



**NEW AMERICAN ECONOMY &
WELCOMING AMERICA**

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS
FOR
THE GATEWAYS FOR GROWTH CHALLENGE
September 2018**

SUMMARY

The Gateways for Growth Challenge is a competitive opportunity for local communities to receive tailored research, direct technical assistance, and/or matching grants from New American Economy (NAE) and Welcoming America (WA) in support of the development of multi-sector plans for welcoming and integrating immigrants. This opportunity is open to urban, suburban, and rural communities alike.

BACKGROUND

Over the past few decades, more and more communities across the United States have been shaped by immigration, seeing their demographics shift with new populations that have revitalized neighborhoods, added vitality to business corridors, enriched communities with cultural diversity, increased the tax base, and spurred innovation and creativity in local colleges and universities. With these changes have come both opportunities and challenges. Communities have the opportunity to leverage the myriad economic, social, and civic contributions immigrants make in their new home, but face challenges ensuring that they meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population while promoting social cohesion. At the same time, uncertainty around federal immigration policy has put communities in a tenuous position when it comes to ensuring all of their residents feel protected and welcome. In the face of this, communities are thinking more proactively about how to create an environment that sends a message of inclusion, maximizes the contributions of all residents, and gives community members the tools they need to thrive.

Communities have approached this work in several ways, with efforts led by mayor's offices and city and regional councils, as well as local chambers of commerce. Many communities are creating strategic plans to welcome and integrate new Americans, bringing multiple stakeholders from local government, business, and civic organizations to work together to craft a vision and strategy to ensure the community is inclusive and economically vibrant. In most cases, a multi-sector task force or steering committee is appointed to lead this process, and is tasked with providing concrete recommendations on what the community should do to promote immigrant integration. Recommendations range from economic development strategies to encouraging civic engagement and a positive public narrative around immigration. Examples of communities that have successfully completed this process include [Anchorage](#), [Northwest Arkansas](#), [Salt Lake County](#), and [San Jose](#),

among many others.

To support and scale this work, in 2016 Welcoming America and NAE launched the [Gateways for Growth Challenge](#) (G4G), a competitive opportunity that offers a combination of tailored research, direct technical assistance, and/or matching grants to communities nationwide. **Following the successful completion of its second round, we are pleased to announce a call for applications for Gateways for Growth Challenge Round III.**

In 2019, NAE and Welcoming America will once again offer resources to aid immigrant integration planning efforts in communities that have demonstrated a public-private commitment to a community-wide strategic planning process. These resources will range from tailored research reports that quantify the role immigrants play in local economies to tailored technical assistance that can include coaching by phone as well as in-person site visits. For communities that have the financial commitment of a local funder, there will also be an opportunity for a modest matching grant to support the planning process.

STRATEGIC PLANNING SUPPORT OFFERED

NAE and Welcoming America will work with a maximum of 25 urban, suburban, and rural communities through this competitive opportunity. **Communities can apply for assistance in one or more of the following areas:**

1. Local Research

In many places, a lack of information around who immigrants are and how they engage in the economy prevents communities from designing programs that maximize the skills and talent of their international populations. Up to **20 communities** will receive customized research reports that highlight the economic and demographic impact of immigrants and refugees locally, including their tax contributions and spending power, roles in the local labor force, population and demographic trends, and other key information. This research can be used to inform existing planning processes, or can be used to start the conversation on why a community should develop an immigrant integration strategy. G4G local research awardees are expected to release the completed research brief within 12 months of the award being given with a public event such as a press conference or panel discussion. A few examples of research briefs from previous awardees include: [Boise](#), [Dallas](#), [Lancaster](#), [Little Rock](#), and [Memphis](#).

2. Direct Technical Assistance

Up to **ten communities** will receive ongoing technical assistance from WA and NAE to support the development of their strategic plans from January 2019 through December 2019. During this time, communities are expected to participate in monthly check-in calls and can receive one site visit from an NAE and/or WA representative, as needed. For communities just beginning the planning process, the site visit could be offered in the form of an initial convening or stakeholder meetings facilitated by NAE and/or WA that brings together key leaders across sectors in the community. For communities further along, the site visit could include facilitating community engagement in the planning process; sharing best practices and models for developing an integration strategy or recommendations; or advice on public messaging campaigns. These points of engagement will be an opportunity for communities to direct specific questions to WA and NAE staff throughout the Gateways for Growth Challenge period.

Except in special circumstances, formal direct technical assistance, including phone coaching, will end in December 2019, 12 months after the Gateways for Growth Challenge award is given.

