Count Me 2020 Census Fund
CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY & DISCLOSURE FORM

Purpose
The purpose of this conflict of interest policy is to ensure Count Me 2020 Census Fund grantees are selected in a fair and unbiased process.

Assumptions
- Count Me 2020 Census Fund grants committee is best equipped to make decisions that meet the needs of grantees and the community because it includes individuals with varied points of view like: residents, community based organizations, funders, academia, and technical and subject matter experts.
- Conflicts of interest (as defined in this policy) may exist because Count Me 2020 Census Fund seeks committee members with direct knowledge of the communities supported by its grants.
- Upon joining the grants committee, members strive to participate in a manner that is fair and unbiased.
- Using this policy as a guide, grants committee members are best positioned to judge whether they have a conflict are not and will be forthcoming with that information.

Definitions
Specific relationship: Personal or financial interest in an applicant or one of the applicant’s partner organizations or a strong positive or negative conviction that does not allow committee member to be unbiased
Example: board member, board committee member, staff, consultant, frequent volunteer

General relationship: Relationship with or knowledge of one of the partner organizations, but no specific conflict
Example: previously but no longer have a specific conflict, current informal partner (work in the same region/population, serve on committees / work groups together)

No relationship: No knowledge of or relationship with any of the partner organizations

If a conflict exists

If a specific conflict exists
- When discussion is taking place: the grant committee member may not advocate for or against the proposed project or provide opinions, but may provide factual information in response to a direct question from another grant committee member
- When decisions are made: if it is only about the organization related to the conflict (e.g. to rate, rank, fund) the member will abstain; if the decision is about a broader issue that includes the organization, e.g., to approve a cohort of grantees for funding agreed to by the group, declare the conflict and participate.

If a general relationship exists
- Participate fully

Transparency
The following will be made public, online or otherwise: (1) the conflict of interest policy; (2) committee member names and terms; (3) grant awards. SDG staff and Count Me 2020 Fund grant committee members may discuss proposal strengths and areas for improvement with applicants, but will not discuss proposals with anyone but the applicant and their named partners.

December 2019
**Process**

A conflict of interest declaration will be completed once for each distribution of funds, as follows.

- Disclosure is required prior to initial proposal review and additional/new disclosures will be accepted at any point and invited any time new information is received about applicant/partner lists.

**Resolution**

If a grant committee member or staff believes an undisclosed conflict exists:
- The potential conflict will be described to the group as it relates to the conflict of interest policy and an open discussion will take place. The presence or absence of conflict will be determined by consensus.
- Any change in status will only affect discussion and decisions made from that point forward.

If someone outside the committee or staff raises a concern:
- Staff will review the policy with that individual and respond to any concerns.