



Cities of Opportunity:

TURNING CRISIS INTO PATHWAYS TO EQUITY AND RESILIENCY

Invitation to Apply: New 2021 Action Cohort

NEW CITIES OF OPPORTUNITY ACTION COHORT - FOR LOCAL LEADERS SEEKING TO:

- Infuse race equity into their city's comprehensive and strategic plans encompassing economic opportunity, affordable and healthy housing, city planning and design, neighborhood services and amenities - aligned with health.
- Leverage city assets and resources in partnership with health systems, public health, community-based organizations, local foundations, businesses and other partners to address pressing community needs to improve individual health and the city's economy.
- Align across city government departments, functions and levels to better serve residents and ensure limited resources are fully leveraged for fair and just impact.
- Apply data and evidence to tailor and target efforts to communities at greatest risk and build back more inclusive and resilient communities.
- Improve governance structures, processes and policies to work across silos for sustained systemic change.

APPLICATIONS DUE

OCTOBER 23

11:59 pm local time

WHY CITIES OF OPPORTUNITY: TODAYS IMPERATIVE

America's local officials are providing exceptional leadership amidst the unprecedented triple crises:

A global pandemic that laid bare chronic injustices in our country, economic devastation to business owners and workers, and an urgent pervasive call for the end of systemic and structural racism. Long-standing inequities in healthcare, finances, education, housing, public safety, nutrition and other human needs are revealed in those who are hit the hardest by COVID-19.

Local leaders continue to respond to surges of infection, shut-downs and reopenings across the country. They also want to build stronger and more inclusive communities for the future: to turn elevated awareness of systemic inequities into action. Local officials can seize the moment to change power structures, policies and systems that have blocked opportunities for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) and marginalized communities over generations.

Local leaders can do this by building *Cities of Opportunity*: Communities with policies, practices and programs that give everyone a fair chance to pursue their dreams regardless of race, gender, age, ability, and economic status. Leaders in these cities can address holistic, interconnected factors that affect life expectancy and harness political will with other elected officials, stakeholders and multi-sector partners to deliver equitable and resilient futures for all.

PROGRAM PURPOSE: CITIES OF OPPORTUNITY ACTION COHORT

NLC offers the new Cities of Opportunity (CoO) 2021 Action Cohort for municipal leaders who want to chart new paths forward by:

1. Increasing the interconnection and equitable outcomes of three key factors that affect how long and how well people live — **Economic Opportunity, Housing, City Planning and Design.**
2. Driving comprehensive policy and systems change among these factors by embedding race and equity to strengthen:
 - Civic Engagement to include authentic participation of diverse residents in decisions that affect their lives;
 - Data to identify sources of inequities and populations of focus for equitable outcomes;
 - Financing approaches to ensure resources are fully leveraged and aligned to meet the greatest community needs;
 - Cross-Government and Multi-Sector Partnerships to strengthen alignment within city, with state/federal levels, and with businesses, community-based organizations and other local stakeholders for collaborative solutions that foster equity; and
 - Durability and Sustainability of efforts with intentional application of equity principles.

PROGRAM APPROACH & BENEFITS: CITY-CENTERED, CONTEXT-SPECIFIC TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In collaboration with CoO strategic partner, **Consilience Group, LLC**, the Action Cohort will meet each participating city where they are. CoO's context-specific technical assistance provides flexible tools and frameworks to support each city's key priorities, and adjust in real time to the uncertainties, challenges and opportunities in today's complex landscape.

- NLC works with teams from six cities over 12 months to advance equity via policy and systems change across factors that affect health. Each

team is composed of city officials, city staff and key anchor/partner organizations.

- To advance each city's CoO priorities, participants will work within their respective city team, and with other teams in the Action Cohort, to share progress, challenges and solutions.
- NLC will bring the teams together with Consilience Group and other national experts on leading approaches to advance sustainable policy and systems change.
- The year-long program consists of a variety of activities:
 - Individualized team TA sessions with tailored coaching and consultation to support teams in crafting and implementing their specific CoO Action Roadmap and Workplan.
 - Cross-city virtual events on priority topics of interest to all teams.
 - Planned in-person convenings (contingent upon health and safety considerations) of the entire cohort to accelerate peer sharing and learning, relationship building, and connection with national experts.
 - Thought partnership and in-depth discussions with experts and philanthropic leaders.
 - Regular cross-city Executive Briefings facilitated with top city leadership to build champions and sustain support for each city's CoO work.
- Additional benefits of the CoO Action Cohort:
 - A \$10,000 grant cities can allocate to support their CoO priorities.
 - Access to cutting-edge resources, innovations, CoO tools, alumni and faculty.
 - Opportunity to share insights and learnings with broader CoO learning community.
 - Featuring city and its leaders in stories about their CoO work across NLC network, with external partner organizations and broader public health community.
 - Opportunities to feature leaders and work of city at national conferences and publications.

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION AND TEAM MEMBERS

Each CoO Action Cohort city core team will have up to 5 members, composed of individuals across local government and partners from the broader community with the ability to move priorities forward within and across housing, economic opportunity and city planning and design. This core team is the hub to engage others in both city government and the community to drive their CoO priorities.

- Effective core teams will include a combination of top city executives (mayor, city manager) and/or cabinet-level city staff and senior departmental staff, other local elected officials, and principals from key partner organizations (e.g., local hospital/health systems, community foundation, community-based organization, business leaders, faith leaders).
- Strong core teams will have a mix of individuals who can champion CoO priorities and ensure progress is made within the city, including subject matter experts and those with relationships on the ground to secure the information, data and resources to advance the overall effort.
- Core Team members should expect to commit an average of up to 6 hours per month, between team TA sessions, cross-city events, and internal working sessions within the team.
- Additionally, each city's top executives (mayor, city manager), regardless of whether they are a core team member, should expect to participate in three cross-city briefings to stay abreast of progress, challenges and opportunities across the cities. Other elected legislative officials are welcome to join these briefings.

