



## Adopt-A-Tract Mini Grant Application

There are less than 30 days remaining in the 2020 Census operation. North Carolina's current 2020 Census self-response rate is below the national rate and below where our state was in 2010. Join the final push to make NC count by adopting a low-responding census tract through NC Counts Coalition's Adopt-A-Tract program. NC Counts Coalition invites organizations to adopt-a-tract to increase self-response rates among historically undercounted populations to ensure a fair and accurate Census. This program is a part of NC Counts Coalition's Get-Out-The-Count campaign. Grant amounts will be between \$1,000 - \$2,500. Collaborative proposals for up to \$3,500 will be considered. Funds will support direct contact tactics in NC communities at risk of being undercounted, also known as hard-to-count (HTC) communities. Up to \$150,000 in grant funds will be disbursed through this program.

### **Section 1. Grant Application Process**

Please submit your proposal online with the following link: <http://bit.ly/Adopt-A-Tract>

There will be an informational online meeting regarding the application process with NC Counts Coalition on Wednesday, September 2, 2020, 7:00 PM. This meeting will be an opportunity for interested applicants to ask questions about the grant process. There will be an opportunity for Q&As during this meeting. **Applicants do not have to attend this meeting to respond to this RFP**; the meeting is optional. The meeting will be recorded and uploaded to NC Count's Coalition's YouTube Page:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmol4OMEBMn82DfBwriqp8A/featured>

Click here to register for the webinar. Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUrdOusrTivHt0aRr3Bb79kijH15mcecQeL>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

If you have any questions about the submission process, please contact Stacey Carless at [stacey@nccensus.org](mailto:stacey@nccensus.org). Please use this subject line in your email to Stacey Carless: [ORGANIZATION NAME] AdoptATract2020\_RFP.

### Grant Selection Committee

Grants will be reviewed by NC Counts Coalition's Board and an NC Counts Coalition staff member. The grant selection committee appreciates concise, thoughtful proposals.

### Timeline

Begin Accepting Proposals	September 1, 2020
Deadlines for proposals	Proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis until 12:00 am on Tuesday, September 9, 2020. The committee will review submitted proposals with 48 hours of submission. Approved proposals will receive a check within 7 days of approval.  Applications will be reviewed and scored by the grant review team
Proposals will not be accepted after 12:00 a.m. on Tuesday, September 9, 2020.	

## **Section 2. Priorities**

With research from Carolina Demography, NC Counts Coalition identified 15 counties across the state at highest risk for an undercount. These counties are Anson, Bertie, Cumberland, Duplin, Durham, Edgecombe, Guilford, Halifax, Hoke, Mecklenburg, Northampton, Robeson, Sampson, Scotland, and Vance. These counties have the most overlapping risk factors for populations historically undercounted. Those risk factors include:

- share of residents living in one of the tracts predicted to be hardest to count in 2020
- tracts with highest share of children under 5; and
- tracts with highest share without broadband, and tracts with the highest share of all three of those factors combined.

Outreach to hard-to-count populations from **all** NC counties will be considered with priority given to the 15 counties mentioned above.

After priority counties, priority will be given to proposals that target Census tracts that are performing below the state average response rate as of 8/28/2020 (60.6%). Outreach tactics must target a hard-to-count community in low performing Census tracts.

### **Funded Activities**

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is inviting proposals from organizations interested in strategies to **directly contact** a portion of the identified priority communities.

Grant funds may be used to support efforts to conduct a robust field and/or digital campaign to encourage full participation in the 2020 census in a specific Census tract. Such activities must target hard-to-count households and could include, but are not limited to:

- Organizing events that comply with COVID-19 social distancing measures to promote participation in the census and provide information about filling out the census form;
- Establishing community sites that comply with COVID-19 social distancing measures that provide information and assistance to community members about the census form and how to fill it out online or on paper;
- Conducting targeted communications efforts that comply with COVID-19 social distancing measures through organizing tactics such as phone banks, event canvassing, peer-to-peer texting, relational organizing and other digital tools.

Activities that are connected to or amplify broader existing or planned civic engagement efforts are encouraged. Creative and innovative ideas are encouraged.

Examples of outreach include, but in no way limited to:

- Census caravans
- Phone banking
- SMS text campaigns
- Information dissemination at food and/or mask distributions
- Neighborhood canvassing with literature drops
- Postcard mailing (Hand-written or printed)
- Census inspired sidewalk chalk art contest

### Activities and Items that Will Not Be Funded

- billboards / advertising (unless the advertising is to promote a Census centered and focused outreach event)
- bounce houses
- website management services
- participation in a complete count committee
- participation in media events and/or interviews
- Regranting of funds
- Technology (if you are in need of a tablet and hotspot, NC Counts may be able to supply you with this technology)

### Grant Amounts

Grant amounts will vary, depending on proposed activities and the organization's capacity. The maximum amount that will be granted per tract will be \$2,500 for a single organization and \$3,500 for a collaborative proposal for the time period starting September 1, 2020 - the end of the Census operation, September 30, 2020 or October 31, 2020.

