



**FY2021 Continuum of Care
New Project Application**

Agencies that apply for funds through the CoC Funding Process must complete an application for each program in E-snaps. In addition, agencies must complete this New Project Application for each program.

This form is due on **October 4, 2021 at Noon** by e-mail to hsc@cityofmadison.com. **Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Please do not wait until the deadline to submit the application. No grace period will be granted.** If you have questions, please contact Torrie Kopp Mueller, tkoppmueller@cityofmadison.com or call 608-266-6254.

Agencies with more than one CoC project must submit a separate form for EACH project.

Agency Name	Sankofa Educational Leadership United
Project Name	Supporting Healthy Families Rapid Rehousing

Project Contact Name	Jalateefa Joe-Meyers
Phone Number	608-395-8129
E-Mail	Jalateefa@sankofaelu.com

Funding Request	\$312,100.00
Proposed # of Units	10
Proposed # of Beds	
DV Bonus Project – Yes or No?	Yes

Please answer the following questions:

Project applications will be reviewed based upon adherence to the HUD CoC Program Interim Rule, FY21 CoC NOFA, and FY21 CoC NOFA Policy Priorities, as well as results of the Project Performance Scorecard.

1. Please describe how your project takes proactive steps to minimize or overcome barriers to housing retention. Sankofa Educational Leadership United’s Rapid Rehousing Program is designed to leverage and enhance the strengths and assets currently existing in local communities, which increases access points for families navigating complex processes and systems that inadvertently become barriers that have long term consequences and negatively impact their housing security and subsequent health outcomes of marginalized populations. Our goal at SELU is to collectively empower and mobilize public and private community resources to implement systematic, sustainable, and clinically sound approaches to dismantle housing insecurity and increase health outcomes that can only be obtained when basic needs like housing are met. Under our service pillar of Health our Supporting Healthy Families Initiatives team developed a 5-point strategic approach to dismantle the wave of housing insecurity

that exists within our community that aligns with the guidance given by the National Alliance to end homelessness, The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the National Low Income Housing Coalition and the National Health Care for the Homeless Council and local officials such as Mayor Sataya Rhodes and Dane Counties Health and Human Needs Committee. This past year was our first year offering Rapid Rehousing as a resource. Through analysis of our toughest cases, we arrived at the conclusion that **it's rarely one cause that leads to homelessness; often it's a combination of barriers including medical, mental health, substance abuse and the effects of generational poverty** that make it impossible for some households to maintain housing without long-term supports. There seem to be a plethora of services available when a family is homeless but many of those supports go away or households "time-out" once they achieve a perceived level of sustainability. When families come into housing with a history of multiple challenges, any number of events can trigger a downward spiral without an existing or easy to locate safety net.

- In response we have six of our staff trained as peer support specialist. This allows clients that need longer term supports to stay supported by Sankofa beyond the length of Rapid Rehousing specific case management until true stability is obtained or if supports are removed and the family lapses back into insecurity our services can easily be reinstated.
- In order to make a plethora of housing and housing types available to our clients we have taken on a business approach to engaging property owners. We Network - Staff, board members, supporters, and donors to see if they own properties that we may be able to use or are connected to someone that owns property that would be willing to give me a second chance. We engage Real estate agent and Attend networking events landlords may be a part of such as Chamber of Commerce, real-estate associations, landlord associations. We also present our program at local churches, service clubs (Rotary, American Legion, Eagles, Kiwanis). In addition to using The mainstream resources such as Word of mouth - landlords know other landlords – we ask for referrals. Ads/Listings - Newspapers, rent.com, apartments.com.

For direct client support we offer the following:

- Development of Housing Stabilization Action Plan (HSAP) to work on any identified barriers to getting and keeping housing.

For Getting Housing:

- Financial assistance for housing start-up.
- Initial consultation and ongoing assistance with housing search,
- including bus tokens as needed.
- Staff may accompany client to the landlord interview.
- Time-limited rental & utility assistance, per client Housing Stabilization Action Plan, for up to 18 months. Intensive case management of 3 Xs per week initially, then move to Weekly home visits for two months; then reduce to bi-weekly or monthly as most Housing Plan goals are met. Include unannounced drop-in visits.
- Services available for up to 18 months, depending on housing problems and progress toward HSAP goals.
- Landlord Assistance:
- 18 month availability; landlord can call with tenancy issues and program will respond; ongoing option to call even after Rapid Re- Housing services are ended can be offered or negotiated on a case-by-case basis*.
- Program will check in with landlord monthly (or more often if landlord prefers) for updates/issues.
- May pay an additional damage deposit and/or last month's rent in addition to normal start-up costs*.
- We will relocate household if an eviction is being considered. If household will not leave, program may pay court costs of eviction.
- Program may pay or repair damages

2. Describe your agency's overall quality improvement efforts. Please include how you solicit and incorporate feedback from program participants.

