



**Community Improvement Grant
Project Budget and Matching Funds**

PROJECT NAME:

Cost Estimate: List all features, amenities, supplies and plans (Add or delete rows as needed)

| Cost Estimate | Requested Funds | Matching Funds |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Salaries/Wages (in-kind only) | | |
| Administration: Planning & Implementation | N/A | \$2,000 |
| Contracted Services | | |
| 2 Workshop Teachers = \$350/1 workshop | \$1400 | \$800 |
| 1 Spanish Translator = \$300/1 workshop | \$600 | \$250 |
| Materials/Supplies | | |
| Printing: Agenda & Handouts = \$75/session | \$150 | \$100 |
| Paper for Charts & Printing | \$65 | \$65 |
| Printing/Reproduction | | |
| Flyers & Graphics for Distribution & Online Media | \$50 | \$50 |
| Rentals | | |
| Venue: Viewing equipment & screen, Microphone, \$500/each workshop | NA | Museum Donation = \$1,000 |
| Other | | |
| Lunch food for 2 workshops w/ 50 attendees at each | \$235 | \$235 |
| Total Requested Grant Amount | A. \$2,500 | |
| Total Matching Funds | | B. \$4,500 |
| Total Project Cost (A+B) | \$7,000 | " |

Other Funding Sources:

| Funding Sources | Date Committed | Amount |
|---|-----------------------|---------------|
| Daphne Smith Fund | 2/2026 | \$2,500 |
| Community Foundation Sonoma County | 3/2026 | \$2,000 |
| Museum of Sonoma County - Venue & equipment | 3/2026 | \$1,000 |
| Donation = \$1000 | Total | \$5,000 |

Community Improvement Grant Questions

1. *Describe your project, including objectives and goals, and explain how your project will meet these goals.*

Since before Listening for a Change became a nonprofit 501(c)(3) in 1997, Listening for a Change has been serving Santa Rosa in strong community building efforts to create more authentic, healthy, and integrated communities. We work to help foster our Santa Rosa community so that neighbors and those living across the city don't live in separate silos, but have opportunities to come to know, understand, accept, and respect the voices of people who live amongst us. This is the foundation of a healthy and strong democracy.

Supporting and increasing social cohesion is foremost in the work of Listening for a Change. We work to meet this goal through teaching our neighbors, young and old and from many different demographics and geographic areas, how to listen attentively and use the skills of oral history to interview one another. Our premise is that everyone has a story and that we all hunger to be seen, heard, and respected. As a listener we learn what other people have gone through, how they think, what their needs are, what we share, and how we are different. When someone listens respectfully to us, we feel heard and seen. Democracy works when we can listen, understand, and compromise with one another to find better solutions to shared problems.

Over the years we have conducted multiple highly successful listening oral history workshops with the community-at-large, schools, businesses, and other nonprofit organizations. The workshops for the community-at-large are called the *Community Listening Project* and are intended for youth to elders. The *Community Listening Project* trains volunteer community members in the art of oral history and engages them in interviewing their neighbors.

As communities become more diverse, it is important to develop a healthy and inclusive atmosphere for everyone. The process of

interviewing people from different backgrounds helps to heal fractures and misunderstandings caused by socio-economic, racial, ethnic, generational, sexual, and religious diversity. The project brings together people from all backgrounds to build empathy, understanding, communication, and ultimately, forge a more cohesive community identity. As people meet new faces in their community and listen to different voices, the barriers of ignorance and intolerance begin to break down. Please visit <http://listeningforachange.org/community/> to read our report to the community created from oral history interviews of people who attended our *Community Listening Project* workshops and then interviewed their neighbors.

We would appreciate support from the City of Santa Rosa's Community Advisory Board to expand this process within our city and propose two free 4-hour workshops open to the Santa Rosa public to learn better listening skills and how to conduct oral histories. Our plan is to have bilingual Spanish translators at each workshop and welcome members of our large Spanish speaking community. Each workshop will have the capacity for up to 50 participants. The participants, after the workshop, will interview neighbors and create videos or audio recordings of their neighbors, acquaintances, co-workers, family members, or other people.

Karen Wise, the Executive Director of the Museum of Sonoma County has invited Listening for a Change to use space at the Museum to conduct the two workshops (see letter). They will also provide a video screen and connection capacity as well as a microphone. The plan is to have one workshop in 2026 in October or November and another in spring of 2027 in April or May. Preparation will include extensive public outreach through Listening for a Change's relationships with other Santa Rosa organizations, schools, and nonprofits as well as social media such as Constant Contact, FaceBook, etc. It would be beneficial for the City of Santa Rosa to publicize with your outreach media as well.

Outreach to participate in the *Community Listening Project* can be extended through Santa Rosa Neighborhood Associations; public schools through teachers and administrators whom we have worked with that

include Maria Carrillo High School, Montgomery High School, Piner High School, Elsie Allen High School, Santa Rosa Middle School, Santa Rosa High School and Roseland University Prep. We also have teachers and administrators at Santa Rosa Junior College who will be invited to encourage their students to engage.

Through our documentary film *Embers of Awakening: From Firestorms to Climate Healing* (which can now be seen for free on our website <http://listeningforachange.org/fire-projects/> or on YouTube) we have relationships with the three major hospitals as well as the Santa Rosa Fire Department. In addition, the California Parenting Institute (CPI), Los Cien, Positive Images, Career Technical Education (CTE), Restorative Resources, are all organization Listening for a Change collaborates with and will be invited to have members or participants join the oral history experience. This will be a gathering of people from many geographic and demographics of Santa Rosa. Welcoming, openness, and accessibility are cornerstones of all Listening for a Change programming. The ongoing focus of this program is to continue to foster respectful listening and problem solving across Santa Rosa.

