



WELCOME!

TO THE INVITATION TO JOIN A WAY HOME WASHINGTON'S FLAGSHIP PROGRAM

ANCHOR COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

We are so excited to share information with you about A Way Home Washington's first-ever expansion of our flagship program, the Anchor Community Initiative (ACI).

A Way Home Washington is a statewide movement to prevent and end youth and young adult homelessness, with a focus on prioritizing young people of color and LGBTQ+ young people who experience homelessness at disproportionately higher rates than their white, straight, cisgender peers. We provide strategic statewide support and intensive support in communities participating in the Anchor Community Initiative, to inform, grow, and sustain change efforts. Working together with Washington's Office of Homeless Youth, and communities, we operate to transform systems to be data-informed, performance-based, equity-driven and hold young people at the center of all we do.

The Anchor Communities Initiative is a national model for preventing and ending homelessness for young people. The Anchor Community of Spokane is the largest community in the United States to achieve a reduction in youth and young adult homelessness! Continuing progress like this in more communities uniquely positions Washington to make functionally ending youth and young adult homelessness statewide a reality.

To learn more about the possibility of your community joining together with other communities across the state who are proving that we *can* prevent and end youth and young adult homelessness, we ask that you please read through the brief materials in this ACI Expression of Interest (EOI) packet.

1. Overview of A Way Home Washington
2. Invitation and APPLICATION to Submit an Expression of Interest to Join the Anchor Community Initiative
3. Core Components of the Anchor Community Initiative
4. Functional Zero
5. By-Name List
6. Frequently Asked Questions: About A Way Home Washington, the Anchor Community Initiative, and the ACI Expression of Interest
7. Glossary

Please note the submission date for the Expression of Interest, as well as opportunities to learn more:

- October 12, 2021** The Expression of Interest is available to all interested Washington communities.
- October 13, 2021** **4:00 PM** – Zoom Informational Webinar about the EOI, hosted by A Way Home Washington and the Washington State Office of Homeless Youth. [Register here.](#)
- November 4, 2021** **3:00 PM** – Zoom Q&A session about the EOI, with guest speakers from the current Anchor Communities. [Register here.](#)
- November 19, 2021** **5:00 PM** – **Final submissions of Expressions of Interest are DUE.**

With estimates of up to 15,000 young people in Washington experiencing homelessness – the equivalent of nearly a quarter of the state’s entire high school graduation class per year – it is imperative that we grow our ability to do what we know works to put an end to youth and young adult homelessness. We know that when young people have a safe and stable home, supportive connections and access to needed services, they have the opportunity to successfully transition into adulthood and thrive.

We hope you will give serious consideration to this opportunity. Please reach out to us with questions at ACIDepartment@awayhomewa.org .

Sincerely,



Julie Patiño
Executive Director of A Way Home Washington



Ashley Barnes-Cocke
Anchor Community Initiative Project Director



INVITATION & APPLICATION TO SUBMIT AN EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

ANCHOR COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

Section I: Background Information

A WAY HOME WASHINGTON

A Way Home Washington (AWHWA) is a statewide movement to prevent and end youth and young adult homelessness, with a focus on prioritizing young people of color and LGBTQ+ youth who experience homelessness at higher rates than their white, straight, cisgender peers. Co-Chaired by First Lady Trudi Inslee, we lead and unite passionate stakeholders across the state to build systems that can respond to the unique needs of *all* young people.

[Click here for more information on AWHWA](#)

THE ANCHOR COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

The Anchor Community Initiative (ACI) is A Way Home Washington's flagship program. The initiative supports communities to accurately know all of the unaccompanied youth and young adults (YYA) aged 12-24 experiencing homelessness, and uses that data to end YYA homelessness. This includes ensuring just and equitable outcomes for young people of color and LGBTQ young people. AWHWA provides each Anchor Community with strategic coaching, data infrastructure, subject matter expertise, and state-level advocacy. The Core Improvement Teams in each Anchor Community leverage their own knowledge, political will, and real-time data to transform their community into one that can quickly provide every unique young person a pathway toward stability.

