



2020 WASHINGTON CENSUS EQUITY FUND

Evaluation Report



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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FOREWORD FROM THE HONORABLE GARY LOCKE

I was honored to guide the work of the 2020 Census in our state as the chair of the Washington Complete Count Committee.

In 2009, when President Obama took office and I became Secretary of Commerce, we inherited a troubled 2010 Census, but, with active supervision and unprecedented community engagement, ultimately delivered the most accurate census in U.S. history and came in 25% under-budget.

Executing the constitutionally mandated decennial population count requires an incredible amount of effort and planning. My experience with the 2010 Census showed that there are general challenges to ensuring a complete count, such as timely and adequate funding and staffing of the Census Bureau; communities of color distrusting the government after decades of oppression; various groups urging boycotting of the census unless national political demands were met; and survey fatigue. These challenges were exacerbated in 2020 by the proposed inclusion of the citizenship question and the COVID-19 pandemic.

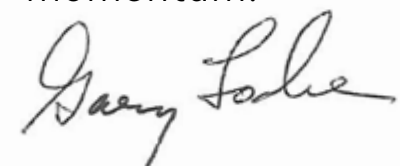
In 2019, I posed to the Washington Complete Count Committee members: “What does success look like? How will we measure it?” While numbers were paramount, there was a consensus that success would be indicated by, and dependent upon, two key measures: collaboration and fortification of relationships across government, private, nonprofit and philanthropic sectors; and the typically underserved becoming civically engaged.

Philanthropy Northwest took this question further by giving us a deeper view of how a collaborative of funders saw themselves as an important voice in shaping a robust and accurate count in Washington. With initial investments from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 2018, Philanthropy Northwest engaged and collaborated with the philanthropic sector to invest a total of \$1.5 million through the Washington Census Equity Fund, with some Equity Fund partners investing an additional \$3 million directly to community-based organizations.

This report is not just about philanthropic investments, however. It is about the collective impact that philanthropy, in partnership with community-based organizations and government, had in ensuring a robust and accurate count. We successfully depended on each other to achieve the incredible success of a higher census self-response than in 2010 and the second highest out of any state in 2020.

With the 2020 Census behind us, it is important to take the time to reflect on our work together. This report provides reflections and learnings that impact philanthropic giving and engagement to inform future efforts on a wide variety of civic challenges and endeavors.

Washington’s future is secured by the incredible efforts led by us all. Let us continue this momentum.



Gary Locke



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The decennial census count in the United States impacts the allocation of political representation and more than \$1.5 trillion in federal funding each year, including more than \$29 billion to Washington state, the focus of this report. While it produces quality data for governments, philanthropy, nonprofits, businesses and researchers alike, some populations can be – and historically have been – undercounted in the survey. This can lead to less representation and fewer resources for communities that are not accurately counted. For the 2020 Census, a combination of heightened political polarization, budget limitations and the COVID-19 pandemic threatened to increase undercounts.

Around the country, many philanthropy-serving organizations and cross-sector coalitions mobilized to help ensure an accurate census count against these challenges. Philanthropy Northwest was involved in census conversations regionally and nationally since 2017 through its work to promote a reflective and inclusive democracy. At the beginning of 2019, Philanthropy Northwest launched a funding partnership that became the Washington Census Equity Fund. With a shared purpose grounded in equity, this partnership invited all philanthropies committed to supporting census efforts to come together to build relationships, explore collaborative efforts and leverage philanthropic voice and influence to mitigate the undercount in Washington.

This report uses stakeholder interviews and grantee data to evaluate the Equity Fund's impact during the 2020 Census. Particular attention was given to the fund's grantmaking to community-based organizations, collaboration within the philanthropic community and philanthropy's role in partnering with community-based organizations on a cohesive advocacy strategy within Washington.

Resourcing Community-Based Organizations Through Grantmaking

Guided by continuous strategic discussions between Equity Fund partners, the Equity Fund issued two rounds of grants between 2019 and 2020, totaling \$1.5 million toward 83 grants to nonprofits, community organizations and tribes in Washington. Grants supported local nonprofits and grassroots organizations in executing outreach strategies within historically undercounted populations to increase census survey completion rates.

Grantees conducted a variety of tailored outreach methods, reaching communities through trusted community messengers, culturally centered census-themed events and merchandise, advertising, phone and digital communication and more. In total, they increased census awareness for more than two million residents.

Most funders and grantees felt the process went well, though with a mixed response in particular areas. While challenges were not unique to the Equity Fund, for some the application process was confusing or burdensome. The Equity Fund made modifications aimed to address these issues and promote a more flexible, community-based approach by the second round of funding. As the Equity Fund navigated its own learnings to ensure statewide access to funding, challenges in the external environment persisted. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Equity Fund quickly mobilized to respond, providing small general operating support payments to grantees with flexibility for grantees to creatively adjust their census outreach plans.

Philanthropic Coordination and Collaboration

The Equity Fund existed within an ecosystem of census stakeholders in Washington. Interviewees commonly viewed Philanthropy Northwest as a central hub of the work, though some saw it more as a broker between the public, philanthropic and nonprofit fields, or as a backbone organization.

The Equity Fund succeeded through utilizing Philanthropy Northwest's existing relationships with funders and working with nonprofits as partners, not solely as grantees. A couple key partnerships included working with the Washington State Office of Financial Management, which managed the state's census work, and the Washington Census Alliance, a network of People of Color-led community-based organizations and tribes that conducted census outreach and led advocacy for increased census funding.

Challenges to the collaboration included limited capacity of the Equity Fund partners, as well as some experiencing a lack of clarity around roles and expectations, or perceiving power disparities and issues with transparency. Staff turnover within some philanthropies, plus virtual meetings – influenced by geographic distance at first and later mandated by the pandemic – also affected opportunities to network and build relationships.

Advocacy

In early 2019, the Washington Legislature approved \$15 million for census outreach. This far exceeded the governor's original proposal for \$4.5 million, which would have been far less effective at supporting an accurate census count. The government's increased prioritization of the census resulted from the advocacy of numerous stakeholders, including grassroots organizers of the Washington Census Alliance who led the collaborative strategy that Philanthropy Northwest and Equity Fund partners helped design and execute. In addition to the increased resources, advocacy resulted in a greater understanding among nonprofits and especially funders about the role of the census, and also highlighted the effectiveness of collective action.

Philanthropy Northwest had an impactful role in convening the Equity Fund. Many Equity Fund partners considered the effort effective given the level of coordination of philanthropic resources to ensure a robust and accurate count. As organizations look to the future – be it the 2030 Census or other civic engagement efforts – Philanthropy Northwest and many Equity Fund partners recognize the importance of adapting the lessons learned to leverage the partnerships that developed.

Data and interviews from the evaluation revealed several recommendations for future census collaborations. These included starting the work early, practicing transparency, remaining proactive and responsive, streamlining grantee requirements and elevating the trusted messenger model. Some suggestions can be implemented now, including maintaining the infrastructure and existing partnerships, institutionalizing learning and supporting funder engagement in advocacy.

The 2020 Census efforts raised the bar for many philanthropies in Washington for engaging in a broad campaign to strengthen communities and build an inclusive democracy. As stakeholders across the country begin exploring how to continue working together for the 2030 Census, Philanthropy Northwest is certain the Equity Fund's 2020 partnership is only the beginning for philanthropy and the census in Washington.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2020 CENSUS: THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CLIMATE

A robust and accurate census is a critical mechanism in our democracy. Required by the U.S. Constitution,¹ the decennial census is a survey that aims to count every person in the country, as well as gather some basic demographic information. The census count affects the distribution of political representation and the equitable allocation of more than **\$1.5 trillion** in federal funds each year – including a combined \$69 billion to the Northwest states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming.² These funds support programs and improvements in public health, education, transportation, emergency preparedness and more. Demographic and socioeconomic data from the census also help state, local and tribal leaders, businesses, nonprofits and foundations prioritize services, resources and investments.

The census is never perfect, but there should be little room for error. Population **undercounts**³ can negatively affect the **resources and political representation**⁴ distributed to communities, and an undercount of up to a few percentage points is common among populations less likely to complete the survey. “**Hard-to-count**”⁵ populations often include young children, People of Color, migrants, rural and remote residents, renters and people experiencing homelessness, among others. For example, the 2010 Census undercounted Native Americans living on reservations by **nearly 5%** – one of the most missed populations in that census.⁶

The 2020 Census lacked sufficient funding early in the process, leading to fewer resources for outreach to historically undercounted groups, as well as a reduction in field testing of the survey. Pre-census testing is an important stage in the census operation, especially when there are changes to the process or form. In particular, the 2020 Census introduced an internet response option that replaced the paper form in many areas, but also raised **cybersecurity concerns**⁷ about compromised data and would not be accessible for households lacking internet connectivity.

An underlying cause of the census operation’s instability was the politicization of the process. Central to the partisan pressure was a proposal from the presidential administration that the survey should ask for people’s citizenship status. A question about citizenship on the 2020 Census would likely have reduced participation among immigrant households, especially in Hispanic communities, and therefore reduced

the accuracy of the count. The Supreme Court **prevented** the inclusion of the question on the form,⁸ but the attempt increased people’s distrust of government and may have influenced them to avoid taking the census.

The new Congress in 2019 helped move significant resources to the census. At the end of 2019, the Census Bureau received \$7.6 billion to bolster the census count. The **funding** exceeded the request from the Census Bureau and would allow the 2020 Census to provide additional questionnaire assistance and outreach.⁹ However, state governments also varied widely in their own census outreach funding. States that invested more in census outreach and collaboration could increase the accuracy of the count of their residents and, in turn, increase their federal funding allocations (and political representation in certain cases). States with fewer census resources may receive less due to undercounted hard-to-count populations.

Lastly, the COVID-19 pandemic began soon after the census started, adding new challenges and worsening existing ones. Disasters make it difficult to accurately survey the population, and in particular, the pandemic made in-person outreach a health risk. The Census Bureau **pushed back** its operational deadlines by multiple months, eventually ending the in-person count at the end of September 2020 rather than mid-summer.¹⁰ For safety reasons, the Census Bureau limited its in-person questionnaire assistance and did not reopen its administrative offices until later in spring 2020. The reduced in-person outreach may have **negatively** affected response rates, especially in rural areas and among other hard-to-count populations.¹¹

ROLE OF PHILANTHROPY IN THE 2020 CENSUS

Mounting concerns about the challenges facing the 2020 count drew the philanthropic sector’s attention. By 2017, the topic of the census had gained interest and momentum across philanthropy. Some philanthropy-serving organizations (PSOs) at the national, regional and state levels had begun to launch census collaborations, funds and advocacy efforts. Many in philanthropy were also connecting to, and leading others in philanthropy into, a larger ecosystem of cross-issue, cross-sector stakeholders who were all invested in an accurate 2020

count. For the 2010 Census, philanthropic support to organizations leading policy advocacy, education and outreach efforts exceeded **\$33 million nationally**.¹² While these organizations maintained their focus into 2020, it was clear philanthropy needed to catch up and engage in a more concerted way to address the unprecedented challenges of this census cycle. With only a couple years left before the 2020 Census, advocating for more resources and supporting communities’ preparedness was of the essence.



This was the environment in which Philanthropy Northwest began considering its own role in the 2020 Census. By 2017, Philanthropy Northwest’s national partners had established a clear priority to support census efforts and were inviting Philanthropy Northwest’s partnership. These leading partners included United Philanthropy Forum, the nation’s largest membership network of PSOs; Funders’ Committee for Civic Participation, which managed the Funders Census Initiative; and Democracy Funders Collaborative Census Subgroup, funders working together at the national level to develop a multi-pronged philanthropic strategy, including aligning funding to organizations. Around this time, Philanthropy Northwest had also increased its capacity to engage in public policy with the hiring of a public policy-focused staff member and expansion of the organization’s public policy lens to address issues focused more squarely on promoting more diverse, equitable and inclusive communities in the Northwest. The case for Philanthropy Northwest’s role in leveraging its voice, relationships and wide network to support a robust and accurate census count was compelling; with this once-in-a-decade endeavor, there would be no opportunity for do-overs. In December 2017, the Philanthropy Northwest board approved to support a fully funded, accurate 2020 Census, including through efforts to prioritize hard-to-count communities, as an organizational public policy priority.

PHILANTHROPY NORTHWEST AND THE 2020 CENSUS

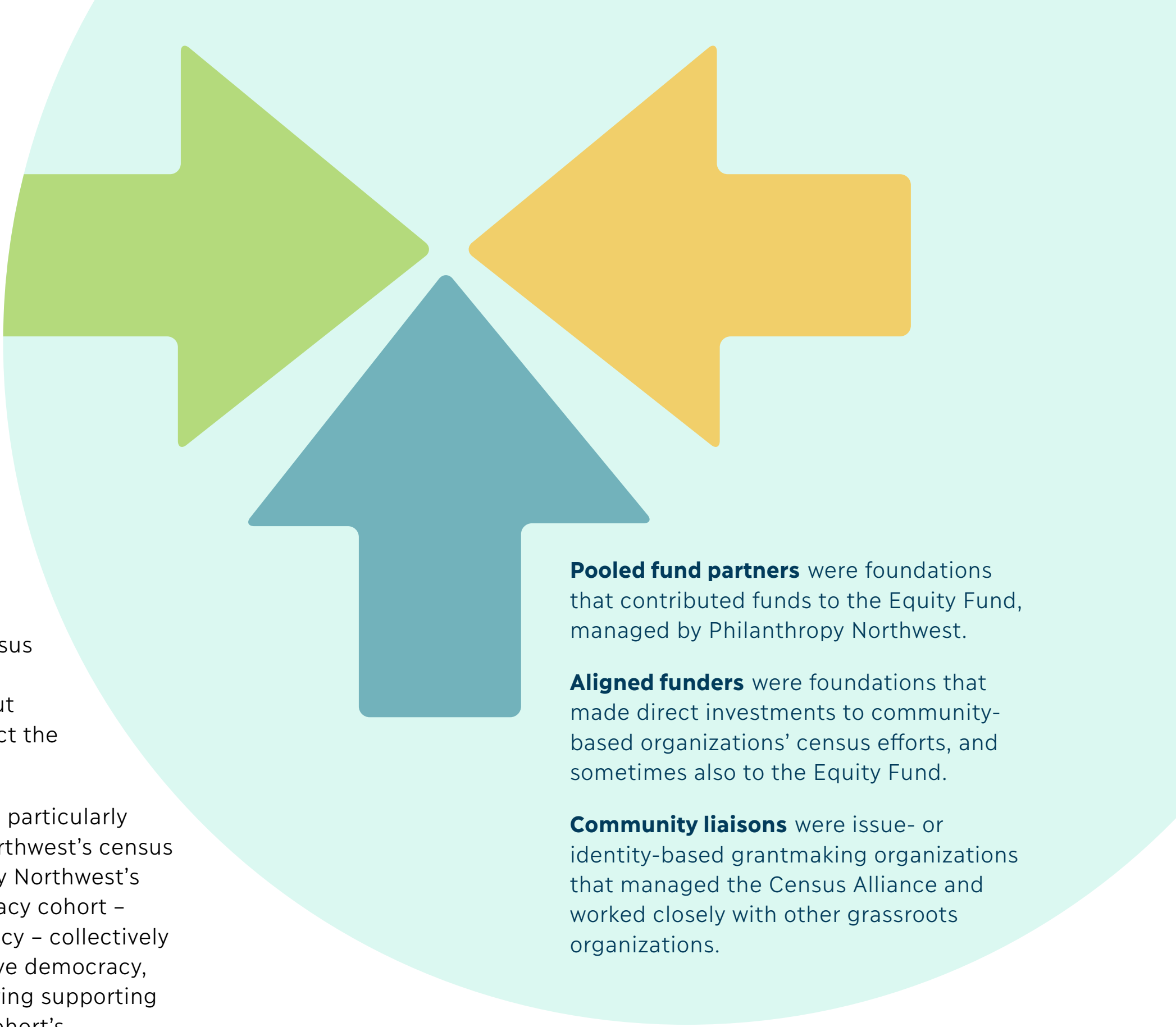
Philanthropy Northwest is a regional network of philanthropies in the Northwest, connecting funders across various convenings and collaborative efforts. The organization represents around 150 grantmakers holding roughly half of the philanthropic assets in the region.

