Partnership Building

SCP CEEEJ includes a co-applicant partnership structure with one primary applicant and up to two (2) co-applicants to support and strengthen local partnership building. This program encourages co-applicant partnerships to support equity, local engagement and collaboration.

Key elements of equitable partnerships should include reciprocal, mutually beneficial relationships; balanced and clear roles and responsibilities; an equitable decision-making structure where each partner is closely involved in all decisions affecting the project; and power dynamics are recognized and addressed. The budget for the co-applicant(s) should reflect the roles and responsibilities described in the application and outlined in the scope of work. The partnership should also seek to support long-term relationship-building.

Opportunities to Connect with Local Partners

SCAG has developed a Jamboard to help facilitate the connection of potential project partners and co-applicants. If your agency needs further assistance in how to find or build a relationship with a local partner, SCAG can help support by providing guidance on known agencies and organizations specific to the local context. Please reach out to Hannah Brunelle, Senior Regional Planner, at brunelle@scag.ca.gov for additional guidance.

Best Practices for Inclusive and Equitable Engagement

Community Engagement Strategies are a required component of all projects funded through SCP CEEEJ and shall be integrated into the proposed project scope. Strategic community engagement centers those who have been historically excluded from planning processes. Using equitable and accessible community engagement practices throughout project planning and implementation encourages strategic and informed participation.

An exceptional description of the approach to community engagement includes detailed commitments for co-powered community decision-making and co-leadership with the process. Strategies must be accessible, inclusive and relevant to the community. Strategies must move beyond simply informing or consulting the community, and toward meaningful opportunities for active community participation and co-leadership. Exceptional strategies include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

» **Language Justice** – Conduct multi-lingual outreach in the most prevalent languages spoken in the community with translation and interpretation services provided for all project meetings and events as needed. Develop materials that are accessible and digestible for basic reading comprehension.

» **Accessibility** – Center and prioritize accessibility in community engagement. Address barriers such as location and timing of events, and accessibility by public transportation; hold meetings and pop-up events in existing community gathering locations, accessible by public transportation, and in places people are familiar and comfortable with, to foster a trusting relationship with the project team. This may include connecting with community members at existing community gathering points instead of planning meetings at inaccessible times; ensuring the availability of American Sign Language interpreters; ensuring text is accessible in both size and font and digital content includes image descriptions and alt text for screen readers; creating opportunities for virtual and in-person engagement recognizing the on-going risk of the pandemic.

» **Local History and Culture** – Many communities may have participated in previous outreach efforts that did not result in change. Over time, either not being included or participating and/or not feeling heard may affect future participation. Welcome and encourage communities to share oral histories and lived experiences in order to address community-identified needs. Explore opportunities to address this harm and seek repair. Consider opportunities to close feedback loops. Demonstrate an understanding of community norms, priorities, levels of comfort with technical language and expectations for project completion.

Best Practices for Inclusive and Equitable Engagement (continued)

» **Age** – Develop opportunities for people of all ages to participate and contribute; use strategies to facilitate the full participation of aging populations, as well as the needs of young residents, including utilizing diverse communication channels through social media, online platforms, print and radio outlets; and integrate opportunities for activities and engagement with young children to participate.

» **Equitable Partnerships** – Use paid partnerships with local community-based organizations and nonprofits working in the project area.

» **Inclusive and Equitable Decision-Making** - Include a plan for a feedback loop with the community to demonstrate continual engagement and equitable decision-making.

Letters of Support

Applicants should provide letters of support for the proposed project from three (3) other agencies or partners (not including co-applicants) that address the following:

» How the proposed project meaningfully addresses all of the program objectives, by project type.

» How the project reflects a meaningful approach to community engagement.

» How the applicant and/or co-applicants have the relevant expertise, experience and skillsets to implement the project.

» How the project directly addresses historical disinvestment and benefits Priority Populations.

» How the entity writing the letter will support the project.

Letters of support can come from, and are not limited to, the following agencies or partners (not including co-applicants):

» Advocacy Group (Social Equity, Health, Environment, etc.)

» Chamber of Commerce/Business Group

» City or County Agency

» Community-Based Organization

» County Transportation Commission

» Council of Governments

» Faith Based Organization

» School District

» State Agency

» Transit Agency

» Youth/Senior Group

Please upload letters of support with the following naming convention: ApplicantName_ProjectName_PartnerName_Support Letter.PDF