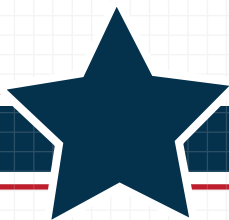


A BLUEPRINT FOR IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION



A BLUEPRINT FOR IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

NYCITIZENSHIP IN SCHOOLS

ISSUE AREAS: Citizenship, Civic Engagement, Parental Engagement, Financial Empowerment

SUMMARY:

NYCitizenship in Schools is a municipally-coordinated public-private partnership that brings legal assistance and information to immigrant parents who have children in the New York City public school system and are eligible to apply for citizenship through a series of information sessions and naturalization service events held in public high schools across New York City. Throughout the school year, eligible parents have access to free legal information and assistance from experienced volunteer attorneys to guide them through the application process. For those unable to pay the \$680 naturalization application fee there are fee waiver applications, free financial counseling and low-interest microloans available.

OBJECTIVES:

- + Help greater numbers of immigrant parents apply to become U.S. citizens
- + Increase visibility and accessibility of affordable, high-quality immigration legal assistance
- + Connect immigrants with neighborhood-based financial institutions to help them establish credit, open bank accounts and learn about other mainstream financial services that are available
- + Increase immigrant parent involvement in education by providing immigration-related services for parents in schools

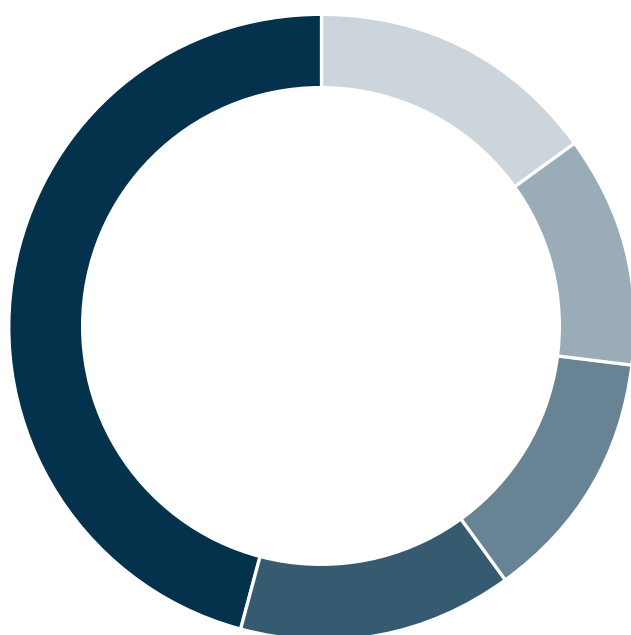
"Naturalization is the most important act that a legal immigrant undertakes in the process of becoming an American."

- U.S. COMMISSION ON IMMIGRATION REFORM, 1997

BACKGROUND

Every year, hundreds of thousands of immigrants across the country decide to apply for U.S. citizenship. This decision is symbolic in many ways, but it is also practical: In addition to earning new rights and privileges, naturalized citizens also earn higher wages, have access to better employment opportunities and experience higher rates of homeownership, on average.¹ In the aggregate, these benefits have huge economic implications for localities with significant numbers of residents eligible to become citizens, because they lead to increased tax revenue, buying power and economic stability. Researchers at the Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration at the University of Southern California estimate that if the 8.5 million people in the United States eligible to become citizens successfully completed the naturalization process, the spending generated by their increase in wages would amount to an increase in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of anywhere from \$37 billion to \$52 billion over the next decade.²

Although immigration is administered at the federal level, local governments stand to benefit tremendously from higher rates of naturalization and should consider strategies for promoting or facilitating this process. While many immigrants choose to apply for citizenship on their own, there are currently millions of eligible non-citizens around the country who have yet to take this step. Although naturalization is a fundamental component of immigrant integration, the process of applying to become a citizen is complex and expensive, and as a result many individuals who are eligible to apply delay beginning this process for years, sometimes decades.³ Understanding why eligible non-citizens choose not to naturalize can help inform initiatives aimed at promoting or facilitating the naturalization process.



HOW LONG HAVE YOU HAD A GREENCARD AT THE TIME OF ATTENDING THE NYC CITIZENSHIP EVENT?

- Less than 4 years and 9 months
- 4 years and 9 months - 5 years
- 6 - 7 years
- 8 - 10 years
- More than 10 years

*Results from a survey of immigrant New Yorkers participating in NYC Citizenship events conducted by the NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs

COMMON CHALLENGES:

According to a significant body of research, three primary barriers account for much of the disparity between the number of eligible immigrants and the number who successfully become citizens.

Lack of information about the naturalization process.