Philanthropy Northwest supports spaces that catalyze philanthropy into coordinated action, including on public policy issues impacting the sector and communities in the region. This can happen immediately or over a more gradual process. In the case of the 2020 Census, Philanthropy Northwest’s work navigated elements of both, due to the external timing of census operations and advocacy that brought an urgency to the issue, and the network learning and strategizing that unfolded over multiple years. Following Philanthropy Northwest’s commitment to focusing on the 2020 Census, the organization took multiple paths to operationalizing the work.

2018 focused on building awareness, convening dialogue and planning. Philanthropy Northwest became an active member of the Funders Census Initiative (FCI), which mobilized philanthropic organizations across the country to learn, strategize, plan and advocate together. Philanthropy Northwest joined FCI’s leadership team to inform national efforts with its regional perspective, and to facilitate connections and amplify the resources accessible to Philanthropy Northwest’s membership network.

In tandem with organizational learning and expertise-building, Philanthropy Northwest leveraged its role as a convener to bring more discussion about the 2020 Census into its network spaces across the region. Some spaces were an immediate and natural fit for the dialogue about what philanthropy needed to do as the window to impact the 2020 Census was closing.

Two groups of Philanthropy Northwest members played particularly significant roles in the early months of Philanthropy Northwest’s census work in Washington. Under the umbrella of Philanthropy Northwest’s Democracy Northwest initiative, members of the advocacy cohort – funders with deep commitments to advancing democracy – collectively recognized the census’ vital role in a strong and inclusive democracy, and several had independently funded or were considering supporting community organizations leading census efforts. The cohort’s discussions in 2018 focused on how to align and potentially collaborate. Another set of members were participants in the Building Community Philanthropy (BCP) initiative, a Philanthropy Northwest network of community foundations, identity-based grantmakers and United Ways that learn and work together to promote equitable philanthropy and support community-led solutions.¹³ Philanthropy Northwest proposed the 2020 Census as a potential issue for the group’s collective learning and collaboration. In January 2018, Philanthropy Northwest solicited national census experts from FCI and the Democracy Funders Collaborative Census Subgroup to speak at a BCP convening and with the Democracy Northwest advocacy cohort, addressing the scale of coordinated efforts and bringing a sense of urgency to funders’ imperative to engage in the census. The discussions helped catalyze the efforts to come.



Philanthropy Northwest’s deepening relationships across the national ecosystem of broader census stakeholders supported the network’s progression into collective action. As part of the FCI leadership team, Philanthropy Northwest collaborated in the development of strategies for funder outreach, education, resource development and technical assistance that would extend to FCI’s open working group of funders across the country. In particular, concerns about the proposed citizenship question led Philanthropy Northwest and nearly three dozen national and regional PSOs to sign on to a [letter](#) in August 2018 to the U.S. Department of Commerce and Census Bureau opposing the proposal,¹⁴ in tandem with a [separate letter](#) that 300 individual philanthropies submitted,¹⁵ including more than two dozen Philanthropy Northwest members. This effort set the stage for

Philanthropy Northwest to join 30 other philanthropy organizations in filing an **amicus curiae (friend-of-the-court) brief** in the U.S. Supreme Court the following spring, outlining the many ways foundations and PSOs rely on accurate census data to support thriving and empowered communities.¹⁶ These examples underscore the intentionality of engaging and leveraging PSOs, like Philanthropy Northwest, with their network structure, as leaders to build a movement for philanthropic advocacy and investment.

LAUNCH OF THE WASHINGTON CENSUS EQUITY FUND

As discussions about philanthropic collaborations on the 2020 Census continued across its regional network, Philanthropy Northwest directly engaged with community and government leaders in Washington, positioning the organization for perhaps a new type of census role. The Washington Census Alliance, or Census Alliance, a coalition of organizations led by people of color and Native tribes across the state, had been building membership and momentum for several months, with some members straddling both Census Alliance and Philanthropy Northwest membership and facilitating Philanthropy Northwest's connection to the coalition. The Census Alliance's larger mission was to build the capacity of Black-, Indigenous- and People of Color-led (BIPOC) organizations to lead advocacy efforts with a regional and geographic perspective, which would then transition post-census into ongoing leadership opportunities, including through redistricting advocacy. Additionally, the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM), the executive agency that oversaw the state's efforts in the 2020 Census, was preparing to launch the Washington State Complete Count Committee in fall 2018 and invited Philanthropy Northwest to join.

By fall 2018, Philanthropy Northwest's growing relationships across sectors – especially philanthropic members and partners, the Census Alliance and OFM – layered upon the catalytic discussions with BCP and the advocacy cohort, led to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation inviting Philanthropy Northwest to submit a proposal for funding that would mobilize philanthropy to coordinate strategies and pool investments.

Philanthropy Northwest responded to this invitation by considering two key questions:

- Why was a coordinated and collaborative philanthropic strategy important to fund community-based organizations?

- How would Philanthropy Northwest design this effort to support philanthropy and community-based organizations to work together to ensure a robust and accurate count?

A collaborative strategy could scale philanthropy's impact on the census in an unprecedented manner. The goals of coordination were to maximize the impact of philanthropic investments to ensure a robust and accurate count across Washington for the 2020 Census and create a model for philanthropic partnerships, government engagement and community mobilization beyond 2020 to support a more vibrant democracy.

From late fall 2018 through early winter 2019, Philanthropy Northwest built its internal team to staff the overall effort, which primarily consisted of its CEO, three public policy staff members (including a new staff member to lead these efforts) and a staff member from The Giving Practice with grantmaking expertise. Based at Philanthropy Northwest, The Giving Practice is a national consulting firm committed to building stronger communities through more equitable, collaborative and effective philanthropy. Philanthropy Northwest also identified key roles across the rest of the organization, including communications staff and consultants to develop messaging toolkits, templates and guidance for grantees and philanthropic partners, and finance staff to manage and move the funds efficiently.

With this internal team in place, Philanthropy Northwest began outreach to prospective philanthropic partners. Philanthropy Northwest answered critical questions about why a collaborative philanthropic approach was important – whether it was by pooling or aligning funding and strengthening coordination, or by building trust with community leaders about Philanthropy Northwest's participation. Prospective partners also had questions about the purpose of allocating funding to Philanthropy Northwest instead of directly to community-based organizations and coalitions. While Philanthropy Northwest was interested in leveraging philanthropic investments for coordinated grantmaking, it was important to have an equity orientation during fundraising. Philanthropy Northwest also considered how funders could engage in the collective efforts and ultimately decided it was important for funders to participate without the barriers of “pay-to-play.” This decision encouraged funders to invest in census efforts, whether it was through pooled or aligned funding, which led to an invitation to join the partnership to participate in a statewide 2020 Census strategy



for Washington philanthropies. The partnership eventually included three types of grantmakers: pooled fund partners, aligned funders and community liaisons.

The initial meeting of interested partners in February 2019 set a foundation for how collective participation would actualize philanthropic impact on the 2020 Census. Partners first developed an understanding of their purpose and principles that would guide their work together. See Appendix A for the Purpose and Principles document and Appendix F for a full list of Equity Fund partners. Partners also agreed that the collaborative would be known as the Washington Census Equity Fund, or Equity Fund. They would meet collectively each month, though specific aspects of the partnership would be divided among four subcommittees coordinated by Philanthropy Northwest staff members. A smaller additional set of funders invested in the census but did not have the organizational bandwidth to actively engage in the Equity Fund.

INFRASTRUCTURE OF THE EQUITY FUND



Governance Committee

The governance committee included funding partners committed to engaging in a collective strategy to guide the Equity Fund’s overall objectives. The committee met about once a month from February 2019 through July 2020 and occasionally afterward, mostly online with in-person meetings twice per year. Many, but not all, Equity Fund partners attended these meetings, which included ongoing updates of regional and statewide census outreach and engagement strategies, funding decisions, and relationship building and collaboration across the partnership.

Government Relations Subcommittee

The government relations subcommittee formed after the initial governance committee meeting in February 2019. It consisted of funders that had interest, capacity or relationships to strategically inform collective efforts to support the Census Alliance’s ask to the Washington legislature to budget \$15 million for the 2020 Census.

Grants Subcommittee

Guided by recommendations from the governance committee, the grants subcommittee helped create the request for proposals (RFP) protocol and processes to ensure that the Equity Fund funding was accessible and supported efforts across Washington. The subcommittee met virtually before each round of applications opened to provide strategic guidance on the RFP and review process, helping address questions about the direction and parameters of the grants.

The first RFP, dedicated to planning and mobilization, involved collaboration with the King County-centered Regional Census Fund, hosted by Seattle Foundation. The second RFP focused on census outreach and education, especially for grantees that were unable to obtain state funding.

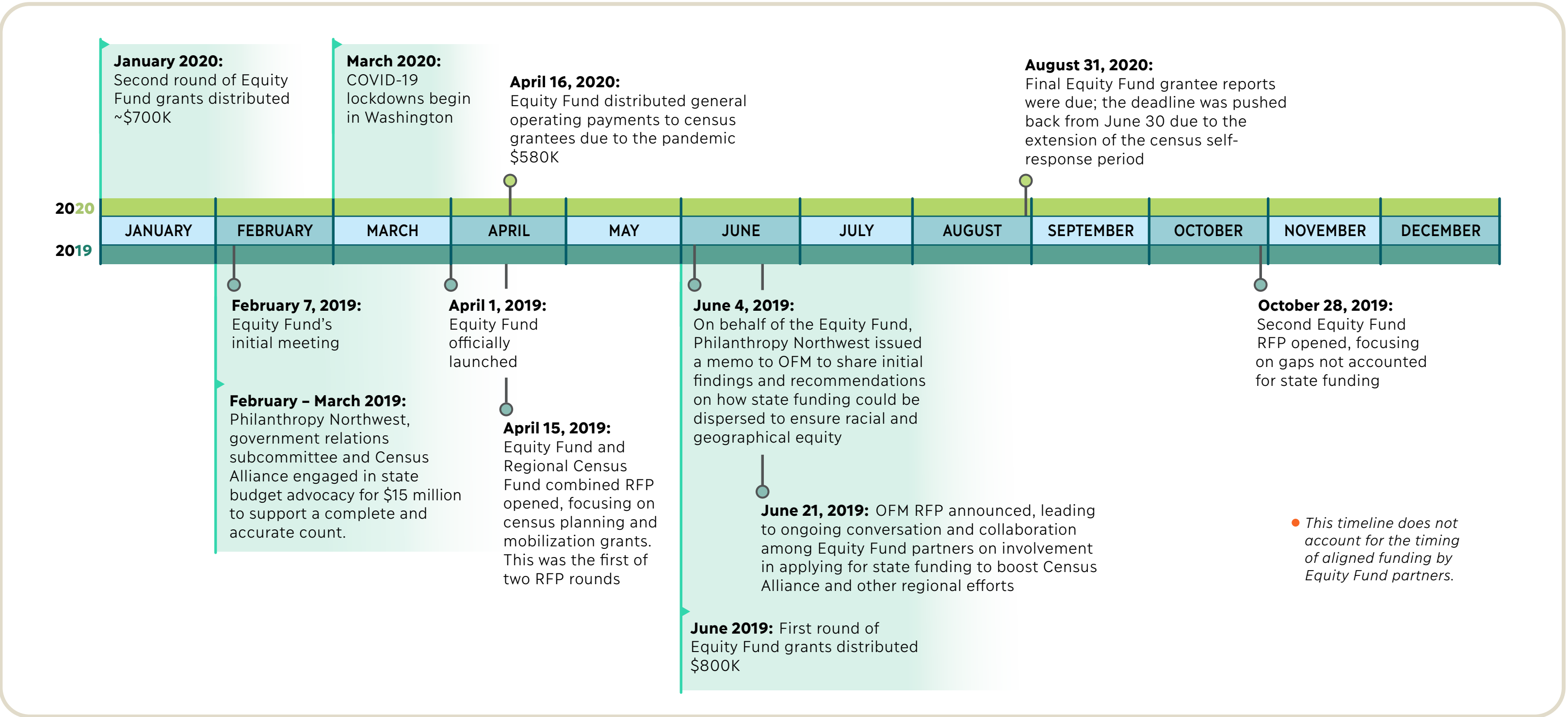
Outreach and Communications Subcommittee

The outreach and communications subcommittee provided guidance and support for external outreach and communications. The subcommittee shared ideas and feedback, especially about the RFPs, to ensure awareness of the census and the Equity Fund’s funding reached a wide audience across the state. Members also helped spread the word to potential applicants, working in partnership with the grants subcommittee to produce materials in multiple languages to ensure greater accessibility.

Steering Subcommittee

The steering subcommittee served as a diverse group of thought partners that guided Philanthropy Northwest staff when needed. While the subcommittee was initially formed to serve as the leadership body of the Equity Fund, the Equity Fund principles demanded that this collaborative operated in a manner that distributed power and decision making among all the Equity Fund partners. As such, the subcommittee affirmed open, transparent conversations while serving as an additional thought partner to guide Philanthropy Northwest and the Equity Fund.

TIMELINE OF THE EQUITY FUND’S KEY ACTIVITIES



EVALUATION

LAYING OUT THE EVALUATION LANDSCAPE (METHODOLOGY)

The evaluation of the Equity Fund commenced in summer 2020. To assess achievement of the Equity Fund’s purpose, the evaluation team explored four key questions related to the fund:

- Did the fund help ensure a complete count?
- Did the collaboration that occurred within the fund catalyze more resources?
- Was the fund implemented effectively?
- What lessons from this census model can apply to future census collaborations?

To address these questions, Philanthropy Northwest staff and The Giving Practice evaluation consultants partnered to develop an evaluation framework. They employed an iterative evaluation process to help capture the nuances of the Equity Fund and its outcomes. The framework explored three outcome areas: 1. funding priorities and responsiveness to grantees; 2. collaboration between the fund partners with one another and with Philanthropy Northwest; and 3. advocacy. Using a mixed-methods research approach, the evaluation design wove together both qualitative and quantitative data. This strategy provided a comprehensive understanding of the influence and impact of the Equity Fund across Washington.



Data Collection

This report uses four main sources to develop its findings (Appendices C-E include protocol instruments for the data sources):

- Grantee survey: Equity Fund grantees submitted a final report detailing their census work at the end of August 2020. While grantees received the questions at the start of the grant term, Philanthropy Northwest altered and added some questions to gather data on how grantees promoted the 2020 Census despite the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Equity Fund partner survey: Philanthropy Northwest released a survey in January 2021 to generate information from Equity Fund partners about the activities and strategies deployed by the fund. Philanthropy Northwest sent the survey to all partners, regardless of level of participation or contribution.
- Interviews: From January to April 2021, the evaluation team conducted interviews with 22 stakeholders who could provide substantive feedback. Philanthropy Northwest and The Giving Practice selected participants to provide a broad range of perspectives about the Equity Fund, including large funders, community liaisons, community foundations with high levels of involvement with the Equity Fund and leadership in their geographic areas, Washington legislators, the Census Alliance, OFM and Washington Nonprofits.
- Focus groups: From January to April 2021, the evaluation team conducted three focus groups: one with community foundations, one with the Census Alliance’s public policy committee and one with an RFP reviewer panel.

The evaluation’s findings are organized into three sections. Section One, “Resourcing Community-Based Organizations Through Grantmaking,” explores the priorities of the fund, the RFP process, grantee accomplishments and the impact of COVID-19 on census efforts. Section Two, “Philanthropic Coordination and Collaboration,”

examines how partners worked together for a common purpose and outlines different models for collaboration. Lastly, Section Three, “State Budget Advocacy,” lays out the factors that contributed to the collective advocacy effort.

