

# Census 2020 Community Convenings: Queens

May 27, 2020

The Robin Hood Foundation, United Way of New York City and Hester Street hosted the Queens Community Convening to support organizations with their Census outreach efforts. Organizations shared their outreach experiences - both challenges and opportunities- and brainstormed ways to foster group collaboration, engage historically undercounted communities, and ensure a complete count.

## PARTICIPANT REPRESENTATION

28 attendees gathered to represent diverse populations, geographies and organizations across Queens:



## CHALLENGES

During discussion, Queens attendees surfaced issues they are experiencing in their outreach:

### COVID-19 Hurdles

- Most hard-to-count populations are best engaged in person. Social distancing has made it hard to build trust with communities.
- Libraries, which were planning to have Census kiosks, have closed. There are currently no completion sites.

### Hard-to-Engage Populations

- Immigrant communities, notably undocumented residents, hesitant to provide information for the Census
- Seniors without internet access, experiencing isolation during COVID-19.
- Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Creole and Bengali speakers with limited English proficiency

## — OPPORTUNITIES

Organizations shared what is working - the innovative strategies they are piloting during COVID-19:

### Analog Outreach

- Include Census flyers with food distribution at food pantries.
- Distribute Census materials at essential businesses, like gas stations, pharmacies, and take out restaurants.
- Use incentives, like gift cards to local businesses, to encourage Census completion.
- Integrate Census messaging with health resources for mental health and telemedicine visits.

### Digital Outreach

- Use phonebanking and text banking in multiple languages.
- Leverage WhatsApp groups, particularly for religious congregations and seniors.
- Provide counselors to help people fill out the Census on the phone.
- Provide a step-by-step guide on how to complete census on a cellphone.

### Messaging

- Promote the Census hotline number.
- Communicate the connection between Census funding and the COVID-19 crisis.

### Messengers

- Houses of worship
- Local libraries
- Local ethnic media
- NYCHA Tenant Associations

## — NEXT STEPS

Attendees defined their next steps to collaborate with grantees, the City and funders:

### COLLABORATION

- Create a space for grantees to collaborate and share materials with one another.
- Harness staffs' skills within organizations to provide each other translation and volunteer support in languages like Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Creole and Bengali.

### RESOURCES + OUTREACH

- Develop Census videos with local leaders.
- Develop materials focused on vendors who are about to reopen.
- Reach out to NYCHA Tenant Associations and houses of worship to engage their constituents.

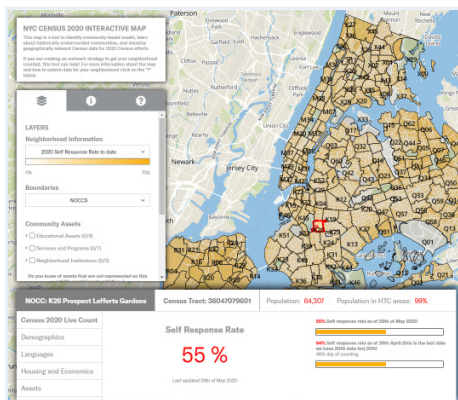
## — RESOURCES

### INTERACTIVE CENSUS 2020 MAP

This mapping tool visualizes relevant data and community assets to inform organizational outreach and track the self-response rate.

To use the map, click [here](#).

If you want a one-on-one training session on the map, schedule it [here](#).



### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Census Resource Hub](#) by NY Counts 2020
- [Census Resource Hub](#) by Hester Street
- [Talking About Cens-US](#) by Generation Citizen and United Way of New York City
- ["I Count" Video](#) by Witness to Mass Incarceration
- [Faith Leader Census Toolkit](#) by FPWA
- [Census Question Flyer](#) by Catholic Charities
- [Online and Language Phone Numbers](#) by Catholic Charities