <li>• Workshops and Training</li> <li>• Capstone Project Support</li> <li>• Peer Collaboration (Networking and Leadership Lab)</li> <li>• Access to Resources</li> </ul>
<b>How long is the program?</b>	The Future Leaders Academy lasts for nine (9) months, starting from the program launch date on March 28, 2025, to November 15, 2025. Throughout this period, participants will engage in monthly workshops, mentorship sessions, and complete a capstone project, all designed to help them develop and enhance their leadership skills. Program participants must attend both in-person workshops in March and November.
<b>What is the time commitment required?</b>	Participants should expect to commit approximately two hours per month to the program. This includes attending workshops, reflecting on what they've learned, and discussing them in small group leadership lab sessions. Outside of the formal two (2) hours a month, the cohort can set up their own time with the mentors each month as needed. The program is designed to be manageable alongside your professional responsibilities.
<b>Will I receive any certification or recognition upon completion of the program?</b>	Yes, participants who successfully complete the Future Leaders Academy will receive a certificate of completion. This certificate acknowledges your commitment to leadership development and your mastery of the program's core competencies. Additionally, you will join an esteemed Future Leaders Academy network, gaining continued access to professional development opportunities and recognition within the VSP community.
<b>Is travel required for the program?</b>	<p>Yes, travel is required for two key events:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The in-person launch event March 28-29, 2025, at the start of the program, where participants will gather for orientation and initial workshops.</li> <li>2. The in-person graduation and closing event November 14-15, at the end of the program, celebrating the completion</li> </ol>

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of the program and the presentation of capstone projects.

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<b>What is the format of the virtual sessions?</b>	The virtual sessions are conducted through an interactive online platform, combining live workshops, video reflections, and group discussions.
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<b>What is the capstone project?</b>	The capstone project is a culminating assignment that demonstrates the program participants' ability to reflect on their leadership journey and apply the skills and knowledge they've acquired to a real-world problem, whether it is in their practice, at their work, or in their professional careers. Attendees will get more information once they have onboarded and attended the in-person launch event of the academy.
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<b>Can I defer my acceptance to a future cohort if selected?</b>	No, we do not offer deferments to future cohorts at this time. If you are unable to participate in the cohort for which you are selected, you will need to reapply for a future session. We encourage applicants to carefully consider their availability and commitment to the program before applying.
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<b>Where can I learn more about the Future Leaders Academy?</b>	To learn more, visit <a href="https://vspproviderhub.com/future-leaders">vspproviderhub.com/future-leaders</a> .
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**Additional Questions?** Please email Brittni Favors, Program Manager, at [futureleadersacademy@vsp.com](mailto:futureleadersacademy@vsp.com).