

FUNDRAISING COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

PREPARED FOR

CASA GALLINA
CULTURA • COMUNIDAD • MEDIO AMBIENTE

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CORE MESSAGES

WHO WE ARE

Casa Gallina is a creative, nonprofit organization in Mexico dedicated to advancing environmental preservation and the cultural expression of local communities across the country. We foster strong connections to the natural world and indigenous cultures starting with the community-driven experiences in Mexico City's Santa María la Ribera neighborhood and beyond to other urban and rural areas of the country.

WHAT WE DO

At Casa Gallina, we are driven by the belief that collaborative learning and cross-sectoral interactions are the key to improving the world around us. We work with hundreds of passionate artists, educators, scientists, and neighbors to nourish our communities, and create and preserve cultural history and experiences. Through innovative art exhibitions, published books, and community events, Casa Gallina collaboratively captures, shares, and preserves traditional practices, languages, and histories of Indigenous communities across Mexico.

HOW WE DO IT

Committed to a rigorous methodology that incorporates the concerns of communities, Casa Gallina approaches all of our work through cooperation and partnership. By working with neighbors, agents and organizations in Mexico City and across the country, we create experiences, exhibitions and publications that address challenges specific to the area. We develop tools and methodologies that can be replicated and scaled by our allied partners across Mexico.

SECONDARY MESSAGE GRID

THE NEED	• In today's world, 56 percent of people live in urban areas – a higher percentage than any time in recent history. As urbanization has increased, tree canopy has gradually declined, and it is more difficult for everyday people to feel connected to the natural world, or to recognize the impact of human actions on the environment.¹ ◦ Research suggests that experiences with nature not only shape individuals' behavior, but also their values and political stances. Increasing connections with the natural world can help influence people's pro-environmental actions and beliefs.² • Urbanization and population growth also contribute to air pollution, as has been in the case in Mexico City. Once labeled the most polluted city in the world by the UN, Mexico City's air quality has improved, though its air particles still exceed air quality guidelines set by the World Health Organization.³ • Increased social isolation, particularly among older adults, has been exacerbated by urbanization, technological advancements, and the lack of community spaces for interaction between neighbors. This isolation has been identified as a factor in the "social vulnerability index" affecting health outcomes for adults in Mexico⁴; strong social ties are crucial for emotional and physical well-being. ◦ The COVID-19 pandemic also dramatically contributed to social isolation and feelings of loneliness for populations around the world, especially the elderly. Loneliness has been recognized as a global health issue by the World Health Organization and a 2022 survey found that 32.4 percent of adults across Mexico experienced
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¹ [Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment](#)

² [Frontiers in Psychology](#)

³ [World Health Organization](#)

⁴ [National Institutes of Health](#)

	loneliness — with that figure rising to 34 percent in Mexico City and Morelos.⁵ • There has been a substantial drop in the number of indigenous languages spoken in Mexico: of the estimated 350 that once existed before Spanish colonization in the 15th century, 282 have disappeared.⁶ The decline in indigenous languages and cultural exchange, closely tied to the environment, represents a loss of invaluable knowledge and cultural diversity. ◦ Additionally, racial discrimination persists toward those of indigenous heritage in Mexico. In 2020, 24% of indigenous people surveyed said they had experienced discrimination, and 75.6 % felt under-valued.⁷ • Food insecurity, especially access to fresh and nutritionally rich food, is a prevalent issue in Mexico. Only 57.8% of the Mexican population can secure food for consumption, while 42.2% experience food insecurity, according to Mexico's National Council of Evaluation. Research shows that food insecurity contributes to a number of physical and mental health issues.⁸
THE OPPORTUNITY	• Fostering deeper connections with nature and access to urban green spaces can help to curb the loss of biodiversity and generate action against the climate crisis. ◦ Educators can integrate environmental perspectives, catered to local contexts, into lesson plans to expose students to information on nature and the environment. This can enhance young people's critical thinking skills and also give them the opportunity to consider their impact on the world around them and build empathy for their environment. ◦ Urban gardens, farmers' markets and other food-centric community events also provide

⁵ [Mexico Business News](#)

⁶ [Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Indígenas](#)

⁷ [National Survey on Discrimination](#)

⁸ [International Journal for Equity in Health](#)

opportunities for urban dwellers to come together and learn more about the connections between nature, farming and cooking practices, and nutrition.

