



# request for proposals

2020 Census: Everyone Counts!

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## Introduction

The United States census is conducted every 10 years in accordance with the U.S. Constitution. It aims to count every single resident living in the entire country. A fair and accurate census count is essential to numerous aspects of civic life, from allocation of billions of dollars in federal funds in California alone, to political representation at all levels of government.

Unfortunately, history has repeatedly shown that certain groups – including people of color, immigrants, low-income communities, and children – are statistically more likely to be undercounted. California faces several unprecedented challenges to a complete and accurate 2020 census count, including significant underfunding of the U.S. Census Bureau, the potential addition of a citizenship question and the fact that the census will be conducted primarily online for the first time ever.

To minimize the undercount in our region, the **Bay Area Census Funders Collaborative**, a group of foundations that are committed to ensuring a fair and complete count, is announcing a grant program to support 2020 census education and outreach efforts. The Bay Area Census Funders Collaborative will award grants through Silicon Valley Community Foundation (SVCF) and East Bay Community Foundation, partners of the collaborative. Grants will be awarded to nonprofit organizations working on 2020 census participation in hard-to-count communities in the nine-county Bay Area. Grant awards will generally range from \$3,000 to \$50,000 with some exceptions for larger grants. Applications from grassroots organizations, cross-sector collaborations, coalitions and/or networks are encouraged. Community based organizations that work with underserved populations and are advancing racial and economic inclusion are strongly encouraged to apply.

By using a request for proposals (RFP) approach, the Bay Area Census Funders Collaborative aims to solicit the best thinking of nonprofit organizations, including local education agencies, school districts and public schools, public sector agencies and other entities who seek to increase census participation among hard-to-count populations.

## Grant Application Deadline

The application process will open on **April 15, 2019**.

SVCF will be managing the application process on behalf of all funders involved in the Bay Area Census Funders Collaborative through its **Apply SVCF** online system.

Grant applications must be submitted through **Apply SVCF** by **11:59 p.m. PDT on Friday, May 31, 2019**.

## Key Dates

### April 15, 2019:

Application process opens

### May 31, 2019, 11:59 p.m.:

Proposal submission deadline

### August 2019:

Announcement of grant awards

## Problem Statement

Constitutionally mandated, the decennial census produces demographic data that guides the allocation of federal resources and determines California's political representation in Congress. In California, census information guides \$76 billion in federal funds to the state annually, which amounts to approximately \$2,000 per person.

When we secure an accurate census count, we ensure that our communities get their fair share of the more than \$675 billion available annually in federal funding for schools, hospitals, infrastructure and more, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Despite being the most populous state in the nation, California has historically suffered from a significant undercount due to its high concentration of hard-to-count communities. Hard-to-count populations include people who are low-income, experiencing homelessness or living in low-visibility housing, undocumented people, non-fluent English speakers, racial/ethnic minorities and children age 8 and younger. Additionally, an undercount in the 2020 census places California at risk of losing a congressional seat in redistricting, which would unfairly diminish the state's political influence at the federal level.

The 2020 census is marked by challenges, setting it up to be one of the most difficult censuses in recent history. First, the U.S. Commerce Department's proposal to add a citizenship question to the census form has increased fears throughout immigrant communities about how census data will be used. Coupled with anti-immigrant rhetoric and policies over the past two years, the addition of the citizenship question has eroded communities' trust in the census. Second, the 2020 census will be the first census conducted primarily online, creating a participation barrier to many individuals and families without reliable access to the internet, and raising concerns about data privacy. Third, the 2020 census will coincide with the 2020 presidential election, raising concerns about interference with census outreach and education efforts.

While the challenges to a complete and accurate count of our region are significant, nonprofits, government and philanthropy have come together to ensure that every Californian is counted. The State of California has allocated an unprecedented \$90.3 million to support census efforts. Support will include a communications campaign and funding to local government and community-based organizations. Local counties and cities across the region have formed Complete Count Committees and have designated staff and funding for census efforts. Similarly, nonprofit organizations throughout the region are mobilizing *Get Out the Count* campaigns, integrating their work into a broader civic engagement and/or movement building strategy.

## **Grant Opportunity**

The Bay Area Census Funders Collaborative will award grants to nonprofit organizations engaging in education and outreach to hard-to-count communities in the nine-county Bay Area for the 2020 census. Grant applications should include specific target populations and plans to educate and encourage participation in the census. Examples of possible activities include, but are not limited to:

- Education event or workshops for members of hard-to-count communities to learn more about the 2020 census, the risks to an accurate count and why it is important to participate.
- Door-to-door canvassing to encourage households to complete the census form.
- Social media campaigns to raise awareness and educate members of hard-to-count communities about the 2020 census.
- Technical assistance for nonprofit organizations that are helping communities complete the census form.
- Media outreach to traditional or digital outlets.
- Advocacy with state and/or local policymakers for census related issues.
- Enumerator recruitment in hard-to-count communities.