All proposals must include a project budget.

Budget Template at this link:

<https://nmcdn.io/e186d21f8c7946a19faed23c3da2f0da/e33ebba15b7e45b7a7ca3024d892a391/files/Adopt-a-tract-Budget-Template.docx>

- Proposals may include expenses up to 25% of the requested amount for staff time
- Proposals may include expenses up to 20% of the requested amount for stipends for volunteers

### Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Organizational considerations:
  - a. Status: Must be a 501(c)(3) organization. Applicants that are not 501(c)(3) may apply under a fiscal sponsor that is a 501(c)(3) in good standing. Government and quasi-government organizations are not eligible for funding.
  - b. Relationships & experience: Applicants should be able to demonstrate established relationships and experience working with priority communities. Applicants should have a good track record working on activities that increase community engagement or civic participation, such as community organizing, public education, outreach, or advocacy. Priority will be given to NC established and/or based nonprofits.
  - c. Capacity: Applicants should be able to demonstrate organizational capacity (staff and/or volunteers) to implement the proposed plan of action.
  - d. Representation: Organizational and/or project leadership is reflective of the community the proposal is focused on.
2. Tactics that prioritize at least one of the hard to count areas or populations below:
  - a. Hard to Count Geographic Areas: Anson, Bertie, Cumberland, Duplin, Durham, Edgecombe, Guilford, Halifax, Hoke, Mecklenburg, Northampton, Robeson, Sampson, Scotland, and Vance

**OR**

### **NC Census tracts performing below the state average.**

You can use these maps to help you target your outreach by Census Tract:

- CUNY MAP:  
<https://www.censushardtocountmaps2020.us/?latlng=40.00000%2C-98.09000&z=4&promotedfeaturetype=states&baselayerstate=6&infotab=info-rtrselfresponse&filterQuery=false>
- US Census Bureau Map  
[https://2020census.gov/en/response-rates.html?cid=20423:%2Bcensus%20%2Bresponse%20%2Brates%20%2Bmap:sem.ga:p.dm:en:&utm\\_source=sem.ga&utm\\_medium=p&utm\\_campaign=dm:en&utm\\_content=20423&utm\\_term=%2Bcensus%20%2Bresponse%20%2Brates%20%2Bmap](https://2020census.gov/en/response-rates.html?cid=20423:%2Bcensus%20%2Bresponse%20%2Brates%20%2Bmap:sem.ga:p.dm:en:&utm_source=sem.ga&utm_medium=p&utm_campaign=dm:en&utm_content=20423&utm_term=%2Bcensus%20%2Bresponse%20%2Brates%20%2Bmap)

- b. Historically undercounted populations: Young children, people of color, rural residents, and low-income households. Additionally, people with disabilities, seniors, people experiencing homelessness and LGBTQ+ people are also considered as hard-to-count populations.
  - c. Households with no computer or inadequate internet access
3. Goals: **Clarity** on engagement strategies and metrics for progress of outreach efforts. Proposals that do not have clear metrics WILL NOT BE REVIEWED.
  4. Alignment: Where applicable, knowledge of and willingness to collaborate with the Census Bureau, Census Complete Count Committees, local governments, or other national and local nonprofit organizations, especially those active in their targeted geographies or with their focused population groups. Priority will be given to applicants who are active partners of the NC Census Task Force. Collaborations amongst organizations is encouraged and applicants are encouraged to reach out to local county complete count committees for partnership and collaboration opportunities. Collaborative proposals are encouraged and will be considered. Collaborative proposals should list all organizations that are a part of the proposed project, with a very brief description of the partnering organization's role.
  5. Content Knowledge: General knowledge about the Census process, uses of Census data and requirements regarding filling out the form.
  6. Vision: An overall vision aligned with promoting civic engagement.

### **Section 3. Section Grant Guidelines**

In accordance with federal, state, and local laws, and in keeping with its mission, NC Counts will not fund organizations that use race, color, sex, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, veteran status, or any other protected classification as a basis to deny services to qualifying individuals who seek assistance that falls within the scope of the organization's mission. NC Counts and Blueprint NC encourage nonprofits whose Executive Director is a person of color or whose board is made up of a majority of people of color to apply.

CLICK HERE TO APPLY: <http://bit.ly/Adopt-A-Tract>