- Indigenous farming practices intertwine the relationship between humans and the natural world, and many indigenous practices are the building blocks for “regenerative agriculture” movements today. These time-honored methods not only underscore a profound respect for the environment but also embody sustainable practices that enhance and preserve biodiversity, soil health, and ecosystems.⁹
- In a world of increasing social isolation, particularly among older adults, “third places,” or gathering spaces between home and work, can play an important role in building community.¹⁰ Accessible community centers play a pivotal role in strengthening social ties and enhancing the well-being of neighborhoods, by providing a welcoming space for neighbors to connect, engage, and support one another.
 - Facilitating community engagement and intergenerational activities focused on environmental stewardship can combat loneliness and enhance social bonds across communities of all ages.
- Surveys have shown that arts engagement is linked with feelings of social connectedness, supporting the idea that the arts can help forge social connections.¹¹
- There is an opportunity to more actively celebrate indigenous languages and cultural practices; this can help to preserve Mexico’s rich heritage and foster a deeper understanding and appreciation among all members of society. Language preservation is an essential part of strategies to promote cultural belonging. It can also increase self-esteem and confidence in indigenous communities.¹²

⁹ [Environmental and Energy Study Institute](#)

¹⁰ [The Brookings Institution](#)

¹¹ [BMC Public Health](#)

¹² [Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society](#)

WHO WE ARE

Casa Gallina is a creative, nonprofit organization in Mexico dedicated to advancing environmental preservation and the cultural expression of local communities across the country. We foster strong connections to the natural world and indigenous cultures starting with the community-driven experiences in Mexico City's Santa María la Ribera neighborhood and beyond to other urban and rural areas of the country.

- Founded in 2013, Casa Gallina operates as a vibrant cultural laboratory, crafting innovative projects that blend art with community engagement to preserve the environment, build social connections, and increase education on traditional cultural practices.
 - Casa Gallina believes that when neighbors have the time and space to build intentional connections, they build empathy for one another and can collaborate to create projects to advance the common good.
 - With a deep commitment to the environment, culture, community, and education, Casa Gallina is focused on growing community and encouraging collaboration in an urban environment to improve daily life.
 - Since 2019, Casa Gallina has been sharing our methodologies with allied organizations who share similar concerns, but operate in other areas of Mexico, to activate and support community processes around the environment through culture.
- Rooted in the Santa María la Ribera neighborhood of Mexico City, Casa Gallina's impact extends through 21 states across Mexico through strong partnerships with local schools, museums, and other strategic allies.
 - Our allies include a network of community organizations, public and private institutions, and collectives in Aguascalientes, Campeche, Chiapas, Ciudad de México, Estado de México, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Michoacán, Morelos, Nayarit, Nuevo León, Oaxaca, Puebla, Querétaro, Quintana Roo, Sonora, Tabasco, Tlaxcala, Veracruz y Yucatán.
- Casa Gallina translates directly to "Hen House" in English. While the name began as a tongue-in-cheek reference by the organization's founder, our name speaks to the collaborative nature of our programming and our connection to nature in an urban environment.
- We are headquartered in a historic home in the Santa María la Ribera neighborhood that serves as the centerpoint for Casa Gallina's community events and a gathering place.

	• Casa Gallina is a community space for safe, supportive experimentation and learning. Visitors and guests to Casa Gallina are welcomed as if they were coming to one's own <i>casa</i>, home. ◦ Casa Gallina's programming creates a dialogue among neighbors to exchange perspectives on cultural issues and actions in daily life through art. This work recognizes and celebrates cultural diversity, and regional knowledge. • Casa Gallina stresses the importance of building strong networks for the exchange of information and experiences between individuals and organizations. In addition, our focus on building community and uniting neighbors through events strengthens bonds throughout the community and combats social isolation occurring in urban areas, which is vitally important following the COVID-19 pandemic. ◦ Connections between community members build resilience, combat social isolation, and create a united community. • Our dedicated team members have diverse backgrounds in art, community engagement, education, and more. We work closely with our allied organizations across Mexico, and with artists, scientists, educators, and people from the public and private sectors to create a vision of community.
WHAT WE DO At Casa Gallina, we are driven by the belief that collaborative learning and cross-sectoral interactions are the key to improving the world around us. We work with hundreds of passionate artists, educators, scientists, and neighbors to nourish our communities, and create and preserve cultural history and experiences. Through innovative art exhibitions, published books, and community events, Casa Gallina collaboratively captures, shares, and preserves traditional	• Our theory of change is rooted in the belief that fostering collaborative learning and interdisciplinary interactions among professionals from diverse fields lead to innovative solutions and positive social impact. Through facilitated dialogue, the exchange of ideas, events, and interdisciplinary projects, we aim to create a dynamic environment that nurtures creativity, problem-solving, and community engagement. • Art is a central component of Casa Gallina's mission. Every year, we partner with local artists and commission artwork in their respective territories, and collaborate on school-based art projects and annual exhibitions at the Geology Museum of Mexico City (Museo del Instituto de Geología de la UNAM), centrally located in Santa María la Ribera. All art