3. Matching Grants

Up to **ten communities** that have been able to secure a commitment from a local funder (a community foundation, corporate sponsor, city government, etc.) to support this work will be eligible to receive a small planning grant of up to \$12,500—to be matched locally for a total of up to \$25,000—towards their strategic planning process. In-kind donations are ineligible for this match. Some ways these funds could be used include, but are not limited to, hosting an initial convening of stakeholders; hiring a consultant to advise or facilitate the planning process; supplementing staff time of a point-person for managing or facilitating the strategic planning process; hosting immigrant and refugee roundtables; and developing a community outreach and messaging campaign. Matching grant recipients will be required to enter into a grant agreement in order to receive funding. It is expected that funds be fully spent by the end of December 2019 (12 months after the Gateways for Growth Challenge award is given). **Additionally, all matching grant communities will be expected to participate in the direct technical assistance program outlined in the previous section (Section 2).**

TIMELINE

Communities that are awarded research, direct technical assistance, and/or a matching grant through the Gateways for Growth Challenge should be prepared to spend 3–12 months working with WA and NAE, depending on the type of support awarded. Most communities that were awarded technical assistance through Gateways for Growth Challenge Rounds I and II required approximately 12 months to complete the planning process, including building connections with community stakeholders, convening working groups, and developing and presenting their strategic plans. Communities that were awarded customized research took, in most cases, three months to develop and release their reports. The following sample timeline illustrates the general/approximate time commitment the strategic planning process requires.

Sample Timeline for Strategic Planning

Research will be delivered within the first six months of the planning process

- Months 1-2: Convene core partners for definition of goals, timeline, process
- Months 3-9: Convene working groups; engage community for feedback
- Months 10-12: Draft strategic plan; solicit feedback; finalize and publicly launch plan

GRANTEE EXPECTATIONS/CRITERIA

Successful planning processes bring many partners to the table, ensure the meaningful engagement of immigrants and refugees, and are coordinated by one or two organizations that convene and support the work behind the scenes. Applications are being requested from organizations that will— together with a partner organization—lead this planning effort. We strongly encourage applications to come either from city/county government or from chambers of commerce, but applications from non-profits or foundations will also be considered. Although the lead organization can be any of these entities, demonstrated institutional support for this planning effort from either local

government or a local chamber of commerce is required.

Expectations

Communities applying for any level of support must demonstrate evidence of the following:

- Commitment from a lead/convening partner (e.g., city/county government, local chamber, nonprofit); and
- Interest or endorsement from the private sector (e.g., local chamber, economic development entity).

For communities applying for tailored research:

- Metro area, multi-county, county, or city population of at least 100,000 people (the applicant community can be smaller, but research methodology requires a 100,000-person minimum for analysis).

For communities applying for technical assistance:

- Ability and staff capacity to appoint an individual or committee to oversee and coordinate the planning process within the community, as well as serve as the liaison between the community and WA/NAE; and
- **Commitment to developing and publicly releasing a final multi-sector strategic plan by December 2019 that engages community leaders in the planning process; includes concrete recommendations; describes an implementation process and timeline; and includes a mechanism for adjusting the plan.**

For communities applying for a matching grant:

- All expectations outlined for technical assistance above; and
- Demonstrated financial commitment from a local funder to match the grant awarded.

Review Criteria

Applications will be judged on the following criteria:

- Commitment of lead organization to facilitate this strategic planning process (applications submitted by city government or chambers of commerce are preferred, but non-profits will also be considered);
- Strength of local partnerships and organizational capability of the proposed collaboration, as well as prospects for new partners from multiple sectors to join the effort;
- Demonstrated capacity of a staff person to lead the project;
- Evidence of leadership, vision, and commitment to working toward immigrant integration;
- Whether the application is coming from a place where the number of immigrants is growing rapidly and significantly changing the social, economic and political dynamics in the community OR a community that is actively seeking to attract immigrant residents;
- Degree to which immigrant and receiving community engagement is emphasized;
- Level of understanding of community integration needs; and
- Potential to leverage local funding.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Participation in Peer Learning Program

Communities selected for the Gateways for Growth Challenge will be provided the opportunity to connect with peer communities in their cohort as well as the Round I and Round II cohorts of the Challenge. These connections will allow recipients to learn from the experiences of similar communities and, over time, will help build a community of colleagues undertaking similar immigrant integration work at the local level. Peer learning opportunities include one-on-one phone calls, webinars, and in-person meetings at Welcoming America's annual conference, the Welcoming Interactive.

