

Request to Participate: The Lincoln Vibrant Communities Teams Program

Overview

The [Lincoln Institute of Land Policy](#) and [Claremont Lincoln University](#) are seeking their newest cohort of teams for the Lincoln Vibrant Communities Teams Program. Over the next decade, the Lincoln Institute, a globally recognized nonprofit private operating foundation, and Claremont Lincoln University, an accredited private nonprofit university, will partner with municipalities across the US to address common, complex challenges facing counties and cities. The teams program directly addresses a specific challenging issue in your community or organization. The goal is to build vibrant, engaged communities and staff driven by trust, facilitated by resident agency, and focused on positive change.

Supported by the Lincoln Institute, the Vibrant Communities Teams Program is powered by the distinctive leadership framework of Claremont Lincoln University. Claremont Lincoln will provide trained coaches and a project delivery specialist to work alongside and support you to lead to your success. You will develop an elevator speech, a professional staff report, a plan to present to your leadership, and a professional presentation.

This 24-week work-embedded course designed for teams of four to six leverages daily and weekly work within communities and the strengths and expertise of diverse participants. The facilitator and coach both have rich experience leading teams in a variety of cities and will facilitate horizontal learning (participatory learning in which the work experiences of each participant are valued, and expertise is shared and strengthened). All major tasks relate to the final project, a summary report to be presented to and shared with decision-makers and financiers in each participant's location. Real-world challenges and opportunities to apply learning are led by participants, facilitated by faculty, and supported by a coach to ensure participants maximize their time and learning. Upon successful completion, each team member receives a nine-credit graduate Certificate in Innovations and Trends in Public Administration–Lincoln Vibrant Communities. Faculty includes experts who work in the field and have direct experience addressing issues such as infrastructure planning and finance, water management, affordable housing production and preservation, housing the unhoused, public health, climate preparedness and resilience, and more.

After the program, teams will be invited to stay engaged through the Network, a national

online network of catalysts for local change and leaders who engage others across the public and private sector to transform their communities.

The graduate Certificate in Innovations and Trends in Public Administration–Lincoln Vibrant Communities will allow team members to apply nine credits toward a CLU graduate degree (more details under “Application Instructions”). Teams will:

- gain advanced skills in strategic communication, regional planning, scenario planning, master plans and policy evolution, innovative budgeting, and capitalizing land use policy for community building;
- work directly with a mentor who will meet regularly with the team;
- conduct virtual visits with other teams to share knowledge, learning, and feedback;
- come together at the annual Lincoln Vibrant Communities Conference to report on the transformation and impact that this work had on the team and their communities; and
- earn an Advanced Practice Graduate Certificate that can be applied toward a bachelor’s or master’s degree at CLU (See “Application Instructions” for more information.)

Topic

While some cohorts are themed, this Lincoln Vibrant Communities Teams Cohort will be multidisciplinary. Suggested topics for team projects and plans include:

- Affordable housing
- Economic development
- Capital investment in infrastructure
- Natural resources, including water management and energy
- Public safety/public health
- Data centers
- Safe streets/transportation

Cost

Through the generosity of the Lincoln Institute and Claremont Lincoln University, this Vibrant Communities Teams Program is almost entirely underwritten. Participants will pay only \$1,500 per person plus travel for the launch event. Additional optional programming will

be provided at cost. After the launch event, this program's cost will be nonrefundable.

Timeline

The program will launch on January 28–30, 2026, in Chicago, IL. By submitting an application, applicants indicate that they are able and willing to attend.

Upon acceptance, participants will have seven days to create a Claremont Lincoln University student profile to confirm participation. Participants will be sent this link in an email notifying them of acceptance. Team members will then schedule a short call with a student success manager at Claremont Lincoln University, who can process any necessary paperwork and answer questions. After this call, team members will be able to access online program orientation modules and the Lincoln Vibrant Communities Network, and connect with coaches and faculty.

Online instruction is designed for asynchronous learning, which allows students to engage at any time, no matter where they are in the country.

Who Should Apply

- Teams of current, emerging, and aspiring public sector leaders working for cities and counties
- Teams of community leaders working with the public sector
- Teams of business and industry leaders working with the public sector
- Cross-sector teams comprising all the above
- Former Lincoln Vibrant Communities Fellows interested in Affinity Teams (If you have questions about Affinity Teams, contact LincolnVibrantCommunities@claremontlincoln.edu.)

Return on Investment

- Deepened leadership capacity to address complex municipal challenges
- Knowledge and practical application of advanced policies, practices, and approaches to address these challenges
- Skills in strategic communication and effective engagement of diverse community perspectives
- A network and intentional community of content experts and colleagues
- A nine-credit advanced practice graduate certificate in leadership designed specifically for public and private sector leaders focused on municipal change

(Participants may request baccalaureate credits in lieu of the certificate; academic credit may be applied toward graduate and undergraduate degree programs.)

- Increased impact and agency as an ethical, engaged leader

Application Instructions

The online application form will open on November 3. The application must be written in English and submitted via the online form by January 6, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET. Your response to the open-ended questions should not exceed 500 words. Teams will be notified of their acceptance no later than seven days after submitting an application OR, if the application is submitted within 48 hours of the final deadline, by January 8, 2026.

Applicants must be living and working in the United States during the program. Current and past employees, board members, or family members of Claremont Lincoln University (CLU) or the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy are not eligible for the teams program. Current CLU degree-seeking students are not eligible to apply unless they have the endorsement of the chief academic officer and are currently working directly with the public sector. Current CLU degree-seeking students should contact CLU staff by emailing LincolnVibrantCommunities@claremontlincoln.edu.

This 24-week program culminates in a nine-unit for-credit graduate certificate from Claremont Lincoln University, titled “Innovations and Trends in Public Administration—Lincoln Vibrant Communities.” Participants can:

- Regard this certificate as an achievement in itself;
- Apply the credits from the certificate to a CLU master’s degree; or
- Convert the certificate into baccalaureate credits (only when applied to a CLU Bachelor of Organizational Leadership degree).

The transferability of graduate credits to other accredited institutions depends upon the receiving institution. Participants applying without a conferred baccalaureate degree will not be eligible to receive graduate credit but are welcome to participate in the program for a noncredit certificate of completion.

Questions

For questions regarding this request for proposals, please contact us at LincolnVibrantCommunities@claremontlincoln.edu.