



CENTRAL  
VALLEY  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION

Request for Proposals

*to participate in the*

# **INFORMED NARRATIVES for COMMUNITY HEALING and EQUITABLE SYSTEMS (INCHES) INITIATIVE**

*Mobilizing grassroots organizations and residents for an inclusive economy in Fresno*

**ISSUED BY**

Central Valley Community Foundation

**RELEASE DATE**

December 12, 2022

**PROPOSAL DUE DATE**

February 13, 2023, at 3 pm

**RFP CONTACT**

julie vue

[julie@centralvalleycf.org](mailto:julie@centralvalleycf.org)

559-430-7737

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# Program Description

## Background and Purpose

The Central Valley Community Foundation (CVCF) is pleased to offer this Request for Proposals (RFP), with the goal of selecting ten (10) grassroots organizations who will work together in a Learning Community to strengthen and mobilize as a base for inclusive economic development in Fresno.

The Informed Narratives for Community Healing and Equitable Systems (INCHES) Initiative is made possible by a grant to CVCF by The James Irvine Foundation (JIF). JIF and CVCF believe that communities will experience greater economic and political opportunity when they are well informed about issues impacting their economic prospects and mobility and have the skills, relationships, and resources they need to implement and sustain changes that benefit their lives. For every foot we stride together in dismantling structural racism, we have learned that some inches must be dedicated to reinforcing a shared understanding of where we've been and where we're going.

In the last three years, CVCF has worked towards inclusive economic development through our collective impact initiative Fresno D.R.I.V.E. (Developing the Region's Inclusive and Vibrant Economy), which engaged over 300 community partners to shape 14 key initiatives within the portfolio areas of human capital, economic development, and neighborhood development. Critical to DRIVE's success is shared understanding of the effects of racism on the Fresno economy and transformative community engagement that directly involves those most impacted by structural inequities. The INCHES initiative seeks to position grassroots organizations and their resident constituents in the driver's seat to mobilize for inclusive economic development in Fresno.

The goals of the INCHES Initiative are:

- To strengthen the capacity of grassroots, community-driven organizations in Fresno's most underserved communities to create restorative spaces for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) essential workers to heal from the economic effects of COVID and its associated pandemic.
- To build the leadership capacity of residents and essential workers to lead community-wide dialoguing sessions about the root causes and impact of racism and economic injustice, creating shared understanding and analysis of the problems and opportunities to improve economic justice in Fresno.
- To inform and shift institutional policies and practices of civic and institutional leaders whose daily work impacts education, economic, and workforce development in Fresno by improving their capacity and skill sets to engage in meaningful dialogue, learning, and reconciling activities associated with a shared understanding and analysis of the root causes of racism and their continued effects on today's economic disparities.

Each grantee will be expected to:

- Engage at least two (2) staff members in the Learning Community.
- Recruit, support, and compensate six (6) essential frontline workers or residents to participate in the Learning Community.
- Engage a minimum of 40 essential/frontline workers and residents in a dialogue on the effects of racism in the Fresno economy
- Participate in all eight (8) Learning Community convenings.
- Participate in a learning exchange to share your findings and learnings on creating an inclusive economy.
- Participate in data collection, reporting, and evaluation as it pertains to participation in the learning community and engagement with residents on understanding the effects of racism in the Fresno economy.

## Funding Information

The INCHES Initiative will provide both financial and leadership development support for the selected grassroots organizations. Specifically, the selected applicants will:

- Receive up to a maximum grant amount of \$130,000 per organization, including a significant portion for general operating support and/or overhead.
- Allocate a portion of the grant funds to compensate their resident leaders’ participation in the initiative and their own staff time dedicated to the initiative, including data collection and reporting performed in partnership with CVCF.
- Participate in the 10-months long Learning Community that consists of organization staff and resident leaders.

## The Learning Community

Key to community power-building is the creation of a base of informed and engaged people. In the INCHES Initiative, the base of people will be convened as “The Learning Community”, which consists of two (2) staff members and six (6) resident leaders from each awarded grassroots organization. The purpose of the Learning Community is to effectively build power and knowledge on creating an inclusive economy. Below is the schedule of the Learning Community convenings for the duration of the grant period (March to December 2023). Grantees and resident leaders are expected to attend each session to maximize learning and collaboration.

ACTIVITY	DATE
Learning Community Convening #1 - Overview presentation of grant goals and expectations - Relationship/community building	March 16, 2023
Learning Community Convening #2 - Training & Shared Analysis: Effects of racism on the economy	April 2023
Learning Community Convening #3 - Training & Shared Analysis: Effects of racism on the community	May 2023
Learning Community Convening #4 - Training & Shared Analysis: Effects of racism on neighborhoods	June 2023
Learning Community Convening #5 - Preparing for dialogue engagement with residents (facilitation training)	July 2023
Complete dialogues with residents	August 2023
Learning Community Convening #7 - Post-dialogues debrief - Preparing for learning exchange	September 2023
Learning Exchange	October 2023
Learning Community Convening #8 - Closing reflections and future opportunities	November 2023
Grant reporting	December 2023

## Data Collection and Evaluation

Grantees are expected to collect data and complete evaluation for the duration of the grant. Data collection and reporting includes demographic information such as name, gender identity, race/ethnicity, age, and zip code of the grantee’s constituents. Evaluation includes 1) pre- and post-survey for participation in the Learning

Community and 2) post-survey for dialogues with residents. The Central Valley Community Foundation will provide templates and technical assistance for data collection and evaluation.

