

Sample Field Strategy RFP

Please note, as with all resources included in this toolkit, this is a *sample* and should be tailored to the needs of your organization and/or community. Additionally, as policy developments and census operations unfold, samples and templates may need to be adjusted to address these changes and progress.

Request for Proposals
Field Research: Preparing Us for the 2020 Census
March 29, 2018

Introduction

The California Community Foundation and Weingart Foundation invite you to submit your proposal for community-based field research and communications related-research focused on increasing participation of Hard-to-Count (HTC) populations in the 2020 Census. This Request for Proposals (RFP) is by invitation only. Your institution was selected to respond given your current work around the 2020 Decennial Census and/or breadth of experience in strategic communications, community engagement, social impact campaigns, and work with HTC populations in Los Angeles County, Inland Empire and Orange County.

About the California Community Foundation & Weingart Foundation

Since 1915, the California Community Foundation (CCF) has empowered donors to pursue their own philanthropic passions and to collaborate with us in addressing the root causes of Los Angeles County's most pressing issues, including education, health, housing and immigration. CCF stewards more than \$1.6 billion in assets and manages more than 1,600 foundations, funds and legacies. The Weingart Foundation works to advance fairness, inclusion and opportunity for all Southern Californians, especially those communities hit hardest by persistent poverty. Our mission is to build a better Southern California by supporting the capacity of nonprofit organizations working to advance social and economic equity, so that they can more effectively serve the underserved.

Why the 2020 Census?

In California, the distribution of \$76 billion for federal programs depends on data derived from the census. If our residents go uncounted, it will inhibit both equal access to resources and equal political representation for Californians.

Census experts have ranked California as the "hardest-to-count state," with 10 out of the 50 hardest-to-count counties in the nation. Historically, hard-to-count populations (HTC) include: racial and ethnic minorities, young children, urban and rural low-income households, limited-English-proficient immigrant and mixed-status families; and single parent households.

It is critical that philanthropy and the community seek to ensure an equitable 2020 Census Count in Los Angeles County and neighboring regions. Los Angeles County has approximately 3,066,249 people living in areas deemed as “Very High” and “High” risk of Low Response. And, with a high concentration of HTC communities across a jurisdiction of 4,000 square miles, it is considered the #1 hardest to count county in the country. The undercount in the 2000 census resulted in a loss of \$650M in federal funding to L.A. County over 10 years.

Heading into 2020, serious factors threaten our ability to produce an accurate and equitable census count in all communities. The U.S. Census Bureau is budget-constrained, lacks senior leadership and is behind schedule in its planning for the 2020 Census. Concerns continue to grow about information security and privacy, the confidentiality of information given to the government, and how government programs will use the information they collect, especially around immigrant communities. In addition, current plans include a reduction in Census Bureau enumerators and the introduction of online enumeration technologies.

These factors vastly increase the potential for an undercount, especially among vulnerable populations. The threat is even greater in Los Angeles County, Inland Empire and Orange County, where we have high concentrations of HTC communities. Timing is crucial.

What is our role in planning for the 2020 Census?

Funders are partnering with L.A. County & City along with key organizations like Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees (GCIR), Southern California Grantmakers (SGC) and the Census Policy Advocacy Network (CPAN) comprised of: Advancement Project California, Asian Americans Advancing Justice – California, California Association of Nonprofits, California Calls, California Native Vote Project, Children Now, Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA), Council on American Islamic Relations – California, Disability Rights California, Empowering Pacific Islander Communities, Equality California, Housing California, Mi Familia Vota, NALEO, and PICO California to engage local stakeholders to create a coordinated regional infrastructure. The goals are to help align and advance local advocacy efforts to encourage the development of needed research and data dedicated to enhancing our understanding of HTC communities, the barriers to participation, and effective efforts to support coalition building and partnerships to increase civic engagement.

Assignment

We are defining the target HTC populations as African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, Pacific Islanders, Muslims, LGBTQ, parents of children age 0-5, immigrants, low-income residents, homeless people and people with disabilities and residents with limited English proficiency. Ensuring the highest level of participation by Los Angeles County, Inland Empire, and Orange County's Hard-to-Count communities in the 2020 Census will require a coordinated and well-informed effort that focuses on educating, engaging and assisting communities. In 2018-2019, funders seek to support an array of research and testing projects dedicated to enhancing our understanding of HTC communities and the barriers to participation they may face in 2020 to support communications and

field/canvassing strategies for Getting Out the Count in HTC communities in the Greater Los Angeles Area.

Funders will rely on institutions submitting proposals to include a proposed infrastructure to drive this work, including a breakdown of tactics for qualitative and quantitative research methods as well as proposed engagement of research firms or other subcontractors, as needed.

The following data products are what we seek to fund with this RFP. As such, proposals should address at least one of the areas listed below:

- Public opinion data on:
 - what target HTC populations know about the census
 - potential barriers to their participation
 - testing of comfort level with technology
 - likelihood of responding
 - what contact methods, messages, and messengers work
- Detailed geographic, demographic analysis and datasets of HTC populations/communities.
- Research that furthers understanding of how HTC populations interact with online and digital technologies, including testing ways that technology can be used to help Get Out the Count in 2020.
- New tools and toolkits that increase access to HTC data and research; and/or that help support planning and outreach efforts of government, community organizations, and/or other stakeholders, including review of toolkits previously used and evidence how new tools build off past efforts.
- Field experiments that test effective Get Out the Count strategies for face to face and digital tactics and strategies that can be mixed into an organization's integrated voter engagement work.

Learning Network

Grant recipients will have the opportunity to share data, findings, challenges and innovations with other grantees through a learning network, facilitated through convenings and resource hubs.

Given the number and complexity of data products being requested, applicants may submit collaborative proposals to round out their qualifications as a bidder. For example, an applicant may partner with an academic institution.

Submission Requirements

Submission requirements include:

- Brief organization overview & capabilities
- Key staff for this project and description of experience
- Capabilities of any subcontractor partners, if one is used, and clear description of roles and responsibilities
- Description of approach and methodology to field research
- Project timeline (research must be conducted from June 2018 - December 2018)

- Project budget
- Description of how research and findings will be used and shared with relevant/appropriate stakeholders
- Submission should be no more than 7 pages in total

Budget

Target project budget range for proposals are \$50,000-\$100,000. Please include in your submission an estimated budget with a breakdown of the costs.

As a non-profit organization, we require a demonstration of non-profit, discounted or value-added services incorporated into the budget if you are suggesting recontracting. Please indicate this element within your proposed budget.

Evaluation Criteria

Submissions will be reviewed and scored using criteria that include the following considerations:

- Personnel qualifications;
- Prior experience;
- Evidence of clear understanding of project goals;
- Creativity to tackle the research and recommendations;
- Ability to adhere to the project's timeline and budget;
- Ability to work with an CCF/Weingart staff and nonprofit partners;
- Compliance with the submission requirements of this RFP.

Timeline

March 29: Issue RFP

April 5: Deadline for questions at 2:00 p.m.

April 29: Submissions due at 12:00 p.m. via email.

May 16: Organizations notified of approval or declination.

May 30: Finalists present to CCF and Weingart.

Week of June 7: Selected groups notified.

June 15: Work begins.

December 2018 - January 2019: Research presentation to CCF, Weingart, grantee and key stakeholder partners.

Submission & Presentation Details

The 7-page maximum submission must be sent to CCF on April 29 by 12:00 p.m.