



Requests for Proposals (RFP): Integrated Fundraising and Impact Capital Strategy Consultant for 3C

Issued by: The Chicago Community Trust on behalf of the Connecting Capital and Community (3C) initiative

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Proposal Due Date: June 1, 2026

Point of Contact: Jessica Omana, 3C Program Manager, jomana@cct.org

Background

As our region's community foundation, The Chicago Community Trust (the Trust) has been here for all Chicagoans for over 110 years. We unite donors, nonprofits and residents to support people, organizations and partnerships that strengthen the Chicago region. We address challenges that stand in the way of a thriving region, including meeting people's critical needs such as secure housing and healthy food; mobilizing support in response to crises such as the Great Depression and COVID pandemic; and working on ways to build wealth and well-being for Chicagoans, including those who have historically lacked equal access to opportunity.

Gentrification and displacement continue to threaten many of Chicago's underinvested communities. Residents who want to remain in their communities need more pathways to affordable homeownership. With a focus on East Garfield Park and Humboldt Park residents, the Trust joins the Connecting Capital and Community (3C) initiative partners in addressing barriers to homeownership and supporting the quality of life for homeowners in underinvested communities. As a multi-year, cross-sector initiative housed at The Chicago Community Trust, 3C has focused on expanding access to homeownership through coordinated investment, policy innovation, and community-driven solutions. 3C identified East Garfield Park and Humboldt Park because of their strong community leadership, shared commitment to 3C's priorities, and coordinated investments in infrastructure and economic development already underway.

3C aims to support interventions that look beyond individual projects to systems-level change that will impact the structure of opportunity for underinvested communities citywide. Together, we are shaping a new homeownership model for Chicago that can be scaled across other communities. Our model for change is grounded in three pillars: increasing housing supply, supporting first-time homebuyers, and expanding capital. 3C launched innovative capital tools for both buyers and developers to address gaps in affordability. In partnership with Neighborhood Lending Services, we introduced a low

interest mortgage product for first-time homebuyers purchasing 3C homes, increasing buyer's purchasing power. We also are scheduled to launch a Developers' Fund in partnership with Community Investment Corporation to address construction capital challenges, strengthen capacity, and help mission-driven developers accelerate the production of homes.

Purpose of Engagement

3C is entering its fourth year, after having recently completed a 3-year strategic plan that reflects on the impact of its work, synthesizes key learnings, and maps out the future direction of its work to promote equitable homeownership and community wealth. The strategic plan outlines four big goals to help solidify the direction of, and identify areas of growth for, the initiative through 2028.

- Create a capital strategy and secure funds to support existing and future efforts.
- Build and implement a governance and partnership structure.
- Expand the 3C model (buyer support, housing inventory, new lending models, additional Chicago neighborhoods aligned with 3C).
- Empower community and activate local stakeholders.

3C is seeking an experienced consultant to manage a one-year fundraising and capital strategy, guided by 3C partners, that contemplates both philanthropic sources as well as concessionary capital (i.e. impact-first, below-market, and flexible capital sources). The consultant will be responsible for collaborating with the 3C Leadership Council, identifying, cultivating, and soliciting prospects, developing campaign communications, and coordinating with 3C Trust staff.

The fundraising and capital strategy should center:

- 3C's target beneficiaries (households at 80 to 120 percent of the Chicago Metro Area Median Income)
- Solutions for sustainable, affordable homeownership for first-time buyers
- Sustaining the 3C collaborative's operating infrastructure – key drivers include supports for homebuyer's subsidy and capital for affordable, low-cost lending (both for developers and buyers)

This engagement will help 3C not only scale but deepen its impact, sharpen its strategic direction, and elevate the story of its work to expand equitable homeownership and build community wealth in underinvested communities.

Scope of Work

The engagement will include, but not be limited to, the following areas of work:

- **Facilitation and Alignment**
 - Establish and lead regular fundraising meetings with 3C's Leadership Council and establish accountability measures to align on cross-organization process and strategy

