



**THE AMERICAN IMMIGRATION COUNCIL &
WELCOMING AMERICA**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
FOR
THE GATEWAYS FOR GROWTH CHALLENGE, ROUND V
August 2022**

SUMMARY

The [Gateways for Growth Challenge \(G4G\)](#) is a competitive opportunity for local communities to receive support from the [American Immigration Council](#) (the Council) and [Welcoming America](#) (WA) to improve immigrant inclusion in their community. Through tailored research on the local economic and demographic contributions of immigrants, direct technical assistance, and/or matching grants to create a multi-sector strategic plan, the Council and WA teams will support G4G awardees to create a local narrative, backed in data, on the imperative for building inclusive communities and, for those ready to take the next step, build a community-wide plan for immigrant inclusion supported by multi-sector stakeholders. We encourage urban, suburban, and rural communities alike to apply. The Gateways for Growth Challenge will prioritize communities who demonstrate an ongoing commitment to addressing larger systemic disparities and developing inclusive emergency management systems that prioritize the health and safety of all residents, regardless of immigration status, in their applications.

BACKGROUND

Over the past few decades, communities across the United States have been reshaped 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 belonging. 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 local government offices, regional entities, local chambers of commerce, nonprofits, and other conveners. 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 inclusion. 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](#), [Bowling Green](#), [Dallas](#), and [Salt Lake County](#), with communities like San Jose launching second iterations of their first plan, among many others.

To support and scale this work, in 2016 Welcoming America and New American Economy – now the American Immigration Council – 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 fourth round, we are pleased to announce a call for applications for Gateways for Growth Challenge Round V.**

In 2023, the Council and Welcoming America will once again offer resources to aid immigrant inclusion 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 virtual coaching. 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.

GATEWAYS FOR GROWTH SUPPORT

The Council and Welcoming America will partner with a maximum of **15** 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 in the community and how they engage in the economy prevents communities from designing programs that maximize the skills and talent of their international populations. Up to **15 communities** will receive customized research reports that highlight the economic and demographic impact of foreign-born residents 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, used to start the conversation on why a community should

develop an immigrant integration strategy, and be used to guide conversations on local policies and state legislation. 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: [Columbus](#), [San Mateo County](#), [Mercer County](#), and [St. Paul](#).

2. Direct Technical Assistance

Up to **ten communities** will receive ongoing technical assistance from WA and the Council to support the development of their strategic plans from January 2023 through December 2023. During this time, communities are expected to participate in monthly check-in calls through which the Council and WA will provide consultation on the planning process, help troubleshoot challenges, and connect communities to resources, as appropriate. Communities will also receive one site visit from a Council and WA representative, conducted either in-person or virtually. For some communities, this site visit could include facilitating community engagement in the planning process; sharing best practices and models for developing an integration strategy or recommendations; or consultation on public messaging campaigns.

Except in special circumstances, formal direct technical assistance, including virtual coaching, will end in December 2023, 12 months after the Gateways for Growth Challenge award is given.

3. Matching Grants

Certain communities that have been able to secure a commitment from a local funder (such as 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. 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 2023 (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 the Council and WA, depending on the type of support awarded. Most communities that were awarded technical assistance through the Gateways for Growth Challenge previously required approximately 12 - 18 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 to nine 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 can be delivered and released at any point throughout the planning process.

- Months 1-3: Convene core partners for definition of goals, timeline, process, and working group identification
- Months 4-8: Convene working groups; engage community for feedback and conduct community outreach surveys
- Months 9-12: 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. We strongly encourage the lead partner to be a **city/county government, chamber of commerce** or a **community foundation**, but applications from **nonprofits** will also be considered. The lead organization can be any of these entities, but applicants must demonstrate institutional support for this planning effort from a local government and/or a local chamber of commerce. Selected communities are expected to complete, sign, and return all documentation (including, but not limited to, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and other financial documents such as a W-9) by **Wednesday, November 30, 2022 at 5 PM ET**.

Communities applying for tailored research must demonstrate evidence of the following:

- Ability and staff capacity to appoint an individual to oversee and coordinate the planning process of the tailored research report and launch of the report, as well as serve as the liaison between the organization and the Council
- 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); OR
 - Interest or endorsement from the public sector (e.g. city/county government)
- 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).

Communities applying for technical assistance must demonstrate evidence of the following:

- Ability and staff capacity to appoint one to two individuals to oversee and coordinate the planning process within the community, as well as serve as the liaison between the community and WA/the Council;
- Commitment to developing and publicly releasing a final multi-sector strategic plan by December 2023 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;
- Commitment from a lead/convening partner (e.g., city/county government, local chamber, nonprofit); including
 - Interest or endorsement from the private sector (e.g., local chamber, economic development entity); and
 - Interest or endorsement from the public sector (e.g. city/county government)

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. In-kind donations are ineligible for this match.