U.S. immigration law is complex, and the path to citizenship involves a detailed analysis of eligibility and lots of paperwork. In a survey conducted by the New York City Mayor's Office:

37.5% of respondents reported that the reason they had not applied was because they didn't know where to get information about the naturalization process

87.1% of respondents were not aware of the availability of free naturalization application assistance (provided by the CUNY Citizenship Now! program) prior to being invited to participate in NYCitizenship

Lack of access to affordable, quality immigration legal assistance.

Given the complexity of the naturalization application and the possibility for errors to result in delays or denial, accessing legal assistance when applying for citizenship is advisable. However, legal fees add up, and low-cost, qualified immigration attorneys may be difficult to find. Even in New York, which has the second highest number of attorneys per capita, it is estimated that there may be only one immigration attorney for every 10,000 residents. Unmet demand for legal assistance may also result in the proliferation of fraudulent immigration service providers, who often charge exorbitant fees in return for poor and potentially harmful services.

Lack of financial means to pay the fee for citizenship.

Over the past decade, the fee for citizenship has increased dramatically—by more than 300 percent—to its current total of \$680. This fee increase has dampened naturalization rates across the U.S., and many individuals report that the cost of applying is a reason they have chosen not to submit applications. In a survey conducted by the New York City Mayor's Office:

48.8% of respondents indicated that the high cost of the application fee was a reason they had not previously applied

50.0% of those who had successfully completed applications but had yet to submit indicated that the \$680 fee was a deterrent to doing so

In order to effectively address these challenges and increase the rates at which individuals apply for citizenship, naturalization programs should include components that respond to the need for education about the naturalization process, as well as legal and financial assistance. This blueprint for NYCitizenship shows how the program is designed to address the informational, legal, and financial challenges confronting Lawful Permanent Residents eligible to become citizens in New York City, while specifically targeting and responding to the needs of public school parents.

NYCITIZENSHIP IN SCHOOLS

With generous support from Citi Community Development, NYCitizenship in Schools launched in September 2012 to help more New York City immigrant parents become U.S. citizens. The program design is unique: the City of New York is the first municipality in the country to launch a naturalization initiative that includes access to low-interest microloans and financial counseling as a method for paying the \$680 USCIS naturalization application fee. Furthermore, the program is school-based, which provides a new opportunity for immigrant parents to connect with staff and services in their child's school building, incentivizing formal engagement in the education of their child.

COMPONENTS:

- + Information sessions to provide education about the naturalization process
- + Service events to provide free one-on-one legal assistance with the citizenship and fee waiver applications
- + \$680 citizenship microloans and free one-on-one financial counseling to help parents pay the USCIS naturalization application fee and build financial stability

Strategic inter-agency collaboration among the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, the New York City Department of Education, the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs' Office of Financial Empowerment and the City University of New York, along with two partnering community development credit unions, created a more comprehensive, unified service delivery model for parents while simultaneously increasing City agencies' access to a key constituency.

NYCitizenship in Schools Partner Entities



Community Development



Information Sessions

Selected high schools agree to host information sessions for parents interested in the program. This addresses multiple challenges by providing a basic overview of the naturalization process to immigrant parents, creating a forum for questions about immigration-related issues (even if not directly related to naturalization) and clarifying who should register for the program, based on eligibility requirements. Multilingual City employees volunteering their language skills also attend to provide interpretation assistance, as needed.

INFORMATION SESSION PARTNER ENTITIES AND ROLES



Introduction and overview. NYC Citizenship program coordinator introduces parents to mission and role of MOIA and provides basic overview of NYC Citizenship In Schools program.

Information about process. Coordinator provides information about naturalization—eligibility requirements, benefits, fees and process—as well as an overview of financial assistance services available through the NYC Office of Financial Empowerment and local credit unions.

Registration and referrals. Coordinator walks parents through the registration process and refers parents with questions about immigration legal issues to qualified service providers.



Space. School administration agrees to host information session and identifies appropriate space.

Recruitment. School advertises NYC Citizenship information session in the school building, sends letters and makes phone calls home to alert parents to the opportunity.



Marketing and technical assistance. Citi Community Development created multi-lingual collateral with information about NYC Citizenship and the requirements for naturalization, which is used to promote the program and market the service to eligible parents.

FIND YOUR AMERICAN VOICE

Citi Community Development provided technical assistance with the NYC Citizenship In Schools marketing campaign and developed promotional materials to inform parents about the opportunity and requirements for naturalization.



