

PRESS RELEASE: CDFI RESEARCH CONSORTIUM SELECTS FIRST ROUND PROJECTS

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2023

DURHAM, N.H.— The CDFI Research Consortium has selected 11 projects to receive over \$330,000 collectively in research awards in its first round of funding. The Consortium received 32 requests for nearly \$1 million in response to its inaugural Request for Proposals, calling for “research related to measuring outcomes from CDFI [(community development financial institution)] investments, how best to channel capital to low-income and historically disadvantaged communities, and major obstacles faced by borrowers and lenders to those communities, and potential solutions.”

The CDFI Research Consortium is a first-of-its-kind national network in the community development finance field, seeking to understand the impact and potential of CDFIs and to provide actionable guidance to lenders as well as investors, policymakers, and other collaborators. CDFI loan funds, banks, and credit unions hold at least \$452 billion nationwide, and the industry has a 40-year track record of lending to people, small businesses, housing, real estate, and community projects.

The awarded research organizations and project titles include:

- Auburn University (AL) – Causal Impacts of CDFIs: Evidence from Diverse Locations, Products, and Institutions
- Brandeis University in partnership with Baker Tilly (MA) – Bridging the Lending Gap: Collaborations Between Local Government and CDFIs
- Crediture, Inc. (CA) – A Strategy to Validate Stated Income for Cash-Only Businesses
- Falcon Capital Advisors (VA) – Analysis of CDFI Lending in the Single-Family Mortgage Market
- Impact Frontiers (MA) – Assessing CDFIs’ Investor Contribution Using Evidence-Backed Narratives
- LISC (Local Investment Support Corporation, NY) – CDFI Impacts on Wealth and Assets: Lending, Credit Enhancements, and Strategies to Close the Racial Wealth and Resource Gap
- NC Rural Center, in partnership with Corner Square Community Capital and Thread Capital (NC) – A Roadmap to forming Statewide CDFI Coalitions
- Pacific Community Ventures (CA) – Beyond Loan Performance: Understanding Wealth-Building Goals of Entrepreneurs of Color and Enhancing CDFI Impact
- Pathway Lending (TN) – Leveraging State Tax Incentives to Attract Private Capital
- Stepping Stone Partners in partnership with Tern Strategies (PA) – Strengthening Pathways for Community Investing: A Landscape Assessment and Analysis of CDFI Investment Note Offerings
- SZ Consulting (VA) – Reversing Weak-Market Decline: A Collaborative CDFI Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative in Philadelphia

The funding for research was provided by Citi Foundation, as part of its Community Finance Innovation Fund, which is advancing the field of community finance to create positive impact for low-income communities and communities of color.

“We know that the community development finance industry plays a critical role in delivering capital to low-income communities, but to shine a light on its impact requires rigorous, independent research and actionable data,” said Kristen Scheyder, Senior Vice President of Citi Foundation. “By seeding the creation of the new CDFI Research Consortium, we hope to help unlock research and resources that bolster the industry and move the field forward.”

The funded research will be conducted over the next 8-24 months and the results will be disseminated as published reports with initial reports expected to be published in fall 2024. The research findings will also be adapted as articles, presentations, primers, and other resources. The Consortium plans to post another Request for Proposals in Q1 of 2024.

The CDFI Research Consortium is based at the Center for Impact Finance at the University of New Hampshire. The Consortium is supported by a diverse Advisory Board of CDFI practitioners, academics, and other researchers from across the country. Learn more about the Consortium at: <https://carsey.unh.edu/center-for-impact-finance/current-projects/cdfi-research-consortium>.

The Center for Impact Finance is part of the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire. The Center has a mission to equip the community development finance field with the products, tools, skills, and connections to address inequality and foster economic, social, and environmental resilience. Learn more about the Center at: <https://carsey.unh.edu/center-for-impact-finance>.

Point of Contact

[Hannah Vargason](#) | UNH Center for Impact Finance | hannah.vargason@unh.edu