Release date: August 5, 2019

**Request for Information**

**Technology Funding for Census 2020**

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| **Requirements** * Application
* Budget
* W-9
* 501(c)(3) or fiscal sponsor letter (N/A for governmental agencies or businesses)
* Submit all documents to Alessia.Simmonds@acgov.org
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**Application Deadline:** Friday09/06/2019 at 5pm

Late applications will not be considered for funding

 **Submit questions to:** Alessia Simmonds, Outreach Manager at Alessia.Simmonds@acgov.org

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| Alameda County anticipates expending a total of $100,000 for one or multiple Technology Contracts to provide access to the online Census questionnaire so that Hard-To-Count communities. Contractors are required to attend an onboarding meeting, a training on how to guide individuals through the Census form, and to report outreach metrics. Funds will be administered through the Alameda County Census Office under the Community Development Agency.  |

 ***More information at*** [***https://www.acgov.org/census2020/***](https://www.acgov.org/census2020/)

 **Background**

The United States Census is constitutionally required to be conducted every 10 years. Census data are used to allocate billions of dollars in federal funds which support numerous Alameda County services and to determine political representation at all levels of government. Census taking is conducted by the United States Census Bureau.

Problem Statement: **Alameda County has a high concentration of Hard-to-Count (HTC) communities, including children aged 0-5, low-income individuals, people experiencing homelessness, immigrants, non-fluent English speakers, and racial/ethnic minorities.** Alameda County has 413,000 Hard-to-Count residents, making up 26% of the County’s population. Additionally, an undercount of only 6% in 2020 places Alameda County at risk of losing $1 billion, which would diminish the County’s ability to provide critical services for the next decade as it receives most of its revenue from federal & state resources. The US Census Bureau is encouraging everyone to take the 2020 Census online through its first digital platform which is expected to be live starting March 12, 2020. Each address will be mailed a Census invitation letter with a 16-digit pin number and QR code to log into the online Census platform, however, the Census can still be taken online without this information. Additionally, Alameda County will be funding and working with hundreds of partner organizations (referred to as Census Ambassadors) who will organize events, workshops, or convenings in which technological equipment is needed to ensure participants can complete the Census.

Objective**: Our goal is to ensure that every person in Alameda County is COUNTED despite the following challenges:** underfunding of the U.S. Census Bureau, a new online questionnaire, increased distrust of government, a proposed citizenship question, and limited language access for people with limited English proficiency. To overcome these challenges, the County is seeking to invest in trusted messengers, such as community, education and faith-based organizations, coalitions, grassroots programs, and others to provide Census education and access to HTC residents. We seek to fund technology support to ensure that Alameda County residents without access to broadband or technological equipment are able to access the online platform and complete the 2020 Census.

**Technology Partnership Funding Opportunity**

The Alameda County Complete Count Committee Census 2020 Office (County Census Office) is requesting information from experienced organizations who specialize in providing technological support to advance community engagement so that the county census office can understand the cost of specific services. This information will inform the County Census Office’s plan to award one or more grants to entities who can provide access to technology in partnership with Alameda County Census Ambassadors to ensure a complete count in hard-to-count communities. Contractors may set up and operate mobile or “pop up” technology labs at community-based events, provide equipment, and/or technical support to partner organizations for their Questionnaire Assistance Centers.

* QAC Technology Support: Partner organizations may need technology (computers or mobile devices) for their Questionnaire Assistance Centers. The contractor would be required to set up the equipment, instruct the site manager about how to use the equipment, and setting up the devices with secured internet access.
* Outreach supported by Technology Contractor(s): Events such as workshops, Census parties, etc. will be managed by a community-based organization and the technology contractor will only provide set up, equipment or internet troubleshooting, sharing best practices in utilizing the online Census platform, and equipment breakdown. Events will range in size as well as the technological capacity of the individuals completing the Census online. In advance of each event, the contractor(s) will be provided event/site contact information, venue layout, expected number of attendees, internet and electrical capacity, and other details necessary to ensuring adequate support by the contractor(s) at the community-based event.
* Outreach conducted by Technology Contractor (s): The Alameda County Census Office may need to deploy the Technology Contractor to lead outreach at community festivals including both assisting attendees to complete the online Census and setting up a station for them to do so. Such events may require more tech set up time than an indoor event. The Technology Contractor will be required to support outreach metrics.

