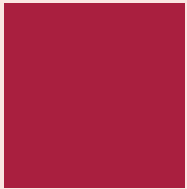
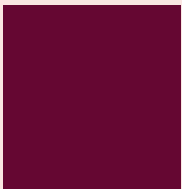
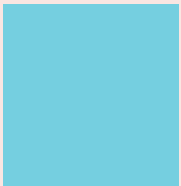
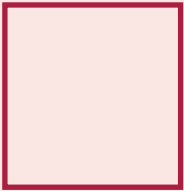




STRENGTH & PROGRESS

API Council Impact Report 2019-2023







Letter from the Executive Director

This year API Council will celebrate 10 years of collective advocacy for our diverse API communities in San Francisco. From its genesis, the Council fought for community organizations who work with underserved APIs that were too often overlooked by San Francisco power brokers and worked to protect its community from devastating budget cuts in the face of an economic downturn. By building power through the API Council, we have protected the resources and services our most vulnerable communities need, while simultaneously building solidarity and strengthening relationships within the community. We have continued to find strength in advocating as a united front to ensure all voices within the API community are heard.

Building power through the collective means that we are uniquely organized to ensure our members are well represented, have deep relationships with policymakers, and lift up smaller organizations that are asked too often to do more with fewer resources. Over the last 10 years, we have built resilience amongst our members who rose to the challenge as the pandemic changed every aspect of our lives, threatening the health and vitality of our neighborhoods. Together, we built programs that gave our businesses in key API neighborhoods the stability they needed, our community members food to nourish them, and provided protective equipment for our frontline workers to ensure they were able to work. We have worked alongside the City to create community development programs that preserve our cultural districts like Chinatown, Japantown, and SOMA Filipinas. Foundation partners like Crankstart Foundation and the Stupski Foundation have allowed our members to advance racial equity and food equity. The API Equity Fund has allowed organizations to build community centers where we can gather that the City recognizes as key investments to centering communities.

There are challenges ahead as the fiscal outlook for the City continues to worsen, but API Council continues to advance opportunities for our communities. We know that too many of our businesses are suffering and too many of our API residents are continuing to be challenged by the ever-increasing cost of living. Our promise to you at this moment is that we will continue to fight together to build a better future and to protect the heart of our communities.

In solidarity and strength,

Cally Wong

About API Council

API Council is building the voice, visibility, and influence of San Francisco's diverse Asian and Pacific Islander communities, united in the call for equity.

Formed in response to the budget crisis of the 2010s, API Council first came together to prevent proposed cuts in city funding for API-serving nonprofits. These community leaders understood the only way to secure resources for underserved APIs is through collective action.

API Council serves as the trusted, unified voice for San Francisco's API community organizations who provide direct services to thousands of the city's residents. To date, API Council has secured more than \$90 million in resources to ensure our member organizations can best serve API communities and the broader needs of San Francisco families.

The Council advocates for the needs of the API community using data and research to highlight resource gaps and the need for linguistically- and culturally-appropriate programs to serve our multi-ethnic community.



BY THE NUMBERS

API Council is made up of

57 community organizations

providing direct services in San Francisco.

Member organizations serve over

650,000

clients and over

90,000 households.

Nearly **76** percent

of the clients that API Council's member organizations serve are immigrants.

Members provide services in

19 different languages

to more than

15 different ethnic groups.

API Council's efforts have afforded member organizations greater opportunities for collaboration to solve some of San Francisco's most pressing issues. We've brokered innovative partnerships that have:

- ❖ Increased senior housing through innovative funding
- ❖ Enhanced equitable community open spaces in Chinatown and Japantown
- ❖ Supported the development and inclusion of API artists and cultural development with new funding initiatives
- ❖ Leveraged rent-relief programs to retain low-income housing
- ❖ Designed job training pilots that provided participants with a living stipend to increase financial security
- ❖ Fostered solidarity as the API Community experienced a rise in hate crimes by focusing on community-driven safety and justice
- ❖ Organized and ensured that Census 2020 counted the hardest to reach API communities
- ❖ Advocated for API inclusion in redistricting maps that centered all BIPOC communities
- ❖ Developed a food security and justice blueprint plan for increasing cultural accessibility and affordability centered on dignity and choice
- ❖ Strengthened non-profit institutional sustainability through a \$30 million API Equity Fund



Program Highlights: Building Power, Building Place, Building Community Strength

SAFETY AND JUSTICE: FOSTERING SOLIDARITY IN THE FACE OF HATE

In response to a rise in anti-Asian violence both nationally and locally, and a rise in violent incidents involving our API elders, the Council came together to build the Coalition for Community Safety and Justice (CCSJ) in 2019. The Coalition, led by Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA), Chinatown Community Development Center, Chinese Progressive Association (CPA), and Community Youth Center (CYC), was formed to address the long-standing issues of safety within the API community and to address and prevent violence, racism, and xenophobia.

