



Power Moves

Your essential philanthropy assessment
guide for equity and justice

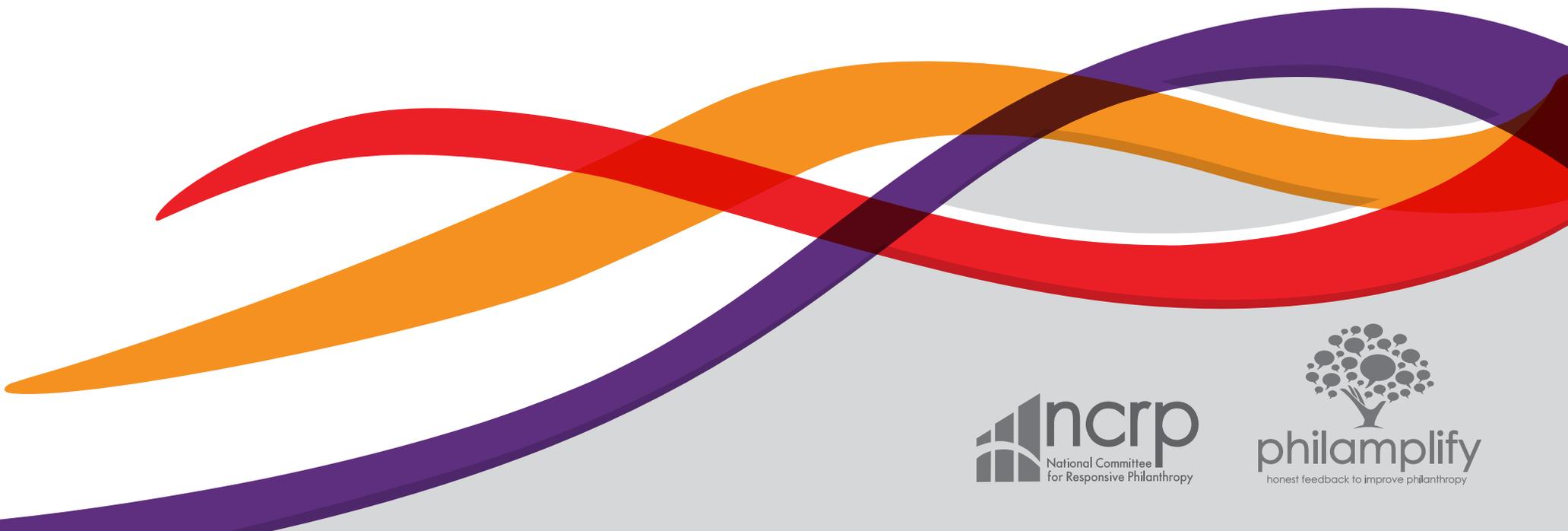




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ABOUT NCRP

The National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy envisions a fair, just and democratic society in which the common good is recognized as a high priority; where a robust public sector is empowered to protect, preserve and extend the commonly held resources and the public interest; where a vital nonprofit sector provides voice and value to those most in need; and where all people enjoy equality of opportunity, access and fair treatment without discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, economic status, national origin or other identities.

NCRP envisions philanthropy at its best contributing to this vision of society by operating with the highest standards of integrity and openness and by investing in people and communities with the least wealth and opportunity and nonprofit organizations that serve and represent them.



EQUITY

POWER

INTRODUCTION

Taking time out for self-assessment and learning is an important part of the organizational cycle of planning, action and reflection.

It helps ensure that your strategies make sense given your goals, and that those strategies are having the impact you seek for the communities you care about. Other factors may prompt introspection, such as internal leadership changes or external events. The philanthropic sector's growing urgency to tackle inequities also offers strong motivation to take stock. Today, it is still all too easy to predict advantage or disadvantage based on race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or ability.

This suite of self-assessment resources addresses all of these imperatives, but with a unique twist: It helps funders like you respond to the current moment of social foment and the enduring drive for long-overdue justice by exploring your own power. It complements and builds on other important equitable grantmaking resources so that you can solicit feedback and engage in a reflective assessment process that increases the likelihood of success.

Power, whether through organized people or organized money, is the force that changes systems, and changing systems is the only way to achieve equitable outcomes for all communities. As a grantmaker, you cannot truly strive for and advance equity until you understand your own power and privilege in society and in relation to your grantees. Then you can make conscious choices about how to use that power to be more effective and have lasting positive impact, in ways that align with the goals, needs and strategies of the communities you seek to benefit.

Explore what the most strategic social justice grantmakers already understand: To make the world a better place, communities need to build power; funders need to share their power with these communities; and they both need to wield their power to influence relevant audiences and decision-makers. Fundamentally, these funders acknowledge the role of power and activate it to create change – with humility and attention to privilege.

WHY FOCUS ON POWER?

When rules are crafted by the rich and powerful, they tend to favor the rich and powerful.
When institutions are run predominantly by men, they tend to stifle opportunities for women.
When elected officials remain disproportionately white, as the Reflective Democracy Campaign found in a recent study¹, they tend to leave communities of color on the margins.

The same holds true in philanthropy. Organized philanthropy represents institutions of the wealthy, and giving across the board is increasingly skewed toward the rich, as reported by *Inside Philanthropy*.³ Research by the D5 Coalition, Council on Foundations and other studies have also shown that despite years of investment in diversity, equity and inclusion, foundation trustees and executives remain overwhelmingly white and male.⁴

Funding to benefit under-resourced communities inevitably raises questions of power. Improving the lives of those on the downside of power necessarily entails increasing their own agency and ability to change the rules to better reflect their needs and interests, which ultimately benefits all of us.⁵ It also entails re-examining the ways funders use their own power and privileged status, and the ways they relate to marginalized communities.

“Power is the ability to change the rules.”

- Rashad Robinson in *Fast Company*²

USE POWER MOVES TO INCREASE YOUR EFFECTIVENESS AND HAVE GREATER IMPACT ON THE ISSUES AND COMMUNITIES YOU CARE ABOUT

- Examine how you are using power in your internal operations, grantmaking and external relationships.
- Incorporate timely input, tapping the knowledge and experience of your priority communities and of the nonprofits that work with them.
- Collect the information you need to think expansively and strategically about how to solve complex problems in partnership with others.
- Make intentional choices about how to leverage your power, privilege and resources with humility to make the world a better place.

WIELDING POWER

SHARING POWER

BUILDING POWER

POWER MOVES INVITES
YOU TO EXPLORE THREE
DIMENSIONS OF POWER



BUILDING POWER

Supporting systemic change by funding civic engagement, advocacy and community organizing among marginalized communities

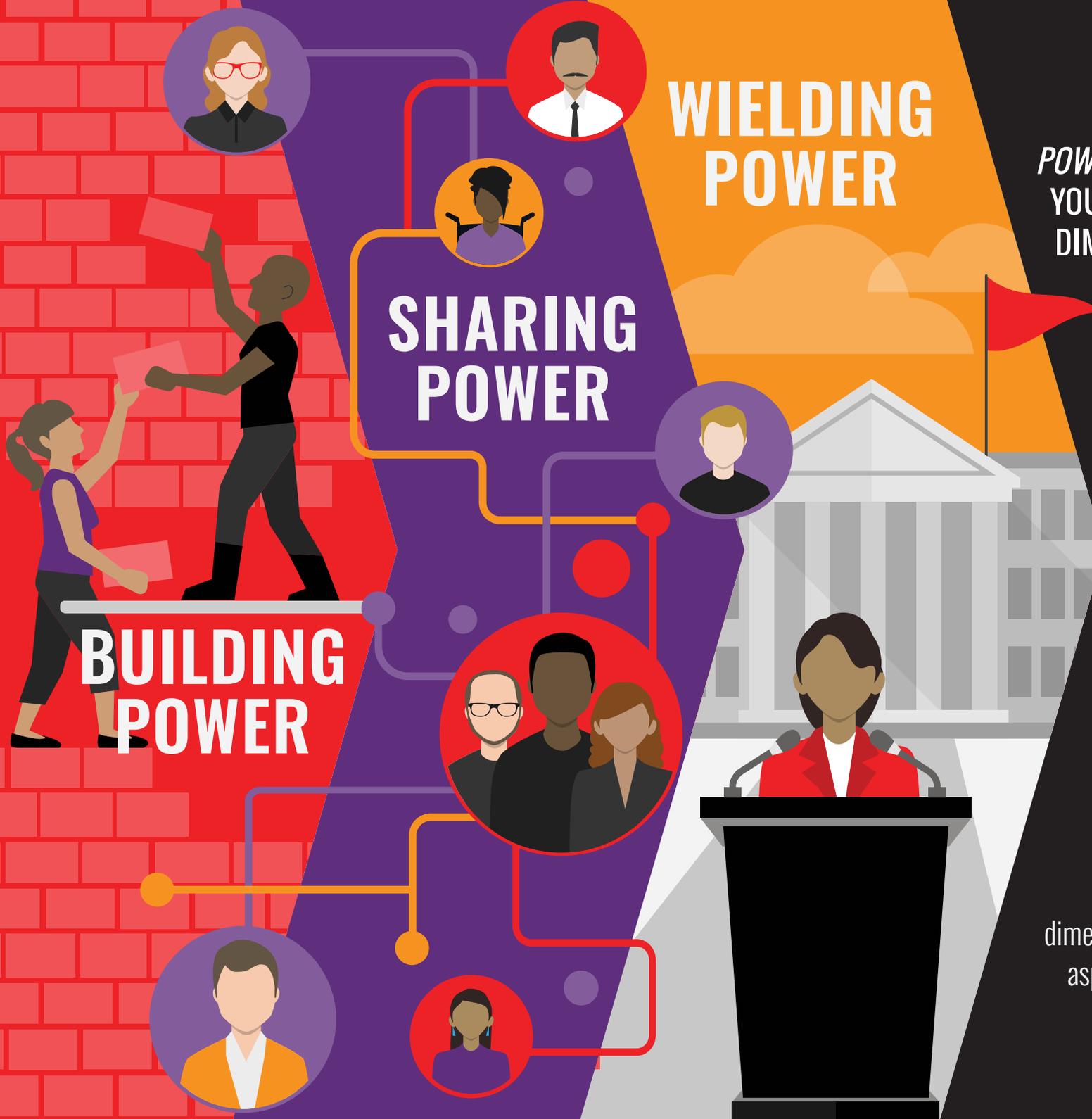
SHARING POWER

Nurturing transparent, trusting relationships and co-creating strategies with stakeholders

WIELDING POWER

Exercising public leadership beyond grantmaking to create equitable, catalytic change

Together, these three dimensions represent the highest aspiration for grantmaking that advances equity & justice



POWER MOVES IS FOR YOU

Do you want to ensure that your grantmaking is leaving a lasting positive legacy that makes the world a better place? Then this toolkit is for you.

WHO IS THIS GUIDE DESIGNED FOR?

Power Moves is designed for foundations that want to exercise the power they have to make change. It is intended for any grantmaker – or advisor to a grantmaker – who cares about marginalized communities and wants to more effectively advance justice and equity. It will benefit funders who value community engagement and want deeper partnerships, along with those who value community-centered solutions and want greater impact. Wherever you are on your philanthropic leadership journey, this toolkit can help you take stock and identify new insights – particularly if you engage with the material with an open mind and curiosity.

WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME TO USE *POWER MOVES*?

For *Power Moves* to be truly helpful, the right time is when the individual or institutional users are ready to ask themselves hard questions, ask their constituents the same hard questions and be ready to receive honest, perhaps tough, answers and make strategic changes accordingly. To determine whether it is the right time for you or your institution to use these resources, **take the brief readiness assessment on page 68.**

WHY SHARE YOUR INSIGHTS?

Power Moves grew out of NCRP's Philamplify project, which was rooted in the tenet that funders who receive honest feedback and share the results of that feedback pursue smarter strategies, make better grants and build stronger relationships.⁶ In this spirit, we encourage toolkit users to model transparency and openness by sharing the results of their self-assessment with colleagues, constituents and the public.



“This is more than a toolkit. It is a guide offering multiple points of entry for foundations who want to unpack their translation of privilege into power and the ways which that power can intentionally advance social justice and equity. The structure of the toolkit is a road map for those beginning their journey and landmarks and reminders for those further along. It is a solid and needed contribution to the continued evolution of foundation practice.”

- Jara Dean-Coffey
Founder and Principal, Luminare Group
Power Moves Advisory Committee Member

THE ORIGINS OF PHILAMPLIFY AND THIS TOOLKIT

In 2009, NCRP released aspirational standards for social justice grantmaking, *Criteria for Philanthropy at its Best*. These criteria were quantitative, easily measured and benchmarked against peers. Next, we delved deeply into best practices through two series of reports:

- Seven place-based studies documenting the return on investment of funding advocacy and community organizing, summarized in *Leveraging Limited Dollars*.
- Four issue-focused reports on high-impact strategies for philanthropy in education, health, arts and the environment, summarized in *Real Results*.

These reports serve as distilled best practice guides that lift up key lessons drawn from extensive data analysis and hundreds of interviews with nonprofit leaders and funders.

Building on this body of work, NCRP launched Philamplify in 2013. This initiative created a new set of philanthropy best practice assessment measures and methods that offer a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of foundation goals, strategies

and practice to complement the *Criteria*. Philamplify has several innovative features:

- **Focus on justice and equity:** Philamplify assesses the extent to which funders practice strategic, social justice philanthropy. It examines how funders use all of the tools at their disposal to change the systems that perpetuate inequity, with leadership of the very communities harmed by inequities. Philamplify studies how funders include those communities to shape, implement and measure progress on social change grantmaking goals and strategies.
- **Optional cooperation:** NCRP invited foundations to participate in the process but conducted each assessment regardless of whether the foundation agreed to be “philamplified.” All foundations we had contact with found the feedback and recommendations useful, whether or not they chose to participate in the process.
- **Stakeholder feedback:** The methodology included an anonymous survey of all the foundation’s grantees for the three most recent years of grantmaking, coupled with 40–50 confidential interviews with key stakeholders.
- **Public results:** Philamplify publicly shared all assessment results on an

interactive online platform and invited commentary and debate.

Philamplify applied the assessment framework to independently and thoroughly assess a dozen foundations, offering unsolicited yet actionable feedback that most of these grantmakers used to inform and change practice.

Drawing on surveys of more than 1,800 nonprofits across the country as well as hundreds of in-depth interviews with nonprofits, foundations and other stakeholders, Philamplify data offer rich insights on grantmaking, incorporating the critical perspective of foundation stakeholders.

While many funders may not self-identify as “social justice” grantmakers, they incorporate the values and practices lifted up in our research or aspire to do so. Demand for Philamplify materials, a desire to scale the initiative, NCRP’s commitment to drive resources to social movements and the changing policy and political landscape all contributed to the decision to develop a Philamplify self-assessment tool.

In the process of developing the toolkit, NCRP reframed the original assessment measures within three dimensions of power.

HOW IS THIS GUIDE ORGANIZED?

Power Moves is organized by each of the three power dimensions, including:

- A brief description of the topic.
- Best practice guidelines.
- Sample questions to gather internal data on that topic.
- Sample questions to solicit feedback.
- A discussion guide to help make meaning of the data and feedback, and reflect on progress.
- A next steps tool, which can be used for one dimension or all three.
- Tips for implementation.

It also includes a list of ready tools and handy references that will help in your assessment journey, such as:

- Glossary of relevant terms.
- Readiness assessment.
- Sample assessment timeline and process.
- Tips on gathering feedback.
- Next steps worksheet.
- Case studies on best practices for each power dimension.

On the *Power Moves* website, check out additional examples of best practices, a comprehensive list of resources from around the sector, and sample worksheets, templates and other assessment instruments.

HOW SHOULD I USE THIS GUIDE?

Power Moves can be applied flexibly based on your needs, and available time and resources. You can choose to work on all three dimensions of power or start with one; they can be explored individually and in any order. You can also choose to apply this toolkit to one grantmaking program, several or your entire portfolio.

