

Census Equity Fund Request for Proposals

Support for Oregon Census 2020 Hard to Count Campaign,
Census Assistance Centers

Date: Thursday, October 31, 2019

Proposals Due by: **11:59 pm on Wednesday December 4th 2019.**

Issuing Organization: United Way of the Columbia-Willamette
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To Apply: Email application materials to CensusCAC@unitedway-pdx.org

Introduction

The Census Equity Fund of Oregon intends to award approximately \$2 million in funding for Census Assistance Centers (CACs) serving “Hard to Count” populations across the state. CACs provide an effective on-the-ground presence for the 2020 census in order to raise public awareness, deliver trustworthy information, and provide options for self-respondents to receive questionnaire support. CACs are one component of a broader #WeCountOregon plan.

Awards will generally range between \$20,000-\$40,000, with a maximum of \$65,000. Funding is intended to reach across the state, ideally with at least one CAC in each county.

Census Assistance Centers (CACs)

CACs are service organizations, other non-profits, or public agencies that are safe spaces where Hard to Count (HTC) people can fill out their census online. (Government agencies please see note on page 6.) CACs need to have a strong and direct connection with the communities they serve and should be places that HTC people are likely to visit.

In order to serve as a CAC, an organization should have:

- A publicly accessible physical space open evenings and weekends from April to July 2020
- Internet connected computers available for public use
- Staff available to answer questions and support public in taking the census online
- The ability to provide information and assistance in the language of the communities to be served
- Commitment to participating in a required one-day training at an Ambassadors Summit with the #WeCountOregon Campaign. (There will be six options; dates and locations still to be determined.)

CACs will receive tools and materials related to census communication and outreach, which will be available in multiple languages.

Hard to Count (HTC)

Communities or people designated as “hard to count” are those at risk of being un- or under-counted in the federal census. According to the Census Bureau, HTC populations 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, people with limited English proficiency, and people living in remote census tracts. For more information on HTC communities, visit census2020now.org and click on Oregon HTC Map in the dropdown menu. The Population Research Center at Portland State University estimates that Oregon has approximately 1 million HTC individuals.

Background

The decennial census is a constitutionally mandated count of all residents of the United States, including immigrants (documented and undocumented), refugees, and Tribal members. It is a backbone of American democracy, helping to determine congressional and electoral representation, as well as State and federal funding allocations. Many key safety net programs

are funded via census data, including Head Start, SNAP, school lunches, Section 8 housing, Pell grants, short-term rental assistance, medical assistance programs, and more.

Census Bureau estimates indicate that Oregon's population has grown by 8.1 percent since 2010. If the census count in 2020 fully reflects this growth, Oregon will gain a sixth seat in the U.S. House of Representatives as well as increased federal funding allocations.

A Historic Census

There are a number of unique factors in 2020 that pose challenges to achieving a full and accurate census count, particularly among Oregon's hardest to count populations. These factors include:

- the first ever digital census—reinforcing a digital divide when almost 20% of Oregon households do not have broadband internet¹
- reductions and delays in federal funding²
- the focus on the potential inclusion of a question about citizenship—almost a half-million Oregonians live with a non-citizen; 78% of those living with a non-citizen are people of color³
- growing fears among immigrants due to the current political and social climate
- increasing public distrust of government
- concerns regarding security of personal and online information.

#WeCountOregon Campaign

Dancing Hearts Consulting (DHC), led by Founder and CEO Esperanza Tervalon-Garrett, has been working with a coalition of culturally-specific organizations across the state since February 2019 to collectively develop the #WeCountOregon Campaign, a detailed and comprehensive get-out-the-count plan that includes:

Field Outreach: Incorporates trusted messengers to conduct multi-lingual, culturally-specific field outreach across the state.

Communications: Communications will be multi-lingual and culturally-specific reaching 3 million rural and urban people across Oregon.

