



Michigan Nonprofit Association

Executive Summary

On behalf of the Michigan Nonprofit Association (MNA), we are requesting a grant of \$75,000 in support of the Michigan Nonprofits Count Campaign. Partnering with the Council of Michigan Foundations, the campaign will mobilize and engage nonprofits across the state in support of a fair and accurate census count and build the capacity of nonprofits ready to address future community concerns and threats to democracy.

Introduction

In the 2010 census, Michigan was in danger of undercounting many vulnerable populations and as a result the state was at risk of losing federal funding that is vital to communities across the state. With support from the philanthropic community, the Michigan Nonprofit Association led a statewide effort to mobilize and engage nonprofits across the state to increase the 2010 census count, particularly in hard-to-count communities. Despite significant economic concerns and a high unemployment rate, Michigan was one of only a handful of states that exceeded its mail-in-rates from 2000 (78% compared to 69%). Two of the areas with significant philanthropic investment in 2010 were Calhoun and Genesee Counties. Both of these communities experienced an increase in the mail-in-rate with Calhoun seeing an increase from 76% in 2000 to 79% in 2010, and Genesee County saw an increase from 80% in 2000 to 82% in 2010.

In 2020 we are at risk of a significant undercount with the census implemented as an internet-first approach. In Michigan the demographics are shifting toward an increasingly older, more diverse, lower income, and ultimately more vulnerable population with limited access to technology and greater discomfort engaging with government. The campaign is a collaborative, coordinated, statewide effort to encourage participation in the census in communities that are at significant risk of being undercounted. The campaign will mobilize nonprofits to encourage participation in the 2020 census, provide trainings and tools for nonprofits on effective outreach tactics, assist nonprofits in identifying hard-to-count communities, award mini-grants to local nonprofits, coordinate a statewide communications plan and work with government officials to avoid duplication of efforts and enhance government's communication and outreach efforts to ensure a complete count.

For more than 25 years, MNA has been a trusted partner in addressing pressing issues for nonprofit organizations throughout Michigan, including those serving vulnerable populations. Michigan's nonprofit community is ideally suited to encourage hard-to-count communities to be counted. We learned from our efforts in Census 2010 that nothing can replace the encouragement and reassurance of a trusted nonprofit. Nonprofits serving in hard-to-count communities have well-established relationships by way of their services and advocacy efforts, speak the communities' language, and are generally regarded with a higher level of trust than certain government agencies. Through the years we have participated in many cross-collaborations including government, academic institutions, nonprofits, businesses and faith-based organizations. As a result of these cross-collaborations, MNA has extensive and diverse networks throughout the state. Given the depth of the strategy led by MNA, the breadth of the stakeholder group, the inclusive process that produced these results, and the credibility and experience that MNA brings to the table within the context of this process, we strongly believe that MNA is well positioned to carry out the objectives laid out in this proposal. The Council of Michigan Foundations (CMF) and the Michigan Nonprofit Association have long partnered on civic engagement efforts, such as the 2010 census campaign; public policy efforts on the state and federal levels; research about the sector; and convening's to further the relationships between grantmakers and grantseekers.

Need

Although the 2020 campaign will be modified based on lessons learned from the 2010 campaign, MNA recognizes the unique circumstance of this census. Unlike past decennial census, the 2020 census has unique struggles including:

- Underfunding of the 2020 census that has resulted in the Government Accountability Office placing the census on its high risk list because of concern that the lack of funding will hinder the U.S. Census Bureau's ability to complete the census on time and accurately. This lack of funding has also resulted in cancellation of 2 of the 3 dress rehearsals for the 2020 census.
- This decennial census will be unique because individuals will be encouraged to complete the census online and census takers will be equipped with internet-connected devices to simplify the process which makes the dress rehearsals crucial for testing out the system.
- "If you underfund the census, you get an undercount," says Kenneth Prewitt, who directed the Bureau during the 2000 census. "And if you don't count people, they are politically invisible, in effect." (Time, May 2017).
- According to the Pew Research Center, public trust in the government remains near historic lows. Only 20% of Americans today say they can trust the government in Washington to do what is right "just about always" (4%) or "most of the time" (16%). Getting people to respond to the census is difficult as it is, but when asked by an entity that they do not trust it makes the effort even more difficult.
- The U.S. Census Bureau is currently experiencing a leadership vacuum with the resignation of the director in May 2017. As stated in an opinion piece published in the Washington Post authored by Republican and Democratic past directors of the Census Bureau, "The 2020 census faces unprecedented challenges in collecting data, including fear of government authorities in immigrant communities, cyber security threats (real or perceived) and uneven access to reliable Internet service, which could disadvantage rural, low-income and older households. The nation needs a Census Bureau director with the capabilities to navigate these minefields credibly and deliberately."

