

Minnesota Housing's Capacity Building Initiative is intended to build organizational capacity to address housing disparities, build power in communities most impacted by housing challenges and disparities, pilot innovative solutions to housing challenges, and support inclusive and equitable communities. We want organizations and communities to use their knowledge and creativity to develop strategies that work for them.

We recognize that historical and institutional racism has disproportionately created housing challenges and disparities for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities and recognize the importance of BIPOC communities leading and driving solutions to these challenges. We also recognize that there are other communities most impacted\* by housing challenges and housing instabilities who have a critical role to play in addressing the challenges that affect them. Through increasing the capacity we seek to build communities where everyone can thrive.

We have allocated up to \$450,000 for this initiative. We will provide up to **\$40,000** in **one-time** funding for one-year projects that will help grantees meet project objectives, develop a knowledge base, and the programming to ultimately increase effectiveness and impact in the long term. Successful applications must be able to articulate a vision and plan to sustain the work developed during the project period.

We encourage organizations with smaller capacity to apply and scale their funding request to the needs of their proposed project **or** partner with an organization to increase their capacity to achieve a larger objective.

**\*Communities Most Impacted** as defined in our [Strategic Plan](#) are the people more likely to be impacted by housing instability including: lowest Income (e.g. <= 30% of area median income), People of Color, Indigenous Individuals, LGBTQ+, • People Experiencing Homelessness, People with Disabilities, Immigrants, Large Families, Seniors, Children, People Facing Barriers and/or Limited Choices due to: Poor Credit, Limited Savings, Criminal History, Prior Evictions, Transitioning Out of Foster Care, Prison, Other Systems.

#### Who can apply for funding?

- Tax-exempt nonprofits
- Tribal governments and tribal corporate entities
- Collaborations, if lead partner is a qualified applicant
- Local units of government and political subdivisions

#### What can funds be used for?

Examples of eligible activities include but are not limited to:

- Pilot projects (e.g., housing models for those with background check challenges; solutions that increase housing stability and access, such as renter protections that is guided by evidence-based research; tenant engagement and advocacy training)
- Community engagement, education and leadership development to facilitate community-led decision-making to reduce the homeownership disparity gap or meet a housing need.

- Partnership development, including a fiscal agent or consultant relationship, to build organizational capacity, leverage resources, relationships and expertise to comprehensively address community housing needs.
- Staff development and training to build organizational capacity to meet community needs.

#### **What activities are NOT eligible for funding?**

- Direct housing development costs
- Direct housing services including affordability gap or down-payment assistance
- Expenses not directly related to the proposed project or activity
- Lobbying or other direct political activities

#### **What criteria will proposals be reviewed for?**

- Extent to which the proposal addresses root causes of housing disparities and challenges.
- Role of communities most impacted by housing challenges and disparities in the planning and implementation of the proposed project.
- Clarity of plan demonstrating how the program will serve, actively engage, build and share power with the communities most impacted.
- Clear and measurable outcomes.
- Extent to which increasing organizational capacity will result in outcomes that shift systems toward equity in housing.
- Capability of staff and organizational leadership to undertake the proposed work and the presence of communities most impacted in organizational leadership and decision-making roles.
- Credibility of plan to complete the proposed work within one year and plan to embed and sustain increased capacity.
- Ability to budget and manage grant funding.

Priority will be given to activities that did not receive Capacity Building Initiative funds in 2019. We will fund a variety of project types and will work to achieve an equitable racial and geographic distribution of funds across the state. Proposals that advance to the final stage of scoring will be invited to participate in an interview that will include questions related to the grant priorities and the grant proposal. Interviews will be scored and incorporated into the final evaluation and selection process.

#### **Reporting Requirements**

All Capacity Building Initiative grantees are required to:

- Participate in check-ins with Minnesota Housing.
- Submit a mid-year, one-page report.
- Submit a final report outlining proposed and achieved outcomes and expenditures.

#### **Timeline**

- August 28, 2020: Application release date
- September 28, 2020, Noon: Application deadline
- December 18, 2020: Applicants informed of funding decisions

## Questions?

If you have questions or would like to discuss your ideas, please contact Alyssa Wetzel-Moore at [Alyssa.Wetzel-Moore@state.mn.us](mailto:Alyssa.Wetzel-Moore@state.mn.us) or 651.263.1453 by September 24th. **Please note:** there may not be enough time to respond to questions after that date.

### Instructions:

Complete the following application and submit through our online portal. You will receive a confirmation of your application and your responses via email. Partially completed applications cannot be saved. We recommend referencing the pdf of the application to prepare and save your responses and then copying and pasting your responses into the online application.

**Applications must be submitted by Monday, September 28, 2020 at noon.**

If you need an accommodation to apply, please contact [Alyssa Wetzel-Moore](mailto:Alyssa.Wetzel-Moore@state.mn.us) via email at [Alyssa.Wetzel-Moore@state.mn.us](mailto:Alyssa.Wetzel-Moore@state.mn.us) or phone at 651.293.1453.

A complete application must contain the following documents:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Application
<input type="checkbox"/>	Financial Documents (see page 7 for detailed instructions)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copy of applicant's Minnesota Secretary of State Business Record: <a href="https://mblsportal.sos.state.mn.us/Business/Search">https://mblsportal.sos.state.mn.us/Business/Search</a>  If organization is not currently registered with the Secretary of State. All Grantees must be registered by the time they enter into a contract with Minnesota Housing. (Not required for governmental jurisdictions)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Project Work Plan</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<a href="#">Project Budget</a>
<input type="checkbox"/>	If proposal is being submitted by a formal partnership, include a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlines the roles and responsibilities of the partners who will work together to implement the program. All Grantees working in formal partnerships must have an MOU by the time they enter into a contract with Minnesota Housing.

