



## **Census**

Our vision is to achieve vibrant communities with great opportunity for all. There is perhaps no better example of a national effort that can help make this vision a reality than achieving a fair, accurate, and thorough decennial Census and American Community Survey (ACS).

### **NY Funders Alliance Census Policy Statement:**

**NY Funders Alliance supports ensuring an accurate, fair, and reliable count of residents, as required by the U.S. Constitution through full funding and participation in the decennial Census and American Community Survey to ensure fair representation and allocation of resources, and access to complete and reliable data to support community engagement, planning and economic development.**

Board Approved: January 2021

## **An Accurate, Fair & Reliable Count Matters**

The decennial census and ACS influence nearly every issue supported by New York philanthropy, including education, employment, veteran services, rural development, and health care.

The census is a critical mechanism for ensuring that no community's needs or voices are overlooked. Census data is used to determine government funding for vital services and programs, as well as allocation of political representation. New York currently receives \$53.2 billion in federal dollars each year to pay for vital community assets (schools, hospitals, etc.). If the data collected does not reflect communities accurately then we run the risk of underfunding integral programs and depriving underserved communities of government resources, their political power and even private sector investment. Nonprofits and philanthropic organizations rely on this data to understand the needs of their communities and measure impact.

Without government funding, communities would turn to philanthropy and nonprofits to fill the void, but philanthropy does not have the resources to replace lost government support.

Ensuring hard-to-count communities' participation in the census requires additional resources and expertise. Hard to count communities include urban and rural areas with large low-income populations, young children, people of color, non-English speakers, the elderly, those who are disabled, renters, the homeless, and those living in mobile homes or multi-unit residences. The digital Census further added new challenges in counting those who lack digital literacy and internet access.

Recognizing these challenges, we are part of national and statewide efforts to engage philanthropy in supporting a complete and accurate Census.