**Invitation to the Southeast Regional Local Infrastructure Hub (LIH)**

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**Timeline.** Table 1 summarizes the applicationprocess by due date.

**Table 1. Southeast Regional LIH Applicant Process and Timeline.**

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| --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Date** |
| **July 10, 2023** | Invitation release |
| **July 10, 2023 – Mid 2024 or SSDN LIH budget allocated in full** | Applications will be reviewed as received, until the cutoff date and / or SSDN’s LIH budget is fully allocated |
| **Within 14 days of submission** | Applicants will be notified of decisions within 14 days of their submission, and scoping / negotiations / award paperwork processes will begin |

**Opportunity overview.** [The Local Infrastructure Hub](https://localinfrastructure.org/) (LIH) launched as a Bloomberg Philanthropies initiative to ensure that all communities can access federal infrastructure funding to drive local recovery, improve communities, and deliver results for residents. The LIH focuses on opportunities related to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) - also referred as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) - through three-tiered learning and mentoring tracks.[[1]](#footnote-1)

LIH Cohorts are now open to assist local governments and their partners in the Southeast in accessing the historic levels of federal funding available through IIJA and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). Cohorts provide technical assistance (TA) to advance racial wealth and climate equity in communities. These program partners are ready to provide 1:1 local government outreach and TA. They can also work with strategic local and regional partners in a way that will build long-term capacity for local implementation.

**This is a highly adaptable project support and funding opportunity. There are 3 options:**

* Option 1 is to access direct TA from SSDN’s LIH Cohort.
* Option 2 is to access direct TA from SSDN’s LIH Cohort and to designate a local capacity-building partner to receive a small award for local capacity building around a federal grant opportunity.
* Option 3 is to request an award for local capacity building, which will go to a local partner to allow them to support a federal application development team right now and ideally into the future.

**Please complete the application form** [**posted**](https://www.southeastsdn.org/programs/southeast-sustainable-recovery-center/) **with this invitation.** *Applications must be submitted* ***in Word format. If choosing Options 2 or 3, please submit******the budget******in Excel format.*** Please send completed application form and budget (if applicable) to [Susanna Sutherland](mailto:susanna@saenv.com) and [Kathryn Conner](mailto:kathryn@saenv.com) as soon as it’s ready. Copy the full project team named in the application and SSDN’s [Nick Deffley](mailto:nick@southeastsdn.org).

**Assistance options.** Applicants will choose from 1 of these options:

* **Option 1. Access to 1:1 help from SSDN’s LIH Cohort.**
  + Up to $30,000 in TA value to assist with up to 3 of these categories:
    - **Grant strategy:** help with identifying and aligning community needs to federal funding opportunities.
    - **Engagement:** community and stakeholder ownership in proposal planning.
    - **Technical exploration:** expertise in a specific topic, like energy efficiency.
    - **Federal proposal development:** support drafting and submitting a proposal.
* **Option 2. A combination of access to SSDN’s LIH Cohort and a one-time capacity-building award.** 
  + A local capacity building award designated to a private partner or to a local, regional, or national non-profitfor up to $20,000. This will be to assist a team in developing a federal proposal.
    - Local governments are not eligible to directly receive these funds.
  + LIH Cohort access of up to $10,000 in TA value in up to 2 categories from the list in option 1.
* **Option 3. An SSDN LIH award for local capacity building to support a federal grant application.** 
  + An up to $30,000 award designated to a private partner or to a local, regional, or national non-profit. This will beto support building local capacity to go after federal funding opportunities right now and into the future. Local governments are not eligible to directly receive these funds.

If choosing option 1 or 2, there will be a TA pairing period between application acceptance and agreement execution. During this time, all parties will be introduced, and boundaries set with goals in writing. SSDN’s LIH Cohort will deliver direct support to local governments and their local partners.

If choosing option 2 or 3, direct awards made to a designated local partner must foster cross-sector, collaborative federal application development that involves community and builds local capacity.[[2]](#footnote-2)

During agreement negotiations, SSDN may request additions or reductions as they work to match available Cohort capacity to community needs. Applicants are encouraged to creatively leverage on-going partnerships and to determine what is realistic to accomplish within the timeframe leading up to the targeted federal funding opportunity. Plan backwards from the federal due date. A minimum of 3 months ahead of this date is needed to build a successful federal proposal.

**Eligibility.** Eligible applicants represent communities within the States of AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, TX, and VA. Applicants from these states are a local government **-OR-** a community-based organization (CBO)[[3]](#footnote-3) working directly with one or more local governmentswithin the Southeast region. These eligible organizations are partnering with at least 1 entity in each of these 2 categories:

* A local, Black-led CBO and / or one that prioritizes the needs of frontline communities in their mission statement and normal workflows.