APPLY NOW!

BUILD A NEW PATH TO EQUITY AND RESILIENCE IN YOUR CITY

Only one application per city will be considered and must be received with the full support of the mayor and/or city manager. Please email completed applications to dana@nlc.org.

APPLICATION AND PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Application Due	October 23, 11:59 pm local time
Finalist Interviews	November 2 – 20, 2020
Final Information Due (confirmation of partners on team)	December 11, 2020
Inform Cities selected for 2021 Action Cohort	Early January, 2021
Announce to NLC Network, Publicize with Funders/Partners	
Quarterly Executive Briefings (with mayors, city managers, key elected officials and CoO Team Leads)	January – December 2021
Monthly Events:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Team TA/Coaching Meetings• All-City Peer Learning Events and Subject Matter Consultations (online, with two in-person convenings pending COVID-19 and cities' travel guidance)	

PART I [NOT SCORED]

Applicant / City Information

1. First Name
2. Last Name
3. Title
4. Pronouns
5. Email Address
6. Phone Number
7. City Name
8. State
9. Population of your community
 - a. Below 50,000
 - b. 50-100,000
 - c. 100,001-250,000
 - d. 250,001-500,000
 - e. 500,000+
10. Geography type
 - a. Rural
 - b. Urban
 - c. Suburban
 - d. Other
11. Area Median Income and Poverty Rate
12. Race and Ethnicity Demographics
13. Overall Health Status Data: Life Expectancy, Low Birthweight Babies, Premature Deaths
14. COVID-19 Spread – % Positive Cases, Excess Deaths, Hospital Capacity
15. What inspires you to join the Cities of Opportunity Action Cohort? Select all that apply:
 - a. Tailored technical assistance – city-centered and context-specific
 - b. Peer to peer sharing, other city examples and problem solving
 - c. Access to cutting-edge resources and subject matter experts
 - d. Executive briefings for top city officials to champion and support CoO work
 - e. Networking with city counterparts and national experts
 - f. Opportunity to feature your city's work in national conferences and publications
 - g. Modest grant to support your CoO priority
 - h. Other – (please write in short answer)
16. Finalist Information: If you are selected as a finalist, a one-hour phone interview is required with your team lead and Mayor or City Manager between November 2-20, 2020.
 - Please indicate if that's feasible: Yes: No:

PART II [50%]

Applicability of the Cities of Opportunity Approach

This section is intended to help you reflect upon how CoO 's comprehensive approach toward policy and systems change applies to your city's needs at this time. We are not looking for grand accomplishments in these areas as the commitment and "readiness" to tackle them.

- a. Please describe your city's existing work to address health inequities among your communities. Your response may include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Are you reviewing city financing, planning and management for equity and systemic inclusion? If so, please describe how. (Examples can include contracts and grants awarded, permits, housing and retail development, and other incoming and outgoing investments.)
 - In what ways is the city scrutinizing municipal policies and ordinances to identify and correct for structural racism and inequities and to sustain change? (This can include economic development, contracting and hiring, zoning and planning, policing, fines and fees, parks and recreation, etc.)
- b. How is this work related to three major factors that affect your residents' health - **Housing, Economic Opportunity, City Planning & Design**? *Feel free to add other factors as relevant.*
- c. Describe your city's activities to engage residents. Include examples of building trust and ways of including communities to shape decisions that affect their lives.
- d. How is the city using data to identify priority populations to focus on, to understand sources of inequities and to measure progress and achieve equitable outcomes?
- e. Are departments/functions across city government aligning their efforts? If so, describe how and in what areas?
- f. Describe the city's experience with collaborating across sectors in your community. What is the focus and who are the city's partners in the collaborative?
- g. How is this collaboration effective? What are the challenges?

PART III [35%]

Pandemic-Driven Priorities: Potential for Sustained, Equitable Policy and Systems Change

In this section, please describe how changing priorities due to the pandemic might be openings for lasting structural changes that can improve equitable health outcomes.

- a. There are many ways in which COVID-19 impacts your work. Describe the top three, how they impact health and equity in your community and your work to address health inequity.
- b. How are you modifying your approach to your work given these COVID-19 impacts? Which particular approaches (policies, practices, programs or systemic changes) hold promise as you look past the acute phase of the pandemic?
- c. What are your key priorities as you look toward longer-term recovery and rebuilding for stronger, more equitable and more resilient communities? Please describe potential policy, practices or systems changes as relevant.

PART IV [15%]

Preliminary City Team Composition

The ideal team will include up to five individuals across local government and partners from the broader community with the ability to move priorities forward within and across housing, economic development, and city planning and design. This core team is the hub to engage others in both city government and the community to drive progress on your CoO priorities. This includes decision makers and essential staff from city departments on policy and systems change, and external partners that might include the local health system, public health department, community based organizations, business leaders and a funding partner or key stakeholder with access to funding partners.

- a. Describe the team you have in mind for the CoO Action Cohort, including the individuals' organizational affiliation and position.
 - *Please note: If you are selected as a finalist we will discuss this in the finalist interview. That will help you further solidify the players for the team and confirm partner commitment to participate as the last step to complete your application before NLC selects the cities for the 2021 CoO Action Cohort.*
- b. Does your application have the support of your city's top executive (mayor or city manager) and their willingness to participate in quarterly cross-city leadership briefings? Yes: No:

HOW TO SUBMIT

Save file and email completed application to dana@nlc.org.