The amount of time you allocate to complete the assessment and reflection process may depend on several factors: the number, size and scale of grantmaking program(s) included in your assessment; the number of power dimensions you decide to explore; and the human resources you are able to allocate to this process. An assessment across all dimensions of power will likely take at least six months.

The sample timeline and steps on page 69 offer guidance but can be modified based on these considerations.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF PRIVILEGE AND RISK IN EXERCISING FOUNDATION POWER?

Any self-reflective process about a foundation's use of power to achieve impact and advance equity must delve into two important and related topics: privilege and risk.

Every foundation wields power by virtue of its position relative to grant seekers. Because power is not often discussed openly and directly, it tends to grow in unintentional ways that mirror and exacerbate dominant power structures. Too often, foundation leaders deny they have power at the same time that they act from it – unchecked and unable to grow and change. To interrupt that dynamic and set the stage for honest exploration and choice-making, this guide leads with a power lens and applies it throughout the sections that follow.

Foundations are unique entities that enjoy privilege in numerous ways, starting with their tax-exempt wealth. Beyond compliance with IRS rules, they experience very little public oversight and are not

accountable to any other constituency. The people who run foundations enjoy privilege, too. A large proportion of trustees and CEOs are white and therefore enjoy personal and positional privilege on top of institutional privilege. Whether they are aware of it or not, they likely reflect and reinforce the dominant white culture. And as reported in *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, other kinds of privilege come into play based on nationality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation and disability status.⁷

Even if a foundation has board and staff who are people of color, women, LGBTQ and/or have a disability, it is likely that the organizational culture and the way the foundation views its place in society are shaped by white, heteronormative values.

This embedded, seemingly invisible culture and privilege inform how a foundation decides what is “normal,” “good,” “effective” or “risky.”⁸

From the perspective of those communities the foundation seeks to benefit, the “risks” to the foundation of using or sharing its power may seem negligible relative to the risk of nonaction or to the risks that marginalized people are forced to take every day. For example, when a foundation adopts a new program or strategy that doesn't turn out as planned, the community or grantees are more likely to be judged as “failures” than the foundation, and they are more likely to be harmed when grant funds are pulled and the initiative is abandoned.⁹

On the other hand, a foundation's leaders may have reasons to be cautious about when and how to use their privilege and power. Some are concerned about reputational damage. Others fear that using their voice publicly will drown out or displace community voice. They intentionally stay out of the limelight so that grantees' work can shine. Discussing these concerns with nonprofit partners and community leaders can help the funder decide whether, when and how to use its power and privilege responsibly.

Ultimately, risk-taking in philanthropy requires a willingness to innovate, knowing that things may not go as planned, and this need not mean "failure." Foundations can move beyond one-off or episodic risk-taking to make it an integral part of the foundation's culture, which means re-defining risk and how the institution handles it. This toolkit highlights foundation leaders who have done just that.

The fact that some of the best exemplars of bold action are leaders of color should not lead white leaders to think it is somehow "easier" for those from marginalized communities to take risks. If anything, the opposite is true, given that people of color experience differential consequences than do whites for similar actions. And it should also not lead white leaders to think that they are off the hook – they are also responsible for taking risks to make communities more just and equitable and are in a more advantaged position to do so.

TAKING THE RISK ON RISK

"One of the things that's been exciting here in the last couple of years is that we've been having a very explicit conversation with our trustees and our staff about risk. This was the subject of a two-hour conversation at our March board meeting this year. Risk is a fact of life, and we all manage it in a variety of ways. Some risk you can anticipate, so you plan for the potential of those risks, you get fire insurance. Some risk you can't anticipate.

We have the challenge of trying to figure out how to leverage the resources – the small resources that we've got – to have the biggest possible effect. ... And that leads you to think: It's not just about the money. It's about other assets that we can invest: reputation, convening power, knowledge, capacity-building and risk. Sometimes, if you want to create major change, you have to take extra risk to do it. We've been trying to think about our risk posture in a 360-degree way that looks at all those factors."

- Stephen Heintz
President, Rockefeller Brothers Fund¹⁰

WHAT IS RISK AND HOW DO WE ASSESS IT?

THE OPEN ROAD ALLIANCE DESCRIBES RISK AS FOLLOWS:

- Risk is the likelihood that an event will occur that will cause some type of undesirable effect. Risk events can occur anywhere, anytime. They may be predictable or not, controllable or not, and caused by internal or external variables.
- Risk exists along a spectrum, and identical events may be deemed more or less “risky” by different parties depending on their perspectives. In other words, the same risk is often perceived and experienced differently by different people and organizations.
- While labeling something a risk implies the possibility of a negative effect, taking that risk can be a profoundly positive choice. Risk can lead to reward.¹¹

To set the stage for an honest exploration and choice-making about power, have an internal discussion about how privilege affects the perceived risks of using power.

The foundation can then develop policies and practices, informed by its constituencies, that take advantage of the opportunities and mitigate the risks of using institutional privilege, especially potential unintended harms to grantees and communities.

Finally, a foundation can take a leadership role in opening up peer conversations about institutional privilege, its implications for philanthropic leadership, risk-taking and potential positive or negative consequences to grantees and communities.



Consider a scenario:

Your foundation accumulated its wealth from fossil fuel production. Today, it is fighting climate change and considering whether to divest from fossil fuels, potentially jeopardizing its assets and its brand, as did the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

- Who currently defines what is “risky?” Who should?
- Who weighs the social or institutional costs and benefits of taking action? How real are those risks?
- Who looks at the opportunity costs of action or nonaction to particular stakeholder groups such as those most affected by the issue? What about those with most power in the institution?
- How real are the personal, professional and institutional risks in taking action?
- How does that compare with the risk to grantees and communities?

INTRODUCTION

Section End Notes

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2. Adele Peters, "'Power Is The Ability To Change The Rules': How Rashad Robinson Holds Companies Accountable," *Fast Company*, October 25, 2017, <https://www.fastcompany.com/40474488/power-is-the-ability-to-change-the-rules-how-rashad-robinson-holds-companies-accountable>.
3. David Callahan, "Tilting Upward: Skewed Giving Trends and Inequality in the Nonprofit Sector," *Inside Philanthropy*, October 28, 2017, <https://www.insidephilanthropy.com/home/2017/10/28/inequality-philanthropy-civil-society>.
4. Council on Foundations, "The State of Change: An Analysis of Women and People of Color in the Philanthropic Sector," 2016, <https://www.cof.org/content/state-change-analysis-women-and-people-color-philanthropic-sector>. Also see p. 8 of the D5 Coalition's "State of the Work: Stories from the Movement to Advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion," April 2016, <http://www.d5coalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/D5-SOTW-2016-Final-web-pages.pdf>.
5. According to John A. Powell, targeted universalism is the use of targeted strategies (designed to address disparities for specific populations) to achieve universal goals, in contrast with the usual approach of universal strategies (policies that make no distinctions among different population groups) to achieve universal goals. See the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society explanatory video about targeted universalism: <https://haasinstitute.berkeley.edu/targeteduniversalism>.
6. This tenet is well articulated by the Fund for Shared Insight: "Shared Insight emerged from the belief that we as funders are the most effective and can do the most good in the world if we are more open – open to sharing with each other what we learn, and open to listening to, and acting on, input from our grantees and the people we seek to help." More at <https://www.fundforsharedinsight.org/about/>.
7. For example, see Alex Daniels, "Foundation Salaries Vary Widely," *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, February 2, 2018, <https://www.philanthropy.com/article/Foundation-Salaries-Vary/242421>. "More than three quarters of all full-time employees at foundations are women, the survey found, but only 56 percent of chief executives were women. People who are racial or ethnic minorities account for 26 percent of foundation staffers, but they are the boss of only about 11 percent of the organizations surveyed. And only 1 percent of full-time staff members were reported as having a disability."
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9. Maggie Potapchuk, Sally Leiderman, Donna Bivens, Barbara Major, *Flipping the Script: White Privilege and Community Building* (MP Associates, Inc. and the Center for Assessment and Policy Development, 2005), p. 73, <http://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/potapchuk1.pdf>: "What foundations don't understand is that when you label a program a failure in a community, you have labeled the community a failure."
10. Vivien Hoexter and Linda C. Hartley, "'Risk Is a Fact of Life.' A Conversation with Stephen Heintz of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund," *Inside Philanthropy*, February 15, 2018, <https://www.insidephilanthropy.com/home/2018/2/15/risk-is-a-fact-of-life-a-conversation-with-stephen-heintz-of-the-rockefeller-brothers-fund>.
11. Maya Winklestein and Shelley Whelpton, "Foundations Don't Know What They're Risking," *The Foundation Review*, Vol 9 (2) (2017), p. 93-108, <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1368&context=trf>.



BUILDING POWER

Supporting systemic change by
funding civic engagement, advocacy
and community organizing among
marginalized communities

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BUILD POWER?

Many funders have been inspired recently to incorporate principles of diversity, equity and inclusion in their grantmaking for greater impact.

There is a robust list of resources you can use to begin deploying equity-oriented grantmaking on the [Power Moves online resources page](#).

This section will help you assess whether your grantmaking is in fact supporting marginalized communities in building and shifting power in meaningful and intersectional ways.

Our research has shown that funders who are successfully making grants that build power and advance equity for marginalized communities follow these guidelines:

1 | THEY ARE EXPLICIT ABOUT ADVANCING SYSTEMIC EQUITY FOR SPECIFIC MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES IN THEIR GOALS, STRATEGIES AND OPERATIONS.

Their grantmaking is informed by an equity analysis and explicitly addresses disparate outcomes, impacts, access, treatment or opportunity for marginalized communities. Our research showed that funders need to focus both on systemic change and on equitable benefit for specific marginalized communities to make meaningful progress. A commitment to one without the other may not succeed in rooting out and ending disparities.

Also, foundations that want to effectively pursue equity grantmaking also seek to embody equity, diversity and inclusion values and practices in their internal operations.

TIP *Philanthropic foundations that were explicit about equity aims, and about whom they sought equity for, were more likely to use systemic change strategies such as policy advocacy and therefore more likely to show progress and impact in their issue area.¹² For example, the Lumina Foundation for Education and The California Endowment¹³ not only incorporated equity language into their goals and strategies but prioritized specific marginalized communities in their respective grantmaking issue areas. Both fund advocacy and also directly advocate with policymakers around their equity goals.*

2 THEY FUND UNDER-RESOURCED COMMUNITIES TO BUILD POWER AND BE THEIR OWN AGENTS OF CHANGE.

They are funding strategies that change systems and policies to solve problems over the long term and expand power and access for marginalized communities, thus supporting those communities to take the lead. Funding systemic interventions is important, such as creating new norms within systems and fostering better alignment within and across systems. In addition, funders can support grassroots advocacy, civic engagement and organizing to create transformative, sustainable change. These strategies are necessary complements for foundations that have been funding social services and want to evolve their grantmaking strategies for more systemic impact and influence.

TIP Our study¹⁴ of 110 nonprofits in 13 states provides data on the value of funding power building. It documented \$26.6 billion in policy impacts (such as increased wages and Medicaid expansion) won by organizations and their allies over five years – a return on investment of \$115 for every dollar of foundation-funded advocacy, community organizing and civic engagement. In many cases, organizations that provide programs and services also organize their constituents to advocate with decision makers to improve services and address root causes of disparities. See the video we created for our assessment of The Kresge Foundation¹⁵, featuring grantee PUSH Buffalo.

3 THEY FUND CROSS-CUTTING APPROACHES. BUILDING POWER MAY NOT FIT NEATLY INTO NARROWLY DEFINED ISSUE AREAS.

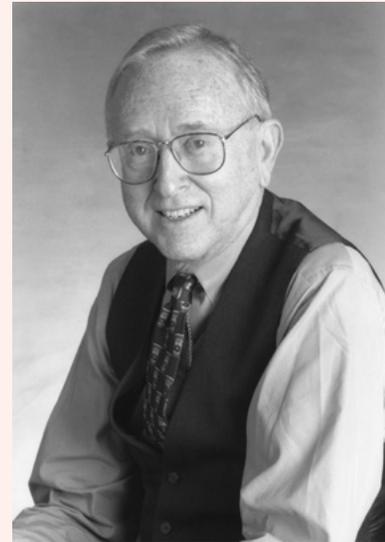
They reach out across various sectors of society, issue silos and constituencies in partnership with others to achieve equitable impact. Inequity spans many issues, systems and communities. Foundations that foster cross-cutting approaches internally among their programs and externally among grant partners will be able to seize on opportunities for greater impact to address complex problems.

TIP Check out NCRP's *Smashing Silos*¹⁶ report on the impact of funding multi-issue organizing, which notes, "Unlike single-issue campaigns in which people often bring to the table their preferred issues and solutions, successful multi-issue and multi-constituency efforts begin with the values and relationships of similarly situated people. This allows individuals and organizations to set aside ideology or the cause of the moment, if only briefly, to achieve larger shared purposes."

4 | THEY FUND FOR THE LONG TERM WHILE ALSO BEING RESPONSIVE TO EMERGING OR URGENT OPPORTUNITIES.

Flexible, long-term funding shows trust in the grantee and supports agile policy advocacy and organizing better than short-term, project-specific grants. Beyond the traditional call for proposals, funders can use rapid response funds, challenge grants, “innovation” grants; cooperative grant programs rather than competition; and regranteeing through grassroots funders and nonprofit intermediaries to identify and support emerging and cutting-edge organizations and leaders, including those that don’t already have an established 501c3 nonprofit.

TIP Learn from the many funders who are adapting grantmaking processes to be more responsive to emerging issues and movements,¹⁷ such as using interviews and videos applications and faster grant-making decisions and disbursal processes. For example, in early 2017 The California Wellness Foundation launched its new Advance and Defend program to help grantees respond to the post-election policy landscape. The foundation revisited how the staff work as a team and changed grant procedures to more rapidly award \$16 million in grants.¹⁸



“We invest in strategic organizations and exceptional leaders.

Those organizations and leaders are the experts and agents of change, and we view our role as providing them with meaningful levels of general support over the long-term so they can build their institutional capacity.”

- Herb Sandler
Co-Founder and President, Sandler Foundation

Statement from when the foundation accepted the 2016 NCRP Impact Award

LEARNING FROM HILL-SNOWDON FOUNDATION

“One of the reasons we finally agreed on organizing was because we all agreed on the fundamental democratic nature of it. And in some ways, it’s a lot easier for a family with divergent views to agree on community organizing and the basic idea that the people who are most affected by a problem should have some say in the solutions. We may not agree on education reform – whether charter schools or standardized testing are good or bad – but we can agree that the families with kids who are falling behind in failing schools know best about what they need to achieve.”

- Ashley Snowden Blanchard
*Trustee, Hill-Snowdon Foundation*¹⁹

Currently, this D.C.-based funder makes grants to organizations that use multi-generational approaches to address issues facing low-income youth of color and other marginalized youth, and multi-issue organizing that promotes family-supporting and community-strengthening jobs.

A grant partner that embodies these cross-cutting strategies is Caring Across Generations, an innovative social movement organization building powerful alliances across constituencies to create change. Caring Across Generations has united elders and people with disabilities, family caregivers and paid caregivers, to fight for quality long-term care, and better worker training, wages and working conditions. Together, this alliance has passed groundbreaking legislation to expand domestic worker rights and improve care.

The foundation’s chief executive, Nat Chioke Williams, has exercised sector leadership on equity by creating both a fund and funder’s network to support Black-led organizing. He has noted that Black-led organizations face a higher bar when applying for grants, “It has often been easier or more allowable for philanthropy to support white-led organizations working in Black communities than Black-led organizations.”²⁰

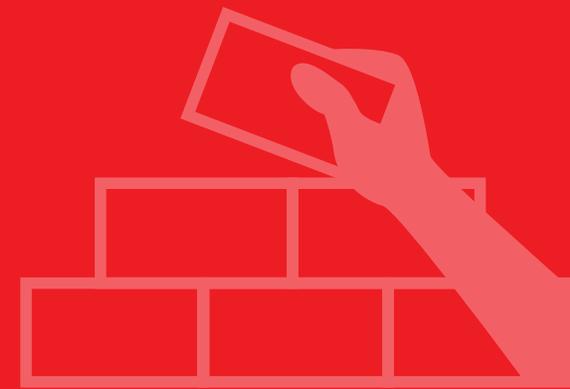
BUILDING POWER

Kick-Off Discussion

Begin your Building Power journey by making sure that everyone on your team is on the same page in understanding equity and power.

HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR DISCUSSIONS

1. What does it mean for us to advance equity? To build power?
2. What are our positive associations with the idea of building power and equity? What most excites us about this approach to grantmaking?
3. What are our negative associations? What assumptions or fears underlie them?



BUILDING POWER**SELF-ASSESSMENT DATA GATHERING TOOLS**

The following sets of questions can guide you in collecting internal data and external feedback. After you've gathered all information, designate one or more staff to review it and make meaning of it, answering "What does it tell us?" and "What are the implications?" so that the discussion group can reflect and begin to answer "What do we want to do about it?"

A | INTERNAL DATA GATHERING

The purpose of internal review is to assess the extent to which your institution demonstrates a commitment to systemic change and equity for under-resourced communities, strategies that engage beneficiary communities as change agents, flexible and responsive grant support, and funding across program areas, issues and communities. Because effective equity grantmaking requires an internal commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, these topics are addressed here as well.

Demographic data on staff and board composition and leadership, internal documents and interviews with staff and board all will help you gather data to answer the questions below. Relevant internal documents include strategic plans, grant guidelines, requests for proposals, application forms, grants data (including demographics of beneficiary organizations) and grant purpose summaries. If you already submit grant data to the Foundation Center, the Center may be able to provide multi-year trend data on your giving for social justice and marginalized communities.

✓ INTERNAL QUESTIONS CHECKLIST

Here are key questions to answer through internal data gathering:

1. **To what extent does the foundation embody diversity and inclusion?**
 - a. Are there internal diversity, equity and inclusion goals?
 - b. Which board and staff have lived experience and reflect the communities they serve, including in leadership roles?
 - c. Is there board and staff diversity related to income, wealth, race, ethnicity, gender, LGBTQ, disability status and age?
 - d. Is the foundation staff culturally competent? Does it understand and seek to address implicit bias?
 - e. Does our organization solicit confidential or anonymous feedback from staff and board about progress on equity and inclusion goals?
 - f. Are staff and board held accountable to equity goals through internal assessment and evaluation?

2. What does decision-making look like at the foundation?

- a. How is power distributed?
- b. Is there an environment for staff of color to be empowered to make decisions? Other marginalized groups? How is that measured?
- c. Is there an intentional pipeline for staff of color to progress into senior levels of management? Other marginalized groups, including talented people with disabilities?
- d. What is the retention rate of staff of color? What are the reasons why they leave? How has the organization responded to feedback?

3. How does our grantmaking support equity and social change?

- a. Are the board, executives and staff in agreement on equity and systems change goals? Are there stated equity goals in grantmaking?
- b. Have we prioritized specific populations for benefit in our grant guidelines?
- c. What data and research on disparities and inequities (issue-focused and/or place-based) have informed our grantmaking goals and strategies?
- d. How have we incorporated knowledge and wisdom of nonprofits and communities that are directly affected by these problems?
- e. Do we have shared understanding with our grant partners about what it means to work toward equitable systems change?
- f. Have we completed a power analysis to understand the foundation's role in the ecosystem we seek to influence and our grantees' place in it?
- g. How knowledgeable are our staff about advocacy, organizing, civic engagement and movement building?

- h. Do we have data systems that enable us to track what proportion of grants and grant dollars are benefiting specific marginalized populations and what proportion go to organizations that are led by marginalized groups? What does that data tell us?
- i. Similarly, can we track percentage of grants and grant dollars that are supporting systemic change strategies, including advocacy, community organizing and civic engagement? What does the data indicate?
- j. How many of the foundation's grantees are organizations that are led by people of color? Women? Other constituencies the foundation highlights in its equity work?
- k. Are our and our grantees' work accessible to people with physical, vision, hearing and other disabilities?
- l. How does the foundation invest in human capital and leadership development for those on the front lines of fighting for social change?
- m. How do we invest in organizational sustainability for long-term success? For example, do we provide multi-year general support grants?
- n. Do our grant agreements provide grantees with the maximum legal latitude to engage in advocacy and non-partisan voter engagement?
- o. How do our internal structures support cross-issue or cross-portfolio grantmaking?
- p. Are we making any grants that cut across program areas, issues or constituencies?
- q. Do we have any grant programs or processes that enable us to respond flexibly and quickly to emerging community needs and opportunities?

B | EXTERNAL DATA GATHERING

Surveys or interviews with grant partners and interviews with knowledgeable peer funders and experts on equity and policy change relevant to your issue and geographic location can provide important perspectives on the extent to which you are effectively addressing any stated goals around equity and systemic change. Grant partners and community leaders can give feedback on the extent to which your grant programs support community-led change.

Also ask grantees and peers which funder(s) stand out as leaders in building power for equitable systems change. Knowing this will help you identify models and best practices down the road.

SAMPLE SURVEY OR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR GRANTEES, PEER FUNDERS AND OTHER EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

1. What evidence do you see that [insert your institution's name]'s current goals and strategies (in relevant program area) are likely to:
 - a. Achieve explicit benefit for marginalized communities?
 - b. Result in more equitable systems that improve outcomes for marginalized communities?
 - c. Support and empower marginalized communities to define solutions and lead change?
2. How well has the foundation implemented its strategies? What is it doing well? What could it be doing better?
3. Could you comment specifically on the effectiveness of the foundation's strategies in addressing systemic inequities?
4. What are the specific outcomes or signs of progress (or lack thereof) that tell you whether the foundation is making a difference?
5. How knowledgeable and experienced are foundation program staff to work on equity issues? To support advocacy, organizing and civic engagement?
6. How much and how well does this foundation work with other funders? With other sectors of society?
7. To what extent do you see the foundation directly engaging marginalized communities to create change? (Examples of direct engagement are funding nonprofits that organize and empower those communities, inviting communities into foundation's strategic discussions and decisions, creating forums for communities to voice their concerns, etc.)
8. How effectively does the foundation partner with communities of color?
9. How much does it support community-driven collaboration, especially building bridges across issues and constituencies?
10. How does the foundation help support the priorities of marginalized communities (or intended beneficiaries), even when the foundation's own priorities may differ? What if the community's priorities are at odds with other powerful decision-makers (i.e. in government or business)?

BUILDING POWER

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Once you have gathered and synthesized internal and external data and feedback, the next step is group reflection: What does this information tell you about your current approaches, and how might you apply new insights in your strategies and practices for greater effectiveness? Below are some questions to use, tweak or add to for your group reflection.

1 | WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Get on the same page by presenting key lessons and insights from the data and feedback. Then ask the group:

- a. Are there any notable divergences in the data: divergences internally and also divergences between internal data and external feedback?
- b. What surprised us about internal data and external feedback on this topic?
- c. What evidence shows that the organization is doing well? What are areas for growth or improvement?
- d. Do we have clarity and shared agreement (internally and with external partners) on whom we are seeking to advance equity for and why? How does the organization demonstrate a commitment to equity?
- e. To what extent do we have a shared understanding with grantees about how to build power to advance equity? Who else needs to be part of shaping and achieving that shared vision for justice?
- f. How are we thinking and acting with an understanding of complex systems and their intersections across issues and affected communities? How do grantmaking and partnerships reflect this understanding?

2 | WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

- a. Which of the toolkit's equity-oriented power-building strategies could help us better achieve our goals? The goals of our grant partners? Which do we want to learn more about?
- b. What are some outside-the-box ideas we've heard that could help us support power building among marginalized communities?
- c. What are our fears or perceived obstacles against engaging in any of these activities? What additional information would we need to decide which strategies to pursue?
- d. If we are doing all or most of these already, which ones would we like to do better?

At the end of the discussion, take a look at the following visual and reach a consensus about where your institution is on the power-building journey, and where you would like to be in the next several years. Then see which considerations for implementation and power-building examples may be helpful. Finally, if you have started to brainstorm future actions, record those so you can revisit them as you finalize your next steps.



WHERE ARE YOU ON THIS DIMENSION OF POWER? WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE?

AT THE BEGINNING OF BUILDING POWER

- Board nor staff reflect communities served.
- Has no stated equity commitment in grantmaking.
- Grants are for general community benefit.
- Grants address short-term alleviation of problems.
- Strategies do not consider ways to shift or build community power.
- Grantmaking programs are siloed.
- Grant agreements forbid advocacy.
- Few or no grants support power building activities such as organizing and civic engagement.
- Does not assess internal operations and processes with equity lens.
- Does not consider accessibility for people with disabilities.

JOURNEY
AHEAD





BUILDING POWER



**EQUITY
THIS WAY!**

People of all abilities can access grant programs equally.

Evaluation and data systems support equity goals.

Internal decision-making prioritizes lived experience and equity goals.

Grant processes are responsive to social movements and urgent needs.

Board and staff reflect commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Grantmaking has explicit equity and systems change goals for specific communities.

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Creatively funds and builds bridges across issue silos and constituencies. | Grant agreements support advocacy. |
|--|------------------------------------|

Significantly funds civic engagement, community organizing and advocacy.

BUILDING POWER

CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Now that you've completed your Building Power self-assessment, this section will help you implement the next steps. Here are some issues to consider as you shift your grantmaking strategies and practices:

1 AMELIORATE OR PREVENT COMPETITION BETWEEN MARGINALIZED GROUPS FOR LIMITED PHILANTHROPIC RESOURCES.

Although historical funding of white-led organizations to achieve generalized community benefit has had limited results, shifting funding and power to advance equity for specific marginalized groups may cause other constituencies to feel left out.²¹

We have seen these dynamics play out in harmful ways, especially when politicians employ “divide and conquer” tactics to sow racial divisions. It’s important for funders to be thoughtful, nuanced and patient in pivoting grantmaking strategies for long-term systemic change.

Place-based funders as well as others may encounter fear and anxiety when they make a public commitment to funding racial equity or other kinds of equity.

THESE STEPS CAN HELP YOU RESPOND TO SUCH FEARS:

a. **Publicly acknowledge and address the anxieties of your constituencies.** Be honest and direct about changes in funding priorities. Let your constituencies know these will be handled with empathy and respect. As Meyer Memorial Trust went through an

extensive process of listening and learning to more fully embrace equity, then-CEO Doug Stamm used the foundation’s blog to communicate openly about how the foundation was evolving.

- b. **Ask yourself, “Who else is marginalized and why?”** Whatever your mission, whether your focus is a region or an identity group or an issue, asking this question will help you prioritize your strategies and grants most effectively among unique or intersecting groups. The Northwest Health Foundation realized it was not doing an effective job of engaging and serving people with disabilities, causing it to change how it communicates, conducts outreach and utilizes other strategies to be more inclusive.
- c. **Allocate greater funding toward equity and systems change.** Examine how a higher annual payout rate can support your equity goals and encourage other grantmakers to do so also.
- d. **Strategize beyond your own funding portfolios.** Help grow and mobilize other philanthropic resources to meet multiple equity aims.
- e. **Forge common ground.** Convene grantees from different constituencies and give them the resources to work together to enable them to jointly craft solutions that ultimately will benefit the whole community. Unity around shared values rather than division borne of anxiety about resources will help achieve progress towards equity.

2 UNDERSTAND THE UNIQUE ASPECTS OF FUNDING ADVOCACY, ORGANIZING AND MOVEMENT BUILDING.

Transforming grantmaking to build power and support movements is complicated. Be ready to:

- a. **Be in the know.** Make sure you are well-versed in the legal parameters of funding advocacy and civic engagement, which are quite broad. As Funders Committee for Civic Participation has documented, integrating year-round voter engagement with organizing and advocacy is a proven strategy for successful systemic change.²²
- b. **Be patient.** This type of grantmaking requires tenacity: Be ready to make long-term flexible investments in power-building organizations and to ride out the ups and downs and messiness of social change.
- c. **Be a true partner.** Having a trusting, honest relationship with grantees is critical. You'll also need to manage expectations of foundation trustees.
- d. **Be realistic.** Changing systems is not a direct, straightforward process and requires a flexible, adaptive approach to defining and measuring progress. A proliferation of advocacy evaluation tools can help grantmakers and social change organizations measure progress, and they can help funder boards recognize signs of impact. Refer to an online list of resources.²³

3 EVALUATE YOUR GRANTMAKING WITH AN EQUITY LENS.

Funders should question the standard approach to philanthropic evaluation, which has many embedded orthodoxies that can work against equity and power-sharing goals. You'll need to share control over the evaluation process, co-decide with grantees what success looks like and how success will be measured, invest evaluation dollars in culturally inclusive conceptions of "credible" data and rethink who is "credentialed" as evaluators and experts.

In a seminal framing paper, the Equitable Evaluation Project, led by Luminare Group, Center for Evaluation Innovation and Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy, urged funders to ensure that evaluations embrace the following principles:²⁴

- a. They are in service of and contribute to equity.
- b. They answer critical questions about the impact of a strategy on different populations; how that strategy addresses systemic sources of inequity; and how history and cultural context affect that strategy and existing inequities.
- c. They are designed and implemented in a way that is culturally competent, multiculturally valid and oriented toward participant partnership.

4 | KNOW WHEN TO FUND ORGANIZING OR BE THE COMMUNITY ORGANIZER.

The decision to fund community organizing or civic engagement should be made after a foundation has spent time learning who the key community leaders are and which groups are already effectively engaging constituents in an organized way to build power or have the potential to do so. A funder may assume or conclude that there are no existing groups to invest in or that they aren't effective. Check these assumptions or conclusions: Are they based on preconceived ideas of who has the skill and capacity to organize?

Ultimately, some grantmakers do decide to take on the organizer role. The Colorado Trust completely reorganized its grantmaking programs and teams to better support resident-led health equity work and hired community-based organizers in place of program officers.²⁵ Incentive Community Foundation decided it needed to organize residents, philanthropists and other stakeholders to change the community culture from defeatist dependency to shared stewardship and collective agency.²⁶

Whatever strategy you decide on, make sure that residents and community-based organizations are included in the decision-making process.

5 | ANTICIPATE CONTROVERSY THAT MAY BE STIRRED UP BY ACTIVIST GRANTEEES.