Limitations of the Evaluation

Philanthropy Northwest and The Giving Practice also acknowledge limitations in the evaluation process. It would have been ideal to interview each Equity Fund partner, but resource limitations prevented this. Although the Equity Fund partner survey allowed the evaluation to cast a wider net to gain additional insight from partners not interviewed, Philanthropy Northwest and The Giving Practice chose the interview participants based on level of engagement, types of funders and key stakeholders across sectors. While The Giving Practice conducted most of the data collection, Philanthropy Northwest staff administered the Equity Fund partner and grantee surveys and synthesized survey data that informed findings in this report.

Additionally, because many grantees also received funding from other entities, it is difficult to isolate the work done specifically by the Equity Fund and attribute impact to the Equity Fund alone.

The authors strive to be objective throughout this report. Philanthropy Northwest staff who administered the Equity Fund and led Philanthropy Northwest’s census state budget advocacy co-authored this report with The Giving Practice evaluation consultants. Philanthropy Northwest acknowledges the potential risk of bias in gathering and synthesizing data. In addition, the The Giving Practice evaluation consultants were not involved from the onset of the Equity Fund, and therefore there may be a few discrepancies in how the interviews were interpreted.

RESOURCING COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS THROUGH GRANTMAKING

The primary role of philanthropy is to do grantmaking. This section explores the timeline and priorities of the Equity Fund. It also details the RFP process before highlighting the accomplishments of grantees. This section ends with examining the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on community-based organizations carrying out crucial census efforts.

Priorities of the Equity Fund

The Equity Fund planned to make two rounds of funding to community-based organizations. The first round focused on planning and mobilization. The second round focused on outreach and education. The Equity Fund designed these stages with the expectation that the state would fund additional census work with even more financial resources at their disposal than philanthropy, which anticipated contributing at least \$3 million in total investments. Through this staggered grantmaking, the Equity Fund sought to maximize philanthropic resources to support grantees across the state.

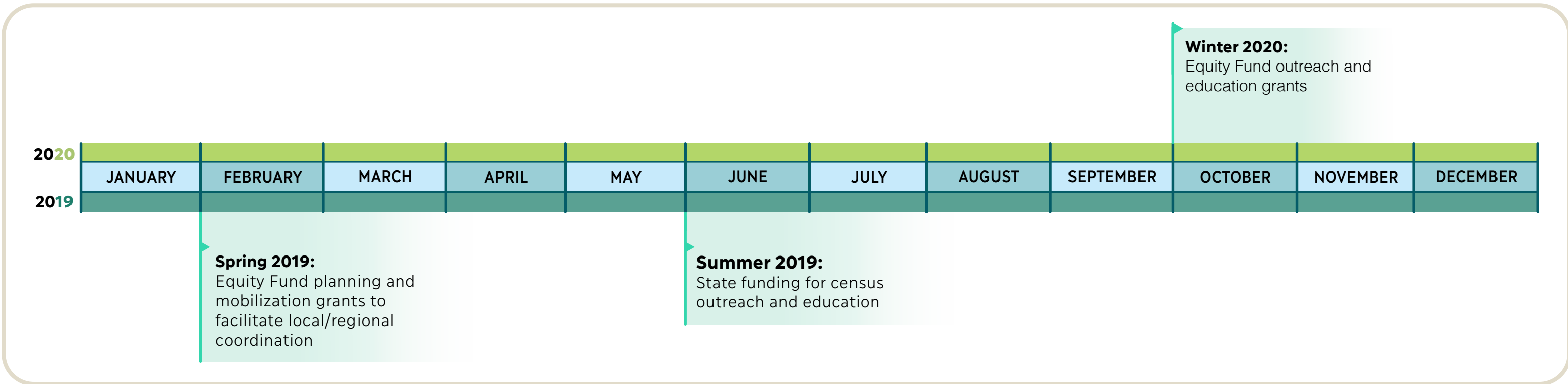
In interviews and surveys with funding partners, there was no contention that the Equity Fund’s priority was to ensure greater outreach in communities that have been historically undercounted, including racial and ethnic minorities, lower income populations, rural communities, undocumented (and documented) immigrants, people who do not speak English and those experiencing homelessness.

When asked during the evaluation process what they believed the goals of the Equity Fund to be, funders consistently spoke about its commitment to equity.

“The goal of the fund was to ensure those in categories which are typically undercounted, such as immigrant communities, those who speak a language other than English as their first language and those experiencing homelessness or facing atypical mental health concerns [were included] in order to achieve a more equitable census count.”

“[The goal of the fund was] to have a positive impact on the historical undercount of community members, particularly communities of color, in the census while addressing the additional threats that the Census 2020 presented.”

PREDICTED FUNDING TIMELINE



“Equity, equity, equity! We need [People of Color] and rural areas well counted to ensure adequate funding for all communities and – perhaps more importantly – representation in government.”

While partners had initial concerns related to funding going to highly populated areas or being spread too thinly to make an impact, they felt the Equity Fund was successful in covering Washington state.

“[The] geographic reach seemed good, as well. The fund was very mindful in including community foundations, and we saw lots of community folks represented [in the fund].”

During reflections on the process in the evaluation interviews, partners shared they were concerned during the fund’s planning stages about rural and tribal areas being accurately counted because of sprawl, remoteness, the higher prevalence of P.O. boxes and the digital divide due to infrastructure and financial means. They shared that in order to address the problem head-on, the Equity Fund intentionally sought to address geographic equity by funding grantees working specifically with rural and tribal communities.



Grantmaking

Request For Proposals (RFP) Process

The Equity Fund’s first RFP opened in spring 2019, with \$800,000 available for 501(c)(3) nonprofits, 501(c)(3)-sponsored community organizations and tribal governments. Each organization was eligible for a grant of up to \$40,000 to focus on planning and mobilization. Philanthropy Northwest answered inquiries on an ongoing basis and hosted three question-and-answer calls to connect with applicants and help clarify any concerns. Each grant proposal went to both Seattle Foundation’s Regional Census Fund and the Equity Fund; while the Regional Census Fund solely focused on King County-centered applications, the Equity Fund prioritized applicants outside King County (with a few funded within King County). A dozen volunteers, of which 10 were employees of foundations and governments, reviewed applications. Following additional high-level reviews from Equity Fund partners and Philanthropy Northwest, the Equity Fund selected 28 grantees out of a total 56 applications.

The second RFP began in October 2019, with \$700,000 available for grants up to \$20,000 for census outreach and education. This round followed the Regional Census Fund’s second RFP and the state’s RFP, so it was one of the last opportunities for new grantees to get census funding in Washington.

The Equity Fund revised the second process to ensure that the opportunity reached an even wider audience and was accessible to small organizations. In addition to minor adjustments to the application (see Appendix B), broad outreach and hosting three more question-and-answer calls for applicant inquiries, Philanthropy Northwest held an online listening session to gather community perspectives before the RFP launched. The review process also turned mostly to paid community reviewers, a shift applauded by Equity Fund partners. Of 25 reviewers, 20 did not work at a foundation or government office.

LANGUAGES COVERED BY GRANTEEES INCLUDE
(but are not limited to):

Afan Oromo	ASL	Amharic	Arabic	Cantonese	Hindi
Hmong	Kikuyu	Kinyarwanda	Mandarin	Russian	Somali
Spanish	Tagalog	Tigrinya	Urdu	Vietnamese	

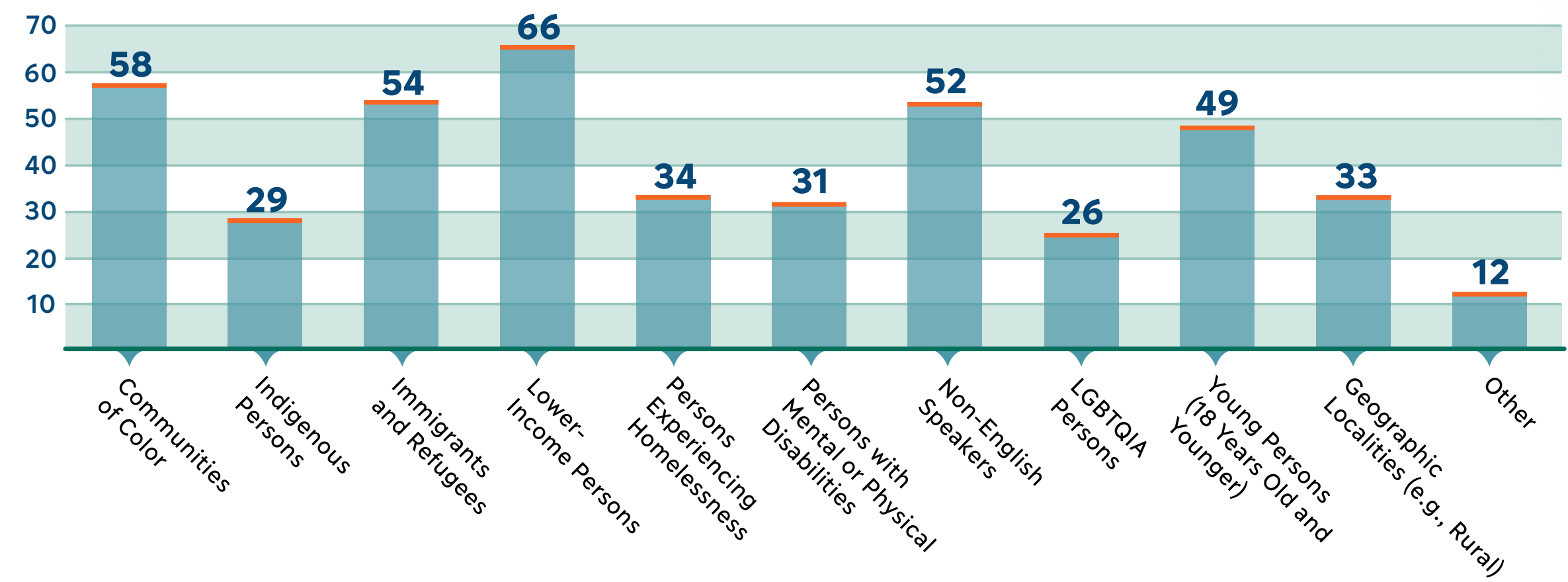
In January 2020, 55 additional organizations received funding out of a total 78 applications. Most of these grantees had not applied for or received funding from the first round. For many, this was their only census funding.

In total, the Equity Fund distributed 83 grants to 77 grantees covering a wide range of localities and hard-to-count populations (see Grantees Serving Hard-to-Count Populations on the next page) across 38 of Washington’s 39 counties, as well as several statewide grantees (see Number of Grantees Serving Each County on the next page). These numbers, as well as many of the themes and quotes outlined below, come from the knowledge and observations that 76 grantees shared in their final reports. Appendix G provides a full list of grantees.

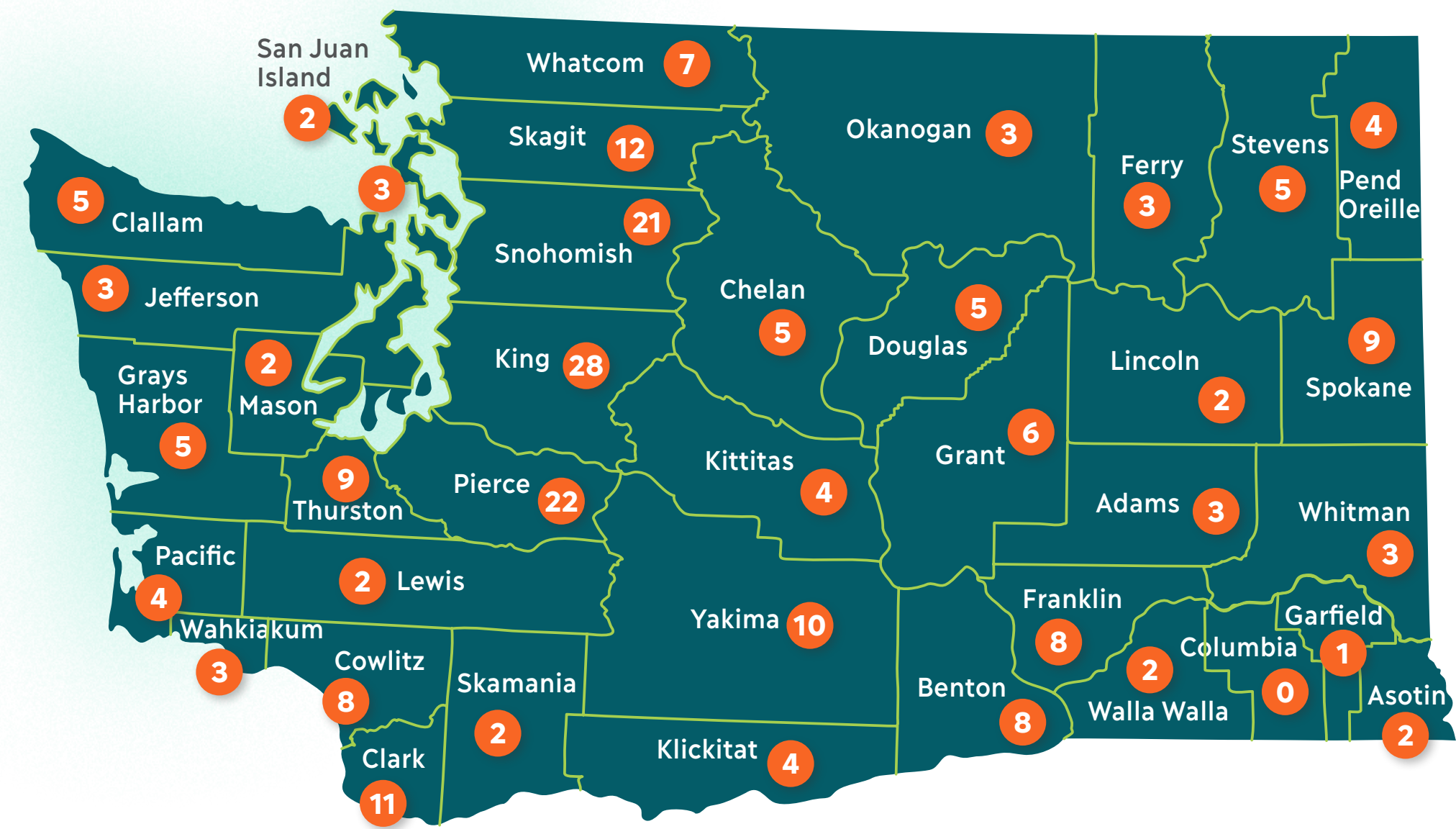
To stay connected, Philanthropy Northwest hosted two grantee check-in calls in the middle of the grant terms. First-round grantees also submitted a mid-term report, which highlighted their progress to Equity Fund partners. All grantees received email updates about the process, as well as resources and funding opportunities that the Census Alliance, individual grantees and other partners brought to Philanthropy Northwest’s attention.



GRANTEES SERVING HARD-TO-COUNT POPULATIONS



NUMBER OF GRANTEES SERVING EACH COUNTY



11 Statewide

Note: Some grantees covered multiple counties and were counted for each county. However, statewide grantees were excluded from county totals.

RFP Accessibility and Distribution

During the evaluation team’s interviews, Equity Fund partners shared initial concerns that funding would privilege applicants in Seattle and the greater King County area. They questioned if the collaboration with the Regional Census Fund during the first RFP only exacerbated this perception. Interview participants also acknowledged that the Equity Fund made conscious efforts to prioritize not only statewide coverage of funding but also geographic equity of funding. This prioritization in practice involved mapping out different regions across the state to ensure that organizations outside of the Puget Sound region had the opportunity to apply for and receive grants. The Equity Fund also relied heavily on community foundations across Washington to provide greater insight and outreach to local organizations that could be potential grantees.

Equity Fund partners agreed at the outset to have a streamlined and simple RFP process.

“We talked a lot about language, accessibility of language, and accessibility of the request for proposals – how to make things easy, clear and low barrier.”

However, there were mixed impressions from both funders and grantees on how successful the process was in meeting this goal. Some fund partners believed the process met the intended goals and felt that the speed at which the funds were set up and deployed was both “remarkable” and “done in good partnership.” Partners also shared that having two funding phases was beneficial.

