



request for proposals

Immigration:
Adult English Language Acquisition



Immigration: Adult English Language Acquisition

Introduction

Silicon Valley Community Foundation advances innovative philanthropic solutions to challenging problems. Two of these challenging problems – the successful integration of immigrants and the inability of receiving communities to understand and recognize immigrants as real and potential assets in the community rather than as liabilities – are addressed through our immigration strategy. To better understand our goals and objectives for this strategy, we encourage you to read the community foundation’s research paper on the topic at siliconvalleycf.org/immigration-integration

The immigration strategy has a two-pronged approach:

- 1) strengthening the legal services infrastructure, which seeks to address the need for affordable and reliable immigration legal services provided by nonprofit community organizations; and
- 2) adult English language acquisition, which seeks to promote English instruction, coordination and best practices among community colleges, adult education schools and community-based organizations.

This request for proposals, or RFP, focuses specifically on adult English language acquisition. By using an RFP approach, the community foundation aims to solicit the best thinking of nonprofit service providers, public sector agencies, research institutions and other entities serving San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

Grant Application Deadline

The application process will open on Aug. 29, 2016. Responses to this RFP must be submitted through our on-line application system, applySVCF, by **5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 30, 2016.**

Problem Statement

Silicon Valley is a diverse region. More than one-third of the 2.5 million residents of San Mateo and Santa Clara counties are immigrants, and almost two-thirds of those younger than 18 are children of immigrants. Immigrant entrepreneurs have contributed considerably to innovation and job creation in Silicon Valley, and nearly half of our workforce is foreign-born. Our region's continued prosperity and quality of life depend on our ability to create communities that recognize immigrants as assets and that honor shared values of family, hard work and opportunity for all.

This requires that we address the insufficient number of effective English-language learning, job training and legal services for immigrants. These services are not adequate to meet current need, let alone the potential future demand that would result from comprehensive immigration reform.



A key challenge to immigration is the inability of the receiving communities to understand and recognize immigrants as real and potential assets in the community rather than as liabilities.



Program Goal

SVCF's goal for this strategy is to address the demand for high-quality English language programs in our region. English is truly the language of opportunity for today's immigrants: it opens the door to jobs that can pay family-sustaining wages and allows immigrants to fully participate in civic life, including the ability to vote in local, state and federal elections.

SVCF will award grants in two programs that improve English skills for adult immigrants – English as a Second Language and Vocational English as a Second Language, or ESL and VESL instruction. In light of limited state and federal funding, as well as strong demand for high-quality English language acquisition programs, SVCF will prioritize funding consideration for **region-wide efforts** that:

- coordinate among community college, adult education and nonprofit ESL and VESL programs;
- target instruction in our region to immigrants;
- promote best practices and maximize funding sources; and
- lead to skills development, career advancement and/or persistence in studies.

While we recognize that there are many worthwhile institutions developing and running programs, **SVCF will give priority to established English language skills partnerships and organizations that:**

- Develop and maintain high-quality programs that bring together different community institutions – such as government, community colleges, nonprofit organizations and job-training programs with high employment potential – and result in expanded use of services, persistence in study and achievement by adult learners. Programs should also serve to strengthen the field of workforce development.

- Integrate adult instructional systems and offer a range of VESL and ESL courses to address different language skill levels and learning goals using curricula that address topics related to students' interest and lives.
- Expand and improve adult English language instruction through “anytime-anywhere” programs using onsite, blended and online new technologies that connect to the above-mentioned community institutions.
- Demonstrate clear understanding of how their proposed project advances their existing goals. This includes dedicating a specific amount of staff time to the project and having a clear plan for measuring its success.

SVCF will gauge success according to one or more of these indicators: increase in the number of immigrants gaining access to VESL and ESL courses; increased access to workforce development opportunities; assessment of English language acquisition, usage and context in which English is spoken.