**The Alameda County Census Office will evaluate the technological needs of our partners and the projected costs by the organizations which apply to this Technology RFI to determine a proposed contract for services.**

**Important Notes:**

* The Technology Contractor will be responsible for ensuring the equipment used for Census outreach is secure through encryption. Devices should be kept on a current operating systems and have some form of access control.
* The Alameda County Census Office will provide its technology contractor(s) with outreach materials, including handouts, posters, and collateral. These expenses should not be reflected in the RFI.

**Grant eligibility:**

* Organizations may be non-profits with a 501(c)(3) designation or a fiscal sponsor, governmental agencies, or businesses.
* Ability to provide a completed W-9 form or be a current vendor with Alameda County
* Entities that serve Alameda County. Organizations headquartered outside of Alameda County must demonstrate successful experience, local partnership, or expertise in serving Alameda County HTC residents.
* 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.

 **Proposal Evaluation Criteria**Proposals for grants should include a narrative that responds to the questions found on the County Census 2020 Office’s online application system. Proposals will be evaluated using this 50-point rubric:

10 Points Organizational capacity: including staffing, leadership, programmatic outcomes, and fiscal management

10 Points Outreach plan and activities are in alignment with the Alameda County Census Outreach Framework

20 Points Applicant has developed a cost-efficient plan to provide technological equipment and services for:
A. QAC Set up
B. Outreach Supported by the Technology Contractor
C. Outreach Led by the Technology Contractor

10 Points Established track record working with Alameda County’s Hard-To-Count communities
  **Review and Selection Process**

Proposals will be reviewed by a panel comprised of: representatives of the Alameda County Census Office, All In, Alameda County Library, and the Community Development Agency. During the review period, applicants may be contacted to provide additional information. Applicants will be informed of grant decisions in September 2019.

 **Potential Contractor Requirements**

* Trainings: Attend 2 trainings provided by the Alameda County Complete Count Committee
	+ Monthly Planning Meetings with County Census Office: November - June

***Purpose***: Develop systems and protocols with Alameda County Census Office for deploying contractors for community-based Census technology support, and troubleshoot those systems to enhance access, increase Census participation rates, and improve community partner experience. (By phone / in person)

* + Contractor Orientation:
	+ Census Outreach Training: January - March (TBD - Offered on multiple dates at locations throughout the county) ***Purpose***: Instructions on how to assist folks with the Census form & Frequently Asked Questions
	+ CCC Meeting: Early April ***Purpose:*** Review response rates by tracts and share best practices *(Optional)*
* Be a Census Messenger: Incorporate 4-6 Census updates into communications (newsletters, social media, etc.)\*
* When leading Census outreach, utilize informational materials provided by an approved source: County Census Office, the U.S. Census Bureau, the State of California’s Census Office, or an approved CBO. List will be provided by County Census Office.
* Language Access: Connect individuals needing information in a foreign language to the Alameda County website in which materials will be provided in all languages spoken in Alameda County.
* Track Progress:
	+ Regularly track their outreach through an online portal facilitated by the Alameda County Census Office which County staff will enter into California’s SwORD tool (Statewide Outreach and Rapid Deployment)
	+ Metrics will include: number of impressions made, number of Census forms completed at such event/QAC, demographics served, and other relevant factors to track outreach.
	+ Submit a final report (including data and a post-Census evaluation)

 *(\*Materials will be provided by Alameda County and/or available to print from the Census Office website.)*

