



Request for Applications Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD)

The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ is a National Endowment for the Arts leadership initiative in partnership with the Housing Assistance Council, along with buildingcommunityWORKSHOP.

Call for Applications Release Date: May 22, 2019

Application Deadline: 11:59 PM EST, July 22, 2019

Submit via Typeform: <https://bcworkshop.typeform.com/to/HyuFil>

Contact: CIRD@bcworkshop.org or CIRD@ruralhome.org

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Housing Assistance Council (HAC), with buildingcommunityWORKSHOP ([bc]), are excited to announce the Request for Applications to the Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD). Rural communities are invited to submit applications to receive design support and technical assistance to host a local rural design workshop or participate in a learning cohort.

ABOUT CIRD

The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (CIRD) is a leadership initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Housing Assistance Council, along with buildingcommunityWORKSHOP. Focusing on communities with populations of 50,000 or less, CIRD's goal is to enhance the quality of life and economic viability of rural America through planning, design, and creative placemaking. CIRD is intended to empower local citizens to capitalize on unique local and regional assets in order to guide the civic development and future design of their own communities.

The CIRD program goals include:

- Building capacity in rural communities to plan comprehensive revitalization strategies;

- Introducing creative placemaking, arts, culture, and design strategies as drivers of economic development in rural America;
- Facilitating a network of rural communities for idea exchanges and peer learning; and
- Preparing communities to be ready and competitive for state and federal funding opportunities.

More information about CIRDP can be found at <https://www.rural-design.org/>.

OPPORTUNITY

For 2019, the CIRDP program consists of two different opportunities via a single application:

Workshop Communities: Up to three (3) communities will be selected to host an on-site **rural design workshop**. With support from a wide range of design, planning, and creative placemaking professionals, the workshops bring together local residents and local leaders from non-profits, community organizations, and government to develop actionable solutions to the community's specific design challenge. The community receives additional support through customized follow-up support after the workshop and web-based resources, webinars, and peer learning through the Learning Cohort (described below). Examples of potential design challenges include (but are not limited to):

- Historic preservation and adaptive reuse of community buildings
- Designing quality affordable housing that supports livable and equitable communities; including housing and other amenities that support young people, families, and/or the elderly and aging in place
- Creating public or civic space that supports and integrates cultural expression and local identity and/or play and active recreation
- Developing recreational trails for mobility, active transportation, and economic development
- Redesigning Main Street as a local street versus state highway/thruway
- Improving access to healthy food and local food eco-systems
- Leveraging Main Street or local businesses for economic development, including branding, wayfinding, façade improvements, and streetscape design
- Integrating cultural identity into the built environment to drive heritage tourism

Learning Cohort Communities: Up to twenty (20) rural communities (in addition to the three communities selected for on-site design workshops) will be selected to participate in a **Learning Cohort**. Rural community leaders from government, non-profits, local business, and civic organizations are invited to gather together for peer learning; training in design, planning, community engagement, and facilitation techniques; and support in navigating funding opportunities to make their community's vision a reality. Applicant organizations can indicate on their application if they only want to participate in the Learning Cohort.

Both parts of the CIRD program connect rural residents with resources and ideas for developing locally driven solutions to community design challenges.

Applications must be submitted online via Typeform
(<https://bcworkshop.typeform.com/to/HyuFiI>) by 11:59 pm ET on July 22, 2019.

A webinar about this opportunity will be hosted on June 11, followed by office hours for questions about the application on June 18 and July 10. See Important Dates below for details.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicant Organizations must:

- Be part of a rural or tribal community of 50,000 or less, that is rural in character.*
- Have a specific design challenge in mind, although the CIRD team realizes that design challenges might evolve based on on-the-ground happenings.
- Be able to participate in CIRD as indicated in Participation Expectations below
- Commit to the full period of programming from September 2019-December 2020

**rural tribes and communities with higher populations, please contact cird@ruralhome.org with any questions or concerns*

The following entities meeting the criteria above are encouraged to apply:

- Municipal, tribal, or county governments

- Local nonprofit organizations, including but not limited to Main Street organizations, art centers, preservation groups, historical societies, or chambers of commerce, working in rural areas
- Regional planning organizations working in rural areas
- University community design centers or university agricultural/extension offices or other programs with close ties to the community presenting the design challenge
- Partnerships of the entities listed above are encouraged to apply

