

**Census Equity Funder Committee of Oregon (CEFCO)  
Request for Proposals for  
Statewide Census Equity Coordination**

**Date:** Release date Wednesday, November 28, 2018

**Proposals Due by:** **Tuesday, January 8, 2019, 5:00 pm Pacific Standard Time**  
Email: [laureng@unitedway-pdx.org](mailto:laureng@unitedway-pdx.org)

**Issuing Organization:** United Way of the Columbia-Willamette  
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All proposals must be emailed as a PDF [LaurenG@unitedway-pdx.org](mailto:LaurenG@unitedway-pdx.org)



## INTRODUCTION

The Census Equity Funders Committee of Oregon (CEFCO) invites organizations, including 501(c)3, 501(c)4, LLCs and other corporations, and individuals to submit proposals to create and coordinate a statewide engagement plan to implement and align on-the-ground efforts to get out the count for the 2020 Census.

CEFCO, through its fiscal sponsor United Way of the Columbia-Willamette, intends to award one contract of up to approximately \$250,000. Actual award may be higher or lower. The projected term of this contract will be February 1, 2019 through December 31, 2021, organized around three phases:

Phase 1: Plan Development

Phase 2: Plan Implementation

Phase 3: Post-Census work

Phases 2 and 3 contingent upon successful completion of and CEFCO satisfaction with Phase 1 deliverables.

Only one proposal may be submitted by a single eligible entity. Entities working together as a coalition or partnership may only submit one application under the name of the lead individual, organization, or firm.

## Background

Mandated by the U.S. Constitution, the Census counts every resident in the United States. The data collected by the decennial census determine the number of seats each state has in the U.S. House of Representatives and is used to distribute billions in federal funds to local communities. The 2020 Census will require counting an increasingly diverse and growing population of around 330 million people in more than 140 million housing units. To get an accurate count, the Census Bureau must build an accurate address list of every housing unit, maximize self-response to the census, and efficiently follow up with those who do not respond.

The 2010 Census resulted in a state apportionment of more than \$10 billion annually from the 16 largest federal assistance programs. However, in FY2015, 37 states forfeited a measurable amount of funds for each person missed in the 2010 Census. Oregon was one of those states, losing \$1,169 per capita from five of the largest federally funded programs due to undercounting.<sup>1</sup> According to the Census Bureau, Oregon's population has grown by 8.1 percent since 2010. If current population estimates hold, Oregon stands to gain a seat in Congress in addition to increased federal assistance.

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<sup>1</sup> *COUNTING FOR DOLLARS 2020: The Role of the Decennial Census in the Geographic Distribution of Federal Funds.* Andrew Reamer, George Washington University. March 19, 2018.

The Census has never been completely successful in capturing accurate numbers for specific populations that have been historically undercounted, but this time it's likely to be much worse. Why?

- The Census Bureau has been fraught with unprecedented challenges, including insufficient and delayed funding, resulting in canceled tests and scaled back preparations
- Cybersecurity threats (real and perceived) and the digital divide, as the first high-tech census rolls out
- The Commerce Secretary has proposed a citizenship status question, which, if included, will deter a significant number of respondents
- Community reluctance and fear of sharing information with the government

### **CEFCO**

Since January of 2018, a group of Oregon funders has been meeting to learn about public, philanthropic and nonprofit plans to engage around the 2020 Census. This Census Equity Funders Committee of Oregon (CEFCO) includes the following philanthropic organizations:

- City of Portland Office of Community & Civic Life
- Collins Foundation
- Ford Family Foundation
- Gray Family Foundation
- Oregon Community Foundation
- Meyer Memorial Trust
- North Star Civic Foundation
- Northwest Health Foundation
- PacificSource Foundation for Health Improvement
- Pride Foundation
- Spirit Mountain Community Fund
- United Way of the Columbia-Willamette

We believe that collaborating and coordinating our approach as funders is the best way to support an accurate and equitable count in 2020. To that end, we have developed a set of shared principles and goals (see Exhibit 1), chief among them to align our funding to increase the response rate in “Hard-to-Count” communities. As a collaborative, we plan to support coordinated efforts that:

- Decrease undercounts and increase overall participation in the 2020 census
- Reduce real and perceived harm of the census across all Oregon communities
- Increase availability of accurate census information to traditionally undercounted communities
- Increase awareness of the impacts a census undercount could have to typically underrepresented communities
- Build the capacity of traditionally undercounted communities to engage in public policy efforts

