Request for Proposals
Immigrant Integration
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 immigrant integration 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 http://www.siliconvalleycf.org/content/immigrant-integration.org.

The immigrant integration strategy has a three-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; (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; and (3) bridging the cultural gap, which seeks to leverage established two-way educational programs that allow non-immigrant communities and immigrants and their receiving communities, to learn about the diverse immigrant populations in Silicon Valley. 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 applications must be submitted through our new on-line application system, applySVCF, by 5:00 p.m. (PST) on Friday, October 18, 2013.

Problem Statement

Silicon Valley is an immigrant demographic microcosm of the United States. In Silicon Valley, one-third of our residents are immigrants, nearly half of our workforce is foreign-born and close to two-thirds of those under the age of 18 are the children of immigrants. Given this demographic reality, a new social model of immigrant integration — one that promotes mutual benefits for immigrants and their receiving communities and that allows newcomers enhanced civic participation and improved economic mobility — is critical.

A key challenge to immigrant integration is the inability of the receiving communities to understand and recognize immigrants as real and potential assets in the community rather than as liabilities. Conversely, newcomers may have cultural misunderstandings and misperceptions about their receiving community which may create barriers to integration and community-building.

Program Goal

The goal of the community foundation for this strategy is to address the growing 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.

The community foundation 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 coupled with high demand for quality English language acquisition programs, the community foundation will prioritize funding consideration for region-wide efforts that: 1) coordinate among community college, adult education and nonprofit ESL and VESL programs; 2) target instruction in our region to immigrants from top sending countries and 3) promote best practices and maximize funding sources. Though we recognize that there are many worthwhile institutions developing and running programs, the community foundation will give priority to established English language skills partnerships and organizations that:

- Develop and maintain high-quality programs that bring together different community institutions – government, community colleges, job-training programs and nonprofit organizations – which result in expanded use of services, persistence in study and achievement by adult learners.
- Integrate adult instructional systems and offer a range of VESL and ESL courses to address different language skill levels and learning goals with 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.
• Demonstrate clear understanding of how their proposed project advances their existing goals including having a dedicated amount of staff time to the project and have a clear plan for how to measure its success.

The community foundation will gauge success according to one or more of these indicators: increase in the number of immigrants gaining access to VESL and ESL courses, assessment of English language acquisition, usage and contexts in which English is spoken, number of participants who pursue next level English and/or additional coursework.

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, the community foundation 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 target population to be reached and justification for that focus.
• Provide clear benchmarks for measuring progress.

Application Process
1) Review reference materials. These may be found at http://www.siliconvalleycf.org/content/immigrant-integration.org.
   • Research paper on the Immigrant Integration strategy
   • RFP for Immigrant Integration: Adult English Language Acquisition
2) Participate in the information session. This is highly encouraged for those interested in responding to this RFP. Because all grant applications must now be submitted online, this session provides an overview of SVCF’s online application system, applySVCF. Additionally, information sessions provide an opportunity for applicants to review in more depth the RFP’s content and ask questions. To register for this session please visit our website’s calendar.

More specific questions about program concepts, content, eligibility and evaluation can be asked through phone calls and in-person meetings with the program officer, as time permits.

3) Submit grant application, including required attachments, through our new online application system, applySVCF. Applications must be submitted by 5 p.m. (PST) Friday, October 18, 2013.
**Key Dates**

- **September 20, 2013:** Release of RFP
- **September 25, 2013:** RFP Information session (register through our [online calendar](#))
- **October 18, 2013 5 p.m.:** Proposal submission deadline
- **December 2013:** Announcement of grant awards

**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, 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 2012 grantmaking cycles was $40,000. 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 and future applicants as well as members of 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 the community foundation’s board of directors. Applicants may receive a site visit, telephone call and/or other type of communication from community foundation staff as part of the proposal review process.

Applicants will be informed of grant decisions in December 2013.

**Evaluation, Monitoring and Grantee Learning Activities**

- Grantees will be expected to meet the community foundation's requirements for a final financial and narrative report as well as a presentation to community foundation 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 research-based 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.
About Silicon Valley Community Foundation

Vision:
Silicon Valley Community Foundation advances innovative philanthropic solutions to challenging problems, engaging donors to make our region and world a better place for all.

Mission:
Silicon Valley Community Foundation is a comprehensive center of philanthropy. Through visionary leadership, strategic grantmaking and world-class experiences, we partner with donors to strengthen the common good locally and throughout the world.

We value:
Collaboration  Integrity
Diversity   Public Accountability
Inclusiveness  Respect
Innovation  Responsiveness

At a Glance
Silicon Valley Community Foundation makes all forms of philanthropy more powerful. We serve as a catalyst and leader for innovative solutions to our region’s most challenging problems. The community foundation has more than $2.9 billion in assets under management and more than 1,650 philanthropic funds. As Silicon Valley’s center of philanthropy, we provide individuals, families and corporations with simple and effective ways to give locally and around the world. Find out more at www.siliconvalleycf.org.