

Memorandum of Understanding for Neighborhood Heat Resilience Engagement

This is a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”), dated **March 26, 2026** (“Effective Date”), between City of Columbia, MO (Lead Community”), and the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (“USDN”), an Illinois nonprofit corporation, to implement the **Neighborhood Heat Resilience Engagement** project (“Project”). It describes partnership roles.

1. Purpose and Scope

This work will work with neighborhood residents, city staff, neighborhood residents, and community-based organizations to design, plan, and implement a heat relief solution that will fit the needs and interests of the people who are most impacted. The work is described in greater detail in the Final Project Proposal, Appendix 1.

2. Project Term

USDN and the Lead Community agree to a Project Term of 5-months from award notification (March 2026 – August 2026). If more time is required, the Lead Community indicates this to fund management as soon as that is known, so an extension can be documented. Please reference the [USDN Award Guidelines and Policies](#), attached hereto as **Exhibit A** and incorporated herein, for more information about this process.

3. Responsibilities

- a. USDN.** USDN, as a project investor, is responsible for:
- i. **Funding.** USDN provides funding for the project in an amount not to exceed \$5,080 USD. Payment(s) are made according to the Payment Schedule described in Table 1.
 - ii. **Technical Assistance.** USDN contracts with [Sutherland & Associates](#) to manage its competitive member funds. Fund management assists with any decision-making that impacts this MOU or any associated agreements/ payments. They receive, confirm, and process all deliverables, quarterly reports, and invoices. They monitor progress and capture the impacts of the investment.
 - iii. **Payment Processing.** USDN processes Lead Community approved invoices upon receipt via the Lead Community, within 30 days.
 - Invoices are submitted by any party receiving payment, including local governments. Invoices paid by USDN to any party follow the payment schedule outlined in Table 1 of this agreement, which are also reflected in any associated independent contractor agreement(s). All invoices are addressed to:

Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN)
 Reference: CF17 – Columbia, MO
 Attn: Jamal Brown
 USDN Chief Finance and Operations Officer

500 Westover Drive #14973
 Sanford, NC 27330

- Project funds are expended per the proposed budget, in accordance with the terms in this MOU and to fulfill the scope of the final and awarded proposal.
- To keep the Lead Community as the visible lead of the work, invoices are approved by the Lead Community and then submitted to USDN fund management for review against the project budget. USDN fund management initiates processing of approved invoices with USDN.¹

b. Lead Community. The City of Columbia, as the Lead Community, is responsible for:

- i. **Project Management and Coordination.** Providing the project management and coordination necessary to complete the project.
- ii. **Quarterly Updates.** Submitting a 1-2 paragraph update describing progress on outputs, timeline, budget, and metrics is due at the end of each quarter, until project completion.
- iii. **Final Products and Reporting.** By August 31, 2026, submitting:
 - **Project Products / Outputs.** All substantial products and outputs produced as high-quality deliverables, for posting to the USDN website.
 - **Final Project Report.** A final project report form, attached hereto as **Exhibit B** and incorporated herein.
 - **High Resolution Photos.** High resolution .jpg photographs of project work, to potentially be used in USDN communications.
 - **Project Budget and Expenditures.** A detailed record of project expenditures, including a comparison of original budget to award expenditures. Please use the Budget Template, attached hereto as **Exhibit C** and incorporated herein, or simply modify and return your proposal budget to show proposed to actuals.
- iv. **USDN Presentation.** At project completion, awardees may be asked to present project outcomes during a USDN virtual or in person meeting. This request is subject to USDN’s communications schedule and is not guaranteed to be made
- v. **1-Year Impact Report.** Submitting a 1-page report 1 year after the project term, noting any additional impacts that have developed since the project ended.

4. Project Participants and Primary Contacts

a. Lead Community and Primary Contact:

- i. **Lead Community:** Columbia, MO
- ii. **Project Lead:** Nina Thomas, Community Resilience Organizer, 701 E Broadway, Columbia, MO, 65201 nina.thomas@como.gov (573) 441-5520
- iii. **Project Manager:** Nina Thomas, Community Resilience Organizer, 701 E Broadway, Columbia, MO, 65201 nina.thomas@como.gov (573) 441-5520

¹ To prevent any payment delays, the Lead Community lets Fund Management staff know of any schedule or staffing changes with as much advance notice as possible so that schedules can be adjusted.

b. Project Participants.

i. Cross-departmental Participants:

- Tyler Gerstheimer – Sustainability Specialist for the City of Columbia, USDN member. Tyler will assist with event planning, facilitation, and reflection.
- Shawna Johnson – Community Engagement Specialist for the City of Columbia, Local Government Participant. Shawna created the community engagement guide that Office of Sustainability staff used to outline this summer’s engagement. Shawna will also provide input for event planning and connect Office of Sustainability staff with community partners.
- We would like to coordinate our first event with Columbia’s **Parks and Recreation** department. Parks and Recreation is opening a new park in the target neighborhood and will host an opening celebration in the summer. They are open to a collaborative event, but they have not set a date yet. Once that happens, we will move forward together.

ii. External Primary Partners:

