

2020 LEED FOR CITIES & COMMUNITIES GRANT GUIDELINES



With support from the Bank of America Charitable Foundation, the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is pleased to announce a call for applications to the **2020 LEED for Cities and Communities Grant Program**. The grant program will convene up to 20 U.S. local governments committed to certifying in the LEED for Cities and Communities rating system and accelerating progress on urban sustainability. Local governments will participate as a cohort, collaborating and exchanging ideas with peers as they get organized, set goals, collect data, and apply for certification.

Applications to the 2020 LEED for Cities and Communities Grant Program will be evaluated on various criteria, including demonstrated need, leadership support, commitment to data driven decision-making, staff capacity, and coordination with other local initiatives. Local governments that best meet the stated criteria will be selected.

PROGRAM DETAILS & TIMELINE

Applications for the 2020 LEED for Cities and Communities Grant Program will be received in January with decisions made in early February. Once we get through program logistics and travel arrangements, we will commence the program with a two-day, in-person orientation and training for two representatives from each community. USGBC staff will walk the new communities through the rating system and evaluation measures, and lead them through a number of hands-on exercises to calculate scores and develop an action plan for the year.

After the training, communities will start to align their existing programs, policies, and plans with the rating system using project management tools and resources provided by USGBC. Then they will gather data on the evaluation measures of their choice from the rating system and enter data into reporting tools.

The cohort of local governments will meet regularly throughout the year via phone calls and web conferencing to report progress and share best practices. Each community will receive a dedicated USGBC coordinator who will check-in regularly and help to resolve issues and provide feedback and support.

It is anticipated that communities will apply for certification within the first six months of the program year. Each community will be responsible for gathering the data necessary for certification. When the community has completed the application to their specification, they will submit for review. USGBC/GBCI will provide a robust, third party review including a performance score and certification results. USGBC will provide marketing support and resources to help announce and celebrate the community's certification.

Communities who certify in advance of Greenbuild will have the opportunity for recognition at our annual reception. Conference sessions and workshops may also feature projects from the cohort. Toward the end of 2020 and beyond the grant program year, staff will support communities as their focus shifts to evaluating results, prioritizing investments and next steps, and communicating impact.

AWARD PACKAGE

Each local government selected will receive an award package including:

- One, annual USGBC Silver membership;
- Registration in LEED v4.1 for Cities and Communities;
- Certification review fees, LEED v4.1 for Cities and Communities;
- Access to the Arc reporting platform to encourage continuous improvement and benchmarking;
- A two-day, in-person orientation workshop with other selected communities for two local government officials/staff; and
- Access to online education resources, project management tools and monthly conference calls; and
- A dedicated USGBC staff liaison with ongoing programmatic and technical support.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be met and demonstrated in the application form:

- Applicant is a United States based local government (e.g. city, town, county).
- If accepted, applicant commits to register their community by March 1, 2020.
- Applicant has leadership support to actively participate.
- Applicant commits to send 1 local government official (preferably elected/appointed) and 1 staff member to the in-person orientation workshop.

USGBC reserves the right to select communities for the program based on these additional criteria:

- Diverse representation including factors such as geography, economic conditions, land area and population size;
- Demonstrated need for technical support to achieve LEED for Cities & Communities certification and implement its principles;

- Willingness to be open, transparent, data-driven and address sustainability challenges head-on;
- Sufficient staff resources to complete the data collection necessary for certification;
- Commitment to diversity, inclusion and social equity;
- A vision for using certification results to advance solutions and prioritize investments in community-wide sustainability; and/or
- Location in an area represented by Bank of America.

The selection committee will be comprised of USGBC staff, partners and representatives from our formal stakeholder groups.

SCHEDULE

- Open Call for Applications: Week of December 16, 2019
- Webcast for interested applicants: January 10, 2020
- Deadline to Apply (5pm EST): January 31, 2020
- Committee Review of Applications: February 3-7, 2020
- Decisions Announced: February 7, 2020
- Public Announcement of Communities: ~February 21, 2020
- Orientation Program in DC: Week of March 23 or 30, 2020
- End of Formal Program Year: December 31, 2020

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please submit the following application package in electronic format ONLY:

- Completed application form
- All supporting files requested in the application

Application packages should be emailed to cities@usgbc.org with the subject: Community Name - Application 2020 LEED for Cities and Communities Grant Program

The deadline to submit materials is January 31, 2020 by 5:00pm EST.

[Apply to the 2020 LEED for Cities and Communities Grant Program](#)