



# LOW-INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS



## 2024/2025 CRANE Guidelines and Application

### Our Mission

*Growing Nebraska communities through affordable housing and agribusiness.*

**2024/2025**  
**COLLABORATIVE RESOURCES ALLOCATION FOR NEBRASKA (CRANE) PROGRAM**  
**GUIDELINES & APPLICATION**  
**9% LIHTC and AHTC**

The focus and primary purpose of CRANE is to target specific long-term, interrelated and coordinated job creation/enhancement, economic growth, joint housing and community development strategies in order to provide affordable housing. Together, NIFA and other collaborating resource providers will work with communities and neighborhoods, who have joined with for profit and non-profit entities that commit to participate in the CRANE Program, as well as with other public and private resource providers.

The partnership between resource providers and applicants will be formed for the strategic placement of comprehensive housing, job and community development resources into Nebraska communities and neighborhoods that are ready and prepared to move forward on a pre-developed strategy to address the housing needs of the community or neighborhood.

**A. COMPONENTS OF CRANE**

The CRANE Program involves a three-tier process. Potential CRANE Program eligible applicants must submit an email to NIFA with a brief description of the development and how the development is CRANE eligible. Upon review by NIFA the potential CRANE Program Eligible Applicants will be invited to submit a CRANE Application and all required supporting information via the online funding application system, along with a nonrefundable CRANE Application Fee, set forth in Appendix A of the 2024/2025 Housing Credit Allocation Plan for 9% LIHTC & AHTC, which must be received in NIFA's office at the time the application is submitted to NIFA. NIFA will notify the applicant if they are CRANE eligible and whether the CRANE Application meets the requirements under the CRANE Program. If the CRANE Application meets those requirements, the eligible applicant must then submit a completed LIHTC/AHTC Application via the online funding application system and the LIHTC/AHTC Application fee must be received in NIFA's office on or prior to the time periods specified by NIFA (as set forth in the 2024/2025 Housing Credit Allocation Plan for 9% LIHTC and AHTC). CRANE Applications and related documentation received by NIFA will be reviewed on a monthly basis.

1. To participate in the CRANE Program, for-profit or non-profit entities ("Eligible Applicant") must join together with cities, communities and neighborhoods and collectively demonstrate that through a public process they have assessed the needs of their particular community with respect to economic development, community resources and housing development, and have proposed specific solutions to address those needs (the "Plan").

Eligible Applicants must designate a "Lead" organization that will actively and regularly participate in a strategic planning and implementation program. The Plan may cover

incorporated municipalities, neighborhoods or villages, although elements of the Plan may also include areas located in adjacent, unincorporated but municipally regulated areas. Housing developments in both metro and non-metro communities are eligible under the CRANE Program.

2. Jointly, NIFA and other participating resource providers will set threshold and ranking criteria for the CRANE Program applications. All CRANE Program applications will be reviewed by NIFA staff and the NIFA Programs Committee and are subject to approval by NIFA's Board. Applicants must also receive the appropriate approval from the participating resource providers for their respective development.
3. Initial CRANE Program applications will be "soft" meaning that property control, zoning and financing need not be finalized at the time of submission of the application; however, the Eligible Applicants must provide a strategy and timeline within the Plan for completing the full LIHTC/AHTC application.
4. The CRANE application must also show financial support for proposed services to occupants or other proposed programs where the occupants are the primary beneficiaries in the development. Commitments for at least 10% in materials, services and/or cash is required for each phase of an Eligible Applicant's progress other than LIHTC or AHTC. Examples of other funding sources may include, but are not limited to, Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Funds, National Housing Trust Funds, HOME Funds, CDBG Funds, FHLBank Funds, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), and donation of land, professional fees, construction equipment or materials, and/or a donation/contribution of cash funds. Other additional funds from for-profit or non-profit entities are eligible matches if approved by NIFA.
5. Once a CRANE Program application has been accepted, a timeline will be developed with the Eligible Applicant to assign a category and to identify resources available with NIFA and other participating resource providers. Applications will be categorized as follows:

- Category 4: Conceptual
- Category 3: Feasible
- Category 2: In formation
- Category 1: Ready, in all aspects, to proceed

The following table provides a basic outline of the Category designations and Action Steps that must be completed by an Eligible Applicant prior to receiving the associated Category designation. NIFA reserves the right to adjust the Action Steps required of the Eligible Applicant based on the needs of each individual development.