- A faith-based organization, **United Community Builders**, is finishing construction on a nearby resource hub. Once construction is complete, Office of Sustainability staff will meet with United Community Builders staff to identify areas for collaboration
- Many of the residents of the target neighborhood are immigrants. Office of Sustainability staff will work with staff from **City of Refuge**, a refugee support organization, to establish trust with the neighborhood and build connections.
- The Office of Sustainability will meet with community-based organizations (i.e. The Food Bank, Central Missouri Community Action, etc.) at the monthly **Unity in the Community** meetings, encouraging them to share event details with the residents who use their services and look for opportunities to partner on specific events.
- As opportunities arise, the Office of Sustainability plans to seek out partnerships with other organizations. For example, once neighborhood residents identify a general topic for their neighborhood heat solution (i.e. utility assistance, weatherization, splash pads, cooling centers, etc.), we will invite relevant organizations to the table

5. Project Scope: Deliverables, Timeline, Reporting and Payment Schedule

Project activities, deliverables, and due dates are scheduled below in Table 1.²


² Please add these dates to calendars(s) and proactively notify Fund Management staff if it is anticipated that any deliverable due dates will shift after this award agreement is executed. Schedules will be adjusted accordingly. Table 1 becomes the project’s Deliverables Report. Each time a deliverable is received, it is returned to the Lead Community from Fund Management with notes/links as a receipt. This method keeps each party clear and aligned on the status of the work.

Table 1. Schedule of Project Deliverables and Payments

#	Activity	Deliverables	Due Date	Payment / Recipient
		Agreements: Signed MOU and other project agreements	Not later than 30 days after MOU is delivered	Payment upon fully executed MOU and associated invoice: \$5,080 to City of Columbia
1	Activity 1. Present to a monthly convening of community-based organizations. Go over broad overview of the initiative and invite both the organizations and their clients to future events	Deliverable 1: Presentation slides, list of organizations	Date: April 30, 2026	
	Progress Update 1	250-word update	PR1: May 27, 2026	
2	Activity 2. Host public summer celebration in target neighborhood, inviting all residents to	Deliverable 2: Participant list, photos, reflection from staff	Date: June 30, 2026	
	Progress Update 2	250-word update	PR2: June 30, 2026	
3	Activity 3. Facilitate neighborhood walking tour	Deliverable 3: Participant list, notes from walk and map of route	Date: July 31, 2026	
	Progress Update 3	250-word update	PR3: July 31, 2026	
4	Activity 4. Host meeting with neighborhood residents to plan next steps	Deliverable 4: Participant list, meeting agenda, meeting notes, reflection on engagement series	Date: August 31, 2026	
	Final Project Report, Photos, and Budget Reconciliation	Final project report describing lessons / impacts, high resolution photos (.jpg format) and the final reconciled budget	Date: August 31, 2026	

6. Lobbying. USDN project funds cannot be used for lobbying.

Urban Sustainability Directors Network

DocuSigned by:

Signature: _____
BRB46725E7A9448

Name: Jamal Brown

Title: USDN Chief Finance and Operations Officer

Date: 4/6/2026



CF17 – Columbia MO
Neighborhood Heat Resilience Engagement
Project Amount: \$5,080
Project Completion Date: August 31, 2026

Acceptance of Memorandum of Understanding

(Please complete all blanks on this page)

The City of Columbia accepts the terms of this MOU.

City of Columbia, Missouri

By: _____
De'Carlton Seewood, City Manager

Date: _____

Attested by:

Sheela Amin, City Clerk

Approved as to Form:

Nancy Thompson, City Counselor/ek

CERTIFICATION: I hereby certify that the above expenditure is within the purpose of the appropriation to which it is charged, Account Nos. 11000610-504990, -501392, -501395, -501220, -504310, -504960 and that there is an unencumbered balance to the credit of such appropriation sufficient to pay therefor.

By: _____
Matthew Lue, City Director of Finance/ll

Instructions for Check Issuance: Invoices will be submitted for each payment by the organization receiving funds with a completed [ACH Authorization Form](#) and [W-9 Form](#)

Tax ID Number: 43- 6000810



*CF17 – Columbia MO
Neighborhood Heat Resilience Engagement
Project Amount: \$5,080
Project Completion Date: August 31, 2026*

Project Lead Contact Information:

Name: Nina Thomas,

Address: 701 E Broadway, Columbia, MO, 65201

Phone: (573) 441-5520

Email: nina.thomas@como.gov

Project Manager Contact Information: Name: Nina Thomas,

Address: 701 E Broadway, Columbia, MO, 65201

Phone: (573) 441-5520

Email: nina.thomas@como.gov

Appendix 1 | Full Project Proposal

1. **Project title.** Neighborhood Heat Resilience Engagement
2. **Amount requested.** \$5,080
3. **Primary project focus.** Developmental work
4. **Priority category.** (1) advances engagement around greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction / climate resilience (funded examples [here](#))
5. **Lead USDN member.**

Nina Thomas, Community Resilience Organizer
701 E Broadway, Columbia, MO, 65201
nina.thomas@como.gov
(573) 441-5520
6. **Other participants.**
 - 6a. Other participants

Tyler Gerstheimer – Sustainability Specialist for the City of Columbia, USDN member
Tyler will assist with event planning, facilitation, and reflection.