A major focus for the CCSJ is ensuring culturally competent aftercare services, assistance, and referrals to other agencies for support. Understanding that the API community might be hesitant to report crimes or feel mistrust of governmental representatives, the Coalition designed direct outreach programs that were sensitive to the challenges for API victims. This work was driven by CYC who wanted to ensure people impacted by violence had contact with outreach workers in the community who could help them navigate the system while they healed from the trauma. Bilingual victim advocates helped individuals apply for victim benefits and get connected to any necessary services like legal assistance, mental health support, in-home support services, and victim assistance funds. CYC provides this in-depth case management in language and in culture, aiming to connect with victims by visiting them in the hospital or at home as soon as possible to ensure they have the support they need. The Coalition also created a need-based victim support

fund which offered immediate financial assistance to vulnerable clients, ensuring as much stability for them as possible.

In addition to this direct outreach, the Coalition also does community outreach to encourage a violence prevention model. Working with neighborhood specific organizations, the CYC's community outreach team conducts regular merchant walks to provide information about emerging issues in the area and to ensure that businesses in cultural districts know they can reach out in the event of an incident.

This community outreach also includes programming focused on embracing the diversity of San Francisco's neighborhoods in order to promote a cross-racial understanding of healing and solidarity and working to gain trust from partners. The Coalition worked with impacted Chinese and Black residents to address the root causes of violence and work collaboratively on solutions. The Coalition hosted a number of listening sessions, rallies, and events, as well as a workshop series on restorative justice for both youth and Chinese-speaking immigrant adults. The listening sessions were designed to be a forum for community members to raise concerns, confront contradictions, and reflect the different community needs around accountability, public safety, and race. CPA has also held intergenerational membership exchanges in partnership with Arab Resource and Organizing Center and Coleman Advocates. Fireside chats were held with the broader English speaking community on issues such as gun violence and alternatives to carceral

solutions. CPA also held three Cantonese language seminars to educate community members on issues such as racism, education, employment, policing, and the history of cross-racial solidarity building.

CPA continued to expand a restorative justice capacity building pilot for working class Chinese American youth members. The pilots included cohort members from CPA, Southeast Asian Development Center, and CYC and provided spaces for deep self and intergenerational healing. This is especially important for youth members as they build the skills necessary to handle conflict with peers and even parents.

CAA, along with Stop AAPI Hate, led the No Place for Hate statewide legislative campaign in response to street harassment in San Francisco and across California. No Place for Hate is a campaign aimed at improving safety in public spaces to prevent verbal harassment. CAA successfully shepherded three safety bills through the California state legislative process: AB 2448, SB 1161, and SB 434. AB 2448 created a pilot program for businesses to create safer shopping experiences for all patrons. SB 1161 and SB 434 led to the creation of a community survey tool and required the top 10 transit agencies in California, including SFMTA and BART, to collect and publish rider experiences with harassment in their transit systems data collection.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



In May 2021, Chu Fong Eng was senselessly stabbed on Market Street while waiting for the bus. Ms. Eng survived the attack but required surgery for the injuries she sustained. The Coalition's outreach team did a wellness check after the incident and connected her with In-Home Support Services seven days a week, which were provided thanks to donations to the victims and survivors fund. Launched in 2021, this crowdfunding fund shares 100% of all donations with impacted individuals and families to provide financial assistance for their immediate needs.

In addition to this, CAA and Stop AAPI Hate led the effort to expand the API Equity Budget to include \$40 million in additional funding which enables organizations to continue to provide victim support services and expand their violence intervention programs. In 2023, CAA created a local Community Safety and Justice policy platform aimed at providing evidence-based policies and practices to improve safety. Recognizing that violence is present when there is a disinvestment in communities, particularly neighborhoods that are home to Black and Brown people from low-income backgrounds, the platform refers to a holistic framework that centers economic justice, community development, and environmental conditions to inform its local community safety and justice policy recommendations.