 **Census Timeline with Key Grant Deliverables**

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| **Deliverable** | **Date** |
| RFI released | August 12, 2019  |
| RFI Webinar *(Not required but highly encouraged; will be recorded)* | August 15, 2019 4-4:30pm |
| RFI Questions Due (submit to Alessia.Simmonds@acgov.org)  | August 23, 2019 |
| RFI Questions Released (posted online & emailed to those who inquired)  | August 27, 2019 |
| RFI Deadline (Note: late applications will **not** be considered) | September 6, 2019 at 5pm |
| Grants Awarded  | October 2019 |
| Contractor Orientation (Mandatory for all contractors) | November (TBD) |
| Census Outreach Trainings - conducted by County Census office | January - March 2020 |
| Activation Phase: Census Self-Response  | March 12 - May 1, 2020 |
| Activation Phase: Non-Response Follow Up  | May 2 - June 30, 2020 |
| Final reports due (no later than)  | July 31, 2020 |

**Bid Protest / Appeals Process**

GSA-Procurement & Support Services prides itself on the establishment of fair and competitive contracting procedures and the commitment made to following those procedures. The following is provided in the event that bidders wish to protest the bid process or appeal the recommendation to award a contract for this project once the Notices of Award/Non-Award have been issued. Bid protests submitted prior to issuance of the Notices of Award/Non-Award will not be accepted by the County.

1. Any Bid protest by any Bidder regarding any other Bid must be submitted in writing to the County’s GSA–Assistant Director, located at 1401 Lakeside Drive, 10th Floor, Oakland, CA 94612, Fax: (510) 208-9711, before 5:00 p.m. of the FIFTH (5th) business day following the date of issuance of the Notice of Intent to Award, not the date received by theBidder. A Bid protest received after 5:00 p.m. is considered received as of the next business day. A Bid protest received after the FIFTH (5TH) business day following the date of issuance of the Notice of Intent to Award shall not be considered under any circumstances by the GSA or the Auditor-Controller (OCC).

a. The bid protest must contain a complete statement of the reasons and facts for the protest.

b. The protest must refer to the specific portions of all documents that form the basis for the protest.

c. The protest must include the name, address, email address, and telephone number of the person representing the protesting party.

d. The County Agency/Department will transmit a copy of the bid protest to all bidders as soon as possible after receipt of the protest.

2. Upon receipt of written protest, GSA–Assistant Director, or designee will review and evaluate the protest and issue a written decision. The GSAAssistant Director, may, at his or her discretion, investigate the protest, obtain additional information, provide an opportunity to settle the protest by mutual agreement, and/or schedule a meeting(s) with the protesting Bidder and others (as appropriate) to discuss the protest. The decision on the bid protest will be issued at least ten (10) business days prior to the Board hearing or GSA award date. The decision will be communicated by e-mail or fax, and certified mail, and will inform the bidder whether or not the recommendation to the Board of Supervisors or GSA in the Notice of Intent to Award is going to change. A copy of the decision will be furnished to all Bidders affected by the decision. As used in this paragraph, a Bidder is affected by the decision on a Bid protest if a decision on the protest could have resulted in the Bidder not being the apparent successful Bidder on the RFI/Q.

3. The decision of the GSA–Assistant Director on the bid protest may be appealed to the Auditor- Controller’s Office of Contract Compliance (OCC) located at 1221 Oak St., Room 249, Oakland, CA 94612, Fax: (510) 272-6502. The Bidder whose Bid is the subject of the protest, all Bidders affected by the GSA-Assistant Director’s decision on the protest, and the protestor have the right to appeal if not satisfied with the GSA Assistant Director’s decision. All appeals to the Auditor-Controller’s OCC shall be in writing and submitted within five (5) business days following the issuance of the decision by the GSA-Assistant Director, not the date received by the Bidder. An appeal received after 5:00 p.m. is considered received as of the next business day. An appeal received after the FIFTH (5TH) business day following the date of issuance of the decision by the GSA-Assistant Director shall not be considered under any circumstances by the GSA or the Auditor-Controller OCC.