Shawna Johnson – Community Engagement Specialist for the City of Columbia, Local Government.
Shawna created the community engagement guide that Office of Sustainability staff used to outline this summer’s engagement. Shawna will also provide input for event planning and connect Office of Sustainability staff with community partners.
 - 6b. **Have you confirmed that each one has the capacity to do this work?** Yes
 - 6c. **State if any partner is missing that this work will seek to onboard:** A large portion of this work will involve bringing on other partners.
 - We would like to coordinate our first event with Columbia’s **Parks and Recreation** department. Parks and Recreation is opening a new park in the target neighborhood and will host an opening celebration in the summer. They are open to a collaborative event, but they have not set a date yet. Once that happens, we will move forward together.
 - A faith-based organization, **United Community Builders**, is finishing construction on a nearby resource hub. Once construction is complete, Office of Sustainability staff will meet with United Community Builders staff to identify areas for collaboration
 - Many of the residents of the target neighborhood are immigrants. Office of Sustainability staff will work with staff from **City of Refuge**, a refugee support organization, to establish trust with the neighborhood and build connections.
 - The Office of Sustainability will meet with community-based organizations (i.e. The Food Bank, Central Missouri Community Action, etc.) at the monthly **Unity in the Community** meetings, encouraging them to share event details with the residents who use their services and look for opportunities to partner on specific events.

- As opportunities arise, the Office of Sustainability plans to seek out partnerships with other organizations. Once neighborhood residents identify a general topic for their neighborhood heat solution (i.e. utility assistance, weatherization, splash pads, cooling centers, etc.), we will invite relevant organizations to the table.
7. **Statement of intent.** We plan to work with neighborhood residents, city staff, neighborhood residents, and community-based organizations to **design, plan, and implement a heat relief solution** that will fit the needs and interests of the people who are most impacted. This will be a neighborhood-level engagement campaign, focusing on one of Columbia’s most vulnerable neighborhoods.
 8. **Root cause design / the “why”.** In 2022, the City’s Office of Sustainability worked with community volunteers, organizations, and consultants to build a heat map of Columbia. The map shows that, though summers are hot for everyone, some areas in Columbia can be nearly ten degrees hotter than others on the hottest days. The residents who live in those hotter areas tend to also face other challenges, including lower incomes, historical inequalities, and lack of community resources. The Office of Sustainability worked with community leaders, residents, and community-based organizations to co-create strategies to build heat resilience for the most vulnerable residents. Together, we launched a series of city-wide heat resilience initiatives, including a heat education campaign, heat kits, and a tree planting program.

However, there is no one-size-fits-all solution for extreme heat. In 2025, we spoke to residents in three of the city’s hottest neighborhoods. Many of the people we spoke with faced barriers that made the city-wide initiatives inaccessible. For example, the tree planting program only benefits homeowners with enough space for a shade tree and enough time to care for the tree. For renters or people who cannot care for the tree, this is not an adequate solution. To reach the most vulnerable residents who have barriers to public participation, we decided to follow The Othering and Belonging Institute’s philosophy of Targeted Universalism. We have a universal goal—making Columbia more resilient to heat waves. To meet this goal, we need to cool down the hottest neighborhoods.

Additionally, one of the three neighborhoods we spoke to lacked human infrastructure (i.e. neighborhood associations, community organizations, etc.) and did not have a strong relationship with city government. As a result, this neighborhood was not represented at previous engagement events. This neighborhood will be the target of the 2026 Neighborhood Heat Resilience Engagement.

If we received funding from the Catalyst Fund, we would build a strong relationship with a target neighborhood and work with neighborhood residents to co-create a neighborhood-level heat resilience plan. In this neighborhood, city staff, neighborhood residents, and community-based organizations will work together to design, plan, and implement a heat relief solution that will fit the needs and interests of the people who are most impacted. Co-creation is at the center of this work. The neighborhood residents are experts on their lived experiences, and respecting this expertise is crucial to building public trust. Strengthening our relationships with vulnerable neighborhoods will not just help with this heat resilience initiative—it will rebuild trust and make future initiatives more

successful. By working *with* neighborhood residents, we will create a long-lasting solution that addresses the needs of the neighborhood.

9. **Methodology / the “how”.** The neighborhood we chose to focus on lacks human infrastructure. They do not have a neighborhood association or a presence at city council meetings. Until this year, they did not have a park or public gathering place at all. Our first step will be to bring people together. The barrier to entry at this first event will be as low as possible. This will be an event where people can come and go as they please and share a meal with their neighbors. There will be activities for children to make families feel welcome. We will use this time to invite folks to future events and build trust with the neighborhood residents.

The next event will be a walking tour of the neighborhood. City staff and residents will eat a catered meal together and then go on a short walk around the neighborhood. Residents will be encouraged to share stories about their neighborhood, comment on how the neighborhood’s physical structure impacts their heat relief strategies and discuss challenges they face staying cool. City staff will take notes and facilitate.

The last event will be focused on steps forward. Residents will be invited to a meal, where they will decide the general topic their neighborhood heat solution will be (i.e. utility assistance, weatherization, splash pads, cooling centers, etc.) and how often they would like to meet as we move into planning and implementation. From there, relevant city staff, community-based organizations, and neighborhood residents will get together regularly to discuss the specifics and look towards implementation.