PARTICIPATION BENEFITS

Workshop Communities

Three communities will be selected to do a deep dive into a pressing design challenge that is impacting their community. Each workshop includes:

- \$10,000 stipend to the host community for workshop and related expenses
- A tailored site visit and multi-day workshop with design experts to assist with project visioning and advancing toward implementation
- In-person or virtual check-in with CIRDC staff and team members - including designers and planners - on a quarterly basis after the workshop, to help tackle the community design challenge
- A travel stipend to participate in Learning Cohort activities
- Lodging stipend and registration fee waiver for HAC's National Conference

In addition to the benefits listed above, Workshop Communities will have access to all events and opportunities afforded to the Learning Cohort, listed below.

Learning Cohort

An additional 20 communities from the applicant pool will be invited to participate in the Learning Cohort, an opportunity for two leaders from each selected community to gather together for peer learning; training in design, planning, community engagement, and facilitation techniques; and support in navigating funding opportunities to make their vision a reality. The Learning Cohort opportunity includes:

- Invitation to the Rural Design Summit (Fall 2019), an in-person, design focused gathering of rural leaders, designers, and related subject experts

- \$1,000 travel stipend
- Access to online education and coaching on design related topics catered to the cohort's particular design challenges
- Opportunities to exchange knowledge and experiences of design issues with peers from across rural America
- Invitations to in-person events and conferences to further peer learning and exchange
- Invitations to link to HAC's national capacity building network including webinars, convenings, funding opportunities, and related opportunities
- An opportunity to contribute to rural design conversations at the national level

PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

Workshop Communities must:

- Designate a local coordinator who will serve as the main point of contact for the workshop and communication with CIRD team. This person may also be responsible for tracking expenses and other administrative and logistical details.
- Provide a \$10,000 match to the \$10,000 stipend for hosting a workshop in their geography. A match can be cash or in-kind, which could include assets like the rental value of the workshop venue, donated meals for workshop participants, and/or staff time.
- Collaborate with the CIRD team to organize the design challenge site visit and workshop. This will include:
 - Drafting of site visit agenda, including a site tour, introduction to local partners, and establishment of design challenge goals, objectives and timelines.
 - Assistance in drafting workshop agenda
 - Coordination of site visit and workshop logistics, including securing venues, recommendations for Resource Team lodging and transportation, and catering.
 - Managing correspondence with workshop participants
- Provide a final budget report and narrative report after completion of the site visit and workshop.
- Participate in broader CIRD network building, including but not limited to CIRD workshops events, both online and in-person.

Learning Cohort Communities must:

- Attend the Rural Design Summit (Fall 2019).
- Engage in peer learning activities, where applicable.
- Respond to a survey on learning outcomes.
- Commit to stewarding design activities and projects in their home community.

IMPORTANT DATES

May 22	Request for Applications launched
June 11, 2:00-3:00pm ET	CIRD Webinar
June 18, 6:00-7:00pm ET & July 10, 1:00-2:00pm ET	Online open office hours on Facebook with [bc] to answer application questions
July 22	Applications due 11:59pm ET
End of August	Successful applicants notified
Early September	Successful applicants publicly announced
Fall 2019 – Fall 2020	CIRD Program activities, including local workshops and learning cohort programs

SELECTION CRITERIA

Applications will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria, equally weighted:

Excellence is a reflection of the commitment, quality, and capacity of the applicant and partners to host a workshop and engage the community to address design challenges, including:

- Alignment with CIRD goals and design technical assistance offerings
- Capacity to lead a local design workshop and/or steward activities in their local community
- Commitment to partner and collaborate locally to address a design challenge

Merit reflects the relevance of the identified design challenges to the local community, the community's readiness and enthusiasm to tackle the design challenge, and a commitment to stewarding a local design agenda; including:

- Clear design challenge and relevance to the community
- Evidence of community's voice and/or planned community engagement and buy-in
- Commitment to participation in the CIRD program and willingness and capacity to implement ideas from the program

If circumstances warrant, CIRD might give special consideration to applications in certain geographies and/or applications that promise unique contributions to national rural design conversations. Applicants have the opportunity to indicate if they are only interested in being considered for the Learning Cohort.

