

## 2020 Census – Mini-Grants to Support a Fair and Accurate Count

### Request for Proposal Berrien County Hub Mini-Grants

An accurate census count ensures that all communities get their fair share of federal dollars. The 2020 Census will be online so extra efforts are needed for everyone to be counted. Support is available for trusted organizations to encourage census participation.

As required by the U.S. Constitution, the federal government conducts the census once every 10 years to count the population of the United States. A complete and accurate count is vital for communities. Census data is used to distribute funding for road repairs, school improvements, and social programs. The number and distribution of elected officials are based on census data. Nonprofit organizations, businesses, and governments use census data to identify community needs and evaluate solutions to difficult problems.

Historically, some populations—including communities of color, low-income households, immigrants, and young children—have been undercounted in the census. Undercounts deprive communities of necessary resources and equal representation.

The next census occurs in April 2020. For the first time, census data will be collected primarily online. The new format may make it even harder for people without reliable Internet access to participate.

#### WHAT'S AT STAKE FOR BERRIEN COUNTY IN CENSUS 2020?

An accurate count in Census 2020 is vital for Michigan and Berrien County. Researchers estimate that communities will lose about \$1,800 per person per year in census-based federal funds. **Berrien County has over \$44 million at risk each year for 10 years due to undercounting our population.** As trusted members of the communities they serve, nonprofit organizations are well positioned to engage on this issue and encourage census participation.

#### MINI-GRANT OPPORTUNITY

Berrien Community Foundation (BCF) is serving as the Census Hub for Berrien County and is launching a mobilization campaign to support census participation across the county.

With support from Michigan Nonprofit Association, the Frederick S. Upton Foundation, Whirlpool, Spectrum Health Lakeland, United Way of SW Michigan, Cornerstone Alliance, Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber, and the Berrien Community Foundation, BCF is offering funding for Census 2020 outreach activities to organizations that serve potentially undercounted communities in Berrien County. Mini grants are available to support projects that will:

- Educate and encourage potentially undercounted communities about the importance of the 2020 census.
- Familiarize communities with the census process and changes to the 2020 census.
- Develop and implement effective strategies and/or events to boost participation in the census.

Within these priorities, applicants should design a project that best serves their community. Mini-grant recipients are key to the success of the campaign. As trusted entities, local organizations know their neighborhoods and those they serve. Target populations for this mini-grant program are potentially undercounted populations in Berrien County, including:

- Low-income persons
- Persons experiencing homelessness
- Young children
- Persons with mental or physical disabilities
- Persons who do not live in traditional housing
- Geographically isolated persons
- Highly mobile persons (students, military)
- Physically isolated persons
- Persons who distrust the government
- Non-English speakers
- Undocumented immigrants
- LGBTQ persons
- Communities of color

#### WHAT PROJECTS CAN BE INCLUDED IN A MINI-GRANT? (SEE MORE EXAMPLES ON PAGE 4)

- A youth center hosting a “census party” to encourage family participation in the census and have volunteers available to help participants complete the census online.
- Encourage those who come to an event to bring their unique household ID code. The census mailing has a unique ID code and makes completing the census easier and faster.
- Human service providers setting up a kiosk for individuals to learn more about the census and complete it online.
- Partner with local businesses to connect with employees and customers.

Projects not needed are those where the Census Bureau assigns staff to count in person. For example, census workers count individuals in group living facilities that offer services such as assisted living and group homes.

#### WHAT CANNOT BE INCLUDED?

- Canvassing blocks with tablets or laptops. Census staff will go door-to-door so volunteer activities should be directed elsewhere.
- Mini-grant funds should *not* be used to give gift cards or other incentives to individuals for completing the census or for bringing the unique ID code to a census event. However, mini-grant funds *are permitted* to be used for raffles, food, prizes or door giveaways (such as gift cards) to individuals attending events in support of a fair and accurate 2020 census.

#### REQUIRED ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

##### Required Funding Criteria

- Proven track record of serving or representing those who are most at risk of being undercounted in the 2020 Census.
- Clear understanding of the challenges including institutional and structural issues the community faces in obtaining an accurate census count.
- An organized constituency base and concrete goals or strategies to get out the count in their community.
- Organization aims to have staff, volunteers, and board that are reflective of the community at risk of being undercounted.

##### Required Basic Eligibility Criteria

- Emerging and established organizations at all stages of work are encouraged to apply for funding.
- To be selected for funding, organization must be legally incorporated in Michigan with 501(c)(3) status, or a project sponsored by a government agency with a clear charitable purpose. Organizations with a fiscal sponsor are also eligible to apply.
- The campaign does not fund individuals.
- Campaign support cannot be used for partisan efforts.
- Organizations must satisfy all reporting requirements, including narrative and financial reports to

local census hub administrators.