“There are philanthropy deserts across the state, and we wanted to reach them as deeply. We gave money but did it in two phases since some communities were slower to get going [in their census efforts]. We wanted to make sure that we didn’t miss those still doing critical work.”

Other partners and grantees experienced challenges and felt the RFP process was burdensome. Some partners and grantees cited that the time needed to complete the application itself was not commensurate with the grant amount received. For nonprofits who lacked infrastructure or recently became nonprofits, the effort needed to complete the application process was even greater. A number

of partners also indicated that the application was not completely intuitive and that grantees often needed additional support on the application process.

“[It] would be great to include community in helping build the RFP and reporting process (or other funders) so it is lower-lift.”

“The intent was to reach out to those historically undercounted; however, I saw large organizations that would apply for everything. So, while the intent of the Equity Fund was there, I don’t know about implementation or how were [organizations] asked to apply.”

“It was a large lift RFP. ... The RFP was long for what it was, in terms of money. Trusted messengers for census work were not grant writers. ... Written responses (for reporting) and hard deadlines don’t mean that funders can’t adapt and adjust to community.”

“We got a few groups to apply that might not have. But was there a lost opportunity in the process? Many nonprofits lack the infrastructure, or recently became a nonprofit. Outreach success depends on including these groups.”

While the RFP process did not come without challenges, most grantees shared that they appreciated the opportunity and the flexibility, responsiveness and clarity the Equity Fund provided throughout the process. When asked to rate their grant experience from 1 (“poor”) to 5 (“excellent”), grantees gave an average rating of 4.7.

“Historically underserved communities need more access to grants of this kind (clear, concise, without a long list of requirements) to be able to build community successfully.”

“The network of grantees created by the [Equity Fund] was valuable. The conference calls were helpful for receiving information, sharing ideas and learning what other grantees were doing. We appreciate how the team kept us connected during our grant term.”



Grantee Accomplishments

Grantees carried out the Equity Fund’s intent to increase organizations’ capacity to conduct outreach, public education and advocacy to support an accurate count. In particular, they informed historically undercounted populations in Washington about census participation. Grantees’ combined outreach goal was 1,272,000 people. While their work was strongly affected by the size of their grants, the sizes of their organizations and external factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic, grantees estimated reaching 2,354,000 people through one or more of their outreach mediums. A subset of 22 grantees estimated that on average, they each communicated with over 3,100 people who would not have completed the census if not for their outreach.

Grantees usually centered their census work on specific hard-to-count populations they routinely served, with tailored messaging strategies and grant funds going toward equipment, staffing and supplies. For direct outreach, some grantees relied on paid trusted messengers to bring residents information about the census and answer their concerns. As a model implemented nationwide, trusted messengers were community members with census ambassador training who educated others about the census and its importance to the community's priorities. Grantees themselves were also trusted messengers. In quite a few cases, the **Promotora Model**, a trusted messenger method originating in Latin America to distribute public health and other information to the population,¹⁷ inspired this approach.

“[Our community members] have never participated in a national census before arriving to the United States. Due to lack of participation in a census in the past, this vulnerable community had no basic education of what a census entailed. Because of this funding the organization took the initiatives to host events and go household to household educating the community about what a census means, why it is important that everyone in the community gets counted and how this benefits our community, neighborhood, city and state.”

One grantee delivered pies to its tribal elders to check on their well-being and discuss the census. Each pie came with a note:

“Let this pie serve as a friendly reminder to participate in the 2020 Census. It is especially important for all American Indians and Alaska Natives to make sure they participate in the Census. Past under-counts of Native populations have deprived hundreds of thousands of American Indians of their voice in government affairs. Your response to the 2020 Census helps determine how billions of dollars in federal funds are distributed each year...”

Other direct outreach included booths, presentations, contests and questionnaire assistance at cultural events, luncheons, breakfasts, pop-up days and other places to share information. Grantees also noted the importance of having resources to provide incentives (food, useful swag items, gift cards or raffles) to community members. Incentives increased engagement in outreach activities and got community members to converse with grantee staff and trusted messengers.

Organizations often spread information through coalitions and collaborative efforts, in one case even partnering their outreach with Latin American consulates. Digital outreach was also common – especially during the pandemic – and included texting, emails, webinars and other virtual events, as well as a song about the census. Frequently, outreach and assistance were available in multiple languages.

Indirect outreach through advertising was also often part of organizations' plans. Ad campaigns covered billboards, radio, television, social media, local papers and ethnic media sources. Grantees developed products to promote the census, such as t-shirts, buttons, calendars, brochures, flyers, pamphlets, magnets, bumper stickers, lawn signs, totes, pens, postcards and door hangers.

“Through our learning process during the grant project, we came to understand that the Census Bureau does not send the postcard reminder to P.O. Boxes. [We are] a rural community and many residents receive their mail only by P.O. Box. We anticipated this as a missed opportunity and used grant dollars to expand outreach to P.O. Boxes. As a result, [we] received direct inquiries from residents and we were able to either help answer their questions directly or refer them to appropriate resources.”

“Because we are a diaspora without one central location, such as a reservation, we knew from the beginning that much of our outreach would necessarily involve postal and digital communication. We were able to follow through with that, despite the disruptions of the pandemic.”

Grantees also tailored their outreach methods to address community members' hesitations about the census. Distrust and fear of the U.S. government, as well as privacy concerns, were two of the main reasons people said they would not complete the survey. Some community members' experiences with government practices in their native countries reinforced their concerns, underscoring the importance of trusted messengers who were sensitive to this context and able to provide in-language or culturally appropriate support.

“Several participants called us to dispel rumors such as the census communicating with [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement] or that it would affect their stimulus checks.”

“The 2020 Census work has created space for culturally specific organizations to become a part of larger systems to address how to work with hard-to-count communities with historical mistrust of government entities.”

Equity Fund partners also echoed the importance of trust to engage communities in the census.

“Our census work builds on our trusted relationships with community members, which opens a pathway of learning about their most pressing needs and issues affecting their lives.”

“Trusted messengers were not just working 9-5 jobs, that were out and about all of the time, sharing information, answering questions – sitting down and helping people access things online, it's completely hands on.”

Trust also extends to future partnerships. Grantees often cited the importance of engaging youth as a lesson to keep in mind, and the message that they also count resonated well. Many young people during the 2020 Census will be heads of household in 2030, making youth engagement critical to a longer-term strategy of census mobilization in hard-to-count communities.





Lastly, trust was facilitated between community messengers and organizations and grantees, as well as between grantees and the Equity Fund itself. The funding helped grantees compensate trusted messengers or collaborating organizations for their work. Stipends also created capacity for organizations they have been volunteer-led and often expected to do work on a pro bono basis.

COVID-19: Unforeseen Challenges

The COVID-19 pandemic was a significant roadblock for census efforts across the state, severely impacting many of the hard-to-count populations where census efforts were focused. When it became clear that pandemic would impede census operations, the Census Bureau extended the self-response deadline from July 2020 to September 2020. In turn, the Equity Fund extended the grant term from the end of June to the end of August.

The Equity Fund recognized the significant and unforeseen challenges that grantees were up against during the pandemic. In April 2020, they pooled an additional \$580,000 so that all grantees received a general operating payment between \$4,000 and \$10,000, with higher payments prioritizing tribes and organizations exclusively serving rural areas with less of a philanthropic presence.

“We let families know that we were able to provide many resources due to the general operating funds we received – families have really struggled [during the pandemic] and were so grateful for the support. Having these conversations about the census while providing immediate support during such a difficult time offered a safe and trusting conversation and families shared that they would complete the census.”

“[The grant] allowed us to re-group and pay for our rent at a time when we were in dire need. The grant came to us before other grants did, and it got us through a very rough few months. We will be forever grateful. The feeling of relief when the grant came was huge – it was a confirmation that a larger, established organization believed in us and supported us, and it gave us hope as well as tangible assistance. We were able to focus on serving the community by pulling together resources, handing out food and vouchers, and handing out rent assistance received from other grants, rather than on worrying how we were going to operationally stay afloat. We are committed to our work and committed to our community.”

Understanding that grantees may need to alter their proposed activities to best respond to the evolving situation, the Equity Fund adjusted the reporting requirement to ask grantees about changes they made to their work. While almost every grantee completed at least part of their original proposal, two-thirds made significant modifications to their activities.

According to grantees, the flexibility and earlier timeline of the census grants helped them pivot as stay-at-home orders went into effect. With many in-person activities canceled, modified plans placed a heavier emphasis on virtual and digital efforts like webinars, social media posts, emails and texts. However, the pandemic likely hampered the turnout of vulnerable populations, including the elderly or those with limited technology literacy or access. The crisis made organizations realize they needed to develop their virtual infrastructure much more extensively for purposes beyond the census.

Additionally, data tracking became more difficult. While many grantees used logs, social media analytics, spreadsheets, databases, surveys and product giveaways to track outreach efforts, some stated that they had to constantly adapt to the pandemic and other census operational

changes and were unable to get an accurate count at times. A few grantees used the Census Bureau's updates on self-response rates – the percentage of households in an area who completed the form on their own – to measure progress or occasionally to modify their outreach. Despite many grantees noting the negative influence the pandemic had on their overall effectiveness, census work had enabled organizations to be in a more versatile position to reach out to communities with COVID-19 information and resources. This was especially useful in hard-to-count populations that were the hardest hit by COVID-19 cases and other impacts of the pandemic.

While stretched beyond their usual services, grantees creatively folded the census into their pandemic-related work, often highlighting to communities the importance of census data to ensure communities had resources during crises. Organizations offered census masks and conducted outreach or questionnaire assistance at places like food banks, grocery stores and COVID-19 testing sites, and through food deliveries. They also discussed the census with clients when providing essential services.

“We had to get creative as our steadfast methods and distribution points (all the community events and gatherings, especially in summer) presented us with an absolute barrier by being canceled due to the pandemic. We used an ‘everything but the kitchen sink approach.’ Everything from branded promotional items such as hoodies, sunglasses, natural hand sanitizer (community produced) at COVID-19 related community distributions; to yard signs and ads in the tribal publication; to raffles, direct mail, handwritten postcards, and curbside help booths. The impact on the community is that folks know the census is happening, they are reaching out for help if they need it, and they are spreading the word among themselves about how important it is that everyone be counted.”

By the end of 2020, the Equity Fund had distributed \$1.5 million for census work along with the \$580,000 in general operating funds, and aligned funder investments in Washington totaled at least an additional \$3 million. However, the funding alone does not account for all the ways philanthropy engaged and invested in the 2020 Census, including by committing their own staffing to stay engaged, using their voices directly in advocacy efforts, participating in local complete count committees and other efforts.

PHILANTHROPIC COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

The genesis of the Equity Fund is rooted in collaboration. As a membership network, Philanthropy Northwest convened partners across the state to build a coordinated philanthropic strategy and increase cross-sector collaboration to ensure a robust and accurate count.

Money from foundations and the state exceeded some Equity Fund partners' expectations. This success, as well as the entire endeavor, hinged upon everyone's willingness and adeptness to coalesce around a singular issue.

This section examines the ways in which partners worked together for a common purpose and outlines the different understandings of how collaboration occurred, which ranged from "hub," "broker" and "backbone" models. It also highlights factors that facilitated partnership, such as pre-existing relationships, prior awareness of the importance of the census and recognition of the essential role of grassroots organizations. Finally, this section discusses elements that challenged collaboration, including power dynamics, clarity of roles and expectations and the difficulties stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Models of Collaboration

Interview respondents characterized the collaboration in varied ways. For some, organizations with different roles and capacities came together around the work and the goal of a robust and accurate census count. In this version of a "hub" model, various organizations gathered around a common center; in other words, the census work itself was the hub around which organizations revolved (see Hub Models, Centralized by Work on the next page).

Organizations assumed different roles, but they aligned and coordinated around a mutual objective and performed their respective functions. For example, while some foundations played a role in leveraging their influence to garner additional funding, Philanthropy Northwest played a coordinating role, and other funders lent their expertise in reviewing Equity Fund proposals. The Census Alliance worked with funders to bring the outreach work to life on the ground, including providing critical language access to the effort.

“There was pretty good collaboration day to day. There was space for community-based partners to come together and learn and listen and be in cohort. Philanthropy Northwest supported philanthropy and the process. For example, Philanthropy Northwest provided technical assistance to those who didn't get funding or not as much funding through the application process.”

Alternatively, others viewed one organization as a hub. In this case, they referred to Philanthropy Northwest as the entity that was the face of the Equity Fund work; it was the base point for

convening and source of information (see Centralized by Organization on the next page). Some funders remarked that had it not been for Philanthropy Northwest and Equity Fund outreach, they would not have funded census work at all.

“Our organization wouldn't have taken on the census without Philanthropy Northwest.”

During biannual in-person meetings, partners assembled at Philanthropy Northwest's office to share information and discuss collective work, such as signing onto letters or aligning messaging about the importance of the census to their respective boards. Philanthropy Northwest was also the hub where funders strengthened their relationships and networks.

“Convening at the Philanthropy Northwest office was important to support statewide sharing and giving each other ideas. There was shared leadership and safe space. There was also access to national philanthropy and national agencies, such as the Census Bureau.”

Some partners saw Philanthropy Northwest more in a "broker" role – an intermediary or go-between for philanthropy, the state and nonprofits – to facilitate cooperation between funders, build linkages between local, state and national census efforts or help bridge the gap between nonprofits' concerns and OFM or the state legislature. (see the Broker Model on the next page)

“Philanthropy Northwest helped facilitate relationships with some elected officials in Washington, but more importantly connected them to national partners.”

When Philanthropy Northwest received feedback from partners and grantees about the potential burdens to accessing state funding before OFM issued its RFP, Philanthropy Northwest facilitated a discussion between Equity Fund partners (which included the liaisons from the Census Alliance) and OFM in May 2019 to share partners' interests and concerns about funding for community-based organizations and tribes best suited to engage in the outreach. One Equity Fund partner noted their appreciation of the candor between philanthropy and the state to arrive at shared solutions.

Subsequently, in June 2019 Philanthropy Northwest issued a memo to OFM sharing key recommendations on how to disperse the state's \$15 million census allocation to community-based organizations based on the Equity Fund's own RFP process and the requests from its partners. Key highlights included the Equity Fund's analysis and recommendations around language accessibility, ease of application for funding and being available to answer applicant questions. The Equity Fund partners also shared scoring tools, outreach methods and application data, which further enabled OFM to understand how to shape the distribution of state funding.

“Coalition members had difficulty in accessing funding to do their work so appreciated Philanthropy Northwest in providing support and advocacy in getting funding from the state.”

