

**California Census Office RFI #0000010628
California Complete Count – Census 2020**

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION - MEDIA SERVICES

1. INTRODUCTION

The California Complete Count Census 2020 effort is a statewide outreach and awareness campaign designed to ensure an accurate and complete count of all Californians in the upcoming 2020 United States census. The 2020 Census is decennial census, mandated by Article 1, Section 2 of the United States Constitution. The results are used to allocate Congressional seats, electoral votes, and government program funding to state and local governments. Just based on the funding component, a census that undercounts California could cost the state billions of dollars. For every Californian missed during the Census 2020 count, the State is expected to lose approximately \$1,950 per person, per year, for 10 years, in federal program funding.

The intent of the California Census Office's 2020 Census media and marketing campaign is to increase awareness and knowledge of the 2020 Census in hard-to-count communities and thereby increase the likelihood that individuals from hard-to-count communities will respond to the 2020 Census. This program aims to address the following goals:

- Increase awareness and knowledge about the 2020 Census in hard-to-count communities;
- Deliver focused messages about the Census process to targeted undercount groups concentrated on Census tracts that will most likely be undercounted; and
- Ensure that all advertising and messaging is culturally and linguistically competent and responsive to a rapidly changing climate;
- Support the California Complete Count statewide community outreach and media relations efforts through a strategy that is focused, timely, cost-effective and tailored to addressing barriers that prevent highly likely undercounted groups from completing and returning their forms;
- Complement advertising and marketing campaigns by the U.S. Census Bureau, and a network of community-based organizations, local governments and philanthropic entities;
- The ultimate goal is to ensure that hard-to-count populations in California are accurately counted in the 2020 census. The State aims to meet or exceed the U.S. Census Bureau's nationwide target of achieving a 60.5% self-response rate from people in hard-to-count communities.

2. DISCLAIMER

This Request for Information (RFI) is issued for information and planning purposes only and does not constitute a solicitation. Responses will not be returned. A response to this notice is not an offer and cannot be accepted by the California Census Office to form a binding contract. Responders are solely responsible for all expenses associated with producing and submitting the response. The California Census Office is subject to the California Public Records Act (Gov. Code, § 6250 et seq.) and all information in RFI responses marked *Proprietary* or *Confidential* will be handled in accordance with the California Census Office's obligations under that Act.

3. CALIFORNIA COMPLETE COUNT BACKGROUND

Only once each decade, the U.S. Census Bureau attempts to count every resident in the United States. The next enumeration will be April 1, 2020, and will be the first to rely heavily on online responses. The primary and perpetual problem facing the U.S. Census Bureau is the undercount of certain population groups.

Hard-to-count populations include:

- Immigrants and the foreign born
- Linguistically isolated individuals (non-English speaking individuals over 14 years of age within households)
- Non-two parent households
- Persons who are not high school graduates
- Persons who are unemployed
- Persons without permanent homes
- Number of vacant housing units in an area
- Specific ethnic and minority populations
- Renters and children
- Densely populated communities with multi-unit housing, public assistance characteristics
- Native American and Tribal populations. This includes Native Americans living in urban and rural areas as well as tribal lands.

As a majority-minority state, most residents of California fit into at least one of the above-listed categories.

The Census 2020 efforts will include development of well-connected local networks of trusted messengers and targeted community organizations. The decennial census is a federal operation, and it is important to note that all of the State's efforts will be modified and focused on non-duplication, based upon the operation, advertising, partnership and outreach efforts of the U.S. Census Bureau currently being developed.

In preparation for the 2020 Census, the U.S. Census Bureau has been mandated to reduce costs and keep spending levels at the 2010 Census funding amount, which in real terms means fewer resources to cover a larger population. To keep costs down, the U.S. Federal Government made significant cuts to programs, but has also modernized many

operations. Expecting to hire 50 percent fewer enumerators for non-response follow-up, the U.S. Census Bureau is depending on an unprecedented self-response rate. To generate self-response, the U.S. Census Bureau has developed an online self-response tool that is currently in beta testing. Funding to continue usability testing, improve user experience, and guarantee a cyber-secure application has been severely cut. The U.S. Government Accountability Office lists the decennial census functions at high risk of having major problems.

In light of these changes in the U.S. Census Bureau and what they might mean to California, Governor Brown issued an Executive Order (B-49-18) describing California's Census 2020 initiative. The Executive Order established a California Census Office for the 2020 Census which will develop, recommend, and assist in the administration of a census outreach and communication strategy to encourage full participation in the 2020 Census.

