



**CAPACITY BUILDING FOR ECONOMIC RESILIENCE  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**PROPOSALS ARE DUE BY CLOSE OF BUSINESS FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 2017**

**OPTIONAL INFORMATIONAL CONFERENCE CALL: THURSDAY, JULY 13, 11:00AM CONFERENCE NUMBER 1-888-446-7584, PARTICIPANT CODE 262137 (CALL WILL NOT BE TRANSCRIBED OR RECORDED)**

**PROPOSALS MUST BE SUBMITTED AS A SINGLE PDF VIA EMAIL TO [MSANCHEZ@LISC.ORG](mailto:MSANCHEZ@LISC.ORG). NO FAXES WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

**COMPLETE APPLICATIONS INCLUDE THE APPLICATION FORM, NARRATIVES AND ATTACHMENTS**

## **Announcement: Availability of Section 4 Funds for Economic Resilience**

Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Boston invites proposals from community-based organizations in Massachusetts with proven success developing both affordable housing and economic opportunity programs to apply for grants of up to \$50,000. We anticipate making four awards.

**DUE DATE: Friday, August 4, 2017**

### **About LISC**

LISC Boston works to increase equity across Massachusetts, helping **people** gain the opportunities and skills they need to succeed, and improving the health, safety, and prosperity of the **places** they work, play, and live. Together with residents and community-based organizations, we work to ensure that everyone has the chance to live in vibrant communities of choice and possibility.

Our economic development initiatives help families improve their financial stability, and boost the health of neighborhoods by investing in the physical and social assets in their communities. Our comprehensive community planning work in three Boston neighborhoods over the past seven years has highlighted the importance of expanding economic opportunities as key to stabilizing neighborhoods.

### **Economic Resilience Grants**

LISC Boston is inviting proposals from community-based organizations in Massachusetts that are committed to supporting and advancing individuals through training programs, capacity-building, or direct technical assistance associated with wealth- building/financial stability. The goal of this grant is to provide organizations with funding that will strengthen the organization and support economic opportunities for their neighborhoods.

Specifically, we are looking to advance organizations that have programming in the following areas:

- Small business development & stabilization
- Job/workforce development
- Foreclosure prevention & first time homebuyers programs
- Financial coaching/credit building support

Funds will be allocated through the HUD Section 4 program, which is designed to build the capacity of Community Development Corporations (CDCs) and Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) to carry out affordable housing and community development activities that benefit low- and moderate-income families and individuals. CDCs and CHDOs must be organized under Federal, State or local law to engage in community development activities (which may include housing and economic development activities) primarily within an identified geographic area of operation. CDCs and CHDOs must have a tax

exemption ruling from the IRS under 501(c)(3) or (4) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Capacity-building grants are the core of the Section 4 funds. These strategic investments support key CDC staff and other operations that allow organizations to sustain and increase their organizational and programmatic capacity.

***What do we mean by Capacity-Building?*** *Capacity-building is whatever is needed to bring a nonprofit to the next level of operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational maturity, so it may more effectively and efficiently advance its mission into the future. Capacity-building is not a one-time effort to improve short-term effectiveness, but a continuous improvement strategy toward the creation of a sustainable and effective organization. LISC uses HUD Section 4 funding to provide direct grants to support CDC staff and systems, expert technical assistance (TA) to help individual CDCs and/or groups of CDCs improve their operations or programming, and training to build the skills and knowledge of CDCs and their partners.*

## **Narrative**

Your proposal narrative should be a maximum of ten pages (twelve point black type and 1" margins), excluding cover page and requested attachments (see page 7). Please include each of the following elements in the proposal narrative:

1. Describe the population(s) and/or community(ies) the organization serves: socio-economic status, race/ethnicity; immigrants; level of education; language; age; and physical.
2. Summarize your organization's recent work (2015-present) developing economic opportunities for the population(s) and/or community(ies) described above.
3. Describe your organization's current programs and accomplishments.
4. Describe the current challenges and opportunities the organization is facing that this grant would help assist.
5. Describe the top three capacity needs of the organization and how these funds will assist in responding to the challenges and opportunities listed above.
6. Detail how the community will be involved in this project or affected by its outcomes.
7. Summarize how this grant will help the organization increase the quality of its programs and services for its community.
8. Program Budget (See Attachment C) – Please indicate if you have not received Section 4 funds before.