a. The appeal shall specify the decision being appealed and all the facts and circumstances relied upon in support of the appeal.

b. In reviewing protest appeals, the OCC will not re-judge the proposal(s). The appeal to the OCC shall be limited to review of the procurement process to determine if the contracting department materially erred in following the RFI/Q or, where appropriate, the County Charter, County Ordinances or other applicable federal, state or local laws and regulations.

c. The appeal to the OCC also shall be limited to the grounds raised in the original protest and the decision by the GSA-Assistant Director. As such, a Bidder is prohibited from stating new grounds for a Bid protest in its appeal, and the Auditor-Controller’s (OCC) shall not consider any other grounds. The Auditor-Controller (OCC) shall only review the materials and conclusions reached by the Assistant Director of GSA or department designee, and will determine whether to uphold or overturn the protest decision.

d. The Auditor’s Office may overturn the results of a bid process for ethical violations by Procurement & Support Services staff, County Selection Committee members, subject matter experts, or any other County staff managing or participating in the competitive bid process, regardless of timing or the contents of a bid protest.

e. The decision of the Auditor-Controller’s OCC is the final step of the appeal process. A copy of the decision of the Auditor-Controller’s OCC will be furnished to the protestor, the Bidder whose Bid is the subject of the Bid protest, and all Bidders affected by the decision.

4. The County will complete the Bid protest/appeal procedures set forth in this paragraph before a recommendation to award the Contract is considered by the Board of Supervisors or GSA.

5. The procedures and time limits set forth in this paragraph are mandatory and are each Bidder's sole and exclusive remedy in the event of Bid Protest. A Bidder’s failure to timely complete both the Bid protest and appeal procedures shall be deemed a failure to exhaust administrative remedies. Failure to exhaust administrative remedies, or failure to comply otherwise with these procedures, shall constitute a waiver of any right to further pursue the Bid protest, including filing a Government Code Claim or legal proceedings.

 **Application for Funding**

Please submit each of the following documents to Alessia.Simmonds@acgov.org by 5pm on August 30, 2019.

* + **Application** (Please keep answers succinct and specific)
	+ **W-9**
	+ **501(c)(3) letter or fiscal sponsor letter (N/A for governmental agencies or businesses)**
	+ **Budget**

**General Information**

Name of Institution/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name and title of primary contact for proposal: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Is your organization receiving or do you plan to apply for Census funding elsewhere? If so, please list funder, the amount, and describe the project: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Existing Alameda County Vendor Number (not required, only provide if available): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Background Questions:** (No more than 1 page, size 12 font, 1” margins, single sided, single spaced)

1. Provide a succinct summary of your organization’s history, mission, and purpose, as it relates to this project.
2. Describe your organization’s past or ongoing work around technology services or access to communities with limited broadband.
3. Describe your organization’s leadership, programs, outcomes, and ability to increase capacity for this contract.
4. Does Census outreach align with your mission? Please explain.

**Focus Area Question:** (No more than 2 pages, size 12 font, 1” margins, single sided, single spaced)

1. Please estimate the costs for the following outreach types. Specify costs for mobile devices, laptops, and computers, cybersecurity, internet access, staff time for planning and execution of efforts, and related costs such as transportation.
A. QAC Set up
B. Outreach Supported by the Technology Contractor
C. Outreach Led by the Technology Contractor
2. Describe your organization’s experience in working with and collaborating with community-based organizations.
3. Describe what your approach would be to ensure that technological resources are accessible in every event / program assigned by the Alameda County Census Office.
4. How will your organization ensure cybersecurity for your devices?
5. Describe your plans to measure success and evaluate the impact of your project, citing examples of previous tracking from other projects or programming.