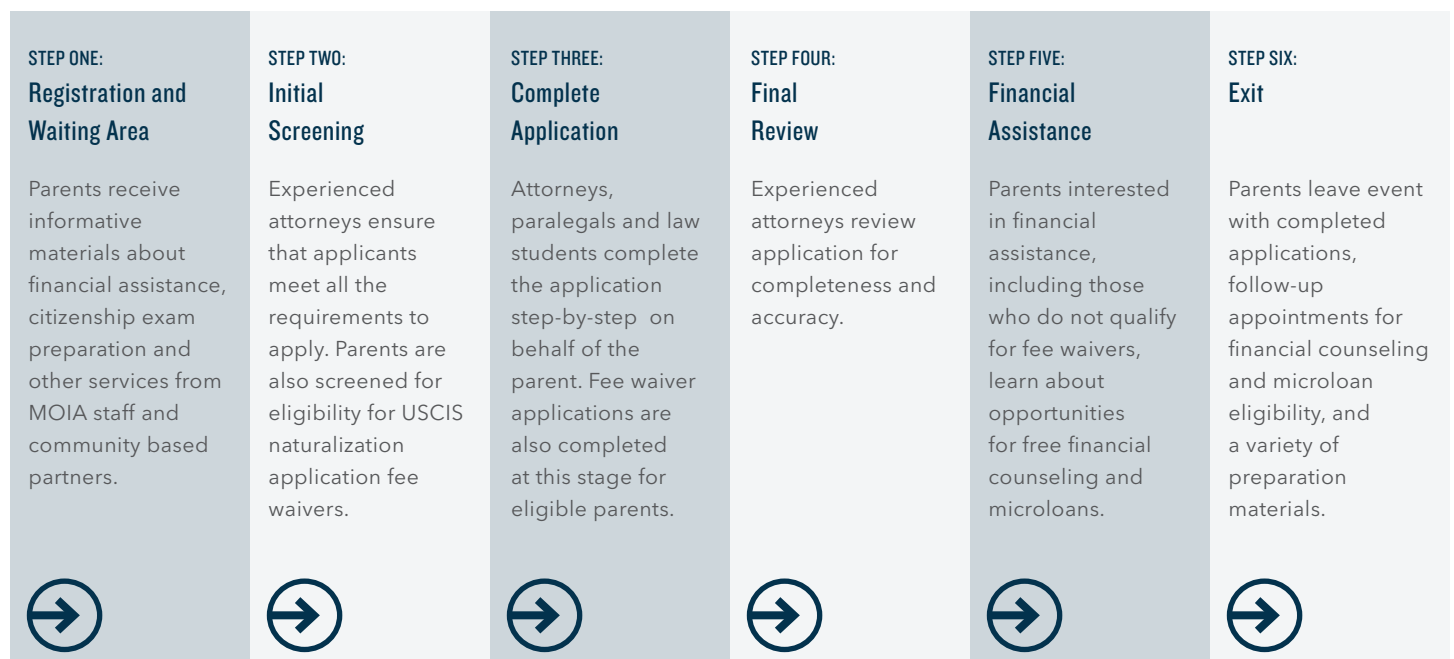
"Our Administration is determined to help ensure that all immigrants who want to become citizens have that opportunity. The enterprise and hard work of immigrants helped make our country great. They create jobs and invest in our City, so we will continue to invest in them by working even harder to help those who are here and are determined to work hard, have the opportunity to stay and help us build a better city and nation."

- NEW YORK CITY MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG

Naturalization Service Events

After parents have had an opportunity to attend information sessions, they are invited to register for naturalization service events, which help participants through the application process, step by step. These events make up the primary component of the initiative and are offered citywide throughout the school year to provide the opportunity for eligible immigrant parents to sit with trained and experienced attorneys and legal volunteers to ensure the successful completion of their applications.

SERVICE EVENT PROCESS



NATURALIZATION SERVICE EVENT PARTNER ENTITIES AND ROLES



Outreach. MOIA staff visit target neighborhoods to engage community leaders, elected officials, parent coordinators in schools and other key community members to promote the service. Messages are also disseminated through ethnic media outlets.

Pre-screening and registration. MOIA staff pre-screen parents for basic eligibility and register them for the event.

Event planning and oversight. Program coordinator works with school staff and CUNY Citizenship Now! to schedule and plan the events.

On-going case management. A designated staff member follows up with parents after the service event to help troubleshoot any further issues and ensure the process is successfully completed.



Space. School administration agrees to host naturalization service event and identifies appropriate space.

Recruitment. School advertises NYCitizenship service event in the school building, sends backpack letters and makes phone calls home to alert parents to the opportunity.



Volunteer recruitment and training. CUNY staff help recruit legal volunteers (attorneys, paralegals and law students) and provide basic immigration law training.