Since our initial meeting in late 2017, CEFCO conducted research and received training from U.S. Census staff, City and State partners, State population experts, state-based and national philanthropic partners across the country, and community-based nonprofits. A key observation emerged from our research: statewide planning and coordination of on-the-ground census efforts are urgently needed in Oregon. There are no such efforts already in motion that CEFCO can plug into. Therefore, our proposed approach is to identify a contractor (“Coordinator”) with statewide organizing experience to (1) develop a plan for a “get out the count” campaign across Oregon, (2) coordinate and align implementation of that plan across the state and the Portland metropolitan area, working with and across public, private and community-based sectors, and (3) support community-based organizations serving Hard-to-Count populations to maintain increased capacity to engage in similar activities by identifying and sharing best practices, developing and sharing tools, templates and other materials to organizations involved in the effort.

### **CEFCO Engagement & Commitment**

CEFCO is committed to helping secure private and public resources to support implementation of the campaign. Our goal is to secure \$1 million of philanthropic resources (including the resources in this RFP) and at least \$3 million of public resources.

We base this on the costs of previous efforts in other states that have successfully exceeded “Hard-to-Count” averages and reduced the public’s heightened suspicion of the census. We have begun conversations with jurisdictions and philanthropic partners across the state about the importance of this community-led campaign and the resources needed to do it effectively. We will work with the Coordinator to align our efforts to secure the resources necessary for a successful campaign.

These resources, preferably, will be pooled in a fund managed by United Way of the Columbia-Willamette. They will be used to implement the campaign including grant support for community-based organizations, centralized and culturally-relevant communications and training, and other proven activities to increase participation in hard-to-count communities.

We are committed to sharing the learning, information and resources we gather from philanthropic partners across the country with the Coordinator. CEFCO may also engage in public-driven efforts on the census including serving on Complete Count Committees and otherwise serving as ambassadors for the importance of the census and counting all of our residents.

### **DEFINITIONS**

Culturally-specific organization: Organizations for which the majority of leadership and decision-makers are representative of the culturally-specific community(ies) they serve, who center the experience and needs of those communities, have a demonstrated commitment to the success of and accountability to those communities, who are culturally relevant and likely to include

community development and systemic and individual advocacy, who engage community members as experts with subjective knowledges affirmed, and who demonstrate community level influence in program and service design.<sup>2</sup>

Equity: The action or process of creating equal opportunity for success, specifically in a system that is unjust. If we achieve equity, all people will experience equality.

CEFCO recognizes that racial inequality is the leading system of injustice in our country, and therefore we need to lead with racial equity in order to rectify these injustices. By leading with racial equity we acknowledge that people experiencing other oppressions will also benefit, including other hard-to-count populations such as rural communities, communities with limited internet access, and more.

Equity Lens: CEFCO recognizes that structural racism, other oppressions, and geographic isolation have historically suppressed census counts of certain communities and that this suppression continues to have compounding negative impacts on resources and outcomes for those communities. Therefore, we believe that investing first and most in efforts that arise from and focus on communities of color and populations that experience barriers to census and civic participation is the best way to ensure that our work ultimately benefits all Oregonians. We will prioritize support for increasing the count of priority populations (see below).

Geographically Isolated: Populations and people living in remote areas of the state. These areas are often low population density and have limited access to resources including social services and broadband internet.

Priority Populations/Hard-to-Count Communities: A demographic group that is at risk of not being counted in the Census and may require costly follow-ups to ensure they are counted. These groups include but are not limited to: people of color, tribal communities, children under five, people experiencing homelessness, households with limited or no internet access, recent immigrants, limited English proficient people, people living in remote census tracts, and more.

CEFCO will prioritize support for: culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies; organizations and communities that otherwise do not have access to the resources needed; and otherwise isolated and “hard-to-count” communities.

Statewide: CEFCO recognizes that many efforts that are statewide have majority focus within urban populations. By focusing on hard-to-count populations with an equity lens, we hope to reach these individuals across all counties of the state, many of which are located in remote and rural counties. This statewide campaign should reach all Oregon counties.

Trusted Messengers: Individuals and organizations who have strong relationships with the community and are trusted by the community to deliver reliable information. Often these

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<sup>2</sup> Curry-Stevens, A., & Muthanna, J. S. (2016). In Defense of Culturally-Specific Organizations: Understanding the Rationale and the Evidence. *Advances in Applied Sociology*, 6, 67-80. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4236/aasoci.2016.62007>

individuals and representatives of organizations reflect the community to which they are messaging, and live, work within, and share similar life experiences with the community they represent.

