

Instructions: Please download this document and answer each of the questions below. Once completed, attach it to the application in PandaDocs. The completed application narrative should not exceed 8 pages. The 8-page maximum does not include the Scope of Work, please download the separate document and provide an effective and succinct work plan.

1. Community Identification

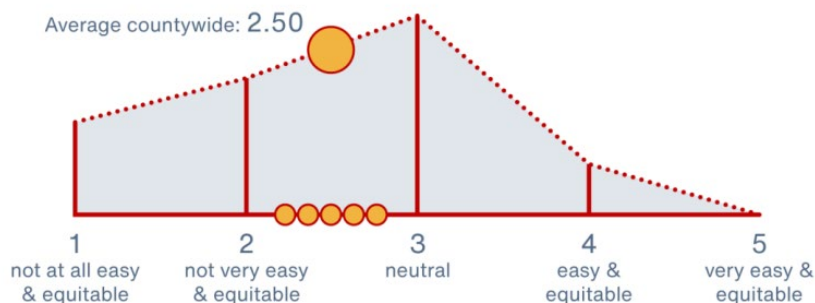
Please describe the community you intend to work with / in and how it was identified as an area that could benefit from the EEI program by addressing the following:

- a. Describe why this community is being selected - describe any criteria, tools, or methods that were used to identify the area or how community voices have been used in picking this area.
- b. What is the make-up of the community? Please include demographics, specific challenges this community may have, opportunities and assets that can be brought up, if it is urban, suburban, or rural (if rural please add any unique challenges the community faces), and/or any other description that is important to recognize for this community.

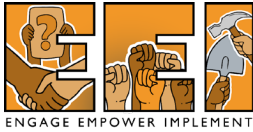
The County of Yolo is committed to serving children, youth, and families by improving access to essential services countywide.

The Yolo County Office of Education (YCOE) released the Roadmap to the Future for Yolo County Children and Youth Needs Assessment in July 2024. The Roadmap to the Future is a countywide initiative tailored to identify and address the unique circumstances of children and youth in Yolo County. Through focus groups, interviews and community engagement sessions that took place around different cities of the County, YCOE identified eight countywide needs of children and youth in Yolo County. This was an intergenerational, interagency approach as the gatherings brought together youth, educators, elected officials, community partners, as well the business community across Yolo County. Additionally, there was an acknowledgment that a “knowledge gap” exists about resources that are available in the community. During the engagement sessions, participants were asked how easy and equitable it was to access services in their community, with 1 being not easy and equitable at all and 5 being very easy and equitable. Figure 20 shows the countywide average as 2.5, or not very easy and equitable. The scoring results for all regions were similar, from Winters at 2.3 to Davis at 2.7.

Figure 20. Responses Rating Services on Ease and Equity



Sources: Roadmap to the Future, 2023



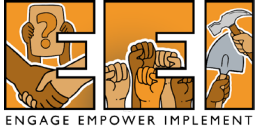
The report also identifies the actions needed to be taken in response to the needs of children, youth, and families in Yolo County. Three categories of countywide actions that inform this grant proposal are the following:

1. **Knowledge Expansion.** Children, youth, and families are more likely to access services if knowledge about services is easy to find, understand, and uptake if so desired.
2. **Access Improvement.** Children, youth, and families need support navigating existing services and community assets, as well as paying for community assets and services. This work includes tailored assistance to individual children, youth, and families to help them understand available community assets and services and to connect children, youth, and families to services and subsidies, including addressing cultural and language barriers.
3. **Implementation Improvement.** Service providers and managers of community assets are continuously working to expand and improve implementation of existing community assets and services, but they need additional support.

Additionally, the report identified three dominant themes.

