



Thank you for taking the CDFI Fund's "Framework for the Future" survey. We look forward to your feedback!

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1. I am answering this... (choose all that apply)

- I am answering this... (choose all that apply) On behalf of a certified CDFI
- On behalf of a certified CDE
- On behalf of a CDFI Fund award recipient
- On behalf of a trade organization
- On behalf of a government agency (federal, state, or local)
- As an interested member of the public
- Other (please specify):

Eligible CDFIs that are not yet certified

2. How can the CDFI Fund use data to strengthen the industry and increase its impact?

1. Make better use of public call report data filed by all regulated CDFIs
2. Automate certification and recertification applications and link collected data to applications that make the information accessible to practitioners, researchers and the general public.
3. Integrate CIIS reporting system with certification and FA/TA application databases.
4. Enhance and update the myCDFI mapping program to incorporate U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey updates or the more robust layers of information available through PolicyMap to reduce or eliminate conflicts between CDFI-designated Investment Areas and new geographic priorities established by Congress or the CDFI Fund and also to provide updated market intelligence to CDFI practitioners.
5. Increase the capacity of the CIMS3 mapping program to process larger batch files to enable CDFIs to easily conduct deeper and more frequent market analyses of their activities on a larger scale.
6. Provide technical assistance through the CDFI Capacity Building Initiative to develop an Application Program Interface (API) that would enable regulated CDFIs to generate all required CDFI compliance reports directly from their core data processing system. Such an API would improve the quality and increase the quantity of data available to the Fund, which would provide a more detailed and dynamic picture of the scale, scope and impact of the CDFI industry as a whole.

3. How can the CDFI Fund best support CDFIs to continue to innovate?

1. Increase investment in financial inclusion, which requires an expansion of innovative financial services as the first entry point for low- and very-low income consumers.
2. Promote competition among CDFIs of every type by ensuring that the most innovative CDFIs of every type have an equal opportunity of receiving a CDFI awards (currently more than half of loan fund applicants receive FA awards while less than one-third of credit union applicants receive awards). This will focus competition and promote innovation within each type of CDFI.

4. How can the CDFI Fund best support CDEs to continue to innovate?

The NMTC is very focused on how to attract investors, which was a big question at the time the program was launched. The overwhelming demand among investors demonstrates that this is no longer the question. Now it is time to reorient the program to suit the greatest needs and opportunities for the greatest possible community development impact. Innovation can be fostered by directing targeted funds to startups or new types of activities. In the latest round, the Fund asked whether the NMTC activities would promote healthy foods and 51 out of 76 allocatees indicated they would be doing healthy foods financing. While an important sector, healthy food financing alone will not foster community economic development. The CDFI Fund should do its utmost to halt or curtail the amount of resources steered to specialty projects and increase the credits available for new activities and new entrants to the NMTC space.

5. What will it take to scale innovative solutions that are known to work locally to achieve a national impact?

1. Refine the approach of the CDFI Capacity Building Initiative to recognize the fundamental differences in the operational parameters of banks, credit unions, loan funds and venture capital funds. In order to spread innovation, technical assistance and capacity-building initiatives must be tightly focused on the practical applications that work within the context of a specific type of CDFI.
2. Convene an Advisory Group of CDFI Intermediaries to help the CDFI Fund develop a practical multi-year plan to promote the scale-up of successful innovations.

6. What more can the CDFI Fund do to reach communities that need CDFIs but are either not being served by them or have limited access to CDFI Fund support?

1. Identify financial institutions in “CDFI deserts” that show high potential for CDFI Certification and encourage them to join the CDFI industry.
2. Provide financial incentives for certified CDFIs to expand services in CDFI deserts.
3. Encourage collaborations and partnerships among CDFIs to expand services in underserved areas.

7. Are the CDFI Fund's programs working optimally for communities? What should be improved and how?

No. Debt-centered economic development initiatives have been likened to trying to fill a bathtub with the drain open. Without access to safe and affordable financial services, low income consumers and communities will continue to have assets drained as fast as they can be created. The CDFI Fund's 20th Anniversary emphasized financial inclusion and the plight of the unbanked, but the CDFI Fund's programs focus on lending, not expanding access to financial services. As the CDFI Fund program application has narrowed over time, comprehensive approaches to community development finance have been starved of the critical resources needed to grow rapidly and successfully compete with fringe and predatory financial services.

8. On a scale from 1-5, with 5 being the most positive experience, please rate your average customer service experience with the CDFI Fund.

I rated them "3"

9. What works well with the CDFI Fund's customer service and what needs to be improved?

CDFI Fund staff show high levels of commitment and competence, but are often hampered by outdated technologies and limitations in staffing, strategy, policies and procedures.

10. What are the community and economic development issues that should be on the CDFI Fund's radar screen, but are not?

To date, the CDFI Fund has almost exclusively focused on lending as the key to community economic development. This focus overlooks the massive erosion of wealth among low-income consumers who must depend on fringe financial services. While loans can help to spur economic development, financial services are the key to financial inclusion; the essential element needed to transform increased economic activity into sustained growth in assets for consumers and communities. The CDFI Fund should balance its investments to increase access to community development financial services as well as loans.