<b>Applicant Contact Information (If applying as a collaboration, list contact information for lead partner who will be contracting with Minnesota Housing if selected)</b>	
First Name:	
Last Name:	
Organization Name:	
Industry Type:	Select one:
Nonprofit Tax ID/Registration Number, if applicable:	
Work Address:	
Work Phone:	
Email Address:	
Describe the Organization's mission and activities:	
Did the organization receive Capacity Building Initiative funds in 2019?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

<b>Partner Information (If applying as a collaboration)</b>	
First Name:	
Last Name:	
Organization Name:	
Industry Type:	Select one:
Nonprofit Tax ID/Registration Number, if applicable:	
Work Address:	
Work Phone:	
Email Address:	
Describe the Organization's mission and activities:	
Did the Organization receive Capacity Building Initiative funds in 2019?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

<b>Proposal Information</b>	
Name of proposal/project:	
Amount of funding requested:	\$
Proposal Overview (provide a 3 to 5 sentence description – who, what, where, why?)	
Project Scope of Work (Provide a numbered list of key activities to be performed (200 word max) –to be inserted into the contract if funded ):	
Project Outcomes ( to be inserted into contract if funded)	
Target Geography(ies):	
Target Population(s):	

**Project Description (Limit three pages)**

1. Describe your project, why it is needed, and how the activities in this proposal will address that need.
2. Describe the timeline for the activities and how it will allow you to implement the proposal in a year.
3. Describe the root cause(s) of housing challenges and disparities this proposal will address.
4. Describe how your project is responsive to community needs.

**Communities Most Impacted**

Communities Most Impacted: The people more likely to be impacted by housing instability including: lowest Income (e.g. <= 30% of area median income), People of Color, Indigenous Individuals, LGBTQ+, People Experiencing Homelessness, People with Disabilities, Immigrants, Large Families, Seniors, Children, People Facing Barriers and/or Limited Choices due to: Poor Credit, Limited Savings, Criminal History, Prior Evictions, Transitioning Out of Foster Care, Prison, Other Systems.

1. Describe how this project addresses the needs of communities most impacted by housing challenges and housing disparities.
2. What role have communities most impacted had in each of the categories below:
  - a. Driving the project’s purpose
  - b. Carrying out project activities
  - c. Advising on the work

### Outcomes (Limit one page)

1. Provide between five and seven proposed outcomes and how you plan to measure the success of each outcome.
2. Describe a tangible benefit Communities Most Impacted will receive as a result of this proposal and how you plan to measure the success of this outcome.
3. Describe how the proposal will support one or more of the following outcomes: "to address housing disparities, build power in communities most impacted by housing challenges and disparities, pilot innovative challenges and support inclusive communities." Describe how you plan to measure the success of this outcome.
4. Describe how you will share what you learn from this project.

### Capacity

1. Explain why you need to build your capacity to meet project proposal.
2. How will project proposal address an existing gap in the housing system?
3. Please describe the meaningful benefits to communities most impacted that will result from applicant's increased capacity.
4. Describe how you will embed the capacity and knowledge gained from this one-time initiative into your organization over the long term.

### Qualifications

1. Describe your organization's key strengths and what makes your organization unique.
2. Why is your organization the right one to take on this project proposal?
3. For the population that you intend to benefit from this project, identify how your organization's demographics, background and/ or lived experience reflect the population in each category below:
  - a. Staff
  - b. Leadership
  - c. Board

If your organization's staff, leadership, and/or board does not reflect the population you intend to benefit, describe how it will incorporate equity practices into its work to inform its recruiting, hiring, promotion and retention practices.

### Alignment and Collaboration

1. Describe how Proposal aligns with broader community efforts or will spur much-needed community efforts.
2. Describe how you plan to connect with potential partners and community members, as appropriate, to carry out proposal activities.
3. If you are applying as a partnership: Describe how your collaboration was assembled and how partners will work together to implement the program.

### Project Budget and Leverage (Limit three paragraphs not including template)

1. Provide a budget narrative that outlines how the Capacity Building Initiative funds will be spent, and identifies all other sources of funding in the project (include reference to secured funding and pending funding, if any).
2. Provide a breakdown of the project budget using the Capacity Building Initiative [Budget Template](#) and submit as an attachment to the application.

### Work Plan

1. Provide a work plan for the project using the Capacity Building Initiative [Work Plan Template](#) and submit as an attachment to this application.

### Final Thoughts (Limit three paragraphs not including template)

1. Is there anything else that we should know about your project or your organization?

### Financial Review

If your organization is a nonprofit and is requesting \$25,000 or more from the Capacity Building Initiative, Minnesota Housing must perform a financial review of your organization (government entities are exempt from this requirement). If the required documentation is not included, your application will **not** be reviewed for funding. In order to continue to be considered for funding, please submit the following based on your **organization's annual income**:

- **Under \$50,000** (or not in existence long enough to have completed IRS Form 990 or an audit): Submit most recent board-reviewed financial statements
- **\$50,000-\$750,000**: Submit most recent IRS Form 990
- **Over \$750,000**: Submit most recent certified financial audit

For the documentation submitted, check the box to confirm that this is the most recent documentation you have available.

If the documentation is from 2018 or before, indicate when more recent documentation will become available: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Authorization**

The information provided in this Capacity Building Initiative Application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title