<i>Category Designation:</i>	<i>Category 4</i>	<i>Category 3</i>	<i>Category 2</i>	<i>Category 1</i>
<b>Definition:</b>	Conceptual	Feasible	In Formation	Ready, in all aspects, to proceed
<b>Action Steps to be Completed prior to Designation:</b>	Consult with NIFA via email about proposed development	CRANE application submitted and Eligible Applicant accepted by NIFA into the CRANE Program	At the request of NIFA, submission of Full LIHTC application	Threshold items in LIHTC application met and final documents provided to NIFA as requested.  Eligible to receive a Conditional Reservation of LIHTC and AHTC

6. Each CRANE application and LIHTC/AHTC will be evaluated and recommendations needed to meet the requirements of the Qualified Allocation Plan (“QAP”) will be provided to the Eligible Applicant. Documentation and materials must be regularly updated in order for a development to retain its CRANE priority status. Applications will be discussed at the CRANE meetings, which will be held bimonthly and are open to the general public.
7. A specific timeline and expected outcome for each development will be developed as part of the CRANE process. Failure by an Eligible Applicant to adhere to the timeline or satisfy the criteria set forth in the timeline may result in a development's re-classification.
8. Measurable progress must be made in accordance with the timeline that has been established for a priority category status to be retained or upgraded. An Eligible Applicant may move into “standby” mode at any time to allow for the resolution of unanticipated problems with prior written approval from NIFA.
9. If NIFA does not receive a response/report from an eligible CRANE Applicant for three (3) months, the application will be placed in “standby” mode and NIFA will notify the applicant in writing of the “standby” status. If no communication is received from the Eligible Applicant within three (3) months after NIFA places the application in “standby” mode, then the application will be removed from the CRANE process and the Eligible Applicant so notified.

10. Full accounting and public disclosure of all inputs and results of the Plan and proposed developments will be required. This data will be used for analysis and program improvement.
11. NIFA and other participating resource providers will be the sole judges of interpretation of compliance with the CRANE Program and the appropriateness of the proposed Plans and development segments. NIFA will be the lead agency for the CRANE Program and will provide staffing and administrative services. NIFA may require that a "Continuity Manager" be engaged for long-term or large developments.
12. With respect to the CRANE Program, for the years of 2024 and 2025, NIFA proposes to set-aside (a) up to 33% of Nebraska's 2024 and 2025 Low Income Housing Tax Credit ("LIHTC") and (b) up to 33% of Nebraska 2024 and 2025 Affordable Housing Tax Credit ("AHTC") authority for CRANE Eligible Applicants, that meet the requirements of Section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code") and the requirements established by the Nebraska Department of Revenue.
13. At NIFA's discretion, CRANE Program resources reserved but not "allocated" at the end of a specified time period may be "recycled" into the competitive program(s) or to other CRANE Program Eligible Applicants.
14. In order to be eligible for consideration of a conditional reservation of LIHTC and AHTC under the CRANE Program, NIFA staff and the Eligible Applicant must work together to address any issues, concerns, and/or additional requirements that arise during the CRANE process. Acceptance into the CRANE Program does not guarantee a reservation of NIFA resources. The development must meet all QAP threshold items specific to the funding requested in the case of LIHTC and AHTC, as well as those additional requirements designed to meet the goals and objectives of the CRANE Program (which additional requirements will be determined by NIFA in its sole discretion based on an individualized in-depth analysis of each development). Once a Category 1 designation has been assigned (as set forth below), a development in the CRANE process is eligible to be considered by NIFA for an allocation of resources if such resources are at that time available.
15. A written statement of the criteria, participants, and methodology of evaluation shall be made part of the public record. All allocations of resources will conform to the rules and regulations of the specific resource programs.
16. The CRANE Program may be discontinued at any time at the discretion of NIFA and other participating resource providers. NIFA and other participating resource providers reserve the right to amend the CRANE Program objectives, rules and components. The resource amount and duration of the set asides will be at the discretion of NIFA and the other participating resource providers.

