

Tribal Housing Excellence Academy

Frequently Asked Questions

What have Participants in THE Academy achieved?

THE Academy has been held twice, in 2014-2017, and 2017-2021. Thirty staff from 15 tribal housing organizations have graduated from THE Academy. In the first cohort, participants completed 41 homes by the end of THE Academy. Participants secured \$912,500 in HOME and ICDBG, and \$8.3 million in non-federal funds and LIHTC equity. In the most recent cohort, 50% of the participating organizations completed a housing project during THE Academy. There were 52 new homes built, and 8 rehabilitated or replaced. Another 72 were under construction or rehabilitation when THE Academy ended. Participants received a combined \$7.1 million in expanded federal funding from HOME, ICDBG, ICDBG-CARES and National Housing Trust Funds. Participants secured another \$5.5 million in bank loans and LIHTC equity for their housing projects.

Are THE Academy trainings virtual or in-person?

There will be a short kick-off webinar for orientation, and the first three-day training will be virtual. Following that, we would love to hold the five remaining trainings in person. However, we know there is a pandemic going on, so we will make the decision about whether and when the trainings will be in-person after consultation with the organizations selected to participate.

Where will the in-person trainings be held?

RCAC will rotate the trainings around the western US in regions close to our selected participants. RCAC selects locations with decent airline access, reasonable per diem rates, and we prefer to use native-owned hotels when possible. THE Academy trainings in the past have been held in or near Phoenix, Albuquerque, Sacramento, Salt Lake City, Spokane, Portland, Seattle and Anchorage.

Which of our staff should attend?

The staff should be those who have responsibilities for developing the housing project and/or operating it when it is complete, and who have the time to participate. In smaller organizations, this often includes the Executive Director or Housing Director. We've also had participation by Development Managers, Project Managers, Maintenance Directors, Admissions & Occupancy Specialists, Tribal Planners, CFOs and a Tribal Administrator.

What is the schedule of trainings?

We try to schedule trainings to avoid conflicts with other major events such as the NAIHC Annual Conference. Our tentative schedule is:

- Kickoff/orientation webinar, several hours, October
- Training 1, Three days, November/December. Virtual
- Training 2, Three and a half days, January/February 2023
- Training 3, Three and a half days, April/May 2023
- Training 4, Three and a half days, July/August 2023
- Training 5, Three to four days TBD, October 2023
- Training 6, Three to four days, TBD, January 2024

How is THE Academy funded?

RCAC was awarded a grant from HUD's Rural Capacity Building for Community Development and Affordable Housing Program to cover the majority of our costs, and a grant from Wells Fargo for the

remainder. The Wells Fargo grant also pays for the scholarships of up to \$4,000 per organization over the whole Academy to offset travel costs.

Is there an application form?

No. Go to Section 3. "Application Requirements" in the application packet and use it as a checklist of what you must provide in your application. Also pay attention to the selection criteria on page 10 of the application packet. However, there is an Excel workbook with two tabs for the self-assessment (see page 15), and those are due along with the application.

What type of housing project is eligible?

New construction of affordable housing for low-income households is eligible, as is major rehabilitation of a housing project, or acquisition/rehabilitation of buildings to create affordable housing. As long as the housing will be high-quality, safe and acceptable to funders, we have no rules about the building methods. We are fine with stick-built, modular, manufactured, straw bale, adobe, Structural Insulated Panels and other methods.

What is *not* eligible is housing work that is a program instead of a project. For example, if you operate a housing rehabilitation program that repairs one or two houses at a time throughout the year, then many of our training topics are either overkill, or not applicable.

What if my Board/Council does not meet before the deadline?

We understand this is a short application window. Please submit the rest of the application by the September 23 due date, and then submit the Commitment Letter from the Board/Council by October 7.

Where can I find a NAHASDA class to take?

Check the ONAP training calendar frequently to find the upcoming offerings.

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/ih/codetalk/calendar

Why is RCAC reopening the application period?

We selected participants from the applications received in April. However, due to applications that were ineligible or withdrew due to staff changes, we have room for several more participants.

How can I ask more specific questions?

Please send your question by email to THEAcademy@rcac.org. We will respond to your questions and can arrange a phone call if you'd like.