practices, languages, and histories of Indigenous communities across Mexico.	projects and exhibitions incorporate themes of environmental and cultural preservation, such as biodiversity, indigenous traditions, and connections between humans and the natural world. Projects are designed and co-created with the communities that Casa Gallina serves. • With a team of artists, designers, linguists, community organizers, chefs, and scientists, Casa Gallina creates thoughtful experiences to elevate its aims of environmental and cultural preservation. In addition, Casa Gallina's growing educational experiences are designed with youth empowerment and leadership development in mind. • Casa Gallina stresses the importance of building strong networks for the exchange of information and experiences between individuals and organizations. Projects strengthen collaborative learning and encourage connections among community members and allied organizations — especially young people, educators, the elderly, and indigenous communities — to drive pro-environmental actions.
HOW WE DO IT Committed to a rigorous methodology that incorporates the concerns of the community, Casa Gallina approaches all of our work through cooperation and partnership. By working with neighbors, agents and organizations in Mexico City and across the country, we create experiences, exhibitions and publications that address challenges specific to the area. We develop tools and methodologies that can be replicated and scaled by our allied partners across Mexico.	• Community engagement and collaboration are central to Casa Gallina's model. Our organization does not aim to be a "thought leader," but rather a champion, connector, and aggregator of Mexico's rich network of active community leaders, change agents, and defenders of territories. ◦ Casa Gallina's diverse offerings are an intentional rejection of a type of urban life and consumption habits that de-emphasize community and cultural traditions and harm the environment. • All of Casa Gallina's work is developed based on the specific needs of our community, utilizing feedback and conversations with our neighbors, partners and participants. We are dedicated to working with others on all initiatives to build community, trust and a collaborative atmosphere. ◦ This method of collaboration and custom approaches for unique challenges is shared with our partner organizations across Mexico. We work closely with our allies in 21 states and assist them

with replicating and scaling this model to address issues brought to them by their own communities, and share methodologies such as collective mapping and environmental education.

- Our events promote environmental awareness through education, cultural projects, and strategies for responsible consumption.
 - *Youth programs:* Children of all ages take part in collaborative workshops that span from urban garden education, to producing plays about environmental awareness, to creative art projects where participants are encouraged to consider earth's biodiversity and their relationship with the world around them. Each program blends creative elements with hands-on environmental education to maximize learning and eco-friendly behavior.
 - *Agroecology classes:* Urban agriculture and cooking classes promote sustainable living practices and challenge urban consumption. Classes are led by farmers, biologists, chefs, activists, and nutritionists, and introduces alternative approaches to food preparation, production, and the circular economy – incorporating indigenous practices and fostering empathetic relationships with the environment. Workshops on topics like preservative making and mending help to further promote ethical consumption.
 - *Farmers' markets:* Indigenous leaders and local agricultural producers visit Casa Gallina to introduce and sell their products to neighborhood residents. The high-quality products like seeds, maize, bread, and seasonal fruits help residents learn more about sustainable living practices, and enable community members to incorporate environmentally-friendly strategies in their daily lives.
 - *Community exchange events:* Casa Gallina hosts cultural events to build cohesion among community members. One notable type is dances for the elderly, where neighbors aged 60 and up come

	together to forge new relationships and connect over music and dance. ○ <i>Physical spaces:</i> neighborhood residents can enjoy a reading room with an extensive library, a computer lab with assistance available for elderly adults, a kitchen for healthy cooking courses, an urban garden with seasonal crop varieties, and neighborhood meeting and workshop spaces. Casa Gallina is configured to maximize community connections and foster dialogue between residents. ● Casa Gallina gathers and disseminates cross-sectoral knowledge on environmental themes through published books. Publications like <i>Life in My Environment</i> and <i>Flavors and Knowledge from the Maize Field</i>, among others, are distributed widely through partnerships with schools and other community-based organizations throughout the country. We print books in indigenous languages to ensure that they align with its core values of cultural preservation and the celebration of traditional practices. ○ Casa Gallina's latest publication, <i>Recrea</i>, is a toolkit for environmental education based on findings from 77 educational centers that partnered with Casa Gallina. <i>Recrea</i> builds on effective methodologies and strategies to increase youth engagement with environmental topics, conservation, and their connections to the natural world. Casa Gallina also created a <i>Recrea</i> board game to pair with the book. ● Each year, Casa Gallina publishes two books, curates and installs two exhibitions, produces two artistic projects, and operates dozens of community events and educational programming at the community center.
IMPACT	● Casa Gallina is a cultural institution and community hub for the Santa María la Ribera community: an average 691 residents visit the house each month, and 12,308 neighbors actively participate in the community events housed at the center. Moreover, Casa Gallina's strategic partnerships with 275+ allies and peer organizations helps extend its impact to 132 communities throughout Mexico.

