

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY RENEWAL STATE FUNDED HOUSING PROGRAMS

2021 REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

- Neighborhood Preservation Program
- Rural Preservation Program



**Homes and
Community Renewal**

Housing
Trust Fund
Corporation

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY RENEWAL

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INTRODUCTION

The Housing Trust Fund Corporation (HTFC) invites eligible not-for-profit organizations to submit applications for the Neighborhood Preservation Program and Rural Preservation Program (N/RPP).

These programs, funded by the State of New York, are administered by the Housing Trust Fund Corporation's (HTFC) Office of Community Renewal (OCR), and provide administrative funding to community based not-for-profits across the State engaged in activities related to the preservation, stabilization, or improvement of neighborhoods/rural areas. Organizations participating in these programs are known as "preservation companies."

Preservation companies utilize the administrative funds provided by the N/RPP to deliver services and bolster community development efforts in their designated service area. NRPP funds do not support capital projects, administrative costs only.

ELIGIBLE SERVICE AREAS

HTFC is soliciting applications limited to new preservation companies that propose service area boundaries inclusive of one, or more identified targeted regions. A service area is a geographically defined boundary proposed by the applicant to recognize or establish a neighborhood within a municipality. An evaluation of the current program has identified targeted areas where program attrition has resulted in an area being unserved or underserved. An underserved area may be served by one or more preservation companies, but demand/need for preservation activities remains unmet. Supporting maps will be provided to illustrate unserved areas.

Applicants will be required to demonstrate that a proposed service area within the following targeted regions meets statutory N/RPP eligible area requirements.

- Albany County
- Broome County
- Bronx County
- Chenango County
- Dutchess County
- Erie County
- Hamilton County
- Kings County
- Monroe County
- Montgomery County
- Nassau County
- Onondaga County
- Orange County
- Queens County
- Richmond County
- Rockland County
- Saratoga County

- Schenectady County
- Suffolk County
- Warren County
- Westchester County

This Request for Applications (RFA) describes the requirements to apply for program funds and explains the process by which HTFC and OCR will evaluate applications.

AVAILABLE FUNDING

HTFC will make available for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2021-22 funds through this RFA. This amount is a guideline for expected awards and the HTFC reserves the right to award additional funds based on resource availability.

Program	Estimated Funding Available Per Award
Neighborhood Preservation Program (five awards)	\$91,223.02
Rural Preservation Program (two awards)	\$89,827.59

I. APPLICATION DEADLINES AND GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Application Deadline

Application Open Date: Wednesday, October 6, 2021

Application Due Date: Friday, November 12, 2021

Applications and uploaded attachments must be submitted via email to: NRPP@nyshcr.org by the applicant **no later than 4:00 PM, EST, Friday, November 12, 2021.**

Applicants may request, based on demonstrated need, to submit a paper application in lieu of using email. Requests may be emailed to OCRinfo@nyshcr.org or mailed to NYS Homes and Community Renewal, Office of Community Renewal, Hampton Plaza, 38-40 State Street, 4th Floor South, Albany, NY 12207.

The above-stated application deadline is firm as to date and hour. In the interest of fairness to all competing applicants, applications received after the specified date and time will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered for funding. Applicants should make early submission to avoid risks of ineligibility resulting from unanticipated delays or other delivery related problems.

B. Applicant Threshold Criteria & Prior Experience

Applicants must meet the following threshold eligibility criteria to advance to a full application review. Failure to satisfy all threshold eligibility criteria will result in the disqualification of the application from further consideration or review.

1. The organization is not currently a preservation company funded by HCR.
2. The organization proposes service area boundaries inclusive of one, or more identified targeted regions listed.

3. The organization has been in existence and providing relevant service and engaged in active preservation of the community in the proposed service area for at least five (5) years.
4. The organization is actively engaged in activities related to the preservation, stabilization, or improvement of neighborhoods/rural areas including owner occupied and rental home repair/rehabilitation; construction of new, affordable housing; tenant/homeowner assistance; subsidy assistance; community planning; or community assistance (after school care; recreation programming; food pantry).
5. The organization has an office in the proposed service area.
6. Per Articles XVI and XVII of Private Housing Finance Law, a substantial portion of the residential population in the service area the applicant proposes to assist through its activities must be persons of low-income. This is defined as residents whose median household income (MHI) does not exceed 90 percent for all residents of the municipality (for NPCs) or region (for RPCs) within which they reside.
7. The organization has funding available to meet N/RPP program matching requirements. This will be a minimum of at least one-third of the total grant award. Matching funds are any additional funds expended to support the objectives of the organization's housing and community renewal programs.
8. The organization's program budget clearly identifies how program funds will be utilized for the payment of salaries and wages to employees, or fees to consultants and professionals, who are engaged in rendering housing preservation and community renewal activities.
9. The applicant must affirm the organization, or its affiliates may not have been in default on federal, state, or local loans or taxes; or had a finding of evidence of fraud or abuse for seven years prior to application.
10. The Board of Directors for the not-for-profit organization is representative of the community and meets the following requirements:
 - **NPP:** Board must have at least seven (7) members and 33% of the board must be residents (not work—reside) in the proposed service area
 - **RPP:** Board must have at least five (5) members and 51% of the board must be residents (not work—reside) in the proposed service area

Applicants are subject to an evaluation of prior performance with other OCR funded programs and organizational capacity.

