



Neighborhood Development Fund Request for Proposals

Proposals are due by close of business May 14, 2019

Informational Conference Call- 2pm, April 29, 2019
Conference Call #1-844-845-5512 access code #76008

Proposals must be submitted via email to mcanton@lisc.org AND CCing jogrady@lisc.org

The Rhode Island office of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and its Neighborhood Development Fund (NDF) is inviting proposals from Rhode Island community based organizations that have the development of affordable housing as a primary line of business to apply for up to \$100,000 in funding.

ABOUT LISC

What We Do

With residents and partners, LISC forges resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity across Rhode Island – great places to live, work, visit, do business and raise families.

Strategies We Pursue

1. Strengthen existing alliances while building new collaborations to increase impacts on the progress of people and places
2. Develop leadership and the capacity of partners to advance our work together
3. Equip talent in underinvested communities with the skills and credentials to compete successfully for quality income and wealth opportunities
4. Invest in housing, businesses, and other community infrastructure to catalyze economic, health, safety and educational mobility for individuals and communities
5. Drive local, regional, and national policy and system changes that foster broadly shared prosperity and well-being

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT FUND

The Neighborhood Development Fund (NDF) was established to increase and sustain the organizational capacity of Rhode Island community-based organizations that have the development of affordable housing as a primary line of business while also addressing broader community revitalization. NDF targets its investments to those activities that will support operations and infrastructure. The NDF is advised by a steering committee. The NDF Steering Committee reviews grant applications and makes funding decisions for this program.

The NDF program includes:

- Capacity building grants;
- Small grants for special projects, communications and information & technology;
- Educational opportunities including workshops and roundtables, as well as, financial assistance to allow staff to attend regional and national conferences; and
- Technical assistance using local and national LISC staff experts and outside consultants.

PROGRAM GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Housing is vital to every family and that is why Rhode Island LISC has invested millions of dollars in neighborhoods across the state to improve and increase housing stock, clean up vacant lots, and give derelict buildings new purpose.

But better housing alone is not enough to help neighborhoods thrive. When people choose a home to live in, they choose the whole community. Thriving communities offer shopping, healthy food, decent schools, parks where children can feel safe to play, and access to living-wage jobs. For housing markets to work, these other aspects of community must work, too.

This comprehensive approach provides both a framework for understanding our existing programs and a strategic imperative for growing and deepening LISC's commitment to building communities.

CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTS

Capacity building grants are the core of the NDF. These strategic investments support key CDC staff and other operations that allow the organizations to sustain and increase their organizational and programmatic capacity.

Proposals must articulate self-evaluation of the organization's capacity and the strategies to be employed to reach capacity goals

NDF grants cannot be more than 25% of a CDC's total proposed operating budget in any given year. Funds may be used to cover such operating costs as:

- Staff salaries and benefits (no more than 75% of any one salary);
- Staff development and travel related to staff development;
- Operating expenses including but not limited to: utilities, rent, office supplies and/or equipment;
- Consultants for improving business/administrative systems, financial/asset management, increasing scope or range of programs, efficiency gains for current programs,
- Other related activities may be considered.

SMALL GRANTS

Small grants for up to \$2,500 and no more than 50% of the overall cost based on the size and scope of the request. Small grants can be used for professional development, special projects, communications or information and technology upgrades. These grants are available to our nonprofit partners by request to Jay O’Grady (jograd@lisc.org) on a rolling basis.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible organization must meet the following threshold criteria:

- 501(c) 3 non-profit incorporated in the state of Rhode Island that engages in community development activities primarily within an identified geographic area of operation;
- Have as a primary line of business, the development and/or preservation of affordable housing;
- Be a community-controlled organization, where at least 51% of the Board of Directors are community residents, business/civic leaders or other stakeholders in the CDC’s service area;
- Commitment to working with LISC that includes timely submissions of requested information and active engagement in training, technical assistance and public policy analyses;
- Conduct an annual audit through an independent certified accountant;
- Agree to and provide all requested financial materials;
- Agree to work with Rhode Island LISC to establish independent evaluations of the organization’s overall operating capacity as requested;
- Agree to convene representative staff and board members to meet with representatives of the Rhode Island LISC staff and members of the NDF Steering Committee;
- LISC reserves the right to request additional information from all organizations that are awarded funding and selected to participate in the program;

- In order to receive funding organizations cannot currently be in default of any LISC transaction;
- Internal reporting capabilities to demonstrate results.

