

County of Sonoma
American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) High Level Funding Request



INSTRUCTIONS

This is intended to be a higher-level proposal for departmental projects eligible for ARPA Funding. The Board will review all submitted proposals on August 31, 2021 and will select which proposals for which they would like a more detailed proposal. These more detailed proposals will be due on September 21; the CAO will be sending out the detailed proposal instructions as soon as possible.

These high level funding requests are due on **July 9, 2021**.

Please complete this form and save it to your department's ARPA folder in the FY21-22 Budget Sharepoint Site; email your analyst when the request has been saved in that location.

Please also complete the high-level overview form in Oracle Planning (No Cost Accounting -> Funding Requests (Use for ARPA) -> Funding Request Overview)

Department	Department Contact	Oracle Planning Fund Request #(s)
Office of Equity	Alegria De La Cruz	EO-FR-02

Project Title

RESPONSE REQUIRED *Language Access Planning & Policy*

Summary of Project

It is anticipated that the Board of Supervisors will make ARPA funding decisions on November 2, 2021 and funds must be fully expended by December 31, 2024. ARPA projects must be completed within this timeframe.

Use this space to provide a summary of the project, including any extra help or limited-term position changes that are being requested. This summary will be what is presented to the Board of Supervisors for their consideration.

Please see the position detail form for additional information related to position changes.

RESPONSE REQUIRED

This item requests a Consultant to evaluate the County's existing language access provision, assess additional departmental and agency needs, and to develop a report of the infrastructure and capacity needed to successfully implement a County-wide Language Access Policy.

The County of Sonoma does not have a County-wide policy or protocol to ensure consistent language access for members of the public who are non-dominant language (non-English) speakers. While many departments are required and resourced, through their funding streams, to provide language access services, others remain without clear guidance as to their legal requirements and without resources to interpret and translate for people who are non-dominant language speakers.

To achieve equitable access to the same high-quality services to which English speakers have access, we must ensure that every community member with whom our staff cannot communicate directly in their primary language has access to a qualified interpreter and high-quality translated documents. We also have a need for a County-wide protocol to address visual and auditory access for people who are blind or have low-vision and who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

In California, the American Community Survey (ACS) reports that 15.9 million people speak a language other than English at home, representing 44 percent of the state population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). Of this group, 6.7 million people, or 19 percent of the state population, speak English “less than very well.” Among Californians with limited English, 3.4 million speak Spanish, 315,000 speak other Indo-European languages, 1.2 million speak Asian and Pacific Island languages, and 88,000 speak “other languages,” which include Latin American Indigenous languages (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). In Sonoma County, the ACS reports that 25.6% of the population speaks a language other than English. People who are not fully proficient in English are twice as likely to experience poverty than English speakers (Batalova and Zong, 2015), making them especially likely to be eligible for County services.

Project Term

State the duration of the project including start and end date for any term-limited positions (earliest start date is 11/3/21 and latest end date is 12/31/2024).

RESPONSE REQUIRED

This project was identified as a priority early in the creation of the Office of Equity, with a proposed timeline of completion by end of 2021. However the Office lacks sufficient capacity to address this critical need at this time. A significant amount of research, a County-wide department survey, and initial fiscal analysis have all been completed at this stage and will facilitate this work being done more quickly. A consultant will be hired in early 2022 with the analysis and policy options presented to the Board by 2023.

Estimated Project Costs and Funding Sources

Estimated Project Costs	
Salaries and Benefits (Extra help or time limited* only)	\$0
Services and Supplies	\$60,000
Capital Costs	\$0
Other Consultant/Contract	\$250,000
Estimated Total Project Costs	\$310,000
Anticipated Alternate/ Leveraged Funding Sources	
List here; provide a detailed description in the narrative below	\$0

Total ARPA Funding Request	\$310,000
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* Include a Statement of Special Funds Activities if proposing the use of Fund Balance

Narrative Explanation of Estimated Project Costs

Provide a high level explanation of the estimated project cost (bulleted list is sufficient). If additional staff are being requested (extra help or limited term only) please explain how they are time-limited in nature and will not be used in an on-going capacity.

