

## Request for Proposals for Research on Impact of COVID-19 on Communities of Color

### Background

The Walmart Foundation believes diversity, equity, and inclusion should be central to the work we support. Through our philanthropy, we work to rewire and reimagine systems across all our giving areas including opportunity, community, and sustainability. As such, it is imperative our giving focuses on equitable systems and design so that all people have the opportunity to thrive.

Because of our deep belief in diversity, equity, and inclusion, we share the following statement which leans into our aspirations:

*At Walmart and the Walmart Foundation, we aim to keep diversity, equity, and inclusion at the heart of our philanthropy. Together, with grantees, associates, and communities around the world, we strive to transform systems to help create more equitable opportunities for all.*

This RFP is a part of Walmart and the Walmart Foundation's broader initiative to address racial equity<sup>1</sup>. COVID-19 is disproportionately impacting communities of color and, like most disasters, is exposing and exacerbating inequities that already existed.

To address solutions to these inequities, our giving must go beyond being imbedded in our traditional philanthropy. Therefore, we are releasing a research RFP to focus solely on how COVID-19 has impacted communities of color in two specific areas:

- disaster response and preparedness
- community inclusion and belonging

Insights from initial research will be critical. While these two topics are different, we want to understand how communities of color are being impacted by COVID-19 in relation to both. We hope this research will inform the field and lead to community-based solutions for the future.

The Walmart Foundation expects to provide **up to \$2 million in funding for all projects chosen pursuant to this RFP**. Proposals should span 6-9 months and not be above \$300,000.00. Proposals should include a strong plan for public dissemination of the research. Proposals should focus on one of two areas listed below and focus on one of the following communities of color:

- African American/Black
- Native American/Indigenous People
- LatinX

### **A) COVID-19's Impact on Community Inclusion**

- A bottom-up approach to understanding how COVID-19 has impacted the perception(s) of community inclusion and belonging\* in communities of color - We want to understand if behaviors and attitudes have changed within communities of color because of COVID-19 with respect to how united/included people of color feel about the broader community in which they live. Example questions could include but are not limited to: are health disparities and unequal

medical treatment alienating people of color from the rest of their community? What are the perceptions of communities of color in accessing resources available in their broader community and are those resources culturally relevant? What are employees' perceptions of their workplace efforts towards inclusion and belonging given COVID-19?

- A top-down approach to understanding how organizations/governments have accelerated or decelerated community inclusion and belonging\* efforts in light of COVID-19 - We want to understand what government, nonprofit, or business inclusion programs have been paused or accelerated given COVID-19. Example questions include but are not limited to: are designated Welcoming Cities accelerating their work or ending it because of budget cuts? What commitments have been made by corporations to accelerate inclusion and belonging given COVID-19? How has government messaging worked to accelerate/decelerate inclusion and belonging for the groups listed above? How have the public and nonprofit sectors included communities of color in creating solutions in the midst of the pandemic?
- Combining the top-down and bottom-up current state analysis - What ideas/solutions surfaced that might accelerate community cohesion because of COVID-19?

\*For section A, we use John A. Powell's definitions of inclusion and belonging. Inclusion is being welcomed into space where the norms, beliefs, etc. are already established. Belonging is cocreating the space to which one belongs.

## **B) COVID-19's Impact on Disaster Response and Preparedness**

- Given the disproportionate impact of COVID-19, identify and analyze the current gaps in the way organizations serve communities of color in times of disasters and the underlying hypotheses around why these gaps occur.
- Identify gaps in how public-private sectors work together in times of disasters to respond to communities of color and how this impacts recovery efforts.
- Utilizing voices from the sector and the community, propose ideas to help communities of color better prepare, respond to, and recover from future disasters.

\*For section B, disasters are classified as a range of scenarios and events that include environmental, conflict, famine/food insecurity, biological/epidemic and industrial/transportation hazards.

For context, the community inclusion section is intentionally scoped broadly (part A). We are aiming to understand the current realities looking at intervention points across systems and not in a single programmatic field. Conversely, the disaster section (part B) is scoped narrowly to look at interventions in the disaster field. The common thread is understanding how both topics are impacting communities of color across our country.

We will consider proposals that demonstrate the ability to conduct research on both topics and can focus on more than one community of color listed. We will also consider proposals that can focus on one topic with one community of color.

### **Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:**

- Proposals should select one or both areas of focus (inclusion/disaster) and address each section outlined under the focus area.

- Research should contain a landscape analysis and focus on qualitative insights.
- Organization and/or researcher has the ability to conduct culturally competent research on one or both topics above with the specified communities of color over the course of six to nine months and share initial findings with their program officer on a regular basis.
- Any organization and/or researcher must have demonstrable relationships and trust with the communities they aim to study. Prior work with the community being studied will be of paramount importance.
- Proposal addresses the organization's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Proposals should have a strong dissemination plan for final research including publications targeting nonprofits, policy leaders, and organizations working in communities of color.

### **Eligibility and Fund Use**

Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis to organizations that submit the most compelling proposal based on the focus area above and the minimum eligibility criteria below.

