



New Online Learning Initiative Will Expand Certification Options for Thousands of Aspiring Economic Development and Affordable Housing Professionals

The National Development Council and Olson Design Group are Collaborating to Expand NDC's Award-winning Training Curriculum as a Complete Online Learning Program for Economic Development and Affordable Housing Certification

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA – The National Development Council (NDC) has contracted with Olson Design Group to adapt and transform its nationally recognized economic and housing development curriculum to an online learning platform. NDC's ONline Education initiative – NDC ONE – is targeting the delivery of initial test class sessions for Summer 2018.

"It's a perfect fit," said Roger Olson, founder and CEO of Olson Design Group. "This is an affirmation of our abilities to execute and deliver training programs that incorporate the latest creative and technological applications for online learning. And given our experience with economic development, we know the subject matter well."

"NDC has been looking for a partner like Olson Design Group to assist in its online conversion and we look forward to how this initiative will advance our mission to build essential development finance skills and capacity in nonprofit and government development professionals," said Tom Jackson, NDC Director of Training.

As the most experienced economic and housing development training nonprofit in the country, NDC has trained and certified over 70,000 aspiring community development professionals for almost fifty years. NDC has also secured generous sponsorship and foundation support that has enabled many of today's most impactful practitioners to obtain NDC Certification. Many of these professionals might not have been able to afford the required four weeks of training without this support.

However, even though training sessions are offered across the U.S., not everyone who wants to become an Economic Development Financing Professional (EDFP) or Housing Development Finance Professional (HDFP) can attend the full complement of training sessions given expense and time constraints. NDC ONE's mixed online and in-class courses will be able to reach many more thousands of people at a time when effective economic development and affordable housing production are critically needed in most communities across the country.



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According to research conducted on behalf of NDC, federal funding for community development projects has declined by 75% since 1979. This situation has left localities to figure out how to create value in their communities using a host of complicated local, state and federal tools designed to fill financing gaps. NDC's training sessions include in-depth explanation and practice on skills necessary to use these tools, including Low-Income Housing Tax Credits and New Markets Tax Credits.

To develop the curriculum, NDC and Olson are exploring several approaches to online learning, including a "flipped classroom" methodology that provides instructional lectures and materials online but combine that with shortened in-class case study discussions, problem solving and team work. The final structure of NDC's online training sessions are still in development but will benefit from years of distance learning experimentation from which much data is now available.

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NDC's work focuses on HOMES, JOBS, and COMMUNITY. Founded as a national nonprofit in 1969, NDC has worked for over 45 years fulfilling its mission to increase the flow of capital for investment in low-income communities. NDC directs capital to support the preservation and creation of affordable housing, the creation of jobs through training and small business lending and the promotion of livable communities through investment in social infrastructure. NDC's products and services are deployed for the benefit of our municipal and nonprofit partners in both urban and rural low-income communities throughout the United States. NDC is headquartered in New York City with offices in Washington, D.C., Seattle, WA, Cleveland, OH and Cincinnati, OH. For more information about NDC, please visit www.ndconline.org.

Olson Design Group, headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, is a veteran owned small business. The company has developed hundreds of online training and sales and marketing programs for government agencies and Fortune 500 clients, such as General Electric, Microsoft, Best Buy, and Brookstone. Visit www.olsondesigngroup.com for more information.

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