Legal expertise and supervision. Experienced immigration attorneys ensure the delivery of high-quality immigration legal assistance.

Event planning and coordination. CUNY staff help with volunteer management, event flow and service delivery on the day of the event.

"Our 1.1 million students, and their families come from every nation on earth, speaking over 180 different languages, creating the most globally-diverse school system in the nation, if not the world. NYCitizenship will build on our efforts to make immigrant families feel welcome in their school communities, and help them achieve their dream of becoming U.S. citizens."

- DENNIS WALCOTT, CHANCELLOR, NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Financial Counseling and Microloans

Parents who do not qualify for fee waivers but who may still need financial assistance in order to pay the \$680 citizenship fee have the option of scheduling an appointment with a financial counselor at a New York City Financial Empowerment Center. Financial Empowerment Centers, staffed by financial counselors, provide free financial assessments to help parents better understand their financial situation, identify issues such as poor credit history and determine whether parents interested in the citizenship microloan opportunity are ready to apply.

For those who qualify for microloans, one of the partnering credit unions will issue a \$680 check directly to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and then work with the parent over the next 6 to 12 months to pay off the loan in small installments. For parents who either do not qualify or who are not interested in the microloan opportunity, financial counselors will explore other possibilities, such as opening checking or savings accounts and budgeting to create a plan for paying the citizenship fee and saving for other important milestones—such as first time homeownership or financing their child’s higher education.

MICROLOAN AND FINANCIAL COUNSELING PARTNER ENTITIES AND ROLES



Information about financial assistance. MOIA staff members provide parents with a basic overview of the services available through the Financial Empowerment Center and credit union network.

Referrals and case management. MOIA staff members help parents make appointments for financial counseling and help them troubleshoot the financial assistance and microloan process.



Schedule appointments. The Office of Financial Empowerment’s call center schedules appointments for parents at Financial Empowerment Center sites around the city.

Oversee Financial Empowerment Centers. OFE staff oversee the delivery of high-quality financial counseling services around New York City.

Financial assessments. Financial counselors at the centers conduct financial health assessments to help parents understand their financial situation and plan for the future.



Microloan applications. Staff from credit unions assess parents’ eligibility for the citizenship loan product and issue checks to the USCIS for parents who successfully apply.

Additional financial services. Credit union staff can provide a range of services to families, dependent upon their needs, such as loan products for small businesses and homeownership and college access advising programs for students.



DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE NATURALIZATION INITIATIVE