Also describe additional funding sources that will be utilized (i.e. if this request is being paired with an awarded grant to enhance the scope of an existing project).

Explain any funding sources that can be leveraged if ARPA funds are awarded (i.e. if ARPA funds can be used as a grant match).

RESPONSE REQUIRED

Costs are for consultant services, with additional costs for stipends for community engagement and focus groups, as well as interpretation and translation costs.

Please check to confirm General Services and Information Services have been consulted regarding space needs and costs associated with your request have been included in the fiscal impacts above.

ARPA Eligibility

Explain which element(s) of ARPA the project aligns with. To the extent possible, please indicate the page number(s) and element(s) included in this guidance: <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRP-Fact-Sheet-FINAL1-508A.pdf>. If you are uncertain about how a project aligns with ARPA, please contact your CAO analyst.

RESPONSE REQUIRED

Serving the hardest-hit communities and families (Page 5)
 Assessing and creating the infrastructure leading to a Language Access Policy supports a population disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. By ensuring that we create clear and consistent guidelines to communicate with non-english speakers, we are removing barriers that often limit these communities’ ability to access government resources, in this case they recover from the economic and health impacts of this pandemic.

Strategic Plan Alignment

*Please indicate which Strategic Plan **OBJECTIVE** will be furthered by this project. Note: if listed, item must tie to a specific objective, and not simply be in alignment with a general pillar or goal.*

Link to the Strategic Plan: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/Board-of-Supervisors/Strategic-Plan/PDF/Five-Year-Strategic-Plan-2021-26-English/>

Indicate N/A if not applicable
 Pillar: Race Equity & Social Justice
 Goal: 4

Objectives: 4

- **Objective 4:** Develop and establish a language access policy for the County of Sonoma by end of 2021.

Department Lead for this Objective: Alegría De La Cruz

Racial Equity and Social Justice

In January of 2021, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors adopted a five-year strategic plan that included a Racial Equity and Social Justice pillar. The ARPA guidance specifically calls out how the pandemic has disproportionately impacted low-income families and communities of color. Please answer the questions below to describe how the project supports the Racial Equity and Social Justice pillar.

For additional resources please refer to the [Racial Equity Tool Kit](#), which the Board adopted on November 17, 2020.

- 1. Describe how your project advances racial and economic equity and/or reduces or eliminates disparities and improve outcomes for low-income communities and communities of color Countywide.*
- 2. Identify potential negative impacts of your project on communities of color and low-income communities, and describe what strategies your Department recommends to mitigate any potential adverse impacts.*
- 3. Does this project address specific racial and/or economic inequities in Sonoma County?*
- 4. Does the estimated project budget and timeline include resources and time to ensure sufficient community engagement, accessibility (i.e. translation, interpretation), outreach, etc?*

Indicate N/A if not applicable

A language access plan will allow the county to fully administer aid to all of its residents. In past events, non-English speakers have been left behind. Each department in Sonoma County differs on its language access policy so there is no uniform system to track quality of language access nor payment for these services. The county must adopt this plan in order to make a more equitable Sonoma County while also creating a more efficient local government.

Describe how this project lead to future efficiencies or cost savings (indicate n/a if not applicable)

By tracking costs the county as a whole and its departments will be better equipped to view their finances in regards to language access and to plan and adequately budget for these costs. If department needs are similar, departments can support each other in sharing costs.

Does the project support a community need based on COVID-19, if so, describe.

Yes. Supporting the creation of a language access plan will increase equitable access for families and communities trying to recover from the economic and health impacts of this Pandemic.

Does this meet a known unmet community need? If yes, please provide a link to a report/study/etc.

https://internews.org/wp-content/uploads/legacy/2018-10/Internews_Information%20Assessment_Northern%20California_Sept2018.pdf