

Metro Kansas City Census Equity Fund

[Home](#)

Fund Description:

The Metro Kansas City Census Equity Fund is a regional initiative established by a coalition of private and public foundations to maximize participation in the 2020 Census by supporting community-based efforts to educate, engage and mobilize residents who are likely to be hard-to-count.

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Background:

Our Constitution requires a Census – a count of all the nation’s residents - every 10 years. Data from the Census is used to determine the number and distribution of elected officials, to allocate funding for social programs, highway funds, and more, to enforce civil rights laws, and, to identify community needs and plan solutions. While the Census may seem at first glance to be simply an administrative task, in fact the Census is essential to ensuring all Americans are represented in our democracy and well served by it.

An accurate Census is foundational to an equitable allocation of resources. Unfortunately, the tendency for some groups of people to be undercounted– including communities of color, low-income households, immigrants, and young children – is a persistent problem. Undercounts deprive communities of fair representation and necessary resources. Researchers estimate that a 2020 undercount similar to the 2010 Census would result in the loss of \$48 million in the Kansas City region for 16 federal programs.

The next census will occur in April 2020. To ensure an accurate count, it will be important to address circumstances that might stand in the way of participation. People may not understand the census, may not trust the government, or may not want to share their information. The 2020 census will be conducted primarily online, and people without reliable internet access might find it difficult to participate.

Fund Goals:

The Metro Kansas City Census Equity Fund seeks to support efforts to enhance understanding of the Census and its importance to communities, and to advance full participation in Census 2020. The Fund will accept proposals for activities that educate, engage and mobilize people in Hard to Count (HTC) communities.

Strategies:

The Fund will support efforts to connect with and inform residents in historically undercounted communities, as well as initiatives to activate those residents to complete the Census. Funding priorities include the following strategies:



Within these priorities, applicants should design a project that best serves the specific needs of the community they serve.

Eligible Organizations:

Many nonprofit organizations are trusted members of the communities they serve and are well positioned to engage their constituents and encourage census participation. Organizations with the following characteristics are encouraged to apply:

- proven experience working in the Kansas City metro region
- demonstrated success as trusted messengers/voices in their communities
- established connections with hard to count populations and/or neighborhoods
- 501(c)(3) status (or a community group fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3) organization)

Process:

- **Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis beginning August 1, 2019 and reviewed monthly, beginning September 1st and will continue through May 2020 based on availability of funds.**
- Online applications will be accepted through the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation. Please click [here](#) to access the online application.
- Applicants will be informed about funding decisions by the last day of the month in which their application is reviewed.

Funding Criteria:

Successful proposals will include:

- Demonstrated ability to reach individuals or institutions trusted by hard-to-count populations
- General knowledge about the census process, uses of census data and requirements regarding filling out the form
- A feasible work plan to reach hard-to-count communities
- Organizational capacity to implement the proposed plan of action
- A sound approach for measuring progress

Additional Details:

- Grants are proposed to range between \$5,000-\$10,000, larger amounts may be proposed by multi-organization collaborations, which are encouraged
- Organizations awarded grants will be required to submit a report at the end of the grant period
- To minimize confusion, metropolitan Census efforts are utilizing the slogan "CountMeIn. . ." as in CountMeInKC, CountMeInJoCo, etc. All proposals for education, outreach and mobilization should include



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