

Request for Research Proposals: Affordability of Existing Housing Options for Students

The NMHC Student Housing Council seeks proposals for funding of research on the affordability of existing housing options for students.

Project Content. The goal of this research is to analyze the widespread view that purpose-built student housing communities are amenity-rich places that are not affordable. The approach to this research project would be two-pronged: to determine the differences in cost for students between on-campus and off-campus housing, as well as to gauge the demand for each product type, accounting for the socioeconomic characteristics of students and their parents. The proposed number of properties to examine would be between 20 to 30.

Components of the research:

- 1). Analyze rental data for properties within a certain radius of the school (perhaps a half mile), regardless of whether the property is purpose-built. Determine whether there is a rent differential for purpose-built and traditional market-rate apartments (private data providers are able to flag the different product types). The analysis must take into account differences between the properties examined that go beyond the product type, such as distance from campus, size of units/bedrooms, and amenities offered.
- 2). Collection of data to determine the costs for students and their parents of on-campus housing at the select universities/colleges. Because the cost of housing on-campus is traditionally tied into overall “room and board”, and the off-campus products charge separately for items such as water and cable, it will be necessary to determine some sort of “apples-to-apples” comparison.
- 3). Analyze the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of existing students and their parents, as well as a more macro-level look at future college enrollment trends. This would first include a literature review of existing research by both member firms as well as academic articles from sources such as Pew Research Center.

Budget. Please submit a detailed budget, excluding the cost of data. Funding schedule is 50 percent upon acceptance of the proposal and 50 percent upon completion to the satisfaction of the NMHC Student Housing Committee. [Note: NMHC typically funds such research in the range of \$15,000 - \$25,000, but commensurate with project scope and depth, both higher and lower grants will be considered.]

Submittal Instructions. Submissions should include: (i) one-page resume of all researchers involved; (ii) concise description of issues to be investigated and methodology; (iii) description of data sets to be used; (iv) research timeline; and (v) budget, including projected cost of any data required. Proposals should be addressed to: mberger@nmhc.org no later than May 31, 2017. Contact Matthew Berger, NMHC Vice President, with any questions at 202.974.2362 or mberger@nmhc.org.

About Us. The NMHC Student Housing Council is the leading advocate for the privately owned student housing sector. It is dedicated to meeting the industry’s information, networking and advocacy needs.