



request for proposals

Building Strong Communities: Involving Residents
in the Design of Their Communities

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Introduction

Silicon Valley Community Foundation was created 10 years ago to focus on the community's most challenging problems, convene regional private- and public-sector leaders and initiate policy discussion at the regional, state and national level. Since 2008, SVCF has made a total of \$90 million in grants to over 500 organizations as part of our strategic grantmaking and community impact work in four key strategy areas: economic security, education, immigration and building strong communities.

As we celebrate our 10-year anniversary, we are proud to announce a special \$1 million dollar grantmaking initiative. Through this initiative, 10 grants of up to \$100,000 each will be awarded to deserving organizations that are doing the most innovative and effective work to make our region a better place.

Two grants will be awarded to projects within each of our existing four strategy areas: economic security, education, immigration and building strong communities. Two additional grants will be awarded to projects aimed at increasing civic engagement and participation through creative and innovative uses of technology.

This request for proposals, or RFP, focuses specifically on our building strong communities strategy. By using an RFP approach, SVCF 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 June 5, 2017.

Grant applications must be submitted through our online application system, apply.siliconvalleycf.org, **by 5 p.m. on Friday, June 30, 2017.**

Problem Statement

Silicon Valley is a place with far more jobs than housing. This imbalance drives up an already high cost of living and pushes people who cannot afford homes into outlying areas many miles from their jobs. In fact, fewer than half (41 percent) of first-time homebuyers in Santa Clara County and just 27 percent in San Mateo County could afford to purchase a median-priced home in 2015. Renters are in a worse situation: As home prices have increased, so have Silicon Valley's rental rates (up 27 percent for apartments and 25 percent for single-family homes) .

While land-use planning is supposed to address these challenges and improve a community's quality of life, local residents – particularly those who are low income, immigrants or people of color – are often disengaged from the planning process. This lack of public participation can have a significant and lasting impact because community development plans are typically set for 10 to 20 years. Those plans drive most, if not all, of a community's public investments and physical growth.

Grant Opportunity

The goal of SVCF's work in our building strong communities strategy has been to make strategic investments in efforts that help shape land use and transportation plans and encourage residents to get involved in the design of their communities. These plans were intended to create communities that would be affordable, healthier and better connected, with jobs and homes closer to transit. The intent of this special grantmaking initiative is to support new and innovative ideas aligned with our current approaches in building strong communities. This initiative will also support new ideas for different approaches to involving residents in the design of their communities.

We are not defining this grant opportunity narrowly because we don't want to limit applicants' creativity. We encourage applicants to imagine what might be possible, share one of their new and innovative ideas with us, and explain how SVCF funds could help them apply that idea. It is important to note that this is a special one-time-only grant opportunity associated with our 10-year anniversary. This particular opportunity will not be continued in future years.

For more information about this grant opportunity, we invite you to participate in our upcoming informational webinar (see "key dates").

Proposal Eligibility Criteria

- San Mateo and/or Santa Clara county-serving organizations will be considered. Organizations headquartered outside the two-county region must demonstrate significant service to these areas to be considered, or be partnered with another organization based within the two 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. If an organization serves only 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 proposal for which they seek support attempts to address the needs of the wider community without regard to religious beliefs.

Application Process

1. Participate in the informational webinar. This is highly encouraged for those interested in responding to this RFP. This session provides an opportunity for applicants to review the RFP's content in depth and ask questions. To register for this session, please visit siliconvalleycf.org/calendar.

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

2. Please respond to the short set of questions on the next page by the proposal submission deadline.

Key Dates

June 5, 2017:

Application process opens

June 13, 2017: RFP

Informational webinar
(register at siliconvalleycf.org/calendar)

June 30, 2017, 5 p.m.:

Proposal submission
deadline

August 2017:

Announcement of
grant awards

Application questions:

- What is the specific challenge your project will address to involve residents in the design of their communities? (1,000 characters maximum)
- Tell us about your idea to address this challenge. What do you hope to achieve? (1,000 characters maximum)
- Who will be served by your project? (1,000 characters maximum)
- Why is your organization uniquely positioned to lead this project? (1,500 characters maximum)
- Who are your partners, and what will they contribute to the project? (1,000 characters maximum)
- What is the projected cost of your project, and do you have any other funding to support it? (1,500 characters maximum)

3. Submit grant application through our online application system, apply. siliconvalleycf.org. Applications must be submitted by **5 p.m. (PST) June 30, 2017.**

4. If selected to move forward in the process, applicants will be required to provide additional information about their organization's history, infrastructure, financial background and proposal budget.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

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

- 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, 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 are expected to receive grants of \$100,000 for a maximum one-year period. Budget requests will be closely analyzed, and applicants should include a brief 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 will help staff review all proposals recommended for funding to the SVCF's board of directors. Applicants may receive a site visit, telephone call and/or other type of communication from SVCF staff as part of the proposal review process.

Applicants will be informed of grant decisions in August 2017.

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.

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.



siliconvalleycf.org



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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. Find out more at siliconvalleycf.org.

More Information

If you have questions, please contact us at grants@siliconvalleycf.org or call 650.930.9885

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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