## Application Information

### Who may apply?

Eligible organizations will meet the following criteria:

1. **501c3 Status** - 501c3 community-based organizations (nonprofits) are preferred. Community initiatives that are in the process of obtaining 501c3 status may apply through fiscal sponsorship by another non-profit entity, but the initiative must be able to demonstrate its separate 501c3 application is under way.
2. **Grassroots Organizations** – The organization, in both theory and practice, engages the people where they do work and work alongside the community; they serve to find solutions to improve conditions and outcomes of the community.
3. **Involving Residents in Positive Change** - The organization’s work has focused on one or more of the following activities:
  - a. Involving residents in developing a new vision for their neighborhoods and/or identifying priorities for improving their community;
  - b. Working with residents and supporting their efforts to lead and advocate for positive changes in their community;
  - c. Increasing leadership opportunities and the role of community members to improve their community; and/or
  - d. Supporting the creation of resident-led neighborhood associations or other forms of community organizations that are focused on improving the specific neighborhood or community.
6. **Dedicated Staff** - The organization has at least one part-time or full-time staff member that dedicates a minimum average of 10 hours per week to move the work forward, in addition to others’ contributions.
7. **Committed Advisors or a Board of Directors** - The organization has a stable and committed board of directors or (if not yet a 501c3) advisory committee.
8. **Committed to Participating in the Learning Community** - The organization is committed to participating in the Learning Community by attending monthly convenings as set forth in the Learning Community schedule.

### What are the selection criteria for the INCHES Initiative?

The selection criteria below provide the framework that will be used for evaluating the proposals. The most competitive organizations will:

1. Meet all the eligibility criteria outlined above.
2. Demonstrate that they have gained the trust and support of residents/community members;
3. Demonstrate that they have had meaningful engagement with residents and/or the community they serve.
4. Demonstrate that they have the capacity or will develop the capacity to meaningfully participate in a group effort, i.e. collective impact efforts, coalition building, alliance building, community organizing.
5. Demonstrate that its staff, boards of directors, and/or advisory groups are committed to the mission of their organizations and dedicate time, talent, fundraising support and/or leadership of the efforts.

### Grant Terms and Reporting

- The grant term will begin approximately March 1, 2023, and end December 9, 2023.
- Those receiving awards will be required to submit a final narrative report 30 days following the end of the funding period, reporting on activities and outcomes included in the proposal, as well as a financial report.

# How to apply for the INCHES Initiative

## Submission Guidelines

To help us process your application, please follow these submission guidelines:

- **Applications are due no later than February 13, 2023, at 3 p.m.** Applications submitted after this deadline will **not** be considered. We encourage you to submit your application before the deadline in case you need help with any of the submission requirements.
- Email your application (PDF format) and your operating budget for the current fiscal year to [julie@centralvalleycf.org](mailto:julie@centralvalleycf.org)
- You may submit your application only once. Be sure your application is complete and accurate, including required budget, before submitting it.
- Send questions about this grant program and the application process to [julie@centralvalleycf.org](mailto:julie@centralvalleycf.org) with the subject line INCHES RFP QUESTION.

## Information Required in the Application

### Narrative

Please provide responses to each of the questions below. Applications are limited to five (5) pages in length, not including the budget attachment.

1. **Contact Information:** Provide contact information for the application (i.e. name, title, phone number, and email address for the primary contact) and information on your nonprofit or initiative (i.e. the name of organization/group, complete address, EIN number, and mission and vision).
2. **Your Story:** Tell us the story of your organization. What is the history of your efforts? How and why did it start? What are your current activities? What accomplishments have you seen because of your work so far?
5. **Racial Equity and Diversity:** What experience does your organization have in racial equity/diversity work, whether internally or externally? How would this grant help you build upon your current efforts? How do the board, staff, volunteers, and residents involved with the organization authentically reflect diverse viewpoints, backgrounds, and experiences in your efforts?
6. **Involving Residents and Building their Leadership Abilities:** What is your approach to involving and empowering residents in your efforts? What are some of the ways that residents demonstrate trust in your organization's leadership? How have residents contributed to the vision of your organization?
7. **Community Partnerships/Collaborations:** How have you partnered and/or collaborated with other organizations in the past? What successes and challenges did you encounter in working with other organizations to achieve a goal?
8. **Context, Constraints, and Challenges:** We know — you and your organization are busy! Please identify the constraints on your ability to engage with this initiative, how you plan to incorporate it into the work you are already doing, and how you will spot and address any challenges in doing so.
9. **INCHES Initiative:** How would your organization benefit from participating in this initiative? How would your organization's work be transformed by participating in this initiative? What do you hope to accomplish through the financial and leadership support provided through the initiative?

