



GUIDELINES FOR MHP COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FUND

Minnesota Housing Partnership (MHP) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote homes for all Minnesotans and to assist Minnesota communities in the creation and preservation of housing affordable to low and moderate income people. MHP works to accomplish its mission by supporting communities as they plan and develop affordable housing as part of wider economic and social development objectives and by building community and political support for affordable housing. In doing that, applicants are encouraged to communicate engagement plans with MHP staff prior to submitting the application.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

MHP’s Community Engagement Fund promotes data gathering and planning efforts that are the critical foundation of responding effectively to community and regional housing needs. The Community Engagement Fund of the Minnesota Housing Partnership (“MHP”) is designed to complement MHP technical assistance to help nonprofit organizations, public agencies and communities to become strong, successful affordable housing providers.

<p>Small Investments (maximum \$3,500.00) Awards are for specific organizational activities, such as strategic planning, business planning, and board training. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial management capacity • Community comprehensive/strategic plans • Small-scale activities to meet local housing needs such as local community building • Increase board capacity to produce or preserve affordable housing • Property management assessments <p>Match Requirement: Applicants must provide a minimum 1:1 cash match.</p>	<p>Large Investments (maximum \$10,000.00) Awards are for planning efforts and community engagement initiatives that address the community/regional affordable housing need. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing needs assessments • Strong regional or community planning initiatives • Identification and prioritization of community development plans • Generating acceptance and support from community stakeholders for affordable housing development • Increase applicant’s capacity to apply for and obtain GMHF, MHFA or USDA resources <p>Match Requirement: Applicants must provide a minimum 1:1.5 match. Applicant may include in-kind commitment of staff not to exceed 50% of the overall match.</p>
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ELIGIBILITY

- Applicants must be a nonprofit developer, township, city, or county government body in the state of Minnesota, including housing authorities, housing and redevelopment authorities and tribal organizations. For multi-jurisdictional proposals, one entity may apply on behalf of numerous jurisdictions.
- Applicants must be located outside the seven-county Twin Cities metro area and Duluth.
- Only organizations that develop, rehabilitate, own or sponsor affordable housing are eligible to apply.
- Activities must be completed within 12 months of signature of grant agreement. For large investments, a onetime, one year extension may be considered.
- **For small investments**, applicants may apply for a maximum of \$3,500. Neither grant funds nor leveraged resources can be used for activities that have already occurred.
- **For large investments**, applicants may request up to \$10,000 for early planning efforts. Eligible expenses may include consultant fees, but MHP will review the role of the consultant to ensure that the applicant has a primary role in the preparation of the application and in leading the activity. Funds may not be used for activities that have already occurred or for expenditures that have not been approved by MHP.
- For multiple jurisdictions, all participating entities are encouraged to contribute to the pool of matching resources.

FUNDING CRITERIA

- **Priority** will be given to applicants that incorporate MHP technical assistance and/or MHP staff support into their planning and/or implementation of proposed activities.
- Need for and clarity of proposed activities.
- Likelihood that grantee organization, using MHP funds, will produce or preserve affordable housing units in the next two years.
- Evidence of strong community support (e.g., city/county resolution showing support for affordable housing in proposed community, letters of support from regional partners and/or collaborative organizations, matching funds, waived fees, etc.)
- Qualifications and track record of affordable housing staff, collaborative organizations, and consultants (e.g., success of past affordable housing projects).
- To provide an even distribution of funds throughout the state during each fiscal year, priority will be given to regions that have not received a MHP funding commitment.



BASIC GRANT TERMS

For Small Investments:

Upon selection, MHP will execute an agreement with the recipient, which will include more detailed terms and reporting requirements. Additionally, MHP periodically surveys past grant recipients to determine the ultimate outcomes of its financial investments.

MHP will pay out the award upon completion of the activities, copies of any written materials produced, and acceptance of a final (1-2 page report) which shows how the funds were used (including match) and describes the benefit to the organization. Any MHP commitment not disbursed within 12 months from signature of the agreement will be cancelled.

Match Requirement:

- Applicants must provide evidence of a minimum 1:1 match in cash.

For Large Investments:

Upon signature of grant agreement, MHP will proportionately reimburse the organization for eligible expenses incurred. First payment may occur 30 days after entering into a signed agreement. The final payment will be made upon receipt of copies of any written materials produced, along with a final 1-2 page report describing what was learned from the activities, the community engagement achieved and the expected next steps in the community/region.

Please note that the final payment may be adjusted if total expenses do not equal the budgeted amount. Activities must be completed within 12 months of signature of grant agreement. Any commitment not disbursed within one year from signature of grant agreement will be cancelled.

Match Requirement:

- Applicants must provide evidence of a minimum 1:1.5 match.
- Applicants may include in-kind commitment of staff not to exceed 50% of the overall match.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Please provide the following documents:

- Completed Community Engagement Fund Request Form.
- Proposed activities budget (line item), documenting amount of matching funds and amount requested.
- Proposed timeline with measureable benchmarks.
- Evidence of community support (e.g., city council/local jurisdiction resolution showing support for proposed activity, letters of support from regional partners and/or collaborative organizations, proof of cash match, etc.).
- Résumé of key staff managing the proposed activities.
- If working with a consultant, provide job description, bio, and fee structure. If consultant has not been identified, provide job description and estimated daily rate for the consultant.
- For fund requests over \$3,500.00, include the most recent audited financial statement of the fiscal agent for the grant.



MHP reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received.

Questions: Please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Belleful if you have any questions regarding this application. She can be reached at (651) 925-5558 or at sarah.belleful@mhponline.org

Generous support from the McKnight Foundation makes this program possible.

To submit: MHP requires a paper copy and an electronic copy of your Community Engagement Fund Request Form and attachments.

- **The electronic copy should be emailed to sarah.belleful@mhponline.org.**
- **The paper copy should be mailed or faxed to:**
 - Minnesota Housing Partnership
Attn: Sarah Belleful
2446 University Avenue West, #140,
St. Paul, MN 55114
 - Fax: (651) 649-1725

LOAN AND GRANT SCHEDULE

The MHP Loan and Grant Committee meet the first Tuesday of every even-numbered month to review applications. Applications must be received a minimum of three weeks prior to a meeting in order to be considered for funding.

Application Due Dates	Meeting Dates
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● February 2, 2010● March 16, 2010● May 11, 2010● July 13, 2010● September 14, 2010● November 16, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● February 16, 2010● April 6, 2010● June 1, 2010● August 3, 2010● October 5, 2010● December 7, 2010

These dates are tentative and may change without notice.