



Affordable Workforce Housing Planning Grant Request for Proposals

Applications due by 5 p.m. PST on Sept. 14, 2018

NWCUF Contact Information

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Background

Powered by a network of credit unions, the Northwest Credit Union Foundation (NWCUF) is uniquely positioned to harness and deliver resources that strengthen the financial lives of people throughout our region. We do this through asset building, economic empowerment, and cooperative development. In cooperation with the Northwest Credit Union Association (NWCUA), we help more than 180 Idaho, Oregon, and Washington credit unions achieve positive social impact in their communities.

Over the past year, NWCUF has become increasingly engaged in catalyzing our credit union network around the issue of affordable housing. Policy makers and credit union leaders consistently have urged NWCUF to use our resources and network to develop a significant affordable housing initiative. On January 22, 2018, we hosted our first-ever Affordable Housing Summit, where credit union leaders from across our three states came together. We identified workforce housing as an area where we have considerable opportunity, given credit unions' existing infrastructure and capabilities as community-based financial institutions.

Credit unions are uniquely positioned to think creatively and leverage resources to help address this critical issue. Whether it's single-family homes in rural Eastern Idaho, or large apartment buildings in Seattle, one thing remains abundantly clear: credit unions in our region want to step up and achieve measurable, positive impact for our members and our community in the space of affordable housing.

Your Northwest Credit Union Foundation will serve as a hub for incubating innovative solutions that have the potential to be scaled or replicated to improve housing affordability across our region. We invite all NWCUA member credit unions to submit a planning grant proposal by no later than 5 p.m. PST on Sept. 14, 2018.

Overview

The long-term goal of NWCUF's affordable housing planning grant opportunity is to increase availability and access to affordable workforce housing in our region. The proposed outcomes of the planning grant will be the development of an action plan. The plan should be well-reasoned, broadly accepted, and designed to address

the unique challenges faced by the credit union's own communities as they work to address affordable workforce housing. To the greatest extent possible, the plan should be based on solid evidence that the identified approach is likely to succeed.

NWCUF wants to help break down the barriers that prevent credit unions from engaging more fully with addressing affordable housing in their own communities. As member-driven financial cooperatives, credit unions must make business decisions that are good for their members. In NWCUF's assessment of credit unions impacting affordable housing across North America, those credit unions that are successfully implementing affordable housing programs are successful because of the partnerships they have developed to build up resources, innovate existing practices, and mitigate risk.

As community-based member-owned cooperatives, credit unions have close relationships with their membership base that big banks, traditional mortgage brokers, and the current alternative lending market simply don't have. These connections to the communities credit unions serve makes design and delivery of innovative housing solutions not just possible, but an incredible opportunity to be nimble in addressing the array of real barriers faced by underserved populations.

Funding Availability and Award Range

NWCUF has committed \$120,000 to fund planning phase grant projects. While we anticipate making awards averaging \$20,000, each applicant credit union is encouraged to apply for the reasonable funding necessary to complete the scope of work detailed in your application.

Award Timeline/Funding Period

NWCUF anticipates making planning grant awards by the end of September 2018. Affordable workforce housing planning projects should be no longer than 20 weeks in duration. NWCUF anticipates in announcing an implementation grant opportunity in early 2019. Credit unions who receive planning grant funds will be strongly encouraged to also submit an implementation grant application.

Submission Guidelines

All planning grant applications are due by no later than 5 p.m. PST on Sept. 14, 2018. To access the planning grant application form, visit <https://nwcu.org/affordable-workforce-housing-planning-grant-application/>. All fields must be completed before the form can be submitted. NWCUF strongly encourages applicants to draft responses in a Word document and copy/paste those responses into the application form.

Eligibility Requirements

NWCUF invites applications from all NWCUA member credit unions. Credit union planning projects must focus on communities in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.

Planning Grant Application Details

As mentioned previously, NWCUF strongly encourages applicants to write their responses to each application question in a Word document and copy/paste those responses into the application form. Applicants cannot save and return to the application form. **Once an application is submitted, it cannot be edited.**

The following includes all application questions and requirements (as well as character limits for each section). The online application form can be found [here](#).

Credit Union Information

- **Credit Union Name**
- **Grant Point of Contact Name**
- **Grant Point of Contact Email**
- **Grant Point of Contact Phone**

Proposal Narrative

- 1. Project Title**
- 2. Request Amount**
- 3. Community Needs Addressed (1,500 character limit)**

What is the state of affordable housing in the communities you serve? What are the needs of the populations you intend to serve through an affordable workforce housing initiative? Please include supporting data and facts, where possible.
- 4. Credit Union History with Housing (1,500 character limit)**

Please briefly describe any experience your credit union has with affordable housing products or services (including mortgages, commercial loans for multifamily housing, first-time home buyer programs, rental security deposit loans, etc.).
- 5. Project Description (7,500 character limit)**

Please provide an overview of your intended planning project. Describe your credit union's long-term affordable workforce housing goals and the specific objective(s) and deliverable(s) of this planning grant. How does your proposed project address the community needs you described above? How will the project be executed? What additional resources, such as technical assistance from NWCUF, will you need for your project to be successful?
- 6. Beneficiaries (1,500 character limit)**

Describe the populations that are most likely to ultimately benefit from your project. Are you planning to target services/products to specific underserved populations? If so, describe the populations and how you intend to serve them.
- 7. Partnerships (1,500 character limit)**