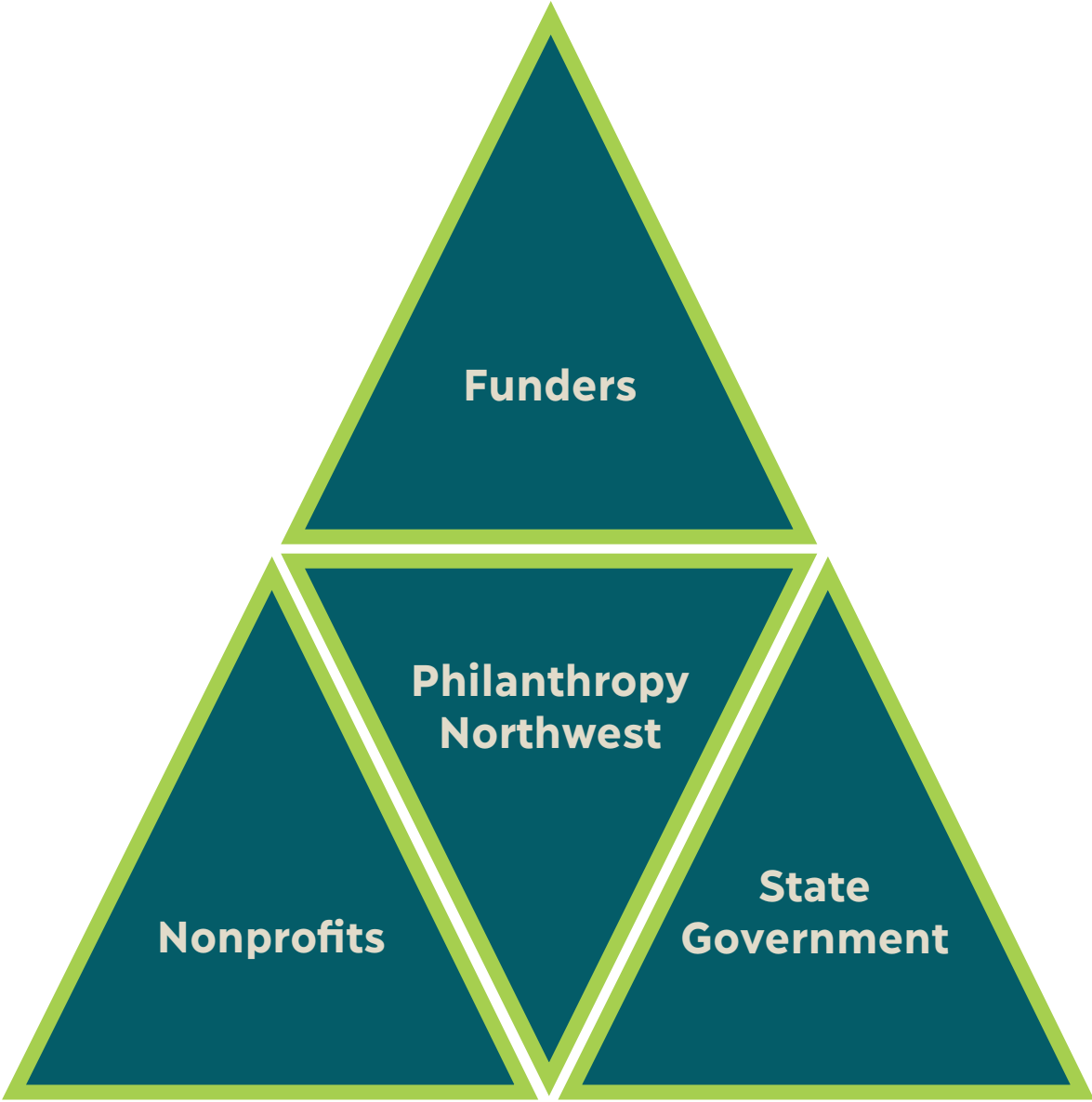
HUB MODELS

BROKER MODEL

Centralized by Work



Centralized by Organization



Finally, some interviewees described collaboration in terms of “backbone” organizations. Several identified the Census Alliance as the backbone entity, while many described Philanthropy Northwest as a backbone organization that conducted the following **hallmark functions**:

- Guiding vision and strategy
- Supporting aligned activities
- Establishing shared measurement practices
- Building public will
- Advancing policy
- Mobilizing funding¹⁸

While Equity Fund partners may have had different points of view around the various models of collaboration, many agreed that Philanthropy Northwest was integral to its success.

Factors That Supported Collaboration

Pre-Existing Relationships With Philanthropy Northwest

Several factors worked in favor of collaboration among the various entities involved in the census effort. Many respondents underscored Philanthropy Northwest’s leadership in contributing to the collaborative atmosphere. They appreciated the responsiveness and consistency of Philanthropy Northwest’s interactions, which reportedly increased their sense of comfort and trust, as well as the perception of authentic partnership.

“Individuals at Philanthropy Northwest were great, they had great leadership, which made a huge difference ... Philanthropy Northwest supported people as they went. [Fund partners] were involved in facilitating access as well.”

Some funders pointed to pre-existing relationships with Philanthropy Northwest as a major factor in bolstering participation. For example, previous participation in Philanthropy Northwest’s programmatic offerings and annual conferences laid the groundwork for articulating shared values, goals and working agreements. These previously established relationships facilitated the trust required for collaboration. Further, some funders’ work in the long-running BCP initiative provided a head start. BCP’s goal of learning in peer groups provided a baseline

of familiarity and shared history with other funders, which, in turn, elevated the sense of accountability.

“Being a part of BCP really helped ... The cohort feeling built relationships and shared language/values, raised accountability.”

Pivot: Role of Philanthropy from Being a Funder to a Partner

The policy environment created by the presidential administration was an unwelcomed and urgent motivation for nonprofits to collaborate with the Equity Fund. Despite their distrust of the administration and fear of potentially putting communities at risk for adverse outcomes, grassroots organizations understood the gravity of census implications and focused their efforts on obtaining a complete and accurate count. In the process, nonprofits’ standing and relationship with funders and Philanthropy Northwest shifted. Some explained that their position changed from being the recipient or object of philanthropic support to being a partner in the collective census work. This shift carved out leadership opportunities for some BIPOC-led organizations. Further, the set of circumstances helped to mitigate some power dynamics between funder and grantee. As one individual put it:

“It increased nonprofits’ legitimacy with Philanthropy Northwest and helped with power differences.”

Nonprofits also welcomed the accounting mechanisms that made compensating trusted messengers possible, which created significant goodwill.

“Providing direct funding to people is a super empowering model. It leveled the playing field beyond the big organizations because it got money into people’s hands quickly.”

Factors That Challenged Collaboration

Other factors at play may have challenged partners’ ability to collaborate, including organizational capacity and perceptions about transparency and power dynamics.

Equity Fund Partners’ Organizational Capacity and Bandwidth

Some respondents experienced a lack of clarity related to roles and expectations. For example, one funder normally identified as being a Philanthropy Northwest member,

but with the focus on hard-to-count populations, their knowledge of community context became vital, which required a shifting of roles from colleague to content leader. Other examples sprang from the involvement of multiple funders who brought forth multiple perspectives and funding models, and there was a question about the potentially negative and diversionary impact that aligned funding may have had on the strength of the Equity Fund.

Some organizations’ own census work proceeded concurrently with the Equity Fund work, which limited their bandwidth for collaboration and created an element of uncertainty. For example, if a funder was already supporting census advocacy, was that sufficient or should it also contribute financially to the Equity Fund? Or if a funder was contributing significantly to the Equity Fund, what did this imply about how it should interface with other invested funders and/or other funders that conducted their own work?

Some funders reported feeling that their capacity to fund influenced their participation. For example, the nature of donor-advised funding, in conjunction with funding that came in fits and starts, placed community foundations in a difficult position. Community foundations





are accountable to their donors, whose priorities may not include census work. Additionally, their level of discretionary funds may not have allowed them to contribute as much as hoped.

“Community foundations are resource sparse. How did the Equity Fund collaboration build lanes for these community foundations?”

Other factors that complicated collaboration included funder staff turnover, related to both their respective organizations and to the census collaboration. For new Equity Fund partners, the process of getting up to speed was daunting, and several yearned for more orientation and greater onboarding support, though respondents did not clarify from where they believed the support should come (e.g., Philanthropy Northwest, their own foundation or other participating funders). Even for some funders involved since the beginning, the issue content may have been new.

Some partners expressed different levels of comfort with the issues and/or advocacy generally or had different levels of capacity to engage. They reported wanting more information and context, especially as real-time changes in census policies and deadlines contributed to a sense of confusion. Also, while not a reflection of their willingness to collaborate, some funders felt that tending to other organizational priorities competed with their involvement in the census effort.

Finally, the modes of participation impacted collaboration. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, some partners relied on in-person convenings at

the Philanthropy Northwest office to strengthen relationships, a critical component of collaboration. Yet other partners, due to the geographic distance, attended only by phone or video which lent to a stilted and uneven experience. People’s differing experiences and facility with online platforms challenged everyone’s experience with virtual meetings. As the pandemic intensified, the restrictions dictated by containment measures were undeniably jarring. While the virtual meetings could not replicate the camaraderie previously experienced by in-person gatherings, they did create an opportunity for more equalized participation among partners.

Power Disparities and Lack of Transparency

Views about power disparities among funders, compounded by perceived lack of transparency, were criticisms that may have hindered collaboration. Some partners questioned whether the differing levels of financial contribution influenced the tone and direction of the work. Philanthropy Northwest took care to mitigate potential sensitivities by not disclosing the dollar amount of financial resources that funding partners contributed to the Equity Fund, leading some smaller funders who contributed lower amounts or none at all to feel included in the partnership.

“Sitting at the same table at Philanthropy Northwest, before COVID, it was not obvious who came from big foundations or from community-based funders. There was a sense of equality.”

A few fund partners felt there could have been greater transparency throughout the process, as they were unsure how decisions were made, such as the geographic destination of funds or which demographic groups constituted hard-to-count populations.

“There was some tension about geographic and [hard-to-count] designations.”

While Philanthropy Northwest utilized the subcommittee process to drive RFP decision-making, some felt more decision-making could have been elevated to the entire partnership.

Differing perspectives about roles and influence beyond the Equity Fund’s grantmaking decisions also likely influenced the tone of the collaboration to some degree. For example, Equity Fund partners

and Philanthropy Northwest had an early conversation about whether Philanthropy Northwest could offer to be the sole recipient¹⁹ of the OFM funding to regrant to the robust community foundation network in Washington, to help ensure a wide geographic distribution. However, this became no longer an option, given the presence of similarly positioned potential applicants, such as the Census Alliance, that warranted a competitive process.

The Equity Fund considered whether there was a role for the partners to work collaboratively to apply for a portion of the funding together, as any applicant would need significant **up-front investments** to implement deliverables.²⁰ However, some partners expressed fear that Philanthropy Northwest already had an outsized role. Some viewed larger and more influential funders with a degree of wariness as well. Another question came up about the role that formal and positional leadership might have played in others’ perceived ability to voice differing opinions. In the end, some partners applied on their own or in smaller partnerships to obtain funding.

“It’s difficult for [a foundation in Seattle] to play a facilitator or convener role because they can face skepticism about whether it’s another Seattle thing.”





partners also looked to the state to multiply those resources. Philanthropy alone could not fund at the scale needed to ensure that all Washingtonians could be counted and that the state could reap the full benefits of federal funding informed by the census count.

Many considered the \$4.5 million census appropriation in Governor Jay Inslee's **2019-2021 biennial budget proposal**²¹ too low to achieve an accurate count in Washington. An **analysis of community-based census outreach costs** by the Fiscal Policy Institute in New York showed that a combination of basic, moderate and intensive outreach would cost upward of \$12 million in Washington, elevating to **\$15 million** when the total hard-to-count population was fully considered.²²

With the Census Alliance leading the advocacy to secure full funding to reach hard-to-count populations, the Equity Fund, through Philanthropy Northwest and the government relations subcommittee, coordinated to support these efforts. Philanthropy Northwest positioned the Equity Fund to the Washington Legislature “as a network of funders who work closely with grantees on the front lines of engaging their communities in the 2020 Census” to address the importance of sufficient state funding, flexibility for the use of the funds and the urgency at which they must reach communities across Washington. Philanthropy Northwest’s scope of state advocacy included direct lobbying, participating in the Census Alliance’s public policy committee, serving on the Washington State Complete Count Committee and partnering in the development of communications strategies. The government relations subcommittee primarily informed Philanthropy Northwest’s actions, and members also lent their own lobbyists to help implement the strategies.

The Equity Fund’s goal was to ensure that philanthropy supported and complemented the Census Alliance’s efforts. With additional capacity and leadership provided by Philanthropy Northwest’s advocacy and lobbying consultant, Equity Fund partners had continuous guidance on how to leverage their individual organizations’ positions in the overall efforts and also participate in the cohesive advocacy strategy.

Factors That Contributed to Collective Advocacy

Numerous factors contributed to the success of the Equity Fund’s advocacy work, including philanthropy’s understanding and willingness to collaboratively engage, strategic coordination on the use of philanthropy’s voice to influence state funding, and the steadfast organizers leading the advocacy campaign.

Awareness of the broad cross-sector efforts to address the political environment facing the 2020 Census had some fund partners seeing the need to work together because “there was a common adversary.” Funders’ willingness to leverage their influence with other funders promoted a sense of collaboration. Spaces convened by Philanthropy Northwest advanced the appetite for collective action – including advocacy – prior to the Equity Fund’s creation. While a few funders eventually may have been constrained in joining the Equity Fund because of their mandate or founder priorities, those who joined recognized that the push to increase the state budget for the census during the 2019 legislative session was a critical call to action.

While fund partners did not want their efforts to be perceived as partisan by the state legislature, the presidential administration’s actions to undermine the census contributed to an atmosphere of partisanship. Some interview respondents noted the national political landscape created a sense of division, particularly around the potential inclusion of the citizenship question. Philanthropy Northwest and several Equity Fund members supported the Census Alliance in its development and execution of an advocacy messaging strategy that centered race and class in focusing on the benefits of the census to all communities across the state.

The leadership of grassroots organizers set the vision for the success of census budget advocacy in Washington. While philanthropy’s behind-the-scenes role was perhaps not visible to those situated in the state capital of Olympia, these efforts, too, played an essential role in the advocacy campaign by “filling the gap in the ecosystem.”

“Being connected to Philanthropy Northwest and the Census Equity Fund helped secure meetings that nonprofits and grassroots organizations couldn’t. ... It helped create access to legislators.”

A couple of people also referred to an atmosphere of sensitivity and self-consciousness about racial dynamics among various Equity Fund partners. There were some sentiments about ownership and authenticity as well as unstated competition between partners, driven by the fear of scarcity. Respondents were circumspect in their answers, yet acknowledged the existence of racial tension that manifested in ways that were perhaps uncomfortable to discuss further.

While the factors detailed above may have challenged partners’ ability to collaborate, they also present an opportunity to explicitly focus on power dynamics within the philanthropic sector in future efforts. Furthermore, these obstacles do not take away from the larger story of the ways in which organizations from across the state came together to work toward something larger than what any one organization could accomplish alone.

STATE BUDGET ADVOCACY

Many of those involved in census work, as well as some policymakers, viewed that the presidential administration’s actions sought to depress the census count among hard-to-count populations, especially BIPOC and immigrant communities. Many stakeholders in Washington agreed it was paramount for philanthropy and the state to dedicate substantial financial resources to ensure an accurate count. While the Equity Fund was committed to philanthropy’s own investments in the census, fund

“Philanthropy Northwest acted as a go-between with the state, philanthropies and nonprofits.”

“[Philanthropy Northwest and the Equity Fund] had the platform and the authority to move government.”

In the overall advocacy efforts, stakeholders regarded philanthropy’s role with appreciation and considered the how the conditions created in this campaign could inform successful coordination and engagement in future efforts.

Advocacy Gains

The success of advocacy can be measured by a number of desired outcomes, including changes in:

- Attitudes, beliefs or positions
- Behavior or actions
- Institutional scope of work
- Decision-making
- Public-private partnerships
- Political narrative

Some aspects of the Equity Fund’s work brought about these changes outside of the budget advocacy realm, through partnerships and relationships that influenced how entities understood the census, engaged in efforts and evolved in their roles. With respect to the advocacy campaign, the most identified advocacy gains among fund partners were two-fold. Foremost was the increased level of funding from the state, indicating effectiveness in the political narrative and heightened perceptiveness about what was at stake. Second, they appreciated the enhanced understanding of collective advocacy as a powerful lever for change, highlighting views that may impact their decisions about future actions.

Increased State Funding

The increased state funding for the 2020 Census represents the most tangible way in which the Equity Fund’s advocacy work was successful. Through their coordinated voices, Equity Fund partners and the Census Alliance moved the state to appropriate \$15 million instead of \$4.5 million, as originally proposed in the governor’s budget. One legislator highlighted Philanthropy Northwest’s role in this endeavor:

“We had a shared strategy and values; it felt great to have a larger collaborative focused on increasing the dollars, even

the corporate foundations. Philanthropy Northwest was very active, and my colleagues recognized this as well.”