#### Eligibility:

- Applicant organization must be a state university or a tax-exempt, public charity described in Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (the "Code"), other than a Type III supporting organization described in Section 509(a)(3)(B)(iii) of the Code. Public charities must be listed in the most current IRS 50 State Master File at the time the application is submitted and at the time of awarding if chosen for funding
- Organization must have a demonstrated ability and expertise to execute the proposed program.
- Nonprofit organizations that operate regionally/locally are eligible to apply.
- We favor collaboration. Organizations are strongly encouraged to work jointly or as part of coalitions, working together on a programmatic goal. If applying as a coalition, one organization must serve as the lead grantee when submitting an application. Any proposed sub-granting of funds should be clearly outlined in the proposal.
- The grant amount requested cannot exceed 20% of an organization's annual operating budget.
- Grant funds may not be used to cover more than 80% of personnel expenses for any single program-related position.
- Selected grantees will be required to provide an abbreviated semi-annual report and a detailed annual final report and financial summary to The Walmart Foundation. These reports are intended to provide an update on the program's activities, a summary of the current status of the program relative to proposed outcomes, and an update on financial expenditures relative to work carried out. Templates will be provided at appropriate times through the CyberGrants system.

#### Fund Use:

- Funds awarded must be utilized for scope of work in proposal only.
- Proposals will not be considered if indirect/overhead costs exceed 15% of requested funds.

#### Funding Exclusions:

- Organizations that deny service, membership or other involvement on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, veteran, disability status, or other legally protected classes will not be considered.
- Organizations that have already received a National Giving grant, but have not completed an impact report, may not apply or receive a new grant.

### **Question and Answers**

The Walmart Foundation will host a webinar on Wednesday, June 24, 2020 at 12pm CT. Please use [this](#) zoom link at that time.

### **Application Process**

The application process will consist of submission of a letter of intent (LOI) and proposal through the CyberGrants on-line application system. All prospective grantees must agree with the Memorandum of Understanding prior to submitting the LOI. Only those applicants selected as semi-finalists will be invited to submit a proposal. Once finalists are selected, applicants may be asked to revise their application to strengthen methodologies, adjust budgets or answer questions about their proposed program before Walmart selects organizations for potential funding.

LOIs and proposals will be submitted via CyberGrants, and will be reviewed based on the guidelines and criteria listed below. The Walmart Foundation reserves the right to consider factors such as geographic diversity and a balanced slate of grantees. The Walmart Foundation will have the sole authority to select the grantees. Submission of the LOI is required to gain access to the full proposal, and all fields must be completed for the application to be considered. Please note that language in the project narrative should be understandable to a lay reviewer and provide reviewers with sufficient information to effectively evaluate the merits of the proposal.

It is often helpful to share prior evaluation results from your organization's work, a short summary of research on best practices in the field and stories of the impact of your work, to help demonstrate your organization's ability to deliver impact. These items can be attached as additional resources. Do not mail additional materials to the Walmart Foundation to supplement the application. Only materials included in the electronic application will be considered.

This is a competitive process. Being previously funded by the Walmart Foundation does not guarantee continued funding.

Character counts for various sections are given in the CyberGrants LOI and proposal. These counts include spaces and formatting. If you exceed the character counts in a field, you will not be able to proceed or submit your application.

### **LOI and Proposal Submission**

LOIs and proposals must be submitted via CyberGrants, The Walmart Foundation's online application system. CyberGrants can be accessed on the Walmart website: [www.cybergrants.com/walmart/national\\_loi](http://www.cybergrants.com/walmart/national_loi)

You must use the invitation code: “ResearchRF” each time you access the application. If you are a first-time user, you will need to create an online profile before accessing the proposal form. Once the LOI and proposal forms are filled out in CyberGrants, please click “Submit.” LOIs must be submitted by 11:59PM ET, July 2, 2020. LOIs and proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered. LOIs and proposals should be submitted as soon as possible, even prior to the deadline. This allows the Walmart Foundation to ask clarifying questions or address errors or misunderstandings if necessary before the application process closes.

Once you have submitted your application, please e-mail [Qadira.Harris@Walmart.com](mailto:Qadira.Harris@Walmart.com) and [Joshua.Sparks@Walmart.com](mailto:Joshua.Sparks@Walmart.com) to ensure we received your application.

### Key Dates

June 18, 2020	System opens to accept LOIs
June 24, 2020	Q&A Webinar on RFP @ 12:00pm CT <a href="#">here</a> on Zoom
July 2, 2020	Submit LOIs Deadline
July 8, 2020	Semi-finalists selected
July 22, 2020	Semi-finalists Proposals Deadline
End of July/Early August 2020	Selection of finalist organizations
Early-Mid August 2020	Notification of Awards
Mid-Late August 2020	Disbursement of Awards

### Statement of Non-Commitment

Issuance of this RFP does not commit the Walmart Foundation to award a grant or to pay any costs incurred in preparation of the proposals to respond to the RFP. Those responding to this RFP must follow its procedures and requirements. Failure to comply with or complete any part of this RFP may result in rejection of the proposal. The Walmart Foundation reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, or to negotiate separately with competing applicants for funds described in this RFP. The Walmart Foundation reserves the right to modify this RFP, submission deadlines and notification dates without prior notice.

### About Philanthropy at Walmart

Walmart.org represents the philanthropic efforts of Walmart and the Walmart Foundation. By leaning in where our business has unique strengths, we work to tackle key social issues and collaborate with others to spark long-lasting systemic change. Walmart has stores in 27 countries, employing more than 2 million associates and doing business with thousands of suppliers who, in turn, employ millions of people. Walmart.org is helping people live better by supporting programs that work to accelerate upward job mobility for frontline workers, address hunger and make healthier, more sustainably-grown food a reality, and build strong communities where Walmart operates. To learn more, visit [www.walmart.org](http://www.walmart.org) or find us on Twitter @walmartorg.

<sup>1</sup>Walmart and the Walmart Foundation announced a 5-year, \$100M commitment to racial equity and the creation of a center on racial equity. Note that this RFP was shaped prior to this announcement and is part of the ongoing commitment to equity.