Our agency has a lived experience board of trustees that meets monthly to review, revise, update and create policies and procedures for our housing programs. We conduct feedback surveys 3 x's during a client's interactions with the agency. When entering shelter. We ask for feedback largely based on Engagement process while on waiting list, we ask conduct a feedback survey when exiting shelter into housing or exiting to other means to get feedback on shelter stay. We solicit feedback when we close cases in rapid rehousing. We utilize this information to improve our systems practices, policies and procedures.

Sankofa Educational Leadership United recognizes its responsibility to listen to client, applicant, and other stakeholder suggestions, complaints or grievances, and attempt to resolve any such concerns.

A grievance/complaint is defined as an expression of verbal or written dissatisfaction that can include, but is not limited to, services, manner of treatment, outcomes or experiences.

Clients (or a client's parent or legal guardian), applicants, and other stakeholders have the right to file a grievance. Individuals filing grievances are treated with dignity, understanding, and respect. In no case will a grievance result in any reprisal. Clients will not be denied service because of a grievance. Grievances will be given prompt and careful attention and, when indicated, grievances will result in corrective action. SELU staff are charged with the responsibility of providing assistance and services within the full intent of SELU policies, and with making efforts to resolve conflicts. Clients are informed of their rights when services are initiated by receiving a copy of the SELU Client Rights and Responsibilities statement. A copy of the grievance policy will be given to clients at their request or at such time that a complaint is made to an SELU staff member that cannot be resolved. The following is the procedure by which clients and representatives of SELU shall attempt to discuss and resolve grievances:

Individuals are to discuss grievances that they may have with the staff with whom they are in contact. If a grievance cannot be resolved by the employee, the employee shall inform the individual of the grievance procedure and inform their supervisor and director of the unresolved grievance.

If the complainant(s) wishes to pursue the grievance procedure, they must inform the staff member or staff member's supervisor of that intent in writing along with a description of the complaint. Such intent will be communicated by the appropriate personnel to the Supervisor

Within 24hrs , the complainant, staff member, and director will discuss the grievance and attempt resolution.

In the event the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved at this point, the complainant may elect to submit the grievance to the CEO. The CEO reviews the case and responds within 24 hrs.

When an appeal is made the CEO compiles a complete report of the situation, including; action taken, reason, and other documentation gathered. The Lived Experience Boards of Trustees Board shall review an appeal within 3 days of its receipt. The complainant will be notified of the Boards decision in writing. The decision shall be final.

All written grievances, SELU response to them, and a summary of the action taken on each complaint, will be kept and results reported through the agency's Performance & Quality Improvement system.

3. CoC-funded projects are required to comply with the Dane County Written Standards. Describe how the agency plans on ensuring compliance with the Written Standards including plans for internal review and monitoring of project policies and practices.

Our agency complies with all written standards and our CEO sits on several committees that are charged with writing and reviewing written standards and utilizes this entry point as an opportunity to advocate for systemic changes in standards that may disproportionately negatively affect populations of clients or negatively affect populations of providers . In addition to advocating for streamline of standards across the county so that they are easy to understand and connect will with other cities within the county because as providers we may provide services to the whole county and not just one city .

4. All projects, including non-housing projects, must operate with the Housing First approach as described in the CoC Written Standards general requirements. Describe how the Housing First approach will be applied to the proposed project. Include aspects of project policies and staff training that can support the Housing First approach such as trauma-informed care and harm reduction.

This is what we mean by Housing First at SELU:

- That homelessness is a problem with a solution, and that the solution is housing. For everyone. Whether you follow the rules or not. Whether you are "compliant" with treatment or not. Whether you have a criminal record or not. Whether you have been on the streets for one day or ten years.
- Permanent housing is what ends homelessness. It is the platform from which people can continue to grow and thrive in their communities.
- Housing First is a philosophy that values flexibility, individualized supports, client choice, and autonomy. It never has been housing only, and it never should be
- Supportive services are part of the Housing First model. That might include formal support services, like a doctor, therapist, or social worker. It might involve informal supports, like connecting with family, friends, or faith groups.
- But, in Housing First, these supports are not prescribed; people have the agency to select the supportive services they need and want, tailoring their supports to their own unique situation.

We also train our staff on the philosophy of housing first , boundaries , ethics , and responsibilities of case management . In addition because we value lived experience in the hiring process we also offer our staff the certified peer support specialist training . In this training Staff must pass a comprehensive exam developed from the standards set forth by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the International Association of Peer Supporters (iNAPS), and a Role Delineation Study conducted with the feedback of thousands of peers. The exam requires significant knowledge across six domains of practice, including Foundations of Peer Support; Foundations of Health Care Systems; Mentoring, Shared Learning, and Relationship Building; Activation and Self-Management; Advocacy; and Professional and Ethical Responsibilities.