10. **Direct outputs from this work.** With this funding, we will:
 1. establish a strong line of communication between residents of the targeted neighborhood and the City of Columbia and
 2. create a regular meeting between residents, organizations, and city staff to build heat resilience at the neighborhood level.
11. **Measuring success.** Our target will be to end the summer engagement with a meeting agenda and contact list for the first of the regularly scheduled meetings between residents, community-based organizations, and city staff. This is a neighborhood that faces many barriers to public participation. By building up the neighborhood’s soft infrastructure, we will create a path forward for a co-created neighborhood heat resilience solution.
12. **Scalability.** Once we learn from our first year, we plan on working with other vulnerable neighborhoods in the future. At the end of the summer, we will write a reflection on the engagement campaign and draft a plan for replicating this campaign in other neighborhoods around Columbia. We plan to share what we learn with other USDN members, who can take this hyperlocal engagement approach and apply it to their most vulnerable neighborhoods.

13. **Project timeline.** Yes, the proposed work can be done 3-6 months from award announcement

14. **Project plan.**

#	Activity	Deliverable	Due Date
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1	Present to a monthly convening of community-based organizations. Go over broad overview of the initiative and invite both the organizations and their clients to future events	Presentation slides, list of organizations	April 30, 2026
2	Host public summer celebration in target neighborhood, inviting all residents to	Participant list, photos, reflection from staff	June 30, 2026
3	Facilitate neighborhood walking tour	Participant list, notes from walk and map of route	July 31, 2026
4	Host meeting with neighborhood residents to plan next steps	Participant list, meeting agenda, meeting notes, reflection on engagement series	August 31, 2026

15. Budget.

Itemized Cost	Requested	Other \$	TOTAL in USD	Notes
Gift cards	\$810.00		\$810.00	Providing participants with gift cards shows appreciation for their time and efforts to engage with government. This incentive is intended to pique participants' interest for them to attend the meeting.
Printing - pamphlets, signage, reports, etc.	\$100.00		\$100.00	Spreading literature to educate participants on the neighborhood engagements and extreme heat will broaden the number of people we can engage and improve the quality of meeting conversations.
Meeting space	\$200.00		\$200.00	To secure a meeting space outside of free City of Columbia facilities. Therefore, providing funding for renting meeting spaces is necessary for hosting meetings in the targeted neighborhood. This funding will cover event spaces for the three planned events
Meal for first event	\$500.00		\$500.00	Providing a meal at these forums incentivizes people's participation and is a natural topic of conversation for people to engage with.
Meal for second event	\$500.00		\$500.00	
Meal for third event	\$500.00		\$500.00	
Document translation	\$250.00		\$250.00	Written, spoken, and sign language services allow us to communicate with people of various abilities and cultures. The neighborhood resilience program relies on conversations with a broad group of people to understand their experiences with urban heat.
Oral translation	\$480.00		\$480.00	
ASL Interpreter	\$480.00		\$480.00	
Child Care contractor	\$360.00		\$360.00	Providing childcare services to people with young children and limited resources.
Advertising	\$900.00		\$900.00	To spread awareness of the event. Includes social media ad promotion, radio ads, etc.
TOTAL	\$5,080.00	\$0.00	\$5,080.00	



*CF17 – Columbia MO
Neighborhood Heat Resilience Engagement
Project Amount: \$5,080
Project Completion Date: August 31, 2026*

16. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Acknowledgment. Yes, our jurisdiction is comfortable executing this kind of document with USDN.

USDN Funds Guidelines and Policies

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Document Purpose

This document is a guide for USDN Fund proposers and recipients. USDN wants to ensure receipt of funds is not a barrier for anyone to participate in a project and will work with Lead Communities and their partners to develop flexible solutions when necessary.

Project Investor

USDN is a U.S.-based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization incorporated in the State of Illinois. USDN contracts with [Sutherland & Associates](#) to manage its competitive member funds. Fund management assists with any decision-making that impacts this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). They receive, confirm, and process all deliverables, quarterly reports, and invoices. They monitor progress and capture the impacts of the investment.

Project Team

USDN issues a project Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to the member community that serves as the project lead on the awarded proposal (“Lead Community”). The Lead Community is the primary point of contact for the project. The MOU is a requirement and should be reviewed by the proposing member community before applying. If the member community has questions regarding the MOU they should contact [fund management](#) before applying. USDN funds this work with philanthropic foundations. The intent is for fund to be competitively distributed to member communities, to advance the goals stated in the associated Request for Proposal (RFP). In part because of this, and in part for member accountability, USDN executes a project MOU with the Lead Community of any awarded proposals. If a

community desiring to lead a project foresees problems with this arrangement, consider identifying a different Lead Community who can serve in this capacity and sign the project MOU on behalf of the team.

In support of the Lead Community, other USDN members are also accountable during the proposal development and project process. Unless otherwise stated in an RFP, guidelines are as follows:

- Proposals must be led by an active USDN member.
- Proposers may be asked to identify primary and observing participants in the project.
 - Primary participants are actively involved in project design and implementation and are committed to using the results of the project.
 - Observing participants express interest in the project and want to learn about the outcomes - to potentially use the results in their own communities.
- Non-USDN members may be part of a proposal, but not lead. Other partners, such as nonprofits, consultants, etc., should be noted in the proposal. If they have not been on-boarded at the time of proposal submission, the process for getting them on board should be described. For example: “a consultant will be procured from an RFP process that will take 1 months from start of project”.
- Members of selection committees who submit proposals or participate in any competitive submission will not score those.

