



# Request for Proposals

## **Safety-Net Services: Food and Shelter**

## Introduction

Silicon Valley Community Foundation advances innovative philanthropic solutions to challenging problems. One of these problems is the on-going need for our communities to have a safety net of essential services during the difficult economic downturn that began in 2008. Each year Silicon Valley Community Foundation sets aside money in its Community Opportunity Fund to support time-sensitive community issues. This request for proposals (RFP) focuses specifically on the critical needs of food and shelter in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

For this RFP round, Silicon Valley Community Foundation is collaborating with the County of San Mateo to solicit applications from food and shelter providers serving San Mateo County. The 2013 San Mateo County Food and Shelter Grant Program will contribute \$500,000 for these crucial services and Silicon Valley Community Foundation will match that amount for a total of \$1 million for food- and shelter-serving organizations in San Mateo County.

In Santa Clara County, the community foundation will also award \$500,000 to organizations providing food- and shelter-related services, resulting in a total of \$1.5 million in safety-net funding for the Silicon Valley region.

**Grant applications must be submitted through our new online application system, [applySVCF](#), by 5:00 p.m. (PST) on March 29, 2013.**

## Problem Statement

The economic downturn that began in 2008 continues to adversely affect many people in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. The inability to pay for such basic needs as food and shelter creates enormous stress on individuals, families and nonprofits in the region that are trying to help them. Families and individuals who already rely on public assistance have been joined by thousands of others who were once self-sufficient but suddenly need assistance. This rising demand for safety-net services has far out-stripped the supply of available public and private funding and caused agency caseloads to soar. Most disturbing of all is the plight of families and individuals who survive with the help of multiple safety-net programs—all of which continue to suffer significant budget cuts.

## Program Goal

The goal of the current funding for safety-net services under this RFP is to support access to food, homeless prevention services and shelter for families and individuals in areas of most need in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. We want to understand the level of increased and/or fluctuating demand for these safety-net services, and the specific causes that are generally attributable to the economic downturn (e.g., job loss, under-employment, loss of housing because of foreclosure-related issues, etc.) as well as how different populations may be impacted. We seek documentation that 1) shows the recession has increased the need for certain existing services or created the need for new services and 2) indicates that available funding sources have not kept pace with rising demand. The community foundation is interested in learning how community-based organizations are adapting and what innovative practices may arise from this crisis.

## General Proposal Evaluation Criteria

- San Mateo and/or Santa Clara County-serving organizations. Organizations headquartered outside the region must demonstrate significant service to these two counties.
- Organizations with a 501(c)(3) designation or 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 serves only a specific population (e.g., women or specific ethnic populations), its proposal will be considered 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.

## Specific Eligibility Criteria

Grants will be made to organizations that have a proven track record of success with the community foundation and that work in close collaboration with Health and Human Services agencies in one or both counties. Those organizations that have an existing funding relationship for food- and shelter-related services with the community foundation will be given priority. We anticipate that the majority of successful applicants will be well-established Core Service Agencies located in San Mateo County and Emergency Assistance Network Agencies located in Santa Clara County. A fewer number of grants will go to organizations that serve particular ethnic/limited English-speaking or other under-served populations for food- and shelter-related services.

Those organizations that do not have an existing relationship will be considered if a compelling justification is made including a demonstrated track record of financial stability and impact. We encourage inquiries regarding these eligibility criteria. They must be sent on or before March 15, 2013 to the following e-mail address: grants@siliconvalleycf.org

## Eligible Projects

Grants will be awarded for:

- Programs that help low-income and disadvantaged children and adults, as well as newly vulnerable individuals and families who now struggle to meet basic needs for food and shelter. Grants will be for continuation and expansion of direct food and shelter services.
- Organizations that provide people with access to food, homeless prevention services and shelter (e.g., information and referral, hotel vouchers, rental assistance and/or case management services).
- In San Mateo County, grants will be awarded to organizations that serve geographies and populations where the need is greatest, including “re-entry clients” that formerly were inmates of correctional institutions and recently have been released. The community foundation recognizes that the need for shelter-related services for vulnerable populations of all types may be particularly critical in this county.

While it's expected that the majority of grants awarded will be for project-specific support, some general operating support will be available as well in both San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

The community foundation will not award grants under this RFP for:

- Development and support for, or maintenance of, permanent affordable housing.
- Support for residential drug treatment programs.
- Support for emergency funds that assist a targeted group of people affected by a specific challenge—such as diagnosis of a life-threatening disease—with food, shelter or rental assistance needs.

## 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 between multiple community-based organizations and also projects that bring public and private partners together with nonprofit organizations.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the sector and its trends.
- Identify a target population to be reached and justification for that focus.
- Provide clear benchmarks for measuring progress, and indicate how results from these services will be tracked as efficiently as possible, potentially using current county reports that highlight the specific results of this funding.

## Application Process

1) **Review reference materials.** These may be found at [www.siliconvalleycf.org/content/community-opportunity-fund](http://www.siliconvalleycf.org/content/community-opportunity-fund)

- RFP for Safety-Net Services: Food and Shelter
- Grant Applicant FAQ sheet (to be posted on our website following the Information Session on March 13, 2013).

2) **Participate in an information session.** This is highly encouraged 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 new 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 addressed through phone calls and in-person meetings with the program officer, as time permits.

3) **Submit a grant application**, including required attachments, through our new online application system, applySVCF.

Applications must be submitted by 5 p.m. (PST) March 29, 2013.

