



Choice Neighborhoods

e-news about transforming housing, people and neighborhoods

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FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Art Works Grant Program Encouraging Public Engagement in the Arts

The National Endowment for the Arts is accepting applications for [Art Works](#), a grant program that supports the creation of excellent art, encourages public engagement with diverse and public art, facilitates lifelong learning in the arts, and strengthens communities through art. Matching grants generally range from \$10,000 to \$100,000. There will be two rounds of application reviews and awards. The deadline for the [first round](#) of applications is February 16, 2017; the deadline for the second round is July 13, 2017.

Pilot Grants for Partnerships that Increase Inclusion in STEM Fields

The National Science Foundation (NSF) released a solicitation for [NSF INCLUDES](#) seeking proposals for collaborative initiatives aimed at enhancing preparation, increasing participation, and ensuring contributions of individuals from groups that have traditionally been underrepresented and underserved in the STEM sector. For 2017, 25 awards of up to \$300,000 each will be awarded. Preliminary proposals are [due](#) February 14, 2017; full proposals are due May 16, 2017.

Grants to Create Workforce Development Programs for Environmental Cleanup

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a [funding opportunity](#) for local governments or nonprofits to deliver Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training programs that recruit, train, and place local unemployed and underemployed residents with the skills needed to secure full-time employment in the environmental field. For 2017, EPA expects to grant 15 awards of up to \$200,000. The deadline to [apply](#) is February 24, 2017.

Funding Opportunity for Collaborative Initiatives to Reduce Youth Drug Use

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)'s Drug-Free Communities (DFC) program is accepting applications for funding for coalitions undergoing planning efforts to reduce drug use among youth using SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework. Approximately 70 awards will be granted for up to \$125,000 per year for five year cycles. [Applications](#) are due March 15, 2017.

CommunityWINS Grant Program for Neighborhood Revitalization

The U.S. Conference of Mayors [is accepting](#) nominations for the 2017 CommunityWINS Grant Program. This program funds projects related to neighborhood revitalization, economic development, and job creation. Six awards ranging from \$50,000 to \$300,000 will be granted to nonprofits identified by mayors or city leadership. [Applications](#) are due March 17, 2017.

Farmers Markets Promotion Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is seeking applications for its [Farmers Market Promotion Program](#), which supports development, improvement, and expansion of domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agritourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities. Funding can be used to increase the distribution of fresh produce in food deserts. The program has \$13 million in funding available, with grants ranging from \$50,000 to \$500,000. The deadline to [apply](#) is March 27, 2017.

Funding for Programs to Prevent Youth Violence

The Office of Minority Health (OMH) in the Department of Health and Human Services announced funds for the Minority Youth Violence Prevention II program. The program emphasizes integrating social determinants of health with community policing approaches and a collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach. OMH will award 11 grants of up to \$425,000 per year for four years. The deadline to [apply](#) is April 4, 2017.

EVENTS AND TOOLS

Upcoming Webinar on TANF and WIOA to Support Two-Generation Efforts

On February 16, 2017, the U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Dept of Labor will host a [webinar](#) on how Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding can support two-generation efforts, which pair programming targeting children with programming for parents. Additionally, HHS' [Self-Sufficiency Research Clearinghouse](#) published a [Selections Report](#) – a compilation of research – on two-generation approaches.

Strong Foundations: The Economic Futures of Kids and Communities

The Federal Reserve System will host a [conference](#) exploring the connection between child development and neighborhood revitalization. The conference will be March 23-24, 2017, in Washington, DC. [Registration](#) ends on February 24, 2017.

Recorded Webinar on Approach to Improve Student Behavior and Learning

The American Youth Policy Forum recently posted a [recorded webinar](#) exploring what districts and school leaders can do to incorporate Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). Practitioners that work with children in poverty can improve child behavior and increase learning capacity by incorporating social and emotional education into educational programming.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Resource Guide for Local Governments to Expand Broadband Access

The National Resource Network worked with six cities to produce a resource guide, [Access and Inclusion in the Digital Age](#), to share lessons learned about expanding internet access and increasing digital literacy, including overcoming common obstacles.

Communication Guide for Reaching and Engaging Hispanic Communities

The Child Trends Hispanic Institute, in collaboration with the Crimsonbridge Foundation, assembled a [guidebook](#) and [webinar](#) to help service providers and educators develop more effective strategies to reach and engage Latino and Hispanic families.

Resident Voices from a Collaborative Planning Effort in DC

The Urban Institute partnered with residents of Benning Terrace to design and test a program for youth. [This article](#) provides the residents' feedback on their experience participating in the design

of the program, and offers some suggestions to inform other communities engaged in community planning efforts.

Promoting Entrepreneurship and Job Creation through Worker-Owned Businesses

A recent [Shelterforce article](#) looks at how creating worker-owned businesses can promote entrepreneurship and job opportunities in low-income areas. It profiles policies and practices from Richmond, VA, Austin, TX, and Oakland, CA.

