

General Housing Account Program (GHAP) Capacity Building Program

Grantee Handbook

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Introduction

Access to safe, affordable, stable housing is vital to improving the quality of life for Oregon’s families and communities. Community-based nonprofit housing developers, local housing authorities, Native Nation (Tribal) housing entities, and local governments are uniquely positioned within their communities to support placemaking and provide culturally specific and responsive housing and resident services.

Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) recognizes the important role that values, and mission-driven housing development, preservation, and management organizations play in the long-term health and success of our communities. The GHAP Capacity Building program was created to support the growth and development of these entities toward meeting their affordable rental housing priorities.

GHAP Capacity Building (GHAP CB) Grants help organizations and local government agencies that currently (or have taken documented steps to) develop, preserve, or manage affordable rental housing by providing funds for a variety of capacity building activities.

Grant offerings are typically \$50,000 to \$75,000 per year and are intended to support the applicant in advancing their mission related to providing safe, healthy, and stable affordable rental housing. Offerings may also be structured to broadly support regional capacity building, and can support growth of one or more areas of the affordable rental housing industry. Grants are typically two-year grants but may include the possibility of extension for additional years.

OHCS may focus on investing in activities and projects that clearly align with the priorities outlined in the Statewide Housing Plan and support the agency’s goals for affordable rental housing. Allocations through this fund are focused on supporting the development and operation of affordable multi-family rental housing.

General Capacity Building Grant Guidelines

Staff contact information

For more information about current funding opportunities, please visit the [GHAP Capacity Building webpage](#) or contact the GHAP Capacity Building program at HCS.GHAP.CB@hcs.oregon.gov. Additional information about the GHAP Capacity Building program can be found in the [GHAP Program Manual](#).

Who can apply

GHAP Capacity Building grant offerings are usually tailored to support certain strategic needs or goals for capacity building and housing development. The entities listed below are eligible to receive GHAP Capacity Building funds. Specific solicitations and grant



offerings may open only to a limited set of eligible entities depending on the goals of the offering.

- Nonprofits
- Public Housing Authorities
- Tribal Nations and Tribally Designated Housing Entities
- Local Governments

General requirements*

- Applicant organizations must be registered as a business in Oregon and funded activities must serve residents in Oregon.
- Grantees must carry insurance coverage and are responsible for the proper use, accounting, and reporting of grant funds.
- Applicants must have the development, preservation, or operation of affordable rental housing clearly stated within their Bylaws or have a Board decision on record directing the organization to begin activities or preparations toward the development, preservation, or management of affordable housing.

**Specific grant offerings may include additional requirements.*

Program goals:

- Increase housing production, preservation, and sustainability in regions and communities in Oregon with unmet needs through capacity building investments.
- Strengthen capacity of eligible entities and geographic areas in Oregon with high need for housing and limited local resources to meet shared affordable rental housing development and operating goals.

Current focus:

- Workforce development for affordable rental housing (ARH) professions
- Culturally specific developer and sponsor organizations capacity building
- Rural regional and organizational capacity building

GHAP Capacity Building Strategic Priorities

Build knowledge and collective power for housing organizations

Examples

- Training and technical assistance
- Networking, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing activities with other organizations engaged in the development and/or management of affordable rental housing



- Build and provide educational curriculum/sessions related to affordable rental housing
- Support for peer-to-peer mentoring within and between organizations

Build organizational capacity for self-determination

Examples

- Paid internships for housing development and asset management positions
- Consulting to support the development of in-house tools and processes
- Technology upgrades to support efficiency and effectiveness
- Activities towards building organizational and staff emotional well-being
- Use of capacity building grant funds to pay current housing development or asset management staff for the specific purpose of setting aside surplus funds to create or grow the organization’s emergency reserve account

Build long-term organizational stability and opportunities to grow

Examples

- Initial investments in additional staff (with an expectation of organization plan for continued funding for the role)
- Housing program or services research projects and studies to improve the organization’s data collection, analysis, and interpretation
- Some predevelopment, soft costs, and asset management activities:*
 - Community collaboration and feedback activities
 - Financial analyses and financial planning
 - Year 15 preparations
 - Capital Needs Assessments

**OHCS anticipates many of these project-related activities will be covered by the Predevelopment loan program in the future. At that time, OHCS will adjust this list to avoid overlap.*

Build leadership capacity

Examples

- Activities that provide the organization or its board greater capacity to oversee or expand its affordable housing portfolio
- Succession planning, systems development, and creation of internal training to support knowledge retention within the organization and to increase housing development program resilience
- Strategic planning activities
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training and technical assistance



Grant Application Review Process and Timeline

Depending on the terms of the resource offering, grant applications may be assessed based on threshold standards or reviewed by a group of reviewers with combined expertise in affordable housing development or asset management, urban planning, community development, and social justice.

