

# WORKFORCE INNOVATIONS GRANT

## I THE CHALLENGE

The homeless services workforce is under strain. Recent publications by the [National Alliance to End Homelessness](#), the [National Homeless Services Workforce Survey group](#), and the Turner Center highlight some significant challenges rooted in decades of neglecting sector employees. Low salaries, persistent job vacancies, high turnover, existing and potential budget cuts, and other factors are creating barriers to ending homelessness.

Rectifying these challenges will likely take significant time and involve both large interventions (e.g., securing billions in new nationwide investments in salaries) and small interventions (e.g., launching an employee mentorship program within a particular Continuum of Care) aimed at recruiting and supporting high-quality homeless services staff.

## I THE OPPORTUNITY

While the field continues to pursue large-scale reforms, the National Alliance to End Homelessness (Alliance) is offering a new opportunity to encourage small-scale innovations. The Alliance is requesting proposals for a funding opportunity that will award a one-time grant of up to \$50,000 to continue an existing project or start a new one. The expected grant term will be up to 2 years.

In furtherance of the Alliance's 501(c)(3) mission of ending homelessness, the purpose of the project must be to support the recruitment, promotion/advancement, and retention of high-quality homeless services staff, including (but by no means limited to):

- Developing a new training program for employees seeking career advancement
- Establishing a mentorship program
- Funding a limited-term fellowship in a critical needs area
- Conducting research on staff needs and wants
- Providing self-care/wellness activities (e.g., a frontline staff support group, staff appreciation days, or meditation/yoga classes)
- Addressing concerns rooted in compensation

Creativity is highly encouraged. However, it is not required—some of the most impactful changes are the ones that lack bells and whistles.

## I THE INTENDED PRODUCTS

The Alliance intends to publish two products as a result of this funding opportunity.

1. **A compendium of community-based strategies or innovations.** The Alliance intends to share replicable ideas gathered through the application process with the homeless services field at large. The Alliance's hope is to inspire others to do something new (no matter how small) to support their staff. Applicants that do not want their name, community, or idea to be shared will not be penalized.
2. **A short paper on the impact of the innovation.** Grantee(s) will be asked to work with the Alliance in tracking and reporting the impact(s) of the intervention. The exact ask (including time frame and data/information collected) will necessarily vary by project; however, it would be designed so as not to burden the finances and human resources of the grantee.

# I APPLICATION PROCESS

The Alliance aims to avoid an overly burdensome application process. The steps are as follows:

## ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Only 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations, and local/state government agencies, and tribal nations are eligible to apply. Entities must be in a U.S. state or territory.

## APPLICATION

Submit a written document (no more than 1000 words) or video recording (no longer than 10 minutes) The deadline for submitting an application is 11:59 pm (EST) on **Friday, April 11 , 2025 (Deadline extended)**.

The application consists of written or video responses to the below questions. You can submit your responses by a) adding them to [this electronic form](#) or b) writing them in a Word document and emailing them to [hri@naeh.org](mailto:hri@naeh.org). Video responses should be uploaded to a hosting service (such as Google Drive or Dropbox) with sharable links placed into the webform or in the emailed Word document.

- a. *Briefly describe your organization's mission and major areas of focus.*
- b. *What workforce challenge is your project seeking to address?*

Please provide information about the specific workplace(s) so that readers/viewers can understand your particular challenge. For example, a response such as "We need more staff" may not provide enough detail. However, a response such as, "We have lost 10 staff members over the last six months. We've posted the jobs but not one suitable candidate has applied. We had to cut back on service delivery by closing on Wednesdays" may provide better insight into your program needs and how grant funding may help to accomplish them.

- c. *Please provide a brief description of the project (or the intended use of the funds).*
- d. *Why do you want to start this project (or continue it, if existing) and how do you think it will successfully support high-quality service delivery?*
- e. *How much funding are you requesting, and over what time period?*

Please right-size your requests, and indicate a sum that reasonably seems to match the activity (e.g., a funding request of "We need \$50,000 to buy a television for the breakroom" would not reasonably match the activity).

- f. *Can the Alliance share information about your project idea in published materials?* If yes, would the organization/agency name and community prefer to remain anonymous in any such materials? (The answers to these questions will not impact selection decisions for the award.)

The most successful applications will be those seeking to address challenges that reasonably impact service delivery (including helping to keep or hire staff needed to assist clients) and that propose projects that reasonably help to resolve the identified challenge.

**Projects that include employees with lived expertise as applicants and/or as a part of the target population are highly encouraged.** Please indicate this factor somewhere in your materials.

Finally, the applicant organization should identify an authorized representative. The authorized representative should be in a leadership position or someone who has secured the approval of such a leader to implement the project. Please include their name, role, and email address in your application submission.

## **INTERVIEW**

The Alliance will conduct virtual meetings in April/May 2025 to better understand your organization/agency, challenges, and the proposal overall.

## **AWARDS ANNOUNCEMENT**

Awards will be announced in May 2025.