4. PURPOSE OF RFI

The purpose of this RFI is to gather new and innovative ideas from advertising, media and public relations agencies that can reach and motivate hard-to-count populations. The California Census Office is planning to award a contract to help plan, design, produce, integrate, implement, and monitor a communications program in California for the 2020 Census. The selected Contractor(s) will be responsible for providing services in multiple communications areas to support building awareness and promoting self-response by Californians for the 2020 Census.

Media efforts will include but are not limited to the following:

- Research and analytics, including message testing of hard-to-count communities;
- Planning, development, and integration of a statewide, multilingual advertising and marketing campaign;
- Project management;
- Communications support;
- Traditional advertising and media buying;
- Digital advertising and other communications technologies;
- Social media and digital engagement;
- Public relations; and
- Communications Planning and Materials for Partnerships (LCCCs, CBOs, etc.)

The California Census Office is well aware of traditional media methods of reaching hard-to-count populations that have been used in previous census efforts. The goal of this RFI is to solicit new thinking that builds on that foundation, especially in light of the U.S. Census Bureaus' introduction of an on-line self-response tool and limited investment of resources.

The requested information is intended to assist the California Census Office in learning more about the communications industry, best practices currently available within the industry, and the capabilities of companies in the industry.

This RFI is for information gathering purposes only. After evaluating the information received, the California Census Office may issue a future solicitation to select qualified organizations to receive funding to provide assistance.

Responses to this RFI should be no more than 10 pages, size 10 Ariel font.

6. INFORMATION REQUESTED

To help the California Census Office develop plans for accomplishing its goals without duplication of time or funding, the State is asking for new and creative media and marketing ideas in order to maximize the number of Californians counted in Census 2020 and reach the hard to count populations.

Responses should include media outreach efforts that have not been used in previous census efforts. RFI responses may include, but are not limited to, the following ideas:

- a) Please indicate whether your company has experience combating crisis communications messaging or “intentional misinformation campaigns” and whether you can do this on your own, or would need to subcontract.
- b) Describe any unique collaborations and/or coalitions that your agency is a part of in conducting similar work that would add value to the California Complete Count Census 2020 campaign.
- c) Describe best media practices, including social media outreach that can reach targeted communities.
- d) Identify roadblocks to the 2020 Census and potential strategies for overcoming these challenges. This does not need to be limited to efforts your agency currently engages in.
- e) Please indicate whether your agency has experience working on campaigns that include the following components, and please indicate whether your agency could handle this on its own or whether it would need to engage with subcontractors:
 - Directed towards hard-to-reach groups across California
 - Combating intentional misinformation campaigns
 - Dispelling negative messaging
 - Crisis communication/PR handling
 - Social Media
 - Media buys (tv, radio, internet, etc.)
 - Coordinating with CBOs
 - Experience working with the State of California

7. PROTESTS

Since this RFI is not a request for bid on goods and services, and no commitment is required of either party, protests are not appropriate and will not be considered by the California Census Office.

8. DISPOSITION OF MATERIALS

All material submitted in response to this RFI will become the property of the State of California and will be returned only at the State's sole option and at the respondent's expense.

9. CONTACT INFORMATION

The contact for this RFI is: Vanessa Vaughn
Attn: California Complete Count RFI #0000010628
Email address: Vanessa.Vaughn@census.ca.gov

10. KEY DATES

A non-mandatory phone conference will be held **on 9/19/18 at 10:00 a.m.** to answer questions specific to the RFI process including viewing, downloading, registering, or logging in to the CaleProcure webpage. Questions related to any other topic will not be addressed during this call.

Phone Conference Line: 1 (877) 346-8673
Participant Code: 50907349#

Questions regarding the intent or content of the RFI should be submitted to the contact identified above and clearly marked "Questions Relating to California Census Office 0000010628" Questions must be received in writing or by email on

September 21, 2018 by 5:00 p.m.

Written responses to the RFI are to be received by the California Census Office in writing on **September 26, 2018 by 5:00 p.m.** Respondents are strongly encouraged to submit the RFI response prior to the due date, if possible. RFI responses shall be delivered to the contact identified in Section 9, Contact Information.

Responses must be submitted in a digital format (e.g. Microsoft Word, PDF, or excel) either as an attachment to an e-mail or other digital format such as a compact disc or a thumb drive. Although not required, an additional hard copy response will be accepted.

11. RESOURCES

- <https://www.census.gov/roam>
- <https://census.ca.gov/>
- <https://census.ca.gov/resources/>
- <https://cacensus2020.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=13bdaa4c0d6c4b2a82a5b1ddf2efc56b&extent=-13936574.0534%2C3993215.3184%2C-12357690.7972%2C4719672.8353%2C102100>

- www.caleprocure.ca.gov
- <https://census.ca.gov/solicitations/>