CENSUS AND REDISTRICTING: MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES COUNT

The API Council has always been dedicated to ensuring all our community voices are counted, which is why the Council knew it had to be at the forefront of 2020 Census outreach efforts. At the height of the pandemic, API Council members made the decision to continue its grassroots direct outreach to ensure that members of the API community had information about the Census in the languages they spoke. Working with the Office of Civic Engagement and Immigrant Affairs, API Council put together a robust program to ensure harder-to-reach API residents were counted by focusing efforts in high-density regions like Chinatown, Civic Center and the Tenderloin, and the Excelsior district. The efforts culminated in a census caravan that worked to deliver outreach materials and goodie bags with gift cards to Chinatown restaurants and retailers.

Building off that outreach in 2021, API Council participated in the redistricting process for the first time since our formation. Members of the Council realized that there was no other agency or organization advocating redistricting in San Francisco with a focus on API needs. This created great risk for the redistricting process to break up API population centers in the City, effectively dampening the collective voice of our API communities.

The Council worked to collaborate across the diverse API communities, along with other communities of color, to create a map that preserved and revitalized the cultural districts and protected communities of interest. API Council identified key priorities for the redistricting process, including keeping the Tenderloin and SOMA together, keeping API cultural districts whole with Japantown staying in District 5 with the Fillmore community, and ensuring that District 3's Chinatown residents did not lose voting strength. This process created the first API Unity Map proposal which was presented to the San Francisco redistricting task force. The result was a joint effort with other communities of color to advocate for a redistricting map that would protect and center community voices and pathways in political power.



CCSJ'S IMPACT

77

AAPI victims supported in 2022 by CCSJ's victim services program (145+ total since program began)

7

Languages spoken by CCSJ victims services team (Cantonese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Thai, Mandarin, Tagalog, and Toishanese)

1500+

Residents engaged in CCDC's community safety programming at Ping Yuen and Tenderloin Family Housing



\$40,000

Distributed to victims in 2022 through CCSJ's victims services program (\$80,000 total since program began)

73

AAPI victims supported until July 2023 by CCSJ's victim services program (184 since 2020)

200,000

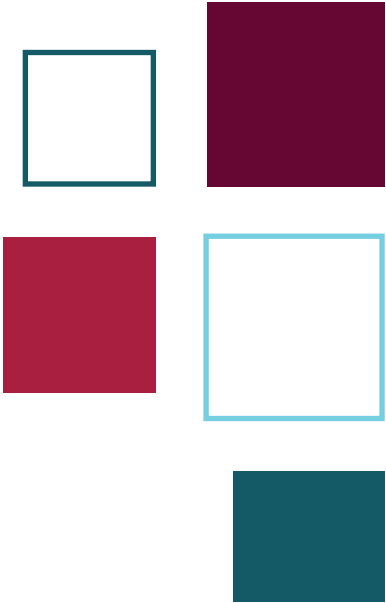
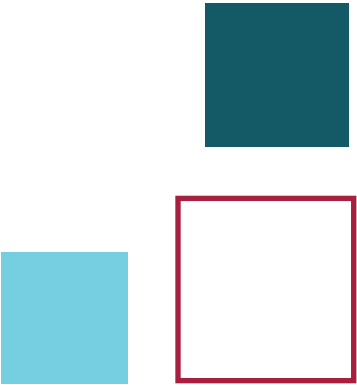
Views in 2022 of the 100+ Chinese-language articles on community safety written by CAA's Chinese Digital Engagement team

API EQUITY FUND: RESOURCING OUR COMMUNITIES

Our community organizations at the API Council often find themselves facing threats of displacement, which in turn threatens the stability they need to provide services. Learning from the previous recession, the Council worked to create the API Equity Fund in 2022 to build cultural power by ensuring our vital community organizations and their community spaces are protected and preserved. The API Equity Fund was championed by Supervisor Connie Chan, co-sponsored by Board of Supervisors President Aaron Peskin and then-Supervisor Gordon Mar and provided \$30 million of grant funding for organizations to acquire property or make capital improvements.