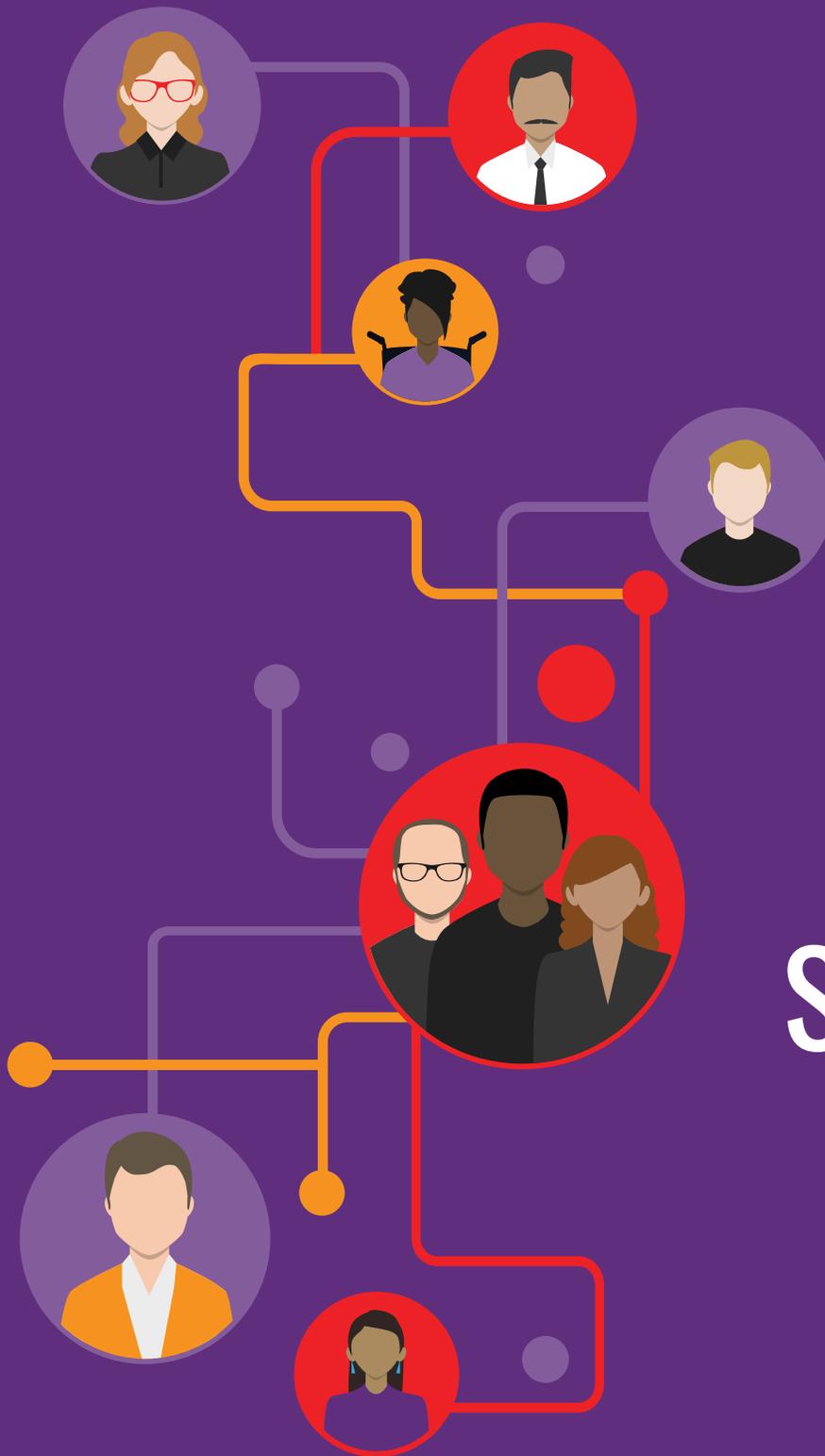
The fear of controversy can discourage a foundation from supporting power-building organizations. Here are ways you can prevent this from becoming a barrier to shifting your strategies and practices:

- a. **Read NCRP's *Freedom Funders* report, then have a board and staff discussion upfront about the role of direct action and civil disobedience in advancing equity.** This can help strengthen their resolve.
- b. **Invite an open, honest conversation with grantees about strategies and tactics.** This will allow the foundation to be prepared for what may arise.
- c. **Make the most of teachable moments.** If a grant partner does stir up controversy that makes someone at your foundation uncomfortable, this is an opportunity to reaffirm your organization's commitment to power building and revisit why these types of tactics are sometimes necessary.

BUILDING POWER

Section End Notes

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14. See Grantmaking for Community Impact Project at <https://www.ncrp.org/publications/grantmaking-for-community-impact-project>.
15. View the video and read The Kresge Foundation assessment by Elizabeth Myrick at <https://www.ncrp.org/initiatives/philamplify/assessments/all-assessments#kresge>.
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22. See Funders Committee for Civic Participation resources, <https://funderscommittee.org/civic-engagement-matters-workshop-toolkit/>.
23. See Alliance for Justice's Bolder Advocacy resources, <https://www.bolderadvocacy.org/tools-for-effective-advocacy/evaluating-advocacy>, and Center for Evaluation Innovation resources, <http://www.evaluationinnovation.org/publications/searchable-database>.
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SHARING POWER

Nurturing transparent, trusting relationships and co-creating strategies with stakeholders

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SHARE POWER?

To achieve sustained community-driven systems change, funders must be prepared to share some of their inherent power.

Often, this means trusting your stakeholders and giving up some control. Sometimes, it will mean giving up a lot of control because nonprofits accustomed to the typical funder-grantee dynamic may not trust you until you do.

Even language can matter. *Power Moves* uses both “grantee” and “grant partner.” Using “grant partner” challenges the top-down power dynamic that defines nonprofits primarily as recipients rather than as collaborators with their funders.

Engaging in power-sharing practices will ultimately affect your grantmaking: As mutual trust grows, you may become more comfortable with grant partners helping you set strategy and define success. You also may be willing to take on more risk, while mitigating risks to them and their communities.

Funders who share power effectively with current and prospective grantees and other community members engage in several practices.

1 | FUNDERS ARE HIGHLY RESPONSIVE, INCLUSIVE AND TRANSPARENT IN COMMUNICATION WITH EXISTING AND PROSPECTIVE GRANTEES.

They build trust and share power through two-way communication and transparency. They adopt inclusive feedback processes that enable grant partners and grant seekers to provide honest, unvarnished input and to know how the foundation used it.²⁷

These funders acknowledge their power relative to grant partners and applicants but try to mitigate that imbalance through more inclusive decision-making, such as co-developing what success looks like and how to define impact. They typically share their theory of change and help grantees show how their work fits into the overall framework, reducing guesswork on the nonprofit’s part. They make sure that grant application, reporting and evaluation processes are useful and not needlessly cumbersome and time consuming.

All of these practices facilitate efficient communication and shared learning while also improving relationships and minimizing the burden on the grantee. At the same time, grant seekers are able to engage with grantmakers' staff even if they don't have a pre-existing relationship.

TIP See *The Whitman Institute's Nine Key Practices of Trust-Based Investment*²⁸ and *Vu Le's take on why trust-based grantmaking helps nonprofits be more effective*.²⁹ Also, check out *New Media Ventures' reflections on creating a more open application process*: "Funding exclusively through referrals can limit what funders see and increase the risk of confirmation bias – one of the reasons white men are so much more likely to get venture capital funding in Silicon Valley. By having an open and transparent application process, heavily marketed to ensure we're getting outside our own bubbles, we've made a tremendous impact on the diversity of our portfolio."³⁰

2 | THEY INVEST IN THE SUCCESS OF THEIR GRANTEES.

One of the most effective ways these funders show trust and cede some control in the partnership is by providing multi-year core support, not just one-year project grants. As Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO) has well documented, this matters to nonprofits because it offers stability and frees up resources otherwise spent chasing grants to be spent on achieving mission. It enables social change organizations to be agile and take risks in response to uncertain policy environments.

These funders also provide other trust-building support such as showing up in the community and at grantee events; giving grantees resources and a say in devising useful, relevant and culturally competent capacity building and evaluation tools; and sharing their connections in the funding world.

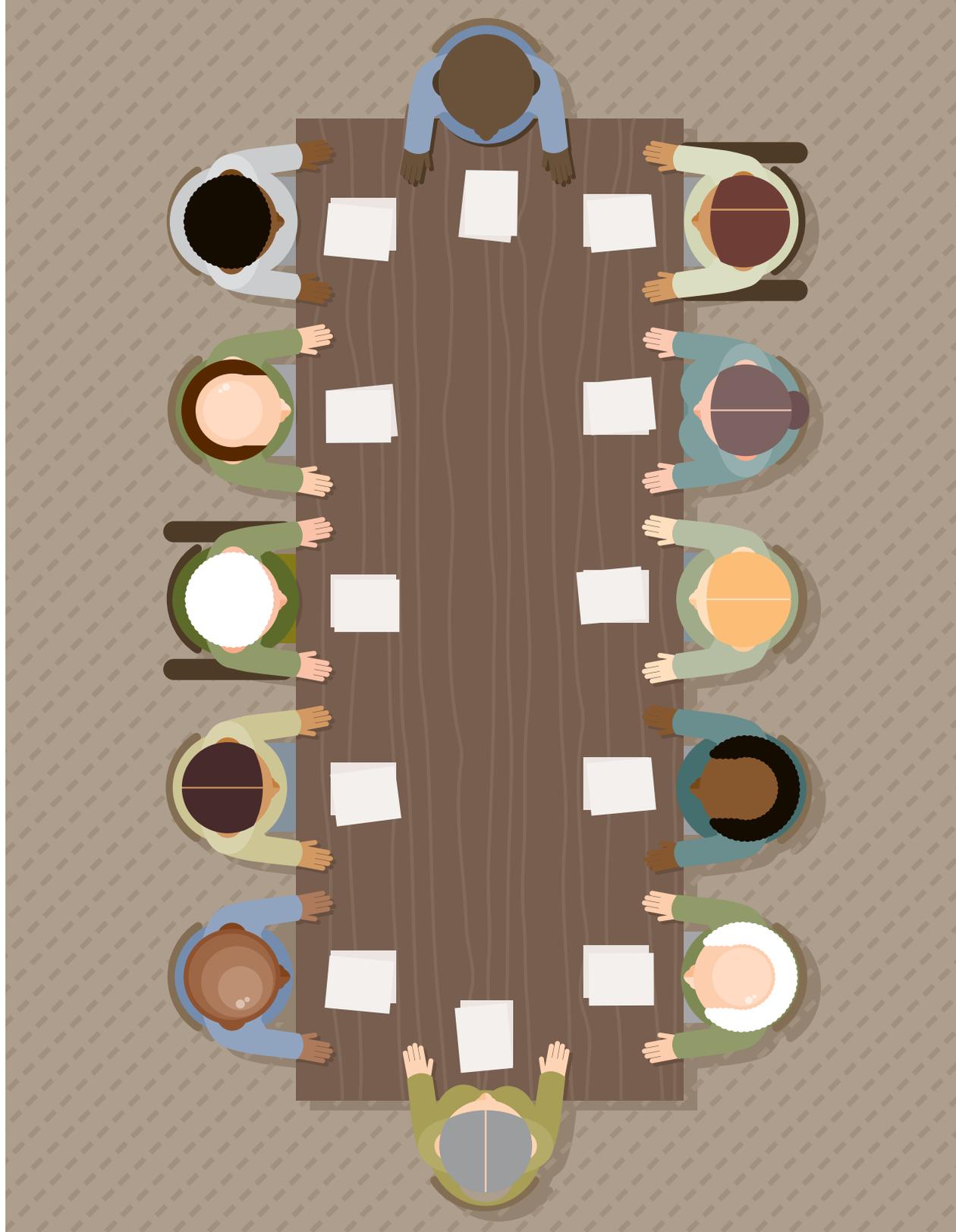
TIP A key finding from our *Philamplify* assessments showed that foundation staff capacity is also critical to high-quality grantee relationships. If the size of the grants portfolio exceeded foundation staff capacity to manage relationships with their grantees, the quality of the relationship also suffered, which we saw in our assessments of *Knight Foundation*, *The Kresge Foundation* and *Lumina Foundation*.

3 THEY ENGAGE WITH AND SOLICIT INPUT FROM THE COMMUNITIES THEY SEEK TO BENEFIT, GOING BEYOND THE USUAL SUSPECTS.

These funders understand that grant partners can provide insight into community conditions. They seek to deepen understanding and build new relationships by engaging directly with other community leaders too.

These funders also practice the ultimate power-sharing strategy: sharing control of grantmaking decisions with community members. They do this by bringing community members onto the foundation's board and staff, onto grantmaking and advisory committees and by fostering community-led planning processes that guide grantmaking decisions.

TIP Check out NCRP's popular webinar on *community-led grantmaking*, featuring *Headwaters Foundation for Justice*, *The Colorado Trust*, *Brooklyn Community Foundation* and *Third Wave Fund*.³¹ Also learn how the *Trans Justice Funder Project* uses equitable participatory grantmaking.³²



COLLABORATING FOR IMPACT: CALIFORNIA CIVIC PARTICIPATION FUNDERS

“As funders, we come into a lot of these places with real baggage we have to deal with. Either people have had really difficult experiences with other funders, or else they think we have an agenda and are going to force them to do what we want or to jump through a lot of hoops to get our funding.”

- Surina Khan

CEO, The Women’s Foundation of California

“[W]e told the local partners that we weren’t going to try and influence which social justice issue they worked on...That takes real discipline as a funder, but we know we won’t create truly lasting partnerships if we are coming in and forcing people to work on short- term campaigns we each want to see.”

- Cathy Cha

Vice President of Programs, Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund

As reported in *Bolder Together*,³³ the California Civic Participation Funders embodied not just collaboration among the participating foundations, but between the funders and their grantees. Building relationships and trust over time, and being present in the community consistently, were required for funders to truly share power with local communities, and for those communities to overcome fears and distrust based on past experiences. A key takeaway: “Let local groups lead with their issues, not yours.”

SHARING POWER

Kick-Off Discussion

Begin your Sharing Power journey by discussing the following questions to ensure that your team members are on the same page.

HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR DISCUSSIONS

1. What does it mean to have trusting relationships with grant partners?
2. What does it mean to “share power” with grant partners?
3. Who do we define as our community or constituency beyond grantees?
4. What are our positive associations with the idea of building trust and sharing power?
5. What are our negative associations with sharing power? What assumptions or fears underlie them?



SHARING POWER

SELF-ASSESSMENT DATA GATHERING TOOLS

The following sets of questions can guide you in collecting internal data and external feedback. After you've gathered all information, designate one or more staff to review it and make meaning of it, answering "What does it tell us?" and "What are the implications?" so that the discussion group can reflect and begin to answer "What do we want to do about it?"

A | INTERNAL DATA GATHERING

The potential for authentically sharing power rests on whether you are building trust with potential applicants and grantees or eroding it. You can determine how well you're laying that foundation of trust by examining your communications, application and reporting requirements, types of funding provided and decision-making processes. It will be important to assess how these processes and interactions may unintentionally advantage some groups and disadvantage others, such as communities of color.

INTERNAL QUESTIONS CHECKLIST

Here are key questions to explore through review of internal documents and processes and interviews with relevant foundation board and staff:

1. To what extent are we transparent in our communication?
(A great tool for assessing your own degree of transparency relative to best practice is the Foundation Center's GlassPockets' Steps to Transparency.)
2. How burdensome are our application, reporting and evaluation processes for applicants and grantees?
 - a. Do they pose any unintentional barriers for organizations led by people of color, people with disabilities or other marginalized groups?
 - b. For example, are our applications accessible to people who use screen readers or captions?
3. Are grant reports used for shared learning and improving how to support grantees? (Project Streamline's tools will help you to assess whether you are unnecessarily creating extra work for your grant applicants and grantees.)
4. How does our foundation gain honest (preferably anonymous) input and feedback from grant partners and applicants?
 - a. Do we analyze the feedback with an equity lens?
 - b. How do we act on this feedback?
 - c. Does the foundation share learning and any changes in practice back to those who provided feedback?

5. What are expectations of program staff regarding frequency and type of communication with grant applicants and grantees?
 - a. Do those expectations foster quality relationships?
 - b. Are they realistic expectations given the number of grant relationships staff need to manage?
6. Do any grantmaking staff have prior nonprofit experience?
 - a. Experience in the communities we serve?
 - b. How does that experience affect grantee relations, if at all?
7. How does the foundation signal and reinforce its trust for grantees and community stakeholders?
 - a. How do we know if organizations led by people of color feel trusted and trust the foundation, compared with other organizations?
8. What types of other support have we offered grant partners, beyond the grant itself?
 - a. Is it culturally appropriate?
 - b. What roles do grantees play in determining types of nonmonetary support and who provides it?
9. How do the foundation's decision-making and conflict resolution processes reflect trust and power sharing within the organization?
 - a. With grantees and other community stakeholders?
10. How does the foundation decide which information gathered is credible and important to our decision-making?
 - a. How inclusive and equitable are our definitions of "expertise"?
11. How is success defined?
 - a. Who defines it?
12. What is the internal decision-making process?
 - a. Who is included?
 - b. Is the process transparent?
 - c. Are there opportunities to make changes to the process?
 - d. Who decides?
13. When and how is conflict addressed?
 - a. What are the responses when an individual or a group raises a difficult issue, especially one involving race, gender, inequities, power or privilege?
 - b. Are there different patterns of response by staff or board?
 - c. By race/ethnic or gender identity groups?

