

NEA's Member Organizer Academy

FAQ for Member Organizers

What is the Member Organizer Academy (MOA)?

The Member Organizer Academy is a development opportunity for member organizers who want to become lead member organizers. The MOA will create a cohort of members through training, coaching and shared experiences who can support other member organizers in 1:1 conversations, creating a union vision, and building strong structures. Once accepted into the program, participants will be Member Organizers operating as Leads.

Where do I apply?

Applications open on February 1, 2027. To be notified about the opening fill of the MOA Interest Form.

Do I need to be a Member Organizer currently or have experience working as a Member Organizer?

We recommend that the applicants are existing member organizers who are familiar with the work of organizing; however, it is not required. Applicants do need to have some level of experience talking to their co-workers about their union and fighting for a better workplace. Specific examples of campaigns they have participated in/led will be considered.

Do I have to have an elected role in my local union?

No, we encourage participants not to hold a role in their local/chapter so they can fully focus on the program and the success of their campaign.

What will a successful Lead Member Organizer look like?

A successful Lead Member Organizer provides regular coaching and support to other member organizers. They help organizers prepare for their day by developing a plan for engagement and anticipating difficult conversations based on the assignment—such as recruitment or turning out members for an event. A strong Lead Member Organizer also debriefs organizers after their conversations, helping them reflect on what worked, address challenges, and strategize next steps.

What are the expectations of the MOA leads in their affiliates?

Lead Member Organizers support other member organizers in their daily work, including coaching through challenging recruitment conversations, identifying leaders, assisting with turnout plans and messaging, and playing an active role in the training of member organizers in their affiliate.

What are the expectations of the MOA leads with the NEA?

Lead Member Organizers must commit to attending an in-person training and participating in two one-hour Zoom calls per month to debrief the work happening in their states, celebrate successes, and address challenges related to coaching other member organizers.

What is the expected time commitment for the MOA for Lead Member Organizers?

The MOA is a yearlong from beginning June 1st, 2027 – May 31st, 2028. In addition to your work back home, there will be a 1 week of in-person training in June and two 1 hr. zoom calls per month with the National Coaching Cadre.

I've never done anything in my local/chapter, can I still apply?

Applicants must be a member in good standing of their union and must have experience talking to their co-workers about their union.

What type of support can I expect from my state affiliate staff?

Your state affiliate staff will be a thought partner and coach during the year. They will likely support you through check-in meetings and training associated with the member organizer program in your state. It's important to communicate what kinds of support you would like to the staff member.

What training is provided?

In-person training in June will focus on coaching skills, leadership identification and development skills, structure building, and testing. The bi-monthly zoom calls will include coaching and development of leads as well as strategic training on different components of organizing as needed.

What if I can't attend the June training, can I still participate?

The in-person training is a requirement to be a part of the Member Organizer Academy co-hort. There is not an online option or a make-up date.

What funding can I expect from NEA?

The NEA will provide a monthly stipend to each participant for the duration of the program provided the participant completes the required W-9 form and monthly check-ins. Additional compensation for state affiliate work as a member organizer is at the discretion of the state affiliate.

What if I need to end my participation in the MOA?

We understand that emergencies happen and will be dealt with on a one-by-one basis; however, we do encourage all participants to commit for the duration of the program as attendance will be considered for future MOA opportunities. Stipends may be withheld for lack of participation and attendance in required meetings/trainings.