

Project Citizenship



FOUNDED: 2014

CURRENT ANNUAL BUDGET: \$617,995

CONTACT: Veronica Serrato,
Executive Director

PHONE: 617.694.5949

EMAIL: vserrato@projectcitizenship.org

WEB: www.projectcitizenship.org

Project Citizenship (PC) paves an easier path to citizenship for eligible immigrants. Lack of knowledge about how the process works and high legal fees have left many unable to gain access to citizenship.

- Nationally, 8.8 million immigrants are eligible for citizenship. 300,000 live in Massachusetts.
- Due to financial, legal, and bureaucratic obstacles, only 10% of eligible immigrants apply for citizenship, leaving millions of people without access to the rights and privileges of citizenship.

Citizenship creates stability for individuals, their families, and our shared communities. When immigrants gain the rights, privileges, and obligations of citizenship, they are able to contribute to the vitality of our communities and our democracy as a whole.

PC's efficient and cost-effective model represents an innovative pathway to increasing the number of naturalized U.S. citizens. It offers immigrants information, free legal expertise, and a streamlined process, facilitated by trained volunteers and community partners. As a result of these efforts, 95% of PC's clients successfully become naturalized citizens.

Investment Opportunity

Project Citizenship seeks an investment of \$1.4M over the next two years to meet the growing number of immigrants who are ready to apply for U.S. citizenship. PC plans to expand services in Boston and beyond, with a goal of naturalizing 10,000 immigrants by 2019. The investment will be used to increase its reach by hiring key staff members, increasing the number of volunteers, enhancing volunteer training, and expanding partnerships.

Two-Year Goals

- Expand the service area to include Lowell, Brockton, Chelsea, and other gateway cities
- Develop an intake center, staffed by volunteers
- Double the number of staff, including adding a staff attorney to provide expertise in immigration law
- Increase immigrant and volunteer outreach to enable substantial growth in the number of immigrants served

Ways to Invest

FINANCIAL

- \$50,000 helps fund a staff attorney
- \$25,000 underwrites a citizenship outreach campaign through ethnic media
- \$5,000 funds design and implementation of a training webinar for volunteers
- \$1,000 provides individual legal representation to five immigrants

IN-KIND

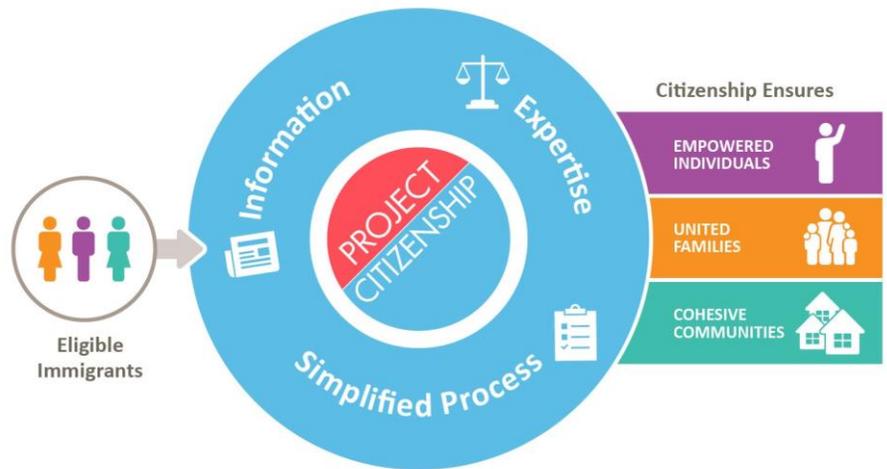
- Photography and videography that capture the immigrant experience
- Telephone intake line staffed by trained volunteers
- IT, website maintenance, and Salesforce support
- Graphic design, marketing, and printing
- Computers and iPads

Leadership & Governance

Attorney Veronica Serrato is PC's first Executive Director. Veronica, whose parents are naturalized citizens from Mexico, graduated from Harvard University and the B.U. School of Law. She is the recipient of the B.U. School of Law 2017 Silver Shingle Award for Service to the Community.