## B. ELIGIBLE DEVELOPMENTS

Applicants requesting consideration for an award of LIHTC/AHTC for a proposed development through the CRANE Program must provide evidence through the CRANE Application that the development provides substantial benefit in one or more of the following areas:

- i. Housing for households that meet one or more of the following: (serious/chronic mental illness, physical or developmental disabilities, substance abuse issues, or homelessness) At least 30% of the units must serve one or more of these populations; or
- ii. Native American Housing (housing that is developed on an Indian Reservation or on tribal land, either held in trust or fee simple, or housing developed and operated by an Indian Tribe that is recognized by Nebraska or the federal government); or
- iii. Adaptive Reuse of a non-residential building to create affordable housing; or
- iv. Housing developments in response to settlement agreements or consent decrees relating to housing deficiencies, housing discrimination or other housing issues i.e. Choice Neighborhood program; or
- v. Housing developments, located or to be located, in a county that has never had an occupied LIHTC development; or
- vi. Reentry Housing targeting individuals released from a correctional institution; or
- vii. Housing developments, located or to be located, in a community that at any time during the prior three (3) years has been designated as a natural disaster area pursuant to a Presidential Disaster Declaration, and with respect to which NIFA has determined (using available information, including information from partner organizations (e.g. FEMA)) that there is a significant loss of housing as a result of such natural disaster.

## C. LIHTC BASIS BOOST

As authorized by the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (H.R. 3221), NIFA may increase or “boost” the eligible basis of a particular development for purposes of the allocation of LIHTC by up to 30% (“Basis Boost”) for designated buildings that are located outside of an established Qualified Census Tract (QCT) or Difficult Development Area (DDA). NIFA will review the financial feasibility of the development and the request for additional Basis Boost in accordance with **NIFA’s QAP**. CRANE applicants may request up to a 30% Basis Boost under the following guidelines if the Basis Boost is needed to make the development financially feasible. The ultimate amount of any Basis Boost will be at the discretion of NIFA based upon the information in the Program applications.

#### **D. AFFORDABILITY PERIOD**

All developments for which resources are awarded through the CRANE Program will be required to have a minimum affordability period of 45 years (15-year compliance period plus 30-year extended use period) and waive the right to qualified contract.

#### **E. TARGETING GROSS RENTS TO LOWER LEVELS**

All developments applying for resources through the CRANE Program are required to score five (5) points in the Targeting Gross Rents to Lower Levels category.

- Three (3) points will be awarded if at least 10% of the total units in the development have a targeted gross rent level that is affordable to households whose income level is at or below 40% of the applicable AMI.
- Two (2) points will be awarded if at least 40% of the total units in the development have a targeted gross rent level that is affordable to households whose income level is at or below 50% of the applicable AMI. These units shall be in addition to any units selected at 40% AMI or less.

# FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY - MUST SUBMIT AN ONLINE APPLICATION

## 2024/2025 CRANE APPLICATION

### INSTRUCTIONS AND CERTIFICATION

The undersigned applicant hereby makes application to participate in the CRANE Program. Applications may be submitted via the online funding application system no later than 5:00 p.m. on the deadline for that particular Cycle. A non-refundable application fee, as set forth in Appendix A of the 2024/2025 Housing Credit Allocation Plan for 9% LIHTC and AHTC, must be received in NIFA's office by 5:00 p.m. on the date that the online CRANE Application is submitted. The application must be filled out completely, with all questions and items completed. If a question does not pertain to your development, insert "N/A" in the space provided for an answer.

The undersigned hereby certifies that the information set forth in this application and in any exhibits in support thereof, is true, correct and complete. The undersigned understands that any misrepresentation may result in the cancellation of any resources allocated or reserved under the CRANE Program. The undersigned also agrees that NIFA and/or the participating resource providers may request additional information to evaluate this application: (download a copy of the Certification of CRANE Applicant from the Exhibit Examples at [www.nifa.org](http://www.nifa.org) and upload in the CRANE online funding application).

The undersigned hereby acknowledges that copies of Applications submitted pursuant to the QAP (which includes applications for 9% LIHTC, AHTC, 4% LIHTC and CRANE) will be made available by NIFA to the public (other than during the active review process) upon written request. Additionally, NIFA will post the scores for Applications at [www.nifa.org](http://www.nifa.org). By submission of an Application pursuant to the QAP, applicant acknowledges and agrees to the release and publication of its Application and related information.