B | EXTERNAL DATA GATHERING CHECKLIST

The following questions are primarily for grant partners, but to get a complete picture it's best to ask rejected grant applicants and community leaders about their experience with the foundation as well.

As noted in the Tips for Soliciting Feedback, it will be very important to use an equity lens to analyze responses to these questions. Grant partners that are led by or serve communities of color or other marginalized groups may have different experiences with your foundation than white-led organizations.

Also, ask stakeholders which funder(s) show trust in their grantees and share power with community stakeholders. Knowing this will help you identify models and best practices down the road.

SAMPLE SURVEY OR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR GRANTEES

1. Give one example (or more) of how [insert name of your institution] contributed to an effective partnership with your organization.
2. Give an example of what this foundation could do to be a more effective partner.
3. Which of the following three to five characteristics most contribute to an effective partnership? (Can be open-ended or select from among these characteristics.)
 - a. Alignment of goals and mission between the foundation and grantee
 - b. Grant application process
 - c. Grant size
 - d. General operating support/use of funds for overhead
 - e. Grant cycle or length of grant (e.g., multi-year)
 - f. Foundation receptivity to innovation and risk
 - g. Flexibility in use of grant funds/ability to make midcourse corrections
 - h. Relationship with foundation leadership (top executive and/or board)
 - i. Relationship with foundation staff
 - j. Foundation communication/transparency related to goals, strategies, processes and decisions
 - k. Public leadership on key priorities of the foundation and its grantees
 - l. Funder knowledge, expertise and role as thought partner
 - m. Extent of foundation collaboration with others to achieve goals
 - n. Networking and convening among grantees
 - o. Exposure and connections to other funding sources
 - p. Technical assistance, capacity building or professional development for grantee staff
 - q. Evaluation measures or reporting requirements
 - r. Cultural competency and sensitivity to equity concerns
4. In your opinion, which of these characteristics could be most improved to make your relationship with the foundation more effective? (Select top-five characteristics.)

5. Has the foundation provided your organization support, either monetary or nonmonetary, through the following? If so, please rate its usefulness. If not, please select "N/A."
 - a. Research related to your program area/best practices
 - b. Connections or convenings with other interested parties to work on a common issue
 - c. Exposure and access to other funders
 - d. Opportunities to learn from and network with peers
 - e. Access to policymakers
 - f. Technical assistance, capacity building or professional development opportunities for your staff
 - g. Support for strategic planning or evaluation
 - h. Other
6. What kinds of assistance would you like the foundation to offer in the future? (Select all that apply from above options.)
7. How much input did you have in what types of support were offered beyond the grant? And about who provided the support?
8. What kinds of foundation disclosure and transparency matter for your work? How good is this foundation at communication and transparency?
9. Has the foundation asked for feedback from you about its grantmaking strategies or practices in the last three years?
 - a. If yes, did the foundation report back to you on what it learned?
 - b. Did it made changes to its strategies or practices based on your feedback?
10. How collaborative was the foundation in working with your organization to decide goals, strategies and outcomes for the grantmaking program? For your grant specifically? (Chose from: Just right, not enough or too collaborative)
11. Which organization played a larger role in setting the performance measures or deciding what would be the performance measures for your grant? (Choose from: My organization, the foundation, both equally)
12. Were the outcomes measurement and reporting requirements appropriate relative
 - a. To the size of the grant?
 - b. The size and capacity of your organization?
 - c. Relative to the requirements of other funders?

QUESTIONS FOR GRANTEES, COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS AND PEER FUNDERS

1. Give one or more examples of how [insert name of your institution] effectively creates and maintains trusting relationships with the community and people it serves. How could the foundation build better community relationships?
2. Give one or more examples of how this foundation effectively collaborates and shares power with residents and others in the community to achieve shared goals. How could the foundation be more collaborative?
3. How well does this foundation relate to communities of color? Other marginalized groups? How could this foundation better partner with communities of color? Other marginalized groups?
4. Which foundation(s) do you think are most effective at building trusting relationships and sharing power with your community? Why?

SHARING POWER

DISCUSSION GUIDE

After assembling internal and external data and feedback and synthesizing it, reflect upon the key facets of sharing power: quality of trust and communication, quality of support and quality of relationships with community. What does the information tell you about your current approaches? How might you need to adapt practices for greater effectiveness? Below are some questions to use, tweak or add to for you group reflection.

1 | WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Get on the same page by presenting key lessons and insights from the data and feedback. Then ask your group:

- a. Are there any notable divergences in responses across those who've answered the questions: divergences internally and also divergences between internal data and external feedback?
- b. What surprised us about [internal/external] feedback on this topic?
- c. What evidence shows we are doing well? What are areas for growth or improvement?
- d. In what ways is the foundation demonstrating trust in its grant partners? How are grantees showing they trust us?
- e. What do other community stakeholders think of the foundation, and do our prioritized communities see us as a true partner? How effectively do we engage them? Are there differences by race, gender, disability status and other identities?
- f. What have we learned about the most effective ways to solicit and receive honest feedback, especially from marginalized constituents? How does the foundation measure the quality of that feedback, taking into account race, class and other power dynamics that exist between funder and grantee?

2 | WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

- a. What ways could the foundation further foster trust with grantees? With its other constituents?
- b. How can the foundation grow or improve our support to grantees beyond grant dollars? How can we foster useful, creative connections and convenings that might catalyze collaborations for grantees?
- c. How would sharing power more than the foundation does now help us better achieve our goals? What would be reasons not to further share power?
- d. How could more inclusive decision-making improve our relationships and outcomes? Are there ways to measure success, in part, by how much influence a community has had in shaping grantmaking decisions and strategies?
- e. How can we more inclusively and effectively include stakeholders, beyond the usual suspects, at the strategy shaping, decision-making table?
- f. How can we ensure that people with disabilities are able to participate fully in the opportunities we, our grant partners and other community members offer? (e.g. provide pooled funds for accessibility to events, trainings, websites, etc.)
- g. How can we reach out to leaders we haven't met and who might not be in our networks yet? What tables might we want to be invited to, thus shifting the power dynamic from host to guest?
- h. What feedback vehicles can we employ to measure the foundation's community credibility? How can the foundation analyze, respond to and improve its credibility based on the feedback?
- i. What are possible tools for navigating tensions around conflicting cultural norms between foundation and community?
- j. How can the foundation more effectively negotiate with community members to harness community assets and talents toward community goals and increase community agency in solving problems?

At the end of the discussion, take a look at the following visual and come to a consensus about where your foundation is on the power-sharing journey, and where you would like to be in the next several years. Then see which considerations for implementation and power-sharing examples may be helpful. Finally, if you have started to brainstorm future actions, record those so you can revisit them as you finalize your next steps.



WHERE ARE YOU ON THIS DIMENSION OF POWER? WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE?

AT THE BEGINNING OF SHARING POWER

Does not seek to make application and reporting requirements less burdensome.

Application process is not accessible to people with disabilities.

Does not publicly share information about strategies and decisions.

Solicits little or no regular, honest feedback from grant partners.

Primarily makes one-year project grants.

Provides little or no support beyond grants.

Insists that all decisions reside solely with the foundation.

Engages priority communities minimally or superficially.

Gives little attention to equity and inclusion in
building relationships.

JOURNEY
AHEAD





SHARING POWER



EQUITY

THIS WAY!

Streamlines application and reporting requirements.

Application process is accessible to people with disabilities.

Offers responsive, culturally appropriate support beyond the grant.

Deeply engages community, beyond usual suspects.

Offers resources to support access and inclusion of people with disabilities.

Strives for relationships that are equitable and inclusive.

Includes grant partners and other constituents in decision-making.

| | |
|---|--|
| Solicits consistent feedback from grant partners to inform learning and action. | Communicates openly and transparently. |
|---|--|

Provides flexible grants (core funding, multi-year commitments).

SHARING POWER

CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The reality of building relationships with grantees and community stakeholders is that, ultimately, the power will never be equal between funders and nonprofit organizations.

Relationships grounded in mutual accountability, respect and trust that shift power require vigilance and a willingness to address inherent tensions and proactively intervene when a power imbalance threatens to undermine a relationship.

Now that you've completed your Sharing Power self-assessment, the following considerations can inform implementation of next steps:

1 | NAVIGATE THE ECOSYSTEM OF SOCIAL CHANGE ACTORS WITH CARE.

Don't inadvertently pit groups against each other or favor more established nonprofits over newer cutting-edge groups. As a funder trying to share power, it's critical to be mindful of politics at play between and within groups. Race, class, gender, gender identity, disability status, age and other factors can affect power dynamics within a nonprofit ecosystem.

Transparency and clarity around roles and shared outcomes can help people and organizations to be more collaborative and less competitive. Foundations that support authentic, long-term relationships among community groups rather than funding shotgun weddings and arranged marriages will see stronger collaborations among the organizations working together.

Read stories of effective support for community collaboration by the Liberty Hill Foundation³⁴ and Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation.³⁵



In partnership with funder allies, Solutions Project convened nearly 70 foundations for a briefing by organizers and tribal leaders in late October 2016. At the same time, Mark Ruffalo, Solutions Project co-founder and Fighter Fund visionary, visited Standing Rock with Reverend Jesse Jackson and others to bring media spotlight to the effort and deliver solar power to the camp. Solutions Project received the 2017 "Get Up, Stand Up" NCRP Impact Award for its rapid-response grantmaking. Photo courtesy of Solutions Project.

2 | HONE CULTURAL COMPETENCY, HUMILITY AND SKILL IN DEVELOPING HONEST RELATIONSHIPS.

To work across the differences that exist between funders and their nonprofit and community partners, especially those with different racial or ethnic backgrounds or lived experiences than foundation staff, it is important to ensure that your staff have the skills and sensitivities needed to relate authentically and engage in courageous conversations.

For example, NCRP's *As the South Grows: Weathering the Storm* offers guidance on how to build authentic relationships with communities that have a long history of harm and trauma, by "lean[ing] in to conversations about the real and perceived harm done to Southern communities in the name of racism, classism and other discriminatory practices." This includes acknowledging your and your foundation's "shared complicity" in that history.³⁶

- a. Remember that in the beginning of building trust, a grantee or community leader may not be ready to speak directly and honestly about challenges with you or with the grant-funded activities. Don't take it personally; rather, look for ways to earn that person's trust until they are ready to be forthcoming.
- b. Be aware of how your own implicit bias may affect how you relate to different partners. Examine how you may unwittingly preference certain people or perspectives over others.
- c. Intentionally map your network of relationships to see which are strongest, which need to be better cultivated, which are missing altogether. Bring an equity lens to this analysis.
- d. Ensure that people know you will provide accommodations for disability issues so everyone can fully participate.

3 | LET GO OF THE ILLUSION OF CONTROL.

Whether or not you intend to share power, no funder is in total control. Truly sharing power means knowing this, accepting it and acting accordingly.

Sometimes things will get messy; you may lose control of the process or narrative. For example, a community-driven decision-making process might decide to focus grantmaking differently from your own assessment of what would have the greatest impact. If you have strong, honest relationships as the basis for partnership, you'll be able to work through those difficult moments. But it takes time to build those relationships and to build trust, so set realistic expectations for making progress on shared goals.

SHARING POWER

Section End Notes

27. The Center for Effective Philanthropy's Grantee Perception Report and Applicant Perception Report enable foundations to receive candid feedback from grantees and grant seekers about the quality of its relationships.
28. Learn more at <http://thewhitmaninstitute.org/grantmaking/trust-based-philanthropy/>.
29. Vu Le, "Trust-based grantmaking: What it is, and why it's critical to our sector," *Nonprofit AF*, October 24, 2016, <http://nonprofitaf.com/2016/10/trust-based-grantmaking-what-it-is-and-why-its-critical-to-our-sector/>.
30. Christie George, "Open yourself up to new solutions," April 5, 2017, GlassPockets, <http://blog.glasspockets.org/2017/04/george-new-media-ventures-innovation-series-05042017.html>.
31. Check out the webinar recording at <https://www.ncrp.org/2017/09/community-led-grantmaking-collective-wisdom-social-change.html>.
32. Caitlin Duffy, "Equitable Participatory Grantmaking in Trans Communities: A Q&A with Gabriel Foster," *Responsive Philanthropy*, Winter 2018, National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, <https://www.ncrp.org/publication/responsive-philanthropy-winter-2018/equitable-participatory-grantmaking-trans-communities-qa-gabriel-foster>.
33. Cathy Cha and William H. Woodwell, Jr., *Bolder Together 2: Building Grassroots Movements for Change*, California Civic Participation Funders, <http://www.haasjr.org/sites/default/files/resources/Bolder%20Together%202.pdf>.
34. Lisa Ranghelli and Julia Craig, *Strengthening Democracy, Increasing Opportunities: Impacts of Advocacy, Organizing and Civic Engagement in Los Angeles* (Washington, D.C.: National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, March 2010), p 40-42, <https://www.ncrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/GCIP-LA-report-low-res.pdf>.
35. Frontline Solutions (Brian Baughan et al), *Strengthening Democracy, Increasing Opportunities: Impacts of Advocacy, Organizing, and Civic Engagement in the Gulf/Midsouth Region* (Washington, D.C.: National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, May 2011), p 33, http://www.ncrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Strengthening_Democracy_Increasing_Opportunities_Gulf-Midsouth.pdf.
36. Ryan Schlegel and Stephanie Peng, *As the South Grows: Weathering the Storm* (Washington, D.C.: National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, November 2017), <https://www.ncrp.org/publications/as-the-south-grows/weathering-the-storm>.



WIELDING POWER

Exercising public leadership beyond grantmaking to create equitable, catalytic change

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO WIELD POWER?

Philanthropic funding is critically important to organizations. Bold grants can catalyze transformative change. Yet many funders rely on grants alone to achieve impact, missing the opportunity to leverage the other tools at their disposal to advance their mission, values and equity goals.

In 2014, Ambassador James Joseph famously addressed community foundations on the five types of philanthropic capital. He urged them to move from being a “grantmaker to social enterprise that strategically deploys not just financial capital but social, moral, intellectual and reputational capital.”³⁷

Nonfinancial capital represents institutional and individual power that can be effectively used to influence others in order to achieve equitable, long-term change. Having a point of view that is well-grounded and has moral integrity will enhance your institution’s credibility rather than tarnish it. Yet the idea of wielding power and influence can be difficult for foundations that pride themselves on being a “neutral convener.”

Exercising the power of the bully pulpit can also be conflated with being partisan or with being top-down and dictatorial, but neither is a given. In fact, philanthropic power can and should be wielded for good, if done in thoughtful ways that acknowledge your institutional and personal privilege and align with the goals and strategies of the communities you are trying to benefit. (See privilege and risk discussion on page 10.)



“Grants are one important strategy

for increasing prosperity and educational attainment and strengthening communities and nonprofits in Arkansas. But they aren’t our only strategy. To move the needle, WRF staff also serve as ambassadors, advocates and activists for a shared vision of progress-- and we motivate others to be leaders as well.”

*- Sherece Y. West-Scantlebury
President & CEO, The Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation
Former Board Chair of NCRP*

WRF underwent a Philamplify assessment in 2013.



Foundations that wield their power responsibly and effectively do the following:

1 THEY CONVENE GRANTEES AND COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS WHILE ALSO PLAYING A SUPPORTIVE PARTICIPANT ROLE AT OTHER CONVENING TABLES.

Nonprofits and community leaders appreciate productive opportunities to be in relationship with funders and each other. With input and guidance from stakeholders, grantmakers can organize convenings to build community and share knowledge, support cross-cutting approaches, address complex problems and advance shared goals with and among their partners. Fostering new relationships across issues, geographic areas or constituencies can introduce fresh perspectives and innovative solutions to complex problems. These partnerships can also yield additional resources by leveraging the networks of a diverse array of stakeholders.

