

San Mateo County Health

Community Collaboration for Children's Success – Racial Equity Action Subcommittee

Release Date: December 1st, 2020

Due Date: January 11, 2021

San Mateo County Health is seeking competitive quotes from qualified organizations to develop, administer, and implement a pilot Civic Empowerment Training Program with a particular focus on those from underserved communities, youth ages 15 – 25, and young adults as outlined in the scope of work below.

Please review and consider applying or sharing with partners or qualified organizations.

Proposal Outline: Please provide us a brief project proposal that includes the following: 1) an overall timeline, 2) anticipated cost, 3) relevant experience in civic empowerment and racial equity particularly for youth, young adults, and communities from underserved backgrounds, 4) any proposed modifications and additions to the suggested scope of work and budget below. Please place your proposal on organizational letterhead in pdf format if possible.

Budget: Budgets for this work must be kept under \$20,000 to be considered.

Timeline: We expect a contractor to be identified in January 2021 and the contract to begin March 2021.

Submission & Questions: Please submit your brief proposal no later than January 11, 2021 to Juvy Ann Reyes at jareyes@smcgov.org. Please direct questions to her as well.

Review Criteria

Project proposals will be reviewed based on the following criteria: 1) experience working with youth, 2) experience working in the areas of racial equity, civic empowerment and knowledge of policy advocacy, systems-level change, etc., 3) feasibility of proposal, 4) existing youth and/or advocacy networks in San Mateo County, 5) familiarity with using online platforms to convene groups to deliver trainings, host events, etc.

Background

[Community Collaboration for Children's Success \(CCCS\)](#) is a multi-agency effort that includes partnerships between San Mateo County Health, Human Services Agency, Juvenile Probation, County Office of Education, First 5, and community-based organizations, working to improve life outcomes for vulnerable children and youth in San Mateo County. The focus of this Civic Empowerment Leadership Training was identified by members of the CCCS Racial Equity Action Subcommittee as an important and immediate strategy needed for advancing racial equity in San Mateo County and supporting the success of our impacted youth and families.

Health & Youth Civic Empowerment

Research on the relationship between civic engagement and health is still nascent but increasingly revealing the connection between the two. Health-focused foundations and institutions across the

nation are beginning to invest in civic leadership to improve health outcomes and improve community health overall.^{[i],[ii],[iii]} The field acknowledges that youth are a particularly important population to focus on. They are often left out of decision-making processes and yet represent the future leaders of our communities.

Youth that are civically empowered show a stronger sense of connection to others,^{[xvi],[xvii],[xviii]} which in turn has positive physical and mental health outcomes.^{17,[xix],[xx]}

The health benefits of a **stronger connection to others is associated with:**

- better physical and mental health outcomes such as lower rates of heart disease, depression, and alcohol and drug use.^{17,19,[xxi]}
- experiencing a greater sense of belonging and empowerment, which positively impacts youth self-esteem, growth, and identity.^{17,[xxii],[xxiii]}
- building resiliency in trauma, which translates to better health outcomes.^[xxiv]

Alternatively, youth who feel disconnected from their community experience higher levels of isolation and loneliness, which are detrimental to health because:

- it reduces emotional and socio-cognitive competencies.¹⁷
- it is associated with psychological symptoms like depression^[xxv] and suicide ideation^[xxvi]
- it may increase violent behaviors and use of substances.^{[xxvii],[xxviii],[xxix]}
- it is associated with higher risks of premature death.^[xxx]

Local data on youth well-being in San Mateo County highlights concerning trends that may be indicative of increasing loneliness and social isolation of youth, especially among youth of color. The more that young people engage in civic activities, the higher their social connection and sense of belonging to a community.¹

An important strategy for increasing youth civic empowerment and connectedness is access to political representation and decision-making power especially for our low-income communities and communities of color. People of color in the Bay Area are disproportionately underrepresented in local elected positions throughout the region, however San Mateo County in particular, stands out as having the least diverse elected leadership among its City Mayors, Councilmembers, Board of Supervisors, and District Attorney offices, as compared to the other counties¹. And, 7 of the top 10 cities in the Bay Area with the highest overrepresentation of white people (based on their population), in city elected roles, are located in San Mateo County². Furthermore, the voices of young people are largely absent from the policy- and decision-making processes that affect them and their communities.

Building a stronger pipeline of local community residents from impacted communities to gain access and entry into future leadership roles is imperative. By having a primary focus on youth and young adults, there is an opportunity to encourage their engagement in the local policy and electoral process at an earlier age, as a steppingstone towards greater political participation and increased access to power and political representation for themselves, their families, and peers. Civic empowerment is also an

important tool for lifting up the wisdom and life experiences of young people to voice their priorities and develop policy solutions that further a racial equity agenda for our communities of highest need in San Mateo County.

Goals

Develop, administer, and implement a Civic Empowerment Training program that achieves some of the following goals:

- Build the skills, capacity, empowerment, and readiness of youth and young adults from low-income communities and communities of color to support their understanding and engagement in local electoral and policymaking processes.
- Demystify elected positions and campaigns.
- Increase participants’ understanding of 1) local governance systems, structures, and decision-making, 2) how to become an advocate, and 3) how to build political power for their communities.
- Harness the lived experiences and expertise of young people to empower their leadership in critical decision-making processes that impact their needs and priorities.
- Ground political participation and power within a racial equity framework, amplifying the role of how social and economic conditions, systems, and policy decisions at the local level and affecting multiple issues such as housing, jobs, education, transportation, policing, and more, are the key drivers of access to opportunity and health.