There's a lot at stake for the 2020 census and there is a clear need for aggressive outreach, communication, coordination and organizing to ensure a fair and accurate count in the targeted areas of Metro-Detroit.

First, communities are at risk of losing critical revenue for programs and services. Public officials use census data and the number of people counted to determine distribution of federal funds. Based on a recent study from George Washington University, Michigan receives over \$14.5 billion dollars from just the 16 largest federal programs that disburse funds based on census figures. For example, if we assume a proportional distribution of these funds based on the population of Detroit, the amount of annual funding in question amounts to \$987 Million for critical services and programs such as Medicare; Medicaid; S-CHIP; WIC; SNAP; housing; Head Start; and special education. Also, since public officials use census data to distribute funds there is concern about what the low census participation would mean for the 40% of the state budget that comes from federal funding. Without the government funding, communities would likely turn to philanthropy and nonprofits to fill the void.

Second, many of your grantees often utilize census data to conduct research, demonstrate community need, define the target population served and evaluate their work. For example, it would be difficult to conduct Alzheimer's research without the demographic data provided by the decennial census. Civic organizations, government and business also often utilize census data to help make economic development decisions that impact the quality of life for Detroit residents. From the standpoint of equity and access, those with the most to lose are the most at risk of being undercounted in the 2020 census. The hardest-to-count populations include, but are not limited to, communities of color; immigrants; renters; young children; the homeless; and others traditionally served by the nonprofit community organizations that are often your grantees. As part of MNA's commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity - this campaign will focus on ensuring that those who are traditionally undercounted have a voice in the 2020 census.

Third, the predicted response rates for Metro-Detroit are especially alarming, based on information from the Census Bureau and researchers, MNA expects the response rates to be as low as 83.2% in Macomb County; 82.5% in Oakland County and 78.1% in Wayne County. These rates are alarming since there will be less follow-up with non-responding households due to the Census Bureau's change in its model for collecting responses (internet first), funding challenges and reduced number of Census Bureau employees at the local level. This issue is also compounded by the fact that many households in the city do not have a computer with broadband or internet subscription.

Goals/Objectives/Activities

Goals: 1. To mobilize nonprofits across the state, including organizations in Metro- Detroit, to encourage participation in the 2020 Census particularly amongst those traditionally hardest-to-count. 2. To develop a statewide infrastructure to further advocacy issues of concerns to communities.

Strategy: To cultivate involvement of nonprofit organizations in census 2020 with a focus on hard-to-count communities.

Objectives and Activities:

I. Form a statewide coalition - The statewide Nonprofit Complete Count Committee will be instrumental in outreach, awareness and implementing strategies to ensure a complete count. Co-chaired by Hassan Jaber, CEO of ACCESS and Donna Murray-Brown, President and CEO of the Michigan Nonprofit Association, the Nonprofit Complete Count Committee is comprised of grass-top organizations that represent grassroots organizations serving hard-to-count communities and organizations that directly represent individuals that are traditionally hard-to-count, including people of color, immigrants, homeless citizens, and young children. The Nonprofit Complete Count Committee provides guidance for the campaign, and individual representatives of the committee will educate their networks on the census and mobilize their members to take the lead and/or participate in get-out-the-count efforts in their local communities.

II. Implement a statewide communications strategy - Working with an experienced communications firm, the campaign will effectively communicate with policymakers, the media and the public on the census. Considering the lack of funding at the federal level, there will be a need for messaging targeted at policymakers that encourage local municipalities and the state to dedicate additional resources to enhance communication and outreach for census 2020. Messaging is also needed to educate the media and the public on why the census is important, with messages tailored for traditionally hard-to-count populations to encourage their participation in the census. In addition to assistance with messaging, the communications firm will work with the campaign to develop and maintain a website and social media presence. Finally, the communications firm will develop and promote media advocacy tools for use by local nonprofits, including, but not limited to, earned and paid media options.

III. Develop tools and conduct trainings - Educational opportunities and materials will be provided to increase the capacity of nonprofits across the state to engage in census 2020. Trainings and tools will provide nonprofit staff and volunteers with the information, skills and tactics necessary for local organizations to conduct get-out-the-count efforts in their communities. MNA will partner with the Census Bureau, participating regional hubs and other community building organizations to provide tools and educational opportunities that specifically address: why the census is important to nonprofits and those we serve; understanding the timeline for the census and tips for completing the census online; partnering with local officials and nonprofits to increase outreach and communications about the census; forming local Complete Count Committees; communicating effectively about the census and working with the local media; and tactics for outreach (canvassing, phone banking, community events, etc.) to traditionally hard-to count-segments of the population, including communities of color. Specific training and technical assistance will be designed for the census hubs to assist in their fieldwork detailed below.