## **Eligibility**

A Section 4 operating grant cannot be more than 25% of a CDC's total proposed operating budget in any given year. Funds may be used to cover such operating costs as:

- Staff salaries and benefits (no more than 75% of any one salary)
- Staff development and travel related to staff development
- Operating expenses including but not limited to: utilities, rent, office supplies and/or equipment
- Consultants for improving internal capacity-building, strategic planning, business/administrative systems, financial/asset management, increasing scope or range of programs, efficiency gains for current programs
- Other related allowable activities may be considered

In order to be considered eligible, an organization must meet the following threshold criteria:

- Be a 501(c)(3) non-profit incorporated in the state of Massachusetts that engages in community development activities primarily within an identified geographic area of operation
- Have, as a primary line of business, the development of affordable housing and economic opportunity
- Be a community-controlled organization, where at least 51% of the Board of Directors are community residents, business/civic leaders or other stakeholders in the CDC's service area
- Conduct an annual audit through an independent certified accountant
- Agree to provide all requested financial materials
- Agree to work with LISC Boston to establish independent evaluations of the organization's overall operating capacity as requested
- Agree to meet with representatives of the LISC Boston staff
- Have a Duns number and a current active SAM.gov registration
- Not currently be in default of any LISC transaction
- Have internal reporting capabilities to demonstrate results

LISC reserves the right to request additional information from all organizations that are awarded funding and selected to participate in the program.

**TIMELINE**

<b>July 7, 2017</b>	Request for Proposals released
<b>July 11, 2017 11 a.m.</b>	Optional Conference Call for applicants LISC Conference # 1-888-446-7584 (access code 262137)
<b>August 4, 2017</b>	Proposals due by close of business (5:00 PM)
<b>August 14-25, 2017</b>	LISC will conduct site visits
<b>August 31, 2017</b>	Funding decisions announced
<b>August 31, 2017</b>	<b>All organizations awarded funding are required to provide copies of their two most recent financial audits and quarterly financial statement.</b>
<b>October 1, 2017</b>	Grant term begins
<b>December 31, 2017</b>	End of first quarter-disbursement requests and progress reports are due on or before January 15, 2018
<b>March 30, 2018</b>	End of second quarter-disbursement requests are due on or before April 15, 2018
<b>June 30, 2018</b>	End of third quarter disbursement requests and final progress reports are due on or before July 15, 2018
<b>September 30, 2018</b>	Final - quarter disbursement requests and final process reports are due on or before October 15, 2018.

## EVALUATION AND SELECTION

The LISC Boston Committee will review grant applications and make funding decisions for this program. The Committee will review all information provided in the attached application as well as information gathered at site visits. **Only semi-finalists will receive a site visit.**

**The baseline criteria that the LISC Boston Committee will use to make funding decisions are:**

- An organization that prioritizes comprehensive community development and economic stability activities within a geographic area(s) for which the organization is implementing a broader strategy
- Quality and performance of completed development projects and community programming
- Commitment to an operating approach that addresses comprehensive community needs through neighborhood partnerships
- Overall health and stability of organization
- Commitment to working with LISC that includes timely submissions of requested information and active engagement in training and technical assistance
- Staff/board reflective of the geographic population

## **Request for Proposals**

### **Attachments Checklist**

#### **Attachments:**

- Attachment A – Application Form (attached) and Organizational Chart
- Attachment B – Brief Bios of Key Staff
- Attachment C – Proposed Program Budget (template attached)
- Attachment D – Work Plan (template attached)
- Attachment E – Real Estate Development Report (if applicable)
- Attachment F – Most Recent Audited Financials (if not previously submitted to LISC Boston)
- Attachment G – Copy of IRS 501(c)(3) Determination Letter