

## Why Should Foundations Support Fair Redistricting?

Funders have worked together to support a complete count of all New Jerseyans: children and seniors, citizens and residents, voters and non-voters. Now, these official numbers will determine how to redraw Congressional district and state legislative district boundaries to reflect changes in population. **Fair redistricting is where a complete census count matters most.** When district boundaries are drawn fairly, residents can exercise their power to elect leaders who will better represent and reflect their communities. This is particularly important for communities of color, which are growing in New Jersey. **Today, almost half of the state’s residents are people of color; however, New Jersey’s elected representatives are not similarly diverse.** Fair districts enable diverse communities’ voices and collective influence so that the issues important to them are heard.

**Funders and nonprofits need to be involved in redistricting because if we are not, the process and results will only be partisan and political.** In New Jersey, political party leaders appoint members to two separate commissions – one to draw the 12 congressional districts and one to draw the 40 state legislative districts. Historically, public input has had almost no impact on the redistricting process. In 2021, nonprofits and community groups can change this dynamic by leading public engagement for fair redistricting.

## How Will Nonprofits Advance Fair Redistricting in New Jersey?

Nonprofits in New Jersey have developed a collaborative strategic plan of action. There are two streams of focus: (1) **broad, state-wide attention to promoting fair redistricting processes and to expanding public accountability** and (2) **deep community engagement prioritizing New Jersey’s communities of color.** This work includes:

- Educating the public about what redistricting is, why it matters, and how the public can participate. This includes public events, explainers, infographics, short video, data sharing. Include racial impact analysis to connect redistricting to lived experience. Communications will be culturally specific – targeted and tailored to resonate with BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities – and quick to respond.
- Setting expectations for the commissions’ public engagement and accountability. Create a norm that the “tie breakers” should advance the public’s interests, not the partisan interests of incumbent legislators. Build a support apparatus as necessary, including hosting additional public hearings and analyzing the parties’ maps with particular focus on advancing equity in representation.
- Supporting community-based leadership to develop organizing, outreach, and technical capacity focused on Latinx, Black, Asian, and immigrant communities. Hire three full-time organizers: one each for Latino Action Network Foundation (LANF), United Black Agenda (UBA), and New Jersey Alliance for Immigrant Justice (NJAIJ). Encourage organizing in Asian communities. Support community groups to create and analyze district maps, with technical support from Rutgers’ Eagleton Institute.
- Empowering community members to advocate for fair representation, offer testimony and maps to the commissions, and inform public discourse.

## What Resources Are Required?

**\$970,000 (April 1, 2021-March 30, 2022)**

Fair Districts Coalition (League of Women Voters & NJ Institute for Social Justice)	\$180,000
Communications – for the entire project	\$300,000
Expert analysis (Princeton Gerrymandering Project)	\$40,000
Three full-time organizers (LANF, UBA, NJAIJ)	\$240,000
Expanded community engagement (smaller grants to 5-6 organizations)	\$150,000
Technical support for mapping (Eagleton and software licenses)	\$60,000