Participation in Welcoming America Network

Once selected for either technical assistance or a matching grant, lead organizations that are not current Welcoming America members will automatically join the Welcoming America Network for the duration of the grant period. Learn more about WA membership benefits at www.welcomingamerica.org.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS/PROCESS

This request solicits applications from local government or chambers of commerce interested in leading a strategic planning process towards a community welcoming initiative for their city or county. Applications from other entities (such as non-profits, community foundations, etc.) will be considered if there is a **demonstrated commitment from a city/county agency or chamber to partner.**

A webinar to address Frequently Asked Questions will be held on **Wednesday, October 10th from 2-3pm EST.** To register, please click [here](https://cc.readytalk.com/r/1gnz9rs76t1l&eom) (or copy and paste <https://cc.readytalk.com/r/1gnz9rs76t1l&eom> into your web browser). This webinar will be recorded and will be made available upon request for those unable to join.

Applications are due by **Monday, November 19 at 5pm EST** to challenge@gatewaysforgrowth.org. Follow up questions, if necessary, will be sent on a rolling basis and must be answered within seven days of receipt. All communities will be notified of the selection committee's decision by the end of 2018.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Answers to application questions must be in 12-point font, total no longer than four one-sided pages, and should not include a cover letter.

1. Identify the lead agency, including:
 - Agency name
 - Contact person and title
 - Address
 - Phone, e-mail and website address
 - Tax-exempt status
2. Identify the geographical boundaries of the community, the population size, and the estimated size of the immigrant community. Write a short narrative on the city's recent

immigration history. If there is information on the ethnic breakdown and characteristics of the immigrant community, please include this.

3. Identify the level(s) of support the community is applying for: tailored research, direct technical assistance, and/or matching grant. Communities may apply for all, a combination of, or one of the levels of support.
 - a. **If applying for tailored research**, please identify the desired geographical scope of the research (e.g.: city, metropolitan area, county, etc.). Be aware that the research methodology requires the geography to have a population of at least 100,000 people. Please also describe how you plan to use the research after its release.
 - b. **If applying for a matching grant**, identify the local funder who is committed to supporting the planning process and submit a letter of commitment from that local funder by the application due date. Please also provide a line item budget explaining how the grant funds will be used over the course of the 12-month grant period. Matching grants must amount to \$5,000–\$12,500 and must be cash donations (in-kind donations are ineligible).
4. Explain why immigrant integration and, if applying for technical assistance or a matching grant, why creating a multi-sector strategic plan is important to your community. How has your community approached immigrant integration before? What have been challenges of immigrant integration up until this point, and how do you envision an immigrant integration strategy and planning process addressing these challenges?
5. Identify a partner from government and/or the private sector who will support this process and be involved in the planning process. How will this partner be engaged? **Please include a letter of commitment from the identified partner organization.**
6. Identify who else will be involved in the planning process and their organizational or community affiliations. Explain each participant's role and why each will be involved. What is your strategy for engaging immigrants in this process? Who will the key contact be for coordinating the plan and serving as the liaison with WA and NAE? How many hours per week can this person devote to coordinating this process?
7. Describe any other community planning processes the above community members have participated in before. How will this planning process be different and/or add to work that has previously been done?
8. Explain how you plan to measure the impact of your work. What milestones do you expect to reach? How will you know you have reached them? How will you measure impact after the Gateways for Growth grant period ends in December 2019? To help us understand your milestones, please put together a timeline for developing and releasing your research or strategic plan.

CONTACT FOR INQUIRIES

All questions about the application process should be sent to challenge@gatewaysforgrowth.org.

ABOUT THE PARTNERS

New American Economy

New American Economy (NAE, www.newamericaneconomy.org) is a bipartisan research and advocacy organization fighting for smart federal, state, and local immigration policies that help grow our economy and create jobs for all Americans. [NAE's State and Local Initiatives](#) works with policymakers, business, and civic leaders to build capacity and infrastructure in non-traditional geographic areas to help facilitate immigrant integration and drive economic growth. To do this, NAE provides original research quantifying the demographic and economic role of immigrants in a given community, as well as technical assistance to support multi-sector strategic planning efforts, and advocacy support to highlight the economic imperative for local policies that ensure that all residents can succeed.

Welcoming America

Welcoming America (www.welcomingamerica.org) leads a movement of inclusive communities across the nation that are becoming more prosperous by making everyone who lives there feels like they belong. Through a membership network of 200 local governments and nonprofits spanning 500 communities, Welcoming America connects and supports communities to develop plans, programs, and policies that overcome the fears that demographic change can bring and transform neighborhoods into vibrant places where people respect each other and everyone's talents are valued and cultivated.