- The majority (65%) of Casa Gallina’s program participants are youth under 20 years old; by focusing on leadership development and education, Casa Gallina ensures that future generations grow up with an intentional understanding of their impact on the world around them.
- After each event and initiative, we share evaluations with participants and partners to obtain feedback. Qualitative testimonials from Casa Gallina participants reassert the deep impact of its programming:
 - Self-expression for children: “We live from an adult-centric perspective, which is the basis for teaching, but here they have another pedagogical outlook, where the children can foster their sense of community, that feeling of support, it generates a space where they feel safe, and where we can express ourselves as children or as adults.” - Jessica, mother of a child participating in the summer course *Life In My Environment*
 - Youth programming: “My granddaughters are always very glad to go to Casa Gallina. They have lots of fun [and] they have learned a lot. They have become more sociable; they interact more with people. They have learned to share things and are happy to come here.” - Cecilia, grandmother of Casa Gallina participants and Santa María la Ribera resident
 - Appreciation for the natural world: “What I liked most about this visit was when we learned the different parts of a hummingbird and put one together like a puzzle. I learned that I can plant more flowers to get hummingbirds to come and find food ... and that both humans and animals need nature.” - 8-year-old boy visiting a Casa Gallina art exhibit
 - Community connections in Santa María la Ribera: “Thank you for bringing us together to share feelings, stories and knowledge. I hope this dynamic can expand to more outlying and heterogeneous contexts. I hope I will chance upon the people I

interacted with today on the streets and continue exchanging and getting to know them. Hugs now and forever. "- Miguel, neighbor who attended a community event at the house

ENGAGEMENT LETTER TEMPLATE

The engagement letter template is a formal missive of greatest use in situations with either sophisticated funders who don't accept emails or phone calls, or lack a functional online presence. This could also be adapted for use as a cover letter for proposals.

Dear [Name],

(NOTE: The introduction paragraph should be tailored to your recipient and demonstrate you have done your homework articulating your point of connection and mission alignment to either their work or leadership and beginning to set the stage for shared mission, vision, and goals. You can also identify any specific funding opportunities that are available at the time and say directly that you would like to discuss if there could be a fit for Casa Gallina, such as an open call for proposals.)

In today's rapidly changing world, where 56 percent of people live in urban areas, the connection to the natural world and recognition of individuals' environmental impact is diminishing. This disconnection, alongside the declining number of indigenous languages in Mexico, underscores the need for intentional efforts towards environmental and cultural preservation. Experiences with nature are pivotal to shape individuals' values and inspire climate action. Moreover, the pervasive issue of food insecurity and the social isolation exacerbated by urbanization highlight the critical role of community spaces in enhancing both emotional and physical well-being.

Casa Gallina is a creative, nonprofit organization in Mexico dedicated to addressing these interconnected challenges, helping to preserve invaluable knowledge and improve quality of life for local communities. We foster strong connections to the natural world and indigenous cultures starting with community-driven experiences in Mexico City's Santa María la Ribera neighborhood and beyond to other urban and rural areas of the country. *(Custom outreach to funder): Given our shared focus on locally-led climate resilience efforts, Casa Gallina and [FUNDER] would be powerful partners in our work to engage residents in meaningful environmental and cultural stewardship.*

At Casa Gallina, we are driven by the belief that collaborative learning and cross-sectoral interactions are the key to improving the world around us. We work with hundreds of passionate artists, educators, scientists, and neighbors to nourish our communities, and to create and preserve cultural history and experiences. Through innovative art exhibitions, published books, and community events, Casa Gallina collaboratively captures, shares, and preserves traditional practices, languages, and histories of indigenous communities across Mexico.

Since our founding in 2013, Casa Gallina has engaged over 12,308 neighbors through events at our community center in Santa María la Ribera, supported by a network of over 275 allies. This collaboration has enabled Casa Gallina to extend our influence across 132 communities in Mexico. With 65% of

participants under 20, our work emphasizes youth development and leadership, shaping the next generation's understanding of their environmental and cultural impact.

Designed to scale our influence rather than our size, Casa Gallina seeks to forge new partnerships with community organizations and cultural institutions. Together with [FUNDER], Casa Gallina can accelerate our efforts to build strong communities, fostering a sustainable and vibrant future.