OHCS may request clarification or changes to the application and budget as necessary. Grant applications will then proceed along the approval process that aligns with the terms of the resource offering. Some awards may require approval by the OHCS Affordable Rental Housing (ARH) Director, OHCS Director, or Housing Stability Council. After the final selection has been made, OHCS will announce grant awards. If you are not selected for a grant, program staff can provide suggestions for strengthening future applications.

Restrictions on Use of Funds

- Materials or costs not directly tied to capacity building activities outlined in the final grant agreement
- Annual appeals or fund-raising drives
- Any attempt to: directly influence legislation or public policy; participate in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office; induce or encourage violations of law or public policy or improper private benefit to occur
- Costs of preparing this grant application

Selection

Baseline minimum threshold for all GHAP Capacity Building Grants

This list of threshold items is subject to additions based on the purpose and desired outcomes of the specific solicitation or grant.

- Applicant organization has development, preservation, or operation of multifamily affordable rental housing stated in their Mission or Bylaws*

AND

- Applicant is a non-profit entity, housing authority, federally recognized Tribal Nation, or local government in Oregon

**Specific grant offerings may include additional threshold requirements.*



Review and Scoring

Grant awards may be solely based on a review of threshold requirements, or determined through a scoring process and rubric. OHCS will communicate the selection process to be used by each resource offering. Applications are generally reviewed and scored along these component areas. If a scoring process is used, applicants will be provided with a scoring rubric. These areas are subject to adjustments or additions based on the purpose and desired outcomes of the specific solicitation or grant.

- **Mission, representation, impact, and qualifications**

Example scoring rubric:

- Narrative responses indicate a well-planned project, program, or activity with a purpose, and description of qualifications that meet the grant mission. Demonstrates institutional policies and practices that prioritize equitable outcomes, are data-informed, and include community participation in project/program design.

- **Alignment with OHCS' 2019-2023 Statewide Housing Plan priorities (or other core agency or statewide priorities)**

Example scoring rubric

- Desired outcomes of proposed work and service communities align with the priorities outlined in OHCS' current [statewide housing plan](#). Organization is aware of housing barriers and describes these barriers in their community well. Organization is actively working on addressing one or more of these barriers.

- **Scope of work, feasibility, and readiness to proceed**

Example scoring rubric

- Thorough description of scope of work and plans for implementation. Indicates the expected outcomes of activities. Shows a thorough understanding of how and what data should be collected. Has a clear timeline, with milestones and demonstrated organizational commitment and partnerships that support completing work within the timeline.

- **Budget alignment and justification**

Example scoring rubric:

- Project/program budget leaves no doubt that the associated costs are adequate and realistic. Budget is itemized and completed, and descriptions are provided and relevant. Budget identifies contributions of partnerships and other funding sources that will increase the impact of services in



combination with this grant. Budget narrative includes if and how funding expands or enhances an existing program

Applications will not be judged on the quality of the writing but on the substance of the proposed work.

Reviewers will view the applicant as the subject matter expert on their organization and regional capacity building needs. OHCS will seek to fund applications that build capacity in eligible organizations that effectively and efficiently advance their mission related to affordable housing and will consider the following questions when scoring.

- Why is this capacity building request important?
- How impactful will these activities / efforts be?
- How strong are the equity and inclusion components of the request and application?
- How feasible will this be to implement?
- How well does this meet the objectives of the OHCS Statewide Housing Plan and the GHAP Capacity Building funding opportunity?

Priority Awards

OHCS may give priority to applications for activities in service of:

(This is a non-exhaustive list)

- Historically underserved communities or those considered not likely to apply for affordable housing without targeted outreach, including marketing materials in other languages for limited English proficient individuals, and alternative formats for persons with disabilities. Reasons for not applying may include, but are not limited to:
 - insufficient information about housing opportunities
 - past involvement with the justice system
 - cultural barriers
 - language barriers
 - transportation impediments
- Activities with a clearly defined linkage to preserving existing affordable multi-unit housing portfolios or projects at risk of being lost as affordable housing stock.
- Tribal Nations
- Rural communities

Geographic Location Targeting:

To provide services across the state, OHCS reserves the right to target funding for geographic locations which may include focused populations or areas of greatest need identified at the agency's discretion.