PROJECT PARTNERS



Established by Congress in 1965, the [National Endowment for the Arts](#) is an independent federal agency whose funding and support gives Americans the opportunity to participate in the arts, exercise their imaginations, and develop their creative capacities. Through partnerships with state arts agencies, local leaders, other federal agencies, and the philanthropic sector, the Arts Endowment supports arts learning, affirms and celebrates America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extends its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America.



The **Housing Assistance Council (HAC)** is a national nonprofit that strengthens communities across rural America through investment and assistance with affordable housing and community and economic development. Based in Washington, DC, HAC is actively involved in shaping federal policy and the affordable housing industry with its research, lending and conferences. We also deliver technical assistance, training and affordable loans to local organizations that help rural communities prosper.



buildingcommunityWORKSHOP (bc) is a Texas based nonprofit community design center seeking to improve the livability and viability of communities through the practice of thoughtful design and making. We enrich the lives of citizens by bringing design thinking to areas of our cities where resources are most scarce. To do so, [bc] recognizes that it must first understand the social, economic, and environmental issues facing a community before beginning work.

APPLICATION SAMPLE: You will find the full application on the typeform platform using the link below, and all applications should be submitted through this platform. Here we want to provide you with the application questions so that you can view them ahead of time. We recommend that applicants prepare their answers prior to submission, as users do not have the ability to save their progress within typform.

Note that this application has maximum character counts for most responses and counts a space as a character.

Please contact CIRD@bcworkshop.org if you have any questions about the application submission process.

To access the application:

- Enter <https://bcworkshop.typeform.com/to/HyuFiI> into your web browser.
- Press “Start”
- Answer the following questions in the form:
 1. Lead Applicant Contact Information
 - a. Organization Name
 - b. Street Address, City, State, Zip Code
 - c. Organization Website
 - d. Contact Name
 - e. Contact Title
 - f. Email Address
 - g. Phone Number
 2. Are you only interested in being considered for the Learning Cohort? (Y/N)
 3. Please describe your organization background and mission. (Up to 1000 characters).
 4. If applicable please provide information about any project partners that are likely to be part of your application. For each partner, please provide Organization Name (if applicable), Street Address, City, State, Zip Code, Organization Website (if applicable),

Contact Name, Contact Title, Email Address, Phone Number, Short description of their potential role in your CIRD work. (Up to 1500 characters)

5. Please provide a description of your community and the context of your design challenge. (Up to 1000 characters)
6. Challenge Information (Up to 1000 characters for each section below).
 - a. Describe your design challenge. There will be opportunities to refine the design challenge throughout the course of the CIRD program.
 - i. *Tip: Frame the challenge as more than the solution by giving background on the challenge and why it is a critical need in your community at this moment.*
 - b. Describe your project team and partner organizations that will be involved. Who is a part of this project? Have you worked together in the past? How will you collaborate on this project?
 - c. How do you think your community would benefit from the design and technical resources provided through CIRD?
 - d. What is your organization's current staffing capacity to work on this program?
 - e. (Skip this question if you are only interested in the learning cohort) Please list proposed sources for the \$10,000 match. The full match does not have to be secured at the time of application, identifying proposed sources of matching funds is acceptable.
 - i. *Tip: Remember that your match can be cash or in-kind goods, services, or facilities.*
7. Supporting Material
 - a. Provide a link or compiled photo documentation of the context of your design challenge/community. You can include a link to one video (through Vimeo or Youtube) that describes your community and design challenge. Do not password protect media links. The total time should not exceed 3 minutes.

File upload

- i. Tip: Examples of documentation include photos from the applicant or an aerial image from Google maps. If you do provide a video, it can be informal, event shot on your phone - we just want to understand more about your community!*

Documentation web link

- ii. Tip: Examples of link could be for a flickr album, youtube video, or an article about the area.*
- b. Optional letters of support: Provide up to 3 letters of support from community leaders or partners. This will help us better understand the network of support that will ensure a successful workshop and design process.
 - i. Tip: Letters can come from people like potential project partners, organizations that might provide in-kind donations, stakeholders who would benefit from addressing the design challenge, or local politicians.*

8. Would you like to be subscribed to the CIRD newsletter? (Y/N)

- Click “Submit” or press ENTER.