

Landlord Engagement Lab Frequently Asked Questions

The Application Process, Requirements & Selection

How can a city apply to the Landlord Engagement Lab?

Cities and their partners should [apply here](#) by submitting an application through the Submittable platform. Simply create an account, complete the questionnaire and answer the short response questions.

Applications are due by 11:59 PM EST on Friday, March 25, 2022.

Are communities of all sizes eligible to participate in the Landlord Engagement Lab?

Strategies and tactics discussed in the LEL will be tailored to best serve small-to-mid-sized communities. **Cities, towns and villages with a population of 300,000 people or below are eligible to apply.**

Does a city need to be a dues-paying member of the National League of Cities in order to join the Landlord Engagement Lab?

No, cities are not required to be NLC members in order to participate. Any community with a population under 300,000 that is committed to engaging mom and pop landlords and equitably addressing evictions is encouraged to apply, regardless of membership status!

Who should apply to the LEL, and is a letter of support from the mayor, city manager or a city councilmember required?

Any city and/or agency staff associated with landlord engagement and eviction prevention may apply to participate in the Landlord Engagement Lab. **Two (2) lead participants from the city must be committed to actively participating in the Engagement Lab and should be identified in the application.**

Representatives from partner organizations (including local nonprofits or state/county staff) are also welcome, but not required, to participate as part of a given city team.

The city staff members applying to the Landlord Engagement Lab do not need a letter from their mayor, city manager or city councilmember to apply to this program but should seek to demonstrate the city's commitment to taking meaningful action on landlord engagement.

What about nonprofits, philanthropies, service providers and other partner organizations? Can non-municipal organizations apply or participate in the LEL?

Non-municipal organizations involved in landlord engagement or local eviction prevention efforts are encouraged to participate in the Landlord Engagement Lab as part of a city's team, but are not eligible to apply.

Partner organizations interested in participating should seek to connect with their local government team and encourage them to apply for the LEL.

What are the selection criteria for participation?

Applications will be evaluated based on whether they show commitment from the city to actively creating or refining a landlord engagement strategy that focuses on supporting “mom and pop” landlords and preventing evictions.

Applicants should seek to demonstrate that commitment, along with a commitment to identifying and addressing racial inequities; dedication to actively participating in LEL programming; and open-mindedness to exploring new ideas or sharing about your city's current approach to landlord engagement.

What if more than one application is submitted for the same city?

Applicants from the same city will be asked to merge their teams and participate as a single group. The applications will be evaluated together when determining whether a given city will be accepted into the Landlord Engagement Lab.

Program Components & Participation

What topics will be covered and focused on through programming and resources?

This program will focus on engaging and serving “mom and pop” landlords, rather than larger real estate and property management companies. Strategies will be tailored to **property owners who manage 20 or fewer residential rental units**.

Engagement Lab programming will be responsive to the specific needs and interests of participating cities, but key topics of discussion will likely include:

- Racial Equity
- Developing a Strategy & Implementation
- Landlord Incentives
- Supportive Services
- Advisory Boards & Commissions
- Local Policies
- Communication & Outreach Strategies
- Authentic Community Engagement

What programming are participants expected to attend, and what additional assistance will be available through the Landlord Engagement Lab?

Members of the LEL are expected in to participate in **bi-monthly (every two months) Lab Meetings** taking place on Wednesdays from 1-2:15 p.m. EST. See [the program page](#) and program overview document for the full calendar of meetings.

The bi-monthly Lab Meetings will be supplemented by **optional workshops, hands-on work sessions, and discussion groups** with peers. Members will also regularly receive resources through an **online shared resource hub** and **newsletter**.

Participating cities will be eligible to request and receive **up to 10 hours of hands-on, one-on-one assistance** for specific projects or initiatives related to local landlord engagement strategies.

Will the Landlord Engagement Lab meet in person?

The LEL will not convene in person. Activities related to the Engagement Lab will largely take place over video conference calls.

What are the responsibilities of the lead participants for a city in the LEL?

Two lead participants will serve as the primary points of contact for a city's team. These individuals should be city staff members who are equipped to actively participate in, and contribute to, ongoing Engagement Lab programming. This includes joining and contributing to the quarterly meetings, participating in some optional sessions or hands-on workshops, and sharing relevant resources. They will also support internal coordination with the city as needed, such as by facilitating connections to other city departments or teams in order to apply learnings from the program.

These individuals are also expected to support evaluation of the LEL by completing an initial onboarding survey, periodic progress reports and a final feedback survey at the conclusion of the program.

The lead participants are encouraged to invite additional city staff members, external stakeholders and partners to participate in the LEL's virtual programming on an ongoing basis as part of the city's core team. Lead participants can also engage individuals to participate in one-off sessions relevant to their work. For example, by inviting a colleague who manages communications around eviction programs to join an Engagement Lab workshop or meeting focused on outreach and marketing tactics.

What happens if one of the lead participants leaves their role in the city?

We ask that the departing team lead engage a city colleague to participate in their place and facilitate a transition to that new team member.

Can more than two people from the same city participate in the LEL? What about partner organizations?

Absolutely! In addition to the two lead participants, it's suggested that cities develop a core team of individuals regularly participating in the Engagement Lab programming.

These additional participants should be directly involved in refining the engagement strategy for local mom and pop landlords, and can include other individuals within city government or agencies, or from external partners such as community-based organizations, service providers, philanthropies, or universities.

Individuals can also join for one-off sessions relevant to their work around landlord engagement, rather than participating on an ongoing basis as part of the city's core team.

The Engagement Lab can complement work being done through an existing city taskforce focused on eviction and landlord engagement, or can serve as a spark for developing such an internal workgroup.

Is there a fee associated with participating in the Landlord Engagement Lab (LEL)?

There is no fee associated with the Landlord Engagement Lab. This technical assistance opportunity provided by National League of Cities and Stanford Legal Design Lab is free to teams of city staff and their partners.

Will grant dollars be available as part of this technical assistance program?

No, grant dollars will not be made available through the LEL at this time.

Miscellaneous

What successes have NLC and Stanford Legal Design Lab had with technical assistance related to eviction prevention?

NLC and Stanford Legal Design Lab previously partnered to launch the [2020 Eviction Prevention Cohort](#) and currently co-operate the [Eviction Prevention Learning Lab](#), a network of 30 cities. For additional information about the 2020 cohort, read the corresponding report, [The Eviction Prevention Cohort: Highlights from the Five-City Pilot](#). Additional information is also available through the Stanford Legal Design Lab's [homepage](#) and [EvictionInnovation.org](#).

Have a question not answered here?

Contact the team at LandlordEngagmentLab@nlc.org with any additional questions.