



## 2023-2026 ILFI AFFORDABLE HOUSING PILOT PROJECTS ACCEPTING PROJECT SUBMISSIONS (Applications due December 1st 2023)

### PROGRAM PERIOD: DECEMBER 2023 THROUGH JUNE 2026

ILFI is now accepting applications to participate in its next cohort of Living Affordable Housing pilot projects. Participating projects will be part of an esteemed group of project teams working to innovate on healthy materials and other holistic, regenerative building practices intended to support resiliency and equity in communities. These projects will receive additional technical assistance from ILFI, exclusive benefits, special discounts, and the support of an active and inspiring peer group.

### THE INTERNATIONAL LIVING FUTURE INSTITUTE'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITMENT

The International Living Future Institute (the Institute) seeks to enable and facilitate regular use of the Living Building Challenge (LBC) in affordable housing by supporting project teams, creating resources and education, sharing stories of innovations of affordable housing leaders, and acting as a hub for the affordable housing community to connect with and support each other.

### OVERVIEW OF ILFI'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM

The affordable housing community is uniquely situated to benefit from the philosophy and application of the LBC in order to effectively accomplish its mission and goals. Living Buildings are designed to promote health and resiliency in communities, maximize the positive social and environmental potential of the built environment, and serve as focal points for inspiration and education in their local communities. They are comprised of healthy, earth-safe building materials, harvest energy and water on site, and place equity and social justice at the forefront of their design goals. As the world's most advanced and rigorous green building certification program, the LBC can enhance the positive impact of affordable housing on the lives of residents and in their communities while mitigating the persistent inequalities often present in low-income communities.

Over the last ten years, the Institute has been working to better understand the potential of the LBC to transform affordable housing projects. We have worked with 53 projects registered for the Living Building Challenge and other ILFI certifications (4 of which are certified under Petal and Zero Energy certifications). The accomplishments of these pilot projects have helped to spur innovation and further knowledge beyond the physical components of the projects themselves. Through collaboration with these project teams, ILFI has produced resources including the Living Building Challenge Framework for Affordable Housing (originally published in 2014 and expanded in 2019), the Affordable Housing Materials List (updated annually since 2020), the Best Practices Guide for Red List Free Affordable Housing, and many other case studies, articles, and a video, all available on our [website](#). Additionally, ILFI also creates educational courses and runs a virtual Affordable Housing Summit each year, which highlights learnings and accomplishments from these teams.

### THE LIVING BUILDING CHALLENGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM: 2023-2026

In this next phase, the Institute will select 20 pilot projects pursuing Living Building Challenge, Core, Zero Energy, or Zero Carbon certification to receive a package of technical assistance and become part of an ongoing cohort working together towards Living Affordable Housing. ILFI will also be running a simultaneous cohort called the Path to Red List Free Affordable Housing and would like each team to track a chosen goal of integrating healthy materials. Teams will receive additional education and resources around finding Red List Free products that are feasible. This effort was begun with the last cohort and many teams had great success with the effort, with all teams able to integrate at least some Red List Free products.

### APPLICATION TIMELINE

- Pilot program period runs from December 2023 until June 2026
- Tuesday, October 24th, 2023: International Living Future Institute announces next phase of program and begins accepting pilot project submissions
- Friday, December 1st, 2023: Applications are due by 5pm PDT
- Friday, December 15th, 2023: Selected pilot projects will be notified
- Wednesday, January 31st, 2024: Selected pilot projects must be registered for the Living Building Challenge, Core, Zero Energy, and/or Zero Carbon

## BENEFITS PACKAGE PROVIDED BY THE INSTITUTE TO SELECTED PILOT PROJECTS

In addition to all the usual benefits of registration with ILFI, selected pilot projects will receive:

- Discounted project certification fee for the selected pilot program. Participants will register for ZE 1.0, ZC 1.0, Core Green Buildings Certification 1.0 or Living Building Challenge 4.0.
- Free registration for all team members to the Institute's annual Affordable Housing Summits, while participating in the pilot program.
- Access to affordable housing project team educational and peer support/networking opportunities.
- Access to affordable housing office hours with ILFI technical project coaches to explore specific questions on Petals and Imperatives, strategies, and certification pathways.
- Opportunity to promote the project and project team through participation in ILFI webinars, conferences, blogs, articles, case studies, and/or social media.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF SELECTED PILOT PROJECTS

The goal is to create a group of active projects working together in a supportive network.

Once accepted, pilot project teams are expected to, at minimum:

- **Register the Pilot Project:** ILFI membership will be required before registering a project. Registration includes access to the Project Portal, 2 hour-long meetings with ILFI project coaches, and virtual technical support. Project teams must be prepared to register their pilot project by January 31st, 2023.
- **Pay Discounted Certification Fees at Appropriate Times:** ILFI will discount certification fees for affordable housing project teams by approximately 25%. For more information on certification fees, go to <https://living-future.org/projectregistration>.
- **Complete Feedback surveys:** Report best practices and key lessons learned through a survey 1-2 times a year throughout the program. These surveys will communicate to the Institute project successes, where additional support is needed and how the Living Building Challenge and ILFI's other building programs can further address the needs of the market.
- **Attend Quarterly Affordable Housing Team Meetings:** ILFI requests that a representative from each team attends at least three of the four quarterly meetings and at least 2 of the 4 office hour meetings annually.
- **Select an LBC Project Champion:** Each team must select an integral member of the project team (may from the architecture, owner, or other project member) to serve as the LBC Project Champion. This person will serve to ensure that the goals of the Living Building Challenge (or Core, Zero Energy, and Zero Carbon) are kept in mind throughout the design and construction of the project. The LBC Project Champion must be replaced if they leave during the course of the project. The LBC Project Champion for each team must be reported to ILFI.
- **Participate in The Path to Red List Free Materials:** In addition to certification, each project team will also participate in ILFI's Path to Red List Free Materials cohort, which is a new program (launching in 2024) to support inclusion of Red List Free/Approved materials wherever possible, regardless of certification pathway. Teams will commit to investigating the feasibility of Red List Free/Approved materials for a scope to be defined based on the project team goals and resources and track these efforts. Teams will be provided additional education on the Red List and information on how to integrate healthy materials in a cost efficient manner.

## MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY

1. Project teams must be committed to pursuing Living Building Challenge (Living or Petal), Core, Zero Energy, or Zero Carbon certification on the selected project. A diversity of project goals is desired and priority will be given to project teams that include sustainability measures beyond Energy.
2. Project must be an affordable housing project, as defined by the following:  
*The project must be financially accessible (<30 percent of household income for gross housing costs, including utilities) to renters who make <60% of area median income (AMI) and unit owners who make <80% of area median income (AMI). The project must retain its affordable status for at least 30 years. (If your project does not meet these requirements, you may still apply; however, please explain how your project is meeting the affordable housing needs of your region in your application.) Mixed-income projects are also eligible to apply if at least 50% of the building qualifies as affordable housing.*
3. Project must be located in the United States or Canada.
4. Project teams must be prepared to cover fees and time associated with the "Responsibilities of Selected Pilot Projects" listed above and be able to document the requirements of the Living Building Challenge or other certification..

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Entire submission needs to be compiled in a single document in PDF format (no longer than 5-10 pages) and sent to Susan Puri, Affordable Housing Director ([affordablehousing@living-future.org](mailto:affordablehousing@living-future.org)) by 5pm PDT **Friday, December 1st**.

Questions should be submitted to Susan Puri at [affordablehousing@living-future.org](mailto:affordablehousing@living-future.org). The submission must include all of the following sections and information:

**Eligibility** - Description of how the proposed project meets all of the “Minimum Requirements to Apply.” Be sure to include information regarding the income level targeted by the project and how long and how the project will retain its affordability status.

**Basic Project Information** - Overview of the project including location, building area, number of units and stories, number of occupants, site area, climate zone, building type (multi-family, single-family, townhouse, etc.), program, status of funding sources etc.

**LBC Project Goals** - Description of the goals of the project, including sustainability goals and proposed level of Living Building Challenge, Core, Zero Energy, or Zero Carbon certification.

**LBC Interest + Commitment.** Explanation of why the project team is interested in becoming a Living, Core, Zero Energy, or Zero Carbon certified building and projected feasibility to comply with certification requirements.

**Conceptual Drawings** - Include conceptual renderings or drawings, floor plans, site plans, and/or map if any are available, showing the project.

**Project Schedule** - Include current status/phase of project and start dates for all phases of work, and anticipated move-in date. Be sure to include if the project is funded.

**Project Team List** - Project team, including developer/owner, lead architect, engineer, GC, and other key project team members. Explain the team member’s experience with green affordable housing (such as LBC, Zero Energy, LEED, Enterprise Green Communities, etc.) and list the designated LBC Project Champion.

**Project Contact** - List the main point of contact (either individual or organization) for ILFI (this may or may not be the same person as the LBC Project Champion, but must be an integral member of the project team).

**Questions + Concerns** - List the assistance the project team feels they would need to achieve Living Building Challenge, Core, Zero Energy, or Zero Carbon certification. Include questions, concerns or barriers that the project is encountering.

#### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q - I am only interested in pursuing Petal Certification, Core, Zero Energy, or Zero Carbon Certification. Am I still eligible to apply?**

A – Absolutely! However, we are seeking a diversity of projects and for this reason may prioritize teams seeking Petal, Core, or Living Certification if we have more applicants than we can accept.

**Q – Is there a required phase of design and construction for participation?**

A – No, but projects should be early enough in planning so that strategies to achieve LBC, Core, ZE, or ZC can be integrated into the project. Projects that are funded and ready to actively begin design and the LBC planning process shortly after registration will be prioritized.

**Q - What happens if my project is not, ultimately, certified as a Living Building?**

A – It is expected that projects accepted under this program have a commitment to pursue the Living Building Challenge as fully as possible. If projects accepted under this pilot program do not ultimately meet the requirements for certification, they will not be penalized.

Remember, the LBC is a philosophy, advocacy tool, and certification platform. Although certification is a third-party stamp of approval, projects that embrace the Living Building Challenge end up paving the way for future teams, as well as surfacing new conversations and ideas about the philosophy. We believe this pilot program is the catalyst to making affordable housing projects Living Buildings. We can’t wait to explore best practices with additional project teams who are ready to take their affordable housing projects to the next level!

**Q – Where can I find more information about the Institute’s Affordable Housing Initiative?**

A – Information about this Initiative, including the Framework report, Affordable Housing Materials List, Best Practices Guide for Red List Free Affordable Housing, and other resources can be found at the Institute’s website: <https://living-future.org/affordable-housing/>. You can also contact the Institute’s Affordable Housing Director, Susan Puri at [affordablehousing@living-future.org](mailto:affordablehousing@living-future.org).