

## **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. Faculty facilitate your peer-to-peer community learning, where you will discover and develop innovative best practices from across the country within your own cohort. Professionals 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 will augment your skill building. The facilitator and coach both have led 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). Teams learn to negotiate and work through diverse perspectives and agendas to find common solutions as a foundation for future planning, and each team applies ethical leadership and practical land tools to make measurable changes in their communities. 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.

Upon successful completion, each team member receives a nine-credit graduate Certificate in Innovations and Trends in Public Administration–Lincoln Vibrant Communities or 12 units of credit that may be applied to a CLU bachelor’s degree.

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 in the public and private sectors to transform their communities. Teams will also be invited to join the Lincoln Vibrant Communities Fellows Program to build the political will and understanding to effectively help implement the plans they have built through the teams program.

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;
- share knowledge, learning, and feedback through a uniquely designed set of graduate courses;
- 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**

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 March 18–20, 2026, in Chicago, IL. By submitting an application, applicants indicate that they are able and willing to attend in person.

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 the in-person launch, team members will be able to access online program orientation modules and the Lincoln Vibrant Communities Network and connect with coaches and faculty.

After the launch, teams will engage in a two-week orientation before beginning work in the courses and on their projects. The program ends on October 4, 2026. 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 community leaders working in cities and counties
- Teams of community leaders working with the public sector
- Teams of business, nonprofit, 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](mailto:LincolnVibrantCommunities@claremontlincoln.edu))

## **Return on Investment**

- Knowledge and innovative application of policies, practices, and approaches to

address complex challenges in your community

- Deepened leadership capacity and agency of all team members as they take ownership over community solutions
- 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 designed specifically for public and private sector leaders focused on community building (participants may request baccalaureate credits in lieu of the certificate; academic credit may be applied toward graduate and undergraduate degree programs)

### **Application Instructions**

The online application form will open on January 7, 2026. The application must be written in English and submitted via the online form by March 3, 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 March 6, 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](mailto: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](mailto:LincolnVibrantCommunities@claremontlincoln.edu).