



**NEW AMERICAN ECONOMY & WELCOMING AMERICA**

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

**FOR**

**THE GATEWAYS FOR GROWTH CHALLENGE**

**March 2020**

## **SUMMARY**

The Gateways for Growth Challenge is a competitive opportunity for local communities to receive support from New American Economy (NAE) and Welcoming America (WA) to improve immigrant inclusion and integration in their community. Through tailored economic research on the local economic contributions of immigrants and/or direct technical assistance to create a multi sector strategic plan, the NAE and WA teams will support G4G awardees to create a local narrative, backed in data, on the economic 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.

## **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. While communities have the opportunity to leverage the myriad economic, social, and civic contributions immigrants make in their new home, they face challenges ensuring that the community meets the needs of an increasingly diverse population while promoting social cohesion. Simultaneously, 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, 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 together to craft a vision and strategy to ensure the community is promoting social, political and economic inclusion. 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 [Dallas](#), [Anchorage](#), [Northwest Arkansas](#), [Salt Lake County](#), and [San Diego](#), among many others.

To support and scale this work, in 2016 WA and NAE launched the [Gateways for Growth Challenge](#) (G4G), a competitive opportunity that offers a combination of tailored economic research and direct technical assistance to aid immigrant integration planning efforts in communities that have demonstrated a **public-private commitment to a community-wide strategic planning process**. Following the successful completion of its third round, we are pleased to announce a call for applications for Gateways for Growth Challenge Round IV.

## **GATEWAYS FOR GROWTH SUPPORT**

NAE and WA will partner with a maximum of 20 urban, suburban, and rural communities through this competitive opportunity. Selected communities will receive one or both of the following supports:

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 at a public event such as a press conference or panel discussion. A few examples of research briefs from previous awardees include: [Boise](#), [Dallas](#), [Lancaster](#) and [San Antonio](#).

## 2. Direct Technical Assistance

Up to **10 communities** will receive individualized technical assistance from NAE and WA to support the development of their multi-sector strategic plans for the one year period of July 2020 - July 2021. During this time, communities are expected to participate in monthly check-in calls through which NAE 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 an NAE and WA representative. For communities just beginning the planning process, the site visit could be offered in the form of an initial convening or stakeholder meeting 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 consultation on public messaging campaigns. Technical Assistance recipients will be required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding in order to receive this support over the one year period of the award.

Except in special circumstances, formal direct technical assistance, including phone coaching, will end in July 2021, 12 months after the Gateways for Growth Challenge award is given.

**Note:** We encourage local communities to use the in-kind support of NAE and WA, which beyond significant staff time and travel for technical assistance also includes \$10,000 in research costs and \$10,000 in WA membership value per calendar year, to leverage \$20,000 or more in local match funding to support this process. These funds have proven to be instrumental in helping communities successfully facilitate a community-driven strategic planning process. Some ways these funds could be used include, but are not limited to, 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 an initial convening of stakeholders; hosting immigrant and refugee roundtables; and developing a community outreach and

messaging campaign. Upon request, staff can provide an itemized receipt of in-kind G4G support to assist communities seeking local matching grants. **Communities with confirmed financial matching support will be prioritized in the assessment of applications.**

## **ADDITIONAL BENEFITS FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AWARDEES**

### 1. Welcoming America Membership

The communities selected for technical assistance will receive **premium 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 for the 2020 and 2021 calendar years, including two complimentary registrations to Welcoming America’s annual conference, the [Welcoming Interactive](#), in 2021.

### 2. Peer Learning Opportunities

Communities selected for 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 all three 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 include one-on-one phone calls, webinars, and gathering in-person at the Welcoming Interactive.

## **TIMELINE**

Communities that are awarded research and/or direct technical assistance 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 the Gateways for Growth Challenge previously 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

### **EXPECTATIONS**

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 applications to come either from **city/county government** or from **chambers of commerce**, but applications from other **non-profits or foundations** will also be considered. Although the lead organization can be any of these entities, applicants **MUST demonstrate institutional support for this planning effort from a local government and/or a local chamber of commerce.**

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 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 July 2021 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.**

### **Review Criteria**

Applications will be judged on the following criteria:

- Commitment of lead organization to facilitate this strategic planning process (applications submitted by city or county 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.

### **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS/PROCESS**

#### **Timeline**

03/17/2020: G4G Round IV application opens

03/30/2020: [Applicant briefing Webinar](#), **1:30-2:30 ET**

05/13/2020: Applications are due to [challenge@gatewaysforgrowth.org](mailto:challenge@gatewaysforgrowth.org) by 5:00 p.m. ET

06/17/2020: All communities notified of decision and G4G Round IV begins

This request solicits applications from local governments or chambers of commerce interested in leading a strategic planning process towards a welcoming initiative for their community. 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 briefing webinar to address Frequently Asked Questions will be held on **Monday, March 30 from 1:30-2:30 ET.** To register, please click [here](#) (or copy and paste [tinyurl.com/wmb46vk](https://tinyurl.com/wmb46vk) 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 **Wednesday, May 13 at 5pm EST** to [challenge@gatewaysforgrowth.org](mailto: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 **June 17, 2020.**

## **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, e-mail 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 and/or direct technical assistance. Communities may apply for one or both 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 release and use the research.

**4. If you have secured match funds for NAE and WA's in-kind support,** identify the local funder and submit a letter of commitment 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. Communities with confirmed financial matching support will be prioritized in the assessment of applications.

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. 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 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?
7. 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? Describe this person's leadership position and decision-making authority. Does this person have the capacity 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?
8. 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?
9. 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 July 2021?

To help us understand your milestones, please put together a draft 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](mailto:challenge@gatewaysforgrowth.org).

## **ABOUT THE PARTNERS**

### **New American Economy**

New American Economy (NAE) is a bipartisan research and advocacy organization founded to educate, empower and support policymakers, influencers, and citizens across the country that see the economic and social benefits of a smart approach to immigration reform. NAE has created a coalition of civic, business, and cultural leaders who span the political spectrum and represent all 50 states. NAE makes the case for smart immigration reform in four ways: 1) we use **powerful research** to demonstrate how immigration impacts our economy, 2) we **organize champions** at the grassroots and influencer levels to build support for immigration, 3) we **partner with state and local leaders** to advocate for policies that recognize the value immigrants add locally, and 4) we show **immigrant contributions to American culture** through film, food, art, sports, comedy, and more. Visit [www.newamericaneconomy.org](http://www.newamericaneconomy.org) to learn more.

### **Welcoming America**

Welcoming America leads a movement of inclusive communities across the nation that are becoming more prosperous by making everyone who lives there feel 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. Our [Welcoming Standard](#) provides a comprehensive roadmap for immigrant inclusion, and our [Certified Welcoming](#) program measures, validates, and advances the efforts of cities and counties that have created policies and programs reflecting their values and commitment to immigrant inclusion. Learn more at [www.welcomingamerica.org](http://www.welcomingamerica.org).