Native/Tribal education and engagement: Work with tribal liaisons and trainers to support Tribal Nationals and Tribal communities to fully participate while recognizing their sovereignty and autonomy.

Culturally-specific training and education: Multi-lingual and culturally-specific trainings and education to identify and train stakeholders who can support in-language trainings around the state.

¹ <https://www.oregon.gov/Broadband/Documents/2014%20Oregon%20Broadband%20Adoption%20Survey%20Report%20Final.pdf>

² <https://www.planning.org/blog/blogpost/9125999/>

³ <https://www.census2020now.org/challenges-blog/2018/1/18/challenge-3-proposed-question-on-citizenship-status-pb9bf-xr4dy-wazpw-tc29c>

CACs are a key part of the #WeCountOregon plan and will therefore need to work with campaign on alignment in communications, messaging, and materials. In addition to participating in the required Ambassadors Summit training, CACs must also be willing to be convened by and remain in contact with the campaign and DHC throughout the grant period as needed for alignment and coordination.

As part of the campaign, CACs will receive tools and materials related to census communication and outreach. Materials will be available in at least 10 languages and will be as culturally-specific (as applicable). CACs will also participate in a logo exchange with the campaign.

The Census Equity Fund

The Census Equity Fund is a pooled and aligned fund of public and private resources to support community capacity for census engagement in HTC communities. United Way of the Columbia-Willamette (UWCW) is the fiscal agent and backbone organization for the fund. Partners have been meeting since January of 2018 to develop, fundraise, and align strategies around reaching Oregon's HTC communities in 2020.

Fund partners recognize the critical nature of the 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.

The following public and private funders have contributed and participated in the Census Equity Fund:

- City of Portland Office of Community & Civic Life
- Collins Foundation
- Ford Family Foundation
- Grantmakers of Oregon & SW Washington
- Gray Family Foundation
- Oregon Community Foundation
- Meyer Memorial Trust
- Lamb Foundation
- North Star Civic Foundation
- Northwest Area Foundation
- Northwest Health Foundation
- PacificSource Foundation for Health Improvement
- Pride Foundation
- Spirit Mountain Community Fund
- State of Oregon, Office of Governor Kate Brown
- United Way of the Columbia-Willamette

Grant Parameters

Funding will be prioritized for organizations who primarily serve and have trusted relationships with HTC communities, and will likewise be prioritized for linguistically and culturally appropriate strategies. Geographic distribution will also be considered as funding is intended to reach across the state, ideally with at least one CAC in each county.

Award amount

Typically between \$20,000- \$40,000. Maximum \$65,000.

Eligibility

- Open to any 501(c)3, non-profit, Tribal or government agency. (Agencies see note below.)
- Organizations and funding must serve HTC Communities in the state of Oregon.

- Grantees must attend an Ambassadors Summit and stay in contact with the #WeCountOregon Campaign.
- Organizations may apply to serve multiple counties but may only submit one application per county to be served (i.e. cannot submit multiple applications to serve a single county). Organizations can submit one application to serve multiple counties or submit separate applications for each county to be served.
- Collaboratives of multiple organizations are welcome to apply under a single fiscal lead.

Government Agencies

In regions where few community-based organizations serve HTC communities and do not have the capacity to serve as a CAC, government agencies may be supported with funding to fill that gap. In regions where there is capacity among community-based organizations to provide CAC locations, they will be prioritized for funding. Government agencies that have sufficient staff and infrastructure in place (without funding through this RFP) are still encouraged to participate as CACs in alignment with the #WeCountOregon Campaign, which would include:

- Receiving tools and materials related to the census, specific to HTC communities
- Attending a one-day training at a #WeCountOregon Ambassadors Summit
- Maintaining contact with #WeCountOregon for alignment and coordination as needed
- Participating in a logo exchange with the campaign

To sign up to become a CAC without applying for funding, complete the [CAC Sign Up-Unfunded Form](#) and email it to CensusCAC@unitedway-pdx.org. This form is available at unitedway-pdx.org.