Built into the listening oral history workshops are the knowledge that creating a safe space to share stories is imperative. When conducting a formal oral history, each person learns the imperative of sharing a “safety statement” which says: Thank you for interviewing with me today. I will be asking you some questions but if there is anything that you don’t want to answer, please let me know and we will move on to something else.” Also, unless given written permission, the stories are not to be shared outside of the workshops.

Listening for a Change began as a photographic oral history project in the late 1980’s by photographer Phyllis Rosenfield and interviewer Lisa Slater Nicholls. Disturbed by California ballot propositions to place HIV/AIDS victims in isolation camps, the two women decided to interview people in Sonoma County who had been dramatically interned in “camps” at some time in their lives. Interviewed were Jewish survivors of Nazi Europe, Japanese Americans interned during WWII, and Cambodians sent to farm

labor camps during the Pol Pot reign. All of these people were rounded up, had only a short time to take and carry personal belongings, and did not know where they were going.

Their internment experiences varied widely, but one of the pieces that Lisa and Phyllis noticed these survivors had in common is that when they knew their “neighbors” often opportunities arose to help one another and bring people through the horrors to safety. We met local people from Nazi European camps and fortunate fleers with whom people had shared food, or helped escape. We met Japanese Americans whose neighbors took care of their small farm while they were in camps. And we met Cambodians who were able to get their families out to Thailand and then to the U.S. because people helped one another to safety. To Phyllis and Lisa the bottom line was that when we come to know one another, we are unlikely to otherize—We understand that we share a common humanity.

In a democracy it is utmost importance to bring many voices to the table to share ideas and face challenging problems together. It’s imperative that we become better listeners and capable of respecting multiple perspectives. We all need to improve these skills and understand that compromise and collaboration makes us stronger.

1. Project Budget: Grants may not exceed \$2500. Explain how the requested funds will be used, how the cost estimate was determined and the status of matching funds. Please explain your plans to ensure the project’s long-term sustainability. This section is supplemental information to the Cost Estimate Form.

The following narrative explanations and cost estimates in the budget are based on experience since 1997 leading multiple community and educational workshops each year.

Salaries/Wages (in-kind only)

Listening for a Change will provide wages for administrative and implementation tasks for staff for both workshops. This includes all

planning and physical preparation (printing, nametags, etc.), as well as registration and community media outreach. Listening for a Change will apply Daphne Smith Fund and Community Foundation Sonoma County funds for staff wages and all supportive financial needs for these 2 workshops.

Contracted Services

Funds granted for these two Community Listening Project workshops will help support the planning and implementation by two experienced teachers. This will include focused planning for two separate workshops, set-up, instruction, and online coaching for postworkshop needs of attendees. A third bilingual person will act as translator for Spanish speaking participants.

Materials/Supplies

Printing requirements for 2 workshops include agendas and handouts for learning oral history taking skills. Materials are printing paper, printer ink, and chart paper for specific interactive activities.

Printing/Reproduction

Create flyers for distribution, with primary use online for a digital outreach. Agenda and workshop materials will be printed in-house.

Rentals

Not applicable as the Museum of Sonoma County is donating a venue to host both workshops. This includes speakers, video projection capacity, and microphones.

Other

Lunches for attendees while participating in a 4-hour workshop from either 9:00 am to 1:00 pm or 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Each workshop will serve 50 (total of 100 for 2 workshops) attendees. Volunteers will prepare lunches.

2. *Projects should reflect environmental consciousness regarding materials, energy and conservation. Please describe how your project will meet this goal.*

These workshops will have a minimal use of paper as well as providing recyclable drinking cups, utensils, and plates for lunch food. Publicity will primarily be digital through Constant Contact, FaceBook, etc. with support from multiple organizations.

Listening for a Change is especially attuned to environmental needs. Please view our award-winning documentary film *Embers of Awakening: From Firestorms to Climate Healing* that interviews Sonoma County residents from multiple backgrounds and experiences. Santa Rosa and our area are a microcosm of the climate crisis and what is happening in the world. The documentary shares multiple voices that include scientific information, political perspectives, and ideas for hope from our local community interviewees.

View: <http://listeningforachange.org/fire-projects/>

Please visit our website at www.listeningforachange.org to begin to understand the broad and strong support we have had since we became a Sponsored Project at Sonoma State University in 1987 to today. For validation, please contact Oscar Chavez of the Community Foundation Sonoma County, Connie Coddling of the Coddling Foundation, Dean Tori Carleton of Humanities and Social Science at SSU, Stephen Bittner, Ph.D. Director of the Center of the Study for Holocaust and Genocide at SSU, Wendy Conner a Cloverdale High School and Healdsburg Middle School teacher who has integrated our *Neighborhood Listening Project* with her students for 16 years. Additional references are available upon request.



Phyllis Rosenfield
Executive Director
Listening for a Change

Friday, April 17, 2026

Dear Phyllis:

We are happy to be able to support the important work you are doing at Listening for a Change by providing a venue for the free four-hour oral history workshops you are planning in the Fall of 2026 and the Spring of 2027.

We look forward to continuing collaborations with Listening for a Change in this and other areas.

With all best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karen Wise', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Karen Wise
Executive Director