Sincerely,
In partnership,
With gratitude,
...Or other that suits the personality of the sender

Name
Title, Casa Gallina

FUNDRAISING CALL TALKING POINTS

This template is designed to provide structure to a fundraising call, but can be customized with any variety of talking points in alignment not only to the interests of whomever you are speaking with, but your personal fundraising style as well. While we recommend preparing a script for each outreach call you make, keep in mind that roughly half of your script will be abandoned as the conversation takes on a life of its own. We find that it is helpful to know the information is all there if you do need it, but okay if you don't, and advise limiting to three main points per funder.

Hello [Contact Name], this is [Name] with Casa Gallina. We are a creative, nonprofit organization in Mexico dedicated to advancing environmental preservation and the cultural expression of local communities across the country.

I wondered if you might have a few minutes to explore if our missions align enough to decide if it makes sense to have a more in-depth conversation. *Note: Pause here to let the person respond or indicate if this a conversation he/she is willing to continue at this moment.*

If yes, thank them and continue below. If they indicate an interest (even a small one!) but don't have time for a full conversation at that moment, ask to schedule a call for a more convenient time – 30 mins should be sufficient. Then respect their time and politely end the conversation by saying you look forward to talking further during your next call.

[Continue] In learning about your [mission/interest/work to _____] *(Note: It can be helpful to name past or current grantees or projects; always demonstrate you've done your homework and are therefore not wasting anyone's time including your own)*, I found it connected to our own efforts to [specific point of connection to Casa Gallina's work].

If appropriate, briefly share your personal call to do this work to humanize the conversation at the outset. This sets the stage for the funder to share why they care when you ask later in the call.

When appropriate, share talking points on your unique identity *(Note: utilize those points that relate to the prospective funder. If all points are relevant, choose the strongest bullets)*:

- Founded in 2013, Casa Gallina operates as a vibrant cultural laboratory, crafting innovative projects that blend art with community engagement to preserve the environment, build social connections, and increase education on traditional cultural practices.
- Casa Gallina believes that when neighbors have the time and space to build intentional connections, they build empathy for one another and can collaborate to create projects to advance the common good.

- Rooted in the Santa María la Ribera neighborhood of Mexico City, Casa Gallina’s impact extends through 21 states across Mexico through strong partnerships with local schools, museums, and other strategic allies.

On the need:

- Casa Gallina addresses the interconnected issues of modern life, including individuals’ loss of connection with the environment, pollution, the decline in preservation of cultural practices and indigenous heritage, and increasing social isolation.
- Fostering deeper connections with nature and access to urban green spaces can help to curb the loss of biodiversity and generate action against the climate crisis.
- Accessible community centers play a pivotal role in strengthening social ties and enhancing the well-being of neighborhoods, by providing a welcoming space for neighbors to connect, engage, and support one another.

On our approach:

- Casa Gallina is a community space for safe, supportive experimentation and learning. Visitors and guests to Casa Gallina are welcomed as if they were coming to one’s own *casa*, home.
- Our theory of change is rooted in the belief that fostering collaborative learning and interdisciplinary interactions among professionals from diverse fields lead to innovative solutions and positive social impact.
- Our events promote environmental awareness through education, cultural projects, and strategies for responsible consumption.
- Each year, Casa Gallina publishes two books, curates and installs two exhibitions, produces two artistic projects, and operates dozens of community events and educational programming at the community center.

Shift the focus back to the funder. Be inquisitive and show interest in them and their personal connection to the work. [*For example: “What inspired you to care so deeply about _____?”*]

Do not ask for funding but rather conclude by asking if they feel there should be follow up to this initial conversation – “What would be a logical next step to further explore a possible collaboration between Casa Gallina and [*Foundation Name*]?” or “When you find a mission-aligned partner that is successfully working to solve [*problem or issue area*], what is typically the next step?”

The above paragraph should inform the next step, but if that did not work then you can ask “When would be an appropriate time to reach back out?” Examples of specific framing can include: “When we last connected, we discussed [*program*]; in light of your upcoming grant cycle, I’m wondering if now is the right time to discuss the depth of our missions’ alignment, and also gain insights into what is optimal to focus upon in our submission. My best guess is that a 20 - 30 minute conversation would inform us if it makes sense for us both to invest in a grant submission preparation.”

If they try to shut down the conversation, be respectful. If they give you a firm “no” then graciously thank them for their time and encourage them to keep you in mind in case their funding priorities shift in the future. You may also ask, “What other partners or funding organizations do you feel should know about our work?”

ALWAYS END WITH GRATITUDE FOR THEIR TIME AND WORK! “It’s clear you care as deeply as we do about [*environmental preservation/cultural expression/climate action/community-led development*]. Thank you for your leadership on this issue.”