- Collaborate with 3C staff and partners to integrate philanthropic fundraising and concessionary capital strategies into 3C's broader strategic plan.
- **Landscape Scan and Capital Strategy**
 - Conduct national landscape scan to identify opportunities to leverage fundraising (grants, donations, sponsorships) and concessionary capital (program-related investments, CDFI lending, mission-driven investors, etc.)
 - Map potential sources of subsidy, affordable lending capital, and blended finance models to support developers and buyers
- **Fundraising and Investor Engagement**
 - Lead 3C's fundraising strategy, guided by 3C partners, centering households at 80-120% AMI and the goal of sustainable, affordable homeownership
 - Secure new commitments from philanthropic sources and concessionary capital providers to support 3C's programmatic and capital needs
 - Support 3C partners in cultivation, solicitation and follow-up with prospective sources
 - Engage funders and investors previously connected to 3C partners to identify opportunities for deeper alignment and expanded commitments
- **Communications and Campaign Development**
 - Develop campaign communications that elevate 3C's story, highlighting both philanthropic impact and concessionary capital opportunities.
 - Create messaging tailored to donors, institutional funders, and impact-first investors, ensuring clarity around 3C's dual capital strategy.
- **Tracking and Reporting**
 - Maintain notes and updates on campaign prospect spreadsheet, tracking leads
 - Provide regular progress reports to 3C partners on commitments, pipeline development, feedback, and strategy milestones

Anticipated Deliverables

- Comprehensive analysis identifying priority philanthropic sources and concessionary capital opportunities
- Detailed fundraising and concessionary capital strategy, aligned with 3C's strategic plan
- Case for Support, donor pitch decks, and investor prospectus materials
- Single coordinated ask that reflects 3C's shared priorities and integrates both fundraising and concessionary capital needs
- Secure 2-3 new philanthropic funding sources or concessionary capital commitments

Campaign Timeline

- **Year 1**
 - Fundraising target: \$2,500,000

- Develop/update Case for Support
- Conduct feasibility meetings and landscape analysis
- Identify, cultivate, and solicit top prospects
- Hold campaign kick-off event(s)

Budget

The total budget for this project is up to \$75,000, for a one-year contract with option to renew. Budget should include all professional fees, travel, and expenses.

Desired Qualifications

Ideal applicants will demonstrate:

- Fundraising and Capital Strategy Expertise
 - Consultant should be registered as a professional fundraiser, making direct solicitations, or professional fundraising consultant in all jurisdictions from which funds will be solicited
 - Proven track record in developing and executing multi-year fundraising strategies for complex, cross-sector initiatives.
 - Experience securing large-scale funding from diverse sources including foundations, corporations, government programs, individual donors, and capital providers.
 - Familiarity with capital campaigns and strategies to housing, community development, or similar sectors.
 - Experience structuring and securing concessionary capital (e.g., program-related investments, CDFI lending, mission-driven investors) to complement philanthropic fundraising.
- Strategic Planning & Stakeholder Engagement
 - Ability to align fundraising and capital strategies with organizational goals and 3C's strategic plan.
 - Experience working with community-driven initiatives and centering equity and live experience in fundraising and investment narratives.
 - Skilled at engaging diverse stakeholders, including institutional funders and impact-first investors
- Marketing, Storytelling & Communications
 - Strong capability to develop compelling narratives that elevate the impact of 3C's work and clearly articulate partnership and investment opportunities
 - Experience creating integrated marketing plans targeted at donors, funders, and investors including messaging that resonates across these audiences
- Analytical & Research Skills
 - Ability to conduct national landscape scans to identify funding opportunities and trends.
 - Skilled in prioritizing funding sources, assessing feasibility for securing funds, and recommending blended strategies that balance grants, donations and impact-first capital.
- Project Management & Accountability

- Demonstrated ability to establish regular communication and accountability measures with committees and stakeholders.
- Strong organizational skills to manage timelines, deliverables, and reporting.
- Experience coordinating multi-sector teams and ensuring transparency in campaign progress and outcomes

Proposal Instructions

Submissions should include:

- Approach and methodology – how you will address the phases, facilitate alignment, and manage solicitation under an ambitious timeline. How will you conduct landscape analysis, identify and cultivate top prospects, and develop strong narrative that elevates the efforts and impact of this complex initiative.
- Workplan and timeline – sequence of activities, milestones, etc.
- Experience and background – track record of relevant prior engagements and successful fundraising campaigns
- Budget and fee structure – itemized by phase
- References – two or more clients for similar engagements

Questions related to this opportunity and proposals should be submitted via email to Jessica Omana (jomana@cct.org).

Timeline

- RFP Released: Monday, May 4, 2026
- Deadline for submission of clarifying questions: Friday, May 22, 2026
- Proposals Due: Monday, June 1, 2026
- Anticipate Inviting Consultants to Interview: June 2026
- Anticipate Selecting Consultant: July 2026
- Anticipate Project Start: October 2026
- Anticipate Project End: September 2027