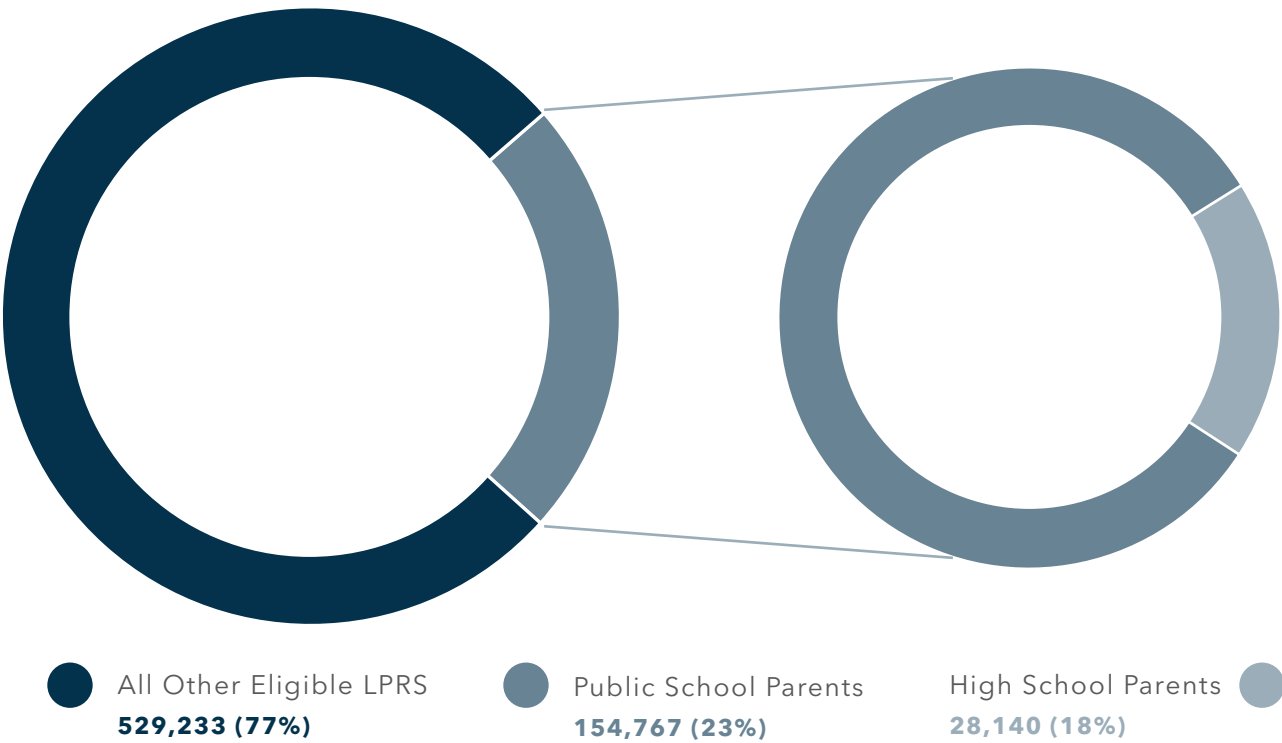
STEP ONE >

IDENTIFY TARGET AUDIENCE

New York City is home to nearly 700,000 non-citizens who are currently eligible to apply for U.S. citizenship. This is a compelling figure, and one of the primary reasons why it makes sense for the City of New York to make a strong commitment to promoting and facilitating naturalization. At the same time, it presents a need to delve more deeply into population data so that limited resources can be targeted to the communities in greatest need of assistance. For NYCitizenship in Schools, the target audience is immigrant parents with children in the City's public school system, with added focus on parents of high school students in order to reach and assist them as they are preparing their children for college and career success.

LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENTS (LPRS)
ELIGIBLE TO NATURALIZE IN NYC
TOTAL: 684,000

PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENTS ELIGIBLE
TO NATURALIZE IN NYC
TOTAL: 154,767



Source: American Community Survey 2010, Population Division, NYC Department of City Planning

This audience was selected for a variety of reasons:

- + The City is committed to ensuring that parents have access to the resources they need to support their families and help their children grow and succeed.
- + Parental involvement in education is an Administration priority and a key factor in promoting academic achievement among children.
- + Schools can provide ready access to parents through outreach, helping identify interested parents and inviting them to apply.
- + The more than 150,000 immigrant parents eligible to naturalize represent a large sub-set of the total number of immigrants eligible to naturalize across the City.
- + Focusing on this population has the added benefit of creating the opportunity for LPR students to derive citizenship from their parents before the age of 18. Attaining citizenship prior to high school graduation positions students for greater success in securing financial aid for college and/or joining the workforce.



DETERMINE HOW MANY RESIDENTS MAY BE ELIGIBLE TO NATURALIZE

The Department of Homeland Security Office of Immigration Statistics provides state-level data on the numbers of non-citizens and estimates how many may be eligible to apply for citizenship. Demographic information is also available through the American Community Survey. Based on this information, demographers at the New York City Department of City Planning were able to run a custom analysis to determine how many individuals in NYC fit this profile. Cities may also engage U.S. Census State Data Centers as well as universities for assistance with sophisticated data analysis in identifying target audience.



SELECT TARGET AUDIENCE OR COMMUNITIES

The City of New York is committed to supporting immigrant parents and families, and targeting parents provides an opportunity for increased return on investment due to the fact that non-citizen children may be able to derive citizenship from their parents.

NATURALIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Immigrants age 18 and older are currently eligible for naturalization only if they have met the following requirements:

- + Lived in the U.S. as a lawful permanent resident for at least 5 years, or 3 years if married to and living with a U.S. citizen.
- + Have been physically present in the United States for at least half of the 5 (or 3) years.
- + Have resided for at least 3 months in the state where individual will apply for naturalization.
- + Be of good moral character and loyal to the U.S.
- + Have basic knowledge and understanding of the history, government structure and the Constitution of the U.S.
- + Be able to read, write, speak and understand basic English
- + Be willing to take an oath of allegiance to the U.S.



ESTIMATING THE ELIGIBLE POPULATION FOR NYCITIZENSHIP IN SCHOOLS:

Demographic analysis was performed by staff at the Population Division of the Department of City Planning

STEP ONE: Start with the three year data (2008-2010) from the American Community Survey and calculate the number of noncitizen parents with a least one child in public school. Determine year of arrival in order to estimate eligibility to naturalize.

STEP TWO: Use estimates from Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for New York State to determine share of noncitizen population that is unauthorized (28.8 percent) and therefore not eligible to naturalize and remove this number from total.

STEP THREE: Put a band of plus or minus 10,000 around the estimate to emphasize the error involved in this estimate.

