Opportunity finance professionals utilize quantitative, analytic, business, and technical skills to generate a tremendous social impact. Learn more about this $90 billion industry, its impact, and career opportunities for students.

Innovative Market-Based Financial Solutions
The opportunity finance industry is one of the most innovative and effective forms of social enterprise. It provides capital and financial services that benefit low-income and low-wealth people—building homes, schools, small businesses, and community facilities; creating jobs; opening new markets; and helping people join the economic mainstream. The opportunity finance industry includes more than 800 mission-driven Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) and their partners working across the United States.

Community development financial institutions (CDFIs) are private financial institutions that are 100% dedicated to delivering responsible, affordable lending to help low-income, low-wealth, and other disadvantaged people and communities join the economic mainstream. Combining innovation and determination, Opportunity Finance Network (OFN) Member CDFIs have invested more than $34 billion in the last 30 years in urban, rural, and Native markets.

Performance-Oriented Lenders
In the current financial markets, mainstream lenders have tightened credit for all but the most qualified borrowers. CDFIs address this gap by providing flexible, market-driven products to consumers, developers, and small businesses that are shut out of the financial mainstream.

Yet CDFIs apply financial rigor and discipline in lending to underserved markets. As a result, most CDFIs are profitable (but not profit maximizing). CDFIs have historically maintained a net charge off ratio of under 1%, which is comparable to the rate for FDIC-insured institutions.
Responsive to Community Needs

The opportunity finance industry is diverse. Individual CDFIs focus on the unique market conditions of the communities in which they operate. In FY 2013, CDFI end-borrowers and beneficiaries were 52% minority, 49% female, and 73% low-income. The cumulative impact of the OFN network includes:

- **720,000** Jobs created or maintained via small business and microenterprise
- **1.5 MILLION** Affordable housing units constructed or renovated
- **9,500** Community facilities financed

_Source: OFN Annual Survey of Membership_

Career Opportunities

Career opportunities within the CDFI Industry are available in the following areas:

- Lending and Investing
- Technical Assistance and Consulting to Borrowers
- Development and Capitalization
- Advocacy and Research
- Finance and Administration
- Marketing and Communications

A career in the opportunity finance industry provides an opportunity to:

- **Have an Impact**—Employees of CDFIs can see the tangible impact they create in local communities. The work they do creates businesses, jobs, stable homeownership, and community services among populations overlooked by traditional financial institutions.

- **Develop Tangible and Portable Skills**—Career opportunities within the opportunity finance industry provide high-level, hands-on experience with financial analysis, consulting, communications, community organizing, coalition building, and more. CDFI professionals are in high demand in geographies across the country, from Boston to Birmingham to the Bay Area.

- **Establish a Network**—CDFIs are an integral part of the opportunity finance industry, and are significant players that work closely with public sector, private sector, nonprofit, and foundation partners including the U.S. Treasury Department, Goldman Sachs, Bank of America, and the Ford Foundation. Building relationships with organizations such as these is a critical activity in many types of CDFI careers—from lending to development to advocacy.

Resources at ofn.org

OFN is the leading network of more than 240 performance-based CDFIs that deliver responsible lending to help low-wealth and low-income communities join the economic mainstream.

- Find a local CDFI at [ofn.org/cdfi-locator](http://ofn.org/cdfi-locator)
- Find an industry internship ([ofn.org/internship-bank](http://ofn.org/internship-bank)) or job ([ofn.org/job-bank](http://ofn.org/job-bank))
- Find resources for students at [ofn.org/cdfis-and-universities](http://ofn.org/cdfis-and-universities)