Deliverables

Requirements as stated in the USDN MOU template include:

- **Final reporting.** All Lead Communities submit a 3–5-page final report that provides project methodology and an assessment of effectiveness. It should be written so that other efforts can be informed by the completed work, and capture learned lessons. The Catalyst Fund Final report form is [here](#).
- **Products.** Products described in the MOU must be submitted to USDN at project completion.
- **USDN Presentation.** At project completion, awardees are asked to present project outcomes during a USDN virtual or in person meeting, if requested.¹
- **High resolution photos.** High resolution .jpg photographs of project work, if applicable, are submitted at project completion for use in USDN communications.
- **Budget and expenditures.** A detailed record of expenditures compared to the original proposal budget is submitted in Excel. Modify the original proposal budget or use the template [here](#).

For projects that produce a tool or formal report in addition to the final report: USDN does not have a specific format requirement for project teams to adhere as they create their final products. Browse USDN products [here](#) to see how others have formatted their work.

USDN does want the information to be structured so that anyone can easily understand the project’s context without intimate first-hand knowledge of the work, however. It should be immediately evident what has been done or learned about this topic, what is being done and learned now, and what next steps are findings pointing towards. For instance, a very simplified structure for a deliverable could be:

¹ This request is subject to USDN’s communications schedule and is not guaranteed to be made.

- **Acknowledgements:** credit all participants in any products produced, so that it is clear to readers, listeners, and /or viewers who played what role. The USDN logo for use when acknowledging funding source(s) is [here](#). A good example of acknowledgements can be found in *A Guide to Equitable, Community-Driven Climate Preparedness Planning*, accessible [here](#).
 - Commissioned by (insert participating USDN members, communities, etc.).
 - Support from / special thanks to (insert consultants, partners, etc.).
 - Funded by / In partnership with (insert USDN Fund, any other funders, etc.).
 - Prepared for (insert USDN members and staff, and any others who should use this work).
 - **Project teams should also cite USDN and partners in presentations about the work.**
- **Executive Summary:** provide a contextual overview that does not assume the reader knows why the work is occurring. Frame each deliverable with a brief summary section.
 - Describe the intended audience: who should use this product?
 - State the project / deliverable purpose: What is the deliverable for?
- **Table of Contents:** describe each section of the product and provide a way to navigate the document easily (for example, if it is a PDF document, use the bookmark function).
- **Key Findings:** describe each project step in detail.
 - List any prerequisites: What does a community need to know/have/do, to follow?
 - Are there graphics? Include tips for reading and understanding them.
 - Summarize the entire process, focusing most on the transferable methods.
 - Include lessons learned and potential next steps to scale the project work.
- **References:** cite the body of background work this project draws upon.
- **Appendix:** any valuable data sets that informed the findings should be here.

The measure of product success is that when another community happens upon the work and prepares to utilize it, they are easily able to know what to do - even without having participated in the work.

Fund Disbursement

The USDN-preferred arrangement is that the Lead Community receive project funds. In this case, funds are disbursed from USDN to the Lead Community with receipt of an associated invoice according to the terms in the fully executed project MOU. However, if the Lead Community is unable or unwilling to receive the project funds, they may designate a partner as the alternative fund recipient on their behalf.

In this case, the project MOU is still issued from USDN to the Lead Community and signed by both parties. If the Lead Community designates a partner to receive payment, a payment schedule and scope of work will be agreed upon and outlined in the project MOU. In addition to the project MOU, a separate independent contractor agreement is executed with the partner and USDN, to perform work on behalf of the Lead Community and receive payment after their invoices are approved by the Lead Community.

For U.S. communities, the Lead Community's tax ID/EIN is required in all cases for USDN's fiscal reporting. If the Lead Community is outside the US, the applicable version of a W-8 form² is required.

²The IRS requires that any international entity receiving a payment from a U.S.-based entity must fill out the applicable version of the W-8 form. It certifies the tax status of the international entity to ensure that proper taxes are paid for the country of origin. USDN requires this form of all international payments for its tax audit compliance. More information on the form and its purpose is [here](#).

The Lead Community is responsible for the work (content), approval of all payments (budget), and reporting. **For any entity receiving funds from USDN, one of the following must be submitted to receive payment:**

- For US entities – **W-9 form, W-9 instructions**
- For international entities – W-8 form (complete list of W-8 form versions and instructions [here](#))
 - For international nonprofit entities – **W-8EXP form, W-8EXP instructions**
 - For international for-profit entities – **W-8BEN-E form, W-BEN-E instructions**
 - If an international entity needs help with the form, contact **fund management** for assistance.