ASSUMPTIONS AND CAVEATS:

Assume that persons who arrived before 2007 would have the 5 year residency rule in order to naturalize and therefore be eligible for this program. However, certain immigrants, such as spouses of U.S. citizens, need only wait for three years. By assuming five years for everyone, the estimate of eligible parents will be slightly understated.

Assume that the New York City distribution of the noncitizen population by legal status is the same distribution as New York State. However, if New York City has fewer unauthorized immigrants as a proportion of the total population than New York State, the estimate of the number of parents will be overstated.

STEP TWO >

IDENTIFY COMMON BARRIERS TO NATURALIZATION

Identifying existing barriers or challenges immigrants face in completing the naturalization process is key to developing an effective initiative. The primary barriers identified by MOIA through available research and the use of surveys were: lack of information about the naturalization process, lack of access to quality, affordable immigration legal assistance, and the high application fee that may make naturalization unappealing or beyond reach. However, different communities may experience these barriers in different ways, and uncovering this information will help you tailor a program that most effectively meets the needs of your constituents.



REVIEW THE LITERATURE

There is a large and growing body of literature on naturalization, citizenship and immigrant civic engagement. Organizations like the Migration Policy Institute (MPI), the University of Southern California Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration, and the Brookings Institution provide detailed reports and analysis that may help guide the development of targeted naturalization initiatives.



CONDUCT PRIMARY RESEARCH

In addition to reviewing available data and analysis, conducting surveys and focus groups and employing other methods of research may reveal additional insight into the underlying motivations and challenges facing your city's immigrant communities with respect to citizenship.

The basic components of a naturalization initiative should be designed to meet the needs of your target population and address challenges they face in applying to become U.S. citizens



INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

In order to address the reported lack of information and understanding of the complex naturalization process, MOIA built information sessions and a public education campaign into the rollout of NYCitizenship in Schools. Citi Community Development provided technical assistance with the marketing campaign and development of promotional materials.



LEGAL ASSISTANCE

To address the lack of access to quality, affordable legal assistance, MOIA partnered with CUNY Citizenship Now! to recruit and train additional pro bono attorneys, paralegals and law students, helping to introduce new legal professionals to immigration work and providing free legal services to a larger number of immigrants. CUNY Citizenship Now! is the largest university-based citizenship and immigration law service provider in the United States, with more than a decade of experience in providing free, high-quality and confidential immigration legal assistance.



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Providing access to financial assistance serves multiple interests. First, helping parents apply for fee waivers from the USCIS or \$680 microloans made available through credit unions is a way to ensure that the cost of the naturalization application is not a barrier to becoming a citizen. Second, connecting immigrants with mainstream financial services, such as loan products and bank accounts, is a way to help them establish and build a financial identity in the United States. Making use of mainstream financial services can help individuals with their financial goals and plans for the future. For example, having a good credit score is important for many reasons: poor credit can prevent individuals from taking out loans to grow their businesses or buy homes, and it can also interfere with their ability to secure employment.



CITIZENSHIP EXAM AND INTERVIEW PREPARATION AND ESL COURSES

USCIS has free materials to help individuals prepare for the citizenship exam and interview, and these materials are provided to all participants in the NYCitizenship In Schools initiative. Additionally, community based organizations that offer services to immigrants, such as civics and ESL courses, are invited to meet with parents at service events to help them connect with these opportunities.

Inter-agency collaboration and partnership with community institutions is critical to the execution of the various components of NYCitizenship. In New York City, partner entities included the public school system, a university-based immigration legal service provider, the City's financial empowerment center network, and two local community development credit unions.



IDENTIFY WHERE PROGRAM WILL BE ADMINISTERED

Public high schools were a natural fit for NYCitizenship in Schools because they provided the space needed for large-scale service events and also served the purpose of building a stronger connection between parents and their child's educational institution. Other possibilities include public libraries, community based organizations, churches or community centers.

Items to consider:

- + Space that allows room for participants to have confidential conversations with legal professionals about their particular immigration case.
- + Waiting area that can be used to facilitate public education – either through the distribution of educational materials or through video presentations.



DECIDE HOW LEGAL SERVICES WILL BE ADMINISTERED

Depending on the program's size and budget, it may be possible to hire attorneys year-round to handle the cases. NYCitizenship in Schools relies on the City University of New York (CUNY) Citizenship Now! program to provide legal expertise and assist with the recruitment, training and management of legal volunteers.

Items to consider:

- + Quality control and oversight for the provision of legal services is essential.
- + Potential partners can include corporate law firms or local bar associations as good resources for securing pro bono attorneys to assist with naturalization work. Although the application itself is complex, naturalization is a good match for pro bono attorneys because it provides a short-term—possibly one-time interaction—with a client, as opposed to a case that requires on-going representation.
- + Law schools in your city may have immigration law or other clinics interested in giving students practical work experience. Introducing law students to immigration law opportunities under the supervision of a qualified attorney or clinical law professor is a smart way to cultivate the network of legal service providers in your city who have experience with and interest in immigration law.

