

Our Home State | Capital and Reserve Grant Program | Application Scoring Rubric

Grantmaking focus:

The Our Home State Capital and Reserve Grant Program supports organizations and programs that ensure access to affordable housing or housing stability.

Our Capital and Reserve Grant program will consider proposals that address one of the following:

- ⊄ Capitalized services reserves, or operating/services reserves
 - ⊄ Matching funds for LIHTC or other public/philanthropic investment
- ⊄ Capital for existing affordable housing project preservation/redevelopment including:
 - ⊄ Protecting, maintaining, and repairing existing affordable housing, infrastructure replacements (ex: boilers, roofs)
 - ⊄ Expiring affordability requirements
 - ⊄ Support for local housing trust funds
- ⊄ Operating reserves for housing service stabilization/preservation including:
 - ⊄ Unexpected budget shortfalls, cash flow gaps, and day-to-day operational emergencies
 - ⊄ Programs and support designed to help individuals find, transition into, and maintain long-term housing

Section 1: Overview of Proposed Work & Your Role in Community

Scoring Description: To what extent does the applicant clearly describe their proposed work? Does the applicant demonstrate how their work will increase affordable housing to meet current community needs OR stabilize services to meet the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness? Strong responses will also state the applicant's current reserve position or capital preservation activity with specificity, consistent with the Grant Narrative Questions.

Score	Description
5	The response clearly and compellingly describes the proposed work and the organization's role in the community. It demonstrates strong alignment with Our Home State's focus on increasing affordable housing to meet current community needs OR stabilizing services to meet the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness. The approach described centers the lived experience of those it seeks to support, honors personal agency and builds power among stakeholders.
4	The organization describes its proposed work and role with clarity and shows meaningful thought into ways to increase organization capacity and responsiveness. Elements that demonstrate commitment to community empowerment are present, though they may not be fully developed or deeply integrated throughout the response.
3	The response provides a basic description of the work and its intended impact but may lack specificity or a clear throughline. While the proposal mentions work relevant to affordable housing or housing stability, the connection to organization capacity building, or community empowerment are only partially articulated.
2	The proposed work is described in vague or general terms, making it difficult to understand the organization's role or impact. Connections to increasing organization capacity or community empowerment are minimal, unclear, or not well supported.
1	The response does not clearly describe the proposed housing work or the organization's role in the community. There is little to no evidence of alignment with Our Home State priorities.
Comments or Questions	

Section 2: Current and Future Conditions

Scoring Description: To what extent does the applicant identify the key challenges and root causes within the housing ecosystem that they seek to change? Does the applicant analyze how these conditions disproportionately create barriers in accessing safe, stable, affordable housing? To what extent does the applicant articulate a compelling vision for a more just and equitable housing ecosystem, including the outcomes or shifts they seek in structures, relationships, mindsets, power dynamics, or policies?

Score	Description
5	The response clearly identifies key challenges and root causes within the housing ecosystem and provides a thoughtful analysis of how these conditions create barriers for individuals seeking affordable housing or experiencing housing instability. It articulates a compelling and well-defined vision for a more just and equitable housing system, including specific outcomes or shifts across structures, relationships, power, or policy. The connection between current conditions, proposed work, and desired change is clear and cohesive.
4	The organization demonstrates a solid understanding of challenges and root causes and connects them to community-level barriers. The vision for affordable housing or housing stability is clear, though some elements of the analysis or intended shifts may not be fully developed or explicitly connected.
3	The response identifies some challenges or barriers but remains broad or descriptive rather than analytical. The vision for change is present but may be high-level, with limited clarity on the specific outcomes or systems shifts the work aims to influence.
2	The description of challenges and root causes is vague, incomplete, or lacks clear connection to community impact. The vision for a more affordable housing or housing stability is minimally described or unclear, and intended outcomes or shifts are not well articulated.
1	The response does not clearly identify key challenges or root causes, nor does it explain their impact on communities. There is little to no articulation of a vision for change or the outcomes the organization hopes to achieve.
Comments or Questions	

Section 3: Strategies & Activities

Scoring Description: To what extent does the applicant articulate a compelling need and use for capital or operating/services reserves funds? Strong applications will clearly articulate a set of strategies and aligned activities the applicant will deploy in pursuit of their desired future conditions, while minding current conditions. The applicant should show how they are creating conditions for equitable housing outcomes while also building the leadership, infrastructure, and collective capacity needed to sustain these changes. Strong applications will include the specific deliverables, milestones, and timeline described in the Grant Narrative Questions, appropriate to the eligible activity selected.