Ahead of the revenue forecast, which was when legislators would begin discussing census funding, Philanthropy Northwest coordinated with the Census Alliance and an Equity Fund partner to testify at a House State Government & Tribal Relations Committee work session. Philanthropy Northwest made an appeal about the importance of the state’s investment and partnership in the 2020 Census:

“We have only one chance to get it right for 2020, but the story we build from our efforts now has even greater potential for a model of effective philanthropic partnership, government engagement and community mobilization that lasts well beyond 2020.”²³

Philanthropy Northwest also collaborated with two influential Equity Fund partners to write an **op-ed** in The Seattle Times to define philanthropy’s interest in the 2020 Census:

“Our work in philanthropy has repeatedly demonstrated the critical importance of good data — better data leads to better decisions, smarter spending and more effective public programs.”²⁴

Philanthropy Northwest and the Equity Fund called out the importance of ensuring investments for the future and urged state lawmakers to see it as a collective priority. During the evaluation, one funder remarked that the leadership from Philanthropy Northwest, Seattle Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation effectively ensured that Equity Fund partners engaged with the state to affirm the \$15 million ask as a key priority.

Increased Awareness of Collective Advocacy as a Lever for Change

Another aspect of the Equity Fund’s success was the acquisition of greater awareness, knowledge and experience with census issues. Foundations and nonprofit organizations reported an increased understanding of the implications of an accurate census count, which range from the allocation of federal monies to redistricting. Some legislators also came to realize that the census was not a partisan issue. Through outreach, residents from hard-to-count populations benefitted from enhanced awareness and knowledge as well. Several interview respondents mentioned how local leaders leaned into policy advocacy as a result of interfacing with partners from the Equity Fund.

Funders also reported positive gains from collaborating on the Equity Fund. Some foundations not previously familiar with policy work recognized the need to align public policy frameworks with their mission.

“I have worked a lot with other community foundations, but never saw anything like this before. Some that had no experience in advocacy were now leaning in. So much happened that can change precedent and have possibilities.”

Some funders stated that without Philanthropy Northwest’s network, which allowed them to see the bigger picture of how the census count influenced policies, they would have focused only on their local community. While they had already begun using general funds for the census at the local level, it was the larger collective action that enabled them to respond as a field within the state. Additionally, community foundations saw that they could successfully demonstrate to their donor base their potential influence at the state and national levels.

“The work would not have happened on such a large scale.”

“Letters with lots of signers created pressure, which means something to the governor and houses of legislature.”

Funders grew in their understanding of the importance of advocacy for community-based groups.

“We need to increase grants for general operating support, at the very least. Survival is not the same thing as thriving.”

“Some nonprofits that were part of the [Census] Alliance subsequently became (c)(4) organizations and became more active in advocacy.”

Philanthropy has an important societal role in handing over power to communities, so future efforts should not be reliant on the privileged relationships of philanthropy. The best role for philanthropy is to boost capacity far ahead of policy campaigns, or continuously, for ongoing organizing, and when needed, provide a boost for mobilization.

Advocacy success from the Equity Fund’s collaborative work with the Census Alliance ultimately yielded gains for the entire state. As one legislator pointed out, Washington ended up near the top among states for a full and complete count.

DISCUSSION

Philanthropy Northwest stepped into an unprecedented role of bringing together the Equity Fund and implementing a network leader model to drive coordinated strategy and action within philanthropy. While this convening role is naturally suited for Philanthropy Northwest, how might Philanthropy Northwest and philanthropy have come together to achieve even greater collective positive outcomes during the 2020 Census?

The Equity Fund's work was extraordinary in many respects, according to some interviewees. The volatile political environment, rapid pace of advocacy efforts and devastating effects of COVID-19 on communities created a catastrophe on political, public health and economic fronts, which created further demands on funders and nonprofits collectively.

Operationalizing the Equity Fund required multi-faceted experience to plan, facilitate and guide work with partners of differing sizes, capacities, resources and missions. As discussed throughout this report, interviewees have shared key themes in the Equity Fund's success in three main categories: grantmaking, collaboration and advocacy.

Grantmaking:

- According to many interviewees, the Equity Fund successfully achieved its goal of dispersing funds widely and equitably.
- Grantees reached over two million residents despite COVID-19's negative effect on operations. The Equity Fund's flexibility and responsiveness, especially during the pandemic, made it easier to conduct and adjust census efforts.

Collaboration:

- Philanthropy Northwest's pre-existing relationships bolstered trust and encouraged funders to join in census efforts when they may not have otherwise.
- Philanthropic partners acted not only as grantmakers but also as partners with nonprofits, which increased trust and coordination around the 2020 Census.

Advocacy:

- The advocacy of Philanthropy Northwest and key stakeholders influenced the state to more than triple the governor's proposed census funding.

- Funders became more aware of the implications of the census count, as well as the strength of collective philanthropic efforts in creating systemic change.

In addition to themes across this evaluation's key categories, interviewees shared other positive takeaways from the Equity Fund's collaborative work, including:

- Providing a bridge between financial resources, issue advocacy and the work on the ground;
- Championing nonprofits' objectives without compromising their autonomy;
- Supporting nonprofits by influencing other funders to join the support;
- Facilitating access to resources beyond money; and
- Exploring the appetite for engaging in various models of advocacy.

Collaboration required financial and material resources, plus an appropriate combination of players, trust and goodwill within the ecosystem. Not only did the Equity Fund partners undergo the usual and typical challenges inherent in any collaborative process, but they also prevailed under the most unusual and demanding circumstances. While Philanthropy Northwest and the philanthropic network learned lessons along the way, especially regarding centering racial equity and promoting even greater transparency, in the end the efforts funneled into the Equity Fund resulted in significant gains. While this evaluation cannot directly attribute 2020 Census results to the Equity Fund, it bears noting that Washington had the **second-highest survey self-response rate** of all U.S. states.²⁵

A few philanthropic practices could potentially pave the way to express the long-term commitment toward thoughtful partnerships. These include ensuring that nonprofits receive necessary and sufficient capital for infrastructure or unrestricted general operating support, as well as engaging with nonprofits that have historically served as direct service providers, to support them in larger civic engagement or coalition efforts that reach a much more diverse population.

Beyond philanthropy's traditional role in the deployment of funds, funders should wrestle with the important question about whether philanthropy should be a consistent and engaged partner to maximize impact and effect systemic change.

“A short-term campaign, one-off policy gains, or even a series of one-off policy gains is not the same as a long-term view of systems change.”

Furthermore, given the success of the Equity Fund, does philanthropy anticipate conducting a similar series of activities every decade? Are there alternatives, and if so, what role might philanthropy play?

“Will philanthropy be scrambling to raise money for the census every time? Or should it think about ways to approach the census differently?”

One of the major implications of an undercount would be that the federal government would not appropriate sufficient funds to the state to meet the needs of the population. If that were the case, over the next decade, philanthropy could be put in a position of dedicating its investments to supplementing community needs that the state or local governments were unable to meet. As seen with how the Equity Fund deployed funding, it is important to leverage philanthropic resources to build a healthy, vibrant and collaborative nonprofit sector, rather than only meeting the most basic needs of the nonprofit sector to do its work. This highlights an important tension about government accountability, and whether philanthropy's involvement props up or even supplants government responsibilities.

“Does philanthropy promote civic engagement without looking at the structural flaws that lead to inequity... Does it focus on implementation without changing the architecture of equity and power?”

And lastly, what is philanthropy's responsibility to the nonprofit sector? From the nonprofit perspective, it is important for philanthropy to express commitment and partnership in consistent and effective ways.

“Philanthropy is like a box of chocolates. You don't always get one thing. [Philanthropy is not] always consistent in the ways that it shows up.”

At minimum, these hard questions warrant a robust discussion within the Philanthropy Northwest network. Funders likely fall somewhere along on a wide continuum in terms of their orientation and answers to these questions. Even if philanthropy collectively shifts in favor of supporting systems change, subsequent questions follow: How should philanthropy operationalize systems change? Does this mean supporting movement building, organizing and leadership pipeline work with an intentionality to shift power?

As we explore how the Equity Fund's successes might contribute to philanthropy's changing role in systemic change, PSOs, like Philanthropy Northwest, across the country are examining whether and how to replicate the concerted efforts on state and local levels for the 2030 Census. Some interviewees inquired whether PSOs are uniquely positioned in the philanthropic ecosystem to function as network leaders to mobilize philanthropic investments in movement building, particularly around the census.



MOVING FORWARD

The evaluation findings surfaced several recommendations for future census efforts:

Start Early: Equity Fund partners emphasized beginning census-related efforts as early as possible. Proactive effort will help ensure greater preparedness, while also allowing time for partnerships to form between culturally specific funders and organizations with geographic and demographic familiarity.

Nurture Existing Relationships: The Equity Fund highlighted that statewide collaboration and partnership among philanthropy, nonprofits and government is critical to census efforts. Partners must continue to engage and maintain the relationships built through the network. There is also a role for Philanthropy Northwest as a convener to build opportunities for inspiration, information, strategy and action among funders and grantees.

Practice Transparency: To strengthen trust within the group and ensure greater clarity regarding roles and processes, members of funding collaboratives can establish and agree to transparency mechanisms, including being open on how decisions are made and making information available in a clear, accessible manner.

Restructure Grantee Requirements: Several partners recommended a shorter RFP and application process, acknowledging that smaller organizations may not have grant writers. Some grantees echoed this sentiment, sharing that easier reporting requirements would help administratively, especially when grant amounts are smaller. Shortening and streamlining grantee requirements would also lean into trust-based practices that address some of the power imbalances in philanthropy.

Elevate the Trusted Messenger Model: Trusted messengers, who were able to communicate about the census using culturally appropriate language and place-based outreach strategies, were essential in increasing census participation among hard-to-count communities. This model should be heavily invested in by cultivating relationships with trusted community groups and individuals.

Remain Responsive and Adaptive: COVID-19 highlighted the need for both proactive and responsive census efforts. The Equity Fund utilized a flexible model that could withstand the unique obstacles presented by a pandemic that disproportionately impacted the same communities that have been historically undercounted. When planning future campaigns, the Equity Fund can serve as an example of how to best meet the emerging and pressing needs of organizations on the front lines. Grantees also echoed the importance of flexible funding with fewer restrictions, trusting them to know what is best for their communities.

Support Funder Engagement in Advocacy: Policy advocacy is a crucial lever for systems change. During the 2020 Census, many funders began to explore their role in policy work. There is an opportunity to continue to raise awareness and learning among funders, to strengthen their ability to engage in and fund advocacy, including lobbying.

Maintain Infrastructure: Significant time and resources went into the 2020 Census efforts. Stakeholders should not have to reinvent the wheel in 2030. The Equity Fund should find opportunities to cultivate the capacity for future efforts throughout the decade leading up to the next census.

Institutionalize Learning: When staff leave organizations, they should be able to leave their knowledge of census efforts with the organization. Both Equity Fund partners and grantees must take into account staff turnover and establish mechanisms to keep critical census knowledge within organizations. Only through institutionalizing knowledge can future coalitions benefit from historical context, analysis of strategies and best practices.

Reflect and Incorporate Lessons Learned: Equity Fund partners emphasized a need to reflect on the work, share best practices and build on lessons learned. This evaluation served as a key reflection point where Philanthropy Northwest captured what the Equity Fund created, learned and accomplished. It is important to bring lessons from the 2020 Census into future census efforts.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: EQUITY FUND PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

Originally disseminated February 2019

Washington Census Equity Fund Governance Committee Statement of Purpose and Principles

Our Purpose

The Washington Census Equity Fund maximizes the impact of philanthropic resources to ensure a robust and accurate count across Washington for the 2020 Census and to create a model for philanthropic partnerships, government engagement, and community mobilization beyond 2020.

Our Principles

- We encourage philanthropy to make best use of its resources and voices to promote the most complete 2020 Census count possible.
- We believe our communities and our sector can only realize their full potential under a healthy democracy, which includes a census that engages and represents all members of our diverse communities.
- We are committed to the dignity, safety and well-being of individuals, families and communities across Washington state.
- We recognize that the decennial census must be conducted in a fair and robust manner that will ensure an informed and complete count of all populations, especially those categorized as “hard to count” (HTC).
- We believe that investing first and foremost in communities of color and populations that experience barriers to census and civic participation is the best way to ensure that our work ultimately benefits all Washingtonians. We will prioritize support for: culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies; organizations and communities that otherwise do not have access to the resources needed; and otherwise isolated communities.
- We believe that collaborating and coordinating our approaches as funders and community partners is the best way to support a robust and accurate census count and to leverage opportunities beyond 2020.
- We are committed to principles of equity in our approach to strategy, collaboration, influence and voice, where we prioritize listening, trusting and responding to community voice, need and leadership.

- We believe that reliable information, mobilized resources and trusted partnerships in communities, particularly those underserved, are essential and will contribute toward an accurate count, leading to long-term benefits in equitable federal and state funding to communities, and organizing capacity beyond 2020.

Our Intended Outcomes

1. Supported public education, community outreach, safety and awareness, regional and culturally relevant communications, policy and appropriations advocacy and other coordinated “Get Out the Count” activities.
2. Identified network leaders in communities to create a pipeline of leadership opportunities across all sectors (e.g., nonprofit, commerce, education, healthcare, policy, etc.)
3. Increased organizing capacity in historically undercounted communities, including greater support for technical capacity and accessibility.
4. Increased participation from community members at every stage, from employment as census workers to measurable decreased undercounts in HTC communities across Washington.
5. Promoted informed census participation by reducing the real and perceived harm of the census across all Washington communities.
6. Developed a more inclusive and responsive model for collaboration, among community networks, nonprofits and funders, ready to activate when community-wide needs emerge. This will be accomplished with the deeper connections, tested strategies, and collaborations gained through this effort – across philanthropy, and with community organizations and tribal, state, county and city governments.
7. Achieved effective, efficient and strategic philanthropic investments in communities across the state through leveraged resources, communication and coordination.

APPENDIX B: EQUITY FUND REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (SECOND ROUND)

Originally disseminated October 2020

Washington Census Equity Fund Request for Proposals

The Spanish translation of this RFP is available, yet limited resources require that applications be submitted in English only.

ABOUT THE WASHINGTON CENSUS EQUITY FUND

The Washington Census Equity Fund* maximizes the impact of philanthropic resources, through a pooled fund structure, toward the goal of a robust and accurate 2020 Census count across the state and to support a model for community mobilization beyond. The overarching desired outcomes of this effort are to organize, inform and activate residents in historically underrepresented communities that are at risk of being undercounted in the 2020 Census.

This fund, managed by Philanthropy Northwest, was created in 2019 by a collective of independent funders and foundations to support local community census participation efforts. The fund awarded \$800,000 in Summer 2019 (Round One) and this RFP is for the final round of funding (Round Two).

* Composed of philanthropic fund partners, aligned funders and philanthropic organizations that also work within communities and members of the Washington Census Alliance. “Resources” throughout the document refer to both financial and non-financial support.

SUMMARY INFORMATION

ANNOUNCEMENT DATE: October 28, 2019
PROPOSAL DEADLINE: November 22, 2019
NOTIFICATION DATE: January 10, 2020

TOTAL AMOUNT AVAILABLE: \$600,000 will be available for grants (grant amounts will vary between \$5,000-\$20,000). The Fund is administered by Philanthropy Northwest.

DESCRIPTION: Funding will support planning and engagement activities through the 2020 Census such as education and outreach, one-on-one technical assistance and other gatherings and/or events to support participation of hard-to-count communities.

ELIGIBILITY: 501(c)(3) organizations (or organizations with a 501(c)(3) fiscal sponsor) and/or tribes are eligible to apply.

INFORMATION SESSIONS: “Census Friday” calls are scheduled on November 1, 8 and 15 at 10 am PST.

For more information, please check out the Washington Census Equity Fund page on Philanthropy Northwest’s website, philanthropynw.org/washington-census-equity-fund.

Equity Fund partners and other philanthropic organizations may be able to directly fund applicants who are unable to receive funding due to the limited funding available for this round. Please let us know whether we have your permission to share your application with Equity Fund partners and other philanthropic organizations in Question 17 of the Proposal Questions to be considered for funding.

