

2021
ERA1

Emergency Rental Assistance

City of Columbus, Department of Development The Stable Housing Initiative

Request for Proposals
Response Due Date and Time
August 2, 2021 at 5pm local time

INTRODUCTION

The City of Columbus (the City) is pleased to announce the release of a Notice of Financial Award (NOFA) for the **Stable Housing Initiative**. The purpose of this NOFA is to find and award funding to organizations who are able to provide outreach, intake, rental and utility assistance, and supportive services to **hard-to-reach and vulnerable populations experiencing housing instability**.

The **Stable Housing Initiative** will provide organizations with rental and utility assistance, and housing stability services for residents of the local area who qualify for the assistance as provided in the laws, regulations, and other current guidance provided by the U.S. Department of Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance 1 (ERA 1), CFDA 21.023.

This NOFA of ERA1 funding makes available \$10,000,000 for requests of up to \$1,000,000 per applicant. Selected applicants will be considered Subrecipients and subject to all Subrecipient regulations under this federal program.

The application period for the **Stable Housing Initiative** is open from **Monday July 19, 2021, to Monday August 2, 2021**.

Deadline for submission of proposals is 5:00pm local time on Monday August 2, 2021. Applications received after this date and time shall not be accepted. This NOFA will cover a Grant Program period of **January 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022**.

The City has partnered with the United Way of Central Ohio (UWCO) to provide an online proposal submission process. All documents are to be submitted through UWCO's portal, e-CImpact. The application link to submit the proposal is provided **CLICK HERE**: <https://agency.e-cimpact.com/login.aspx?org=37145F>

Please consider the following:

- Carefully and thoughtfully review the **Stable Housing Initiative** statements of Vision, Current Reality, and The Work (see below)
- Read background materials provided for ERA1 (e-CImpact **Resources**)
 - U.S. Department of Treasury ERA Fact Sheet [May 2021]
 - U.S. Department of Treasury FAQs [latest edition]
 - U.S. Department of Treasury Interim Report Key Findings
 - See U.S. Treasury site for additional information
<https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/emergency-rental-assistance-program>
- Read and follow all the instructions and guidelines
- Take note of the timeline with submission deadline
- For additional Instructions, and where to access FAQ's and Technical Assistance see **page 11** of RFP.

STATEMENTS OF VISION, CURRENT REALITY, AND THE WORK

A Vision of Stable Housing

The City's vision is for all local area residents to live in stable housing. **Stable Housing** is safe, healthy and affordable to the individual or family facing today's economic and healthcare challenges resulting from COVID-19.

Current Reality: The COVID-19 pandemic has caused increased housing instability among local area residents. In addition, there are many individuals and families that, for a variety of reasons, have been hard-to-reach and to connect with rental, utility and supportive services.

The Work: *To address the rental housing crises exacerbated by the COVID-19 public health emergency and its negative economic impacts for **hard-to-reach and vulnerable low income households** by:*

- Making funding available to assist eligible households that are unable to pay rent or utilities.
- Providing assistance to eligible households through existing or newly created programs that identify, engage and serve hard-to-reach individuals and families.
- Providing stabilization and resource supports for eligible households to maintain stable housing [safe, healthy and affordable].
- Providing at least 60% of the funding to support eligible households with an AMI at 50% or below and/or have a member of the household who has been unemployed for 90 days; up to 40% of the funding can be used for households with an AMI at 80% or below.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY and CAPACITY

- Applicant Agency must be a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization:
 - Agency's proposed services or activities primarily serve Columbus residents.
 - In good standing with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
 - In compliance with the State of Ohio Attorney General's Office.
 - In compliance with City of Columbus Vendor Services*
 - *Agencies must be registered and up-to-date with their City of Columbus Vendor Services account. Visit the website at <https://www.columbus.gov/Templates/Detail.aspx?id=65756> for registration and compliance instructions. Should you need additional help please email the Purchasing Office at vendorservices@columbus.gov or call at (614) 645-8315.
- Applicant Agency must demonstrate capacity to expend requested funds in an effective, efficient and timely manner during the term of the grant [January 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022]

