



Cohort V Application

Deadline: February 14, 2020

Thank you for your interest in Aspire Mississippi, a Mississippi Development Authority program designed to help communities help themselves become better places to live, work, and visit.

Name of Applicant (Team Leader):

Title:

Name of EDO:

County:

Primary EDO Contact (if different from applicant):

Office Phone:

Mobile Phone:

E-mail Address:

Physical Address:

Secondary EDO Contact:

Office Phone:

Mobile Phone:

E-mail Address:

**Each team should consist of 8-10 individuals from across the county. Applicants are encouraged to recruit a broad-based, diverse team of leaders from many different community sectors. It is important that these local stakeholders be invested from the outset of Aspire Mississippi so buy-in is achieved now and with future endeavors.*

You are encouraged to contact us to discuss potential team members to help build a strong, sustainable project team.

Name of Team Member 2: Title:

Name of Organization:

What sector(s) of the community does this individual represent?

- Business and industry
- Faith-based or community nonprofit
- Entrepreneurship/small business
- County Extension service
- Local or regional government agency
- Minority or women-owned business
- Chamber of Commerce/downtown development/Main St/tourism
- Economic development
- College or university
- K-12 educational institution
- High school/college student

Office Phone:

Mobile Phone:

E-mail Address:

Physical Address:

Name of Team Member 3: Title:

Name of Organization:

What sector(s) of the community does this individual represent?

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Mobile Phone:

E-mail Address:

Physical Address:

Name of Team Member 4: Title:

Name of Organization:

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Mobile Phone:

E-mail Address:

Physical Address:

Name of Team Member 5: Title:

Name of Organization:

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Name of Team Member 6: Title:

Name of Organization:

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Name of Team Member 7: Title:

Name of Organization:

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Name of Team Member 8:

Title:

Name of Organization:

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Physical Address:

Name of Team Member 9:

Title:

Name of Organization:

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Name of Team Member 10: Title:

Name of Organization:

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Physical Address:

Name of Team Member 11: Title:

Name of Organization:

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Name of Team Member 12:

Title:

Name of Organization:

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Entrepreneurship/small business

County Extension service

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GENERAL QUESTIONS

What do you think are the most important reasons for participating in Aspire Mississippi?

How do you think your county will benefit from your team's participation in Aspire Mississippi?

What is the population of your county?

List your county's top three employers and the number of employees for each.

- | | |
|----|------------------|
| 1) | No. of employees |
| 2) | No. of employees |
| 3) | No. of employees |

What do you consider to be your county's top three assets?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

What do you consider to be your county's top three challenges?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

What do you consider to be your county's greatest economic engine(s)?

Rate the following: Poor Fair Average Good Excellent

Building permits

Business expansions

Sales tax collections

Population growth

Unemployment rates

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

If County is selected to participate, we will commit the adequate time, effort, and resources necessary to complete Aspire Mississippi in its entirety, including attending all formal sessions/webinars and working with our team on all project work. I recognize Aspire Mississippi is designed to stimulate a lasting and mutually beneficial relationship between our county and MDA, and we understand that MDA will periodically ask for updates and information related to the project outcomes during and following the program.

We understand that absences will be considered on a case-by-case basis and could negatively impact the ability to successfully master and graduate from the program. We also understand that cost reimbursable grant funding up to \$5,000 is available to assist with project implementation and that the amount available to the team is determined by Aspire Mississippi staff following the graduation celebration and is based heavily on attendance and active participation by all team members during each session.

Team Leader’s Signature

Date:

Board Chairman’s Signature

Date:

- E-mail complete applications to Ellen Bourdeaux at **ebourdeaux@mississippi.org** or mail to:
Ellen Bourdeaux, Manager
Aspire Mississippi
P.O. Box 849, Jackson, MS 39205
- Applications must be received by **February 14, 2020**. Visit www.mississippi.org/aspire for more information.

2020 COHORT V TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Each year, Aspire Mississippi works with up to six counties from across the state. Typically, those six are divided into two groups, those north of I-20 and those to the south of it. During the program, except for the first and last sessions, when all counties meet together in the Jackson area, the northern counties meet together, and the southern counties meet together. Exact locations for sessions 2-5 will be determined at the first session.

Session 1	April 7 & 8	Theme: Leadership & Community Development
Session 2a	May 5	Theme: Project Mapping
Session 2b	May 6	Theme: Project Mapping
Session 3a	June 23	Theme: Data-Driven Decision Making
Session 3b	June 24	Theme: Data-Driven Decision Making
Session 4a	August 11	Theme: Economic Development
Session 4b	August 12	Theme: Economic Development
Session 5a	September 29	Theme: Workforce Development
Session 5b	September 30	Theme: Workforce Development
Session 6	TBD	Graduation Celebration & Project Presentations

SESSION TOPIC AREAS

- Community-based Leadership & Team Development
- Community Development
 - Understanding Asset-based Development
 - History of Planning
 - Best Practices
 - Arts and Culture
 - Successful Community Case Studies
 - Downtown Revitalization
- Project Mapping
 - Honing Parameters of a Community Project
 - Identifying Goals
 - Setting up a Timeline
 - Defining Team Member Roles
- Know Your Data
 - How to Find Data Sources
 - How to Use Data Sources
 - Importance of Evidence-based Decision Making
 - County Data Profile Overview
- Economic Development
 - Dos and Don'ts of Economic Development
 - Site Development
 - Role of Utilities
 - State and Federal Resources
 - How MDA Works for You
 - Philanthropy and Community Foundations
- Workforce Development
 - Know Your Workforce Population Characteristics
 - The Strength of Mississippi's Community College System
 - Workforce Partners in Mississippi
 - A Critical Need: Early Brain Development