Grant Application Instructions

Applicants are encouraged to contact GHAP Capacity Building staff to discuss general questions related to the program. Once a grant offering has opened for applications, program staff may not provide application-specific support but can address general questions related to the grant. All questions and responses will be captured and posted online to be available to all applicants. An online information session will usually be held within one week of a funding opportunity announcement. Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) will be available on the [GHAP Capacity Building webpage](#) and will be updated regularly. Check the program webpage for dates and links.

A GHAP Capacity Building grant application typically consists of three parts:

- application questions
- scope and budget
- document uploads

Submitting an Application

GHAP Capacity Building grant offerings may be coordinated by the state's Procurement Team or the GHAP CB program through the Affordable Rental Housing Division's resource allocation process (e.g. Oregon Central Application – ORCA). The coordinating body and grant process will be communicated within the resource opportunity announcement.

All GHAP Capacity Building offerings will be posted or linked on the [GHAP Capacity Building webpage](#).

Procurement-coordinated offerings will be posted to OregonBuys and also linked on the [GHAP Capacity Building webpage](#).

Visit the [GHAP CB webpage](#) for information about current offerings, applications, and fact sheets.

Grantee Information (After grant is awarded)

Required Documentation

You can help shorten the grant agreement processing time by being prepared to provide the following documentation. Funding opportunity announcements typically include a copy of our grant agreement template and insurance coverage requirements for the offering.

Insurance Certificate



Awardees shall provide compliant insurance certificates, including required endorsements, to OHCS **before execution of the Agreement**. Grantees must maintain continuous, uninterrupted coverage and provide insurance certificates demonstrating the required coverage for the Term of the Agreement and additional Insureds. (Contact your assigned Procurement Specialist for more detailed information.)

Coverage Requirements may include, but are not limited to:

- A. Commercial General Liability
- B. Automobile Liability
- C. Workers' Compensation
- D. Directors, Officers, and Organization Liability
- E. Crime Protection
- F. Professional Liability (*may be required for awardees whose grant scope of work will include providing ARH professional or skilled advising or training for ARH professions*)
- G. Physical Abuse and Sexual Molestation Liability (*required for awardees whose grant scope of work will include activities serving vulnerable clients, such as children, elderly adults, and those with intellectual and developmental difficulties*)

Other required documentation may include:

- 501c3 Letter of Determination- when applicable
- Copy of Bylaws, resolution, or formal documentation of Board decision instructing organization to enter ARH housing development, preservation, or operations
- IRS W-9
- Oregon Secretary of State Active Business Registration – when applicable
- Internal Financial Controls Statement – when applicable

Staff Assistance

OHCS staff are available to help you throughout the life cycle of your grant. The Capacity Building program staff are your main support and can connect you to other programs and areas within OHCS. The Capacity Building program staff will be responsible for grant administration, receiving and reviewing disbursement requests, working with awardees on scope or budget adjustments, and providing guidance on evaluating and reporting grant outcomes.

For Procurement-coordinated resource offerings, you will also be provided with a primary point of contact within OHCS' Procurement Team. This person will provide support to awardees throughout the set-up phase of the grant. The set-up phase includes drafting the legal agreement, gathering insurance and tax status documentation, and finalizing contracts.



Procorem WorkCenter

As an applicant for GHAP Capacity building funds, you will be given access to an online shared folder called a “Procorem WorkCenter”. GHAP CB program staff will build the WorkCenter and send the invitation to join to the primary contact listed on your grant application. You are welcome to request access for additional staff. The WorkCenter will contain folders, templates, and checklists you will need to complete the grant process. You will access materials and upload completed documents in the Procorem WorkCenter. GHAP CB program staff can provide guidance and are always happy to address any questions about the process.

Grantees and the GHAP CB program will exchange and store all grant-related materials in their Procorem WorkCenter.

Cohort Meetings

Capacity Building Grant awardees will meet twice each calendar year to share experiences, ideas, and discuss the general landscape, opportunities for future offerings, and needed policy changes. This is an opportunity to connect, support, and learn from each other. The cohort can also request presentations and/or training to be provided at these meetings. The GHAP CB program will try to meet presentation and training requests when possible.