I. What Is The Census

Every 10 years, the United States Constitution requires that all residents, including non-citizens and undocumented immigrants, be counted through a nationwide census. The goal of the decennial census is to count each person in the United States based on their residence as of April 1, 2020. Accurate census data are essential for federal funding allocations to states and localities. Federal resources are divided up between jurisdictions according to what census data tell us about various communities’ demographic characteristics, needs and assets. For Washington to receive its fair share, the Census Bureau must have an accurate count of the state’s dynamic, diverse population.

II. What Is The “Hard-To-Count” Population

Historically, the census has missed large numbers of Indigenous people, immigrants, People of Color, young persons, low-income persons, the highly mobile (such as the people experiencing homelessness and renters) and people living in rural areas. These populations are considered “hard-to-count.”

In Washington, the list of priority hard-to-count populations for funding include:

- Communities of color
- Indigenous persons
- Immigrant and refugee communities
- Low-income persons
- Persons experiencing homelessness
- Persons with mental or physical disabilities
- Non-English speakers
- LGBTQIA persons
- Young persons (18 years old and younger)
- Geographic localities (e.g., rural)



In Washington, there are significant numbers of people at greater risk of being undercounted:

- 15% of Washington’s population, or 1.1 million people, are foreign-born.
- 11%, or 790,000 people, live in hard-to-count neighborhoods.
- At least 53,000 Washingtonians live in rural, tribal, or non-traditional tracts that are harder and more expensive to count.
- Nearly 13 percent of Washington’s households have no or limited internet service, undermining their participation in the first high-tech census.
- Nearly **one in six children** under age five live in hard-to-count communities.

III. Key Resources

We encourage all applicants to first review the resources and toolkits currently available to you and the communities you serve. There is a wealth of information that could be useful to you in your census activities, education and outreach.

Connect with your local community foundation: Reach out to your **nearest community foundation** to learn about other efforts underway in your community and possible partners.

Connect with Complete Count Committees: Complete Count Committees are established by local governments and community leaders to organize local and regional efforts. Find your nearest Complete Count Committee by visiting **Washington’s Office of Financial Management webpage**.

Washington Nonprofits: Washington Nonprofits has created helpful toolkits, resources and materials. Check out the **Washington Nonprofits 2020 Census webpage** for free webinars, fact sheets and information.

Washington Census Alliance: Washington Census Alliance, a statewide coalition of organizations led by, and who serve communities of color, focuses energy and resources on historically undercounted communities. If you are an organization led by and working within communities of color, please connect with the Washington Census Alliance for up-to-date information on coordinating strategies by visiting the **Washington Census Alliance webpage**.

Finally, please visit Philanthropy Northwest’s **2020 Census webpage** to learn more about how philanthropy is responding to the 2020 Census. For more information about the Washington Census Equity Fund, please visit the **Washington Census Equity Fund webpage**.

IV. Applicant Eligibility Criteria

For the purposes of the Washington Census Equity Fund RFP, the “Application Eligibility Criteria” means that organizations will have to satisfy these requirements to be considered for funding, as follows:

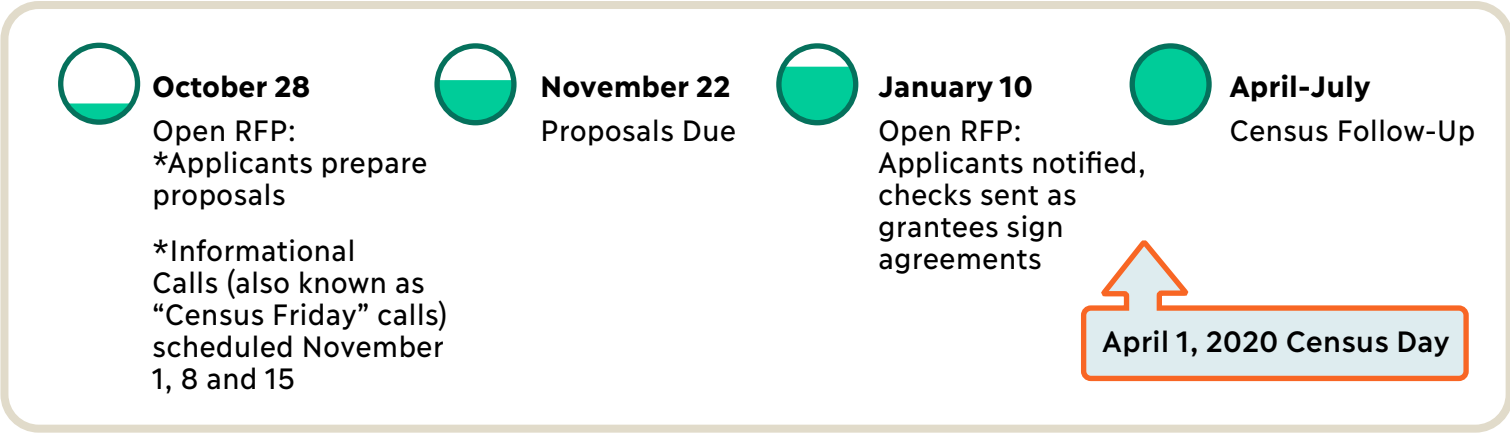
- Organizations with tax exempt 501(c)(3) status, and/or tribes, or community groups fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3) organization and/or tribes; and
- Working in the identified hard-to-count communities and geographies.

V. Funding Priorities

For the purposes of the Washington Census Equity Fund RFP, “Funding Priorities” means that the following set of factors will be highly considered to make funding decisions. If you do not meet a “Funding Priority” factor, this does not mean that you will automatically be disqualified from consideration. Funding Priorities include:

- Entities who have not previously received a grant award in Round One from the Washington Census Equity Fund;
- Community-based, grassroots nonprofits;
- Tribal-led organizations and/or tribes;
- Proposed project led, staffed or guided by individuals reflecting the race, ethnicity and culture of the communities being served;
- Proposals showcasing a history or demonstrated ability to reach and engage members from their communities;
- Includes plans for engaging hard-to-count communities (defined in Section II); and
- Census activities supporting hard-to-count populations outside of King County.

VI. Funding Timeline And Process



- **October 28 – November 22, 2019:** Round Two Open Request for Proposals (RFP) in which eligible groups may submit a proposal for funding. Informational calls and email support are available.

Informational Sessions (also known as “Census Friday” calls) are scheduled on November 1, 8 and 15 from 10 am – 11 am PT to answer any questions about the RFP. Calls will be in audio format only.

Dial-in information: Conference line: (267) 930-4000; Participant code: 329-709-300

- **November 22, 2019:** Submission Deadline
- **November 22, 2019 – January 10, 2020:** Review and selection will be based on satisfactory responses to the proposal questions and availability of funds, as well as other criteria noted in Section VIII below.
 - **Proposal Review Panel.** The review panel includes representation from the community, with emphasis on diverse perspectives, populations and geographic areas.
 - **Selection.** Grant selection will be a consensus-based process in which reviewers’ rate individual applications and seek consensus based upon equitable demographic diversity across the slate of proposals.
- **January 10, 2020:** Round Two applicants notified by email of funding decisions.
- **Mid-January 2020:** Round Two grantees awarded funds upon receipt of signed grant agreement.
- **March 18:** Grantee Check-In Phone Call
- **April 1, 2020:** 2020 Census Day
- **April – July 2020:** Census Non-Response Follow-Up (reaching those who have not completed the census)
- **June 30, 2020:** Final Grant Report

VII. Funding Activities

Our goal is to support organizations in addressing needs and gaps to ensure a robust and accurate census count in their community. In this final round of funding, applicants are encouraged to assess their readiness to plan, organize and implement activities that are best suited for their capacity and commitment to undertake census efforts, beyond existing resources. *Note that there are many resources, including census outreach toolkits, available online for free (see Section III above).*

We are supporting one-time or periodic census education and outreach activities to raise awareness of the census and support those completing the count, with grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000. The total amount of funding available for Round Two is \$600,000.

Examples of funding activities include:

- Local nonprofits and community-based groups creating or implementing existing census trainings, awareness campaigns and educational materials tailored to community engagement.
- Technical assistance and communications support such as internet access, language translation and other accessibility accommodations.
- Workshops, public campaigns and informal gatherings to address census-related concerns and questions from community members.
- Trainings with nonprofits or community leaders on effective outreach tactics and methods for identifying and engaging hard-to-reach communities.
- Outreach efforts and messaging during the nonresponse follow-up phase.

Partisan political activities are ineligible for funding.

VIII. Criteria Categories

Criteria below, listed in order of priority, will guide the Review Panel’s considerations for funding decisions.

Identified Population/Community

- Focuses on hard-to-count communities/geographic areas.
- Organization reflects strong understanding of the needs within their identified community.

- Identifies specific strategies and plans that address the unique cultural and regional needs of the community.
- Aims to track the results of proposed activities and has ability to modify practices based on lessons learned.

Approach and Alignment with the Washington Census Equity Fund

- Articulates how proposed strategies and/or activities will contribute toward increased census participation among hard-to-count communities.
- Identifies strategies and/or efforts that are informed and led by the people within the identified community described in the application, and engages that community in the ongoing work, planning and leadership.

Capacity and Collaboration

- Organization has experience working within historically undercounted communities, if not, can demonstrate understanding of their role as a partner in working with these communities.
- Staff/board/designated leaders are representative of the communities they are working with.
- Demonstrates the necessary capacity to carry out the proposed activity.
- Understands their own community’s barriers to participating in the 2020 Census, address issues of public and community concern and demonstrates potential to mobilize communities of engagement beyond the 2020 Census.

Implementation and Budget

- Demonstrates activities consistent with the approach and anticipated results of increasing participation in the census count.
- Budget presents a realistic estimate of costs associated with the activities.
- Funding request is reasonable given the scope of work.

IX. Proposal Questions

This section lists the questions in the [Washington Census Equity Fund RFP Application](#). Once you begin online, your progress on the application cannot be saved and resumed. Please write out and finalize your answers on a separate document before copying your answers into the Application and submitting it for consideration.

The Funding Priorities (Section V) and Criteria Categories (Section VIII) will inform how these questions are scored by Review Panels.

1. Applicant Organization Name

2. Please list the Employer Identification Number (EIN) of your organization, if registered with the IRS. If applicant is utilizing a fiscal sponsor, list the EIN of the sponsoring organization. Format: 12-1234567

3. If you have a fiscal sponsor, name the fiscal sponsor organization here:

4. Applicant Primary Contact:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____ Phone #: _____

5. The Washington Census Equity Fund is supporting census outreach, awareness and education efforts, with grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000. Please numerically indicate the amount your organization is requesting in the box below, using whole numbers only. Example: 5100

6. Which historically undercounted communities do you intend to serve with the proposed activities? Please select all that are applicable.

• Communities of color

• Indigenous people

• Immigrant and refugee communities

• Low-income persons

• Persons experiencing homelessness

• Persons with mental or physical disabilities

• Non-English speakers

• Rural communities

• LGBTQIA persons

• Young persons (18 years old and younger)
- If you would like to elaborate on your response above or mention hard-to-count populations you serve that were not listed, you may do so here [300 character max]:
7. In which counties will the proposed activities take place? Please select all that are applicable. [Checklist of all counties]
- If you would like to provide further details on the geography that your activities will serve (e.g., cities, neighborhoods, others), you may do so here [300 character max]:
8. Briefly describe the major barriers the identified community faces to participating in the census.

9. Please share how you plan to engage the identified population/ community to overcome barriers of participation and ultimately participate in the census count.
- Briefly describe the proposed activities, location (to the extent known), months they will occur, and estimated number of participants. You may list between one and 10 activities [300 character max for each]
- Example: Set up a booth at the County Fair in Best County to talk with attendees about Census 2020 and distribute flyers, March 10-20, reaching approximately 400 people.
10. Have the identified communities been involved in this proposal in any manner? If so, briefly describe how.

11. How many people do you estimate your proposed activities will directly engage in total?

12. Describe plans for tracking information about the progress and results of proposed activities.

13. Please describe your organization’s experience engaging with the identified communities.

14. How does your organization’s leadership and/or staff reflect the race, ethnicity and/or languages spoken of the identified community?

Optional: List partners or organizations needed to help in the successful implementation of your proposed activities? (For example, community centers, libraries, specific businesses, schools, media)

15. Describe key activities (no more than ten) and budget costs necessary for those activities. Include in your description budget explanatory notes for large expenses. Please ensure budget requests align with the proposed activities in your narrative. [300 character max for each]

16. Example: Setting up a census education booth at the county fair- \$1,900 for supplies, snacks for volunteers and table registration fee.
- Activity 1 + Budget Estimate: Activity 2 + Budget Estimate:
17. May we share this application with other funders interested in supporting census work in Washington? (Yes/No)

18. Have you received other funding related to census planning and engagement? Please include the amount and the source.

19. Optional: What else would you like us to know that is relevant to the proposed funding request and not addressed in earlier responses?

20. Optional: How did you hear about this opportunity?
- If you are submitting your application by mail, please contact us at CensusEquity@philanthropynw.org for a Word version of the application.
- X. How To Submit A Proposal And Contact Information
- Please answer all questions in Proposal Questions (Section IX) [online](#). **Remember: The application cannot be saved and returned to later.** Please write out and finalize your answers on a separate document before copying your answers into the online Application and submitting it.
- Proposals must be completed online by 5:00 pm PT on November 22, 2019.
- Alternatively, if the proposal is mailed, it must be received no later than November 22, 2019 at:
- Philanthropy Northwest
Attn: Washington Census Equity Fund
2101 Fourth Ave., Suite 650
Seattle, WA 98121
- For additional questions on submitting a proposal, please email Marc Moshcatel at CensusEquity@PhilanthropyNW.org.
- XI. “Census Friday” Informational Sessions
- If you are interested in learning more, please consider attending one of the optional hour-long “Census Friday” informational sessions over the phone.
- Washington Census Equity Fund open informational sessions:
- Friday, November 1, 2019 (phone call): 10:00 – 11:00 am

• Friday, November 8, 2019 (phone call): 10:00 – 11:00 am

• Friday, November 15, 2019 (phone call): 10:00 – 11:00 am
- Dial-in information Conference line: (267) 930-4000;
Participant code: 329-709-300
- Stay up to date by visiting our website: <https://philanthropynw.org/washington-census-equity-fund>
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APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

Originally disseminated January 2021

Introduction

- 1. Can you briefly describe your organization and your role in the Census Equity Fund work?

Outcome 1: Collaboration

- 2. How would you describe the collaboration between your organization and the Fund and between Philanthropy Northwest?
- 3. What are some examples of that collaboration?
- 4. What were the mechanisms/processes that enhanced collaboration?
- 5. What are examples of mechanisms/processes that challenged collaboration?
- 6. What does successful collaboration look like, and what would it require?
- 7. How would you characterize philanthropy’s role as a partner, generally?
- 8. How can you reimagine philanthropy’s role in census efforts in the future based on what we learned? And what would that achieve?

Outcome 2: Responsiveness to Grantees

- 9. How did the Fund assess or focus on hard to count populations?
- 10. How did the Fund address geographic distribution of funds?
- 11. How did the Fund facilitate applicant access to funds?
- 12. The “[How to Change a System](#)” pyramid illustrates different ways/ strategies to bring about system changes. We are interested in understanding how the Fund supported you to make changes in the ecosystem?
- 13. What else could the Fund have done to improve the ecosystem?
- 14. Had it not been for the Fund, which aspects of the ecosystem would not have benefitted?
- 15. In what ways did the Fund support adjustments in response to the pandemic?
- 16. In what ways were your concerns solicited, heard, and addressed throughout the process?

Outcome 3: Advocacy/Mobilization

Take a moment to scan the below definitions; we suggest this language to maintain consistency in how people use concepts in their responses.