IV. Target fieldwork and engagement - Provide funding to regional census hubs to award mini-grants to nonprofits in communities and track their activities to share lessons learned and promote peer learning. And, enhance capacity of interested municipalities to support a complete count. The campaign will partner with designated regional census hubs to develop plans unique to their communities that support fieldwork of local nonprofits. Designated census hubs will need to commit to the following with support from the state campaign:

- With education materials and trainings provided by MNA, educate nonprofits in your region about what's at stake for the 2020 census, leading practices to encourage an accurate count in their communities, and possible roles for nonprofits to help ensure a complete count;
- Administer the grant process to award Census 2020 mini-grants to nonprofits in your region;
- Participate in MNA-led statewide monthly peer learning calls and quarterly trainings over the entire campaign time period;
- Partner with local complete count committees to coordinate efforts and avoid duplication of efforts;

- Utilizing research and communications materials provided by MNA, serve as a campaign key messenger with local media and state/federal policymakers in support of funding and outreach for the census; and
- Utilizing communications materials provided by MNA in multiple languages as appropriate, distribute materials to nonprofits and other grassroots organizations to grow support for Census 2020 activities.

MNA will provide designated census hubs with funding to support the administrative and staffing expenses associated with this work. The support will be in the form of funding for mini-grant distribution, training to educate local nonprofits about leading practices to encourage an accurate count in your communities, technical assistance to support the development and implementation of your local plans, opportunities to learn from your peers also engaging in this effort, and communication framework and materials that can be tailored for the needs of your community. MNA will work with local funders and other key stakeholders to identify and designate regional census hubs. At this time census hubs are planned in the following counties with high concentrations of hard-to-count populations: Calhoun, Genesee, Ingham; Jackson; Kalamazoo; Macomb; Midland/Saginaw/Bay Area; Oakland and Wayne. There are also plans for regional census hubs in West Michigan and the Upper Peninsula.

V. Collect, analyze and visualize data - The campaign will provide local communities with data to assist their efforts in reaching hard-to-count populations. The campaign will provide localized data by providing fact sheets for targeted communities on the importance of the census in terms of government dollars derived from the census and percentage of hard-to-count populations in targeted communities. The campaign will also assist local organizations with canvassing and outreach to those that are traditionally hard-to-count in their communities, and will create a dashboard to track and share the number of nonprofits and communities the campaign seeks to engage.

VI. Partner with policymakers - The campaign will work with policymakers on the local, state and federal levels to encourage adequate funding, design and implementation of the census. On the local level, the campaign collaborated with associations of local municipalities to support efforts to educate local governments about the Local Update of census Addresses Program (LUCA), build awareness of LUCA's importance to an accurate count, and to encourage both large and small municipalities to participate in and dedicate resources to the effort. LUCA is a program through which representatives of state and local governments review, correct, and update the census address list, which guides outreach efforts. MNA will also work with these associations to encourage local municipalities to form Complete Count Committees and to provide officials with the information to do so. In addition to partnering with associations of local municipalities, the campaign will encourage regional census hubs to work closely with their local officials on planning for the census, LUCA, complete count committees, communication and outreach efforts.

On the state level, the campaign is working closely with the Governor's office, Office of Foundation Liaison; and state Legislature to ensure adequate funding of the state demographer's office, Michigan's liaison with the U.S. Census Bureau, and to explore additional state appropriations for communications and outreach efforts to increase the census response rate in 2020. MNA will also work with state officials to promote a state Complete Count Committee that is representational of segments of the population that are traditionally hard-to-count. The state legislature also recently appropriated \$500,000 in support of the Michigan Nonprofits Count Campaign.

On the federal level, the campaign will continue to encourage the Michigan congressional delegation to support adequate funding of the 2020 census and to protect the privacy and integrity of the census in terms of the questions asked on the form and the use of the data collected.

VII. Collaborate with foundation leaders - Partnering with the Council of Michigan Foundations (CMF), the campaign will support CMF's efforts to encourage philanthropy to support get-out-the-count efforts. CMF will work with its membership to educate and encourage financial support of the 2020 Michigan Nonprofits Count Campaign and local get-out-the-count efforts with a focus on leveraging member support in targeted communities with hard-to-count populations and high concentrations of nonprofits.