Review Criteria

Applications will be judged on the following criteria:

- Commitment of a 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 bandwidth of one to two staff people 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 newcomer and longtime resident engagement is emphasized;
- Level of understanding of community integration and inclusion needs; and
- Potential to leverage local funding.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS FOR AWARDEES

1. Welcoming America Membership

The communities selected for technical assistance will receive **premium membership** and communities selected for research will receive **general membership** in Welcoming America's membership network, the [Welcoming](#)

[Network](#). The Welcoming Network offers tools, resources, technical assistance, and a global network to help nonprofit and government partners transform communities into more welcoming places. Participating members connect with their peers to share good ideas and receive recognition for their efforts in local, national and global settings. Members access a host of resources to assist them in advancing the policies, programs, and strategies set out in the [Welcoming Standard](#). G4G technical assistance awardees will receive premium membership, including two complimentary registrations to Welcoming America’s annual conference, the [Welcoming Interactive](#), in 2023. G4G research-only awardees will receive general membership for the 2023 calendar year, including fifty percent off registration to attend Welcoming America’s annual conference, the [Welcoming Interactive](#), in 2023.

2. Global Talent Chamber Network Membership

Chambers of Commerce selected as lead or convening partners will receive free membership to the Council’s [Global Talent Chamber Network](#). The Global Talent Chamber Network (GTCN) brings together chambers of commerce from across the country who see immigrant integration as an economic growth strategy. Members of the network have access to plug-and-play advocacy opportunities, communications and messaging guidance, policy analysis, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and online resources and toolkits.

3. Peer Learning Opportunities

Communities selected for the Gateways for Growth Challenge technical assistance will be provided the opportunity to connect with peer communities in their cohort as well as with communities from prior rounds 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 implementing multi-sector strategic plans at the local level. Peer learning opportunities may include one-on-one phone calls, webinars, and in-person meetings at Welcoming America’s annual conference, the Welcoming Interactive.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS & PROCESS

Timeline

08/22/2022: G4G Round V application opens

09/20/2022: Applicant Briefing Webinar

10/11/2022: Applications are due to challenge@gatewaysforgrowth.org by 5:00 p.m. local time

11/01/2022: All communities notified of decision and G4G Round V begins

A briefing webinar to address Frequently Asked Questions will be held on **Tuesday, September 20th from 11 am - 12pm ET**. To register, please click [here](#). This webinar will be recorded and will be made available upon request for those unable to join.

Applications are due by **TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11th 2022 at 5pm local time** 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 **TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1st 2022**.

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:
 - a. Agency name
 - b. Contact person and title
 - c. Address
 - d. Phone, email, and website address
 - e. 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. Please include any available information on the ethnic breakdown and characteristics of the immigrant community.
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 inclusion 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. How will your planning process work to address social and economic challenges in your community? What specific measures will be included in the

planning process to ensure the relevant local government agencies are part of or leading this conversation?

6. If the organization applying is not a local government or representative of the private sector, identify a partner from the government and/or the private sector who will support this process. How will this partner be engaged? **Please include a letter of commitment from the identified partner organization(s).**
7. 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?
8. Who will the key contact(s) be for coordinating the plan and serving as the liaison(s) with WA and the Council? How many hours per week can this person devote to coordinating this process? Describe this person's leadership position and decision-making authority. Does this person have the bandwidth and ability to execute strategies on behalf of their organization, to convene a multi-sector group for a planning process, and to influence participating organizations to take ownership of implementation of parts of the community-wide plan? If not, how will this be achieved?
9. 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?
10. 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 2023? To help us understand your milestones, please put together a timeline for developing and releasing your tailored research report and/or strategic plan.

CONTACT FOR INQUIRIES

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

ABOUT THE PARTNERS

American Immigration Council

The American Immigration Council works to strengthen America by shaping how America thinks about and acts towards immigrants and immigration and by working toward a more fair and just immigration system that opens its doors to those in need of protection and unleashes the energy and skills that immigrants bring. The Council brings together problem solvers and employs four coordinated approaches to advance change—litigation, research, legislative and administrative advocacy, and communications. In January 2022, the Council and New American Economy merged to combine a broad suite of advocacy tools to better expand and protect the rights of immigrants, more fully ensure immigrants' ability to succeed economically, and help make the communities they settle in more welcoming. Follow the latest Council news and information on ImmigrationImpact.com and Twitter @immcouncil.

Welcoming America

Welcoming America leads a movement of inclusive communities across the world 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, Welcoming America connects and supports place-based initiatives that work to reduce divisions and support greater civic, social, and economic participation among new and longtime residents alike. Through the Welcoming Network, participating members access peer learning opportunities, technical assistance, tools, and training to help transform their communities into more welcoming places. Learn more at welcomingamerica.org.