USDN will provide a direct and secure method for tax form submission. When a Lead Community chooses to have funds dispersed to a partner, the following applies:

- **Partner Eligibility.** For a partner to receive funds on the Lead Community’s behalf, the partner must be one of the following:
 - A 501(c)3 Nonprofit Organization or international equivalent.
 - An entity that has a 501(c)3 designation, serving as the Lead Community’s fiscal sponsor.
 - In this case, the named partner is the fiscal agent. This partner can be performing work on the project or serving solely as a fiscal agent on the Lead Community’s behalf.
 - A for-profit consulting organization or consultant.
 - In this case, the Lead Community is still responsible for project oversight and reporting. The MOU indicates this arrangement and is signed between USDN and the Lead Community. However, the funds can go directly from USDN to compensate the consultant for their work. A separate independent contractor agreement (in addition to the project MOU) specifying this arrangement is also signed. It can be structured in any of the following ways, and should include the scope of work to be performed by the consultant that matches what is described in the MOU:
 - Between the consultant and the Lead Community;
 - Between the consultant and USDN; or
 - Between the Lead Community, the consultant, and USDN.

Note: USDN will not sub-contract on a Lead Community’s behalf with:

- More than 1 partner. If more partners involved require payment from the awarded amount, someone other than USDN (e.g., the Lead Community or the Project Partner) must sub-contract with them individually and disburse payments accordingly.
- Non-local government entities such as state universities, national labs, federal agencies, etc.
 - The contracting and reporting requirements these entities require are too time consuming for USDN to participate in. Agreements with non-local government entities need to be between the entity and the Lead Community, not the entity and USDN.
- Unincorporated or unaffiliated individuals, students, and/or interns

For most international entities receiving payment, Part I and Part III of the W-8 form is completed and signed. It is up to the international entity receiving payment to make this tax disclosure.

- Individuals/students can contribute to projects and be compensated with project funding but cannot be paid directly by USDN. The Lead Community writes these payments into the budget, and individuals are paid by the Lead Community or Partner.

Payments. USDN requires that all payment requests be accompanied with an invoice and **ACH Electronic Payment Form**. USDN will process invoices from the Lead Community (or their contractors, upon approval from the Lead Community), within 30 days of receipt.

- Invoices must be submitted by any party receiving payment, including local governments. Invoices paid by USDN to any party must follow the payment schedule outlined in the project MOU and reflected in any associated fully executed independent contractor agreement(s).
- Failure to notify the USDN Fund Management of anticipated project delays, or to provide deliverables by the listed due dates, may result in payment delay. Severe delays may result in cancellation of future payments, and Lead Community performance will be considered in future project funding rounds.
- Project funds must be expended per the proposed budget, in accordance with the terms in the project MOU and to fulfill the scope of the final and awarded proposal. Budget variances above 10% for any particular line item require written permission from USDN fund management.
- All Lead Community contractor / community member invoices must be approved by the Lead Community and submitted to USDN fund management for review against the project budget. USDN fund management will initiate processing of approved invoices with USDN.
- If the project is under budget once it is complete, USDN does not expect the project team to return remaining funds. The expectation is that any remaining funds will be reallocated to enhance project outcomes.
 - In this case, the Lead Community will reach out to fund management to discuss the best options for repurposing the remaining funds.
 - Examples of enhancing project outcomes are paying for community members' time to participate, creating additional deliverables, and / or supporting related work.

Invoice address. Invoices should be addressed to the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) electronically using this address in the header:

Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN)
Reference: [Insert project code, Lead Community, project title]
Attn: Jamal Brown
Chief Finance and Operations Officer
500 Westover Drive #14973
Sanford, NC 27330

International payments. Wire transfers are made in USD upon receipt of invoice. **International bank / wire transfer information is required.** USDN will not pay taxes on any project. If accepting project funds would trigger any tax (e.g., country, state/provincial, and/or local taxes), ensure funding can be accepted on the Lead Communities' behalf by a project partner with tax-exempt status.

Event Costs

Virtual and non-virtual engagement event costs typically include materials, virtual platform costs, facilitation, community member stipends, and/or possibly food and beverage expenses. USDN does not reimburse individuals. This is due to an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requirement that taxes participant costs, requiring participants to file reimbursements as income for that year.³ Because this puts a tax burden on the participant, USDN will pay project event costs described in the MOU using this process:

- The event cost and cash-flow arrangement are noted in the project MOU.
- The total award amount includes event costs and all other project costs.
- The Lead Community or facilitating partner submits an upfront invoice for all event expenses, including any stipends, facilitation, and/or food and beverage costs.
 - The Lead Community keeps track of expenses and reconciles them to the budget.

Proposal budgets detail event costs by line item and include estimates as placeholders when necessary.

Budget Guidance

The budget template is found [here](#). Additional guidance:

- **University partner overhead.** USDN does not pay more than a 20% overhead rate. Universities often charge more, sometimes as high as 50% or more. They will often reduce this rate when told of the cap.
- **Matching funds.** Any non-USDN funding that is necessary for project completion must be in-hand or committed to the project at the time an application is submitted.
- **Project purpose.** Funds should be used to support new efforts, not to replace funds for existing activities or Full Time Employees (FTEs).
- **Project management.** USDN does not typically pay for government staff time. This is because staff often do not have the capacity to focus on the project, diminishing the quality of the deliverables and extending timelines in unmanageable ways. However, USDN acknowledges that project management takes time and contributes to the overall success of the work. It will allow for up to 12% of the project budget to cover project management if need be.
 - This can be for interns, consultants, interim or part-time staff, or local government staff that are dedicated to executing the proposed project. Project management activities should be listed as a percentage of the proposal budget.
 - When it makes sense to designate a portion of the budget for project management, it should be a line item in the proposal budget, and should specify whom the person is, why they are the right person to manage the project and/or create project products, and how much of that person's time is devoted solely to the project.
 - Many projects are managed, in tandem with the Lead Community and project team, by nonprofit or consulting partners that have field expertise in the awarded topic area. These

