

2026 KEHA Leadership Academy Overview

The Kentucky Extension Homemakers Association (KEHA) is accepting applications for a Leadership Academy to be held in 2026. The goal of the Leadership Academy is to strengthen leadership skills for emerging leaders within KEHA. By offering an opportunity for members to enhance and build leadership skills, KEHA anticipates increasing the pool of leaders available to hold county, area and state level elected and appointed positions. In addition, Academy graduates will have increased knowledge and ability to market the organization to potential new members, provide leadership to Extension councils and boards, represent KEHA with partner organizations, and serve as leaders within their communities. Designed by a committee consisting of KEHA Board members, previous graduates, and UK advisors, the academy curriculum will enhance individual leadership skills and empower members to lead the organization now and in the future.

Timeline

July-September 2025 – Interested members prepare applications

October 1, 2025 – Applications due to applicable area president

November 1, 2025 – Areas forward copies of the applications for the two selected participants and one alternate to the KEHA State Advisor (Kelly May, University of Kentucky, 112 Erikson Hall, Lexington, KY 40506-0050). Be sure the application for the alternate is labeled as such.

December 1, 2025 – Commitment letter and training fee (\$100) due from accepted participants

December 15, 2025 – Alternates offered opened slots as needed and applicable

January 15, 2026 – Commitment letter and training fee (\$100) due from accepted alternates

January 21, 2026 – Pre-Conference work packet sent to each attendee to complete before conference start

March 4-6, 2026 – The Third Leadership Academy training conference at Blue Licks Battlefield State Resort Park

April 6, 2026 – Payback Plan of Work Form due

March 8, 2027 – Payback Report Form due

Candidate Selection

Interested KEHA members will submit a Leadership Academy Application to her/his area KEHA president by October 1, 2025. The area officer team (minus any members applying for the academy) will review all nominations, score using

the provided rubric, and determine selections for the area by November 1, 2025. Names of two participants and one alternate per area will be considered to attend. A copy of each participant/alternate application will be forwarded to the KEHA State Advisor by November 1. Selected participants will then receive a letter from the Leadership Academy Committee requiring a \$100.00 fee payment and a signed commitment form to be returned by December 1, 2025. Alternates on the waitlist may be offered the opportunity to attend starting December 15, 2025, and commitment forms and \$100.00 fee payments for alternates will be due by January 15, 2026. Six weeks before the academy training, a pre-conference packet will be sent to each participant, with work to be completed before the training conference.

Curriculum Topics

The Leadership Academy curriculum may focus on the following topics:

- KEHA History
- Understanding Personality and Generational Differences
- Leadership Characteristics
- The Basics of Teamwork
- Communication Skills
- Parliamentary Procedure
- Cultural Competency
- Organizational Assessment

Materials will primarily be from Kentucky Extension curricula covering leadership development and “soft skills.” Trainers will primarily be University of Kentucky Extension specialists, state staff, and/or agents, with potential to include one or two contracted leadership educators. Members of the Leadership Academy Committee will provide activity support during the conference and serve as mentors to participants.

Conference Timetable

The training will be held March 4-6, 2026, at Blue Licks Battlefield State Resort Park beginning at noon on March 4 and ending at noon on March 6. The agenda will require a two-night stay for participants, with double-occupancy rooms. Evening networking and/or teambuilding opportunities will be provided. Meals and refreshments will be provided.

Conference Costs

KEHA as a state organization will cover the following costs associated with the three-day Leadership Academy training: lodging costs (based upon double-

occupancy), meals, meeting facilities, teaching materials, a participant curriculum binder, pre-conference mailings, and supplies for training activities. The \$100.00 participant fee will be utilized to offset a small portion of these costs. Travel to and from the training location will not be covered by the state association, and will be the responsibility of individual participants, county organizations, and/or area organizations as determined locally.

Participant Payback

Within 30 days of attending the Leadership Academy training, participants will develop a plan to provide the 40 hours of “payback” and submit the plan to the Leadership Academy Committee. The simple plan should list activities to be completed within a year and the projected dates for completion. A template will be provided. The following list represents activities ideas that are acceptable for the plan that demonstrate advancement in leadership within the organization.

- Teach leadership development sessions and workshops at the club, county, area, or state levels.
- Advance your leadership position within KEHA (i.e., if you have only served as a club officer but fill a county officer role following training; if you have only served as a county officer but fill an area officer role following training; becoming elected to a state board position, etc.).
- Chair a committee or lead membership recruitment and retention efforts in your county.
- Coordinate the observance of KEHA Week in your county.
- Establish and mentor a new club in your county.
- Establish or enhance officer training in your county or area.
- Teach a learning session at the KEHA State Meeting.
- Promote KEHA membership through media in your county or area (newspaper, radio, television).
- Work with your local Extension agent or office to establish or enhance a county KEHA social media presence.
- Serve on the county Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Advisory Council, County Extension Council, and/or County Extension District Board.

Twelve months after the Leadership Academy training, each participant will submit a report of payback hours to the Leadership Academy Committee. A reporting form will be provided.