### LEAD ORGANIZATION/CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead Organization/Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### LIHTC APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_



**DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION:**

Development Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Development Owner: \_\_\_\_\_  
Development Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Development City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL DEVELOPMENT COSTS: \$**

**PERMANENT FUNDING SOURCES (other than NIFA, total must equal at least 10% of development costs):**

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS (LIHTC) (The maximum LIHTC allocation to any single development will be no more than 20% of Nebraska’s annual LIHTC authority):**

LIHTC Amount Requested: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of Estimated LIHTC Proceeds: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
AHTC Amount Requested: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of Estimated AHTC Proceeds: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**LIHTC DEVELOPMENT**

**THE PLAN:**

- Provide a narrative describing the process used by the community (define who the community is) in which the development will be located to determine the needs of the community with respect to economic development, community resources, and housing development in the community.
- Include in the narrative the needs identified by the community and the proposed solutions addressing those needs, including how the proposed development will meet those needs.

*Upload this narrative in **Exhibit 1** of the CRANE online funding application.*

**DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT:**

- Provide a description of the proposed development.
- Include number of units, types of units and amenities.
- If a site has been selected, describe the area around the site and include pictures of the site, its surroundings and a location map as outlined in Exhibit 8 of the Exhibit Examples.

*Upload this description in **Exhibit 2** of the CRANE online funding application.*

**DEVELOPMENT COST WORKSHEETS:**

- Provide a development cost schedule, statement of sources and uses, rents and expenses for the proposed development.
- Evidence of community based financial support of at least 10% in materials, services and/or cash contribution must be noted.
- Please use Exhibit 111 of the Exhibit Examples.

*Upload the Development Cost Worksheets in **Exhibit 3** of the CRANE online funding application.*

**COMMUNITY BASED FINANCIAL SUPPORT:**

- Provide evidence of community-based financial support of at least 10% in materials, services and/or cash.  
*Upload evidence in Exhibit 4 of the CRANE online funding application.*

**ELIGIBLE DEVELOPMENT:**

- Provide a narrative describing how the proposed development will meet the requirements of one or more of the eligible development types as outlined in Section B above.
- Identify the population to be served.
- Identify the service providers who will serve the population.
- Describe the supportive services that will be provided to the tenants. All CRANE applications must select services equal to the maximum points available in the Supportive Service category of the 9% NIFA/NDED Application.
- The supportive services must be suitable for the population the development is serving. Supportive services may range across a wide continuum of care to a high level and can vary for each tenant over time. Each tenant does not need to utilize all of the supportive services provided by the development; however, the supportive services must be available to all tenants. If tenants are not utilizing the services that are available, NIFA/NDED may question whether or not the development is a CRANE eligible development. Supportive services targeted to adults with behavioral health disorders need to emphasize beneficial treatment outcomes and recovery, with appropriate individualized treatment planning. The market study must demonstrate a need for the eligible development.

*Upload this narrative and agreement(s) in Exhibit 5 of the CRANE online funding application.*

**PATTERNS OF HOUSING DISCRIMINATION:**

- If applicable, provide evidence that the development addresses a finding or pattern of housing discrimination, or a pattern or finding of violation of fair housing laws.

*Upload evidence in Exhibit 6 of the CRANE online funding application.*

**LIHTC CONDITIONAL RESERVATION PROCESS**

CRANE Eligible Applicants applying for LIHTC and AHTC will receive a CRANE Category designation upon initial submission and will be notified, in writing, by NIFA.

Eligible Applicants requesting LIHTC and AHTC must submit to NIFA the full online LIHTC/AHTC Application including all applicable Exhibits and fees by the deadlines that are outlined in the 2024/2025 Housing Credit Allocation Plan for 9% LIHTC and AHTC.

**NIFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CHANGE APPLICATION FORMS AND REQUIREMENTS AS NECESSARY TO MEET THE NEEDS AND PURPOSES OF THE CRANE PROGRAM.**

All inquiries, applications and questions should be directed to:

LIHTC Allocation Manager  
Nebraska Investment Finance Authority  
1230 "O" Street, Suite 200  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-1402  
Phone: (402) 434-3900  
www.nifa.org