OUTREACH EMAIL TEMPLATES

The outreach email templates are designed for initial outreach to “cold” prospects, offering different “angles” for an introduction and invitation to further conversation.

INTRODUCTION EMAIL

Hello [Name],

I hope your day is going well [*or something in the author's personal style that lets them know this is more than template spam*]. My name is [Name] and I'm [position] at Casa Gallina, a creative, nonprofit organization in Mexico dedicated to advancing environmental preservation and the cultural expression of local communities across the country. I'm inspired by the alignment between your [*mission to/vision for/efforts to _____*], and [*point of connection to our own work*]; I wanted to introduce myself and explore potential avenues for collaboration.

Casa Gallina fosters strong connections to the natural world and indigenous cultures starting with the community-driven experiences in Mexico City's Santa María la Ribera neighborhood and beyond to other urban and rural areas of the country. We are driven by the belief that collaborative learning and cross-sectoral interactions are the key to improving the world around us. We work with hundreds of passionate artists, educators, scientists, and neighbors to nourish our communities, and create and preserve cultural history and experiences. Through innovative art exhibitions, published books, and community events, Casa Gallina collaboratively captures, shares, and preserves traditional practices, languages, and histories of Indigenous communities.

As we've begun to identify the leaders in the [*environmental preservation/arts and culture/community-driven developments space (use their own language to categorize them)*], [Foundation Name] tops the list, not only for the work mentioned above but also [*name any other points of connection*].

Would you be interested in connecting briefly to discuss our potential alignment? My schedule is flexible [*name certain days*] and I would be happy to speak by phone or video.

Thank you for your consideration; I look forward to hearing from you soon.
[*Sign your first name in the body of the email*]

Learn more about Casa Gallina [here](#).

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PROPOSITION EMAIL

Hi [Name],

My name is [Name] and I'm [position] at Casa Gallina, a creative, nonprofit organization in Mexico dedicated to advancing environmental preservation and the cultural expression of local communities across the country.

Casa Gallina is deeply committed to environmental preservation and the reconnection of urban populations with the natural world in Mexico City's Santa María la Ribera neighborhood and beyond. Our environmental programs, including urban gardens, agroecology classes, and farmers' markets, educate and engage communities in sustainable living practices. These initiatives are complemented by our focus on indigenous farming methods, which not only honor traditional knowledge but also advance regenerative agriculture, enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem health.

To further this mission, Casa Gallina publishes influential educational materials, such as "Life in My Environment" and "Flavors and Knowledge from the Maize Field," distributed across our network of partners. These efforts are part of a larger strategy to foster environmental stewardship and build empathy for the environment among future generations, particularly the 65% of our program participants who are youth under 20 years old. Research suggests that building these connections to nature not only enhance understanding but also inspire climate action and pro-environmental behaviors.

I would love to share more with you about our approach to increasing communities' connections with the environment and inspiring sustainable practices. Would you be available to speak by phone or video [*offer days/times*]?

I look forward to speaking with you! Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
[Name]

CULTURE AND THE ARTS PROPOSITION EMAIL

Hello [Name],

My name is [Name] and I'm [position] at Casa Gallina, a creative nonprofit organization in Mexico dedicated to advancing environmental preservation and the cultural expression of local communities across the country.

At Casa Gallina, we deeply value the intersection of art and community engagement, using innovative art exhibitions, published books, and collaborative projects to preserve and celebrate the cultural heritage of Mexico. Our annual partnerships with local artists and institutions like the Geology Museum of Mexico City enrich our programming, enabling us to co-create projects that reflect the diversity and vibrancy of our communities. These efforts not only showcase traditional practices and languages but also foster a dynamic dialogue among neighbors, enhancing the cultural fabric of areas like the Santa María la Ribera neighborhood of Mexico City and beyond. We believe these artistic endeavors are essential in building stronger, more connected communities.

Given your interest in supporting [issue area] through projects with [relevant partnerships or projects], I'd love to explore how we might partner with [Foundation Name] to deepen our impact on [issue area i.e. arts and culture, etc].

Would you be open to connecting via phone or video call?

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
[Name]

PITCH DECK TEMPLATE

This can be used for formal presentations or in virtual meetings with prospective donors. We have also seen it used quite effectively in 1:1 meetings with donors, offering a nice visual around which you can build the conversation. This may also be used as a leave-behind piece.

Note: the below slides are designed as a standalone deck with no narrator, but can be tailored with information removed if you are narrating the deck.

SLIDE ONE - OPENING

CASA GALLINA

ADVANCING COMMUNITY-LED ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION AND CULTURAL EXPRESSION

SLIDE TWO - WHO WE ARE

Casa Gallina is a creative, nonprofit organization in Mexico dedicated to advancing environmental preservation and the cultural expression of local communities across the country. We foster strong connections to the natural world and indigenous cultures starting with the community-driven experiences in Mexico City's Santa María la Ribera neighborhood and beyond to other urban and rural areas of the country.