TIP *Before convening, find out how your grant partners or community members would want to use that time. The Monitor Institute's definition of convening is "for the duration, the attendees are participants in a collective effort that serves a specific shared purpose."³⁸ Then gain feedback about whether that shared purpose was achieved. The Knight Foundation uses its brand to convene grantees from 26 cities at signature events that bring in expert speakers in their respective fields. Nonprofit and community foundation leaders highlighted these convenings as a valued aspect of their partnership with Knight, providing opportunities to network, spark new ideas and foster shared learning.*

2 THEY ORGANIZE AND COLLABORATE WITH PHILANTHROPIC PEERS THAT SHARE COMMON CONCERNS, AND WITH OTHER SECTORS SUCH AS GOVERNMENT.

According to GEO, "80 percent of grantmakers believe it is important to coordinate resources and actions with other funders."³⁹ Yet doing that well requires attention to how funders use their shared power to avoid common pitfalls.

Many nonprofits have stories about how a funder collaborative resulted in a net decrease in overall resources for the targeted issue or place, or got bogged down in processes rather than action. While well-intentioned, they can sometimes yield to the "lowest common denominator" strategically and politically, create an echo chamber that makes them an 800-pound gorilla, become less risk tolerant or become more "clubby" in their grantmaking, working against values of openness and transparency.

Collaboration takes many forms. Aside from forming funder collaboratives, funders can also align goals and strategies, or participate in shared learning, while still funding separately.



TIP When thinking about collaborators, don't forget to consider individual donors. Community and private foundations can proactively engage individual philanthropists to respond to community priorities. CFLeads notes that creative donor engagement to enhance community impact is an aspect of community leadership.⁴⁰ The Center for Effective Philanthropy's extensive donor survey data found that donor satisfaction is tied closely to donor perception of a community foundation's impact in the community. Although giving from established endowments, private foundations can also reach out to significant donors that may align around an issue or a geographic location to explore opportunities to collaborate, share best practices or organize pooled funds.

At a minimum, it is important to communicate publicly the foundation's vision, values and strategies and voice a strong commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion within the philanthropic sector. Funders can also help community members who are the least represented have their voices heard and amplified in discussions, debates and decision-making venues.

TIP Consider how the absence of public leadership may lead to confusion about your purpose, missed opportunities to collaborate or influence policy and less strategic impact (see Philamplify study of the Hess Foundation⁴¹). Silence can provide an open field for institutions on the other side of an issue that have ample resources, a public leadership strategy and an appetite to apply it. Leaving a vacuum to be filled by others with values and objectives at odds with yours and your grant partners' undermines whatever impact you seek through your grantmaking. If your foundation has previously embraced a quiet approach (like the New York Community Trust⁴²), it's a good time to think about the advantages and disadvantages of staying quiet versus establishing a powerful voice.

3 THEY INFORM, RAISE AWARENESS AND ADVOCATE BY USING REPUTATION AND EXPERTISE TO BRING VISIBILITY TO CRITICAL ISSUES AND AMPLIFY THE VOICES OF THE MOST MARGINALIZED.

Funders are uniquely poised to use their status as respected institutions to educate the public, media, policymakers, community leaders and peer funders about important issues. While some fear losing their reputation for being neutral, increasingly foundation leaders are feeling compelled to speak up for marginalized communities and democratic principles. (See discussion of privilege and risk on page 10.)

4 THEY DEPLOY NONGRANT FINANCIAL ASSETS CREATIVELY TO ADVANCE FOUNDATION AND GRANTEE GOALS AND SHIFT RESOURCES AND POWER TO UNDERINVESTED COMMUNITIES.

By making a thoughtful, planned and public commitment to mission investing or impact investing – including program-related investments or PRIs, loans, investment screens and shareholder activism – foundations can leverage all of their resources to maximize impact and align investments with goals and values.⁴³

Mission investing can be implemented to support the twin goals of foundation perpetuity and community resilience. When foundations fail to align assets with mission, they may unintentionally undermine their own grantmaking goals. This was the case for the Daniels Fund: it made a commitment to combating alcoholism and substance abuse with its grantmaking, yet its investment portfolio included the world's largest alcohol brewers and distillers.

TIP *Mission investing may seem like a complement to power-building, but in fact it can be part of the core strategy. In historically under-invested communities, wealth building is power building, according to As the South Grows: Strong Roots. "Community economic development in the South is sometimes not seen as a viable strategy to advance equity and justice. But, especially when community asset building directly addresses the South's history of extraction, exploitation and systematic exclusion from economic opportunity, it is indeed a long-term systems change strategy."⁴⁴*



GETTING OFF THE SIDELINES: PITTSBURGH FOUNDATION

“It’s all part of our concern about the strength of the civic fabric. More and more voters feel as if they don’t matter, they don’t have a role. I can’t think of anything more threatening to the civic strength of the community than that.”

- Maxwell King

President and CEO, The Pittsburgh Foundation⁴⁵

In January 2018, The Pittsburgh Foundation took the unprecedented step of filing an amicus brief in support of a lawsuit to invalidate the state’s congressional map as unconstitutional gerrymandering.

As the brief notes, “The Pittsburgh Foundation firmly believes that ensuring a fair, responsive and representative electoral system is essential to success in fulfilling its mission to improve the quality of life in the Pittsburgh region by evaluating and addressing community issues and engaging in responsible philanthropy. A fair, responsive and representative electoral system fosters public confidence in Pennsylvania’s elected officials, increases civic engagement, and promotes the representative goals that form the bedrock of our democratic system of government.”⁴⁶

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court did invalidate the map and issued a new one when legislators failed to offer an acceptable alternative.

WIELDING POWER

Kick-Off Discussion

Begin your Wielding Power journey by discussing the following questions to ensure that your team members are on the same page.

HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOUR DISCUSSIONS

1. What does it mean for our foundation and its leaders to wield power?
2. What are our positive associations with the idea of wielding power? What excites us about this?
3. What are our negative associations? What assumptions and fears underlie those associations?
4. How have we seen peers or our community successfully wield power?



WIELDING POWER**SELF-ASSESSMENT DATA GATHERING TOOLS**

The following sets of questions can guide you in collecting internal data and external feedback. After you've gathered all information, designate one or more staff to review it and make meaning of it, answering "What does it tell us?" and "What are the implications?" so that the discussion group can reflect and begin to answer "What do we want to do about it?"

A | INTERNAL DATA GATHERING

To take stock of how much and how well your foundation is exercising leadership, gather any relevant internal information and data about current and recent practice (in the last year).

✓ INTERNAL QUESTIONS CHECKLIST

Here are key questions to explore through review of internal documents and processes and interviews with relevant foundation board and staff:

1. When convening grantees and/or community stakeholders:
 - a. Who attends and who is missing? (Consider type and size of organizations; demographics such as race, ethnicity, gender, LGBTQ, disability status; urban and rural.)
 - b. What steps does the foundation take to make sure the convenings are inclusive? (Consider transportation costs, accessibility of location, speakers and materials for people with disabilities, days and times, child care, translation and other considerations)
 - c. Who sets the agenda?
 - d. How much input is there from our grant partners and other stakeholders?
 - e. What kind of feedback (anonymous or not) does the foundation collect from participants about the convenings? What does the feedback say?
 - f. What are some of the measures of success and outcomes from convening? Who decides what constitutes success?
2. How does the foundation decide when to be the convener and when to support convening by others?
3. Which other funders does our institution collaborate with, formally or informally?
 - a. What is the nature of that collaboration?
 - b. What are our intended outcomes?
 - c. How do we measure success?
 - d. Do we know whether grantees or intended beneficiaries of the collaborative view it as impactful?

4. How does the foundation engage with individual donors or donor networks to advance shared goals?
 - a. How does the foundation seek opportunities to collaborate with others on cross-cutting issues? (For example, health and environment, criminal justice and education)
5. What kinds of relationships does the foundation have with other sectors?
 - a. Government agencies or officials or public-sector unions?
 - b. With those in the private sector, such as corporations and small businesses, private sector unions?
 - c. What are our goals and success measures for those relationships?
6. How does the foundation communicate publicly its vision, values and strategies?
 - a. Do we communicate them through our website, blog, social media and at grantee and philanthropic convenings?
 - b. Does this include any stated commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion?
7. Does the foundation have guidelines for taking public stands on current issues or events?
 - a. How often has a leader of the foundation taken public stands in the last year?
 - b. Do we commission or conduct research that helps inform and shape public discourse on key issues?
8. Has the foundation used its communications and engagement tools to amplify the positions, voices and activities of marginalized constituencies?
9. How do our assets align with our goals and objectives?
 - a. Does the foundation have a mission investing or impact investing plan or guidelines?
 - b. If yes, does it seek to shift power and resources to underinvested communities?
 - c. What percentage of assets are currently invested in ways that are aligned with its goals?
10. Does the foundation apply screens to its investments to ensure it is not investing in companies that may sell products or use practices that go against its mission?
11. Do we use shareholder proxy voting to influence company practices on behalf of our own mission or the goals of our grantees?
12. What is the race and gender breakdown of our asset and investment managers?



Foundation for Louisiana CEO and President Flozell Daniels, Jr. (far right) served as Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards' designee on the Justice Reinvestment Task Force, whose recommendations led to groundbreaking legislation in the spring 2017. FFL received the 2017 "Mover and Shaker" NCRP Impact Award for bold peer organizing. Photo courtesy of Foundation for Louisiana

B | EXTERNAL DATA GATHERING CHECKLIST

External information and insights from your stakeholders are important complements to the internally gathered data. To the extent possible, obtain anonymous or confidential input (to ensure honesty) from current and recent grantees, philanthropic peers and other key leaders relevant to your issues and/or geographic focus.

You can use sample questions below. Also ask them which funder(s) are effective public leaders who wield their power and privilege with humility. Knowing this will help you identify models and best practices down the road.

QUESTIONS FOR CURRENT/RECENT GRANTEEES AND, IF RELEVANT, COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

1. Have you attended one or more convenings organized by [insert name of your foundation]? If yes:
 - a. How inclusive and accessible was the convening? (Consider cost, diversity of attendees, ease of transportation, physical accessibility, days and times, child care, translation and other factors)
 - b. How much input did grantees and/or other stakeholders have in setting the agenda?
 - c. How successful was the convening? Please share a story of something positive that came out of the convening.
 - d. Were you asked to evaluate the convening? If yes, were results of the evaluation shared with you?
 - e. What's the one most important thing the foundation could do to improve convenings?

2. Has the foundation ever offered to use its assets and investment tools to support your organization's or community's goals? If yes to any of the following, how useful was it?
 - a. Program-related investments
 - b. Loans
 - c. Shareholder activism to influence a corporation's policies and practices
 - d. Other

QUESTIONS FOR BOTH CURRENT/RECENT GRANTEEES AND PHILANTHROPIC PEERS (COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS CAN ASK DONOR ADVISED FUND HOLDERS AS WELL)

3. How effectively does the foundation partner with the following to achieve impact?
 - a. Business
 - b. Government
 - c. Residents
 - d. Nonprofits
 - e. Other funders
 - f. Unions
4. Does this foundation participate in formal collaborations with other foundations or individual donors? If so:
 - a. How effective are these collaborations in advancing equity and changing systems?
 - b. To what extent does the funder collaboration add more value than each foundation working independently?



-
- c. How effectively does the foundation collaborate with others to address cross-cutting issues? (For example, health and environment, criminal justice and education)
 - d. What is one example of this foundation's positive contributions through collaboration?
 - e. What is the most important thing this foundation can do to be more impactful through collaboration?
5. How effectively does this foundation communicate publicly its vision, values and strategies? (For example, on its website, blog, social media and at grantee and philanthropic convenings)
 6. As far as you know, does this foundation have a stated commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion?
 - a. If yes, how effectively does this foundation communicate publicly its commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion? (For example, on its website, blog, social media and at grantee and philanthropic convenings)
 7. Does the foundation undertake any of the following activities? If so, how effectively?
 - a. Commissions or conducts research that helps inform and shape discourse on key issues.
 - b. Convenes stakeholders to address key issues.
 - c. Takes public stands on important issues, even if the issues may be controversial.
 8. Has this foundation reached out to you or others in philanthropy about ways to collectively leverage nongrant financial assets to advance common goals or shift more resources to underinvested communities? If yes, what was the outcome?
 - d. Advocates with policymakers or other decision-makers to inform their positions.
 - e. Uses its communications and outreach tools to amplify the positions, voices and activities of marginalized constituencies.
 - f. Provides communication funding or technical assistance to groups so they can amplify their own messages.



WIELDING POWER

DISCUSSION GUIDE

After assembling internal and external data and feedback and synthesizing it, reflect on the key facets of wielding power: convene grantees and communities; organize and collaborate across sectors; inform, raise awareness, advocate and amplify; deploy assets creatively. Below are some questions to use, tweak or add to for you group reflection.

1 | WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Get on the same page by presenting key lessons and insights from the data and feedback. Then ask your group:

- a. Are there any notable divergences in responses across those who've answered the questions: divergences internally and also divergences between internal data and external feedback?
- b. What kinds of leadership strategies (if any) are we pursuing?
- c. What kinds of leadership strategies (if any) do we seem to be avoiding?
- d. What surprised the group about [internal/external] reflections on the value of these strategies?
- e. What evidence shows we are doing well? What are areas for growth or improvement?
- f. Which strategies are showing the most success or promise so far? Why?
- g. Which strategies are showing the least success so far? Why?

2 | WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

If helpful in answering these questions, imagine the most recent (or largest, most controversial, most successful or least successful) grant the foundation has made.

- a. How might some of these leadership strategies help us better achieve our goals? The goals of our grant partners?
- b. How do we need to show up as a leader to most effectively support the issue or community we care about?
- c. What are our fears or perceived obstacles to engaging in any of these activities?
- d. What additional information would we need to decide which strategies to pursue or to overcome obstacles?
- e. Which strategies do we want to learn more about?
- f. If we are doing all or most of these already, which ones would we like to do better?

At the end of the discussion, review the following visual and reach a consensus about where your foundation is on the power-wielding journey and where you would like to be in the next several years. Then see which considerations for implementation and wielding-power examples may be helpful. Finally, if you have started to brainstorm future actions, record those so you can revisit them as you identify your next steps.



**WHERE ARE YOU ON
THIS DIMENSION OF POWER?
WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE?**

AT THE BEGINNING OF WIELDING POWER

Offers little or no convening.

Does not seek opportunities to sit at other convening tables.

Remains silent on public issues related to mission.

Does not advocate with other decision makers.

Does not align or collaborate with other grantmakers around common goals.

Does not collaborate with other sectors.

Does not help marginalized constituencies reach larger audience.

Does not align assets and investing with goals and values.

If a community foundation, follows donor advisers' lead
on grant priorities.

**JOURNEY
AHEAD**

A white downward-pointing arrow icon centered below the text.



WIELDING POWER



Convenes stakeholders to advance common goals, ensuring accessible locations and materials.

Supports others to lead and convene (good “follower”).

Amplifies voices of marginalized communities.

Collaborates with other sectors of society.

EQUITY
THIS WAY!

Deploys non-grant financial assets to advance mission.

If a community foundation, creatively engages donor advisers to address equity and other community issues.

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Pursues alignment and collaboration with other funders. | Advocates and educates policymakers. |
|---|--------------------------------------|

Uses bully pulpit and reputation to raise issues publicly.



WIELDING POWER

CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Exercising institutional power effectively requires trusting relationships and open communication with grant partners, as described in the Sharing Power section, as well as humility and humor. The following considerations can inform your next steps.

1 | REFLECT ON WHO SHOULD WIELD POWER, WHEN AND HOW.

Knowing which roles and capacities you and other stakeholders bring to an issue or place will make it easier to choose when to lead and when to follow. Understanding institutional and personal privilege and re-examining risk from that vantage point, in consultation with partners and communities, will help you determine how to choose which role.

Part of knowing when to lead or follow is making the effort to find out who else is leading efforts in the community, and asking to be included, rather than always creating a new table and inviting others to it. In those situations, it's important to only join if invited and be ready to bring all the resources and capacities appropriate to share in that context.

