FAQs - Silicon Valley Giving Guides

What is the Silicon Valley Giving Guide for Civic Participation?

SVCF is seeking to identify more ways to successfully link donors to organizations making an impact in our community. In partnership with Magnify Community, a nonprofit initiative that catalyzes local giving in Silicon Valley, SVCF staff produced a list of organizations doing leading work in civic participation so that donors may have a resource to guide their local giving. Donors who recognize the importance of a healthy democracy, support civic engagement and want to make an impact locally can consider donating to the pre-vetted, effective organizations that highlighted in this guide. At this moment in our history, SVCF believes it is critical to support the organizations which are strengthening civic engagement across Silicon Valley and helping build a democracy which reflects the many voices of our community.

In developing this guide, SVCF and Magnify Community took lessons from the Holiday Giving Guide that SVCF published last December, and the Give Lists piloted by Magnify Community in late 2019.

How is this different than the Holiday Giving Guide?

The Holiday Giving Guide included nearly 80 organizations in 12 different issue areas. For this guide, SVCF chose to focus on one issue area and highlight a broader range of organizations within that area.

Why is this Silicon Valley Giving Guide focused on civic participation?

With Californians going to the polls on March 3 and Census Day on April 1, SVCF and Magnify Community agreed that now is the time that organizations leading work to strengthen civic participation need support.

What were the criteria to be included in the Giving Guide?

There are hundreds of amazing organizations in Silicon Valley which are working to promote civic participation, so the process of narrowing it down to nine was very difficult. To ensure fairness, SVCF established four main criteria for organizations to be included on the list. In order to be considered, organizations must:

- Have a demonstrated history of civic engagement work in San Mateo and/or Santa Clara counties
- Have received a grant from either SVCF’s Civic Participation strategy or Voter Engagement funds
- Civic engagement is a core part of their organizational mission, as demonstrated by a standalone program or initiative
- Represent a balance of service areas between organizations serving San Mateo and/ or Santa Clara counties

In addition, SVCF sought to highlight organizations which were not included in the Holiday Giving Guide

All of the organizations which were included have played a leading role in promoting civic participation in Silicon Valley. Through organizing, research, litigation, and bridge building they have helped strengthen democratic participation among underrepresented communities. All nine have track records of evaluating progress and constantly innovating to grow their impact.
While there are other organizations with impressive histories of impact in this area, we felt that these nine stand out and should be highlighted for donors who are just starting to give to local civic participation initiatives.

**Are there other ways organizations not included in this Giving Guide could be highlighted for donors?**

Both SVCF and Magnify Community regularly seek to learn more about Silicon Valley’s nonprofit community and seek to champion local organizations. If you’d like to meet with or share information about your organization with SVCF or Magnify Community staff you can email grants@siliconvalleycf.org and info@magnifycommunity.com. If you’d specifically like to share information about your organization’s civic participation programs, please email JMahoney@siliconvalleycf.org.

SVCF and Magnify Community hope to continue to highlight a variety of local nonprofits for our donors through additional means. SVCF and Magnify Community believe that a thriving community requires a diversity of effective nonprofit organizations, addressing a spectrum of issues, and using a variety of strategies to drive impact locally.

**Will you share what you learn from the pilot of this list?**

Yes. SVCF and Magnify Community are focused on learning from this pilot, and are developing a plan for sharing our learnings from the results of this and other projects in the months ahead.