UNLAWFUL IMMIGRATION SERVICE PROVIDERS AND NOTARIO FRAUD

In some Spanish-speaking countries, a *notario público* is a trained legal advisor but in the United States, a notary public is not. Notarios and other immigration service providers may attempt to take advantage of immigrants hoping to become U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents, preying on their hopes and aspirations while charging exorbitant fees for services they are not authorized to provide. Pairing free legal assistance with public education about the dangers of fraudulent immigration service providers and “notarios” is a way to provide quality services while protecting immigrant consumers from harm.

The New York City Department of Consumer Affairs, charged with protecting consumers from fraud and cracking down on unlawful immigrant services providers, created a multi-lingual Immigration Service Provider Consumer Guide to educate immigrant residents about this harmful practice.



EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROVIDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Although fee waivers do exist for individuals at very low income levels, the \$680 naturalization application fee can present a significant hurdle to the application process, even for families above a low-to-moderate income threshold. Creating a microloan product is one way to both address the need for financial assistance and create an opportunity for immigrants to begin building a financial identity in the U.S.

- + **Identify** possible partner lending institutions. Lending institutions could be banks, credit unions, or other local financial institutions. Selecting financial institutions that are neighborhood-based and have existing ties with immigrant communities, as well as the cultural and linguistic competency to work with the target audience, will lead to the best outcomes.
- + **Consider** ideal loan product terms. Low-interest loans with flexible terms that accommodate individuals with varying levels of credit history and financial stability is important. Recent immigrants may have had less time to build a financial identity in the United States and this product should serve as an opportunity for them to do that.
- + **Convene** financial institutions to discuss possible terms. Inviting multiple financial institutions to the table will help you gauge their interest in the program and the new loan product and will also provide an opportunity for you to hear which loan terms and other variables are reasonable and where there is room for flexibility.
- + **Select** partners through a Request for Proposals (RFP) or other competitive process. Once you have decided on your ideal terms, invite financial institutions to submit ideas about what they can offer and see which institutions most closely align with your target goals.
- + **Negotiate** with selected partners to develop a uniform product. If multiple financial institutions are selected, you may want to work with them to develop a financial product that is uniform across institutions so that all participants have access to the same opportunity, regardless of which financial institution they choose to work with. Conversely, trying out different models can provide a chance to see which product is most effective.

Even if you don't choose to create a microloan product, working with banks and other lending institutions to provide financial counseling and assistance is a way to both overcome the financial hurdle to applying for citizenship and prepare immigrants to invest in their future. Simple outcomes like opening a checking or savings account and working with a financial counselor to plan and save can lead to tremendous benefits over the long term.

Supporting naturalization efforts in your city does not have to mean creating a brand new, expensive program on an already tight budget. Identify your city's existing assets and see what can be leveraged to help more immigrants become American citizens. Possible funders should be identified by looking at interest areas that align with the unique aspects of your program, and the proposal should also highlight the economic benefits of citizenship as a way to play up the possible return on investment.

- + **Staff and time.** City staff members, including staff from the Mayor's Office and the Department of Education, were critical to the development and implementation of NYCitizenship in Schools. Staff members with language skills were also able to assist with the translation of documents and interpretation for participating parents.
- + **Physical space.** NYCitizenship in Schools relies heavily on the use of existing space available in school buildings around the city. Similar initiatives rely on space in libraries and community based organizations.
- + **Legal expertise.** Although lawyers with experience in immigration law are critical to the initiative's success, many law firms and law schools have provided legal volunteers who were able to maximize the program's reach and ability to assist additional immigrant parents.
- + **Financial counseling.** The New York City Department of Consumer Affairs' Office of Financial Empowerment has a network of Financial Empowerment Centers around the city that exist to provide free financial counseling services to New Yorkers. Through support from Bloomberg Philanthropies, many other cities are part of the national Cities for Financial Empowerment Coalition and the CFE Fund's network and may be able to leverage similar support for their cities immigrant communities.
- + **Lending institutions.** Financial institutions such as banks and credit unions will benefit from an influx of new customers or access to new markets, which increases the likelihood that they will be able and willing to create or adapt financial products to support immigrants applying for citizenship.

"Through our support for NYCitizenship in Schools, Citi is committed to working with community and public partners to assist eligible, aspiring citizens in establishing both a national identity and a financial identity, which is essential to fully realizing their American dream. Programs like NYCitizenship in Schools provide access to legal advice and financial resources that can lead to expanded education, employment and asset-building opportunities. Citi Community Development's financial inclusion efforts aim to ensure that all families have access to appropriate financial services so they can achieve their long-term financial goals."

