



EVERYONE COUNTS | County of Santa Clara

request for proposals

Census 2020:
Santa Clara County

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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 hard-to-count 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, fear among community members to interact with the federal government given anti-immigrant policies, and the fact that the census will be conducted primarily online for the first time ever.

To minimize the undercount in our region, Silicon Valley Community Foundation in partnership with the County of Santa Clara, is announcing a grant program to support 2020 census education and outreach efforts. The County of Santa Clara has an enormous stake in the completeness and accuracy of the 2020 Census, with the county budget, priorities and residents' congressional representation all being directly impacted. With the 2020 census facing limits and delays in its budget, snags in its operations and a challenging political climate, the county made the 2020 census a key priority. The County Board of Supervisors has made an unprecedented investment to engage community members to achieve a complete count. These funds will be disbursed to the community through SVCF.

Grants will be awarded to nonprofit organizations working on 2020 census participation in hard-to-count communities in Santa Clara County. 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.

SVCF seeks 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 October 28, 2019.

SVCF will be managing the application process through its

Apply SVCF online system, by **11:59 p.m. (PST) on Tuesday, November 26, 2019.**

Key Dates

October 28, 2019:
Application process opens

**November 26, 2019,
11:59 p.m.:**

Proposal submission
deadline

January 2020:
Announcement of grant
awards

The Current Context

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.

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. In 2010, an estimated 1.5 million Californians went uncounted. Additionally, an undercount in 2020 places California at risk of losing a congressional seat in redistricting, which would unfairly diminish the state's political influence at the federal level.

Census 2020 is marked by challenges, setting it up to be one of the most difficult censuses in recent history. First, recent anti-immigrant policies and rhetoric, combined with the U.S. Commerce Department's failed proposal to add a citizenship question to the census form has increased fear throughout immigrant communities about how census data will be used. Second, the 2020 census will be the first census conducted primarily online, creating a participation barrier for 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 \$187 million to support census efforts. Support will include a communications campaign and funding to local government and community-based organizations. Local counties 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

SVCF will award grants to nonprofit organizations engaging in education and outreach to hard-to-count communities in the County of Santa Clara. Grant applications should include specific target populations and plans to educate and encourage participation in the census. Examples of activities that will be funded include:

- A. Person-to-person outreach:** door-to-door canvassing, phone banking, event tabling, educational forums and other activities to directly encourage household participation in the census.
- B. Social media, email, text and/or media outreach:** Social media campaigns, texting and email campaigns, earned media, paid media with a focus on ethnic audiences.

- C. **Technical assistance:** The establishment and management of Questionnaire Assistance Centers (QACs) that will provide in language support and assistance to individuals who need help completing the census questionnaire.

Proposal Eligibility Criteria

- Organizations that serve the County of Santa Clara will be considered. Organizations headquartered outside of the County of Santa Clara must demonstrate significant service and/or partnership with other organizations based within the core county.
- 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 interested in collaborative opportunities for census outreach and education; SVCF may provide funding for a lead agency to coordinate nonprofit efforts in the county. We are receptive to concrete, practical and impactful project proposals that:

- **Include** effective, well tested outreach strategies to engage hard-to-count communities.
- **Demonstrate** knowledge of the hard-to-count populations that will be reached through the project.
- **Identify** which hard-to-count population(s) and/or hard-to-count census tracts the project intends to reach.
- **Benefit** from collaborative work and bring partners together.
- **Provide** clear benchmarks and a plan for measuring outcomes and progress.

Application Process

1) Review recommended reference materials below:

- This RFP
- County of Santa Clara Census 2020 website: (<https://www.sccgov.org/sites/census/Pages/home.aspx>)
- Links to Census Bureau hard-to-count maps:
 - California State Census Office map (<https://census.ca.gov/HTC-map/>) and
 - City University of New York (CUNY) map (<https://www.censushardtocomaps2020.us/>)

2) Participate in the information session. Attendance is highly encouraged for those interested in responding to this RFP. The information session will be available in person, via webinar (Webex), and will also be recorded and posted online. To register click [here](#).

- **Friday, November 8, 11:00 a.m.**, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, 2440 W. El Camino Real, Suite 300, Mountain View, California 94040. – If you are attending via webinar, **register at here**.

The information sessions will provide an opportunity for applicants to review in more depth the RFP's content and ask questions.

3) Submit grant application, through our online application system, **apply SVCF, beginning October 28, 2019. Applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. (PST) Tuesday, November 26, 2019.** To learn more about how to register and use Apply SVCF, please reference our instructional video [here](#).

More specific questions about program concepts, content, eligibility and evaluation can be addressed to: 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 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, state and local government, to achieve greater impact.
- Established track record working with and engaging target populations.

Awards

Grant awards will generally range from \$5,000 to \$75,000, although there may be exceptions. 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 SVCF's Census Review Committee. 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 January 2020.**

Evaluation, Monitoring and Grantee Learning Activities

- Grantees will be expected to meet the County of Santa Clara's requirements for ongoing data reporting, final financial and narrative report and evaluation data; and be willing and available to talk with funders' representatives and/or staff if requested. A sample template of the reporting can be found **here**. Grantees will be submitting these reports directly to a shared database managed by the County. Details regarding this process will be provided by the County at a later date.
- Grantees will be provided Santa Clara County's "Count Me In" outreach materials and expected to distribute those materials.
- Grantees will be asked to participate in cohort meetings, 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.

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. 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 650.930.9885

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Proposals accepted October 28, 2019,
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