³ For an individual to be reimbursed, they would have to submit to USDN: a [Form W-9](#) for the reimbursement amount, a detailed reimbursement form, and copies of all original receipts that note payment method and date paid – including small items like train tickets. USDN would provide a direct and secure method to individuals for tax form submission. USDN would have to send a completed 1099-MISC tax form to each participant in March of the following year for the previous year's tax filing. The reimbursed amount would have to be reported as income on the participant's personal tax return for that year.

partners should be identified in the proposal if possible, and if not, the process and timeframe for obtaining them (RFP, etc.) should be noted. Budgets should include any needed consulting time.

- **Additional funding requests.** USDN does not accept additional funding requests for open projects. Project teams are expected to work within the MOU’s budget. Sometimes, however, teams gain additional opportunities or face extreme hardships that are out of their control. For example:
 - The team is invited to present at a national competition that would fund follow-on work and needs additional funds for travel.
 - A public health crisis forces the team to drastically adjust course, requiring additional support from partners and additional funds to complete the work.

On a case-by-case basis, additional funding request will be reviewed by the USDN Fund Manager, and USDN staff will determine if additional funds will be added to the budget.

Extensions

The USDN membership is creating a body of innovative collaborative work, which is publicly accessible here. Projects are posted so funders can see what their investments are producing, and so products can be used by non-members and have field-building impact. This public dissemination comes with a level of accountability for Lead Communities. Deliverables directly reflect membership knowledge, capabilities, and effectiveness.

Projects that are not delivered within the prescribed timeline come with a price tag for the fund, in the form of: (1) increased Fund Management time investment, which is deferred from new project development, and (2) the potential for reduced funder trust that USDN member communities can deliver strong, impactful work in reasonable timeframes.

To mitigate these costs, reference the following guidelines to understand the processes and subsequent steps that will be taken to correct any delayed project deliverables:

Reason for Delay	Description	Impacts of Delay	Corrective Measures
Lead Community leaves	USDN member turnover is expected and will be experienced during some project lifespans.	When a Lead Community departs, the team can experience significant delay and the product can be jeopardized.	Departing Lead Community member must contact USDN staff and fund management as soon as possible. A transition plan will be developed on a case-by-case basis, depending on factors like funds spent to date and by whom, strength of other team members, and percent completion.
Consulting Lead leaves	Sometimes a critical team member departs the project, leaving the team to replace them.	When a consulting partner leaves, often the work they were doing must assumed by other team members.	Lead Community must contact USDN staff and fund management immediately. Fund management will work with the project team to fund swift and suitable replacement(s).
Consulting partner is unresponsive, or	In some cases, partners that look good on paper do not	This type of issue can jeopardize the quality of the deliverables	Lead Community must notify fund management early of any negative interactions with the partner and team.

responsive in a negative manner	meet expectations during implementation.	and the effectiveness of the project as a whole.	Fund management will speak to the partner separately to understand how the situation can be corrected or resolved.
Lead Community is unresponsive	In some cases, Lead Communities have capacity issues that prevent them from executing the project to the expectation of signed project MOU.	This will directly impact that community's ability to obtain more funding.	Fund management will note unresponsiveness to USDN, and this will be a point of decision: in extreme cases, USDN may request a refund from that Community's finance department.
Incomplete deliverables	At times, deliverables are turned in that are unsatisfactory or do not match the signed scope of work deliverables.	This may directly impact the ability of the lead community to obtain funding in the future, depending on the justification as to why they are incomplete.	The Lead Community must state in writing why the deliverables do not meet expectations. Based on those explanations, a corrective course of action may be developed by fund management and the Lead Community.
Repeated extension requests	Some project teams request repeated extensions.	This may directly impact the ability to obtain funding in the future. No more than 2 extension requests will be entertained before a refund may be requested. Timeline extension requests must be done in writing, and decisions are made by fund management on a case-by-case basis.	The Lead Community state in writing why the extension is being requested. They must also submit any deliverables created to that point for evaluation of progress and merit. Based on the explanation and product, a corrective course of action may be developed by fund management and the Lead Community, or a refund may be requested by USDN.

Fund management strives to work with each member to ensure success. These guidelines ultimately stress proactive communication and responsiveness. It is understood that situations change. Please contact Fund management with any questions. If a timeline extension must be requested, explain the following in writing:

1. List Lead Community and Project Team members, including consultants.
2. Describe progress to date (attach any deliverables in their current state).
3. Describe reason for extension request.
4. Describe any corrective action taken to ensure the new requested deadline can be met.
5. Suggest new deadline. *This write up will be evaluated by fund management. A follow-up phone call may be requested to clarify portions of the request. Extensions will be provided in writing from the fund management to the Lead Community.*

USDN Catalyst Fund - Final Reporting Form

Remove blue text as you complete this report within 5-7 pages

Final report writing tips. As the questions below are answered, consider what is news-worthy, and write concisely to those main points. USDN collects qualitative and quantitative data from each closing project. This data allows for a better understanding of field-building impact. Antidotes from Lead Communities strengthen network funding proposals by showing clear investment impacts.