Capitalizing upon the status of the real estate market and the properties available, the Equity Fund allows community organizations to build spaces for themselves where they can provide the direct services our community members need in spaces that reflect their cultural heritage. API Council provided support services for organizations interested in applying for the Equity Fund grants, including a grant writing workshop to prepare organizations for the review process. The Fund awarded community development grants to the following organizations: Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco, Self-Help for the Elderly, the Southeast Asian Development Center, API Cultural Center, Kinmon Gakuen/ Golden Gate Institute, and the Filipino American Development Foundation.







MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

For more than 40 years, the **Southeast Asian Development Center (SEADC)** has created and nurtured vital programs and community space to serve the Southeast Asian communities in the Tenderloin District and San Francisco. At the start, they served immigrants and refugees from Southeast Asian countries like Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos and in recent years has expanded to serve people from Thailand and Arab countries. They serve multiple generations, from children as young as 5 years old to senior citizens, providing navigation services for jobs and housing, youth leadership development, and health and wellness services. SEADC received a grant from the API Equity Fund which has allowed them to begin the process of securing a new home for their work.

Currently, SEADC's office does not have dedicated space for the organization's programs, and the 100 clients they serve per day only have access to one bathroom in the space. The building also lacked adequate ventilations systems and could not provide heat or air conditioning. The space also limits the number of people they can serve, and despite their efforts to continue to expand within their current location, space is at a premium and staff has to coordinate to use the rooms they do have.

The new building will allow SEADC to create dedicated space for programs like private rooms to provide therapy sessions in a safe environment, areas for workshops, and more gathering spaces for the community to come together and share food. The new space will also ensure SEADC can adequately serve enough people and they're able to grow their services. The space will be designed to accommodate for an increase in clients and for any expansion of programs.

The fight to secure funding to expand has been a priority for the organization for years, but until the creation of the Equity Fund, it was a challenge. Now, the grant they've received has helped them make the case for additional support from the State and Federal governments.

"The API Equity fund has really allowed us to show other leaders that creating sustainability for nonprofits to continue providing and expanding services is needed," said Judy Young, SEADC's Executive Director. "If your space cannot accommodate the needs of your community, organizations are not able to do what they're really good at and cannot expand services to the fullest extent."

For SEADC, the new permanent location will be all about equity, helping them communicate to the Southeast Asian community that their needs are seen and heard. SEADC knows this new facility will show the community they have a real home where they can receive the services they need, connected to dignity, compassion, and in a culturally compassionate space. Receiving the Equity Fund grant shows the community the city is making a meaningful investment in underserved communities, they see their needs, and they want all San Francisco residents to thrive.



“

We want to build a space that represents the Southeast Asian community, a space that tells them you are no longer unseen and unheard. There is space for you, and you will be treated with compassion. We want this to be mirrored in the space where we serve our clients.

”

~ JUDY YOUNG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SOUTHEAST ASIAN DEVELOPMENT CENTER

BUILDING COMMUNITY STRENGTH

PROTECTING AND STRENGTHENING API COMMUNITY BUSINESSES

Sparked by a rise in violence, vandalism, and frivolous lawsuits that abused the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to target immigrant and API owned businesses, the API Council launched the API Council ADA Legal Defense Team in 2021 to protect these targeted businesses.

Working with the SF Chinese Chamber of Commerce and the Mayor's Office, the ADA Legal Defense Team has provided small businesses with technical guidance and assistance for notices of non-compliance with the ADA. This work includes case support, interpretation, ADA compliance navigation, and support in applying for available resources and funding.

The project aims to help more than 100 API merchants with a range of additional supports including pro bono legal services such as no-cost legal ADA compliance consultations, educational workshops on ADA compliance requirements, and compliance resources such as inspection report interpretation and more.

PROVIDING SECURITY FOR OUR ORGANIZATIONS; PROMOTING UNDERSTANDING IN OUR COMMUNITIES

API Council continues to work across communities to build alliances to tackle hate crimes in the African American, Latino, and Jewish communities, working together to secure \$40 million in the state budget to provide security grants for community organizations.

