



## **Proposal for a National Public Service Communications Campaign on Immigration**

Welcoming America, Welcome.US, and the American Immigration Council in partnership with the Ad Council seek funding to support a first-of-its-kind, national, fully integrated communications campaign that will work to change American attitudes towards immigration over the long-term. This will be done through a campaign that will seed and grow a new “social norm” around immigration that emphasizes inclusion and welcoming over exclusion and resentment.

### **The Campaign Objective**

The objective of a national communications campaign on immigration is to shift current attitudes and behaviors of the target audience by familiarizing them and creating opportunities for engagement with immigrants. The goal is to move the target audience from hostility-to-tolerance-to-embracing immigrants over time. The comprehensive communications campaign will serve as a first step in building awareness and shifting perceptions, and our civic engagement partners will then extend the research-based campaign message further by creating opportunities for more meaningful, personal contact. This campaign will ultimately lead to greater empathy, familiarity, and acceptance of immigrants over time, ultimately resulting in a new social norm.

While this effort will be launched as a fully integrated communications campaign with the Ad Council, the goals will be advanced further by programmatic work being done by civic-minded groups whose membership is made up of the target audience members, as well as corporations that value diversity and inclusion and commit to partnering with the campaign.

This national campaign is necessary in order to help shift current perceptions and encourage a culture of acceptance and inclusion. In addition, it will lay the foundation for future positive discourse in response to anti-immigrant messaging. The campaign will provide the target audience with meaningful, research-based messaging through multimedia advertisements as well as online and offline engagement opportunities.

This campaign will launch at a critical time (likely late 2018). It will provide an affirming alternative to the harsh actions and rhetoric on immigration that fill the news cycle and our social media channels. A comprehensive exploratory research process will determine the specific target audience for this campaign, and creative concept testing will gauge message clarity, resonance and motivation among the target audience. Additionally, the campaign assets and messaging will be tracked overtime to measure exposure, engagement and shifts in awareness and attitudes among the target.

### **Why it is Important/Why Now**

One quarter of American children are immigrants or live in a family of immigrants, and immigrants represent nearly one-in-five American workers, as well as a significant and growing proportion of the consumer market. Yet in the current climate, these newcomers are receiving the message that they are unwelcome and are being excluded from the fabric of communities. This not only contradicts the most basic of American values, but also threatens our economy as families, workers, and new business owners become less able to put down roots, build their education and careers, and invest in their adopted hometowns.

Research has shown that those who are exposed to immigrants tend to have more favorable views of them. However, the fact is that in many small towns and non-traditional immigrant receiving communities immigrants face the challenges of not only being newcomers, but being in a place where newcomers can be viewed with skepticism. Immigrants who settle in traditional immigrant receiving communities do not experience the same level of unwelcome.

Additionally, many Americans from the cities and towns that have felt the economic pinch of the changing economy have, in some cases, made immigrants the scapegoats for their concerns. This campaign seeks to address this head-on by creating the encounters and personal experiences necessary to bring neighbors together to increase understanding and shift attitudes.

Immigration is a longstanding issue, and the next few years promise to be difficult. The public will witness a drastic uptick in immigration enforcement actions (arrests, raids, deportations, etc.). The negative consequences of these actions, such as family separation and economic interruptions, will be felt nationwide. At the same time, many of our country's economic challenges will continue.

In order to seize the opportunity to engage those who are unsure of how to respond to the harsh narrative, and encourage more productive conversations, we need a broad national communications campaign that provides an alternative. We must remind Americans of our values and give them opportunities and messages to use to launch more productive discussions.

### **The Target Audience**

The target audience will be identified following exploratory research. Preliminary thinking suggests that the targeted group may include those Americans living in communities experiencing rapid demographic change and/or non-traditional immigrant-receiving communities. These could include communities with lagging economies that are new to immigrants and refugees to communities with little multicultural exposure. We will further target the campaign towards individuals in these communities who are the best conduits for change.

### **The Organizations behind the Campaign**

Welcoming America, Welcome.US, and the American Immigration Council have received approval by the Ad Council Executive Committee of their Board to begin fundraising for a national fully integrated communications campaign. Much of the work of these three non-partisan organizations is focused on highlighting the positive contributions of immigration, as well as working at the forefront of integration and inclusion at the community level. The three groups are committed to working together to raise the necessary funds and serve as the Ad Council's non-profit partners throughout the process.

## **About the Sponsors**

### **American Immigration Council**

The American Immigration Council is a powerful voice in promoting laws, policies, and attitudes that honor our proud history as a nation of immigrants. Through research and policy analysis, litigation and communications, and international exchange, the Council seeks to shape a twenty-first century vision of the American immigrant experience.

### **Welcoming America**

Welcoming America helps local governments and nonprofit organizations to build a welcoming infrastructure in more than 100 communities across the United States. Their unique local approach goes beyond a single program or service to work with institutions across the community to reduce the barriers that immigrants face to fully participating and build bridges between newcomers and long-time residents.

### **Welcome.US**

Welcome.us celebrates the countless contributions made by immigrants to our communities, our economy, our culture, and our collective American identity. Welcome.us coordinates Immigrant Heritage Month every June to honor the ways in which America and the immigrants who have built our country are linked in a shared, productive history. Welcome.us runs "I Am An Immigrant," an ongoing public awareness campaign to encourage Americans to share stories of their families' immigrant heritage and what it means to be an immigrant in America. Learn more by visiting [IAmAnImmigrant.com](http://IAmAnImmigrant.com).

### **About the Ad Council**

The Ad Council brings together the most creative minds in advertising and media to address the most worthy causes. Its innovative, pro bono social good campaigns raise awareness. They inspire action. They save lives. To learn more, visit [www.adcouncil.org](http://www.adcouncil.org), follow the Ad Council's communities on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), and view the creative on [YouTube](#).