NWCUF will prioritize funding to those credit unions who demonstrate an intent to collaborate and partner with other credit unions and nonprofits. Who will your credit union partner with during the planning project? Describe the role each partner will play in the project. If no partnerships are anticipated, describe why your credit union is best equipped to work independently to carry out your planning project.
- 8. Project Location (500 character limit)**

Where will this project take place? Describe the specific region you anticipate the project benefiting (such as a single city, multiple counties, or an entire state).
- 9. Impact (1,500 character limit)**

How will this project impact affordable workforce housing and the community as a whole? What are the intended outputs and outcomes? How will you know whether the impact has been achieved?
- 10. Budget (please limit to one page)**

Please upload a planning project budget that details the costs necessary to complete the project.
- 11. Timeline (please limit to one page)**

Please upload a planning project timeline that details the key milestone and deliverables.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

NWCUF is committed to promoting and supporting efforts that address the inequalities that exist in communities across our region. Through our affordable workforce housing grantmaking, we will prioritize funding for credit unions or credit union partnerships that clearly identify diversity, equity, and inclusion outcomes in their planning grant proposal. For more information, or to discuss ideas for DEI outcomes for your grant project, please contact Sharee Adkins at sadkins@nwcua.org.

Types of Eligible Affordable Workforce Housing Projects

NWCUF is committed to supporting innovative affordable workforce housing solutions in communities across our region. Affordable housing is a complex issue and no single solution will work for all communities. As such, NWCUF is interested in funding planning grants that identify innovative scalable or replicable solutions that are responsive to the needs of local communities. What works in rural communities might not be what works in urban areas, and what works in Idaho might not work in Washington, etc. Some credit unions may choose to identify ways they can positively impact the rental market, while others will choose to focus on how they can impact homeownership. With this funding opportunity, the sky is the limit.

In January of this year, NWCUF convened an Affordable Housing Summit and shared examples of affordable housing success stories from across North America. These examples were meant to illustrate the depth and breadth of what's possible for credit unions, and the presentations from the Summit can be found here:

[Single Family Housing Solutions](#), Larry Garcia, Mountain Star Federal Credit Union

[Impact Real Estate](#), Lilian Chau, Vancity Credit Union

[Affordable Rental Housing and Multiunit Housing Solutions](#), Mark Kretzschmar, North Carolina State Employees Credit Union

Defining Affordable Workforce Housing

For the purposes of this planning grant RFP, NWCUF defines affordable workforce housing as housing that is affordable to workers and close to their jobs; and that is affordable to households earning 60% to 140% of the area median income. Affordable workforce housing can include homeownership as well as rental housing and should ensure housing costs are no more than 30% of income. Workforce housing is often thought of as housing for teachers, police officers, firefighters, etc., but also includes housing for young professionals, workers in the construction trades, retail salespeople, office workers, service workers, and others. On the housing continuum, workforce housing is adjacent to market rate rental housing and market rate homeownership.



Housing continuum shared by Vancity CU at Affordable Housing Summit and included in Vancity CU presentation (above).

Resources to Aid Credit Unions in Understanding and Demonstrating Need

At the Northwest Credit Union Foundation's January Affordable Housing Summit, regional experts shared compelling data about the state of affordable housing in the Seattle/King County area. Seattle/King County data shared at the Summit can be found here:

[State of Affordable Housing in Our Region](#), Marty Kooistra, Housing Development Consortium

Since the Summit, NWCUF has worked to develop a dashboard of Zillow data that will help credit unions gain a clearer understanding of the specific housing challenges in the communities they serve. This dashboard is limited to only Zillow data at this time, though NWCUF will continuously work to develop this resource into a robust data set that may eventually include Census and other relevant data sets. Credit unions interested in learning more about the state of affordable housing in their own communities can access NWCUF's dashboard here:

[NWCUF Affordability in the Northwest Tableau Dashboard](#)

We strongly encourage credit unions interested in utilizing this dashboard to contact Sharee Adkins at sadkins@nwcua.org to receive a quick overview of the dashboard's functionality.

Eligible Planning Grant Expenses

Planning grants provide a unique funding opportunity for researching and developing a project that will be implemented after completion of the grant period. Through this grant opportunity, NWCUF will fund feasibility studies, financial analysis and modeling, policy research and development, project management expenses, and any other reasonable expenses necessary to fully develop an affordable workforce housing project implementation plan.

Reporting

Every credit union receiving an affordable workforce housing planning grant from NWCUF has a responsibility to report on the use of grant funds. Upon grant award, NWCUF and the recipient credit union will develop agreed-upon project deliverables, including the production of an implementation project plan. Failure to meet project deliverables or submit a project plan could influence future grant decisions by NWCUF.

Engagement with NWCUF and Other Grantees

Every credit union receiving an affordable workforce housing planning grant from NWCUF will be expected to participate in regular check-in meetings with NWCUF program staff. Additionally, it may be beneficial from time to time for all grantees to discuss best practices, barriers, and progress toward project deliverables. For this purpose, NWCUF will coordinate in-person, video, and/or phone meetings and grantees will be strongly encouraged to participate. NWCUF recognizes that the 20-week planning project grant period is short and will work to provide technical assistance and additional resources that enable credit unions to efficiently and effectively work to project completion.

Questions

NWCUF is committed to ensuring that every interested NWCUA member credit union has the support they need to join us in addressing affordable workforce housing. Credit unions with questions, need for additional information, or need for assistance are strongly encouraged to contact Sharee Adkins at sadkins@nwcua.org.