Project Citizenship is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors, two of whom are naturalized citizens. PC's Board Chair is Attorney Jim McGarry, partner at Goodwin. Jim's enthusiasm and commitment to immigrants has expanded PC's *pro bono* relationships with law firms and in-house counsel. Jim received the 2017 Robert B. Fraser Award for *Pro Bono* Excellence for his outstanding contributions.

PROJECT CITIZENSHIP MODEL



“

I was intimidated by the citizenship process, but Project Citizenship's help made it easy and clear. As a citizen, I am no longer a guest or a spectator; I am home.

”

ELIZABETH HARROO
Citizen of the United States and
Trinidad and Tobago



PAVING THE PATH TO THE AMERICAN DREAM

In 2016, PC staff and volunteers served 1,507 immigrants from 91 countries. This success represents exponential growth from 142 in 2014. 95% of PC's clients achieve citizenship, even with challenging issues. 19% of clients are exempt from the English language requirement due to age or disability. PC obtains fee waivers for 75% of its clients, those who cannot afford to pay the \$725 filing fee. PC has achieved this remarkable growth and success thanks to a highly effective and measurable model.

Providing Information

Project Citizenship engages ethnic, mainstream, and social media to promote U.S. citizenship and encourage immigrants to initiate the naturalization process. PC publishes and disseminates culturally appropriate messages in seven languages. As a first step, PC's staff screens prospective clients in their first language to ensure that they are eligible for citizenship and have all their supporting documents in order.

Engaging Volunteers

In 2016, Project Citizenship recruited and trained 624 *pro bono* attorneys and students from eight law firms and four law schools. In 2017, PC will engage at least 750 volunteers.

Simplifying the Process

PC's trained volunteers work one-on-one with clients in one-stop workshops to complete the 20-page naturalization application. Once an application is filed, PC staff tracks all individual cases from submission, fingerprinting, and interview, to taking the oath of citizenship.

Amplifying Impact Through Technical Assistance

PC provides technical assistance and legal expertise to 16 community partner organizations throughout New England that help 2,400 additional immigrants annually through the naturalization process. Working closely with community partners allows PC to increase its impact while reaching linguistically or geographically isolated immigrant communities.



Volunteering with immigrants and helping with their applications for citizenship encouraged me and renewed my faith in people. Citizenship provides real security for immigrants and Project Citizenship makes the complicated process doable and approachable. The excitement that Project Citizenship brings to their workshops is infectious.



JOEL LEHRER
Goodwin

Key Investors

- THE BOSTON FOUNDATION
- FISH FAMILY FOUNDATION
- FOUNDATION FOR METROWEST

Partners

- BOSTON COLLEGE LAW SCHOOL
- BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW
- GOODWIN
- HARVARD LAW SCHOOL
- ROPES & GRAY
- WILMERHALE

BENEFITS OF CITIZENSHIP

Project Citizenship’s impact starts with individuals and extends to families as well as communities. Because 95% of PC’s clients successfully obtain citizenship, the benefits of citizenship and civic engagement are amplified throughout the Commonwealth.

Empowered Individuals

Immigrants who become citizens earn the rights and privileges of U.S. born citizens. They are able to vote, obtain government jobs, run for elected office, travel freely with the security of a U.S. passport, and are eligible for federal student loans. These benefits lead to increased earning power and a stronger sense of security.

United Families

Children holding green cards automatically become U.S. citizens when a parent takes the naturalization oath. Citizens have the highest priority when filing family-based petitions to bring relatives to the U.S. for reunification.