1. Project title.**2. Lead community.****3. Reporting date.****4. Summary of work.** Briefly summarize the project work.**5. Did your local government take any significant actions as a result of participating in this project?**

The following nine action categories are provided to help identify significant actions. Feel free to include any significant actions related to this project that may not fit neatly within these categories at the end.

Enter any actions under the applicable categories below. It is fine if the category does not perfectly match. The name of the action with a 1-2 sentence description and/or a web link is all that is needed. Do not focus on lessons learned or general developments. Be specific, focusing on the consequential actions taken because of this work. Items a – j will not all apply to all work. Note “N/A” when this is the case.

- a. **Education and outreach campaign.** Was there an organized effort designed to inform the public about the issue? Provide a brief description or link.
- b. **Plan development.** Was a plan developed or modified as a result of the project? If yes, provide the plan title and a brief description of or link to the plan that was developed.
- c. **Policy and code adjustment.** Were policies or codes developed or adjusted as an outcome of this project? If so, provide the title, adoption date, and a description/link.
- d. **Formal partnerships and collaboration.** Was an on-going partnership established? If so, provide the name of the group, year established and/or joined, and a brief description or link.
- e. **Practice improvements.** Were any operational changes¹ implemented because of this work? Provide the date begun, and a brief description or link.
- f. **Inventory, assessment, or survey.** Was any data collected or assessed as a result of this project? If so, provide the year undertaken and a brief description or link.
- g. **Enforcement and incentives.** Were any incentives or enforcements² undertaken as a result of this project? Provide the name of the enforcement or incentive, year begun, and a description/ link.
- h. **Programs and services.** Were any new programs or services begun as a result of this project? Please

¹ These might include establishing a new monitoring or reporting system, augmenting a decision process with new or formalized criteria, providing specialized staff training or incentives, pursuing certification by a third party, establishing a special staff liaison or new staff positions, etc.

² These might include clarifying lines of enforcement authority, changing enforcement priorities, changing pricing structures, adding fines, or adding incentives like expedited permitting, reduced development fees, grants or loans, tax abatements, special investment zones, etc.

provide the program name, year created, and a brief description or link.

- i. **Facility and infrastructure improvements.** Were any new facility or infrastructure improvements³ undertaken as a result of this project, or are any in the planning stages now? If so, provide the year undertaken/to be undertaken, and a brief description/link.
 - j. **Other.** List here any significant actions that do not fit the above categories, such as any other significant actions taken by other partners. Note any other significant outcomes of this project.
6. **Outcomes and impacts summary.** Based on your responses above and compared to the original proposal in the appendix of the project Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), did the project achieve its intended results? Why or why not? Consider the outcomes. Describe how the team built climate capacities for the long haul. Show how this work was inclusive and adaptable.
 7. **Impact on project participants.** What has changed in how the project participants approach their work because of this project? This question is looking for development of the project participants. Reflect on what was learned personally and professionally as a result of this work.
 8. **Influencing change.** Compared to the original proposal, describe how the project connected climate work to what people care about now. What was the root cause of the problem that this work intended to address? Did it impact this root cause? Describe how the team shared responsibility, so others can also access, shape, and contribute to local climate goals.
 9. **Follow-on work and leverage.**⁴ What additional work, if any, is happening as a next step(s)? Who is doing this work? Have any funds been raised, in addition to the initial USDN funding for this project? Note if other phases are planned for this work, and if partners are spreading or building on the outcomes. Note how any follow-on work will be administered and funded, if known.
 10. **Product dissemination.** How is the work being shared, and who is planning to use it? Note circulation of outputs and name any others who are using the products to improve their own circumstances.
 11. **Measuring success.** What was the project's definition of success provided in the proposal? Did it change as the work progressed? Did the project reach the targets for the specific measures of success detailed in the original proposal? Review the *Defining and Measuring Success* section of the original proposal to inform this response.
 12. **Lessons learned.** What are 2-3 key lessons learned from this project for how to advance practice on the topic? This is an opportunity to give advice to peers. Reflect on the project process and note the biggest challenges and surprises during the work. What do others who follow need to know?

*Submit this report to Mariana Garcia by the due date in the MOU. Include a **detailed record of expenditures** compared to the original budget. Include any additional funds or in-kind support provided by partners. Modify your original Excel budget or use the template [here](#). **Also send any high-resolution photos in.jpg format that USDN can use in its communications work as it tells member's stories.***

³ These might include creating or upgrading facilities, street upgrades, public transit improvements, joint-use agreements, requiring health impact or other special assessments for infrastructure projects, demonstration projects, natural resources restoration, etc.

⁴ This can be dollars donated by other organizations or governments, donated time through in-kind work, or reduced/donated facilities and services. Note amount of funds, time, or facilities/services donated to the project, and include a calculated dollar amount if possible.

EXHIBIT C

USDN Catalyst Fund Project Budget

[Project Name]

Adjust line items based on original project budget

Line Item/Activity	Budgeted			Total Project Budget	Actuals for USDN Funding	Actuals for Other Sources*	Describe Deviations of Actual from Budgeted / Other Notes
	Costs (USD)	Funding Source					
		USDN Funding	Other Sources*				
Other							
TOTAL	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	

*List other sources in notes