5. Describe key partnerships your agency has established that will help with implementation of this project.

We have key partnerships with a number of agencies .Property owners and management companies , employment skills agencies and other mainstream agencies where we can make referrals for clients by contacting a specific person at an agency that understands our philosophy and model . Collaboration with other culturally responsive community based agencies We've developed strategic partnerships that include priority services and specialized referral processes. We Have formed relationships with works with Madison School Districts Family & Community Engagement in developing support and access points for parents and community advocates within MMSD. We have a relationship with DCDHS and the Juvenile Reception Center's administrators and social workers. In addition, when appropriate we collaborate with with Anesis Therapy and more grassroots agencies like The Peace Network Inc, Cultural Practices that are Relevent, INC. Connecting the Dots, Sisters Of African Decent, One of the additional short term goals is to expand our partnerships with Group Health Cooperative, Journey Mental Health, Dean Clinic, and UW Madison

Clinics. Our goal is to have a community rep that works with each of these organizations to make sure the vulnerable populations they are serving also have seamless access to rent and housing resources. This is another example of how strategic collaborations are moving the work forward.

6. What percentage of staff members identify as Black, Indigenous or a Person of Color? (Info only, to be scored in FY22)

90% of our staff are black or people of color .

7. How does this program work against systematic racism and other structures of oppression? (Info only, to be scored in FY22)

The problems of a social behavior are interrelated to issues of racism, housing, and economic disparity – problems that we continuously and actively work towards resolving racism and are committed to courageous conversations to change systems, policies and practices that are oppressive and reinforcing of white supremacy. We work on these barriers in visible and invisible ways through faith communities, political networks, and economic and legal reform in often highly charged, racially divided, and economically competitive ways. While there is collaboration between people and organizations, success is proportional to the ability to tap into the deep roots of embedded connections, alliances, and agendas of Dane County's key influencers that often lock out black agencies marginalized populations from delivering services and implementing culturally responsive services.

8. How will this program and its practices be culturally responsive to the population(s) who participate? (Info only, to be scored in FY22)

United (SELU), A 501c3 nonprofit organization, recognizes that housing is a right that needs to be provided to everyone. Delivering Social Impact requires talent, systems and processes. Sankofa Educational Leadership United (SELU) encompasses all these traits. Our first commitment to Social Impact is to empower our most vulnerable populations by working intentionally and diligently against systemic oppressive practices that has created deep inequities in terms of who receives resources in Dane County and how. SELU is a grassroots organization led by people that have been historically the most marginalized in Dane County, our community. Our staff is representative of the people we serve, and have personal lived experience across multiple systems that impact marginalized populations. We also have a lived experience advisory board that participates in the internal decisions of our internal policies and procedures, including when and how we take on new projects and initiatives to respond to community need. As we have increased our capacity and service delivery to the community to include housing resources that we believe is not only a basic need, but a basic human right. Our agency response and creation of the Supporting Healthy Families Housing Initiative is a response that was demanded by community needs, supported by data, and revealed indicators that show that BIPOC communities are faring far worse than their white counterparts across all quality of life indicators; financial security, housing security, social support, employment, physical and mental health, environmental safety and overall life expectancy. We have increased our services to the community to include social assistance programs like eviction prevention, housing counseling, utility services, basic need resources like food and housing supplies, shelter and rapid rehousing. Our staff have a depth of understanding and lived experience with racism that has hindered our collective ability to build financial reserves, housing security and overall capacity. Sankofa Educational Leadership United also works closely with the Homeless Services Consortium (HSC) Jalateefa, Our Chief Executive Officer is an elected member of the HSC's membership and sits on the board as The Community Agency Representative. SELU's Supporting Healthy Families Housing Initiatives are all Housing First, and utilize as we believe when implemented correctly it is a proven method of ending all types of homelessness, Core components of our initiative is designed to assure low barrier. Moreover our commitment means employing staff that both have lived experience and specific training as peer support specialists, case management and trauma informed care. In addition, our programs prioritizes people who are most vulnerable and often are the most high-need people in our community. Recognizing the myriad of needs that individuals enter services with we also have substance abuse counselors and mental health professionals on staff to support the wide variety of needs that participants may enter services with.

We're intentional and strategic in including stakeholders in the work. Stakeholders are at the center of our community engagement and outreach work. Our Supporting Healthy Families Housing Initiative has fostered relationships across classes, systems, organizations, businesses and credentials. The challenge for some initiatives or programs that desire to address community disparities and inequities for our most marginalized community members is their lack of community credibility and social capital. They lack the ability to engage those most impacted and vulnerable and therefore have a hard time including the voices of the voiceless in the work. The work can't be done effectively without those most impacted as they hold the answers, they are the answer. Our Agency's policies, practices and initiatives are guided by the people most impacted by said system at the same time through partnerships and our Lived Experience Board Of Trustees. SELU is a corner stone agency in the black community and provides wrap around services. However, our success working within systems like housing insecurity comes through strategic partnerships, relationships and community lead advocacy, landlords. There is no organization like SELU in WI. Our whole mission is to strategically eradicate the disparities that disproportionately affect groups that have been marginalized or excluded because of socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, disability status or some combination of these--any strategy or action plan to address disparities and/or inequalities that people experience in the community also has to recognize and address that marginalized populations have less access to the social determinants or conditions that support health and well being, i.e. healthy food, safe and equitable housing, appropriate education, safe neighborhoods and freedom from racism and

9. How did you hear about the CoC funding opportunity? (INFO ONLY)

On HSC list serve