C. General Requirements

- The application must be completed in its entirety and signed/certified by the applicant.
- The applicant must describe the proposed service area in the application (page 2, question 1) and explain, using relevant statistical data, how the service area needs active community and housing preservation.
- The applicant must submit a signed and notarized Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire (VRQ) for not-for-profit entities. VRQ's that are neither signed nor notarized will render the application ineligible.

D. Application Reference Materials

This RFA provides a portion of the information and materials needed by applicants. Other materials, available from the HCR website at: <https://hcr.ny.gov/neighborhood-and-rural-preservation-programs>, include the following:

- Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)

Application materials available on the HCR website at: <https://hcr.ny.gov/neighborhood-and-rural-preservation-programs#forms-and-documents>, include the following:

- 2021-22 NRPP Application for New Companies
- 2021-22 NRPP Application for New Companies Instructions
- 2021-22 NRPP Application for New Companies Checklist

II. APPLICATION PROCESSING STEPS

- **Application Receipt** – Once an application is submitted via email the application is made available for review by OCR staff.
- **Eligibility Review** – Applications are reviewed to confirm that threshold eligibility criteria are met. Applications that do not meet the criteria will not be reviewed further. The specific criteria are outlined in the program-specific sections of this document.
- **Application Review**
- **HTFC Board Approval** – OCR presents proposed award recommendations to the HTFC Board for review and approval. HTFC Board approval provides OCR authorization to proceed with awards and enter into grant agreements with the awardees.
- **Award/Non-Award Notification** – Applicants will receive a letter with the final status of an application as follows:
 - Award - Selected for Funding, or
 - Non-Award - Not Selected for Funding
- **Program Agreement** – Applicants selected for funding may be asked to revise parts of a proposal prior to issuance of a grant agreement. OCR expects to enter into a grant agreement within 45 business days of the awardee's compliance with submission requirements. Awardees are required to provide supplemental documentation with the Program Agreement. This documentation includes the following, at a minimum:
 - Certificate of General Liability Insurance
 - Auto insurance
 - Workers' Compensation and Disability Insurance
 - Fidelity Bond in the amount of the largest expected disbursement request naming HTFC and New York State as loss payee in accordance with the Program Agreement requirement
- **Implementation Meeting** – Awardees may be required to participate in a program implementation meeting to discuss grant administration and program requirements. Topics

generally include, but are not limited to, file maintenance, financial management, statutory requirements, and programmatic compliance.

III. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Applicants are encouraged to review the full RFA and relevant program materials prior to beginning the application process. These materials provide essential information for composing application responses and guidance for completing the application.

Please contact OCR staff at OCRinfo@nyshcr.org with questions.

IV. NEIGHBORHOOD AND RURAL PRESERVATION PROGRAMS APPLICATION ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The N/RPP provides administrative funding to support community based not-for-profits engaged in activities related to the preservation, stabilization, or improvement of neighborhoods/rural areas. The program funds salaries and fringe benefits for employees whose work duties align with community preservation activities. This may include fees to consultants and professionals retained to support planning and performing such activities. Program funds can also be used towards eligible expenses related to keeping the office functional and open to assist the community. Funding may not be used for capital costs.

- **NPP:** Serves urban areas of the State with cities, towns, and villages having a population of 25,000 or more.
- **RPP:** Services rural areas of the State with cities, towns and villages having a population of less than 25,000.

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible N/RPP applicants are organizations incorporated under the New York State Not-For-Profit Corporation Law, that have been providing relevant community development/housing preservation services to the community for at least five years prior to application. Eligible applicants must have an office in the proposed service area and meet the following criteria:

1. Service Area:

- a. The organization proposes service area boundaries inclusive of one, or more identified targeted regions listed.
- b. **NPP:** The applicant must demonstrate how the proposed service area qualifies under Article XVI of the NYS Private Housing Finance Law. Specifically, a substantial portion of the service area must have a household income at or below 90 percent of area median income.
- c. **RPP:** The applicant must demonstrate how the proposed service area qualifies under Article XVII of the NYS Private Housing Finance Law. Specifically, a substantial portion of the service area must have a household income at or below 90 percent of area median income.
- d. Unserved/Underserved Areas of the State