FUNDING GUIDELINES

- Only one (1) application per 501(c)3 Agency will be accepted. Collaborative proposals are welcomed and encouraged. All Collaborative applications must identify a **Lead Agency** as the 501(c)3 applicant for grant management, fiscal administration and reporting purposes.
 - *Note: Agencies shall not receive multiple awards*
- Grant Award
 - There is no minimum grant award
 - There is a **maximum** grant award of \$1,000,000.00
- Grant funding can be used for eligible activities from **January 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022 as caused by, or in response to, the COVID-19 public health emergency.**
- The City of Columbus reserves the right to not award, or to partially award, eligible agencies and eligible fund requests.
- Grant funding may not supplant other federal funds received by the agency.
- Agencies that are awarded grants will be required to submit final expenditure and activity reports per their agreements **by October 15, 2022.**
- All Agencies will be required to return unused/unexpended ERA1 funds to the City **by October 22, 2022.**
- ERA1 funds are federal U.S. Treasury funds. As such they are subject to federal regulations including, but not limited to: Single Audit Act, 2 CFR 200.303 (internal controls), and 2 CFR 200.303-.332 (subrecipient monitoring).

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Outreach Services

- **Identify** one or more hard-to-reach or vulnerable populations the applicant proposes to reach with rental, utility and supportive services to achieve and maintain **Stable Housing** [safe, healthy and affordable]. Select one or more from the list below for whom you propose to conduct outreach and services.
 - Immigrant and Refugee households
 - Youth [18-24 years old]
 - Individuals [60+ years old]
 - Individuals with Disabilities [physical, intellectual and/or substance]
 - Other [as determined and described by applicant]
- Describe **Outreach Strategy** goals, objectives, activities and measures [including communications plan] to effectively and efficiently engage selected population(s) in rental, utility and supportive services to achieve and maintain **Stable Housing**
- Describe both **Current Capacity** and **Needed Capacity-Building** to implement Outreach Strategy described above

Intake Services

- **Identify** one or more hard-to-reach or vulnerable populations for whom the applicant proposes to conduct intake services for rental, utility and supportive services to achieve and maintain **Stable Housing** [safe, healthy and affordable].
 - Immigrant and Refugee households
 - Youth [18-24 years old]
 - Individuals [60+ years old]
 - Individuals with Disabilities [physical, intellectual and/or substance]
 - Other [as determined and described by applicant]
- Describe **Intake Services Plan** goals, objectives, activities and measures to effectively and efficiently determine eligibility of applicants from selected population(s) for rental, utility and/or supportive services to achieve and maintain **Stable Housing**
- Describe both **Current Capacity** and **Needed Capacity-Building** to implement Intake Services Plan described above
 - *Note: applicant must demonstrate willingness and capacity to be a licensed software user of Allita360 [Allita 360 - Housing Assistance Fund Software Solution - United States](#). The required software license fee will be part of the grantee's administrative budget.*

Rental and/or Utility Payment Services

- Describe **Rental and/or Utility Payment Plan** including fiscal processes and procedures to effectively and efficiently deliver payments to appropriate parties serving selected population(s) to achieve and maintain **Stable Housing**
 - *Note: Utilities and home energy costs are separately stated charges related to the occupancy of rental property. Accordingly, utilities and home energy costs include separately stated electricity, gas, water and sewer, trash removal, and energy costs, such as fuel oil. Payments to City of Columbus public utilities are permitted e.g. electricity; sewer and water*
- Describe both **Current Capacity** and **Needed Capacity-Building** to implement **Rental and/or Utility Payment Plan** described above

Supportive Services

- **Identify** one or more hard-to-reach or vulnerable populations the applicant proposes to provide supportive services to achieve and maintain **Stable Housing** [safe, healthy and affordable].
 - Immigrant and Refugee households
 - Youth [18-24 years old]
 - Individuals [60+ years old]
 - Individuals with Disabilities [physical, intellectual and/or substance]
 - Other [as determined and described by applicant]
- Describe **Supportive Services Plan** including goals, objectives, activities and measures to effectively and efficiently serve selected population(s) with supportive services to achieve and maintain **Stable Housing**
- Describe both **Current Capacity** and **Needed Capacity-Building** to implement Supportive Services Plan described above

REPORTING

There are extensive reporting requirements as established by the U.S. Treasury and the City of Columbus. There will be both monthly and quarterly reporting obligations. In addition, a final report will be due by October 15, 2022

- Describe both **Current Capacity** and **Needed Capacity-Building** to fulfill reporting requirements described above and in U.S. Treasury guidance.

