



Request for Proposals

Immigrant Integration: Bridging the Cultural Gap

Introduction

Silicon Valley Community Foundation advances innovative philanthropic solutions to challenging problems. Two of these challenging problems – the successful integration of immigrants and the inability of receiving communities to understand and recognize immigrants as real and potential assets in the community rather than as liabilities – are addressed through our immigrant integration strategy. To better understand our goals and objectives for this strategy, we encourage you to read the community foundation's research paper on the topic at <http://www.siliconvalleycf.org/content/immigrant-integration>

The immigrant integration strategy has a three-pronged approach: (1) strengthening the legal services infrastructure, which seeks to address the need for affordable and reliable immigration legal services provided by nonprofit community organizations; (2) adult English language acquisition, which seeks to promote English instruction, coordination and best practices among community colleges, adult education schools, and community-based organizations; and (3) bridging the cultural gap, which seeks to leverage established two-way educational programs that allow non-immigrant communities and immigrants and their receiving communities, to learn about the diverse immigrant populations in Silicon Valley. This request for proposals, or RFP, focuses specifically on bridging the cultural gap. By using an RFP approach, the community foundation 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 applications must be submitted through our new on-line application system, [applySVCF](#), by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 6, 2013.

Problem Statement

Silicon Valley is an immigrant demographic microcosm of the United States. In Silicon Valley, one-third of our residents are immigrants, nearly half of our work force is foreign-born and close to two-thirds of those under the age of 18 are the children of immigrants. Given this demographic reality, a new social model of immigrant integration – one that promotes mutual benefits for immigrants and their receiving communities and that allows newcomers enhanced civic participation and improved economic mobility – is critical.

A key challenge to immigrant integration is the inability of the receiving communities to understand and recognize immigrants as real and potential assets in the community rather than as liabilities. Conversely, newcomers may have cultural misunderstandings and misperceptions about their receiving community which may create barriers to integration and community-building.

Program Goal

Putting a human face on complex immigration issues through powerful tools such as video, art, technology and other media can educate and inform policymakers, business, clergy, civic leaders, foundations and the general public about immigrants and their receiving communities. The community foundation sees the full spectrum of arts and culture as an instrument for social change.

Bridging the cultural gap is important as newcomers begin to navigate the norms and regulations of education, health and wellness, labor and financial systems; and the receiving community learns, adapts and teaches newcomers how best to use their strengths in the community. Multi-dimensional communications campaigns, with partners that value cultural competency and diversity in terms of racial and cultural backgrounds, can bring rich and varied immigrant integration experiences to life and illustrate the human consequences of policy decisions in a way that statistics and words alone can not.

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The community foundation will provide funding for multi-faceted communications campaigns that:

- Deliberately seek to engage audiences not already involved in immigrant integration programs.
- Have specific community and/or policy-based objectives, which are clearly defined and articulate how building new relationships with community groups will further immigrant integration in our region.
- Share accurate information about cultures and people, combined with frank discussions to eliminate misunderstandings and misperceptions that can create barriers to integration and community-building.
- Raise questions, share concerns and engage in a dialogue to create authentic relationships and raise understanding about immigration, race, education and other community issues.
- Help participants identify shared interests and create shared experiences, with the willingness to constructively address differences that arise along the way.
- Can be sustained and are well-integrated into existing organizational programming ensuring long-term application within the community.
- Priority will be given to organizations that demonstrate clear understanding of how their proposed project advances their existing goals and a community strategy or agenda, including having a dedicated amount of staff time to the project and a clear plan for how to measure its success.

The community foundation will gauge success according to one or more of these indicators: change in knowledge, awareness, and appreciation of immigrants' experiences and issues, organizational capacity for and use of technology (e.g., social media) to disseminate immigrants' stories, increase in immigrant and receiving community support, engagement, and/or advocacy for immigrants' issues.

Proposal Eligibility Criteria

- San Mateo and/or Santa Clara County-serving organizations. Organizations headquartered outside the two-county region must demonstrate significant service to the area.
- Organizations 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 that do 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 only serves a specific population, e.g., women or specific ethnic populations, the community foundation will consider the proposal on a case-by-case basis.
- Organizations with religious affiliations will be considered for funding only if the project for which they seek support attempts to address the needs of the wider community without regard to religious beliefs.

Project Proposal Characteristics

We are receptive to concrete, practical and impactful project proposals that:

- Include both well-tested models that can be scaled up or expanded regionally while maintaining local relevance, and new pilots that, if successful, can be grown and replicated.
- Benefit from collaborative work and bring public and private partners together with nonprofit organizations.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the sector and its trends.
- Identify target population to be reached and justification for that focus.
- Provide clear benchmarks for measuring progress.

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Application Process

- 1). Review reference materials. These may be found at <http://www.siliconvalleycf.org/content/immigrant-integration>
 - Research paper on Immigrant Integration strategy
 - RFP for Immigrant Integration: Bridging the Cultural Gap
- 2). Participate in the information session. This is mandatory for those interested in responding to this RFP. Because all grant applications must now be submitted online, this session provides an overview of SVCF's online application system, [applySVCF](#). Additionally, information sessions provide an opportunity for applicants to review in more depth the RFP's content and ask questions. To register for this session please visit our website's calendar.

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

- 3). Submit grant application, including required attachments, through our new online application system, [applySVCF](#).

Applications must be submitted by 5 p.m. Monday, May 6, 2013.

Key Dates

April 8, 2013:	Release of RFP
April 9, 2013:	RFP Information session (register through our online calendar)
May 6, 2013 5 p.m.:	Proposal submission deadline
June 2013:	Announcement of grant awards

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Proposals for grants should include a narrative that responds to the questions found at [applySVCF](#). Grant proposals will be evaluated, on a competitive basis, using the following criteria:

- Innovative and effective strategy with potential for systems change.
- 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 and leadership, 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 will receive grants for a minimum of one year. The average grant amount awarded in the 2012 grantmaking cycles was \$30,000. Budget requests will be closely analyzed and applicants should include a 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.

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Review and Selection Process

An advisory committee with issue expertise for this strategy will help staff to review all proposals recommended for funding to the community foundation's board of directors. Applicants may receive a site visit, telephone call and/or other type of communication from community foundation staff as part of the proposal review process.

Applicants will be informed of grant decisions in June 2013.

Evaluation, Monitoring and Grantee Learning Activities

- Grantees will be expected to meet the community foundation's requirements for a final financial and narrative report as well as a presentation to community foundation staff and donors if requested.
- In an effort to further the overall program goals of this RFP, inform future RFPs related to this topic and contribute to larger field-building objectives, grantees will be asked to participate in periodic meetings to share information on project activities and best practices as well as participate in research-based evaluations.

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.