## Key Dates

**February 25, 2013:**

Release of RFP for Safety-Net Services: Food and Shelter

**March 13, 2013:**

Information session at Silicon Valley Community Foundation's Mountain View office.  
(Please visit the community foundation's website to register)

**March 29, 2013 – 5:00 p.m.:**

Proposal submission deadline to Silicon Valley Community Foundation Online Application System

**July 2013:**

Announcement of grant awards (see "Review and Selection Process" below)

## Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Grant proposals that meet the eligibility criteria will be evaluated, on a competitive basis, using the following criteria:

- Demonstrated need for the services proposed and likelihood that a significant number of people from the targeted community will benefit. Applicants must document that the economic downturn has increased the need for an existing service or created the need for a new service.
- 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 with respect to clients served, shelter nights, meals served, case management sessions, households receiving financial assistance and other specific metrics in addition to the aforementioned list. See section below on Evaluation, Monitoring and Grantee Learning Activities for more information.
- Innovative and effective strategy with potential for systems change.
- 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

The community foundation has designated \$1 million total for this year's round of grants for food- and shelter-serving organizations in both San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. Overall, the community foundation anticipates awarding between 20-25 grants, with the majority of grants ranging from \$50,000-\$70,000. In addition, the community foundation expects to award a limited number of smaller grants in the \$10,000-\$25,000 range for agencies that provide services to particular ethnic/language communities and whose capacity and/or proposed activities merit a lesser award. For San Mateo County applicants, the grant size may be larger due to the partnership between the community foundation and the county.

The community foundation and San Mateo County partnership will result in designating a total of \$1 million (\$500,000 from each funder) for food- and shelter-serving organizations in San Mateo County. The additional \$500,000 in grant awards from San Mateo County is a one-time supplement to county funding for Core Service Agency activities. Given the breadth and depth of need for safety-net services, multi-year grants will not be awarded. 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 proposal narratives may be posted publicly on the community foundation's website to reflect the value of transparency and encourage learning among grantees and future applicants as well as members of the community at large. All applications for San Mateo County funding become public documents once submitted.

In Santa Clara County, the community foundation has designated \$500,000 for awards to emergency assistance organizations that provide food and shelter services. Emergency Assistance Agencies located in Santa Clara County will have a proven track record of success in partnering with the community foundation and experience in collaborating with Health and Human Service agencies. As noted above, the majority of grant awards will range from \$50,000-\$70,000, and it is anticipated that awards to a limited number of organizations may consist of grants in the \$10,000-\$25,000 range for those providing services to ethnic/language communities.

## Review and Selection Process

- Community foundation staff will review all San Mateo and Santa Clara County proposals for food and shelter services. Recommendations for both San Mateo and Santa Clara counties' food and shelter grants will be sent for approval to the community foundation's donor engagement and giving board committee.
- Applicants may receive a site visit, telephone call and/or other type of communication as part of the proposal review process.

**Applicants will be informed of grant decisions in July 2013.**

## Evaluation, Monitoring and Grantee Learning Activities

- Grantees will be expected to meet the community foundation's requirements for the submission of a final report, including a financial accounting of funds expended and a narrative report, and/or presentation to community foundation staff and donors.
- Grantees will be expected to report on one or more of the standardized metrics mentioned above in the section on Proposal Evaluation Criteria as applicable to their proposed project/organizational activities.
- For San Mateo County, grantees will also be expected to comply with the county's contract requirements and will be contacted to complete a Contractor Self-Declaration Form.
- 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 may 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.

## Application Checklist

- Grant application submission through our new online application system, applySVCF.**

**All applications must include the required attachments listed below:**

- Attachment A:** Detailed line-item budget for the project (including details on how the community foundation's funding would be used)
- Attachment B:** Budget narrative for the project
- Attachment C:** Copy of your organization's current overall operating budget
- Attachment D:** Most recent audit, if available
- Attachment F:** Evidence of tax-exempt status
- Attachment G:** Memoranda of Understanding from collaborative partners (if appropriate)

#### MORE INFORMATION

If you have questions, please contact us at [grants@siliconvalleycf.org](mailto:grants@siliconvalleycf.org) or call 650.450.5540

To get all the latest grantmaking information, follow us on Facebook and subscribe to our community e-newsletter at [www.siliconvalleycf.org/eneWSletters](http://www.siliconvalleycf.org/eneWSletters)

## About Silicon Valley Community Foundation

### **Vision:**

Silicon Valley Community Foundation advances innovative philanthropic solutions to challenging problems, engaging donors to make our region and world a better place for all.

### **Mission:**

Silicon Valley Community Foundation is a comprehensive center of philanthropy. Through visionary leadership, strategic grantmaking and world-class experiences, we partner with donors to strengthen the common good locally and throughout the world.

### **We value:**

Collaboration	Integrity
Diversity	Public Accountability
Inclusiveness	Respect
Innovation	Responsiveness

### **At a Glance**

Silicon Valley Community Foundation makes all forms of philanthropy more powerful. We serve as a catalyst and leader for innovative solutions to our region's most challenging problems. The community foundation has more than \$2.9 billion in assets under management and more than 1,650 philanthropic funds. As Silicon Valley's center of philanthropy, we provide individuals, families and corporations with simple and effective ways to give locally and around the world. Find out more at [www.siliconvalleycf.org](http://www.siliconvalleycf.org).



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To read more about Silicon Valley Community Foundation  
visit [www.siliconvalleycf.org](http://www.siliconvalleycf.org)

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