SLIDE THREE – THE NEED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION

Casa Gallina addresses the myriad of challenges facing community members in Mexico City and beyond:

- Loss of green spaces: More people live in urban areas (56%) than at any point in recent history; as urbanization has increased, tree canopy has gradually declined, making it more difficult for everyday people to feel connected to the natural world or to recognize the impact of human actions on the environment
- Food insecurity: Only 57.8% of the Mexican population can secure food for consumption, and struggle to access fresh and nutritionally rich food

SLIDE FOUR – THE NEED FOR CULTURAL PRESERVATION

- Social isolation: Increased social isolation, particularly among older adults, has been exacerbated by urbanization, technological advancements, and the lack of community spaces for interaction between neighbors

- Indigenous heritage: Just 68 of the once 350+ indigenous language once spoken in Mexico are still used today; indigenous people report feeling undervalued (75.6%) and facing discrimination (24%)

SLIDE FIVE – THE OPPORTUNITY

- Fostering deeper connections with nature and access to urban green spaces can help to curb the loss of biodiversity and generate action against the climate crisis.
- Educators can integrate environmental perspectives, catered to local contexts, into lesson plans to expose students to information on nature and the environment. This can enhance young people's critical thinking skills and also give them the opportunity to consider their impact on the world around them and build empathy for their environment.
- Accessible community centers play a pivotal role in strengthening social ties and enhancing the well-being of neighborhoods, by providing a welcoming space for neighbors to connect, engage, and support one another.

SLIDE SIX – OUR VISION

We believe that when neighbors have the time and space to build intentional connections, they build empathy for one another and can collaborate to create projects to advance the common good.

With a deep commitment to the environment, culture, community, and education, Casa Gallina is focused on growing community and encouraging collaboration in an urban environment to improve daily life.

SLIDE SEVEN – ABOUT CASA GALLINA

Founded in 2013, Casa Gallina operates as a vibrant cultural laboratory, crafting innovative projects that blend art with community engagement to preserve the environment, build social connections, and increase education on traditional cultural practices.

Rooted in the Santa María la Ribera neighborhood of Mexico City, Casa Gallina's impact extends through 21 states across Mexico through strong partnerships with local schools, museums, and other strategic allies.

SLIDE EIGHT – OUR APPROACH

Our theory of change is rooted in the belief that fostering collaborative learning and interdisciplinary interactions among professionals from diverse fields lead to innovative solutions and positive social impact.

Our events promote environmental awareness through education, cultural projects, and strategies for responsible consumption.

SLIDE NINE – CASA GALLINA

Casa Gallina is headquartered in a historic home in the Santa María la Ribera neighborhood that serves as the centerpoint for Casa Gallina's community events and a gathering place. Casa Gallina's programming creates a dialogue among neighbors to exchange perspectives on cultural issues and actions in daily life through art. Programming includes:

- Collaborative youth programming on arts and the environment
- Urban agriculture and cooking classes
- Farmers' markets
- Community exchange events (e.g., dances for the elderly)
- Physical spaces, including a library, computer lab, urban garden, meeting and workshop spaces

SLIDE TEN – PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Our dedicated team members have diverse backgrounds in art, community engagement, education, and more. We work closely with our allied organizations across Mexico, and with artists, scientists, educators, and people from the public and private sectors to create a vision of community.

Each year, Casa Gallina publishes two books, curates and installs two exhibitions, produces two artistic projects, and operates dozens of community events and educational programming at the community center.

SLIDE ELEVEN – OUR IMPACT

Since its inception, Casa Gallina has touched the lives of thousands, with an average of 691 residents visiting the center each month and 12,308 neighbors actively participating in community events. Through strategic partnerships with over 275 allies, our impact extends to 132 communities across Mexico.

The majority (65%) of Casa Gallina's program participants are youth under 20 years old; by focusing on leadership development and education, Casa Gallina ensures that future generations grow up with an intentional understanding of their impact on the world around them.

