

About Opportunity Finance Network

The Opportunity Finance Network of 165 financial institutions finds and finances opportunities that others overlook. We are community development institutions (CDFIs) and other opportunity finance institutions who work just outside the margins of conventional finance to bring those markets into the economic mainstream and to help the economic mainstream flow into those markets.

Through fiscal year-end 2004, Opportunity Finance Network had loaned and invested \$9.6 billion to create economic opportunities for women-owned, minority-owned, and other small businesses; quality, affordable housing; and essential community facilities and services. That financing has generated or maintained 141,000 jobs and 28,900 businesses, 317,000 housing units, and 4,700 community facility projects in urban and rural neighborhoods in all 50 states.

About First Nations OWEESTA Corporation

First Nations OWEESTA Corporation (Oweesta), an affiliate of First Nations Development Institute (FNDI, est. 1980), was launched in 1986 to assist tribes and Native communities with loans, investments, technical assistance, training and community development research and advocacy. Oweesta became a separate Native corporation in 1999 and is presently the only certified Native CDFI intermediary in the country.

The Mission of Oweesta is twofold:

- To enhance the capacity of Native tribes, communities and people to access, control, create, leverage, utilize and retain financial assets.
- To provide access to appropriate financial capital for Native development efforts.

As a long-standing provider of support for Native communities, tribes, and organizations, Oweesta delivers services and products through four major programs including Financial Institutions & Nonprofit Organizations, Investment & Lending, Financial Capacity Building, and Research, Policy, & Advocacy.

About The CDFI Fund

The CDFI Fund was created in 1994 to promote economic revitalization and community development through investment in and assistance to CDFIs. It achieves its purpose by promoting access to capital and local economic growth through its: 1) CDFI Program by directly investing in, supporting and training CDFIs that provide loans, investments, financial services and technical assistance to underserved populations and communities; 2) New Market Tax Credit program by providing tax credit allocations that enable community development entities to attract private-sector investment for re-investment in low-income communities; 3) Bank Enterprise Award program by providing an incentive for banks to invest in their communities and CDFIs; and 4) Expanding Native Opportunity Initiatives, by providing financial assistance, technical assistance and training to Native CDFIs and entities proposing to become or create Native CDFIs. Since its creation, the Fund has made \$729 million in awards to community development organizations and financial institutions, with over \$22 million directed to our Native initiatives.

Expanding Native Opportunity: Native Communities Financing Initiative was developed for and is fully funded by the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund of the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

Expanding Native Opportunity:

The Native Communities Financing Initiative



Public Ledger Building—Suite 572
620 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106
P 215.923.4754
F 215.923.4755
www.opportunityfinance.net



1010 Ninth Street, Suite 3
Rapid City, SD 57701
P 605.342.3770
F 605.342.3771
www.oweesta.org
www.nfec.info

Funded By



601 13th Street NW
Suite 200, South
Washington, DC 20005
P 202.622.8662
F 202.622.7754
www.cdfifund.gov



Funded By



Expanding Native Opportunity: The Native Communities Financing Initiative



You'll meet with experts and your peers to learn the key building blocks for starting and operating a CDFI. After each session, the Initiative provides on-site consulting to help you accomplish each step.

Building Native Assets for Your Native Community

Bring economic development funding to your community through the Expanding Native Opportunity: Native Communities Financing Initiative (NCFI)!

NCFI delivers a comprehensive training program to guide you through the process of establishing a Native community development financial institution (CDFI) over the course of several months. You will receive detailed instruction and ongoing assistance from specialized consultants at Opportunity Finance Network and First Nations OWEESTA Corporation (Oweesta). These leaders in community economic development will provide an overview of the process along with step-by-step instruction that will enable you to develop a Native community development financial institution (CDFI) and bring new resources to your community.

How a Native CDFI Can Help You

Native CDFIs can be a powerful resource in creating economic strength for Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians. CDFIs encourage the growth and sustainability of small businesses, home ownership, community development projects, and important financial services for Native communities by providing much-needed capital, training and technical assistance.

Step One: Learn if a CDFI is Right for Your Native Community (one-day course)

Attend NCFI's initial training course "Does Your Community Need a CDFI?" to learn if a CDFI could improve your Native community. This course introduces key CDFI concepts, different types of CDFIs, the size and growth of the CDFI industry, and how to be successful in this industry. Opportunity Finance Network and Oweesta instructors will also discuss Native CDFIs they have worked with.

