

▲ The Third Avenue entrance to the King County Courthouse reopened Dec. 16, 2019.



Newsroom

King County
Elections

Voter Education Fund Invests Nearly \$1 Million in Diverse Communities

May 23, 2019

Summary

The Voter Education Fund is a government, philanthropic and community partnership led by King County Elections and Seattle Foundation to remove barriers to voting in underserved and underrepresented communities. A total of 39 organizations are receiving \$950,000 in grants to increase voter engagement in underserved communities.

Story

King County Elections and Seattle Foundation today announced the recipients of the 2019-2020 Voter Education Fund. A total of 39 community-based organizations are being funded \$950,000 to provide nonpartisan voter outreach in historically underrepresented communities

Previous cycles funded organizations on an annual basis. The Voter Education Fund is shifting to a two-year grant cycle to ensure organizations have the resources they need to do significant voter engagement through 2020.

"This is our largest cohort ever, and I'm thrilled to see 11 new organizations joining us this cycle," said Julie Wise, Director of King County Elections. "Their work will be critical to getting out the vote in what promises to be an exciting local election year and an epic 2020 Presidential Election."

Organizations are being funded at two levels: up to \$40,000 to develop a two-year campaign to engage voters or potential voters, or up to \$15,000 to provide a series of smaller activities through 2019 and 2020.

“Stewarding our democracy and investing in civic engagement for all of our residents is one of our highest callings as a community Foundation,” said Tony Mestres, President and CEO of Seattle Foundation. “The Voter Education Fund has increased voter turnout and participation in our community and this new two-year cycle of funding will dramatically grow those efforts.”

Grantees serve a wide array of communities, including communities of color, limited-English speaking residents, low-income youth, veterans, people experiencing homelessness, and people who have been convicted of a felony. This cycle places an increased emphasis on voter outreach to people with disabilities, African American and Native American voters, and historically marginalized residents in South King County.

The West Hill Community Association in South King County plans to use its grant to host candidate town halls, develop a social media campaign, and partner with local high schools to empower teenagers.

“We’re overjoyed to once again be a part of this incredible opportunity to actively ignite passion and spread awareness for greater participation in our democracy,” said Devin Chicras, Vice President of the West Hill Community Association. “The Voter Education Fund is such a powerful accelerant to those efforts and will absolutely be a game changer in how many folks we can engage.”

Disability Rights Washington will launch a targeted, year-round campaign to improve voting access and engagement for residents with disabilities, including those who are or were formerly incarcerated.

“We are all thrilled to have this opportunity to dig deeper into voting rights for inmates in jail in King County and to engage more disabled voters,” said Stacie Siebrecht, Director of Strategic Partnerships for Disability Rights Washington.

Organizations receiving funding will attend an orientation and training workshop at King County Elections during the week of June 3, 2019.

The full list of 2019 grantees is:

- 21 Progress
- APACEvotes
- Asian Counseling and Referral Service
- Being Empowered Thru Supportive Transitions
- Byrd Barr Place
- Coalition of Immigrants, Refugees and Communities of Color (CIRCC)

- Disability Rights Washington
- El Centro de la Raza
- Entre Hermanos
- Eritrean Association in Greater Seattle
- Hearing, Speech & Deaf Center
- India Association of Western Washington
- Indigenous Showcase
- Ingersoll Gender Center
- Institute for Community Leadership
- InterIm CDA
- International Community Health Services
- Kent Black Action Commission (KBAC)
- Korean American Coalition—WA
- Latino Community Fund

- Living Well Kent
- Mother Africa
- Mujer al Volante
- Muslim Community & Neighborhood Association
- Na'ah Illahee Fund
- NAMI Eastside
- Para Los Niños
- Progress Pushers
- Refugee Women's Alliance (ReWA)
- Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness
- SOAR
- Tenants Union of Washington State
- The Vera Project
- The Washington Bus Education Fund
- URBVOTE
- U.T.O.P.I.A. Seattle
- Villa Comunitaria
- Washington Community Action Network Education & Research Fund
- West Hill Community Association

About Seattle Foundation

Seattle Foundation ignites powerful, rewarding philanthropy to make Greater Seattle a stronger, more vibrant community for all. Focused on creating equity and opportunity, our goal as a community foundation is to simplify giving and strengthen the impact of philanthropy for the more than 1,200 individuals, families, businesses and nonprofits we serve. We provide deep community insights, powerful civic leadership, effective philanthropic advising and judicious stewardship of assets in support of our mission.

[Learn more about Seattle Foundation here.](#)

Relevant Links

- [Voter Education Fund](#)
- [Seattle Foundation](#)

Quotes

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Julie Wise, Director of King County Elections

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Devin Chicras, Vice President of the West Hill Community Association



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Stacie Siebrecht, Director of Strategic Partnerships for Disability Rights Washington

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