## **SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES**

### **Phase 1: Plan Development (approx. 10-20% of the work)**

- Planning, development, and integration of a statewide, multilingual outreach and community engagement campaign to include:
  - Project and subcontractor (if necessary) management
  - Communications Plan
  - Evaluation Plan
  - List of contacts, opportunities for new resource development through public/private institutions
  - Timelines for major activities
  - Projected budget for Phase 2 and 3, including resources for grantees, subcontractors and other activities beyond the scope of work in this contract.

### **Phase 2: Plan Implementation (approx. 70%)**

- Coordinate all aspects of the campaign
- Track and coordinate work other organizations are implementing around Census efforts
- Act as liaison and access point for community partners to the pooled fund and participate on the grant review committee
- Implement evaluation and track progress data and stories
- Meet with and provide updates and progress reports to CEFCO (schedule to be determined) and other stakeholder groups

### **Phase 3: Post Census work (approx. 10-20%)**

- Trainings and presentations sharing best practices and findings that support future civic engagement efforts (community organizing, Get Out the Vote, redistricting), planning for 2030, final evaluation/assessment of project and set of best practice recommendations for future Census and similar efforts
- An analysis of redistricting efforts, and an engagement plan to ensure hard-to-count communities are included
- Set of tools, templates and other materials that can be shared with future Census planners and advocacy organizations

## **Reporting**

The contractor will provide regular reports to United Way of the Columbia-Willamette, utilizing a provided template, to be shared with the all partners in CEFCO. Reports will include process updates on work completed, changes to the plan, barriers and successes in implementing, et cetera.

## MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants must possess the following qualifications to be responsive to this RFP:

**Prior Community Engagement/Organizing Experience** — Proposers must have established connections to the priority populations described above and strong track records working on activities that increase civic participation. More specifically, applicants must possess:

- A background in coalition-building that includes working with community-led and community-specific service organizations, government agencies, elected officials, and advocacy non-profits
- Statewide campaign management experience, including demonstrated experience developing communications and field strategies and tactics that successfully activate racially and ethnically diverse, limited English proficient communities, and geographically isolated or remote communities. Comparable experience might include Affordable Care Act enrollment and voter registration.
- Demonstrated experience in identifying, recruiting, and working with trusted messengers and community leaders to reach priority populations.

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)** – Proposers must have lived experience and/or deep understanding of the interconnection between diversity, equity and inclusion, the historic and current policies and systemic barriers to achieving equity and experience identifying, implementing and evaluating strategies that advance DEI.

**Additional Qualifications** – Preference will be given to proposers who can demonstrate experience with the following preferred qualifications:

- Ability to convene and manage legal advisors or a legal advisory team
- Experience fundraising for private and public resources
- Applying research and data analysis in service of campaign development
- Technological/troubleshooting background
- High level of comfort working with relevant stakeholders, including public, private, nonprofit, elected officials, community groups, and others

## PROPOSAL ELEMENTS (total proposal must not exceed 18 pages)

### Requirements for a Response

Proposer must submit a project plan that describes specific project goals and objectives to develop a three-year “Get Out the Count” plan for Hard-to-Count populations. The proposal should include the following:

1. **Overview of Your Practice and Qualifications (3 pages max)**. Please provide a brief profile of you or your organization, including experience with similar efforts, and your philosophical approach to the work. Please describe how you or your organization currently apply equity principles in your work.
2. **Phase 1 Methodology (7 pages max)**. Please provide a detailed narrative describing how you would approach the design and implementation of this project, including

specific goals, activities, timelines, and how you would apply equity principles into your design. This section must also describe Proposer's communication tools to be used by its Key Persons to perform Project activities; and provide specific examples of communication tools that are culturally and linguistically appropriate to the priority population(s) the Proposer will engage.

3. **Key Personnel (2 pages max).** Please describe your organizational structure and the lead person who would work on this project, including qualifications and any other individuals who will be working on the project and how their qualifications (work and lived experience) align with the goals of the project. Describe your capacity to reach a statewide audience of priority population representatives to help implement the plan.
4. **References (1 page each).** Submit complete contact information for three references, (not support letters), References must be from culturally-specific organizations or organizations that serve or represent our priority populations with whom the Proposer has worked. At least one reference must be from an organization led by and serving a culturally-specific community. References should be able to speak to Proposer's ability to achieve goals and objectives of the Proposer's Project Plan.
5. **Budget and Budget Narrative.** The grand total of CEFCO funding listed in Proposer's Contract Budget shall not exceed \$250,000 for the scope of work described in this RFP. The Project Budget Proposal must include identifiable costs of all activities in Proposer's Project Plan, and the administrative structure must be cost effective and efficient.