U.S. Treasury Guidance in Brief (see details e-CImpact “Resources” U.S. Treasury documents)

Rental and Utility Costs:

- Permits payment of **rental arrears**
- Permits the enrollment of households for **prospective benefits** (i.e. don't need arrears)
- **ERA 1** up to twelve (12) months of assistance (plus an additional three (3) months if necessary to ensure housing stability for the household) = Total 15 months
- **ERA 1** does require grantees to seek the cooperation of the landlord or utility provider **before** providing assistance directly to the tenant.
- Unit Types
 - Single Family
 - Multifamily
 - Manufactured Housing
 - Houseboats

Housing Stability Services: Up to 10% of Funds

For purposes of ERA1, housing stability services include those that **enable eligible households to maintain or obtain housing**. Such services may include:

- Housing counseling,
- Fair housing counseling
- Case management related to housing stability,
- Housing related services for
 - survivors of domestic abuse or
 - human trafficking
- Legal services or attorney's fees related to eviction proceedings
- Maintaining housing stability, and specialized services for:
 - individuals with disabilities that supports their ability to access or maintain housing or
 - seniors that supports their ability to access or maintain housing
- Cost of a transitional stay in a hotel or motel when a family has been displaced
- Relocation expenses (including prospective relocation expenses), such as rent deposit

Administrative costs: Up to 10% of Funds

Costs attributable to providing financial assistance and housing stability services to eligible households.

Eligible Households

- Household must be obligated to pay rent on a residential dwelling
- One or more individuals within the household has qualified for unemployment benefits or experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or experienced other financial hardship due, directly or indirectly, to the COVID-19 outbreak;
- One or more individuals within the household can demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability which may include: (i) a past due utility or rent notice **or** eviction notice, and/or (ii) unsafe or unhealthy living conditions (which may include overcrowding); and
- Household has a household income at or below 80% of area median income.

APPLICATION TIMELINE

Monday July 19, 2021	<p>Launch Date: City of Columbus Notice of Financial Award (NOFA)</p> <p>E-CImpact link and sign on information provided to applicants by the City of Columbus and the United Way of Central Ohio</p>
Monday August 2, 2021	<p>DEADLINE: Agencies Submit Online Proposals through United Way’s e-CImpact by 5:00pm local time Monday August 2, 2021</p> <p>REMINDER: Only ONE (1) Application per Agency or Collaborative will be accepted</p>
Monday August 16, 2021	<p>Awards Public Announcement Notification provided to agencies</p>
August/September 2021	<p>Grant Agreements Executed</p>

THRESHOLD CHECK BOXES

Agencies must meet and check all of the following Thresholds in order to be eligible for funding consideration.

- This Agency is in good standing with the federal Internal Revenue Service.
- This Agency is in compliance with the State of Ohio Attorney General’s Office.
- This Funding Request is not supplanting other federal funds.
- This Agency agrees to ensure nonduplication of efforts for budgeted items and that funds are used appropriately.
- This Agency is aware that these U.S. Treasury ERA1 funds are federal funds subject to all applicable federal regulations; and that the applicant, if selected, will be considered a Subrecipient and shall follow all federal and local regulations regarding being a Subrecipient.
- This Agency agrees to the following statement for the provision of services:
“To provide services without regard to race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity & expression, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status, familial status or socio-economic status; and agrees to maintain a commitment to cultural competence and ongoing development of cultural competence capabilities of staff and organization.”

BUDGET

Outline budget in the categories given below.