The first dominant theme: Improved Access to Service Information And Outreach Children, Youth, and Families. The Roadmap to the Future Needs Assessment highlights a need for Yolo County to improve current information about community assets and services and help residents access existing community assets and services. Access requires improved collaboration between local organizations to increase referrals as well as improved engagement to help children, youth, and families overcome language differences, cultural and economic barriers, and time constraints to understand and access services. Many community leaders identified the need to improve communication from service providers to families; collaboration with Yolo County to connect youth to services; engagement and cooperation among agencies; and the sharing of resources across communities. Almost every existing needs-assessment that the team reviewed, identified the lack of coordination among organizations and agencies as a significant barrier to accessing community assets and services for children, youth, and families.

The second theme: Expanded Learning, Engagement, and Leadership Development Opportunities. Despite the strengths in programs for expanded learning, engagement, and leadership development in Yolo County, community feedback indicates that these programs often fall short in effectively reaching underserved groups; Black and other students of color; students in rural areas; special populations, including foster and homeless youth; and students from low-income backgrounds. Accessibility challenges are not limited to the demographics served— timing also poses a barrier, with a need for extended service hours that accommodate working parents' schedules and prevent them from having to choose between employment and childcare responsibilities. Additionally, transportation difficulties hinder access to services for rural youth, compounding the issue of service reach. Those in rural settings are most impacted by limited transportation and underfunded infrastructure, further isolating residents. With a high percentage of school-aged children and working adults in rural areas, there is a critical need for program outreach that fosters academic success and personal growth, as well as college and work readiness programs to equip residents with the skills needed for stable, well-paying



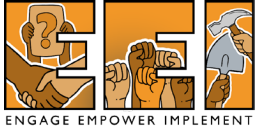
jobs. This information demonstrates that direct attention to rural communities and rural issues is important to address in any equitable outreach initiative in Yolo County.

The final theme: Improved College and Career Transitions. Children and youth in Yolo County need expanded access to college and career readiness opportunities tailored to address geographic and demographic disparities. Improved college and career transitions prepare youth and young adults for success. Publicly available data shows that significant disparities exist in Yolo County regarding college and career readiness. This need was also highlighted during the two youth focus groups and surfaced in the review of other concurrent needs assessment efforts. College and career readiness, a state indicator that schools report, represents the percentage of high school graduates who are prepared for college or a career. College readiness means completing rigorous coursework, passing challenging exams, or receiving a state seal (California Department of Education [CDE], 2023a). Career readiness means completing rigorous coursework and engaging in learning experiences that are designed to prepare students for the workforce (CDE, 2023b). Many school districts' strategic plans and needs assessments also identified goals to address the needs around better preparing students for college and careers (Davis JUSD, 2023; Washington Unified, 2023a; Woodland Joint Unified, 2022).

Furthermore, Yolo County residents in urban areas would also benefit from a large-scale outreach initiative. Yolo County has the highest poverty rate in the state at 20.9% and an even larger disparity in the West Sacramento target neighborhoods, such as the West Capitol Corridor, who experience a poverty rate of 30.4%. According to the California Department of Education, schools located in these target neighborhoods have a nearly 100% student enrollment in free or reduced school meals. (A Portrait of the West Capitol Corridor, July 19, 2024, Brian Vaughn, MPH, Public Health Director, Yolo Health and Human Services Agency). Residents living in these target neighborhoods have low rates of home ownership (26.2% vs 64.3% Southeast Davis), and low educational attainment compared to the county and city average. The median personal earnings is \$24,425 vs \$63,750 and only 9% of residents have at least a bachelor's degree versus 76.5% in Davis. Third grade reading levels at Westfield Elementary School, a significant indicator for high school success, reveal 58% of students reading below standard. Residents face a wide variety of health problems (many linked to poor nutrition) at rates higher than Yolo County overall. West Sacramento residents have a heart disease rate that is 23% higher than the average for Yolo County and 70% higher than the California average; rates for hypertension are 25% higher than Yolo County and 60% higher than California as a whole. Rates for low-income Latinos residents are even higher. More than four out of ten West Sacramento children are obese, higher than both the state (38%) and Yolo County averages (37%).

Clearly the West Capitol Corridor socio-demographic, health, economic data shown as well as a history of lack of investment, warrant an opportunity aligned with the purpose of the EEI initiative.

