

Community-owned multilingual focus groups: Stipend opportunity in Polyglot Philadelphia

Opportunity Guidelines and How to Apply

The Philadelphia City Fund, [Office of Immigrant Affairs](#) and the [Office of Innovation and Technology](#) are happy to announce an opportunity for compensated focus groups to assess the communication needs of multilingual communities in the City of Philadelphia and contribute to the mission of the [Language Access Philly Program](#) to “Ensure that all people can access City services in their language.”

This opportunity has been made possible thanks to [the Operation Transformation Fund grant to improve translations on Phila.gov](#). Stipends of \$5,000 each will be awarded to 10 organizations. Each organization will be expected to conduct at least one (1) focus group with a minimum of ten (10) participants who speak and read in a language other than English. The focus groups will identify most frequently accessed contents on the phila.gov website and share any findings about information that seems unclear or poorly translated.

Compensation will be distributed through the Philadelphia City Fund as follows: 50% at the planning stage, and 50% at the closure stage. The timeline for presenting the deliverables to the Office of Immigrant Affairs should not exceed three months from the award date. Please refer to the Opportunity Guidelines for more details.

Summary of opportunity details

- Stipend amount: \$5,000
- Stipends awarded: Ten (10)
- Application opens: March 20, 2023 (Monday)
- Application closes: April 20, 2023 (Thursday)

Eligibility

Before applying, please review the criteria below:

- The point of contact of the organization must have an email address
- Organization must operate in Philadelphia as an incorporated organization.
 - For example: Non-profits, LLCs, and businesses are eligible

- Must be able to arrange at least one (1) focus group in person in Philadelphia
- Must be able to provide a W-9, an invoice, and an ACH Form for the organization in order to receive payment.
- Must be able to recruit and communicate with speakers of at least one of the following language groups:
 - Arabic
 - Chinese (including Mandarin, Cantonese, or minority dialects)
 - French
 - Haitian Creole
 - Portuguese
 - Russian
 - Spanish
 - Swahili
 - Vietnamese
 - A different language (excluding English)

Background

The City of Philadelphia's [Language Access Philly](#) program has recently partnered with the City's Equitable Engagement team to assess community engagement practices to achieve a greater impact.

The Office of Immigrant Affairs and its Language Access Program was awarded an Operation Transformation Fund grant to improve the quality of translated web-based content on the City's Phila.gov domain. The aim of this project is to create and implement standards for translation consistency, accuracy, and accessibility to Philadelphia's diverse language communities.

After hosting multiple focus groups as part of the Operation Transformation Fund (OTF) grant, the project team found that there is a greater need to further assess communication needs among multilingual communities to better inform recently created translation tools for using the City's phila.gov domain, including glossaries in nine (9) languages and a style guide. These tools were made possible through OTF funding, which allowed the Office of Immigrant Affairs to increase capacity by adding a new team member with a background in linguistics. The Translation Services Coordinator uses these tools as a work in progress for

continues improvement with community input. The language access team has been hosting workshops to learn more about the language communities in Philadelphia, and it is now encouraging a community-owned¹ process to discuss what are the most relevant pages or the key contents that often get lost in translation.

Please note that the project team is committed to language justice practices and welcomes applications for focus groups outside the nine (9) languages suggested by the project team.

Goal

In exploring community-owned feedback by linguistically diverse community members, the project team wants to learn from community-owned approaches to collect feedback and encourage involvement in the quality review process of translations.

Project Scope

We are looking to identify organizations that are interested in engaging with linguistically diverse community members.

Selected organizations will be asked to:

- Identify and recruit community members who speak a language other than English to participate in at least one (1) one-hour focus group.
- Identify and recruit one or more bilingual facilitators who can communicate in the target language(s) and English
- Submit project documentation to the Office of Immigrant Affairs at the end of the project, including:
 - a. Attendance sheets with the following fields
 - i. Name or alias of participant
 - ii. Language(s)
 - iii. Country of birth
 - iv. Zip code
 - v. Email address (optional)
 - b. If recording or taking photographs, collect signed consent forms from participants
 - c. Description of the focus group and key observations

¹ By “community-owned”, we mean that projects incorporate structures and processes where “community members make decisions and communicate them to City government.” This is as defined by the City’s Equitable Community Engagement Toolkit.

- d. Glossary with key terms in the target language and English, with a brief definition
- e. Art project presenting the organization's findings to the general public. This deliverable is open to the creativity of the organization that gathered feedback, and it encourages creativity in project deliverables.

Process and Timeline

The focus groups and all deliverables must be completed by Friday, July 28, 2023.

- **Application opens:** March 20, 2023 (Monday)
- **Last day for submitting questions:** April 10, 2023 (Monday)
 - Questions about the application can be submitted to OIA@phila.gov. You are encouraged to submit questions in your preferred language, but please keep in mind that our team will take 3-5 days to post responses.
 - Responses will be publicized on the website where the opportunity posted. Last day for submitting questions is ten (10) days before the opportunity closes. This will allow our team some time to post translated answers if needed.
- **Application closes:** April 20, 2023 (Thursday)
- **Selection window:** April 24 through May 5
- **Posting results and emailing applicants:** May 8 through May 19
- **Contracting and first payment of 50%:** Selected organizations will receive a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to review, sign, and return with W-9, and ACH information. First installments of 50% will be paid to organizations once documentation is received.
- **Delivery of project documentation to the Office of Immigrant Affairs:** July 28, 2023
- **Maximum extension for delivery of art project:** August 14, 2023
 - The art project is a rendition of the engagement process and helps the general public understand the communication needs from community members who speak a language other than English
 - The Office of Immigrant Affairs may reserve the right to decline the art submission due to limited storage capacity

- If the art project includes photos or multimedia content, the organization must deliver signed consent forms to the Office of Immigrant Affairs and waive liability for use of the submitted materials
- **Final payment of the remaining 50%:** Organizations will receive the final installment following receipt of project documents.

To submit an application:

1. Download the form in your preferred language. Additional languages include:
 - a. [Arabic](#) | العربية
 - b. [Chinese \(Simplified\)](#) | 简体中文
 - c. [French](#) | Français
 - d. [Haitian Creole](#) | Kreyòl Ayisyen
 - e. [Portuguese](#) | Português
 - f. [Russian](#) | Русский
 - g. [Spanish](#) | Español
 - h. [Swahili](#) | Kiswahili
 - i. [Vietnamese](#) | Tiếng Việt
2. Fill out the form
3. Email the form to OIA@Phila.gov with copy to Maria.Giraldo-Gallo@Phila.Gov