Total Stable Housing Request: \$	
Category	\$ Amount
Rental Assistance Payments	\$
Utility Assistance Payments	\$
Housing Stability Costs (up to 10% of total request)	\$
Administration Costs (up to 10% of total request)	\$

EXAMPLE BUDGET

Total Stable Housing Request: \$1,000,000	
Category	\$ Amount
Rental Assistance Payments	\$700,000*
Utility Assistance Payments	\$100,000
Housing Stability Costs (up to 10% of total request)	\$100,000
Administration Costs (up to 10% of total request)	\$100,000

**Based on recent local experience the average rental assistance payment has been \$2,400 per household. Therefore, in this example budget an estimated 291 households would be served.*

COMPENSATION AND INVOICING

A percentage of the grant award shall be advanced upon issuance of the purchase order by the City Auditor. Upon receipt of a report detailing households served with a portion of the Advanced Funds (and amount of payment(s) made), the actual amount expended will be reimbursed in full allowing the grantee to retain the initial Advance as available funds (report format will be provided by the City). This process will continue until the full agreement amount of has been committed to households or the contract ends.

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Applications submitted will be reviewed on the basis the **Thresholds** listed above, the **Eligibility of the Organization**, and the **Capacity of the Organization** to perform the services effectively and efficiently. Review Criteria are on next page. The City of Columbus reserves the right to not award, or to partially award, eligible agencies and eligible fund requests.

Review Objective: Select the Strongest proposals for funding

- The **Strongest Proposals** will demonstrate the greatest organizational power, competence and health to successfully implement proposed services.
- In comparison to the Strongest Proposals, the **Least Strong Proposals** will show a lack of and/or be deficient in organizational power, competence and health to successfully implement proposed services.

16 Review Criteria: Achieving A Strong Proposal
OUTREACH
Agency demonstrates capacity to effectively and efficiently serve selected population(s)
The service activities clearly support the goals of the program
Activities will produce the expected results for the client population
INTAKE SERVICES
Agency demonstrates capacity to effectively and efficiently serve selected population(s)
The service activities clearly support the goals of the program
Activities will produce the expected results for the client population
RENTAL AND UTILITY ASSISTANCE
Agency demonstrates capacity to effectively and efficiently serve selected population(s)
The service activities clearly support the goals of the program
Activities will produce the expected results for the client population
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES
Agency demonstrates capacity to effectively and efficiently serve selected population(s)
The supportive service activities clearly support the goals of the program
Activities will produce the expected results for the client population
REPORTING
Agency demonstrates willingness and capacity to fulfill reporting requirements
AGENCY COMMITMENT & CAPACITY
Agency demonstrates willingness and capacity to be a licensed software user of Allita360
Agency demonstrates willingness to work in a collective environment with other funded agencies
If applicable, Lead Agency of a Collaborative demonstrates willingness and capacity to effectively lead and facilitate a collaborative working model

INSTRUCTIONS, CONTACT, FAQs AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Stable Housing Initiative application link is provided online through the United Way of Central Ohio's e-CImpact

[CLICK HERE](#)

<https://agency.e-cimpact.com/login.aspx?org=37145F>

e-CImpact Instructions:

- To access the application-
 - Agencies with existing accounts can login to e-CImpact
 - Agencies with an existing account should click on **Grant Applications** in the Apply/Report section, then select **Stable Housing Initiative**.
 - New Agencies that do not already have an account can self-register using their EIN/Federal Tax ID, and following the prompts.
 - New Agencies will select the **Stable Housing Initiative** near the end of their registration.
- Next, click the **Complete Registration** button.
 - An automated Approval/Notification message will pop up on the screen.
 - Click the **GREEN** continue/next button at the bottom of the page.
- Finally, a page with the application forms will appear. Click on each section, answer the questions.
- You can save your progress and return to finish later if you wish. Be sure to complete the process by clicking on the **RED** button "**SUBMIT THIS APPLICATION NOW**"

Questions related to the Request for Proposals (RFP) can be requested via email at humanserviceprograms@columbus.gov

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) will be available on the City of Columbus website <https://www.columbus.gov/Development/>

- **Technical assistance** for the United Way's e-CImpact online grant application system can be requested via email at Reporting.Help@uwcentralohio.org and a member of the United Way Data Science team will be happy to assist you.

The Stable Housing Initiative Coordinator
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