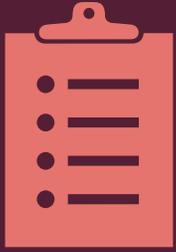


Massachusetts Census Equity Fund 2020



The decennial census is a nonpartisan exercise and a cornerstone of our democracy. Every 10 years, the US Constitution requires that all residents, including non-citizens and undocumented immigrants, be counted through a nationwide census. Collecting accurate census data is an essential part in determining a fair allocation of federal funds and political representation at the federal, state, and local levels. The 2020 census will have a wide-ranging and long-term impact on the future of our Commonwealth.

2020 Census – What’s at Stake:

- In FY15, the federal government distributed nearly \$600 billion dollars to states based on census data for programs including Medicaid, Medicare, SNAP, Section 8, the Children’s Health Insurance Program, Head Start, and WIC. This resulted in more than \$16 billion in funding for Massachusetts.
- Massachusetts could lose \$2,372 per year in federal funding for each person not counted on the census. Without this critical government funding, communities and nonprofits would suffer; philanthropy would be unable to fill the gap.
- Data collected by the census is critical in supporting infrastructure investments, public health, and transportation and for implementation and enforcement of most civil rights laws—including the Voting Rights Act as well as fair housing, education, and employment laws.
- Local, state, and federal governments, businesses, nonprofits, and foundations all rely on data collected by the census to allocate funding, measure impact, and make strategic decisions around service delivery and economic development.
- While the number of seats that Massachusetts has in the US House of Representatives and in the Electoral College is unlikely to be impacted by the 2020 census, the data collected will form the basis of redistricting at the state level.

Historically, certain populations are “hard-to-count”:

Urban and rural areas with large low-income populations, people of color, immigrants, non-English speakers, migrant workers, ex-offenders, young children, the elderly, those who are disabled, renters, the homeless, and those living in mobile homes or multi-unit residences are historically hard-to-count. The 2020 census is planned as the first all-digital count, which may add to the challenges of counting those who lack digital literacy and/or internet access.

This collaboration would support a coordinated, state-wide campaign with the following goals:

- Educating stakeholders, community leaders, elected officials, the media, and the general public on the importance and impact of the 2020 census on our Commonwealth.
- Increasing the response rate in hard-to-count communities to achieve an equitable census count.

Additional concerns about the 2020 Census include: insufficient and delayed funding, turnover of experienced leadership at the Census, and climate of fear in immigrant communities, compounded by the suggestion that the Census will include a citizenship question.

The Massachusetts Funders for the 2020 Census will coordinate:

1. A learning community to educate about the importance of the census. This will include convenings, workshops, and webinars for funders and nonprofits, and other members of the community to receive regular updates throughout the census campaign and to promote their active involvement in the process.
2. A donor collaborative with a volunteer steering committee, has launched the Massachusetts 2020 Census Equity Fund. We anticipate a grantmaking process that will target support to community-based organizations with strong plans to overcome barriers to accurate counting in specific hard-to-count sectors.

We will develop critical partnerships to ensure that the project reaches targeted hard-to-count communities. This includes working with foundations, nonprofits, and census representatives as well as local, state, and federal officials. With sufficient resources to organize a broad coalition, we can have a significant impact that will carry our Commonwealth into the next decade.



The Herman & Frieda L. Miller Foundation



Associated Grant Makers



access strategies fund
Amplifying Voices.

To address these challenges, members of the Massachusetts Census Equity Fund 2020 are inviting funders to be part of a three-year project to promote an accurate count of all residents in Massachusetts.



EPISCOPAL CITY MISSION



Plan & Timeline

The Massachusetts Census Equity Fund 2020 is inviting funders to be part of a three-year project to promote an accurate count of all residents in Massachusetts. The project will be rolled out in three phases from January 2018 to December 2020.

PHASE 1: January 2018–December 2018

Phase One consists of the formation of a funders learning community, research, and planning for census outreach.

- The funders learning community came together in the summer of 2017 and will meet for the duration of the project. Primary activities will include: raising funds to support a donor collaborative that will give grants to community-based organizations; holding quarterly funder forums and webinars to update the philanthropic community on developments in the census process; and co-sponsoring forums and webinars with nonprofits, community-based organizations, and associations to promote their involvement in the census process.
- The research and planning for the project will require: identifying the hard-to-count communities in the state; researching the challenges presented by a digital census and strategizing solutions; determining the impact of the census on distribution of revenues to the state; meeting with stakeholders and policymakers in order to support ongoing efforts and increase collaborations; public education on the importance and implications of the census on Massachusetts; developing promotional materials; and planning for a media launch.

PHASE 2: January 2019–December 2019

Phase Two involves promotion, education, analysis, and public education around the census.

- Key activities will include implementing a state-wide communications and public education strategy to effectively work with policymakers, the nonprofit community, the media, the public, and the private sector on the 2020 census and its impact to the Commonwealth.
- The grantmaking process will begin in January 2019 with the development and distribution of a request for proposals for census outreach funding. Grants will be awarded in the winter followed by training for grantees on how to plan for and promote the census, reach hard to count communities, and increase capacity for nonprofits across the state to engage in the 2020 census.

PHASE 3: December 2020 – Fall 2020

Phase Three involves coordinated efforts to increase the response rate in hard-to-count communities and achieve an equitable census count.

- The on-the-ground work of grantee organizations will be in full swing between January and June 2020. The grantees will be engaging in a variety of efforts including: sponsoring public education events; distributing and displaying census information onsite; managing challenges presented by a digital census; assisting people in completing and returning their census forms; and promoting the census in diverse media markets. Strategic collaborations and new strategies will be explored to ensure that community engagement efforts secure a complete count and that those populations at risk of being undercounted or lacking digital access are protected and engaged.



To get involved or for more information please contact:
Alexi Torres-Fleming, Executive Director of Access Strategies Fund,
Chair of the Massachusetts Census Equity Fund,
(617) 494-0715, x201, atorres-fleming@accessstrategies.org