TIP

*Applying the lenses of privilege and equity can be useful in examining which assumptions go into defining “capacity” and “leadership” in a particular community. For example, NCRP’s *As the South Grows: On Fertile Soil* urges grantmakers to check those assumptions in a regional context. “When funders expect a college degree or a polished grant proposal to justify an investment, they exclude Southern organizations in need of philanthropic resources, which are led by people who are most capable of organizing their communities. Funders often misconstrue signs of privilege for signs of capacity.”⁴⁷*



2 ANTICIPATE PUSHBACK WHEN YOU ADVOCATE ON ISSUES.

Fear of repercussions from taking a public stance is often unwarranted (especially if you've made that decision in consultation with your constituents), but there is always the chance that a person or institution opposed to the stance the foundation has chosen will publicly or privately critique it.

“We’d rather see our grantees rallying to use their voice and assert issues of equity, and we don’t intend to speak for them...We’ve begun to pick our spots and use our voice when we think having our voice has a unique benefit.”

- Dr. Robert Ross

President and CEO, The California Endowment

In speaking about TCE’s decision to support the amicus brief in favor of the Affordable Care Act for the Winter 2011/2012 edition of NCRP’s “Responsive Philanthropy” journal.

Grantmakers are uniquely positioned to weather these moments of conflict and vulnerability because of their relative stability, longevity, resources and privileged status – and to learn from them. Also, pushback is not always a bad thing, as it shows that people are paying attention. As organizers say, “The action is in the reaction.”

3 COMPLEMENT, DON’T DISPLACE, COMMUNITY VOICE AND ADVOCACY CAPACITY.

Funders that use their own bully pulpit and embrace advocacy can be accused of over-reaching or exerting too much control over priorities, narrative and strategy. Avoid this pitfall by ensuring that your advocacy is based on wisdom from the community, and your stances reflect the priorities of grantees and communities served.

TIP

The Philamplify assessment and video about the Walton Family Foundation’s approach to education reform in New Orleans questioned whether the WFF centered a community voice in its education strategy. In contrast, WFF’s environmental grantmaking took a very different approach. See The California Endowment Philamplify assessment, which also explored this theme.⁴⁸



4 | DECIDE WHETHER TO PLAY AN ONGOING OR TIME-LIMITED LEADERSHIP ROLE.

It's important to decide and communicate whether a foundation is pursuing a time-limited engagement or an ongoing commitment. This question should be posed at the outset and periodically reassessed based on stated aims, understanding of changing landscape and progress toward the stated goals.

For example, The California Wellness Foundation's leadership on gun violence prevention as a public health issue has evolved for more than 20 years, adapting strategies as youth deaths from gun violence have declined by half, but the problem persists along with racial disparities. The foundation's 2017 launch of the Hope and Heal Fund is an effort to engage more funders and donors in pursuing bold solutions.

TIP

If choosing a time-limited leadership opportunity you'll need to be mindful of what will happen when you exit your role. The William Penn Foundation (WPF) was an anchor funder and a vocal partner of Communities for Public Education Reform (CPER) in Philadelphia, a funder collaborative that grew the capacity of student and parent-led community groups to fight successfully for better public education systems and more state funding. When WPF changed leaders and its approach to education, it pulled out of CPER, leaving the group with significantly diminished funding and leadership, and it was forced to fold. This resulted in major funding losses for grassroots organizing groups and loss of an influential funder voice just as a new governor created a state budget crisis that wrought havoc in the Philadelphia public schools. The foundation did subsequently course correct by making a multi-year investment in a coalition of groups advocating for increased state education funding.⁴⁹



WIELDING POWER

Section End Notes

37. Karen Collias, "Reimagining 21st Century Philanthropy," *Knowledge Without Borders*, November 18, 2014, <http://knowwithoutborders.org/21st-century-philanthropy/>.
38. Noah Rimland Flower and Anna Muoio, *Gather: The Art and Science of Effective Convening*, Deloitte Development LLC, June 2013, <https://assets.rockefellerfoundation.org/app/uploads/20130626174021/Gather-The-Art-and-Science-of-Effective-Conveing.pdf>.
39. See <https://www.geofunders.org/what-we-care-about/collaboration>.
40. CF Leads, "Framework for Community Leadership by a Community Foundation," http://www.cfleads.org/community_leadership/frameworks.php.
41. Download the Philamplify assessment of the Hess Foundation at <https://www.ncrp.org/initiatives/philamplify/assessments/all-assessments#hess>.
42. Caitlin Duffy, "To articulate or not to articulate ... a community foundation's vision," June 14, 2016, *NCRP Blog*, <https://www.ncrp.org/2016/06/articulate-not-articulate-community-foundations-vision.html>.
43. See a glossary of mission investing terms and further information at <https://missioninvestors.org/glossary>.
44. Ryan Schlegel and Stephanie Peng, *As the South Grows: Strong Roots* (Washington, D.C: National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, June 2017), <https://www.ncrp.org/publications/as-the-south-grows/strong-roots>.
45. "In unusual move, Pittsburgh Foundation files 'friend of court' brief in gerrymandering case," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, January 15, 2018, <http://www.post-gazette.com/news/politics-nation/2018/01/15/Pittsburgh-Foundation-pennsylvaniacongressional-map-gerrymandering-friend-of-court-brief-amicus/stories/201801150034>.
46. See <https://www.brennancenter.org/legal-work/league-women-voters-v-pennsylvania>.
47. Ryan Schlegel and Stephanie Peng, *As the South Grows: On Fertile Soil* (Washington, D.C: National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, April 2017), <https://www.ncrp.org/publication/as-the-south-grows-on-fertile-soil>.
48. See the Philamplify assessments of the Walton Family Foundation and The California Endowment at <https://www.ncrp.org/initiatives/philamplify/assessments/all-assessments>.
49. See the Philamplify assessment of William Penn Foundation at <https://www.ncrp.org/initiatives/philamplify/assessments/all-assessments#williampenn>.

NOW WHAT? PLANNING NEXT STEPS

After your foundation has received feedback and reflected on its practice for one, two or all three power dimensions, it's time to plan the next steps.

First, prepare your team by revisiting self-assessment insights and themes from related discussions. You'll need to:

1. **Affirm which aspects of each power dimension you would like to grow, strengthen or improve.** State clear objectives for progress within each dimension.
2. **Develop a short-term action plan: decide specific steps you will take in the next 12 months** to work toward each objective. Designate which people will take responsibility for follow-through on each task.
3. **Identify best practice resources: individuals, institutions and innovative ideas** that can help you make progress in each relevant power dimension.

The sample Next Steps Worksheet (pages 73-74) can help you create a shared vision for where the foundation wants to go and identify models and exemplars to help it get there. Your team can use it to brainstorm and capture the foundation's objectives, next steps and relevant resources for each dimension. Use the worksheet as a touchstone to periodically take stock of progress and demonstrate how the foundation has shifted in each dimension.

A key resource will be other foundations and their leaders, especially but not only those that you consider peers based on issue focus, geography and/or foundation type. If you aren't sure which foundations are using best practices in each power dimension, you can look at anecdotes in this toolkit and ask peers and relevant philanthropy-serving organizations. Also check out NCRP's Impact

Award winners, Philanthropy's Promise signatories and funders featured on our blog and in *Responsive Philanthropy*.⁵⁰

You can catalyze new peer mentorship and partnership by reaching out to those you want to learn from and emulate.

Some funders even

invite the leader of another foundation to be on their board as a way to tap their expertise.

As you consider next steps, explore the following questions:

1. Which implementation considerations in the Building Power, Sharing Power and Wielding Power sections should we pay the most attention to?
2. What can we do to prepare for or mitigate specific concerns?
3. What lessons or food for thought do examples from other funders offer?
4. What staff and board backgrounds, skills, capacities and experiences do we already have that support each of these dimensions of power?
5. What new skills, capacities and experiences would help our board and staff make progress in each area?

Don't forget to check out Tools You Can Use and visit ncrp.org for additional assessment resources.

“Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.”

- Maya Angelou

TOOLS YOU CAN USE



Glossary

Readiness Assessment

Sample Timeline and Process

Tips on Soliciting Feedback from Stakeholders

Next Steps Worksheet

POWER MOVES GLOSSARY

Ableism: Discrimination in favor of able-bodied people; the belief that people who have disabilities are somehow less human, less valuable and less capable than others.⁵¹

Advocacy: The act of promoting a cause, idea or policy to influence people's opinions or actions on matters of public policy or concern. Many types of activities fall under the category of "advocacy" and are legally permissible for 501(c)(3) public charities to engage in, such as issue identification, research and analysis; public issue education; lobbying efforts for or against legislation; nonpartisan voter registration, education and mobilization; litigation; education of government agencies at all levels; participation in referenda and ballot initiatives; grassroots mobilization; and testimonies before government bodies. There are no legal limits on how much non-lobbying advocacy a nonprofit organization can undertake.

Civic engagement: Any and all activities that engage ordinary people in civic life, such as organizing, advocacy and voter registration, education and mobilization. It often involves building the skills, knowledge and experience that enable people to participate effectively in the democratic process. Also known as "civic participation."

Community organizing: A process of building relationships, leadership and power, typically among marginalized communities, and bringing that power and collective voice to bear on the issues that affect those communities by engaging with relevant decision-makers. The issues raised, solutions identified and strategies developed to achieve those solutions all are defined and acted on by the leaders themselves, often with help from professional organizers. Community organizing can be one part of an overall advocacy or public policy campaign strategy, but it is distinguished by the fact that affected constituencies are the agents of change, rather than paid advocates or lobbyists who represent the interests of such constituencies.

Cultural competence: One's ability to communicate or interact with, or serve people who are of different cultures and backgrounds. Being culturally competent means that you are able to talk or relate to other people in ways appropriate to their culture. Cultural competence begins with deep awareness of your own views and culture, which will help you in understanding the views or culture of others.⁵² A related concept is cultural humility: "The approach of cultural humility goes beyond the concept of cultural competence to encourage us to identify our own biases and to acknowledge that those biases must be recognized. Cultural competency implies that you can function with a thorough knowledge of the mores and beliefs of another culture; cultural humility acknowledges that it is impossible to be adequately knowledgeable about cultures other than your own."⁵³

Disability: a physical (i.e. vision, hearing, mobility), cognitive, intellectual, mental, sensory or developmental condition, or some combination of these, which substantially limits one or more major life activity.⁵⁴

Disparities: Differences in outcomes, impacts, access, treatment or opportunities between under-resourced communities and the dominant group based on race, ethnicity, income, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, national origin, age or other characteristics.

Diversity, equity and inclusion: A set of principles, goals and strategies employed to overcome disparities in access and outcomes, representation and participation by marginalized population groups. Often referred to as DEI or EDI in philanthropy. Each concept is defined separately below.

Diversity: The demographic mix of a specific collection of people, taking into account elements of human difference, including but not limited to race, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and disability status.

Equity: Achieved when you can no longer predict an advantage or disadvantage based on race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or ability. An equity framework is a proactive, strategic approach to improving outcomes that accounts for structural differences in opportunities, burdens and needs in order to advance targeted solutions that fulfill the promise of true equality for all.⁵⁵

Equality: All people are treated equally under the law. An equality strategy seeks to improve access to, or quality of, systems or services for all populations. This “rising tide raises all boats” approach is based on the expectation that improved systems or services for everyone will improve outcomes for those experiencing inequities. It may not, however, make up for the systemic deficits in resources and opportunities experienced by historically oppressed populations.⁵⁶

Implicit bias: The attitudes or stereotypes that affect one’s understanding, actions and decisions in an unconscious manner. Implicit or unconscious biases affect not only our perceptions but also our behavior, policies and institutional arrangements. Also known as implicit social cognition or unconscious bias. “Race in cognition” refers to how implicit and explicit mental processes – which are both altered by and contribute to racial inequities – affect individuals’ decisions, behaviors and lived experiences.⁵⁷

Inclusion: The degree to which diverse individuals are able to participate fully in the decision-making processes within an organization or group. While a truly “inclusive” group is necessarily diverse, a “diverse” group may or may not be “inclusive.”⁵⁸

Intersectionality: The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups,⁵⁹ for example a person of color and/or English Language Learner and/or LGBTQ and/or person with a disability.

Mission investing (also known as “**impact investing**”): The range of tools funders can use to align investment of their non-grant assets with mission and goals. These include program-related investments (PRIs), hiring of diverse investment managers, screening out from investments those companies that profit from harm of the planet or people, and shareholder activism to influence corporate behavior.⁶⁰

Philanthropic openness: Communicating about your goals and strategies, making decisions and measuring progress, listening and engaging in dialogue with others, acting on what you hear and sharing what you have learned.⁶¹

Power: Control, influence or authority. Rashad Robinson said, “Power is the ability to change the rules.”⁶² Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “Power is the ability to achieve a purpose. Whether or not it is good or bad depends upon the purpose.” In a social change and equity context, distinctions are made between “power over” and “power with.”⁶³

Power analysis: An understanding of how power is operating systemically. In social change movement building, power analysis is a visual mapping tool that helps its users determine, for a particular systemic problem, who has power to influence that system and whether those with power are likely to support, oppose or remain neutral with regard to your proposed solutions.

Racial equity: The condition that would be achieved if racial identity is no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, on how one fares.⁶⁴

Social movement: When “people become mobilized around issues they hold dear; at some level, they share a powerful vision about

what is wrong with society and how it must be improved; and they engage in lots of diverse activities not under any one leader’s direct control. The resulting political motion and its effect lead to a change in attitudes, practices and public policy.”⁶⁵

Strategic social justice philanthropy: An approach to philanthropy that uses all the tools at your disposal to change the systems that perpetuate inequity, with input and involvement of the communities harmed by inequities. It aligns social change goals, strategies and progress measures, while ensuring that people prioritized for benefit help shape and implement those goals, strategies and measures.

Structural racism: The macrolevel systems, social forces, institutions, ideologies and processes that interact with one another to generate and reinforce inequities among racial and ethnic groups.⁶⁶

Systems change: Addressing the systemic barriers that create inequities. Grantmaking focused on systems change commonly supports advocacy, community organizing and civic engagement, supporting power building among communities so that they can better shape the systems that affect them. For example, in addition to (or instead of) delivering culturally tailored health care services, this approach might focus on changing the norms and policies that cause or enable health disparities (e.g., community engagement, consultation and decision making in city planning; standards of culturally competent service delivery).⁶⁷ Programs or services that deliver individual benefits to marginalized populations do not advance equity unless the systems delivering those benefits are themselves equitable.

Targeted universalism: The use of targeted strategies (designed to address disparities for specific populations) to achieve universal goals, in contrast with the usual approach of universal strategies (policies that make no distinctions among different population groups) to achieve universal goals. For example, sidewalk curb cuts were implemented to allow people with wheelchairs to travel across the street, but they benefit everyone (cyclists, rolling luggage carriers, caregivers with baby strollers, etc.).⁶⁸

Under-resourced communities (also “**Marginalized communities**”): Populations that experience disparities, are politically disenfranchised or otherwise marginalized. Funders may use other terms such as “disadvantaged,” “vulnerable,” “at-risk” or “underserved.” NCRP defines this broadly, including but not limited to 11 of the special populations tracked by the Foundation Center, i.e., economically disadvantaged; racial or ethnic minorities; women and girls; people with AIDS; people with disabilities; aging, elderly and senior citizens; immigrants and refugees; crime/abuse victims; offenders and ex-offenders; single parents and LGBTQ citizens.

