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## Application for Prospective Partners of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities

### Introduction

In collaboration with the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF), One Economy is seeking interested communities to partner with in developing *21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities* in California beginning in 2008. Communities throughout California that meet the criteria are eligible, including urban and rural areas. The Communities selected will be approximately 1,000 households and will be made up of low-income residents. Prospective partners will be able to work collaboratively with leaders of community-based organizations, community residents, public agencies, local philanthropic agencies, private sector organizations, and other mission-oriented entities that are committed to improving the lives of low-income families and individuals through online information and technology resources.

This document describes the criteria and selection process for identifying three *21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities* for 2008.

### Background

One Economy Corporation is embarking on a three-year statewide initiative to bring the benefits of broadband technology to underserved people and communities in California. This new initiative, *Bring IT Home California*, has two programs: *Broadband@Home* which seeks to connect 30,000 low income households statewide to free broadband at home and will pursue policy change for wiring affordable housing and *21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities* which will connect low-income households to high-speed Internet access, and integrates technology with a community development. Nine *21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities* will be developed with this comprehensive approach by September 2010.

The *Bring IT Home California* Initiative is made possible with the generous funding from the California Emerging Technology Fund. CETF provides leadership statewide to minimize the Digital Divide by accelerating the deployment of broadband and other advanced communication services to underserved communities and populations.

### 21st Century Communities

One Economy has worked with nonprofit organizations and local governments in more than 50 communities around the world to build digital inclusion programs that function as a technology ecosystem for underserved communities. This ecosystem includes technical assistance for broadband deployments, building self-help and educational online content, developing community training programs for new Internet users, training young people to provide technical assistance to residents and, where needed, establishing low-cost computer purchase programs. These efforts are sustained through building partnerships with local organizations and increasing their capacity to integrate these technology activities into their current program offerings.

In California, this comprehensive technology-based community development program will take place in urban and rural communities that are ready to partner with local organizations and One Economy to bring

the benefits of technology to underserved residents. One Economy and CETF will help communities create a comprehensive approach that will result in greater digital inclusion while addressing many of the needs and aspirations of the target population.

The goal of the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities* Initiative is to ensure that California has a technology ecosystem permanently in place so the full potential of the information age is realized by underserved Californians.

### Elements of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities

1. **Affordable Housing with Broadband@Home.** One Economy will provide assistance to owners and operators of affordable housing within 21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities so that broadband can be available in the home at little to no cost to residents.
2. **Content that Transforms Communities and Individuals.** One Economy will work with each community to plug local residents into One Economy's national Beehive network ([www.thebeehive.org](http://www.thebeehive.org)) and develop online applications to address local issues and user needs. Local partners will be invited to participate in identifying local content needs and resources, and advising on local content development.
3. **Youth Serving as Catalysts for Sparking a Culture of Technology Use.** One Economy will help each *21<sup>st</sup> Century Community* develop a corps of young people (ages 14 to 21) that help their communities to get the most out of the computer, Internet access and content available to them while learning essential leadership and professional development skills.
4. **Low-Cost Computer Purchase Programs.** Every community will be able to offer its residents the option to purchase a new or refurbished home computer.

### 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Benefits

Residents of *21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities* will enjoy the benefits resulting from a comprehensive, technology-based community development program. Expected outcomes benefiting community members include:

- Greater utilization of the Internet.
- Online workforce development training and resources.
- Increased scholastic outcomes at all academic levels for students.
- Greater financial literacy levels.
- Improved access to health information and resources.
- Increased technology use as a result youth training about technology and leadership development.

### 21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities Goals

1. Develop **nine** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities over the next three years.
2. Connect **30,000** households to free Internet service in the home.
3. Attract **more than 1.6 Million** unique visitors statewide to the local version of [www.beehive.org](http://www.beehive.org) to improve their lives.
4. Engage **more than 300,000** people from *21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities* will use the local online content and tools developed by One Economy.
5. Provide **5,000** service hours, through at least 100 Digital Connectors, to nine selected communities.

### Criteria for Partnership

One Economy Corporation is seeking interested communities to participate in the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities* program to bring Internet access, self-help content through a local Beehive, youth training and computers to their underserved neighborhoods. Below you will find a description of the readiness criteria, what One Economy will contribute and how to apply.

### Readiness Criteria

Ideally, each community should have the capacity to:

- Identify and promote to local residents 21<sup>st</sup> Century activities, such as receiving in-home Internet access, identifying the local content needs and learning to use Internet access for health, financial and career information and transactions;
- Implement the youth training program;
- Make a commitment of \$50,000 per year for three years to support the local efforts; and
- Designate a staff person, working with One Economy, who is committed to bringing the local resources to catalyze activity and organize communities.

Additional readiness factors that will strengthen an application include:

- The existence of a community collaborative that is currently or can be organized to commit to the goals of *21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities*;
- An articulated ability of local stakeholders to mobilize low-income residents to participate in the program's development process that will be facilitated by One Economy.
- A written resolution, order, or commitment by local executive (e.g. mayor, county exec, board of education member, etc.) that accomplishes any of the following.
  1. Makes all future affordable housing units wired and connected to the Internet to advance the online access portion of the program;
  2. Increases the availability of hardware and relevant content including Internet-based e-government services for low-income people;
  3. Provides access to all publicly owned facilities and assets (e.g. libraries, street lamps, existing fiber) to assist in distributing Internet access to the community;
  4. Defines a geography as underserved or 'targeted' for purposes of this effort; and
  5. Achieves the goals of *21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities*.
- A demonstrated effort to maximize the online availability of city services and information and work to develop a localized Beehive;
- The ability to dedicate Youth Employment funds for leadership and technology training;
- Identifying non-public sector partners and resources that will support the program in future years; and
- Access to local assets and resources to promote awareness and utilization of the program, especially the Beehive.

This list of criteria is illustrative; interested parties are encouraged to share any existing agreements, partnership efforts, or ideas that support the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities* goals when making their application.

### One Economy's Contribution

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities* will have the opportunity to engage a wide variety of partners and resources. Each selected community will have:

- A certain number of free broadband accounts for their neighborhood;
- Development of a localized Beehive, similar to all the existing Beehives in Sacramento, San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose, Los Angeles, and San Diego, (<http://www.thebeehive.org>);
- Establishment of a youth Digital Connectors technology education program;
- Development of a computer purchase program; and
- Technical assistance to design, develop and implement the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities* program over three years;
- An implementation plan for the local technology ecosystem.

#### How to Apply

Letters of Interest are being accepted now. The letter should include:

- A description of the community which you suggest become a *21<sup>st</sup> Century Community*. The description should include demographic information, income level, and affordable housing developments in the area;
- A list of collaborative organizations with brief organizational descriptions and mission statements;
- A statement of current community technology activities;
- Information articulating the community's readiness using the criteria above or any of the additional items suggested; and
- Local resources and financial support available to assist your *21<sup>st</sup> Century Communities* program.

Letters of Interest should be submitted by partners interested in leading a collaborative team. Mail the letters to:

Alan Greenlee  
Vice President  
One Economy California  
1021 N. Orange Drive  
Hollywood, CA 90038

Or by email to:

[agreenlee@one-economy.com](mailto:agreenlee@one-economy.com)

If you have questions about this RFP or need further assistance in evaluating your community's readiness, please email Alan Greenlee.