With ██████████ as the census hub for Southeast Michigan (Detroit, Macomb County, Oakland County and Wayne County), MNA will provide the hub with a plan template and data on expected participation rates for neighborhoods and hard-to-count populations within Metro-Detroit. Based on this information, the census hub will develop a plan for distribution of the local mini-grants (\$925,000) to ensure that the hardest-to-count areas are covered.

- The hub will contact organizations that serve targeted census tracts/neighborhoods and determine the organization’s interest in participating in get-out-the-count efforts.
- With tools, talking points and resources provided by MNA, the hub will educate the local nonprofits on what’s at stake for those they serve and why this effort is so important for their community.
- The Southeast Michigan Hub will work closely with ACCESS and other key nonprofit organizations to shape the plan for distribution of the mini-grants. For example. It is expected that ACCESS will be a mini-grant recipient. Hassan Jaber, Executive Director and CEO of ACCESS, is serving as co-chair of the campaign’s Nonprofit Complete Count Committee.
- The census hub will award mini-grants to the local nonprofits to conduct get-out-the-count efforts in whatever fashion they see fit. It will be up to the hub to determine the number of grants awarded. As trusted entities, local organizations know their neighborhoods and those they serve best. Examples of activities by local mini-grant recipients may include:
 - Volunteers and staff of a neighborhood service organization may canvass blocks with iPads and literature translated into the language commonly spoken in the community. The material, tailored from data and messaging provided by MNA, would address common concerns that may deter individuals from completing the census.
 - An immigrant’s rights organization may hold community forums to educate those they serve about the census. Knowing those they represent best, the local organization would tailor the messages provided by the campaign to meet their needs and ensure that messengers are respected from within the community.
 - A youth center might have a “census party” to encourage family participation in the census and have volunteers available to help participants complete the census online.
 - A non-traditional nonprofit media source may write a series of articles leading up the 2020 census to educate their readers about what’s at stake and how to be counted.
 - With help from volunteers and staff, food banks may set up a kiosk for individuals to learn more about the census and complete it online.

With a dashboard and evaluation guidelines provided by the campaign, the census hubs will keep track of activities of grantees and report back to MNA. This information will help with evaluation and strategy for the campaign, but it will also help to introduce leading practices that could be shared and replicated around the state.

Data Collection/Evaluation

- Project Goal 1: To mobilize nonprofits across the state, including organizations in Metro-Detroit, to encourage participation in the 2020 Census particularly amongst those traditionally hardest-to-count.
 - Outcome; The creation of the new Michigan Nonprofits Count multi-level campaign. The coalition includes campaign infrastructure - MNA, a complete count committee comprised of nonprofits that represent those hard-to-count, census hubs across the state and local mini-grant recipients ready to take action in support of a fair and accurate census count.
 - Definition of Success: An understanding by nonprofits involved in the campaign of what’s at stake for this census; a high level of engagement of nonprofits that represent those who are hardest-to-count; and active participation in the 2020 census by the populations and communities identified.
 - Measure of Success: The campaign will work with an evaluator to develop a dashboard for local use that will provide the hubs and local mini-grant recipients with the framework for gauging their success and highlighting their activities, number of people engaged, number of nonprofits and participation rates of those hardest-to-count. The campaign is also working with a researcher to identify baselines for participation rates in 2020 considering the unique circumstances and challenges associated with this census.

Project Goal 2: The campaign will develop a statewide infrastructure to further advocacy issues of concerns to communities.

- Outcome: The campaign will build the capacity of nonprofits in communities across the state, including Metro- Detroit through funding, training and technical assistance, communications support, and creation of a peer learning community for the census hubs and local mini-grant recipients.

- Definition of Success: Census hubs and mini-grant recipients feel connected to nonprofits in their community and are leveraging a network of peers for this effort and future partnerships. And these same organizations will feel more confident to address future policy issues of concerns in their communities.
- Measure of Success: The campaign will work with an evaluator who will conduct surveys throughout the campaign to assess the learning and networking of targeted nonprofits (census hubs & mini-grant recipients). This tactic will also allow the campaign to make course corrections as necessary throughout the effort.

Conclusion

There's a lot at stake for the 2020 census and a great deal of opportunity for the nonprofit sector to utilize its relationships, organizing and communication skills to make a difference. Working closely with the census bureau and the state, the nonprofit campaign has a unique opportunity to truly engage those who are traditionally hard-to-count and to build the capacity nonprofits in Metro-Detroit and across the state to address future threats to communities.