



request for proposals

Education: Preparing Middle School Students
to Succeed in College and Career

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Introduction

Silicon Valley Community Foundation was created 10 years ago to focus on the community's most challenging problems, convene regional private and public sector leaders and initiate policy discussion at the regional, state and national level. Since 2008, SVCF has made a total of \$90 million in grants to over 500 organizations as part of our strategic grantmaking and community impact work in four key strategy areas: economic security, education, immigration and building strong communities.

As we celebrate our 10-year anniversary, we are proud to announce a special \$1 million grantmaking initiative. Through this initiative, 10 grants of up to \$100,000 each will be awarded to deserving organizations that are doing the most innovative and effective work to make our region a better place.

Two grants will be awarded to projects within each of our existing four strategy areas: economic security, education, immigration and building strong communities. Two additional grants will also be awarded to projects aimed at increasing civic engagement and participation through creative and innovative uses of technology.

This request for proposals, or RFP, focuses specifically on our education

strategy. By using an RFP approach, SVCF aims to solicit the best thinking of nonprofit service providers, public sector agencies, research institutions and other entities serving San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

Grant Application Deadline

The application process will open February 13, 2017.

Responses to this RFP must be submitted through our online application system, [applySVCF](#), by **5 p.m. (PST) on March 10, 2017.**

Problem Statement

Competence in mathematics is essential for functioning in everyday life, as well as for success in our increasingly knowledge-based economy. Eighth-grade math proficiency is an important predictor for college preparedness and professional opportunities. Despite the many signs that point to the importance of middle-school math proficiency, an alarming number of students in Silicon Valley are not meeting this benchmark, and achievement gaps by race/ethnicity are quite large.

Disparities in the quality of education young people receive result in gaps in student achievement. Low-income students and students of color disproportionately attend schools that receive fewer of the resources that matter in a quality education, such as experienced teachers. With fewer resources, student achievement suffers.

Substantial changes in educational policy nationwide and, in particular, here in California, are also a component of student success. Adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2010, as well as the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), have required school districts to undergo significant transformation in recent years.

Grant Opportunity

The goal of SVCF's work in education has been to make strategic investments in programs that improve mathematics instruction in the classroom through professional development of teachers, and in those that provide students who are falling behind with high-quality learning opportunities after school and during the summer. The intent of this special grantmaking initiative is to support new and innovative ideas aligned with our current approaches – professional development of teachers and high quality learning opportunities after school and during the summer. The initiative will also support new ideas for different approaches to helping middle school students prepare to succeed in college and career.



Competence in mathematics is essential for functioning in everyday life, as well as for success in our increasingly knowledge-based economy.

We are not defining this grant opportunity narrowly because we don't want to limit applicants' creativity. We encourage applicants to imagine what might be possible, share one of their new and innovative ideas with us, and explain how SVCF funds could help them apply that idea. It is important to note that this is a special, one-time-only grant opportunity associated with our 10-year anniversary, and this particular opportunity will not be continued in future years.

For more information about this grant opportunity, we invite you to participate in our upcoming informational webinar (see "key dates").

Proposal Eligibility Criteria

- San Mateo and/or Santa Clara county-serving organizations will be considered. Organizations headquartered outside the two-county region must demonstrate significant service to these areas to be considered, or be partnered with another organization based within the two core counties.
- Organizations with a 501(c)(3) designation, those that have a fiscal sponsor with a 501(c)(3) designation, public agencies, collaborations of nonprofit and public agencies, or other entities that have a designated charitable purpose.

- Organizations that do not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, citizenship status, creed, religion, religious affiliation, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, veteran status or any other protected status under applicable law. If an organization only serves a specific population (e.g. women or specific ethnic populations) SVCF will consider the proposal on a case-by-case basis.
- Organizations with religious affiliations will be considered for funding only if the proposal for which they seek support attempts to address the needs of the wider community without regard to religious beliefs.

Application Process

This is a simple, two-step Request for Proposal (RFP) process.

Step One: Please respond to the short set of questions below and submit a proposal budget by the proposal submission deadline.

Application questions:

- 1) What is the specific challenge your project will address to help prepare middle school students to succeed in college and career? (1,000 characters maximum)**
- 2) Tell us about your idea to address this challenge. What do you hope to achieve? (1,000 characters maximum)**
- 3) Who will be served by your project? (1,000 characters maximum)**
- 4) Tell us why your organization is uniquely positioned to lead this project? (1,500 characters maximum)**
- 5) Who are your partners and what will they contribute to the project? (1,000 characters maximum)**
- 6) Please provide us with the projected cost of your project and indicate whether or not you have any other funding to support it? (1,500 characters maximum)**

Step Two: If selected to move forward in the process, applicants will be required to provide additional information about their organization's history, infrastructure, financial background and proposal budget.

Participate in the informational webinar. This is highly encouraged for those interested in responding to this RFP. This session provides an opportunity for applicants to review the RFP's content in depth and ask questions. To register for this session, please visit siliconvalleycf.org/calendar.

More specific questions about program concepts, content, eligibility and evaluation can be addressed through phone calls and in-person meetings with the program officer, as time permits.

Submit grant application, including required attachments, through our online application system, applySVCF. Applications must be submitted by **5 p.m. (PST) March 10, 2017**.

Key Dates

February 13, 2017:
Application process opens

February 24, 2017: RFP
informational webinar
(register at siliconvalleycf.org/calendar)

March 10, 2017, 5 p.m.:
Proposal submission
deadline

April 2017:
Announcement of
grant awards

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Proposals for grants should include a narrative that responds to the questions listed above. Grant proposals will be evaluated, on a competitive basis, using the following criteria:

- Clarity of project description and project activities regarding steps to be taken to achieve desired outcomes.
- Achievable timeline that corresponds to the key activities.
- Meaningful benchmarks and indicators of success.
- Organizational capacity to implement project – including staffing and leadership, operational and fiscal management.
- Established track record in specific program content area or potential to achieve needed content expertise.
- Ability to leverage financial, human and technical resources leading to greater impact.
- Ability to contribute content area knowledge to the field.

Total Awards

Successful applicants are expected to receive grants of \$100,000 for a maximum one-year period. Budget requests will be closely analyzed and applicants should include a brief budget narrative that makes clear the necessity of the project's specific line-items.

Please note that project proposal narratives may be posted publicly on our website to reflect our value of transparency and encourage learning among grantees and future applicants as well as members of the community at large.

Review and Selection Process

An advisory committee with issue expertise will help staff to review all proposals recommended for funding to SVCF's board of directors. Applicants may receive a site visit, telephone call and/or other type of communication from SVCF staff as part of the proposal review process.

Applicants will be informed of grant decisions in April 2017.

Evaluation, Monitoring and Grantee Learning Activities

Grantees will be expected to meet SVCF's requirements for a final financial and narrative report as well as a presentation to community foundation staff and donors if requested.

Thank you very much for your interest in responding to this RFP and in making our region a better place. We look forward to reviewing your proposal.



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About Silicon Valley Community Foundation

Silicon Valley Community Foundation advances innovative philanthropic solutions to challenging problems. As the largest community foundation in the world, we engage donors and corporations from Silicon Valley, across the country and around the globe to make our region and world better for all. Our passion for helping people and organizations achieve their philanthropic dreams has created a global philanthropic enterprise committed to the belief that possibilities start here. Learn more at siliconvalleycf.org.

More Information

If you have questions, please contact us at grants@siliconvalleycf.org or call 650.450.5557

To get all the latest grantmaking information, follow us on Facebook and subscribe to our community e-newsletter at siliconvalleycf.org/publications.