



Opportunity Starts at Home – State Grantee *Grant Application Overview*

Are you a state-level organization that is interested in expanding multi-sector partnerships and influencing better federal housing policies? If so, this grant opportunity is for you!

[Opportunity Starts at Home](#) is a national multi-sector housing campaign that advocates for federal policies which correct long-standing racial inequities and expand affordable housing for the nation's lowest 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, social work, environmental protection, municipal governance, child welfare, 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. The housing crisis demands a broad, multi-sector response.

In addition to its national-level campaign, *Opportunity Starts at Home* has also provided financial assistance to organizations 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 elected officials in Congress to hear from national advocates, but also from their own constituents in the states they represent. These state-level grantees have been 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 Now Offering a Limited Number of New Grants

The national campaign recently received additional funds to further scale our state-based efforts. We want to support this work across the nation, raise its visibility, and help encourage and support its ongoing success. By expanding the number of states affiliated with *Opportunity Starts at Home*, we will strengthen our overall advocacy efforts.

This grant application is an opportunity for state-level organizations that are interested in increasing their capacity to: 1) expand their coalition to multi-sector partners; and 2) leverage those multi-sector partners to engage federal elected officials who represent their state to advance the campaign's [federal policy agenda](#).

Those selected for a grant would: receive financial assistance for a period of one year;¹ be formally recognized as state affiliates of the national campaign; be featured on the national website; participate in cohort learning experiences with other state grantees; and gain access to resources, networks, and technical assistance from the national campaign. Based on past experience, a grant from the national campaign can also give state-level organizations increased visibility and help catalyze their own state and local fundraising efforts.

Which Organizations Are Eligible to Apply for the Grant?

Organizations that are eligible to apply for this grant must meet the following criteria:

- **Commitment to Campaign's Goals, Racial Equity, and Expanding Partnerships:** Applicants must be committed to the national campaign's goal of advancing federal affordable housing solutions for the most vulnerable low-income people;

¹ While actual award amounts are subject to vary for each grantee, the average grant will be approximately \$55,000 over the course of one year. If the national campaign secures new funds in the future, there is a possibility of renewed funding beyond one year. But, as of now, there is only one year of guaranteed funding.



committed to elevating and amplifying racial equity in their housing justice work; and committed to expanding partnerships to an array of non-housing sectors (i.e., education, health, civil rights, criminal justice, environment, faith, etc.)

- **Support of Policy Agenda:** Applicants must be in support of the policy solutions contained within the national campaign's federal [policy agenda](#) and be prepared to engage federal elected officials who represent their state to advance these policy solutions.
- **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:** Organizations from all 50 states are eligible to apply. Previous recipients of this grant are eligible to re-apply.
- **Open to Housing and Non-Housing Organizations:** Applicant organizations can come from a wide variety of sectors, not just housing (i.e., health, education, civil rights, anti-poverty, faith-based, anti-hunger, environment, criminal justice, and more). However, for purposes of this grant, their efforts must be exclusively focused on building cross-sector partnerships to influence the federal housing policies outlined in the national campaign's policy agenda.
 - *Note:* Out of the first seven organizations to receive this grant, six were primarily housing-focused organizations. One grantee was historically centered around asset building issues but added affordable housing to its portfolio of work as part of this grant.

Next Steps

If you are interested in applying for this grant, 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 form will be made available to you. The application itself should take no more than a few hours to complete.

The deadline for submission is November 22, 2020 by 5pm ET.