In the height of the pandemic, with hate crimes on the rise fueled by Anti-Asian rhetoric, a partnership with the Jewish Community Relations Council arose. Rooted in our respective communities'

shared experience of being scapegoated during times of international crises, we looked for opportunities for joint advocacy in the spirit of solidarity. This led to the formation of a SF Jewish-AAPI Solidarity Delegation which traveled together to New York and Washington D.C. to deepen mutual understanding of each community's unique histories, immigration stories, and culture. The delegation visited Congregation Beit Simchat Torah, the NYC Office for Prevention of Hate Crimes, The LUNAR Collective, Tenement Museum, NYC Chinatown, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II.



BUILDING WORKFORCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR COMMUNITY

In 2023, working with the Office of Economic and Workforce Development, the API Council launched a Paid Training Pilot Project that engaged participants in job readiness preparation and placement for lower-income, underemployed job seekers. Five member organizations of the council participated in the pilot program: Self-Help for the Elderly (SHE), Chinese for Affirmative Action (CAA), Chinese Progressive Association (CPA), Community Youth Center (CYC), and the Southeast Asian Development Center (SEADC).

The pilot program focuses on job readiness preparation training and support in finding job placements, with participating organizations providing direct financial assistance in the form of living stipends and coaching support to ensure job retention for these participants. Participants in the program received job readiness skills, digital literacy training, job search assistance, and job placement support through the program.

Each participant also received two living stipend payments for a total of \$8,322. This direct financial assistance led to participants feeling more financially secure, with the stipends providing much needed relief for basic needs like food, housing, and transportation.

The pilot's living stipends also helped dramatically increase food security for low-income job seekers: the percentage of participants that reported running out of food once a month or more decreased by over 75 percent. At the same time, community members also noted that the additional hands-on support via the program helped them develop stronger interview skills and gave them a better understanding of how to search and apply for jobs – all while strengthening their language and computer skills. With these renewed skills, community members were more confident throughout their job search. Pilot programs like this help the API Council offer policy recommendations to city leaders, with tested solutions to increase financial stability for our community members while strengthening the work of our member organizations.



BUILDING COMMUNITY STRENGTH

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH CRISIS, API COUNCIL'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

From the onset of the COVID-19 epidemic, API Council worked with the Stupski Foundation and our members to provide support for the API community. Ensuring food availability and security for low-income API families and seniors was a key priority for API Council, especially as the pandemic required member organizations to shift to meal delivery to ensure the community continued to be fed.

API Council members stepped up to the plate to ensure community members were fed during the Spring and Summer of 2020 through multiple surges. Organizations like the Bayanihan Equity Center (BEC) built on its immigrant food assistance program to provide food for seniors who were not able to access food distribution sites in their neighborhood, with a focus on the South of Market and Tenderloin neighborhoods. These organizations have continued to partner with API Council to design food security programs for the future of our communities.



FEEDING OUR COMMUNITY

- ❖ BEC distributed over 18,000 supplemental groceries during the height of the pandemic when social distancing was critical for high-risk groups.
- ❖ Self-Help for the Elderly also joined this effort to provide seniors with meals, providing over 11,000 nutritious meals to isolated and homebound seniors in the community.
- ❖ Kimochi also provided more than 20,000 meals to seniors in the Japantown community in the immediate surge of COVID.
- ❖ Chinatown Community Development Center created the Feed and Fuel program, serving food to residents of Chinatown's SRO and public housing from Chinatown restaurants to help sustain the community and small businesses. The Feed and Fuel program provided over 120,000 meals during a four month period.
- ❖ Working with the YMCA, the Community Youth Center helped provide 6,720 food packages to Chinatown families through their Pop Up Pantry.

API Council also worked with the Stupski Foundation to ensure that member organizations had the necessary personal protective equipment like masks, hand sanitizer, gloves, and face shields to keep themselves safe while serving the community. Member organizations also worked to distribute additional PPE to community members working in essential jobs or living in congregate housing, putting them at the highest risk.

Partnering with the Asian Pacific Fund, API Council created the COVID-19 collaboration fund, raising over \$400,000 which resulted in grants to the Council's member organizations to fund their response to the pandemic's challenges. Grants helped fund a marketing and outreach campaign to re-energize Chinatown's economy, assisted restaurants in lease negotiations and with city permitting to create new outdoor dining spaces, provided hands-on assistance for community members struggling to receive unemployment benefits, and created recruitment events to sustain the workforce.