Score	Description
5	The response presents a clear and cohesive set of strategies that increase housing stability and promote access to affordable housing. It demonstrates how the work meaningfully shifts conditions toward equitable housing outcomes. The approach integrates individual and organization capacity building as well as infrastructure improvements and collective action to create lasting, equitable housing access.
4	The organization outlines well-defined strategies that contribute to housing justice and improved housing stability. Elements of individual and organization capacity building are present, though connections across strategies or to long-term systems change may not be fully developed.
3	The response describes a set of activities or approaches but may feel programmatic or disconnected rather than part of a cohesive strategy. While there is some alignment with housing justice aims, the connection to power redistribution or sustained systems change is only partially articulated.
2	The strategies are described in broad or unclear terms, making it difficult to understand how the work will lead to meaningful change. There is limited evidence of how the approach shifts power, builds community capacity, or contributes to long-term outcomes.
1	The response does not clearly describe strategies or activities that advance housing stability or promote access to affordable housing. There is little to no indication of how the work will shift power, support community leadership, or create lasting impact.
Comments or Questions	

Section 4: Community Voice

Scoring Description: To what extent does the applicant show that their work is informed by, formed with, and benefiting the communities most impacted? Strong applications should demonstrate how community voices shape their strategies and how they collaborate with organizations, coalitions, or public partners to build collective strength toward shared goals.

Score	Description
5	The response clearly demonstrates that the work is informed by, formed with, and directly benefits the communities most impacted. Community voice is meaningfully integrated into decision-making and strategy, not just consulted. The organization shows strong, authentic collaboration with partners, coalitions, or public entities to advance shared goals and collective impact.
4	The organization describes how community voices inform and influence its work and identifies who benefits. Collaboration with partners is evident, though the depth of shared decision-making or collective strategy may not be fully articulated.
3	The response identifies the communities served and suggests some level of engagement, but it is unclear how deeply community voice shapes decisions or strategy. Partnerships may be mentioned but appear more transactional or loosely connected to shared goals.
2	The description of community engagement is vague or surface-level, making it difficult to understand how communities inform or shape the work. Collaboration with others is limited, unclear, or not meaningfully connected to the work.
1	The response does not clearly identify the communities most impacted or how they are involved. There is little to no evidence that community voices inform, shape, or benefit from the work, and collaboration is absent or unclear.
Comments or Questions	

Section 5: Financial Health and Organizational Capacity

Scoring Description: To what extent does the applicant demonstrate the organizational capacity and financial health needed to sustain their work? Strong applications describe how their budget aligns with their goals, identify areas of growth, and outline the resources needed to carry the work forward. Strong applications will describe current reserve levels, reserve policy status, and a replenishment plan where applicable.

Score	Description
5	The response clearly demonstrates organizational capacity and financial health to carry out the work. It thoughtfully connects budget, staffing, and infrastructure to capital/reserve goals, while also naming areas for growth and how resources will support long-term sustainability.
4	The organization provides a clear overview of its capacity and financial position, with general alignment between budget and goals. Areas for growth and resource needs are identified, though connections to long-term sustainability or capital/reserve goals may not be fully developed.
3	The response includes general information about staffing, budget, or operations but lacks depth or clear alignment to capital/reserve goals. Resource needs or areas for growth are mentioned but remain broad or not fully connected to sustaining the work.
2	The description of organizational capacity or financial health is minimal or unclear, making it difficult to assess readiness for capital/reserve goals. The relationship between budget, goals, and resource needs is loosely addressed or underdeveloped.
1	The response does not provide enough detail about organizational capacity or financial health to determine readiness. It is unclear how the organization will resource or sustain the work over time.
Comments or Questions	