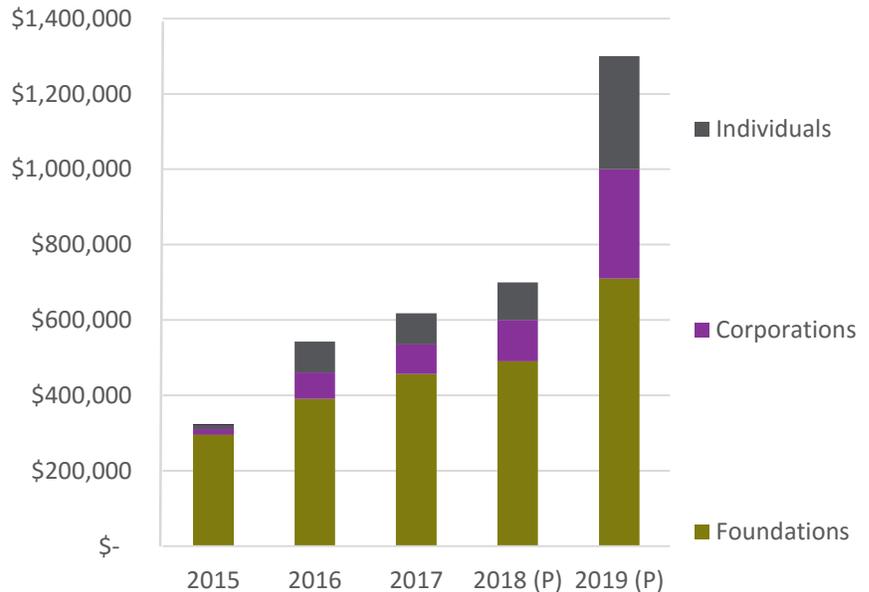
Cohesive Communities

Research shows that cities and neighborhoods with higher naturalization rates benefit from a more stable workforce and a more vital economy. Moreover, civic engagement deepens when immigrants cast their votes and run for public office to help create a representative government.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Project Citizenship was launched through the vision of Larry and Atsuko Fish and generously funded by the Fish Family Foundation to advance U.S. citizenship services. With the current environment on the subject of immigration, the demand for PC’s assistance has increased dramatically. PC is well poised to capitalize on its proven model and to grow its funding base with investments from foundations, corporations, and individuals.

Revenue by Source



Success Story: The Merida Family

In 2001, Mariana Merida arrived in Boston from Guatemala with \$50 in her pocket and a sick child in her arms. She sought treatment for cystic fibrosis for her daughter at Boston Children's Hospital. It took the Merida family five years to obtain green cards.

In 2014, Mariana and her husband had already been eligible for U.S. citizenship for three years, but had not applied. Mariana saw a Facebook post and contacted Project Citizenship, which helped them through the process.

Mariana became a citizen three days before her oldest son, Jose, turned 18, allowing him to automatically become a U.S. citizen, just in time for college financial aid applications.

Thanks to the help of PC, six members of the Merida family have achieved U.S. citizenship. Ana and Sebastian attend Brookline High School. Jose is studying business at Framingham State University and is the first in his family to attend college.



PROGRAM PERFORMANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

Below is a summary of the key measures that Project Citizenship tracks to demonstrate progress, create internal accountability, apply lessons learned, and adjust strategy as necessary. Note: Project Citizenship has committed funding of \$300,000 for each of fiscal years 2018 and 2019, leaving \$1.4M in needed investment over the next two years.

	FY 2017	FY 2018 (P)	FY 2019 (P)
PROGRAM PERFORMANCE			
Number of citizenship applications filed	1,998	3,009	4,993
Applications filed by partner organizations	2,405	3,015	4,011
Number of volunteer hours	3,996	6,024	9,986
Number of law firms engaged	8	10	12
ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH/CAPACITY-BUILDING			
Number of full-time equivalent employees	3.5	7	9
Board members	11	13	15
Fundraising plan	Implement	Revise/ Implement	Implement
Total revenue	\$617,995	\$700,000	\$1.3M

SOCIAL IMPACT

Through its extensive volunteer training, partnerships, and workshops, Project Citizenship works to ensure that all eligible immigrants are given the tools they need to apply for and obtain U.S. citizenship. Below are seven indicators that Project Citizenship will track to measure its progress as it works to ensure that all eligible immigrants can obtain citizenship.

Social Impact Indicators marked below with (*) will be tracked with the help of SIF partner, the Analysis Group, by November 2017.

INDICATOR	2017 (PROJECTED)
PC applicants who become citizens	95%
Amount of money PC saves clients in filing fees	\$1.1M
Amount of money PC saves clients in legal fees	\$3.6M
Number of children who automatically derive citizenship with PC's assistance	144
Clients who express satisfaction with PC's services	100%
New citizens who feel safer due to citizenship(*)	TBD
New citizens who register to vote and who vote(*)	TBD