

FAQs

2021 GICH ALUMNI CERTIFICATION



WHAT IS THE GICH ALUMNI CERTIFICATION?

The purpose of the alumni certification is to ensure that communities who have graduated from the three-year program have continued to work toward addressing affordable housing issues within their communities. The certification allows certified GICH alumni to continue receiving special consideration on DCA program applications.

HOW DO WE BECOME A CERTIFIED ALUMNI COMMUNITY IN 2021?

Teams must successfully complete the 2021 GICH Alumni Certification Application in order to become certified alumni.

WHEN AND WHERE WILL THE 2021 APPLICATION BECOME AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD?

The 2021 Alumni Certification application will be available in December 2020 and will be posted for download at <https://www.fcs.uga.edu/fhce/gich-resources>.

WHO SHOULD APPLY FOR CERTIFICATION IN 2021?

All teams who did not receive a certification designation in 2020 or who are not graduating in 2020 should apply for certification in 2021.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN UNCERTIFIED AND CERTIFIED ALUMNI COMMUNITIES?

All teams who complete the three-year program are considered alumni of the program, but only teams who successfully complete the alumni certification process are considered certified alumni. Certified alumni enjoy special consideration on DCA program applications.

IS THE CERTIFICATION REQUIRED FOR ALL ALUMNI TEAMS?

No. The certification is only required for alumni teams seeking special consideration on DCA program applications including the Housing Tax Credit (HTC) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications.

WHAT DOES "SPECIAL CONSIDERATION IN DCA PROGRAM APPLICATIONS" MEAN?

Special consideration in DCA program applications includes:

- ▶ The ability to receive extra point(s) on the 9% HTC application
- ▶ The ability to apply for CDBG funding each year rather than every other year

MY TEAM GRADUATED IN 2019/MY TEAM RECEIVED CERTIFICATION IN 2019. SHOULD WE STILL APPLY?

Yes. Certification status is good for two years. Because the two-year term will expire in 2021, teams should reapply for certification when the application becomes available.

MY TEAM GRADUATED FROM GICH SEVERAL YEARS AGO. CAN WE STILL APPLY FOR CERTIFICATION?

Yes. Any team that completed the three-year program is able to apply for certification. Please note that certification hinges on certain criteria including retreat attendance, team continuity and ongoing engagement. If your team has been “inactive” (i.e. not meeting regularly or not engaged in GICH-related activities) it is likely your team will not meet the criteria necessary to be certified.

WHAT CRITERIA ARE NEEDED TO BE CERTIFIED?

Alumni teams seeking certification in 2021 will need to meet the criteria identified in the *GICH Alumni Certification 2021 Criteria* document that can be found at <https://www.fcs.uga.edu/fhce/gich-resources>.

IS THE 2021 CRITERIA THE SAME AS LAST YEAR?

Yes, with the exception of adjustments made due to the impact of COVID-19.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY TEAM DOESN'T MEET THE CRITERIA?

If your team does not meet the criteria necessary to be certified, you are encouraged to start working towards meeting those criteria now. Criteria will generally remain the same from year to year. You are welcome to re-apply for certification next year.

HOW LONG IS THE CERTIFICATION VALID?

The certification is valid for two years. Communities who wish to maintain a “certified” status must re-apply for certification every two years.

WHERE CAN I FIND A COPY OF THE APPLICATION?

When the application is released in December 2020, you will be able to download a copy along with an Application Manual at <https://www.fcs.uga.edu/fhce/gich-resources>.

WHO SHOULD I REACH OUT TO WITH ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS?

Please contact GICH@dca.ga.gov with any questions.