Yolo County recognizes that improving access to services will require a culturally and linguistically responsive approach to bridge the gap in outreach and education. By engaging community members in rural and urban areas with culturally and linguistically responsive outreach opportunities, the County seeks to reduce outcome disparities and enhance the quality of life for all children, youth, and family residents.



2. Historical Understanding

Please describe the community's current challenges or barriers, while also considering how this relates to historical harms or factors that include, but are not limited to, government policies, socioeconomic issues, infrastructure design, etc.:

- a. Provide a thorough overview of the historical factors that have created inequities within the community that was selected.
- b. What policies, cultural norms, systems, and/or values currently exist or have impacted this community and created inequities for too long without positive impacts that this project/partnership seeks to change?
- c. Please also include relevant information and share any applicable documentation of previous engagement done in this area in the last 10 years.

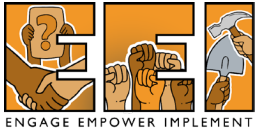
Residents of Yolo County face significant challenges rooted in historical inequities compounded by ongoing socioeconomic and policy-related barriers. Historically, these communities have been shaped by agricultural labor practices that have long marginalized farmworkers, predominantly Hispanic/Latino, offering very low wages. Additionally, these communities can be challenged with inadequate infrastructure, underfunded schools, and limited access to essential services such as healthcare and social services. These conditions have perpetuated a cycle of poverty and limited opportunities for upward mobility. Cultural norms and systemic inequities, such as language barriers and lack of culturally relevant resources, have further isolated this community, making it difficult for residents to access the services and support they need. This project seeks to change these longstanding inequities by addressing the structural barriers that have hindered progress and engaging the community to better connect it with the support it needs to achieve lasting positive impacts.

3. Partnership

Please identify the community-based organization you will be working with by addressing the following items:

- a. Describe your partnership structure and key roles and responsibilities.
- b. How will decisions be made? How will you communicate across partners?
- c. What other partners are important to making this effort successful, and how do you plan to engage them? Identify other partners that can help this effort be successful, including other government agencies or departments and other community organizations, non-profits, schools, churches, or other entities.

The Yolo County Administrator's Office will coordinate all partners, establish roles and responsibilities, and document financial arrangements, agreements, and progress tracking. Decisions will be made collectively during a quarterly meeting structure with more meetings added to our structure on a needs-basis. These meetings would take place using virtual meeting capabilities to enable ease of scheduling and access. The County of Yolo will be the grant administrator and support the Community Based Organization partners to delineate effective outreach avenues. The County can achieve higher service delivery and improve the access to higher quality opportunities by partnering with RISE, Inc., the Yolo

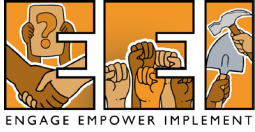


County Office of Education, and the Health Education Council to reach children, youth, and families county-wide.

The Health Education Council (HEC) has worked since 1991 to bring groups together to improve health in Northern California's under-served neighborhoods. Whether it's cleaning up parks, improving lighting and safety, teaching healthy cooking classes, providing youth mentoring or doing health screenings, HEC is dedicated to making health a reality for all people. HEC has a long history of leveraging the power of collaboration to elevate the voices of our region's most underserved neighborhoods. Through targeted resident engagement efforts in West Sacramento, HEC has provided tailored navigation, created programs and helped inform local planning and policy changes. The Health Education Council (HEC) also leads a variety of resident engagement programs in priority West Sacramento neighborhoods and other Yolo County communities that will serve as access points to community engagement, and education for this grant proposal. The Health Education Council will be an important partnership component to gather resident feedback and doing so in a linguistically and culturally sensitive way. HEC will provide essential research and implement best practices from the field to generate solutions that are most likely to be successful.