Anchor Communities establish cross-sector Improvement Teams working in sync with youth action boards* (YABs) to make progress toward time-bound, measurable goals. These groups analyze their system and take action to change the outcomes their system is producing for young people. Particular focus is paid to reducing and ending disproportionality for youth of color and LGBTQ+ young people in all aspects of their system.

You can find more details on the core components of the ACI, including the structure of the ACI model in the documents below:

- [Model and Core Components of the Anchor Community Initiative](#)
- [Functional Zero](#)
- [By Name List \(BNL\) Overview](#)
- [YYA Engagement Gold Standard](#)

BENEFITS AND EXPECTATIONS OF PARTICIPATION IN THE ACI

As part of the Anchor Community Initiative, you will join other communities across the state that are proving you can end youth and young adult (YYA) homelessness. Your community will be a **PROOF POINT** and a **NATIONAL MODEL**!

What your community can expect as an Anchor Community

Communities that are selected as an Anchor Community can expect the following benefits and supports:

- Strategic coaching, data infrastructure, subject matter expertise, and state level advocacy support from a dedicated team who use a data-driven, continuous quality improvement model to support local communities in setting measurable goals, identifying system changes, and using system data to track results;
- A Lead Coach who will support communities to reach their local goals;
- Focused support for the collection and utilization of quality data;
- Connection to other Anchor Communities across the state through facilitated, cross-cohort calls, various learning opportunities, ACI learning sessions, and access to shared material, best practices, tools, data dashboards, and resources through the ACI Resource Hub;
- Targeted data and evaluation tools to uncover inequities and make progress toward key milestones;
- Strategic support for staff in key local positions, including securing host agencies for the Local ACI Coordinator position and Youth & Community Engagement Coordinator roles; and
- Access to state-level funding and policy advocacy based on local needs.

What will be expected of your community as part of the ACI

Communities interested in being a part of the Anchor Community Initiative need to have energy, excitement, and passion, as well as the belief that it is possible to prevent and end unaccompanied youth and young adult homelessness in their community. Further, communities need to be ready and excited to dive into the work of building systems rooted in justice for LGBTQ+ and BIPOC young people.

Local communities must also be able to commit to:

- **Ongoing community buy-in and key stakeholder support** for participation in this initiative, including the CoC Lead Agency and HMIS Lead;
- Upholding the **values and aim** of the Anchor Community Initiative, including authentic youth engagement and a commitment to end disproportionality for YYA of color, LGBTQ and trans/gender nonconforming YYA;
- **Authentically engaging** young people with lived experience as partners and leaders, including supporting an active YAB and ensuring that all young people are compensated for their work;
- **Setting specific, measurable goals** to drive a functional end to YYA homelessness in your community;
- **Identifying and securing key local positions** (a community lead, data lead, and agency to host the local Coordinator and the Youth and Community Engagement positions) *within the first quarter of 2022*;

- **Convening cross-sector teams** (both a Community Team and an Improvement Team) working in sync with YABs who are responsible for making progress toward functional zero, uplifting youth voice, and centering racial and LGBTQ+ justice in the work
 - Convening your local Improvement Team *twice a month*
 - Hosting Youth Action Board meetings *at least monthly*
 - Hosting Community Team meetings *at least quarterly*
- **Engaging in meaningful relationships** with partners outside of the homeless response system, including by/for organizations, school, child welfare, inpatient behavioral health and juvenile justice systems;
- **Building and using a quality and reliable By-Name List (BNL)** of all unaccompanied young people experiencing homelessness in your community;
- Using your BNL data to **reduce the number** of young people experiencing homelessness and **reach functional zero**, including an **end to disproportionality** for BIPOC, LGBQ and trans/gender non-conforming young people;
- **Reporting system-level data** monthly;
- **Participating in a Community of Practice**, which includes attending **Learning Sessions** (2x per year) and other trainings, webinars, and peer-sharing opportunities;
- Engaging in robust analysis around how **systemic racism, homophobia and transphobia** are showing up in your system and programs, and taking concrete action to transform it; and
- **Being brave and innovative** – willingness to honestly interrogate your system and creatively test new ways of doing things, even when there is a possibility of failure.