BUILDING COMMUNITY STRENGTH

ENSURING OUR FOOD RESOURCES FOR OUR COMMUNITY

API Council has mobilized to address food justice and sovereignty for the API community in San Francisco with a grant from the Stupski Foundation. The Council is focused on eliminating inequities that fuel food insecurity and ensuring that the API communities' needs are communicated to city leaders, as it is estimated that the API community makes up nearly 60 percent of San Francisco's food bank participation. The Council also undertook a landscape analysis report, which outlined a need to shift away from a focus on traditional charitable food giving to addressing the root causes of food insecurity.

This work has led API Council and its member organizations to join the City's food security task force; several members are chairing the Reimagining Food Coordination subcommittee to help transform food policy in San Francisco. The subcommittee is preparing to deliver recommendations for a new food policy entity in the city to help create stronger infrastructure for food security and to ensure that food programs are better funded and streamlined. This proposed model will go before the food security task force in May 2024.

API Council is also a member of the Food and Agriculture Action Coalition Toward Sovereignty (FAACTS) which was formed after the City proposed a \$45 million budget cut to food security funding. Those cuts would have left over 70,000 families across the city without access to food and nutrition services. FAACTS works across communities to connect the food systems of San Francisco, and it is now working to build a unified approach that inclusively meets the food needs of its neighbors. In

March 2024, FAACTS launched the first Food Action Summit to bring together stakeholders across the city to imagine and plan a food system that works for all.

Within the API Council, we are also building community capacity for members to take on food justice work. Projects include the development of a community garden at the Samoan Community Development Center that will teach the community how to grow their own food and bring them back to nature in keeping with indigenous traditions. API Council is partnering with Richmond Neighborhood Center's to expand outreach to food businesses in the Sunset district to increase acceptance of EBT thereby enabling API residents to be able to use their benefits at restaurants within their community. Through this program, the Richmond Community Center will help support 150 small businesses with the EBT process.

2024 will bring more movement on the food security work, allowing the Council to build on collaborations across different ethnic communities to address structural inequities in San Francisco.

Looking Forward

This year, API Council marks its 10 year anniversary in May which will culminate in our Rising Together Gala, which will celebrate our first decade of building power in San Francisco. As we celebrate the past 10 years, we remain focused on the work ahead of us.

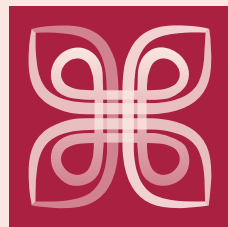
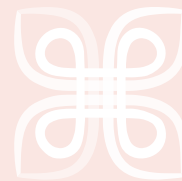
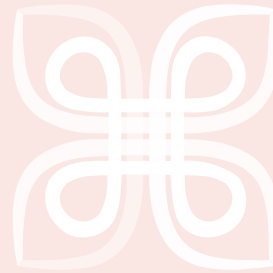
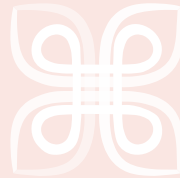
In May, the Council plans to release the State of Asian & Pacific Islanders report. This report will focus on the critical issues impacting the API community in San Francisco, looking at social, economic, and health indicators ranging from housing stability to the growing isolation of the senior community. The report will also examine vulnerabilities when it comes to public safety and economic stability and assess the health of our cultural districts. The goal of the report is to highlight the growing needs of API communities as resources continue to shrink.

The report will also highlight the political power of the API community, and the Council will use findings and recommendations for the report to build a policy platform that will allow the Council to assess city leadership. Later in the year, API Council will host a mayoral town hall focused on questions from our community members on the policy priorities we have outlined. The Council will continue to use the State of API report to build a blueprint for our advocacy in the years ahead.

The report will also be another tool for the Council and its members to demonstrate the scale of need in the API community as policymakers continue to consider cuts to the critical services our members provide. As the economic outlook for San Francisco and the state continues to waver, we are committed to ensuring our organizations can survive, utilizing our success in budget advocacy to secure the resources they need. We will also continue to support the next generation of API community leaders, working with our members to identify talent and creating opportunities for new leaders to grow.

API Council is committed to advancing budget justice for all, working across communities of color to identify opportunities for collaboration and joint advocacy to ensure we all have the resources we need to thrive.





API
COUNCIL