### Annual Operating Budget

Please provide a copy of your operating budget for the current fiscal year. The budget must show your organization's revenue and major line-item expenses for a full fiscal year. Please do not simply provide your IRS Form 990.

## Information Sessions & Timeline

CVCF will offer information sessions to provide interested applicants a chance to ask questions regarding the initiative and understand the participation and other requirements. We advise interested applicants to register to receive any updates or clarifications to this RFP by emailing [julie@centralvalleycf.org](mailto:julie@centralvalleycf.org) and attending an information session to learn more about this initiative. The following are the dates and location for the information sessions.

### Information Session Schedule

Date	Location and Time
December 16, 2022	Zoom   1:00-2:00pm
December 21, 2022	Zoom   9:00-10:00am
January 9, 2023	Zoom   3:00-4:00pm

If you are interested in attending one of these information sessions, RSVP here:

<https://forms.office.com/r/A6hmb4AACH>. Even if you cannot attend, if you are interested in proposing, please register immediately so that CVCF may keep you informed of any updates or clarifications to this RFP.

### Application Timeline & Key Dates

**Information sessions:** December 16 & 21, 2022, and January 9, 2023 – See schedule above. Attendance at the information sessions is not required to apply.

**Application deadline:** February 13, 2023, at 3 p.m. To be considered, your proposal must be submitted by 3 p.m. on February 13, 2023. Proposals received after the due date/time will not be reviewed. Submission before the deadline date is advised in case you need help with your application.

**Approximate award announcement:** The week of March 1, 2023

**Approximate date funds will be available:** March 1, 2023

**Kick-off orientation for awarded grantees:** March 16, 2023

**Learning Community convening begins:** April 2023

**Learning Community convening ends:** Early December 2023

**Grant reporting:** December 2023 – January 2024

## Frequently Asked Questions

Send questions about this grant program and the application process to [julie@centralvalleycf.org](mailto:julie@centralvalleycf.org) with the subject line INCHES RFP QUESTION.

### How do you define “grassroots organization”?

“Grassroots” relates to a belief that a community can solve its own problems, and only the community can solve its own problems. Grassroots organizations support community members to identify the changes they want to

see and then supports them in pursuing their goals. Community change is accomplished by working with residents rather than doing things for them or to them.

### **Why “informed narratives”?**

Dominant narratives of historical memory are often biased in favor of the groups that have wielded the greatest power to tell their story. As such the collective memory can omit the lived experiences of victims of trauma and oppression and obscure the role of specific policies and actions that have perpetuated economic inequality. Both victim and oppressor are denied the truth; the trauma then perpetuates through generations. With a biased and incomplete understanding of history, change in the policies and actions responsible for inequality is impossible.

Constructing informed narratives is the intentional antidote to this root-cause problem. Armed with informed narratives about history, community members can facilitate learning and dialogue about its effects on people’s lives in Fresno down to the present day. Connecting the dots helps residents start to heal from historical trauma and make sense of their own stories as part of a larger whole. In nurturing a shared understanding of race and racism in social and economic systems, informed narratives make possible collective action toward a more equitable future.

### **How do you define community power building as a goal of this initiative?**

We utilize the “community power building” definition by the USC Dornsife Equity Research Institute:

*“the ability of communities most impacted by structural inequities to develop, sustain, and grow an organized base of people who act together through democratic structures to set agendas, shift public discourse, influence decision-makers, and cultivate ongoing relationships of mutual accountability with them to change systems, foster structural equity, and advance health equity.”*

By bringing together grassroots organizations and resident leaders, the INCHES initiative is building a base of Fresno community members who can speak to the effects of racism in Fresno and begin to work together for building an inclusive economy.

### **What types of Technical Assistance will CVCF offer?**

Technical assistance (TA) can be broadly defined as any specialized service or skill that a nonprofit does not possess within the organization, but which it may need to operate more effectively.

1. TA for Selected Grantees (The Learning Community) - If selected, your organization will receive the following workshops and trainings on:
  - a. The effects of racism on Fresno’s economy, community populations, and neighborhoods
  - b. Conducting community-wide dialoguing sessions about the root causes and impact of racism and economic injustice, and creating shared understanding and analysis of the problems and opportunities to improve economic justice in Fresno
2. Additional TA to support carrying out the grant goals and expectations
3. Guidance and support for data collection to measure activities, outputs, and the efficacy of the initiative toward its identified goals

### **How do we calculate our operating budget?**

The annual operating budget is associated with the Statement of Activities (SOA), sometimes called the Income Statement or Profit & Loss, and involves projecting income and expenses for a single fiscal year to accomplish an organization's immediate mission agenda. A basic operational budget captures the revenue (sources of income) and the expenses (cost associated with your work) for a given time period. For prior years, the operating budget can be approximated from Form 990 Part IX, as Line 25 minus the sum of Lines 1-4, or from Form 990-EZ Part I, as Line 17 minus the sum of Lines 10-11.