

2011 Community Development Finance Competition

What is the Community Development Finance Competition?

The Community Development Finance Competition is an academic research and writing competition sponsored by the Federal Reserve Banks of Atlanta, Dallas, Minneapolis and St. Louis.

Competition Purpose

The competition will seek out, support and promote the newest and most innovative community development finance ideas by connecting graduate and high-achieving undergraduate university and college students with community development practitioners, financial institutions and regulatory agencies.

Competition Topic

The competition seeks to address the New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) program, which was designed to increase the amount of investment, particularly equity investment, available to businesses in low-income communities where conventional access to credit has traditionally been limited. Due to the complex nature of NMTC transactions and associated costs, some feel that this may not be the most effective way to subsidize the creation of equity in low-income community businesses.

Using academic research, please take an innovative approach to address the following topic:

- **Is the NMTC program the most effective way to subsidize the creation of equity in low-income community businesses? Please suggest one or two options that could simplify NMTC transaction structures and augment the amount of equity available to qualified low-income businesses.**

Rules

Eligibility Criteria

Graduate and high-achieving undergraduate students studying in the Sixth, Eighth, Ninth and Eleventh Federal Reserve Districts are eligible for this contest.

- The Sixth District (Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta) includes Alabama, Florida, Georgia and portions of Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee.
- The Eighth District (Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis) includes Arkansas and portions of Missouri, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois.
- The Ninth District (Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis) includes Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, northwestern Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.
- The Eleventh District (Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas) includes Texas, northern Louisiana and southern New Mexico.

Each entrant must be under the supervision and direction of a professor.

Students who have family members employed by the Federal Reserve Banks of Atlanta, Dallas, Minneapolis or St. Louis, or who are serving as a competition judge are not eligible to participate.

Competition Regulations

All papers must comply with the following contest rules:

- Each paper must reflect the student's own research, writing and original thinking.
- Only one paper may be submitted by each student.
- Group submissions are not accepted.
- Each student must complete and attach a student entry form.
- Professors must verify and sign the verification of authenticity on the student entry form.
- Papers must be typed.
- Paper length is limited to eight double-spaced, single-sided, numbered pages with one-inch margins, using 12-point Times New Roman typeface. The title page and bibliography are not included in the eight-page limit.
- Each paper must include a title page with the following information:
 - paper title
 - author's name
 - school name
- The title of the paper, but NOT the author's name, MUST appear on the top of the first page of paper text.
- References should be included and clearly identified.
- Submissions must be received via e-mail or postmarked via mail by **March 21, 2011**.
- Electronic submissions of the paper (in Microsoft Word or PDF format) and a scanned copy of the completed student entry form may be e-mailed to **Daniel.P.Davis@stls.frb.org**.
- In lieu of an electronic submission, a hard copy of the paper and the student entry form may be mailed to:

Daniel Davis
Community Development
Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis
P.O. Box 442
St. Louis, MO 63166
- Papers will not be returned to the author; they become property of the Federal Reserve Banks of Atlanta, Dallas, Minneapolis and St. Louis. These banks may reprint the papers in educational publications and use them at community development events. Appropriate citations will be given to the writers.

Judging Criteria

Competition submissions will be evaluated using five criteria:

- Comprehension – How well does the paper reflect a thorough comprehension of the topic?
- Organization – Does the argument follow a logical and easily understood progression? Does corroborating evidence support the paper's main points?
- Conclusions – Do the conclusions follow logically from the argument? How compelling are the conclusions?
- Creativity – Does the paper demonstrate a creative angle on the issue? Were diverse resources used?
- Implementation – Does the student provide a strategy for implementing any proposed solutions?

Awards

Exploring Innovation: A Conference on Community Development Finance

The authors of the top submissions will receive a scholarship (registration, travel and lodging) to attend the Exploring Innovation Conference in St. Louis, Mo. (May 9-11, 2011) and an opportunity to present their paper during a session at the conference. To learn more about the Exploring Innovation Conference, please visit <http://2011.ExploringInnovation.com>.

Federal Reserve Bank Internship

The student who submits the most innovative paper will win a paid summer internship (4-6 weeks) in community development at the student's choice of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis or the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. The winner will be announced at the closing luncheon of the Exploring Innovation conference in St. Louis on May 11, 2011.

Timetable

March 21, 2011

Final deadline papers may be received via e-mail or postmarked via mail.

March 22 – April 5, 2011

Evaluation committee reviews the submitted papers.

Week of April 8, 2011

Students selected to participate in the Exploring Innovation conference will be notified.

Student Entry Form

Please see attached.

Questions

Questions regarding the Community Development Finance Competition may be addressed to Daniel Davis at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis by e-mail (Daniel.P.Davis@stls.frb.org) or phone (314-444-8308).

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Student Entry Form

Please type or print

Mr. Ms. Name: _____

Academic institution: _____

Academic level (please check one): Graduate student Undergraduate student

Degree being pursued: _____

Concentration/Major: _____

Anticipated graduation date: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

If selected as the completion winner, I would prefer an internship in: St. Louis Minneapolis

Name of supervising professor: _____

Phone number of supervising professor: _____

E-mail address of supervising professor: _____

Professor Verification

I have read the enclosed paper and verify that it reflects the above-named student's original work.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____

Student Verification

I am the author of the enclosed paper and verify that it reflects my original work. I give permission for the Federal Reserve Banks of Atlanta, Dallas, Minneapolis and St. Louis to reprint this paper in educational publications and for use at community development events.

Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____

**This entry form must accompany your paper.
All entries must be postmarked by March 21, 2011.**

Electronic submissions of the paper (in Microsoft Word or PDF format) and a scanned copy of the completed student entry form may be e-mailed to **Daniel.P.Davis@stls.frb.org**.

In lieu of an electronic submission, a hard copy of the paper and the student entry form may be mailed to:
Daniel Davis, Community Development, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, P.O. Box 442, St. Louis, MO 63166