



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Census 2020
Strategic Communications



**Missouri Foundation
for Health**

a catalyst for change



Missouri Foundation for Health requests the services of a consultant to help develop a statewide strategic communications plan for the 2020 Census.

Background

The Constitution requires the federal government to collect census data every 10 years. The census provides an official count of the United States' population and information about important demographic changes over a 10-year period. Population amounts are used to ensure states are being fairly represented, both in the allotment of federal dollars and in the number of congressional districts. The data collected helps to determine the distribution of federal funding to states for numerous programs aimed at helping underserved communities. These federal funds make up large portions of state budgets, with the majority of the dollars going toward programs such as Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Highway Planning and Construction Program. The census is also used to guide decision making by federal, state, and local governments; philanthropy; and businesses in determining where resources should be directed and how efforts should be evaluated.

Low participation in the 2020 Census could have substantial negative consequences for Missouri. Missouri receives approximately \$11.2 billion annually in federal funds, which are directly calculated from census data. In fact, for every person undercounted, Missouri forfeits an estimated \$1,272 in federal dollars. Achieving a complete count will already be a challenge for many areas across Missouri, with 9 percent of the population living in hard-to-count communities during the 2010 census. Households most at risk of being undercounted include those who are low-income, renters, people of color, young children, and immigrants. The new online census platform also presents hardships for the roughly 20 percent of Missouri households that lack access to broadband or high-speed internet services. This poses a significant concern for rural residents and older adults who are less likely to have broadband in their homes. The development of an effective and consistent messaging campaign for Missouri is vital to ensuring we have a complete and accurate count in the 2020 Census.

Description of Services Required

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to engage a strategic communications consultant to develop, implement, and manage a 14-month census messaging campaign.

The selected consultant will be expected to work closely with Missouri Foundation for Health staff, polling consultants, cross-sector stakeholders, and coalitions throughout the MFH service region to coordinate and align efforts. The consultant should have extensive knowledge of and have strong relationships with a wide network of media outlets throughout Missouri, as well as with key Missouri stakeholders who represent and/or understand hard-to-count communities. Missouri Foundation for Health will be working with a polling firm to conduct rural public opinion research and limited message testing for this project. The strategic communications consultant should plan to work in collaboration with that consultant through October.



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The goals of the messaging campaign are to:

- Develop effective and consistent strategic messaging that will encourage and inform about the importance of participating in Census 2020, with a particular focus on Missouri's hard-to-count populations
- Amplify the reach of key messaging by engaging new and existing partners, grantees, and communities throughout MFH's service region to develop buy-in and materials appropriate for various audiences
- Mobilize Missourians, across various sectors and communities, to participate in the 2020 Census and to encourage complete count activities

The communications consultant will:

1. Develop a messaging campaign with innovative communications methods to reach diverse audiences, to be rolled out in the fall of 2019 and continue through summer 2020. When appropriate, messages should be consistent and influenced by existing messaging research done at a national level ([Funders Census Initiative Briefing Series: Census 2020 Messaging Testing Results](#)).
2. Work with MFH polling consultant (to start work in April 2019) to incorporate rural public opinion findings into messaging materials
3. Develop a plan for organizations and communities that includes creative strategies, tactics, and platforms that support the core messaging necessary to inform on the benefits of being counted in Census 2020, while providing guidance to grantees and partners on how materials should be implemented and used to increase market penetration and impact
4. Manage the messaging campaign and provide analytics on how well it is being received and what has proven to be effective, with an understanding that some aspects of the campaign may have to be refined based on engagement and outcomes
5. Develop a targeted paid media plan to aid the messaging campaign to reach hard-to-count communities
6. Work in collaboration with MFH staff and partners to complement state, regional, and local complete-count efforts, including Census Bureau staff working in Missouri
7. Conduct focus groups with community members and cross-sector partners, as determined by the Foundation, in order to assess knowledge gaps and identify opportunities to refine and inform messaging
8. Develop marketing materials for campaign that includes at least one video and multiple posters or other leave behinds that increase awareness of Census 2020. These materials should be sector specific (education, business, health care, nonprofit, government)
9. If not based in Missouri, consultant must be willing to travel to Missouri at least twice for external presentations or convenings. Consultant must also participate on calls and/or in meetings with MFH staff on a regular basis



Proposal Submission

Proposals must be submitted online.

To begin a proposal, [click here](#).

To return to a proposal in progress, log in to your [Account](#).

Contact and Deadline

If you have questions, please contact Alex Rankin, Government Affairs Manager, at arankin@mffh.org or (314) 345-5571. The proposal is due no later than midnight on April 5, 2019.

