

Choice Neighborhoods

monthly news about transforming housing, people, & neighborhoods

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants Application Posted

HUD posted the FY 2021 Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants [Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#) on November 17, 2021. Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants support communities that have undertaken a comprehensive local planning process and are ready to implement it. HUD is making available approximately \$218,000,000 for Implementation Grants. The maximum grant award has increased this year to \$50 million. Applications are due on February 15, 2022.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

American Rescue Plan Senior Demonstration Program--AmeriCorps

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 provides additional federal [resources](#) to AmeriCorps Seniors with a particular interest in programs that will serve communities hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. Applicants must demonstrate how they will engage adults 55-years-old and over to address one or more priorities, which range from education, access to care, aging in place, and economic opportunities (see the full [NOFO](#) for details). Applications are due on February 3, 2022. Total funds available: approximately \$10 million. Grant amounts range from \$100,000 to \$500,000.

Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program

Funding is designed to support the development of [community-based food projects](#) and to make them self-sustaining. The primary goal of the program is to meet the food needs of low-income individuals through a variety of methods, including distribution, linkages to Federal programs, increasing self-reliance, and other community investments. Projects and plans must focus on a defined community and describe in detail the activities and outcomes of the plan or project. More details [here](#). Application deadline (FY2023): November 29, 2022. Award ceiling: \$400,000.

Challenge America, National Endowment for the Arts

[Challenge America](#) grants support small organizations for projects in all artistic disciplines that extend the reach of the arts to populations that are underserved. Project support will start after January 1, 2023. Grants awarded generally cover a period of up to two years. Application deadline: April 21, 2022. Award ceiling/floor: \$10,000.

YouthBuild, Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration

The purpose of the YouthBuild program is to [fund organizations](#) to provide a pre-apprenticeship program model that includes education, occupational skills training, leadership development, and post-program placement opportunities to disadvantaged youth

between the ages of 16 and 24 who left high school prior to graduation. Eligible applicants include public or private non-profit agencies. Application deadline: January 21, 2022. Award ceiling/floor: \$1,500,000/\$700,000. Expected number of awards: 75.

EVENTS & TOOLS

Child Tax Credit Resources

To assist residents in accessing the expanded child tax credit, HUD has produced a series of [resources](#), including webinars, fact sheets, and flyers in English and Spanish. Residents who do not earn enough to file taxes can also [still qualify](#) for the child tax credit by filing their taxes for 2021. Federal government resources for filing taxes, including the location of free VITA/TCE tax preparation sites, can be found [here](#).

Community Arts Programs

Policy Link's [Arts, Culture, and Community Development](#) website presents evidence, ideas, and resources about the ArtPlace America [Community Development Investments Initiative](#) (CDI). Written and video resources are available and focus on a set of "core competencies" needed for organizations to succeed, video interviews with nearly 40 CDI participants, and the links to press and scholarly attention to CDI.

RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS

Filling the Affordable Housing Gap

This [article](#) from HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research summarizes a discussion about how permanent supportive housing, financed in part by health care providers, can provide a valuable resource to families.

Community Wealth Building Models

This [article](#) from the Urban Institute describes mechanisms to expand community ownership, enable community-led investment decisions, and generate revenues from community-based assets that can further local ownership and wealth-building in communities.

Climate Resilience Strategies

New York City Housing Authority used a [virtual technical assistance](#) panel to assess how to boost climate resilience at one of its residential campuses, Marlboro Houses, in the Gravesend neighborhood of Brooklyn. The recommendations of the virtual panel will be incorporated into future RFPs for modernization efforts.

Generation Work Initiative

This [case study](#) focuses on how the Hartford Generation Work local partnership adapted its efforts to authentically engage young adults by establishing a youth advisory council called the Young Legends to help shape its work; also discussed are the benefits and challenges of the partnership's efforts.

GRANTEE SPOTLIGHT

Last year marked the tenth anniversary of Choice Neighborhoods. Over the last ten years we've seen many grantees transform their communities into strong, vibrant areas of growth and opportunity. The November and December 2021 newsletters highlighted Philadelphia and Norwalk's success stories. We will continue to feature grantees from the FY2013 cohort in the January and February issues. We hope these stories will inspire you and reveal what's possible through engaging public housing residents and community members in revitalization efforts.



Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh's first Choice Neighborhood – located three miles east of downtown – is comprised of the Larimer neighborhood and the eastern-most section of the adjacent East Liberty neighborhood. After decades of disinvestment and economic decline, the East End neighborhoods are undergoing significant investment and unprecedented growth with several technology companies like Google setting up shop.

Building on these historic investments, HUD awarded the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh (HACP) and the City of Pittsburgh a \$30 million Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant (FY2013) to “pull” East Liberty’s development momentum into Larimer. The Choice Neighborhoods grant centers on the redevelopment of the Hamilton-Larimer public housing site and the East Liberty Gardens project-based Section 8 development. Strong community-based civic organizations like the Larimer Consensus Group laid the groundwork for securing the Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant by conducting a comprehensive planning process and developing a [vision for the neighborhood](#).

The first three (of four) phases of Pittsburgh’s housing plan are complete with a total of 247 new mixed-income rental units, 115 of which are replacement units. The East Liberty/Larimer Choice Team recently broke ground on Phase III which includes 42 units in a 3-story mixed-use building in the heart of Larimer's historic business district.

Staying true to the community’s vision as a “21st Century Green Neighborhood that Works” each of the housing developments were built using sustainable technologies and the first two phases achieved Enterprise Green Communities certification, a stringent green rating factor for mixed income developments. Phases III and IV are also expected to achieve this certification upon completion.

Phase IV is under construction and focuses redevelopment efforts on a neighborhood jewel,

the historic Larimer School. Larimer School is the last remaining historic structure of significance in Larimer and the Choice team made great efforts to ensure it remained a prominent feature within the community by preserving and rehabilitating the building for occupancy.



Throughout the course of the grant, the East Liberty/Larimer Choice team focused on sustainability, green infrastructure, and access to parks and recreation. The new mixed-income housing development surrounds the new 3.2 acre Liberty Green Park. The park cost \$6.5 million and includes intergenerational features that bring together both old and young residents. The park includes new play mounds and playground equipment, a public plaza, and an open lawn. The park also incorporates stormwater management systems designed to capture 4 million gallons of water runoff from the park each year.

To further support the neighborhood's homeowners and residential character, the Urban Redevelopment Authority launched a comprehensive homeowner assistance program in the Choice Neighborhood. The program provided grants of up to \$20,000 for exterior improvements. Through proactive community engagement, URA's program has supported existing homeowners, improved the neighborhood's visual appeal, helped connect the new public housing development with the surrounding neighborhood, and broadened the positive impact of the Choice Neighborhoods funding in the neighborhood.



Before and after facade improvements

A key aspect of Choice Neighborhoods grants is the focus on improving residents' access to healthcare, quality education, and employment opportunities. At the end of the grant term, 95% of residents had health insurance (up from 37%) and 66% of residents had full time employment, up from 12% at the start of the grant. To maintain this momentum, HACP, the City, Urban Strategies, and the Allegheny Department of Human Services created a long-term sustainability plan for the Choice Neighborhoods residents. The County's Human Services agency will oversee a supportive services endowment and provide critical services to residents moving forward.

The East Liberty/Larimer Choice Neighborhood started as a vision by community residents that led to investment from many partners over the last 20 years. Today, the neighborhood signals a rebirth and commitment to providing safe, affordable, and sustainable housing for those who call Pittsburgh home. The overall grant is a model for what Choice Neighborhoods can be, supporting those who have called Larimer home for decades while

welcoming new residents to the area.

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