White privilege: The concrete benefits of access to resources and social rewards and the power to shape the norms and values of society that whites receive, unconsciously or consciously, by virtue of their skin color in a racist society.⁶⁹

READINESS ASSESSMENT

Power Moves will guide you in examining internal operations, grantmaking and external relationships. How will you know whether your foundation is ready to embark on this process? Review the toolkit glossary on page 64 and then answer this set of questions to find out:

1. After reviewing the glossary, can you envision talking about these concepts with your foundation staff and board leadership? Would leaders be receptive to these definitions?
2. Does your grantmaking prioritize benefit for under-resourced and marginalized communities? (Note: Your foundation may use another term such as “disadvantaged,” “vulnerable,” “at-risk” or “underserved.”)
3. Do your foundation’s stated or implied values align with equity?
4. Has the foundation committed to advancing equity for priority issues or communities?
5. Has your foundation’s board and staff leadership embraced systemic change as a grantmaking goal or strategy?
6. Does your foundation place a value on community engagement in its programs and external relationships?
7. Has your foundation taken any steps to integrate principles and practices of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) into its internal operations?
8. Have your foundation leaders examined their power and privilege as grantmakers in relation to the nonprofits and communities they support?

If you answered “yes” to at least four of these eight questions, then your foundation would likely find value in using this guide to reflect on ways it can use power to increase effectiveness and impact.

If you answered “no” to five or more questions, this may not be the best time to dig into *Power Moves*. If that’s the case, here are some suggested steps to take first:

- Review relevant online resources on ncrp.org to become better informed about the topics in this toolkit, including:
 - o Primers on advocacy, organizing and civic engagement grantmaking.
 - o Lessons on funding social movements.
 - o Articles on racial equity, implicit bias and white privilege.
- Seek training and support on why and how to incorporate equity as a core value and practice internally and in your grantmaking. The Association of Black Foundation Executives (ABFE) and Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity (PRE) offer such resources, as well as other CHANGE Philanthropy partners.
- Talk to some of the funders highlighted in this toolkit to find out how they got started on the path to building, sharing and wielding power for equity.

SAMPLE TIMELINE AND PROCESS

Below is a sample timeline for using Power Moves to assess how fully you are utilizing your philanthropic power to have a lasting positive impact on the issues and communities you care about.

But don't forget: This is just a guide. You control how much of the assessment to do at one time and how much time you want to spend. For example, you may decide to double the length of the process and spread each set of monthly activities across two months, or to focus on just one program area or power dimension this year.

MONTH 1

- Assemble a team. Your internal assessment group will include members with the authority and capacity to act on what you learn. The team should include relevant representation by demographic, position, function and program. Make sure your team includes staff or trustees who have direct relationships with grantees, community organizations and other constituents.
- Designate roles. It is important to have an overall coordinator who will keep the process moving forward, a skilled facilitator who can help participants address constructive feedback, and a few team members with research skills to collect, analyze and present data. These roles will require significant time commitments; workloads should be adjusted accordingly. If resources allow, consider whether an external facilitator would be better able to hold the group accountable to the process and enable team members to receive, process and reflect on honest feedback.
- Solicit and reward buy-in. Communicate early and often about the purpose of the assessment, especially among foundation staff, board members and grantees. Any of these stakeholders may feel threatened; help ameliorate their concerns by emphasizing that the purpose is shared learning to help them be more impactful, not evaluation to judge individuals. Model transparency and humility, while avoiding defensiveness and blame, to give everyone a chance to learn and grow.

MONTH 2

- Invest in learning. Review the toolkit power dimension(s) as a team and, if needed, study relevant concepts that inform the toolkit approach (see an extensive reading list on our online resource section). Also review the section on privilege and risk. Set aside time for discussions to explore relevance and potential applications to your current grantmaking.
- Begin internal data collection for the dimension(s) of power you have chosen to explore. Review the related sample checklist of questions and edit or add to it. Alert relevant staff and enable them to budget time to gather answers to the list of questions about how the foundation approaches its work in this area.
- Invite grantees, peers and other stakeholders to participate. Let them know why, when and how you will be soliciting honest feedback (e.g., survey, third-party interviews). Identify incentives and motivations that will support high response rates. (See Tips on Soliciting Feedback.)
- Establish a timeline for informing board, staff and other stakeholders on the status of the assessment.

MONTH 3

- Continue internal data collection as needed.
- Solicit feedback from grantees, peers and other stakeholders. Review related sample questionnaire and edit or add to it. Allow at least four weeks to obtain feedback; after four weeks, assess the response and whether to expand the pool or incent additional participation. Capture responses from a representative mix of stakeholders, giving special attention to traditionally marginalized constituents who might need extra encouragement or time and resources to participate.
- Update board and staff on the status of the process.

MONTH 4

- Solicit further feedback from grantees and other stakeholders as needed.
- Analyze internal data to prepare for group discussion. Flag any new questions that surface during the analysis and require further information gathering.
- Update board and staff on the status of the process.

MONTH 5

- Analyze stakeholder feedback and identify key themes emerging from this data.
- Integrate analyses of internal data and stakeholder feedback for each power dimension you are exploring to prepare for the group discussion.
- Share top level data and insights with the committee and those who will be part of the group discussion.
- Update board, staff and other stakeholders on the status of the process.

MONTH 6

- Hold one or more discussions led by your designated facilitator with the assessment team and key leaders to make meaning of the data and feedback and explore their implications. Use or adapt the discussion guide provided for each relevant power dimension.
- Decide next steps, assignments and timetables to act on the priorities that emerged from the discussion (see Next Steps Worksheet). Assignments may flow naturally along programmatic or management lines; if not, the assessment team may want to either transition to an “implementation team” or may want to create a team that will carry the priorities forward.
- Update all staff, trustees, grantees and other stakeholders on the status of the assessment, including (most importantly) the ways the priorities/recommendations will be addressed. Let them and the public know what the foundation learned from this process and how it plans to act on this information.
- Celebrate and give thanks! Show your appreciation to everyone who participated in the process.

TIPS ON SOLICITING FEEDBACK FROM STAKEHOLDERS

Gathering feedback from a foundation's constituents and others familiar with its work is an important way to build stronger relationships and also get a reality check.

None of us can truly see ourselves objectively, and some form of “360-degree feedback” from stakeholders can help us identify areas in which we are doing well and opportunities for growth. How you solicit that feedback matters, both for obtaining useful information grounded in honesty and for upholding values of equity and inclusion.

1 | THINK EXPANSIVELY ABOUT WHICH STAKEHOLDERS TO SOLICIT FEEDBACK FROM.

- a. Current grantees are important to include, but keep in mind that they are grateful for receiving funding and will likely skew positive in their responses. Consider including prior grantees from the last three years as well as rejected applicants and organizations that have made inquiries but haven't actually applied for a grant. If you are a place-based funder, include community leaders who do not receive funding, such as neighborhood leaders, elected officials and business leaders.
- b. Consider using a network approach. Think about all of the networks you are currently in and how best to reach and include those networks in the feedback process. Then think about relevant

networks you aren't currently a part of and think through how to obtain representation from those networks.⁷⁰

- c. Include philanthropic peers that know your work, e.g., others in your region or that work on the same issue(s).
- d. If you prioritize one or more specific issues (such as K–12 education, environment), identify content experts who can give feedback on your strategy and its implementation, especially with an equity lens.

2 | ONCE YOU'VE ASSEMBLED THE LIST, MAKE SURE IT INCLUDES DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES.

- a. Strive for diversity in stakeholders' wealth, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and disability status. You may need to do extra outreach to receive feedback from marginalized constituents.
- b. Try to anticipate and address any obstacles to providing feedback, such as language or accessibility barriers.
- c. Be mindful of the time you are asking individuals to give and how that burden falls unequally on a low-income community leader versus



a program officer at another foundation. Think about how you can incentivize and “give back” to under-resourced individuals who provide feedback: for example, by hosting a community lunch and Q & A with your CEO to share results and insights afterward. You could offer gift cards to those who are interviewed or participate in a focus group.

- d. Be aware of the inherent power imbalance with grantees and make sure they know participation is optional. They may feel they have to or else face negative consequences.
- e. Also be aware of power imbalances within the foundation and create safe opportunities for staff, especially staff of color, to provide information as part of the internal data collection process.

3 | IF LOGISTICALLY AND FINANCIALLY FEASIBLE, SOLICIT FEEDBACK ANONYMOUSLY OR CONFIDENTIALLY TO INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD IT WILL BE HONEST.

- a. Electronic surveys can often provide anonymity. Tools such as Survey Monkey and Google Forms make the data collection and analysis easy and inexpensive. Or if resources are available, consider third-party surveys such as the Center for Effective Philanthropy Grantee Perception Report. Use multiple choice and Likert scale questions to the extent possible to make analysis easier, but it is important to offer at least one open-ended response or comment opportunity.
- b. If you have the resources to hire a third party, this person can conduct one-on-one confidential interviews and/or focus groups with a sampling of constituents and summarize key themes in the feedback. Interviews or focus groups can help reach a greater level of nuance after conducting a survey, to probe certain topics for deeper understanding.

4 | MAKE SURE YOU CAN ANALYZE FOR EQUITY.

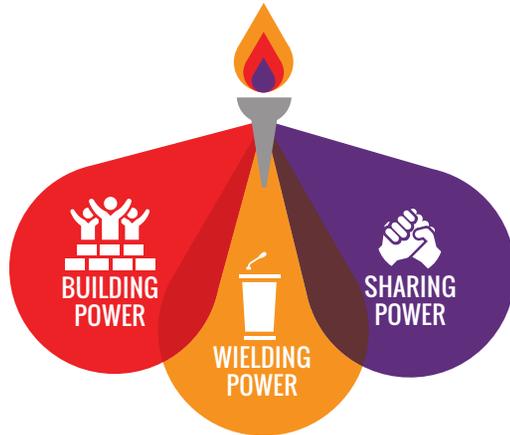
- a. Especially if using an anonymous survey, it will be important to collect basic demographic information from respondents voluntarily (e.g., related to wealth/income, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and disability status). This will enable you to know whether you received an adequate response rate from specific constituent groups and to analyze for differences in responses among them.
- b. Keep in mind that, even if a small minority of responses diverge from the rest of the feedback you received, if it came from marginalized constituents, it is worth taking seriously.

5 | LET YOUR CONSTITUENTS KNOW WHAT YOU LEARNED AND HOW YOU PLAN TO USE THE INFORMATION AND INSIGHTS YOU GATHERED FROM THEM.

- a. Thank everyone you reached out to for their participation.
- b. Use multiple platforms and vehicles to communicate the results.
- c. Consider an in-person convening where stakeholders can ask questions and reflect on the results. This is also an opportunity to ask for advice on how the feedback process could be improved in the future.
- d. Be transparent about feedback you received but chose not to act on and why.

POWER MOVES NEXT STEPS WORKSHEET

What are our next steps on the three dimensions of power?



Use the worksheet on the following page as a tool to help you get started.

- Decide and mark where in each road the foundation currently sits.
- Write down key objectives for each relevant power dimension. Set ambitious but realistic goals for moving further along the road.
- Next to each objective, add in key action steps for the coming year. Agree on who will take charge for each.
- Brainstorm resources, jot them down on sticky notes and place them on the relevant road. Resources that can support progress in more than one power dimension can be placed in the intersections of the roads.
- Download the online Next Steps Spreadsheet to refine objectives and tasks and track progress.

NOTES FROM POWER DISCUSSIONS







BUILDING POWER

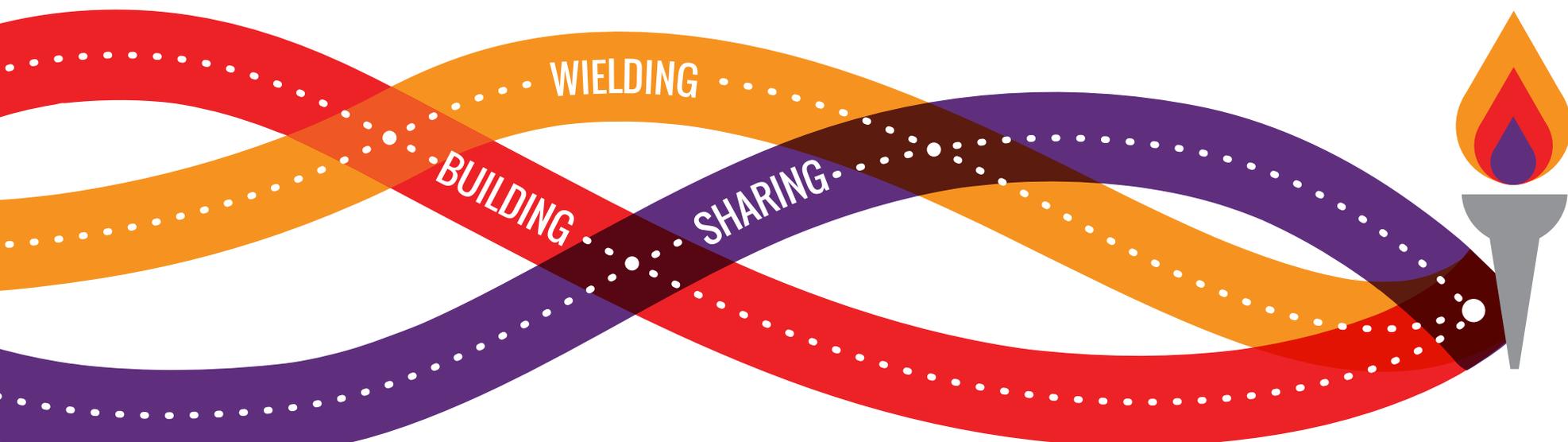
| Objectives | Next Steps | Assigned To |
|------------|------------|-------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

SHARING POWER

| Objectives | Next Steps | Assigned To |
|------------|------------|-------------|
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| | | |

WIELDING POWER

| Objectives | Next Steps | Assigned To |
|------------|------------|-------------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |





TOOLS YOU CAN USE

Section End Notes

50. Find all of these resources at <https://www.ncrp.org>.
51. Definition provided by Jennifer Mizrahi, co-founder of Mizrahi Family Charitable Fund and full-time volunteer CEO of RespectAbility.
52. Definition from: <http://www.centralohioafp.org/?wpdmact=process&did=MTA1LmhvdGxpbms=>.
53. Definition from the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, <https://www.cadca.org/> (referenced resource can be found in the members-only section).
54. Op cit., Mizrahi.
55. Combines definitions from OpenSource Leadership Strategies and CHANGE Philanthropy.
56. Definition from Equitable Evaluation Project Framing Paper, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzIHFJNSW5yY3dGaGN0MTdISEk/view>.
57. See Kirwan Institute, <http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/about/#overview> and <https://www.ncrp.org/publication/responsive-philanthropy-spring-2015/implicit-bias-and-its-role-in-philanthropy-and-grantmaking>.
58. See D5 Coalition, <http://www.d5coalition.org/tools/dei/>.
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EQUITY

POWER

CONNECT WITH US

Congratulations for embarking on this self-assessment focused on using power to advance equity and justice. NCRP staff are available to answer questions about how to use this guide. We also welcome your suggestions to improve it or ideas for supplemental tools and resources.

Please let us know how we can support you to complete this process and share your results.

Contact the Power Moves team at powermoves@ncrp.org and (202) 387-9177 ext. 31.



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“Ultimately, philanthropy is faced with an ethical question. No matter the type, size, location or mission, every foundation influences equity and justice through an inherent relationship to power. With *Power Moves*, NCRP has provided funders with a meaningful framework for ethical thought and action.”

Kristi Andrasik*

Program Officer, The Cleveland Foundation

“With *Power Moves*, NCRP is stepping up once again to help the field understand what’s needed at this important moment to take meaningful action to advance social justice. As much as the tools and stories can guide foundations to more effective grantmaking, it also reveals the depth of NCRP’s knowledge and relationships in the sector.”

Suprotik Stotz-Ghosh*

Senior Advisor, Racial Equity, Grantmakers for Effective Organizations

“Grantmakers and foundations often have a difficult time moving from conversation to practice when tackling a difficult topic in house at their organization. *Power Moves* is a thoughtful guide designed with and for grantmakers looking to refocus the lens through which they address racial equity and social justice. No matter where you are on that important journey, you’ll find something in this toolkit for you!”

Timothy McCue*

Director of Grant Programs, Potomac Health Foundation