RISE (Rural Innovations in Social Economics) Inc. organized as a public benefit non-profit [501.c.3] corporation in March 1987. Since its inception, RISE Inc. has been endorsed by the community as the social service delivery entity in rural Western Yolo County. The Organization's specialty is rural program design and delivery; its strength is engaging the community in active self-determination and motivated self-sufficiency. The Winters and Esparto-Capay Valley Region encourages all human and social services to be clustered under the RISE Community Service Center umbrella. This incubation of services and programs has increased efficiency and is cost-effective. RISE, Inc. would be responsible for audience identification in Yolo County, particularly, identifying children and youth in rural areas and connecting them to engagement activities that ensure that youth in our community have access to programs that foster academic success and personal growth, as well as college and career readiness programs to equip them with the skills necessary for stable, well-paying jobs. RISE, Inc. may also conduct outreach during Yolo County Office of Education youth employment events.

The Yolo County Office of Education (YCOE) has held Transitional Age Youth Workgroup Sessions since 2022 to engage community and education partners in cross-agency collaboration in countywide alignment, identifying assets, and coordinating services specific to youth, young adults, and their families. YCOE is not a CBO or a government entity applicant for this grant, but rather is a key stakeholder and will perform service efforts that reinforce and expand RISE, Inc.'s outreach and engagement activities. The Yolo County Office of Education is an additional stakeholder that will provide access to platforms, tools, and supports that assists individuals and families in navigating career exploration, training and upskill opportunities, college options, and events that promote opportunities for youth and young adults to prepare for the 21st Century workforce. In addition, the Yolo County Office of Education can assist in the launch of community schools by providing coordination that will advance youth and family involvement in education and support the utilization of the child and youth framework to advance the efforts centered around children and youth.



As part of the next steps for the Roadmap to the Future initiative, YCOE will help to develop a plan that will further the investment in understanding and addressing the needs, with the goal of inspiring action to improve the community assets and services that children, youth and families in Yolo County need to thrive, as well as establish a shared framework to ensure their healthy development. As part of this effort, the Yolo County Office of Education can host convenings to better understand the gaps in access to community assets and services, support cross-collaboration throughout the County to improve upon these assets and services, and develop system mapping and navigation trainings to improve coherence of the assets and services available.

4. Incorporating the community

Please describe the intended approach for the community engagement by addressing the following:

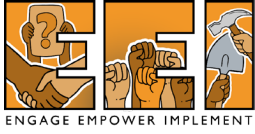
- a. Key strategies and/or participatory methods the community will participate in (focus groups, committees, community ambassadors, surveys, etc.).
- b. Milestones or key indicators of success of the engagement strategies.

Please describe how you plan to show transparency to the community within the engagement process.

RISE, Inc. applies a community engagement approach for youth programs and training developments which involves participatory methods such as focus groups with students, parents, and educators, as well as community committees that include senior citizens and local workforce representatives. Surveys will be conducted to gather input on program needs and preferences, and community ambassadors will be appointed to ensure clear communication between project leaders and residents. Success indicators will include the active participation of youth and workforce-aged individuals in focus groups, the diversity of perspectives represented on committees, and a strong response rate to community surveys. Transparency will be prioritized by regularly sharing progress, survey outcomes and program decisions with the community through our local newspaper, ensuring that residents are fully informed and can provide continuous feedback throughout the implementation of these programs.

HEC employs various strategies to listen to and collect feedback from residents we work with. Strategies are selected based upon the preferences of residents and the type of information sought. HEC uses an asset-based lens when designing listening tools to capture the strengths of people and communities, not just their needs or problems. Strategies in our toolbox include resident interviews; online surveys; focus groups; listening sessions, advisory groups; key informant interviews and satisfaction surveys. All feedback is collected in the resident's preferred language and we often employ trusted people from the community to collect the feedback. HEC also uses a partnership-based approach to gathering resident feedback, joining together with other organizations to listen to residents. Because often the same people are approached by different organizations, we believe partnership can leverage resources and be less taxing on residents.

Yolo County will receive and analyze the data on milestones and key indicators of success of the engagement strategies from RISE, Inc., Yolo County Office of Education, and HEC. Yolo County will review all data to determine measures of outreach activity success.



5. Scope of Work & Budget

- a. Please download the sample scope of work and incorporate a budget by task.