*See [Core Components of the Anchor Community Initiative](#) for more information.

HOW ANCHOR COMMUNITIES WORK

After being selected as a new Anchor Community, we will hit the ground running! You will bring your community teams together and start the work to end, not just manage, unaccompanied youth and young adult homelessness in your community.

Here is what you can expect in 2022:

January-March	April-June	July-September	October-December
Identify host agencies and hire for local positions	Communities host By-Name List scorecard session	Local Youth Action Boards are up and running	By-Name List Scorecard workplan sessions
Community Leads set regular meetings with ACI Coaches	Starting in April, set a regular time twice per month for your Improvement Team to meet	Apply for project funding through the Office of Homeless Youth, if needed	Communities begin reaching quality, reliable data!
Identify Improvement Team Members	Spring Learning Session		Fall Learning Session

Data Leads are on board	Communities start submitting system level data		
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GLOSSARY

A glossary of common ACI terms can be found [here](#).

Section II: Community Information

We are using an online form to collect Expressions of Interest. **The link to the online form is [here](#).** The questions below are here **for your reference only, you do not need to submit your responses through this document.** You will respond to the questions and include all attachments (including links to any videos or additional materials) directly in the online form itself.

BASIC DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

- Name of community submitting the EOI:
- Are you submitting as a CoC or other geographic make-up?
 - Yes, we are submitting as a designated CoC
 - No, we are not submitting as a designated CoC
 If other than a designated CoC, please explain.

WHO IS SUBMITTING THIS EOI RESPONSE

- Community Point of Contact for this EOI
 - Name/organization
 - Email
 - Phone
- List of community members/stakeholders involved in putting the EOI response together.
- Include a list/chart showing which organizations/system partners will be supporting active staff participation on the local community Improvement Team, including which are by/for organizations.
- Please describe how young people contributed to this application.
- Please submit (as an attachment) a statement of commitment signed by (at minimum):
 - The agencies hosting local positions
 - CoC lead representative
 - HMIS data representative
 - YAB members (if applicable)
- In addition to the signed statement of commitment, please also submit (attach) a Letter of support from local political leadership.

Section III: Community Questions

You will answer the following narrative questions directly in the online form. Community responses will be reviewed and scored based on answers to the following questions/criteria.

CRITERIA A: TELL US ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY

- 1) Describe the current work/coordination happening in your community around housing insecurity or preventing and ending unaccompanied youth and young adult (YYA) homelessness. Please include information on the following:
 - Who is leading and participating in the work?
 - What other homelessness, equity initiatives or technical assistance (TA) are you currently participating in (or have in the past)?
For example: 100-Day Challenge, YHDP Round 1,2,3 or newly selected Round 4/5, SPARC community, HUD Coordinated Entry Equity Demonstration, HUD S1 TA, others
- 2) What major gaps and barriers exist in your current system for housing YYA? How have you identified these gaps (what data have you used)?
- 3) How is disproportionality for young people of color, LGBTQ and/or trans and gender nonconforming YYA showing up in your YYA housing system and how do you know?

CRITERIA B: TELL US ABOUT YOUR VISION

- 1) Why are you excited about potentially becoming an Anchor Community and how would participating in the Anchor Community Initiative add to the work already happening in your community?
- 2) What are 3 things you would improve in your system today, if you could?
- 3) Do you believe your community can end youth homelessness, including an end to disproportionality for young people of color, LGBTQ and trans and gender nonconforming YYA?

CRITERIA C: COMMUNITY CAPACITY: LAUNCH & IMPLEMENTATION

- 1) Tell us which agency (and/or position) will be your **Community Lead** and describe their capacity/experience leading a system-change initiative.
- 2) Tell us which agency will commit to host your **Local ACI Coordinator** (keep in mind that this position will require access to HMIS).
- 3) Have you identified an **ACI Data Lead** for your community? If yes, please list. If not, please describe your plan to identify a data lead.
- 4) Can you commit to sharing your local system-level data with AWHWA each month? Describe any challenges you foresee. Do you foresee any difficulties pulling a By Name List (BNL) for your area?
- 5) Have you identified an organization to host a **local ACI Youth Action Board**, stipend fund and Youth and Community Engagement Coordinator? If yes, please list the organization and if

not, what your plan is for identifying the organization. Do you anticipate any issues with being able to have a point person in place during the first quarter of 2022?