- ROBERT ANNIBALE, GLOBAL DIRECTOR OF MICROFINANCE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, CITI

STEP SIX >

EXPLORE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Initiatives like NYCitizenship In Schools provide great opportunities to leverage public-private partnerships to support work with immigrant communities. Naturalization initiatives provide a unique opportunity to approach funders from a variety of angles, depending on their areas of interest and expertise: immigrant issues, civic engagement, community development, financial empowerment, combating poverty, parental engagement, legal services and so on.

Possible funders should be identified by looking at interest areas that align with the unique aspects of your program, and the proposal should also highlight the economic benefits of citizenship as a way to advertise the potential returns on investment.

Support for NYCitizenship was generously provided by Citi Community Development, in part due to the initiative's focus on the creative use of microfinance to address financial limitations for low- and moderate-income immigrant families. Citi Community Development provided support to Casa de Maryland for a similar model through their Citizenship Maryland initiative.

STEP SEVEN >

ESTABLISH METRICS TO MEASURE IMPACT

Measuring programmatic success is key to understanding which aspects of the program are effective and identifying on-going challenges. For a naturalization initiative, the primary goal is to help individuals become U.S. citizens, but there are a variety of other outcomes that may demonstrate success and return on investment. For NYCitizenship, the primary objectives were to help immigrant parents naturalize and begin to develop financial stability in the United States. The following metrics were chosen to assess the program's impact vis-à-vis these goals and provide examples of measurements that could be considered in the design and implementation of a similar program.

Sample metrics used for NYCitizenship:

- + Number of parents who successfully complete naturalization applications
- + Number of parents who receive financial counseling, apply for fee waivers, take out microloans or access other financial products
- + Number of parents who successfully submit applications for citizenship

ENDNOTES

1. The Economic Value of Citizenship for Immigrants in the United States, Migration Policy Institute, September 2012
2. Citizen Gain: The Economic Benefits of Naturalization for Immigrants and the Economy, Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration, University of Southern California, December 2012

CITIES FOR IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION aims to support the expansion of programs and policies that facilitate the economic, civic and cultural integration of immigrants across the United States. The NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) has provided and will continue to provide technical assistance and guidance to other municipalities in their efforts to support immigrant communities and encourages local governments to network and share best practices in this important field.

Blueprints for Immigrant Integration, as well as additional tools and resources, are available on nyc.gov/integration and will continue to grow over the coming months. Please feel free to write us and share feedback by contacting integration@cityhall.nyc.gov.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work highlighted in this document was made possible with the support and guidance of many talented colleagues in New York City and across the United States. The NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs would like to thank Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg for his visionary leadership on immigration, as well as our partner agencies, organizations, and funders, who share our commitment to supporting and investing in the well-being of immigrant New Yorkers.

MOIA wishes to thank the following partners: Citi Community Development, for their innovative corporate leadership in the field of immigrant integration and their generous support of NYC Citizenship In Schools; City University of New York and the great staff at CUNY Citizenship Now!, who provide free, high-quality immigration legal assistance to thousands of New Yorkers every year; NYC Department of Consumer Affairs' Office of Financial Empowerment, who provided technical assistance with the development of the citizenship loan and oversee a network of Financial Empowerment Centers that offer free financial counseling to thousands of New Yorkers year-round; NYC Department of Education, including many dedicated school principals, administrators and teachers across the city whose close partnership made it possible to provide direct services to immigrant families; East River Development Alliance and the Neighborhood Trust Federal Credit Union, who provide expert financial counseling and access to a range of financial products and services; CASA de Maryland, whose innovative Citizenship Maryland program was among the first to make use of microloans for citizenship and inspired the development of NYC Citizenship In Schools.

Writing/Editing: Daniel Wallace, Fatima Shama, Matilde Roman, Kraig Cook, Nazli Parvizi, Monica Tavares

Design: Aaron Kinnari **Printer:** (add)ventures

Cities for Immigrant Integration and the Blueprints for Immigrant Integration were made possible with support from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. The opinions and views of the authors do not necessarily state or reflect those of the Fund.

Support for printing of the Blueprints for Immigrant Integration was generously provided by Citi Community Development.

The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, a nonprofit dedicated to innovative public-private partnerships, has provided support for the Blueprints for Immigrant Integration.

Community Development



**Office of
Immigrant Affairs**
Fatima Shama
Commissioner



Rockefeller Brothers Fund
Philanthropy for an Interdependent World