



Guide for Gaining Community Support for the Grand Challenge

Ready to be a Grand Challenge Community? The following action steps are designed to help you ensure your community is ready to take on the Grand Challenge.

In September 2019, AWA will launch the Grand Challenge to support 10 communities to operationalize a measurable, effective end to youth homelessness.

Grand Challenge Goal

Over a two year period, the A Way Home America Grand Challenge will help 10 communities in the United States end homelessness for LGBTQ youth and youth of color, setting the path to ending homelessness for all youth.

Given that the preponderance of youth experiencing homelessness are LGBTQ and/or youth of color, this result represents a key milestone toward ending homelessness for all young people.

Action Steps

☐ Ensure your community meets the threshold criteria to become a Grand Challenge community.

My community:

- Is aware of how our homelessness system functions for LGBTQ youth and youth of color. We have identified what we still need to learn more about and/or are on the path to learning more.
- Has a commitment to transformational equity work and acknowledges that this work is fundamentally different and difficult, but knows it must be done.
- Has the initial interest or commitment of community leadership, including: Youth champion (i.e. youth provider, youth liaison, dedicated funder), Youth Action Board, Continuum of Care lead, and Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) data lead
- Is committed to collecting and sharing monthly system data publicly with AWA and all participating communities.
- Is committed to prioritizing sending a core team to strategy gatherings three times per year. [A travel stipend will be provided to cover travel costs for selected communities.]

NOTE: The above criteria are currently under review by the National Youth Forum on Homelessness and may be updated prior to the application announcement

☐ Assess if your community has the following characteristics. These indicators will be reflected in the application, and while not required, demonstrate additional readiness which may make a community's application more competitive:

- Efforts toward coordinated community responses already in place, i.e.: Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP), Supporting Partnerships for Anti-Racism Communities, completion of a Youth Homelessness 100-Day Challenge

- Presence of a “backbone” - a funder or an organizing entity that supports the coordination of youth homelessness and system efforts across a community
 - Presence of existing strong AWHHA leadership in the community [such as a Steering Committee member]
 - Demonstrated involvement of key system stakeholders, such as education, child welfare and juvenile justice
 - Strong assessment of current community initiatives and community capacity
- Discuss the Grand Challenge and agree on your community’s commitment to apply at upcoming meetings involving/for the following groups. Each community’s application will need a letter of support from:**
- Youth champion (i.e. youth provider, youth liaison, dedicated funder)
 - Youth Action Board
 - Continuum of Care lead, and
 - HMIS data lead
- Mark your calendar for the following dates:**
- July 23: Grand Challenge Community Application Released
 - July 23: Grand Challenge Reception at National Alliance to End Homelessness Conference (Washington, DC)
 - Aug 1 (3pm EST) & Aug 2 (12pm EST): Grand Challenge Application Webinars
 - Aug 21: Grand Challenge Applications Due
 - Sept 3-5: Grand Challenge Communities Announced at True Colors United Impact Summit (Washington, DC) [Plan to send at least one member of your community, if possible.]
 - October: First in-person gathering of selected communities (location TBD)
- Ask for support in getting your community on board:**
- Reach out to Megan at AWHHA (MEGAN@AWAYHOMEAMERICA.ORG) if you would like a Grand Challenge Intro webinar or call specifically for members of your community.