- i. Only applications that propose to serve unserved or underserved areas of the State, as identified on page 1, will be considered. Preference will be given based on the greatest service need.
- e. The organization proposes service area boundaries inclusive of one, or more identified targeted regions listed.
- The organization is actively engaged in activities related to the preservation, stabilization, or improvement of neighborhoods/rural areas including owner occupied and rental home repair/rehabilitation; construction of new, affordable housing; tenant/homeowner assistance; subsidy assistance; community planning; or community assistance (after school care; recreation programming; food pantry).
- Per Articles XVI and XVII of Private Housing Finance Law, a substantial portion of the residential population in the service area the applicant proposes to assist through its activities must be persons of low-income. This is defined as residents whose median household income (MHI) does not exceed 90 percent for all residents of the municipality (for NPCs) or region (for RPCs) within which they reside.
- The organization's program budget clearly identifies how program funds will be utilized for the payment of salaries and wages to employees, or fees to consultants and professionals, who are engaged in rendering housing preservation and community renewal activities.
- The Board of Directors for the not-for-profit organization is representative of the community and meets the following requirements:
 - i. **NPP:** Board must have at least seven (7) members and 33% of the board must be residents (not work—reside) in the proposed service area
 - ii. **RPP:** Board must have at least five (5) members and 51% of the board must be residents (not work—reside) in the proposed service area

B. Organizational / Fiscal Capacity

Applicants are subject to an evaluation of other OCR program funding history, other OCR program administration performance, and organizational capacity.

Applicants must resolve all outstanding monitoring and/or non-compliance issues that involve a violation of federal, State or local regulations, and/or program and OCR requirements prior to the submission of an application for funding. Applicants that do not resolve monitoring and/or non-compliance issues may be deemed ineligible, and the application will not be accepted or reviewed. HTFC and OCR reserve the right to not fund any application if it has been determined that the applicant is not in compliance with existing State contracts and has not taken satisfactory steps to remedy such non-compliance.

Applicants must also ensure that:

- The organization has funding available to meet N/RPP program matching requirements. This will be a minimum of at least one-third of the total grant award. Matching funds are any additional funds expended to support the objectives of the organization's housing and community renewal programs.
- The applicant must provide prior three years of annual audits to confirm solvency

- The applicant must attest that it has not filed bankruptcy or been in default on federal, state, or local loans or taxes; or had a finding of evidence of fraud or abuse for seven years prior to application.
- The organization must have the requisite staff to carry out housing and community preservation activities.

C. Funding Limits

- NPP: The maximum award amount is \$91,223.02
- RPP: The maximum award amount is \$89,827.59

D. Community Preservation Activities

Applicants must propose a work plan that describes the housing preservation and/or community renewal activities to be completed during the contract period. NRPP funding supports the payment of salaries and wages to employees, or fees to consultants and professionals, who are engaged in these activities. Applicants must demonstrate the type of housing preservation or community renewal work they intend to complete that will benefit the service area. Payment of salaries, wages, or fees must relate to administration of activities in the following categories:

- Property Rehabilitation and Construction
- Client Assistance
- Community Renewal

Review the Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Programs Manual for more information related to community preservation activities:

<https://hcr.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/07/2021-nrpp-manual-final.pdf>

E. Grant Agreement Term

The grant agreement term shall not exceed twelve (12) months. The NRPP program year runs from July 1st through June 30th, annually. Organizations selected will be able to include any work completed going back to July 1, 2021 as eligible activities and can use NRPP funds to reimburse the organization for salaries of those employees paid by NRPP back to July 1, 2021.

F. Other Program Requirements

- Mid-Year Report and Annual Performance Report
 - If approved, the applicant must complete both a Mid-Year Report and an Annual Performance Report as required by the NRPP.

G. Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Program Application Review Criteria

Each application that is determined to be eligible will be reviewed and scored based on the criteria listed below.

The review criteria give preference to applications that demonstrate a need for additional support for housing and preservation activities in the proposed service areas and to applicants that demonstrate sufficient organizational capacity and resources to implement new or expanded preservation activities.

- **Other HCR Funding**

Applicants that are actively administering and in good standing with other HCR programs will be given preference.

- **Program Activity and Scope**

- Proposals that demonstrate a clear understanding of the requirements of the Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Programs and present the necessary organizational structures to implement the program.
- Applicants with mission statements and services that best align with the objectives of the Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Programs.
- Proposals that present efficient organizational structure, staffing, internal controls, continuity planning and distribution of administrative responsibilities.
- Proposals that provide compelling explanation of the applicant's need for NRPP administrative funding, and realistic plan for how the resources will be directed.
- Proposals that present well defined impact of the resources on administrative capacity as it relates to strengthening and expanding offerings within the proposed service area, i.e., measurable examples of anticipated outcomes and accomplishments.
- Applicants that present a successful history of housing preservation and community renewal activities and demonstrate how N/RPP funds will bolster the organization's reach and impact within the proposed service area.

- **Fiscal Responsibility**

Measures the quality and completeness of the proposed project budget, specifically:

- Clarity of project budget including eligible use of funds, evidence that NRPP administrative support will result in additional activity.
- Extent to which the program resources will leverage other relevant funding sources.