



Multi-Sector State Efforts

Endorsement Application Overview

Are you a state-level organization that uses multi-sector partnerships to advocate for better affordable housing policies? If so, this is for you!

[*Opportunity Starts at Home*](#) is a national multi-sector housing campaign that advocates for federal policies which expand affordable housing for the nation's most vulnerable low-income people. Affordable housing campaigns are not new, of course, but what is unprecedented and transformative about *Opportunity Starts at Home* is the diversity of the voices that are joining forces to advocate for more robust and equitable federal housing policies. The national campaign's multi-sector partners include leading national organizations from a wide range of sectors, such as health, education, civil rights, anti-poverty, faith-based, anti-hunger, and more. Together, they are working shoulder-to-shoulder to solve America's housing crisis. Because housing impacts outcomes in so many areas of life, it makes sense that leaders from many sectors are ready to join in the advocacy to advance solutions. This crisis demands a broad, multi-sector response.

In addition to its national-level campaign, *Opportunity Starts at Home* is also providing support and financial assistance to partners in seven states: Housing California, Idaho Asset Building Network, Maine Together, Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey, Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio, Oregon Housing Alliance, and Utah Housing Coalition. Not only is it critical for federal policymakers to hear from national advocates, but also from their own constituents in the states they represent. These state partners are working to build multi-sector coalitions in their states and focus those multi-sector coalitions on influencing federal housing policy.

Why is the National Campaign Running an Endorsement Application for States?

The national campaign understands that there are existing multi-sector efforts happening in more than just the seven states mentioned above. We want to identify that work across the nation, raise its visibility, and help encourage and support its ongoing success. By expanding the number of state partners affiliated with *Opportunity Starts at Home*, we will strengthen our overall advocacy efforts.

This application is an opportunity for state-level organizations across the country that are already pursuing multi-sector efforts focused on housing policy to earn a **formal endorsement** from the national campaign. Such an endorsement would codify their multi-sector work under the *Opportunity Starts at Home* umbrella. Those chosen for endorsement will: be considered formal state partners of the campaign; be featured on the national website; participate in cohort learning experiences with other states; and gain access to resources, networks, and technical assistance from the national campaign.

Does Receiving a Formal Endorsement from the National Campaign Come with Funding?

Receiving an endorsement from the national campaign does not come with financial assistance at this time. However, it would provide special consideration if/when additional funds become available.

The national campaign would need to secure more funds before it could provide financial assistance to any additional partners beyond the seven mentioned above. But the national campaign fully intends to secure these funds and is actively fundraising so that it can expand its financial assistance to additional state partners.

If/when those new funds become available, the national campaign will launch a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Those selected through the RFP process would receive financial assistance. Those who have already earned a formal endorsement would be given special consideration (not a guarantee) in the RFP process.



Even If We Do Not Get Funds from the National Campaign, Could a Formal Endorsement Help Us with Our Own State/Local Fundraising Efforts?

Quite possibly. An endorsement from the national campaign could give state-level organizations increased visibility and could help catalyze their own state and local fundraising efforts.

Which Organizations Are Eligible to Apply for the Endorsement?

Organizations that are eligible to apply for an endorsement from the national campaign must meet the following criteria:

- **Commitment:** Organizations must be committed to the national campaign's goal of advancing federal affordable housing solutions for the most vulnerable low-income people, and they must be committed to expanding the affordable housing movement to an array of non-housing sectors. They must also be comfortable with the broad policy solutions contained within the national campaign's policy agenda, which can be read [here](#).
- **Geographic Scope:** Organizations must have a predominantly state-level focus. Organizations with a predominantly local/regional focus will not be eligible to apply.
- **Eligible States:** At this time, the national campaign will only be endorsing one (1) organization from each of the 50 states. Because the national campaign has already established formal relationships with state partners in California, Idaho, Maine, New Jersey, Ohio, Oregon, and Utah, additional groups from these states will *not* be eligible to apply for an endorsement. Groups from the other 43 states are eligible to apply.
- **Evidence of Existing Multi-Sector Efforts Focused on Affordable Housing:** Organizations that apply must be able to provide evidence that they are already pursuing robust and numerous multi-sector partnerships (or at least are in the advanced planning stages), and that these multi-sector partnerships would ultimately be designed to influence federal policies which expand affordable housing for the lowest income renters.
- **Open to Housing and Non-Housing Organizations:** Applicant organizations can come from a wide variety of sectors, not just housing (e.g., health, education, civil rights, anti-poverty, faith-based, anti-hunger, and more). However, for purposes of this endorsement, their multi-sector efforts must be focused on influencing federal housing policies.
 - *Note:* Of the seven state partners that are currently receiving financial assistance from the national campaign, six are primarily housing-focused organizations. One partner – the Idaho Asset Building Network – has historically centered around asset building issues, but recently added affordable housing to its portfolio of work and is currently building multi-sector coalitions specifically to influence federal affordable housing policies.

Next Steps

If you are interested in applying for an endorsement from the national campaign, please email the national campaign director, Mike Koprowski, at mkoprowski@nlihc.org and he will schedule a brief exploratory conversation with you. After the exploratory conversation, the application itself will be made available to you.

The application itself should take no more than a few hours to complete and can be submitted virtually on a rolling basis. There is no specific deadline. The process is designed to be streamlined and efficient.

The *Opportunity Starts at Home* campaign is making significant strides in broadening the affordable housing movement to an array of other sectors, and we want to identify, encourage, and support similar efforts that are happening in states across the country. Together, we will advance solutions that meet the housing needs of the nation's most vulnerable households.