In the weeks following the course, attendees of "Does Your Community Need a CDFI?" are invited to utilize the "help desk" operated by NCFI. Instructors and other experts will be available to answer questions via phone or e-mail, typically responding within two business days.

Step Two: Organizing a CDFI to Serve Native Communities

If, upon completing "Step One," you and the NCFI consultants agree that your organization is ready to create a CDFI, you will be invited to participate in Step Two: "Organizing a CDFI to Serve Native Communities: A Building Guide." In several sessions over an eight month period, Opportunity Finance Network and Oweesta will provide you with ongoing expert instruction, one-on-one consulting, and access to a peer network focused on establishing CDFIs.

Organization and Market Analysis (two-day course)

The "Organization" class lays out the initial steps required to form a Native CDFI. Examine the key elements of successful CDFIs including human capital, financial capital, and infrastructure. Instructors focus on strategies used to gain community support, select a board of directors, and avoid common pitfalls and obstacles that can affect developing CDFIs.

Instructors also provide advice on preparing the basic documents for a nonprofit organization. You will work hands-on to create the policies and procedures needed to establish a CDFI within the parameters of your Native community infrastructure.

"Market Analysis," delivered on the second day, helps you determine your CDFI's target market and products. Course activities and presentations help you determine demand for financial products as well as identifying competitors and partners. This training highlights the concerns of serving Native communities in remote, rural areas as it identifies and addresses cultural morals and attitudes toward credit. Specific methods and examples for Native community market analyses are also compared and discussed.

Loan Product Design and Operations (online course)

"Product Design and Operations" presents the process of creating loan products and loan procedures to meet the demands of the local, regional or national Native market. This online course identifies what staff and capital resources are needed to implement the proposed loan program and emphasizes creating operations for loan and technical assistance programs. You will be provided with the components of a risk management system that can be adapted to your Native community or Nation and its unique infrastructure issues.

Capitalization, Marketing Your Native CDFI, and Development Services (two-day course)

"Capitalization" provides an overview of fundraising with practical, specific approaches on day one. You will learn where other Native and non-Native CDFIs obtain funds as you identify the three types of money needed: operating, debt, and equity. You will also learn to project your CDFI's financial needs, identify your best opportunities for locating funds, and draft a plan and time frame for raising the funds.

On the second day, instructors present "Marketing Your Native CDFI," revealing the concepts and techniques needed to market a CDFI's loan products and development services. You will learn where to market, what to emphasize to different groups, and how to evaluate the effectiveness of your marketing quickly.

"Development Services," also delivered on the second day, explains how to create technical assistance to support, maintain, and build your customer base. You will learn to identify the needs of your applicants and borrowers, prioritize those needs, and select and provide appropriate, cost-effective assistance.

Expanding Native Opportunity: Native Communities Financing Initiative Follow-up Assistance

After all courses have been completed, NCFI will provide your group with extensive technical assistance including, but not limited to:

- Tribal Government Relationships and Legal Arrangements: assistance with the requirements and arrangements necessary for a CDFI to achieve 501c3 status with the state and IRS.
- Negotiating with funders and investors: help evaluating rates, terms, and conditions of the initial funders and investors, which can determine the future success of any CDFI.
- Making Strategic Choices: consultants will work with staff, board, council, community members and others to help analyze the market for your Native CDFI and plan for its steady development.
- Hiring Staff: assistance in evaluating résumés and structuring the interview process to hire the right staff for your CDFI.
- Ongoing Lending Issues: navigate your CDFI through lending issues fairly and consistently.
- Business Plan Completion: help with reviewing drafts and completing plans to develop realistic yet ambitious projections.

Classroom locations will be announced. For more information about Expanding Native Opportunity: The Native Communities Financing Initiative and available sessions, please contact:

Mamata (Mini) Datta,
Opportunity Finance Network
Phone: 215.320.4343
Email: mdatta@opportunityfinance.net

Stewart Sarkozy-Banoczy,
First Nations OWEESTA Corporation
Phone: 605.342.3770
Email: ssarkozy@oweesta.org



The Lakota Fund, a Native CDFI serving the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, lent money to Nellie Cuny so she could expand her Native business, the Cuny Table Cafe/Campground in Buffalo Gap, SD.