SCOPE OF WORK

1. Kick-off Meeting, Project Workplan, and Follow-Up Meetings

- a. Organize a kick-off meeting with the project team that will include members of the CCCS Racial Equity Subcommittee (referred to as “Subcommittee”). Discuss feedback on training program goals, content, timing, and recruitment and implementation plan.
- b. Develop a project workplan to share with the Subcommittee following the kick-off meeting for their feedback and review. This should include the timeline and schedule of sessions, an overview of methods for delivering the program based on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic, number of participants that can be served, and other components.
- c. Join the CCCS Racial Equity Action Subcommittee meetings to share learnings, get feedback, and suggest continued efforts for the subcommittee.
- d. Organize specific agenda items for the CCCS Racial Equity Action Subcommittee to share progress and evaluation findings.

2. Curriculum and Program Design

- a. *Curriculum and Modules:* develop the training modules, curriculum and timeframe/schedule for the Civic Empowerment Leadership Training. The curriculum should center youth ages 15-25, however the program should be designed to be flexible and relevant for a broader group of young adults who may fall outside this age range. To inform the curriculum, the contractor will:
 - i. Work with youth to identify priority areas and topic ideas for the curriculum. This could include receiving feedback through existing youth network groups

including the County Youth Commission, other city youth commissions, affiliate groups, community college students and relevant associations.

- ii. If possible, review other curriculums offered by organizations/experts who bring experience in increasing civic engagement or offering other types of trainings for youth, young adults, and/or local residents from low-income communities and communities of color.
 - iii. Provide Subcommittee with draft curriculum to review and incorporate feedback.
- b. *Curriculum topic areas for consideration based on Subcommittee discussions. (We do not expect all the topics to be covered.):*
- i. **Local governance systems, their powers, and who oversees them.**
 - How a city operates, its various governance and administrative structures and departments, their functions, and how they interact with one another including Mayor, City Council, Commissions, how decisions are made, and the allocation of resources, services, and funding.
 - The authority and functions of other local decision-making bodies including the County Sherriff’s Office, School Boards and Districts, the County Board of Supervisors, District Attorneys, Superintendent, and Judges.
 - ii. **How racial equity has been advanced by local officials.** Share examples of how local elected leaders have advanced racial equity agendas. Showcase the successes and challenges.
 - iii. **Community engagement and public participation.** Mechanisms for community members to bring their voices to shape outcomes and influence policies at the City and County level. Example: how to provide public comment.
 - iv. **Building Power.** An overview of coalition building, community organizing, policy campaigns, and community-led strategies for advancing a racial equity agenda.
 - v. **Accessing Boards and Commissions and other leadership roles.** Showcase leaders of color who have experience serving in a locally elected or appointed position and can inspire future young leaders. Highlight issues/experiences regarding being a person of color in an elected position and advancing a racial equity agenda, such as their pathway to this work, challenges, strategies, what motivates them, etc. Discuss how to get involved in local government or advocacy groups to further motivate them to stay civically engaged.
 - vi. **Electoral Campaigns.** The components of an electoral campaign, such as the process, timing, and other key factors to understand for engaging in the electoral process and motivating young people to consider running for elected office.
 - vii. **Budget process.** Understanding city and county budgeting, timeline, how to read and interpret a local budget, how budget decisions are made, etc.
 - viii. **Voting.** Current voting laws affecting young people, the importance of activating voter turnout among young people, how young people have shaped elections and policy, etc. Share information on youth-led voting organizations such as My School Votes and other areas for youth to get involved in voting.

- ix. **Intersection between local policymaking and planning and racial equity.** An overview and framing of how local plans, policies, programs, and services impact communities, an overview of what access to political power and representation means, utilizing examples that reflect the communities the participants live in (i.e. who are the elected officials that represent them?), and grounding this in local data on racial inequities.

3. Recruitment

- a. Develop and implement recruitment methods and a plan and timeline for recruiting and enrolling participants in the program. The program should center youth ages 15-25 but allow for flexibility in serving young adults who may be outside this age range.
- b. Develop and implement all necessary outreach materials and strategic communications tools needed to target outreach to predominantly youth and young adults from low-income communities and communities of color throughout San Mateo County.
- c. Develop and administer the sign-up process, mitigating potential barriers to access. The process should allow for participation of those most interested and those from the target audience without creating additional barriers.
- d. Allow for broad engagement but recognize that some types of learning may lend themselves better to smaller audiences and limit participation as necessary – always considering the target audience.
- e. Work with the Subcommittee to review all recruitment, and enrollment materials and process.

4. Implementation and Delivery

- a. Administer and implement the training program based on the Project Workplan and training curriculum. Make adjustments based on learnings along the way, including feedback from the primary audience for the curriculum. The contractor can consult with the Subcommittee as needed but will be responsible for staffing all aspects of implementing the program.
- b. Provide updates throughout the training program, sharing notes, or other information with the Subcommittee.

5. Method of Assessment

- a. Allow for youth to provide feedback mid-way during the program and after they complete the program, to learn what is most valuable, how to improve for future activities and forums, address any challenges, etc.
- b. Share a method for evaluating the benefits of the sessions and/or overall program.
- c. Propose the estimated reach of the program based on your previous experiencing. We recognize this is a pilot and there are many unknowns. We hope to learn through this effort about the interest from the youth and young adults.
- d. Share how would you know if this program is worthy of repeating in the future.
- e. Share how would you know if there is energy and interest from the current audience or subset of attendees/participants to deepen the leadership development work.
- f. Discuss lessons learned and program benefits with the Subcommittee.

ⁱ <http://www.gethealthismc.org/youth-civic-empowerment-health>