



**GFOABC**  
*Better Together.*

# STRATEGIC FINANCIAL LEADERSHIP

**ACCELERATING LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXCELLENCE**

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# THE FINANCIAL LEADERSHIP IMPERATIVE

Local governments are facing **unprecedented, concurrent, and interrelated challenges:**

Aging infrastructure  
Climate change  
Community growth  
Cost of living  
Evolving service expectations

High inflation  
Pandemic recovery  
Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples  
Rapidly evolving technology  
Talent retention

These challenges demand strong leadership from local government finance professionals who sit at the intersection of the many facets of local government service delivery. Finance professionals in local government need to be highly capable of being strategic, thinking holistically, innovating, leading change, developing talent, communicating effectively, and navigating complexity and ambiguity.

**"Local government finance professionals have identified leadership development as a critical need, as the challenges are numerous and complex, and there are currently limited leadership development programs dedicated to local government finance professionals."**

GFOABC is relaunching a strategic financial leadership program to assist members in meeting the local government financial imperative.

# STRATEGIC FINANCIAL LEADERSHIP

Since 2016 GFOABC has been steadily working to create a **Strategic Financial Leadership** program that addresses these challenges.



**Strategic Financial Leadership** is a cohort-based, applied leadership development program for local government finance professionals who are eager to level up their leadership competency while expanding their network, advancing an initiative of importance to their community, and positively contributing to others' experience in the program.

# OUTCOMES

What participants gain from **Strategic Financial Leadership** will be a function of what they contribute to it. Through active participation in the full program participants can expect to:

## Develop leadership competencies:

- Greater self-awareness of your own leadership strengths and development opportunities
- Greater capacity to navigate complexity
- Greater capacity to effectively solve problems requiring collaboration
- Greater capacity to lead self and others and effect change

## Impact your organization and community:

- By the end of the program, participants will have advanced an initiative of their choosing relevant to their own organization that benefits the community.

## Build relationships:

- A broader network and deeper relationships with other local government finance professionals across BC.
- A broader network and deeper relationships with business partners and collaborators within their own local government organization.

**"Internal and external networks are critical for carrying out any kind of job today. The whole point of having organizations in the first place is to have people with different competencies and expertise come together to pursue something collectively important that they could never achieve on their own."**

Rotman Magazine, Interviews & Ideas, Professor Tiziana Casciaro, 2019

<https://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/Connect/Rotman-MAG/IdeaExchange/Fall2019-Casciaro>

# UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAM

**Strategic Financial Leadership** is based on three guiding principles:

**1 - Applied learning**  
learn through doing

**2 - Service learning**  
be of service to others  
while you learn

**3 - Self as agent**  
grow yourself and be the  
change

- The goal of this approach is that participants leave the program with embodied competencies, and that they positively contribute to their organization and community through the process of building those competencies.
- This contrasts with a traditional educational model that emphasizes cognitive understanding of theories, models, and information from various sources (published works, case studies, speakers, etc.), with limited real-world application and impact.
- The program will be cohort-based, and will involve approximately 10-15 participants. The cohort-based approach and group size aims to optimize relationship building and peer learning while still allowing for tailored support from coaches and educators.

The program will kick off at the **2023 GFOABC Annual Conference in Whistler, BC** from May 31-June 2, 2023. It will run for approximately 10 months, with time off in August and February. A capstone presentation will be delivered by participants at the 2024 GFOABC Annual Conference.

**From kick-off to capstone the program will include a combination of:**

- In-person cohort-based workshops as a cohort
- Virtual cohort meetings as a cohort
- Self-guided learning, development, and homework
- Working with others in the cohort and in your organization to practically advance an initiative
- One-on-one coaching with an executive coach

# PARTICIPANT PROFILE

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**Strategic Financial Leadership** is for participants from all types of local governments across British Columbia. Representation is sought from small, midsize, and large municipalities and regional districts from all geographies.

The participant selection process will privilege attributes over title or job description.

**This program is for local government finance professionals who:**

- Demonstrate knowledge of the local government context
- Demonstrate a growth mindset
- Demonstrate a desire to develop themselves and others with the goal of continuously improving service delivery
- Are in a leadership position where they are leading themselves and others (note that there are no minimum requirements for the number of direct reports)
- Want to build their network and relationships internally within their organization and externally with other local government finance professionals
- Are willing to invest themselves, and commit to the entire program

**Professionals who meet these criteria will often, but not always, have:**

- At least 5 years of local government finance experience
- A management role, OR be considered high-potential for advancement into such a position (at their own or another organization).

# THE COMMITMENT

**Strategic Financial Leadership will be a co-creative and reciprocal developmental process, where what everyone leaves with will be a function of what they contribute to the program, and to others' experience in it.**

Participants are expected to:

- **Fully participate in all elements of the program including three in-person sessions:**
  - May 2023, coinciding with the Annual Conference in Whistler
  - November 2023, coinciding with the Fall PD Program in Vancouver
  - June 2024, coinciding with the Annual Conference in Kamloops
- **Commit to creating a generative, safe, and positive environment and experience for others in the program**
- **Be fully present in each engagement**

The time commitment outside the formal workshop structure is anticipated to be approximately 4-8 hours weekly with an average of 20 hours monthly. This is expected to include some evening and weekend time.

Scheduling of cohort-based elements will occur with input from participants to ensure timing works for everyone. Re-scheduling of engagements will be highly discouraged with allowances for the most extenuating circumstances.

Participation in this program is meant to occur alongside a full workload. Time spent engaging in the program is meant to directly contribute to the advancement of an initiative/project relevant to your own work, and in this sense, integration and overlap with existing workload is expected.



# SHARED INVESTMENT

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**Participation in Strategic Financial Leadership will be a shared investment between participants and GFOABC. This approach aims to optimize affordability with personal dedication to the program.**

Depending on individual circumstances the financial investment may further be shared between participants and their employer, or it may be a personal investment participants make in their own development.

**Program fees for the 2023 offering will be \$6,500.00 plus GST and includes executive coaching, two conference registrations, hotel accommodation for the three in-person sessions and program materials.**

This program spans two fiscal years, and as such, the payment can be made in installments.

## **GFOABC Strategic Financial Leadership Program Call for Expressions of Interest**

GFOABC is inviting interested candidates to submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) to participate in the 2023 Strategic Financial Leadership offering. This Call for EOIs aims to equip interested candidates with an understanding of the program, the commitment and investment required, and the EOI submission requirements.

[Expression of Interest](#)





Municipal Finance  
Authority of BC

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