



For Immediate Release

Census coalition receives \$250,000 grant from the New Venture Fund for 2020 outreach in Ohio

More than 1.4 million people in Ohio are considered Hard-to-Count

CLEVELAND (Jan. 29, 2020) – The Cleveland Foundation, The George Gund Foundation and two members of the Ohio Census Advocacy Coalition (OCAC) – Cleveland Neighborhood Progress/Cleveland VOTES and the Children’s Defense Fund-Ohio – have been awarded a \$250,000 grant from the New Venture Fund (at the recommendation of a national census funder collaborative) to support grassroots efforts to get an accurate and complete count in Ohio for the 2020 census, with a particular focus on Hard-to-Count (HTC) populations and communities. The grant will be used to support communications, digital advocacy and community organizing efforts through local organizations and existing networks.

“This grant is critical because it will provide targeted resources to nonprofits whose operations rely on federal funds to organize and mobilize around a singular goal: an accurate and complete count,” said Ronn Richard, President & CEO, Cleveland Foundation. “When people are undercounted, philanthropy is often asked to fill in the gap, and we’re grateful to the national census funder collaborative for its support of the important work yet to be done here in Ohio.”

Accredited 501(c)3 organizations that are working to get an accurate census count in Cuyahoga, Lake and Geauga counties may apply for microgrants ranging from \$500 to \$5,000. Contact Juan Galeano (jgaleano@clevefdn.org), Cleveland Foundation project consultant for the 2020 census, to learn more about this grant opportunity and how to apply for funding.

“In Cuyahoga County, nearly three-out-of-four children under five live in a hard to count area, and Hispanic and African American children were missed twice as often as white children in the 2010 count,” said David Abbott, Executive Director, The George Gund Foundation. “Young children are the most frequently undercounted group in the census, and we want to make sure that is not the case in Cuyahoga County and across Ohio for 2020.”

HTC populations include five primary groups: 1) immigrants/newcomers, 2) African Americans, 3) Latinx, 4) children under five and their families, and 5) students and renters who move frequently.

“We’ve been fighting for the neighborhoods in Greater Cleveland for more than three decades,” said Joel Ratner, President & CEO, Cleveland Neighborhood Progress. “An accurate count is crucial to the vitality of our neighborhoods and the future success of our residents. Cleveland Neighborhood Progress is committed to this effort through the Cleveland VOTES initiative.”

Ohio is one of 24 states to receive no state-level funding for efforts around the 2020 census.

“We felt this was a crucial area of need in light of the fact that Ohio has a large number of potentially hard-to-count households and the state government allocated no money for the census,” said Gary D. Bass, Executive Director, The Bauman Foundation and chair of the national census funder collaborative. “This collective effort underscores the importance of the role of philanthropy and grassroots organizations in census work.”

The national census funder collaborative was established in 2015 to promote a fair and accurate census. It is overseen by a steering committee of 14 foundations and managed by New Venture Fund. Nationally, there are nearly 100 foundations supporting a census Plan of Action that calls for policy improvements to ensure adequate federal funding for the census and sound decision making by the federal government, outreach and public education to improve response rates for the 2020 census, particularly among undercounted populations, and encourages new players to help with the policy and outreach efforts.

“Research from the 2010 census indicate that people living in urban centers, and our children under the age of five throughout the state are at a high risk of going uncounted,” said Tracy Nájera, Executive Director, Children’s Defense Fund-Ohio, one of the co-leads of the statewide effort to engage hard-to-count. “Ohio receives \$33.5 billion in federal funding that touches every community through healthcare, transportation, and infrastructure funding. In fact, Ohio is estimated to lose \$1,200 for every person missed in the census, each year for the next decade. Further, an undercount may also mean the loss of one or two congressional seats diminishing Ohio’s voice.”

Visit OhioCensus.org and clevotes.com for more information.

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About the Cleveland Foundation: Established in 1914, the Cleveland Foundation is the world’s first community foundation and one of the largest today, with assets of \$2.5 billion and 2019 grants of more than \$111 million. Through the generosity of donors, the foundation improves the lives of residents of Cuyahoga, Lake and Geauga counties by building community endowment, addressing needs through grantmaking and providing leadership on vital issues. The foundation’s program areas include: arts and culture, economic and workforce development, education, environment, neighborhoods, and youth development and social services. For more information, visit www.ClevelandFoundation.org and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).