- Advocacy – using voice to shape public policy using organizing, communications, mobilization, policy analysis/research, and lobbying (e.g., this could be shape and membership of commissions/ committee, administrative rules, budgets, legislation, etc.)
- Lobbying – advocacy that specifically calls on policymakers to change and/or pass legislation. Lobbying activities can include mobilization, calls to action, direct meetings and testimony to elected members toward this goal.
- Administrative advocacy: working to influence staff implementation of laws including, but not limited to writing of regulations and rules. (e.g., could include how grants are distributed, reporting requirements, timelines for distribution of funds). Most often, this is NOT lobbying.

In what ways did the Fund influence the ecosystem related to Census advocacy?

- 17. As a component of the Fund, Philanthropy Northwest and some Fund partners engaged in state policy advocacy, including lobbying the Washington legislature. Can you give examples of how these strategies increased the Fund’s impact?
- 18. What role did the Fund play in bringing more state funding for the Census during this legislative campaign?
- 19. How did your organization’s geographic focus inform or play a role in your advocacy?
- 20. What are some lessons from the Fund experience do you think we can apply to other policy issue areas? And what might be required to do this type of work even more fully in the future?
- 21. Finally, are there any other things you would like to mention that were NOT talked about, or things you would emphasize, or questions you’d like to ask?

APPENDIX D: EQUITY FUND PARTNER SURVEY QUESTIONS

Survey Opened January 2021

Introductory Paragraph (also used in email):

Thank you for partnering with Philanthropy Northwest in the Washington Census Equity Fund. We’re conducting an evaluation to better understand how well the Fund met its goals, highlighting lessons learned to help inform the sector for the next census and similar collaborations. Please complete this short survey to help us evaluate the Fund’s progress and challenges. Any quotes that appear in our final evaluation will be anonymous, so please provide your honest feedback. Thanks!

Survey Questions

- 1. Name (optional)
- 2. Organization Name (optional)
- 3. What type of funder are you?
 - a. Community Foundation
 - b. Corporate Foundation
 - c. Family Foundation
 - d. Other
- 4. How would you describe the collaboration between your organization and the Fund?
- 5. What motivated your organization to join the Fund?
- 6. In your view, what were the goals of the Fund? How well do you think these goals were met?
- 7. Were there particular mechanisms/processes that enhanced collaboration? If so, what were they?
- 8. Were there particular mechanisms/processes that made collaboration more challenging? If so, what were they?
- 9. MULTIPLE CHOICE: On a scale of 1-5, 1 being “not at all successful” and 5 being “very successful,” how would you rate the Fund’s incorporation of equity into the collaboration?
- 10. MULTIPLE CHOICE: On a scale of 1-5, 1 being “not at all successful” and 5 being “very successful,” how would you rate Philanthropy Northwest’s administration of the Fund?
- 11. What role should foundations like yours have in future census efforts, and how can this be achieved?

APPENDIX E: GRANTEE FINAL REPORT QUESTIONS

Survey Opened August 2020

Washington census equity fund report questions preview

Instructions: *Using the online link*, please concisely answer the following questions about your grant from the Washington Census Equity Fund. The reporting period for this report is the entire grant term: the date you received the funding through August 2020, or whenever you used the last of the funding before that month. Use your original application as a reference, but we also understand that plans changed due to the pandemic, which may have affected how many people you served or which activities you completed.

Please note that this report only covers the census funding and not the general operating support grant that organizations received in April 2020 (there are no reporting requirements attached to the COVID-19 relief funding you received).

Email us if you have any questions at censusequity@philanthropyNW.org. Thank you!

Questions 1-5: Basic information in case we need to follow up with questions about your report.

- 1. Organization Name
- 2. Project Name
- 3. Primary Contact Name
- 4. Contact Email Address
- 5. Approved Grant Amount (Provide a whole number without punctuation or symbols. Example: 1500)

Questions 6-7: Multiple-choice questions on which populations and geographies you served with this funding. With your responses, we will be able to analyze if the pandemic affected who received outreach and where we had gaps in our funding.

6. Which counties did you serve with this grant?
Options: Statewide, Adams, Asotin, Benton, Chelan, Clallam, Clark, Columbia, Cowlitz, Douglas, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lewis, Lincoln, Mason, Okanogan, Pacific, Pend Oreille, Pierce, San Juan, Skagit, Skamania, Snohomish, Spokane, Stevens, Thurston, Wahkiakum, Walla Walla, Whatcom, Whitman, Yakima
7. Which hard-to-count communities did you serve with this grant?
Options: Communities of color, Indigenous persons, Immigrants and refugees, Low-income persons, Persons experiencing homelessness, Persons with mental or physical disabilities, Non-English Speakers,

LGBTQIA persons, Young persons (18 years old and younger), Geographic localities (i.e. rural), AND/OR Other
Optional: If you would like to elaborate on any of the options you selected above, you may do so here in 400 or fewer characters.

Questions 8-14: Questions about your budgeted work. This is your opportunity to identify how you used the funding and how the pandemic changed your plans.

8. Please provide a concise list of the major project activities in your proposal that you completed, as well as the general timeframe of each activity AND their approximate budget costs.
Example *list*:
- 1. *Tabling event at King County Fair in September 2019: \$1500.*
 - 2. *Door-to-door outreach to about 200 households in downtown Spokane from December 2019 through March 2020: \$2000.*
 - 3. *Social media ads in May 2020: \$1500.*
9. In the same format as above, please provide a concise list of project activities that you completed with the funding that were **not** in your original proposal, as well as the general timeframe of each activity AND their approximate budget costs. If you did not have any new activities, write “N/A.”
10. In the same format as above, please provide a concise list of activities on your application you were **unable** to complete due to the pandemic or other reasons, the intended timeframe of each activity AND their approximate budget costs. If you completed all the activities you planned to do, write “N/A.”
11. Please check that your budget costs in Questions 8-9 add up to your total grant amount, minus any leftover funding. If your organization has leftover funding from this grant to carry out activities between September 1 and September 30 (when the 2020 Census ends), how much is left and how do you plan to use it? If you do not have leftover funding, write “N/A.”
12. What have you accomplished as the direct results of your project activities? Please be generous in sharing your achievements, how you addressed barriers to reach the hard-to-count populations you serve, the impact on the community and what was made possible because of this funding.

13. If your organization continued engaging in census outreach and education efforts after expending the funding, what activities did you engage in and how much additional funding would have supported your efforts? If this does not apply to your situation, write “N/A.”
14. What measures, formal or informal, did you use to track the progress of the funded activities?

Questions 15-17: With the previous questions helping us understand your impact on a qualitative level, the numbers you provide here will help us understand your outreach’s impact on a quantitative level. If you tracked exact numbers, great! If not, estimates are fine.

15. How many individuals in your community were you aiming to reach in this reporting period? (Provide a whole number without punctuation or symbols. Example: 1500)
16. Approximately how many individuals did you reach in this reporting period? (Provide a whole number without punctuation or symbols. Example: 1500)
17. Optional: If able to provide a reasonable estimate, how many of these individuals do you estimate participated in the 2020 Census, who would have not otherwise participated? If you do not have a reasonable estimate, please skip this question instead of making an arbitrary guess. (Provide a whole number without punctuation or symbols. Example: 1500)

Questions 18-19: If you noticed common motivations people had when deciding to complete the 2020 Census or not, let us know. This helps us get a better sense of what factors increased or decreased self-response rates across Washington.

18. What were the factors that seemed to convince people to complete the Census?
19. Optional: If any individuals said they would not complete the census, even with your outreach, what were their reasons?

Questions 20-24: Please share insights you have gathered through this work. Your answers highlight the impact of this work, as well as inform us – and future census collaboratives – on potential best practices for the 2030 Census.

20. Briefly describe any unanticipated outcomes.

APPENDIX F: LIST OF EQUITY FUND PARTNERS

Fund Partners
Arcora Foundation
Ballmer Group
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Blue Mountain Community Foundation
BECU
Bernier McCaw Foundation
Cambia Health Foundation
Cedarmere Foundation
Chuckanut Health Foundation
Community Foundation for Southwest Washington
Community Foundation of Snohomish County
Empire Health Foundation
Greater Tacoma Community Foundation
Group Health Foundation
Innovia Foundation
Kaiser Permanente
Lamb Foundation
Latino Community Fund
M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust
Microsoft Philanthropies
More Equitable Democracy
Na'ah Illahee Fund
Northwest Area Foundation
Premera Blue Cross
Progress Alliance of Washington
Raikes Foundation
Renton Regional Community Foundation
Seattle Foundation
Sherwood Trust
Statewide Capacity Collaborative
T.E.W. Foundation
United Way of the Columbia-Willamette
United Way of Whatcom County
WA Women's Foundation
Whatcom Community Foundation
Yakima Valley Community Foundation

APPENDIX G: LIST OF EQUITY FUND GRANTEES

APACEvotes (Asian Pacific Islander Americans for Civic Empowerment)	Latino Community Fund of Washington State
Asia Pacific Cultural Center	Latino Educational Training Institute/Edmonds Community College
Bellingham Public Schools Foundation	Lower Columbia Community Action Council DBA Lower Columbia Community Action Program
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Olympic Peninsula	Lummi Indian Business Council
Centro Cultural Mexicano	More Equitable Democracy
Child Care Aware of Washington	Muslim Community and Neighborhood Association
Chinook Indian Nation (Confederated Lower Chinook Tribes and Bands)	Northwest Communities Education Center
City of Renton	Northwest Kenyan Community Association
Clark County Latino Youth Leadership	NW Native Census Alliance
Communities of Color Coalition	Para Los Niños de Highline
Community Action of Skagit County	Passages Family Support
Community Health Worker Coalition for Migrants and Refugees	Peninsula Behavioral Health
Community to Community Development	Puyallup Watershed Initiative
Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation	Quinault Indian Nation
Consejo Counseling and Referral Services	Rainbow Center
Council on American-Islamic Relations, Washington	Refugee & Immigrant Services Northwest
Cowlitz Indian Tribe	Refugee Connections Spokane
El Centro de la Raza	Share
Entre Hermanos	Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe
Fair Work Center (in coalition with MLK Labor)	Somali Bantu Community Service of Washington
Faith Action Network	Somali Family Safety Task Force
Falis Community Service	Southeast Washington Economic Development Association
Filipino Chamber of Commerce of the Pacific Northwest in collaboration with the Association of Filipino Engineers of Washington	Spokane Immigrant Rights Coalition
First Five Years & Beyond	Swinomish Indian Tribal Community
Hearing, Speech & Deaf Center	Tacoma Housing Development Group
Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber	Tacoma Refugee Choir
Hmong Association of Washington	Tacoma Urban League
Horn of Africa Services	Taiwanese American Professionals - Seattle
Innovia Foundation	The Noble Foundation
Iraqi Community Center of Washington	Tri-Cities Counts
Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe	Tri-Cities LULAC Council
Kalispel Indian Community of the Kalispel Indian Reservation	Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle
Kitsap County 2020 Census Complete Count	Villa Comunitaria
Korean Community Service Center	Volunteer Food & Resource Center
La Casa Hogar	Wakulima USA
Lake City Collective	Washington Census Alliance
	Washington Nonprofits
	Whidbey Community Foundation
	Yakama/Yakima el Censo 2020
	Youth and Family Link

21. Briefly describe any lessons learned and what changes you would make for the next census based on these lessons.
22. Does the 2020 Census work inform your organizational strategy and actions? If so, how? If not, you can write “no.”
23. Are there specific ways, as a result of this funding, that have led to a stronger network (of individuals and/or organizations) for your organization? If so, please provide an example(s). If not, you can write “no.”
24. Are there specific ways, as a result of this funding, that your organization is better positioned to engage in other community action issues? If so, please provide an example(s). If not, you can write “no.”

Questions 25-28: We would like to know about your experience working with us. This information will help guide our practices for census funding opportunities in the future – both in Washington and elsewhere.

25. At this time, how would you rate the success of this project in meeting the intended Washington Census Equity Fund goals: (1) to support the desired outcome of a robust, fair and accurate 2020 Census count across the state and (2) to create a model for community mobilization beyond?

Options: 1 star = very unsuccessful, 2 stars = unsuccessful, 3 stars = average, 4 stars = successful, 5 stars = very successful.

Optional: If you would like to elaborate on your score, you may do so here in 400 or fewer characters.
26. How would you rate your experience with this funding opportunity?

Options: 1 star = poor, 2 stars = fair, 3 stars = good, 4 stars = very good, 5 stars = excellent.

Optional: If you would like to elaborate on your score, you may do so here in 400 or fewer characters.
27. Optional: Grantees received a COVID-19 general operating support grant in April 2020. If you would like to mention how your organization used the funding, you may do so here.
28. Optional: What else, if anything, would you like the Washington Census Equity Fund to know about this project and your experience in this effort?

ENDNOTES

- 1 U.S. Const. art. I, § 4, cl. 3.
- 2 Andrew Reamer, Brief 7: Comprehensive Accounting of Census-Guided Federal Spending (FY2017) Part B: State Estimates (Washington, D.C.: The George Washington University, 2020), 1-2, <https://gwipp.gwu.edu/counting-dollars-2020-role-decennial-census-geographic-distribution-federal-funds>.
- 3 See Thomas Mule, Census Coverage Measurement Estimation Report Summary of Estimates of Coverage for Persons in the United States (Washington, D.C.: United States Census Bureau, 2012), <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2010/technical-documentation/methodology/g-series/g01.pdf> (describing accuracy measurements for the 2010 Census).
- 4 Mark Mather and Paola Scommegna, Why Is the U.S. Census So Important? (Washington, D.C.: Population Reference Bureau, 2019), <https://www.prb.org/resources/importance-of-u-s-census/>.
- 5 Counting Hard-to-Count Populations: Select Topics in International Censuses (Washington, D.C.: United States Census Bureau, 2019), <https://www.census.gov/library/working-papers/2019/demo/2020-brief.html>.
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- 7 Hansi Lo Wang, “Despite Cybersecurity Risks And Last-Minute Changes, The 2020 Census Goes Online,” NPR, March 2, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/2020/03/02/807913222/despite-cybersecurity-risks-and-last-minute-changes-the-2020-census-goes-online>.
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- 9 Michael Macagnone, “Census Effort Gets \$7.6 Billion Funding, ‘Friended’ by Facebook,” Roll Call, December 19, 2019, <https://www.rollcall.com/2019/12/19/census-effort-gets-7-6-billion-funding-friended-by-facebook/>.
- 10 2020 Census Operational Adjustments Due to COVID-19, U.S. Census Bureau, June 10, 2021, <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade/2020/planning-management/operational-adjustments.html>.
- 11 Christi Zamarripa, “What Is Going on with the 2020 Census?” State Legislatures Magazine, <https://www.ncsl.org/research/redistricting/what-is-going-on-with-the-2020-census-magazine2020.aspx>.
- 12 Warren Goldstein, Making Philanthropic Dollars Count: A History of the Funders Census Initiative during the 2010 Census (Washington, D.C.: Funders Committee for Civic Participation, 2011), 7, <https://funderscommittee.org/resource/fci-2010-final-report-making-philanthropic-dollars-count/>.
- 13 The BCP initiative is a partnership of Philanthropy Northwest, The Giving Practice and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and is designed to promote equitable philanthropy and support community-led solutions across Washington state and Portland, OR.
- 14 David Biemesderfer et. al to Jennifer Jessup, August 2, 2018, <https://www.unitedphilforum.org/resources/philanthropy-serving-organization-letter-citizenship-question-opposition>.
- 15 Joe Del Guercio et. al to Jennifer Jessup, August 2, 2018, <https://funderscommittee.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Census-Citizenship-Q-Sign-on-Letter-Final-2.pdf>.
- 16 Brief for Foundations and Philanthropy-Serving Organizations as Amicus Curiae Supporting Respondents, United States Department of Commerce v. State of New York, 588 U.S. __ (2019).
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- 19 See Wash. Rev. Code §39.26.140 (2012), <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=39.26.140> (regulations on sole source contracts).
- 20 State law requires funding to be distributed through performance-based invoicing, meaning grantees would need to perform the work first before billing the state for their activities. See Wash. Rev. Code §39.26.180(3) (2012), <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=39.26.180>.
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