SLIDE TWELVE – TESTIMONIALS

Qualitative testimonials from Casa Gallina participants reassert the deep impact of its programming:

- Appreciation for the natural world: "What I liked most about this visit was when we learned the different parts of a hummingbird and put one together like a puzzle. I learned that I can plant more flowers to get hummingbirds to come and find food ... and that both humans and animals need nature." - 8-year-old boy visiting a Casa Gallina art exhibit

- Community connections in Santa María la Ribera: “Thank you for bringing us together to share feelings, stories and knowledge. I hope this dynamic can expand to more outlying and heterogeneous contexts. I hope I will chance upon the people I interacted with today on the streets and continue exchanging and getting to know them. Hugs now and forever. ”- Miguel, neighbor who attended a community event at the house

SLIDE THIRTEEN – LOOKING AHEAD

Designed to scale our influence rather than our size, Casa Gallina seeks to forge new partnerships with community organizations and cultural institutions to replicate our programs in new communities. We are seeking funding partners who believe in our shared vision of environmental preservation and cultural expression.

SLIDE FOURTEEN – WHY YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

Increasing access to Casa Gallina’s programming provides neighbors of all ages in Mexico with opportunities to build connections to their neighbors, increase their environmental awareness, celebrate indigenous practices, and promote responsible consumption.

(NOTE: The ask here should be tailored to your audience. For example, “We need \$XXXXX to XXXX (fill in here some specific portions of your project they fund – i.e. giving levels). Please consider donating \$XXXX toward this goal.”

CASE FOR SUPPORT

The two-page case for support retrofits the identity, work, and approach identified in the core and secondary messages into the Problem-Solution-Impact formula traditionally seen in nonprofit communications and presents a compelling call to action. This can be used as a branded collateral piece to attach to email outreach or a “leave-behind” for in-person or virtual meetings.

CASA GALLINA

Advancing community-led environmental preservation and cultural expression

DISCONNECTION IN MODERN COMMUNITIES

In today's rapidly changing world, where 56 percent of people live in urban areas, the connection to the natural world and recognition of individuals' environmental impact is diminishing. This disconnection, alongside the declining number of indigenous languages in Mexico, underscores the need for intentional efforts towards environmental and cultural preservation. Experiences with nature are pivotal to shape individuals' values and inspire climate action. Moreover, the pervasive issue of food insecurity and the social isolation exacerbated by urbanization highlight the critical role of community spaces in enhancing both emotional and physical well-being.

Casa Gallina is a creative, nonprofit organization in Mexico dedicated to addressing these interconnected challenges, helping to preserve invaluable knowledge and improve quality of life for local communities. We foster strong connections to the natural world and indigenous cultures starting with community-driven experiences in Mexico City's Santa María la Ribera neighborhood and beyond to other urban and rural areas of the country.

ABOUT CASA GALLINA

At Casa Gallina, we are driven by the belief that collaborative learning and cross-sectoral interactions are the key to improving the world around us. We work with hundreds of passionate artists, educators, scientists, and neighbors to nourish our communities, and to create and preserve cultural history and experiences.

Casa Gallina is headquartered in a historic home in the Santa María la Ribera neighborhood that serves as the centerpoint for Casa Gallina's community events and a gathering place. Casa Gallina is a community space for safe, supportive experimentation and learning. Visitors and guests to Casa Gallina are welcomed as if they were coming to one's own *casa*, home. Beyond the cultural hub and community center, Casa Gallina's impact extends through 21 states across Mexico via strong partnerships with local schools, museums, and other strategic allies.

Community engagement and collaboration are central to Casa Gallina's model. Our organization does not aim to be a “thought leader,” but rather a champion, connector, and aggregator of Mexico's rich network of active community leaders, change agents, and defenders of territories. As such, Casa Gallina's work is a

direct reflection of community needs, utilizing feedback and conversations with our neighbors, partners and participants to develop programming:

- Collaborative youth programming on arts and the environment
- Urban agriculture and cooking classes
- Farmers' markets
- Community exchange events (e.g., dances for the elderly)
- Physical spaces, including a library, computer lab, urban garden, meeting and workshop spaces
- Published books with cross-sectoral knowledge on environmental themes
- Commissioned artwork and school-based art projects
- Annual art exhibit at the Geology Museum of Mexico City (Museo del Instituto de Geología de la UNAM)

Each year, Casa Gallina publishes two books, curates and installs two exhibitions, produces two artistic projects, and operates dozens of community events and educational programming at the community center. Our diverse programming mix is an intentional rejection of a type of urban life and consumption habits that de-emphasize cultural traditions and harm the environment.

OUR IMPACT

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The majority (65 percent) of Casa Gallina's program participants are youth under 20 years old; by focusing on leadership development and education, Casa Gallina ensures that future generations grow up with an intentional understanding of their impact on the world around them.

PARTNER WITH US

Designed to scale our influence rather than our size, Casa Gallina seeks to forge new partnerships with community organizations and cultural institutions to replicate our programs in new communities. We are seeking funding partners who believe in our shared vision of environmental preservation and cultural expression.

Visit <https://casagallina.org.mx/en> to learn more and join us!