For more information on the online application process, [click here](#). If there are additional questions, please contact Jenny Minelli, Program Assistant, at (314) 345-5531 or jminelli@mffh.org.

Key Dates

March 1, 2019 – RFP Launch Date

April 5, 2019 – RFP Submission Deadline (midnight)

June 21, 2019 – Anticipated Award Notification

June 24, 2019 – Anticipated Project Start Date

Eligibility Requirements

Preference will be given to firms with distinct knowledge of and experience with Missouri, its hard-to-count communities, and related resources and stakeholders.

The Foundation is committed to ensuring that equal opportunity is provided to minority and woman-owned enterprises and that its contractors have active programs for ensuring diversity in their workforce and sensitivity to the issues of race and gender. No person shall be denied or subjected to discrimination on account of any services or activities made possible by or resulting from an agreement resulting from this RFP on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, race, color, creed, national origin, age (except minimum age and retirement provision), marital or veteran status or the presence of any sensory, mental or physical handicap. Any violation of this provision shall be considered a violation of a material provision of this procurement and shall be grounds for cancellation, termination or suspension in whole or in part of any related agreement by the Foundation. The respondents shall at all times in the proposal and contract process comply with all applicable state and federal anti-discrimination laws, rules, regulations and requirements thereof.

Proposal Format and Content

- Submission acknowledgement.** Complete and submit the [one-page acknowledgement form](#).
- Proposal Narrative** (*please include section headings below*)
 - **Organization Name and Primary Contact Information.**
 - **Approach to Services.** Provide a brief description of the approach to services and address each of the following. **This section of the proposal should not exceed eight double-spaced pages, 11 point font.**
 - Provide a description of your organization, including why your organization is well



qualified for this work.

- Describe your organization’s previous experience with developing strategic communications plans and campaigns. Please cite specific experience your organization has with efforts in Missouri and/or in marginalized communities. Provide documentation such as fliers, fact sheets, links to websites, etc. that highlight your work.
 - Describe your previous experience coordinating with cross-sector partners (i.e. government, business, nonprofit, health care) to leverage messaging. What went well in that process? What didn’t go well? What did you learn from the experience that you can apply to this experience?
 - Describe how equity informs how you approach your work.
 - **Deliverables and Proposed Timeline.** Provide a work plan and timeline that identifies activities and deliverables.
- **Organizational History and Qualifications.** Provide a summary of experience and qualifications of the organization’s staff as well as any proposed subcontractors. Include bios of key personnel.
- Cost Proposal.** Provide detailed cost proposal and justification for: professional services (hourly rate and number of hours), travel specifically related to the project, subcontractor fees (attach proposal or contract), and other direct costs related specifically to the project. Foundation reserves the right to negotiate proposed costs. *Note: Requested travel will be reimbursed for coach airfare, reasonable lodging, rental car or public transportation, meals and incidentals expenses at reimbursed amount not to exceed the federal per diem rate.*
 - Intellectual Property List.** If applicable, attach list of intellectual property.
 - Additional required documents:**
 - The names and contact information of 2 – 3 individuals or organizations the Foundation can contact to verify past work.
 - Completed W-9 form

Proposal Review and Evaluation

Proposals will be reviewed in accordance with the requirements of this RFP. Only those proposals that meet all the mandatory criteria in the RFP will be given consideration.

Successful proposals will have:

- Existing organizational infrastructure that indicates sufficient capacity for the work
- Knowledge and experience with Missouri communities, specifically marginalized communities
- Knowledge and/or experience working around participation or enrollment activities and events, similar to the census
- Knowledge of focus groups and the steps to be taken to acquire appropriate community and stakeholder engagement
- Experience effectively communicating and collaborating across organizations with multiple stakeholders
- Experience rapidly and creatively managing, analyzing, and synthesizing information from a



variety of sources

- Timeline and budget that is appropriate for successful execution of the deliverables

A respondent's submission of a proposal in no way guarantees procurement by Missouri Foundation for Health. MFH will not reimburse a respondent for the cost of developing or presenting a proposal in response to this RFP. If approved, contractor will be required to enter into a Service Agreement with MFH. To review the terms of the agreement, [click here](#).

Right to Reject

The Foundation reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals submitted
- Request additional information from any or all respondents
- Conduct discussions with respondents to ensure full understanding of, and responsiveness to, the solicitation requirements
- Negotiate modifications to a respondent's proposal prior to final award for the purpose of obtaining best and final offers
- Approve subcontractors proposed or used in carrying out the work

About Missouri Foundation for Health

Missouri Foundation for Health is a resource for the region, working with communities and nonprofits to generate and accelerate positive changes in health. As a catalyst for change, the Foundation improves the health of Missourians through partnership, experience, knowledge, and funding. To learn more please visit mffh.org.