**-AND-**

* Another local or regional governmental entity.The roles and responsibilities of each partner must be stated clearly in the application and copied on its submission.[[4]](#footnote-4)

SSDN can only resource 1 LIH application per community. The application form does ask about interest in any other additional federal funding opportunities, though, in case SSDN can assist with those through existing staff supports via programs like [this one](https://www.southeastsdn.org/programs/southeast-sustainable-recovery-center/).The application form also requests either:

1. The targeted federal funding opportunity, if known. Reference [this list](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1iCGiKYQ3BMHenTGSgr087gElU0ORzNdsm86XcKDdaBU/edit#gid=0) for federal funding opportunity ideas.

**-OR-**

1. A project description that is ready to be paired with a federal funding opportunity - with a commitment to apply once identified.

**APPENDIX 1. General guidance**

**Contacts for questions:** Please reach out to [Susanna Sutherland](mailto:susanna@saenv.com) and [Kathryn Conner](mailto:kathryn@saenv.com) with any process questions about this funding opportunity. Reach out to [Susanna Sutherland](mailto:susanna@saenv.com) and / or [Nick Deffley](mailto:nick@southeastsdn.org) if you want to discuss current situation, federal opportunities being considered, and/or potential partners or need connections.

**Payments in Options 2 and 3:** If a partner is receiving an award under options 2 or 3, the full amount will be paid upfront to the designated private partner or to the designated local, regional, or national non-profitupon agreement execution. Payments will be made to this designated community partner with receipt of an invoice. Any unused awards funds at the conclusion of the award should be repurposed to further support the goals stated in the application.

After submitting the application form and going through a brief pairing and negotiation process, any approved awards will be made directly from the New Venture Fund (NVF) to the grantee on behalf of SSDN’s LIH program. NVF can also contract for services directly with this money if the eligible applicant wishes for another organization to receive the award instead of them.

**Choosing between a grant or a contract.** If choosing Options 2 or 3, please consider which non-local government entity will be receiving funds. This will help to determine if a grant or contract for services is the preferable route in your unique situation. Generally speaking:

* **Contracts go to private entities,** to pay for specific services, like facilitation or grant writing.
* **Grants go to nonprofit entities**, who then coordinate and / or provide services to support team development of a federal funding application. If your organization does not have these documents on hand, you will want to select a contractor to receive funds directly:
* IRS determination letter.
* Completed and signed W9 form.
* Most recent public Form 990.
* NVF Electronic Payment Form (ETF) with cancelled check, [here](https://www.dropbox.com/s/1e2y652j9g1az5g/NVF%20EFT%20Form.pdf?dl=0).
* Organizational budget.
* Most recent audited financial statements.
* Listing of Board members and key staff working on the project.

**Once scope is negotiated and agreed to, invited grantees** will submit the following information through the NVF portal application system. A link to access this system will arrive via email. Documents that will be required for submission are:

* Proposal and Budget: The NVF portal will have fill-in fields for the questions below.
* Please describe your organization’s mission in 1-2 sentences.
* List your organization’s website.
* Grant agreement signatory, job title, and email address.
* Provide a brief due diligence questionnaire.
* Please summarize your grant project in 3-5 sentences (*this will come from your SSDN application form*)
* Provide a total project budget number. (*this will also come from your SSDN application form*)
* Upload a budget for this project, using the template [here](https://www.dropbox.com/s/p8ios8a43zlgail/NVF%20Budget%20and%20Grant%20Award%20Template.xlsx?dl=0). (*this will come from your SSDN application as well*)
* Do you intend to regrant any of this funding? Yes/No
* Number of part-time staff.
* Number of full-time staff.

**Once scope is negotiated and agreed to, contractors** will complete and email following to NVF:

* The Contractor Proposal Form [here](https://www.dropbox.com/s/hz9hbp404uvtz6j/NVF%20Contractor%20Proposal%20Form.docx?dl=0).
* The Electronic Funds Transfer form (EFT) [here](https://www.dropbox.com/s/1e2y652j9g1az5g/NVF%20EFT%20Form.pdf?dl=0) with a canceled check.
* Worker Classification Form [here](https://www.dropbox.com/s/c209wywigwm2zc9/NVF%20Worker%20Classification%20Form%20%28With%20Employees%29%20-%202023%20Updated%20%284%29.pdf?dl=0)
* A completed and signed W-9 form

1. *Bloomberg Philanthropies and Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation at Johns Hopkins University. (2023, May 3).* [*Local Infrastructure Hub*](https://localinfrastructure.org/)*.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Capacity is defined as multi-faceted, multi-sector, jurisdiction-spanning partnerships that can fill gaps and expand access to resources. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. 3 A CBO is defined as a public or private organization that is representative of a community or significant segments of a community. They provide support services to individuals within that community. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. If cross-sector partnerships do not exist in the community, the SSDN LIH Cohort listed in Options 1 and 2 can help connect to possible partners. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)