- Grantees will be required to participate in shared learning opportunities and an evaluation process.

#### MINI GRANT DETAILS

- Funding is anticipated to run November 2019 through July 31, 2020.
- Applicants should base the amount requested on the scope of the project. Most grants will range from \$500 to \$2,500. Other amounts may be considered.
- One grant request may include multiple education and/or census events.
- Collaboration with other organizations and leveraging other resources are encouraged.

#### REPORTING AND EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS

- During the project, grantees will provide a brief update twice a month to BCF.
- At the end of the project, grantees will submit a report that shares results, evaluates the process and reports final expenses by July 31, 2020.

#### MINI GRANT TIMELINE

June 24, 2019	Mini grant application opens
Week of June 24 & on July 10	Optional information sessions throughout Berrien County
<b>September 30, 2019</b>	<b>Completed proposals must be submitted by 5:00 PM</b>
October 2019	Mini-grant decisions and award information shared with applicants.
November 2019	Awards will be publicly announced
November 2019 thru July 2020	Mini-grant projects active
March 12, 2020	Census Bureau begins mailing to each household; online response begins
March 20 through April 30, 2020	Priority grantee event time period for residents to complete the census form
July 31, 2020	Final expenses and evaluation of mini-grant due to BCF

#### CENSUS TIMELINE

January 2020	Launch advertising campaign
March 12, 2020	Launch self-response to census. U.S. Census Bureau begins mailing to households. This mailing includes a unique ID code for each household that is used when completing the census form. Completing the census form online or via phone begins as soon as the mailing is received. Completion data is available publicly by census tract (not by address) in real time.
April 1, 2020	Official COUNT day. Households submit the name and age for each person living in their household on April 1.
April 9, 2020	Begin early nonresponse follow-up
April 30, 2020	Any household who has not completed the Census form by April 30 will be contacted in person by an employee of the Census Bureau.
July 2020	Census closes. Anyone not completing the form before the end of July will not be counted in the 2020 census.

#### MINI-GRANT AMOUNT RANGE AND DURATION

Mini grant amount range: Up to \$2,500

Mini grant period: November 1, 2019 through July 31, 2020.

#### HOW TO APPLY

- Complete the online application at <https://www.berriencommunity.org/census-hub-grant>.
- Submissions will be accepted until 5:00 PM on September 30, 2019. If you have questions or need assistance completing the form, please contact Kathy Stady.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE WITH CENSUS DATA, CONTACT:

Kathy Stady, Berrien County Hub Coordinator, [kathystady@berriencommunity.org](mailto:kathystady@berriencommunity.org) or 269.266.9062

## Examples of Mini-Grant Activities

### DOVETAIL WITH EXISTING PROGRAMS

- With help from volunteers and staff, human service providers may set up a kiosk for individuals to learn more about the census and complete it online
- Integrate census information into home visits, e.g., Head Start, medication monitoring
- Add census info to organization's intake process
- Share with clients how a complete census count will benefit them and their community
- Provide a "My Kids Count" census flyer for pediatrician offices.

### SHARE THE CAMPAIGN MESSAGE IN MEDIA

- A nonprofit media source may write a series of articles leading up to the 2020 census to educate their readers about what's at stake and how to be counted
- Schedule to be interviewed on Spanish language radio stations
- Recruit peers to deliver message – e.g. students to students, seniors to seniors
- Post census information and links on agency web pages and social media accounts
- Send direct mail postcard to clients and stakeholders about how to complete the census and why it's important to them

### CONDUCT EVENT-BASED OUTREACH

- A youth center could have a "census party" to encourage family participation in the census and have volunteers available to help participants complete the census online
- Organize a pop-up "census station" site in a high traffic location, such as a grocery store parking lot
- Organize a census event with an ice cream truck – offer free ice cream and have volunteers and Internet access available for completing the census.
- Leverage Hispanic Heritage Month to educate participants about the upcoming census
- Coordinate sharing census information with Mexican consulate visits
- Host an April 1 Census Day celebration event

### INVEST IN EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

- Provide assistive technology for people living with disabilities
- Provide hot spot access to help clients complete the census online

### ACTIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- Partner with local businesses to connect with employees and customers.
- Reach out to other community organization to encourage them to refer people from hard to count groups
- Share census information with local faith organizations

Projects not needed are those where the Census Bureau assigns staff to count in person. For example, census workers count individuals in group living facilities such as assisted living. However, they do not count apartment building residents in person.