The Bay Area Census Funders Collaborative recognizes that the 2020 census faces unique and significant challenges. As a result, we are open to both established strategies based on integrated voter engagement practices and emerging strategies to test new ideas and approaches.

## **Proposal Eligibility Criteria**

- Organizations that serve Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano and Sonoma counties will be considered. Organizations headquartered outside of those nine counties must demonstrate significant service and/or partnership with other organizations based within the core counties.
- Organizations must fall into one of the following categories: those 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 must 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.

- Organizations with religious affiliations will be considered for funding only if the project for which they seek support addresses the needs of the wider community without regard to religious beliefs.

## **Project Proposal Characteristics**

Priority will be given to projects that show a cohesive overall strategy and those that best describe how their efforts will be coordinated and implemented, including key anticipated milestones, the timeframe for completion and assessment of impact. We are interested in partnering with organizations that are open to learning, sharing and developing new solutions to challenging problems. 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 targeted hard-to-count population(s) and/or hard-to-count census tracts and provide justification for that focus.
- Provide clear benchmarks for measuring progress.

Although not a requirement, additional consideration will be given to proposals that are clearly linked to ongoing civic engagement/movement building programs specifically within hard-to-count communities. We are seeking proposals that incorporate successful engagement strategies from previous campaigns, proven results of reaching specific communities and potential lessons for future civic engagement/power and movement building programs.

## **Application Process**

### **1) Review recommended reference materials below.**

- This RFP – **2020 Census: Everyone Counts!**
- Links to census hard-to-count maps:
  - **Public Policy Institute of California map**; and
  - **City University of New York (CUNY) map**
- **U.S. Census Bureau website**

## **2) Participate in an optional information session.**

Several information sessions will be held throughout the Bay Area during the open application period. Attendance is highly encouraged for those interested in responding to this RFP. The first information session will be recorded if you are unable to attend. You will be able to access it when available at [siliconvalleycf.org/census2020](https://siliconvalleycf.org/census2020).

- For a full list of information sessions, please visit [ncg.org/2020-census](https://ncg.org/2020-census).

The information sessions will provide an opportunity for applicants to review in more depth the RFP's content and ask questions. To register for an information session, please visit [ncg.org/2020-census](https://ncg.org/2020-census). All applications must be submitted through SVCF's online application system, [Apply SVCF](#). A guide to the online application system can be found [here](#).

**3) Submit your grant application** through our online application system, [Apply SVCF](#), **beginning April 15, 2019**. Applications must be submitted by **11:59 p.m. PDT Friday, May 31, 2019**.

More specific questions about program concepts, content, eligibility and evaluation can be addressed to: [census2020@siliconvalleycf.org](mailto:census2020@siliconvalleycf.org).

## **Proposal Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals for grants should include a narrative that responds to the questions found on [Apply SVCF](#). Grant proposals will be evaluated, on a competitive basis, using the following criteria:

- Clarity of project description and project activities.
- Clarity of responses to application questions.
- Achievable timeline (12 months) that corresponds with key activities.
- Organizational capacity to implement the project – including staffing, leadership, and operational and fiscal management.
- Ability to leverage financial, human and technical resources from other partners, including but not limited to the U.S. Census Bureau and state and local government.
- Established track record working with and engaging target populations.

Applicants should include a budget narrative that makes clear the necessity of the project's specific line-items.

Please note that project descriptions may be posted publicly on our website and/or on one of our partners' websites to reflect our value of transparency and encourage learning among grantees, future applicants and the community at large.

## Review and Selection Process

Proposals will be reviewed by the Bay Area Census Funders Collaborative. During the review period, applicants may be contacted to provide additional information. Final grant decisions may differ from the amount requested.

**Applicants will be informed of grant decisions in August 2019.**

## Evaluation, Monitoring and Grantee Learning Activities

- Grantees will be expected to meet the Bay Area Census Funders Collaborative's requirements for a final financial and narrative report and evaluation data, and be willing and available to talk with funders' members and/or staff if requested.
- Grantees may be invited to participate in convenings and/or technical assistance opportunities to enhance census strategy and outreach.
- In an effort to learn and improve future census efforts, grantees will be asked to participate in a post-census evaluation to share information on project activities, best practices and overall experience.

## Foundations that have contributed to the fund\* that will provide grants through this RFP include:



We are grateful to many individual donors who have made donations towards census outreach to ensure that there is a fair, accurate count.

\*Participants that have contributed as of the RFP print date. An updated list of foundations can be found on our website at [siliconvalleycf.org/census2020](http://siliconvalleycf.org/census2020).

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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[youtube.com/TheSVCF](https://youtube.com/TheSVCF)

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**About Silicon Valley Community Foundation**

Silicon Valley Community Foundation advances innovative philanthropic solutions to challenging problems. 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 [www.siliconvalleycf.org](http://www.siliconvalleycf.org).

**More Information**

If you have questions, please contact us at [census2020@siliconvalleycf.org](mailto:census2020@siliconvalleycf.org) or call 650.930.9885

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