Peer Health Leaders Improve Health Outcomes for Public Housing Residents

[An article](#) in [Crosswalk Magazine](#) describes how HOPE SF communities in San Francisco have addressed poor health outcomes among public housing residents. The article features three Choice Neighborhoods communities and their target housing developments, including Alice Griffith, Potrero Terrace and Potrero Annex, and Sunnydale. These communities are successfully rebuilding trust and connecting residents to healthy activities through innovative efforts, including creating community health and wellness centers that are on site and staffed by public housing tenants and using a trauma-informed approach to inform community engagement.

SPOTLIGHT: Atlanta Community Engagement Playbook

As a Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grantee, the Atlanta Housing Authority, the City of Atlanta, and their partners engaged hundreds of residents, churches, businesses, and community stakeholders in a collaborative planning process. The lessons from this effort and related City planning initiatives on Atlanta's Westside are captured in a practical guide entitled the [Atlanta Community Engagement Playbook](#). With funding from the [Living Cities: City Accelerator](#), the Playbook was developed by the Housing Authority of Atlanta (AHA), the City of Atlanta, partner agencies and residents from five Atlanta Westside neighborhoods.



Figure 1: Choice Neighborhoods focus group at Washington High School

Based on Atlanta's experience, the Playbook includes a set of actionable practices (or 'plays') specifically designed to achieve greater levels of quality community engagement. This resource is broken into two sections – one for community-based associations, and one for service-providers (e.g., local governments, anchor institutions, and nonprofits). The plays for community-based associations follow three guiding principles: 1) act constructively, 2) build collectively, and 3) work creatively. The plays and action guides help community organizations get organized, share their stories, and take action. The plays for service providers follow these guiding principles: 1) build holistically, 2) act sustainably, and 3) work transparently. The Playbook concludes with a series of [Action Guides](#), such as 'Creating a Stakeholder Interest Map' and 'Creating an Outreach Plan.'

One lesson that the Atlanta Housing Authority (AHA) learned through the community engagement process is how much place matters. They found it was important for service providers to go into the communities and get to know residents by attending community gatherings, visiting places of worship, and patronizing neighborhood establishments. AHA also conducted meetings at venues familiar to the community. For example, to engage young people in the planning process, AHA organized a focus group with high school students at Washington High School (pictured above).

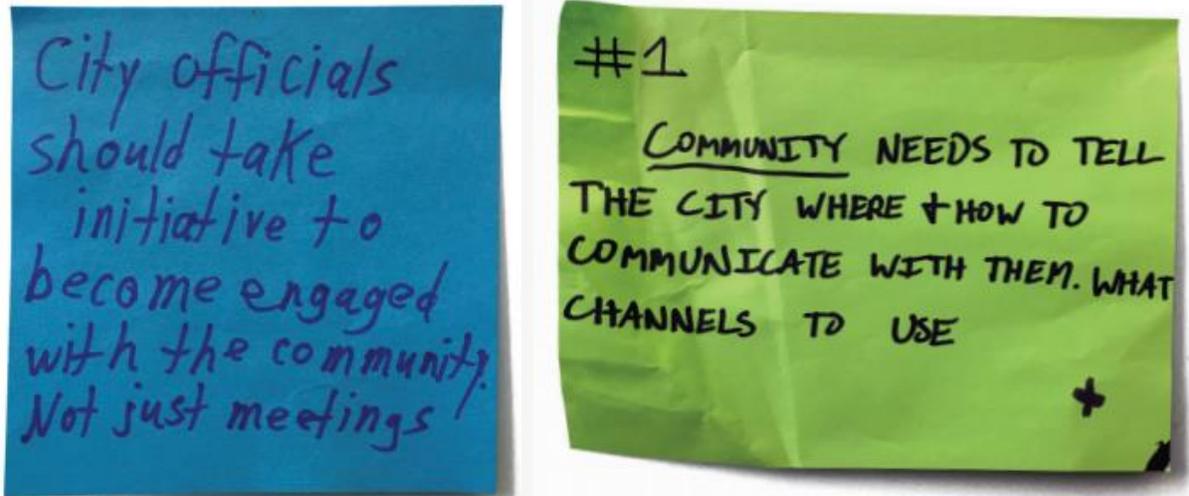


Figure 2: Post-it notes from community members on how to improve civic engagement.

Another lesson learned was focusing on building residents' capacity and empowering resident-led revitalization efforts. AHA implemented a microgrant program to build resident capacity, achieve "quick wins," and help build momentum. However, AHA found that there was a need for additional instruction on developing a project proposal and registering as a vendor to receive the microgrant funds. In response, they decided to hold mandatory training for all microgrant applicants to deliver this information. This training helped improve the quality of the project proposals, and also provided residents with stronger project planning skills. In 2016, AHA funded 12 projects with grants ranging from \$2,500 to \$5,000. Projects included the creation of a Parent Patrol Program, a neighborhood tour titled 'Digitally Mapping Our Past, Our Present, Our Future through Archives and Oral History', and a robotics team to promote STEM education, among other projects. This experience helped inform some of the Playbook's suggestions in the 'Step Back' section. These plays help service-providers prepare to step back, hand off pieces of work and cultivate community leadership.



Figure 3: Healthy Living Festival organized by AHA in the CN Area

For more plays and easy-to-implement ideas, download the [Playbook and Action Guides](#).

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