Proposal Eligibility Criteria

- San Mateo and/or Santa Clara county-serving organizations. Organizations headquartered outside the two-county region must demonstrate significant service to the area.
- Organizations with a 501(c)(3) designation, those that have a fiscal sponsor with a 501(c)(3) designation, public agencies, collaborations of nonprofit and public agencies, or other entities that have a designated charitable purpose.
- Organizations that do not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, citizenship status, creed, religion, religious affiliation, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, veteran status or any other protected status under applicable law. If an organization only serves a specific population, e.g. women or specific ethnic populations, SVCF will consider the proposal on a case-by-case basis.
- Organizations with religious affiliations will be considered for funding only if the project for which they seek support attempts to address the needs of the wider community without regard to religious beliefs.

Project Proposal Characteristics

We are receptive to concrete, practical and impactful project proposals that:

- Include both well-tested models that can be scaled up or expanded regionally while maintaining local relevance, and new pilots that, if successful, can be grown and replicated.
- Benefit from collaborative work and bring public and private partners together with nonprofit organizations.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the sector and its trends.
- Identify the target population and provide justification for that focus.
- Provide clear benchmarks for measuring progress.

Key Dates

August 29, 2016

Application process opens

September 8, 2016

RFP information session
(register through our online calendar)

September 30, 2016 - 5 p.m.

Proposal submission deadline

December 2016

Announcement of grant awards

Application Process

- 1) **Review reference materials.** These may be found at siliconvalleycf.org/immigration-integration
 - Research paper on SVCF's immigration strategy
 - This RFP - Immigration: Adult English Language Acquisition
- 2) **Participate in the information session on Sept. 8, 2016.** This is highly encouraged for those interested in responding to this RFP. Information sessions provide an opportunity for new applicants to review in more depth the RFP's content and ask questions. To register for this session, please visit our website's calendar.
- 3) **Submit grant application,** including required attachments, through applySVCF beginning Aug. 29, 2016. Applications must be submitted by 5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 30, 2016.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Proposals for grants should include a narrative that responds to the questions found at applySVCF. Grant proposals will be evaluated, on a competitive basis, using the following criteria:

- Innovative and effective strategy with potential for systems change.
- Clarity of project description and project activities regarding steps to be taken to achieve desired outcomes.
- Achievable timeline that corresponds to the key activities.
- Meaningful benchmarks and indicators of success.
- Organizational capacity to implement project – including staffing and leadership, and operational and fiscal management.
- Established track record in specific program content area, or potential to achieve needed content expertise.
- Ability to leverage financial, human and technical resources leading to greater impact.
- Ability to contribute content area knowledge to the field.

Total Awards

Successful applicants will receive grants for a minimum of one year. The average grant amount awarded in the 2015 grantmaking cycle was \$50,000. Budget requests will be closely analyzed, and applicants should include a budget narrative that makes clear the necessity of the project's specific line-items.

Please note that project proposal narratives may be posted publicly on our website to reflect our value of transparency and encourage learning among grantees, future applicants and the community at large.

Review and Selection Process

An advisory committee with issue expertise for this strategy will help staff to review all proposals recommended for funding to SVCF's board of directors. Applicants may receive a site visit, telephone call and/or other communication from SVCF staff as part of the proposal review process.

Applicants will be informed of grant decisions in December 2016.

Evaluation, Monitoring and Grantee Learning Activities

- Grantees will be expected to meet SVCF's requirements for a final financial and narrative report, as well as a presentation to SVCF staff and donors if requested.
- In an effort to further the overall program goals of this RFP, inform future RFPs related to this topic and contribute to larger field-building objectives, grantees will be asked to participate in periodic meetings to share information on project activities and best practices as well as participate in evaluations.

Thank you very much for your interest in responding to this RFP and in making our region a better place. We look forward to reviewing your proposal.



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About Silicon Valley Community Foundation

Silicon Valley Community Foundation advances innovative philanthropic solutions to challenging problems. As the largest community foundation in the world, we engage donors and corporations from Silicon Valley, across the country and around the globe to make our region and world better for all. Our passion for helping people and organizations achieve their philanthropic dreams has created a global philanthropic enterprise committed to the belief that possibilities start here.

Learn more at siliconvalleycf.org.

More Information

If you have questions, please contact us at grants@siliconvalleycf.org or call 650.450.5557

To get all the latest grantmaking information, follow us on Facebook and subscribe to our community e-newsletter at siliconvalleycf.org/publications.

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