



2025

Chicago's Co-Governance Pilot Initiatives

Building Chicago's Co-Governance Framework

Co-governance is a pathway where community meets governance. Chicago has been on a journey to define community-government partnerships that share decision-making power and accountability to communities to create stronger policies, programs, and practices that address systemic racism and economic inequality.

In partnership with the Co-governance Steering Committee, the Office of Equity and Racial Justice (OERJ) and Chicago United for Equity (CUE) launched a process to co-create Chicago's Co-Governance Framework. This entailed creating a shared definition, identifying values, and outlining pathways to implement co-governance.

After 18 community conversations and a public comment period where over 250 Chicagoans shared their vision for collaborative governance, Chicago now has a working definition and framework for co-governance. This Framework will help guide how we govern together to address systemic inequities.

Apply To Become A Co-Governance Pilot Initiative

Now that Chicago has a working framework and definition, our next step is to test the practical application of its components. CUE and OERJ are offering an opportunity for government leaders, community-based organizations, and community leaders to apply to be a Co-governance Pilot Initiative. Up to three initiatives, policies, or programs will be selected as pilots through this application process. CUE and OERJ will support the pilots through resources and co-facilitation, but each pilot will be driven by the key leaders identified in the application.



Application Guidance

Application submissions that include the following will be a strong contender to be selected for Co-governance pilot initiative

Existing Relationship - Is there a pre-existing relationship between the community lead and the government lead of this initiative? Or is this a new partnership starting for this opportunity?

Readiness/Commitment— Is this an initiative, policy, or program that acknowledges past harm and inequities? Do the partners involved understand what is required for a community-government partnership?

Accountability - Who are you accountable to? Is there authority to implement this initiative, program, or pilot? Are the community leaders, organizations, and members involved accountable to communities/ populations who are directly harmed by the issue this initiative seeks to address? Do the government departments and agencies have the levers, power, and authority to address the goals and outcomes of this initiative?

Resources/Support - Are there any resources (e.g., time, capacity, financial, operational) already in place that will support this work?

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To apply, [please download the Microsoft Word application](#), complete all required fields (adhering to the word limits), and save the document with the name of the project (e.g., Equitable Transit). Submit your completed application by email to equity.opportunities@cityofchicago.org with the subject line, "Co-Governance Pilot Initiative Submission."

The deadline to apply is May 15th at 11:59 PM.

