

COLLECTIVE COHORT 2026-2027

Program Information and Application Guide

The Collective is a program that brings together a group of community leaders with lived experience of housing insecurity who are working towards housing justice and racial equity in their neighborhoods and greater communities.

This group meets regularly to

- Discuss shared policy concerns about the needs of low-income people and families throughout the country and
- Participate in leadership development opportunities
- Build community and power

This Collective cohort will run from October 2026 to June 2027. 10 participants will be selected for this cohort. To participate in the Collective program, applicants must be a current dues-paying NLIHC member and maintain your membership throughout the course of the program. .

Application period: July 17, 2026 to August 17, 2026.

Applicants will be selected and notified by Friday, October 2nd.

HONORARIUMS

- Participants will receive 2 payments of \$575 during their duration in the program. The scheduled payments will go out as follows:
 - ▶ October 2026
 - ▶ March 2027

PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

- Attend and participate actively in monthly 2-hour Collective Zoom meetings (confirm the dates below).
- Check e-mails and/or texts consistently and strive to meet deadlines for all program-related requests (e.g. Collective projects, comments for letters, feedback) from NLIHC staff.
- Members will stay informed on what's going on with the Collective, federal housing policy, and housing issues within their state and community.
- Members will uphold NLIHC's mission and values in their work relating to the Collective, and act as a responsible spokesperson when representing the Collective.
- Treat all fellows, staff, and Collective members with respect. Once selected, Collective members will develop a set of shared community agreements around respect and accountability.
- On average, Collective members will spend 5-15 hours per month on the Collective program.

APPLICATION GUIDE

This document is **NOT** the application. The application must be completed online via our [SurveyMonkey link](#). This document provides an overview of the questions included in the application. Please feel free to use the document to help prepare your answers for the online application. If you have any questions, please contact Sid Betancourt at sbetancourt@nlihc.org.

NLIHC is an equal opportunity employer. Consistent with applicable law, all qualified applicants will receive consideration for the program without regard to citizenship, gender identity or expression, immigration status, marital status, national origin, physical or mental disability, political affiliation, protected veteran or military status, race, ethnicity, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by applicable local laws, regulations and ordinances.

Questions Included in the Application:

1. Name:

2. E-mail Address:

3. Mailing Address:

4. Phone Number:

5. Preferred method of communication and best time to contact:

6. Have you confirmed that you are a current dues-paying NLIHC member?

a. *You must maintain your membership status during the duration of the Collective program.

7. To make the most of the Collective, it is imperative that you attend each session (with the understanding that emergencies arise, you might be out sick, etc.). Please confirm that you can attend each virtual session below.*

- a. Thursday, October 8 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm ET
- b. Additional team building activities in October (Time TBD)
- c. Thursday, November 12 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm ET
- d. Thursday, December 10 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm ET
- e. Thursday, January 14 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm ET
- f. Thursday, February 11 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm ET
- g. March 9-12, 2027 NLIHC Policy Forum*
- h. Thursday, April 8 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm ET
- i. Thursday, May 13 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm ET
- j. Thursday, June 10 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm ET

*Collective members will need to spend additional time outside of the meetings working on Collective related activities which may amount to 5-15 hours a month.

*Travel to DC for the NLIHC Policy Forum is required. NLIHC will cover hotel and flight expenses through a reimbursement process.

NLIHC wants to build an equitable environment that is inclusive of diverse identities and beliefs. By completing the information in the following section, you will help ensure the Collective remains in an inclusive group.

8. Which best describes your race/ethnicity? (Select all that apply)

- a. American Indian or Alaska Native
- b. Asian
- c. Black or African-American
- d. Hispanic or Latino/a
- e. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- f. Middle Eastern or North African
- g. White
- h. Prefer not to share
- i. Other (please describe): _____

9. Do you identify as a person with a disability or other chronic condition?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to answer

10. Follow-up: If you answered yes to the previous question, can you list the accommodations you would need to fully participate in the Collective program? (short answer)

11. What is your gender identity?

- a. Woman
- b. Man
- c. Non-binary
- d. Not specified above, please specify here:

12. Which of the following best describes you?

- a. Heterosexual or straight
- b. Gay or Lesbian
- c. Bisexual or pansexual
- d. Asexual
- e. Queer
- f. Other (please)describe: _____
- g. Prefer not to share

13. What age range do you fall within?

- a. 18-30 years
- b. 31-40 years
- c. 41-50 years
- d. 51-61 years
- e. 62 years and over

14. If you're comfortable sharing, are you a person with lived experience of homelessness or housing instability? *Housing instability can include a wide array of experiences that include but are not limited to: spending more than 30% of income on housing, facing housing discrimination, uninhabitable or unsafe living conditions, or on the verge of experiencing homelessness. We understand that the range of experiences an applicant may have vary widely, so please answer this question using your discretion.

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

15. Have you participated in any of the following federal housing programs?

- a. Public Housing (Section 9)
- b. Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8, also known as tenant based rental assistance)
- c. Project Based Rental Assistance
- d. Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG)
- e. Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA)
- f. Tribal Housing Programs
- g. Rural Housing Programs
- h. Other
- i. No, but I live/have lived in naturally occurring affordable housing.
- j. I have not participated in any federal housing programs.

ESSAY QUESTIONS (MINIMUM OF 100 WORDS)

16. Why is the housing justice movement important to you? How does this value show up in your work? How did it drive your decision to apply to the Collective program?

17. NLIHC is dedicated to achieving racially and socially equitable public policy that ensures people with the lowest incomes have quality homes that are accessible and affordable in communities of their choice. How does racial and social justice show up in your work and daily life?

18. Do you have any history of organizing or policy advocacy? If so, please highlight some of the work you have done. These may include but are not limited to housing advocacy groups or organizations, tenant unions, resident associations, advocacy groups of any kind. Please be as specific as possible.

19. Have you engaged with NLIHC? Please select all that apply:

- a. I am a current NLIHC dues-paying individual member (required for Collective selection)
- b. I attend/have attended NLIHC webinars
- c. I use NLIHC's reports and other online resources
- d. I have attended NLIHC's Annual Housing Policy Forum or another NLIHC in-person event
- e. I am subscribed to NLIHC's e-mail list
- f. Other

20. OPTIONAL: Do you have any media, published work, or writing samples you would like to share with us (e.g., articles, op-eds, speaking events)? If so, please upload the files here.

Please contact outreach@nlihc.org if you have any questions.

nlihc.org