Contracting, Payment & Reporting

United Way of the Columbia-Willamette (UWCW) is the fiscal agent for the pooled fund and issuing organization of this RFP. Contracts, payments, communications, and reporting will be held by and managed by UWCW. UWCW will send reporting questions no later than 30 days prior to the report deadline. General reporting requirements will include:

- Financial reports (i.e., budget-to-actuals of project costs)
- Narrative report on how funds were used and effectiveness of the project
- Outcomes: Number of contacts/conversations held, number of people who accessed public computers, number of census forms completed, demographics of the populations served including in-language services.

Timeline

RFP Timeline:

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Oct 31, 2019 | Census Equity Fund Partners release RFP |
| Nov 2019 | FAQ Webinar (exact date TBD) |
| Dec 4, 2019 | Application closes |
| Dec 2019 | Proposal Review |
| Jan 2020 | Awards announced & funds distributed |
| Feb 2020 | Possible 2 nd RFP |

Project timeline:

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|----------------|--|
| January 2020 | Project agreement start date |
| Jan-March 2020 | Project planning and preparation |
| March 30, 2020 | Mid-Term Report due |
| April 1, 2020 | CAC is open and operating |
| July 24, 2020 | Census response window closes (CAC closes) |
| Aug. 31, 2020 | Final Reports due |

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.⁴

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

How to Apply

To apply, submit the attached form, project budget (template provided) and additional attachments via email to CensusCAC@unitedway-pdx.org.

Applications must be received by 11:59 pm on Wednesday December 4th 2019.

Please note there are character limits set into the form based on word count.

This is a fillable PDF and may require certain software to save properly. We recommend completing the narrative portion in a word document and saving for you records in case of any issues.

Questions on this RFP can be directed to Lauren Gottfredson at LaurenG@unitedway-pdx.org.

⁴ 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>

Application Questions

Organizational Information

Organization Name

Award Request

Is your organization an independent 501c3 or government agency?

Yes

No

If yes, what is your EIN

If no, do you have a fiscal sponsor

Yes, Name

No

Organization Mission (100 words)

Organization Description (150 words)

Executive Director Information

Name

Email

Phone

Main Contact Information (if different from ED)

Name, Title

Email

Phone

Eligibility questions

Census Assistance Centers must participate in an Ambassadors Summit led by Dancing Hearts Consulting and the #WeCountOregon Campaign (details above). Are you willing/able to participate in this training?

Yes

No

Do you have an identified physical space in which to operate within the state of Oregon?

Yes

No

Is this space open and accessible to the public?

Yes

No

Is this space open evenings and/or weekends? Or will it be during the project period?

Yes

No

Do you have access to internet connected computers or tablets for the public to use or be assisted with to complete their census form?

Yes

No

If no, do you plan to purchase computers or tablet with this funding to provide for public or assisted use?

Yes

No

Narrative questions

What county/counties will this project serve?

Describe the Hard to Count (HTC) populations you will serve through this project. Please include specific language groups as applicable. (150 words)

Where/how do you plan on delivering information and support? How will community members access this service? (150 words)

Where will people access this service? Describe the locations (i.e. service organization, clinic, church, etc.). Include accessibility characteristics of the space (i.e. location, ADA accessible, cultural specificity, etc.) (150 words)

Why is your organization suited to support HTC efforts for the 2020 census? What trusted relationships do you have in your community? (200 words)

Describe the project/how will funds be used? How will funds be used to increase your organizational capacity around the 2020 Census? (300 words)

How might this project build capacity your organization? (150 words)

What staff capacity do you have, or will you hire to support this work? (if not necessary, describe why? (150 words)

Outcomes

What days/hours will your CAC be operating?

How many people will this project serve? (i.e. how many people will hear about the census, how many people will receive support in completing the census, how many people will be counted as a result of this project?)

Attachments

- Project Budget
- Anti-discrimination statement
- 501c3 letter or fiscal agent information
- Organizational budget