Using the budget template provided [\[web link\]](#), please provide a detailed accounting of your proposed cost structure. Please complete all three tabs included in the template. Indicate total hours anticipated for the project and pricing for services for this project. In addition to completing the budget template, Proposer must also submit a budget narrative using the same attachment which explains the reason for each requested budget item and provides the basis for its cost. All requested budget items must be thoroughly justified and clearly related to the proposed project described in Proposer's Project Plan.

## REPORTING AND PAYMENT REQUIREMENTS

CEFCO acknowledges that it is accountable to each of our organizations, our donors and trustees, and to our Boards of Directors. Therefore, the contractor agrees to provide regular reports to United Way of the Columbia-Willamette, to be shared with the all partners in CEFCO. Reports will include process updates on work completed, changes to the plan, barriers and successes in implementing.

Information on reporting and payments will be included in the resulting contract.



## RFP Process Timeline

RFP Announced	November 26
Proposers Q&A Webinar	December 13, 3:00-4:30 PM
Proposal Due Date	January 8, 5:00 PM
Proposal Review and Decision	January 16
Finalist Interviews (tentative)	January 18
Award Letter sent	January 21
Contract Start	
• Phase 1	Feb 1, 2019
• Phase 2	July 1, 2019
• Phase 3	January 1, 2021
Contract End	December 31, 2021

## Proposers Q&A Webinar

CEFCO partners will host an online Q&A session on Thursday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 to 4:30 PM. A recording of the session will be posted online [\[add link\]](#) for those who are unable to attend.

To join the webinar live, select from the following options:

### 1) Web Browser

- a) <https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/live-event/kffpfrwp>

### 2) Mobile device

- a) Download the app from App Store or Google Play

iPhone/iPad: <https://itunes.apple.com/app/blue-jeans/id560788314>

Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.bluejeansnet.Base>

- b) Enter event ID: kffpfrwp

### 3) Phone

- a) Dial one of the following numbers, enter the participant PIN followed by # to confirm:
  - +1 (415) 466-7000 (US)  
PIN 8503684 #
  - +1 (760) 699-0393 (US)  
PIN 2562325429 #

## Exhibit 1

# Census Equity Funders Committee of Oregon

## STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

### Our purpose:

As Oregon funders, we recognize the critical nature of the federal census to all the populations we aim to serve in our individual organizations, particularly (though not exclusively) because census data will affect the allocation of state and federal resources to those populations for a decade or more. We believe that collaborating and coordinating our approach as funders is the best way to support an accurate count in 2020, which in turn supports recognition of and public funding for Oregon communities.

### Our intended outcomes:

- Decreased undercounts and increased overall participation in the 2020 census
- Reduced real and perceived harm of census across all Oregon communities
- Increased availability of accurate census information to traditionally undercounted communities
- Increased awareness of the impacts a census undercount could have to typically underrepresented communities
- Increased organizing capacity in traditionally undercounted communities

### Our equity lens:

We recognize that structural racism, other oppressions, and geographic isolation have historically suppressed census counts of certain communities and that this continues to have compounding negative impacts on resources and outcomes for those communities. Therefore, we believe that investing first and most in efforts that arise from and focus on communities of color and populations that experience barriers to census and civic participation is the best way to ensure that our work ultimately benefits all Oregonians. We will prioritize support for: culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies; organizations and communities that otherwise do not have access to the resources needed; and otherwise isolated and “hard to count” communities.

### Our collective commitments:

- Applying an equity lens to our work/decisions (as noted above) and focusing our attention on “hard to count” populations and areas of the state
- Connecting with community-based organizations early and often to center their expertise and perspectives (with appropriate compensation), while being sensitive not to over-promise
- Supporting community organizations to coordinate with and learn from each other about effective strategies to reach “hard to count” populations
- Developing a coordinated funding model that pools or aligns funds using a “no wrong door” policy that minimizes application hurdles for community organizations
- Emphasizing funding approaches that intentionally support long-term capacity (particularly organizing capacity) for community organizations for the census and beyond
- Connecting and engaging with other partners—government, health systems, universities, schools, faith communities, chambers—to maintain a landscape scan of assets, activities and challenges around the state with respect to the 2020 census
- Honoring historical knowledge in communities while being responsive to their changing contexts and conditions (including technical issues that present challenges for digital census participation)
- Supporting approaches that ensure that communities are informed about the potential positive and negative impacts of engaging in the census in order to make informed choices
- Exploring support for community-validated counts as an immediate follow on to census work, dependent on community interest and identified leverage points
- Revisiting these commitments if and when the need arises to adjust or reaffirm them