TIMELINE

April 22, 2019	Request for Proposals released
April 29, 2019	Informational Conference Call
May 14, 2019	Proposals are due at close of business (5:00 PM)
June 28, 2019	Funding decisions announced
July 1, 2019	Grant term begins
July 17, 2019	All organizations awarded funding are required to provide the organization's most recent quarterly financial statement.
September 30, 2019	End of first quarter-disbursement requests (progress reports are due on or before October 15, 2019)
December 31, 2019	End of second quarter-disbursement requests (mid-term progress reports are due on or before January 31, 2020)
March 30, 2020	End of third quarter-disbursement requests (progress reports are due on or before April 15, 2020)
June 30, 2020	Grant term ends-final disbursement requests (final progress reports are due on or before August 15, 2020)

EVALUATION AND SELECTION

The NDF Steering Committee reviews grant applications and makes funding decisions for this program. The Steering Committee will make funding determinations based on the criteria outlined in this document. The Committee will review all information provided in the attached application as well as information gathered at site visits.

The baseline criteria that the NDF Steering Committee will use to make funding decisions are:

- An organization that prioritizes comprehensive community development activities within a geographic area(s) for which the organization is implementing a broader revitalization strategy;
- Quality and performance of completed development projects and community programming;
- Overall health and stability of organization;
- Commitment to making demonstrable progress in the areas of real estate production and organizational capacity; and
- Active relationship with LISC.

REQUIRED APPLICATION MATERIALS AND NARRATIVE SECTIONS

The goal of this grant is to provide operating support to organizations which have a clear idea of their organizational needs, and a plan to strengthen their capacity in order to better achieve its mission.

2019 NDF applicants MUST provide the following:

- I. Completed *2019 NDF Application Form and Checklist* (form attached).
- II. Completed *2019 NDF Capacity Building Activities Form* (form attached).
- III. Completed *2019 NDF Real Estate Pipeline Report* (form attached).
- IV. Completed *2019 NDF Cash Flow Projection Form* (form attached).
- V. Narrative Sections:
 - a. Organizational Background (1-2 Pages): Please provide a brief summary of your organization's history, current programs, and challenges / opportunities (1-2 pages). **ALSO** please provide:
 - i. Current Board of Directors list with term limits if applicable.
 - ii. Brief bios of key staff and corresponding job descriptions.
 - iii. An Operating Budget for the Current Fiscal Year.
 - b. Capacity Building Activities (1-2 Pages): Please provide a brief narrative explaining why the Capacity Building Activities identified in the *2019 NDF Capacity Building Activities Form* were selected.
 - i. How will these goals help strengthen the organization?
 - ii. How will increased capacity in these areas allow your organization to better respond to challenges and / or opportunities?
 - iii. If goals selected for 2019 were also selected for 2018, please explain why the goal recurs, what progress was made during 2018-19, and any factors that indicate an improved ability to meet the selected goal this year.
 - c. Fundraising Strategy (1 Page): Please provide a brief narrative articulating your organization's fundraising strategy including the impact if the organization is not awarded NDF funds and, conversely, what an award of NDF funding this round would mean to the organization's ability to leverage other funds.
 - d. Real Estate Development Challenges (1 Page): Describe obstacles to advancing the Real Estate Development projects identified in your *2019 NDF Real Estate Pipeline Report*.