Receiving Grant Funds

You will be asked how your organization would like to receive your awarded funds. OHCS grants generally use a standard reimbursement model every quarter to disburse funds - starting upon the agreement’s effective date. The GHAP CB program may build the option for advance into the resource offering and can provide a portion of the total awarded funds as payment in advance, and quarterly thereafter. Either way, you will need to determine whether you will receive payment through direct deposit or via paper checks. Setting up direct deposit is the quickest way to receive your money. Paper checks can take longer to receive due to the required additional processing time. Your chosen compensation method will be agreed upon with OHCS and written into the final grant agreement.

If your organization is not currently set up to receive direct deposits from the OHCS ARH Division and you would like to receive payments electronically, you will need to provide:

- ACH registration form; and a
- Voided check (a scan is okay) or a letter from your bank verifying the account and routing number



The ACH registration form can be found in the Templates and Examples folder in your Procorem WorkCenter. The completed form should be uploaded to your WorkCenter. Do not email the completed form to staff.

Reporting and Verifying Money Spent

Progress reports are an important responsibility as a grantee. They are vital to informing OHCS of which strategies, supports, and investments are working, and which aren't. Grantees will typically be required to provide a mid-year progress report and a year-end report for each grant year using the reporting form provided in their award package. The report will include aggregate data about capacity building activities and participants, metrics defined by the applicant in their application, and other metrics to be defined collaboratively by the grantee and the OHCS grant administrator. The progress report provides OHCS with insight on policy opportunities and barriers that you've encountered.

During the course of your grant, OHCS staff will regularly touch base to check in on the progress of your grant activities. At the close of your work period, your final progress report should share progress made, successes, challenges or barriers, and things you've learned.

Progress reports are different than disbursement requests. Progress reports should be used to report progress on grant activities and are typically only required 1-2 times per grant year.

Disbursement requests are requests for disbursement of awarded funds or reimbursement on activities that the organization has conducted and paid for through their own funds. The payment schedule should be outlined within the grant agreement. Requests should include an invoice containing an account of expenditures under agreed upon budget categories. Required documentation of paid grant activity expenses must be submitted with each disbursement request.

Reconciliation requests are very similar to disbursement requests except the grantee has already received awarded funds through an advance. The reconciliation schedule should be outlined within the grant agreement. Reconciliation requests should include an invoice containing an account of expenditures under agreed upon budget categories. Required documentation of paid grant activity expenses must be submitted with each disbursement request.

Examples and templates to help with Progress Reports, Disbursement Requests, and Reconciliation Requests are available in your Procorem WorkCenter.



Requesting payment and/or reconciling an advance

Requests for payment or reconciliation on GHAP Capacity Building Grants are made by submitting a completed GHAP CB Invoice or awardee-generated invoice. Invoices should have a unique identifying invoice number and provide the same content and information as the GHAP CB Invoice form. The request should include any documentation as outlined in your grant agreement to verify how the requested funds were used. Please ensure your verifying documentation and calculations align and support the amounts and items on your form or invoice. Examples and templates for disbursement and reconciliation requests are available in your Procorem WorkCenter.

Disbursement / Reconciliation documentation*:

- Disbursement or reconciliation Invoice
- Program Cost Report / General Ledger Summary
- Payroll Report – for expenses related to staff time
- Paid invoices from sub-contracts and sub-awards

*The program will randomly select one quarter to request additional supporting documentation (e.g., receipts, etc) along with the Invoice and Program Cost Report annually. You will be given advance notice of the need to provide supporting documentation.

Disbursement and reconciliation requests should be submitted through the Procorem WorkCenter. The Grant Administrator will review your request and respond with questions if needed. Once all submitted items for the request appear to be in order, and internal approvals are in place, the Grant Administrator will submit your request to ARH leadership and Accounting for final review and processing. The Grant Administrator will let you know when your request has been submitted for final review and processing.

Grant Close Out

OHCS staff will work with you to close your legal agreement once we approve your final progress report. GHAP CB program staff will coordinate an opportunity to debrief your overall experience, make sure we have all required documentation completed, and learn how the GHAP CB program can support your efforts in the future.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with questions or feedback.

- GHAP Capacity Building webpage - <https://www.oregon.gov/ohcs/rental-housing/housing-development/development-resources/Pages/general-housing-account-capacity-building.aspx>
- GHAP Capacity Building program email – HCS.GHAP.CB@Hcs.oregon.gov