- 6) Describe how your community will ensure that local agency and political leadership is and will remain invested in the effort to end YYA homelessness and will support your local team in making progress toward that goal.
- 7) If you are selected as an Anchor Community, will your community be able to launch the ACI locally during the first quarter of 2022? What do you see as the biggest challenges for your community to start this work (first 3-6 months)?

Section IV: Submission & Selection Process

Submission Process

To be considered for participation in this next cohort of the Anchor Community Initiative, interested communities will need to submit a complete Expression of Interest form to A Way Home Washington by the deadline (5pm, November 19th). We are using an online form to collect Expressions of Interest. The link to the online form is [here](#). This EOI Packet is **for your reference only, you do not need to submit your responses through this document**. You will include all attachments (including links to any videos or additional materials) in the online form itself.

Your full submission must include the following:

- Complete Community Information** (from Section II above)
- Narrative responses to the Community Questions** (from Section III)
- A signed statement of support** from key partners and stakeholders (see specifics in Section II above)

*Note: In addition to your narrative response, we encourage communities to be creative and submit any other additional materials for consideration (for example, a video created by your community partners or young people submitted to us or posted on your social media sharing why you are excited to become an Anchor Community or any other creative way you want to tell us about your community)!

The Expression of Interest period will be open for 6 weeks (from 10/12-11/19). All submissions are due to AHWA via the online form **NO LATER THAN 5:00 PM on November 19, 2021**.

Community Selection

The second cohort of Anchor Communities will join the initial four Anchor Communities across the state that are working to reach an end to youth and young adult homelessness (functional zero). Up to four communities will be selected for this next phase of the ACI.

Selection Criteria

- Community selection will be based on the following:
 - Clarity and completeness of proposal
 - Current community capacity and ability to support the work of the ACI
 - Geographic diversity

- Community coordination and cross-sector support
 - Commitment and ability to create and use a quality, real-time By-Name List*
 - Engagement with young people with lived experience
 - Commitment to and vision for ending YYA homelessness, including disproportionality
- Responses submitted must meet the following **minimum thresholds** to be scored:
 - Complete response to all questions in Section II and III
 - All required attachments/materials are submitted, including **signed statement of commitment**
 - Responses must be received by AWHWA by the deadline listed in the EOI packet

Selection Process

Community responses to the EOI will be reviewed by a Selection Committee that will include representatives from AWHWA and the Office of Homeless Youth (OHY) who bring a variety of backgrounds and experiences (including data expertise and young people with lived experience of homelessness).

- Communities that meet the minimum threshold (see above) will be invited to participate in an interview with the selection committee. These interviews will be scheduled for 60 mins and **will take place between Dec. 6-10, 2021** (exact dates will be scheduled with communities that meet threshold by 11/30).
- Final decisions will be made mid-December 2021 and communities will be notified by the end of the year.

**Please see the [EOI FAQs](#) and [Glossary](#) for additional information*

Section V: Timeline & Key Due Dates

Timeline/Deadlines

- October 12, 2021** The Expression of Interest is available to all interested Washington communities.
- October 13, 2021** **4:00 PM** – Zoom Informational Webinar about the EOI, hosted by A Way Home Washington and the Washington State Office of Homeless Youth. [Register here.](#)
- November 4, 2021** **3:00 PM** – Zoom Informational Q&A session about the EOI, with guest speakers from current Anchor Communities. [Register here.](#)
- During the Open EOI Period** Check the Expression of Interest FAQs regularly for updated information and responses to questions.
- November 19, 2021** **5:00 PM** – **Final submissions of Expressions of Interest are DUE.**
- December 6-10, 2021** Community Interviews.

Late December

Communities Selected/Notified.

January 2022

New Anchor Communities on board