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WOL RACIAL JUSTICE FUNDING SURVEY SUMMARY

A. Framing Information

PLEASE NOTE: While 149 respondents completed the survey, they often left questions blank so response percentages do not always reflect 100% participation. We have sought to cull data that reflect the broadest participation among respondents.

- Responding organizations came from 33 states and Washington DC
- Top 5: CA, MD, DC, NM, MA
- This lengthy survey had three primary purposes: 1) obtain baseline data about racial justice funding; 2) learn more about foundation trends in the field of racial justice; and 3) examine the relationship and expectations between racial healing/racial justice organizations and funders.
- 87% of respondents are not-for-profits, higher education institutions or government agencies
- They are predominantly small to medium organizations: 85% have between 0-20 staff members
- Top 5 strategies respondents use to fulfill their organizational missions: 1) Leadership development; 2) advocacy; 3) community engagement; 4) training and education; 5) policy and system change
- Responding organizations are most heavily funded by a combination of foundation grants (27%), government contracts (31%) and non-government contracts (37%)
- 56 respondents reported budgets below \$500,000 and 54 respondents reported budgets between \$500,000-10 million or more.
- Of the 61 organizations that reported receiving foundation grants in the last 5 years, 80% received grant money for programming and only 20% received general operating support.
- Of those receiving foundation grants, 39 organizations received grants of under \$50,000, 25 between \$50-500,000, and 10 above \$500,000

B. Headlines

A majority of respondents noted that too few funders are willing to support racial equity and healing work and even fewer are actively willing apply a substantive racial equity analysis to their own operations and decision-making processes

BEST PRACTICES

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Respondents shared their advice for foundations that wish to continue or work toward grant-making using a racial equity analysis:

- *NAME* the commitment to this work
- *DEFINE* the analysis that they apply to this work
- *APPLY* the analysis to their own operations
- *RECOGNIZE* historical and contemporary systemic and structural racism
- *EMBRACE* an intersectional approach
- *UNDERSTAND* that dismantling racist systems takes time and sustained effort

FUNDING BARRIERS

Survey respondents indicated that funders wittingly or unwittingly create barriers to funding meaningful racial equity and healing work when they:

- 1) Insist on a particular organizational partner or a methodology
- 2) Emphasize strict outcomes without other ways to recognize progress
- 3) Fund only known organizations/programs; privilege white organizations; and impanel all white selection committees
- 4) Allow themselves to be influenced by the political climate to decrease funding
- 5) Restrict funding and specifically focus on programming rather than general operations

BREAK DOWN BARRIERS TO FUNDING

To break down these barriers and thereby support effective racial equity and healing work, funders should:

- 1) Listen to community voices and trust communities to know what they need
- 2) Enable new forms of collaboration *within* communities and organizations
- 3) Provide training and capacity-building in advocacy and engaging power structures
- 4) Support leaders who work on the “margins” without forcing them into the “mainstream”
- 5) Build power in communities of color
- 6) Enable local organizations to partner with national organizations in this work.
- 7) Build capacity for movement-building and support networks

RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR FUNDERS

Funders who wish to have an impact in racial justice work should:

- 1) Become *nimble risk-takers* to support rapid response needs in the context of long-term change
- 2) Use the *power of the bully pulpit* to educate about the reality of structural racism and how it intersects with other forms of social oppression
- 3) Welcome *racial justice organizations as thought partners* to determine realistic outcomes, measures and best strategies for accomplishing the work

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- 4) Seek to deeply understand the *implications and challenges of being a "self-sufficient" racial justice organization*
- 5) *Integrate a racial equity analysis* in everything they do, both in and out of the grant-making process
- 6) Provide *flexible, less restricted funding* to organizations of color (not solely white organizations) to build and sustain infrastructure, staff *and* programs;
- 7) Support *research* to expand evidence, direct action, community organizing and establishing communities of practice.

C. Questions the Survey Data Generated

1. What would it look like for racial justice organizations and funders to develop long-term, equitable strategic partnerships to address structural racism? What would such an approach require?
2. What does accountability look like between and among racial equity/racial healing organizations regarding the distribution of resources?
3. What does accountability for racial equity work look like between and among funders?
4. Can WOL leverage its network to match contracts to providers?
5. Can WOL leverage its expertise to develop a national individual giving campaign or provide campaign assistance to local/regional organizations?
6. Can WOL connect network members who wish to pursue joint projects and funding?

D. Next Steps

Phase 1: Share survey outcomes at November 1 Movement Net Lab retreat and gather feedback about implications from participants. Questions to drive this conversation:

- *Do the survey outcomes surprise you/challenge you/confirm what you already know? Who else needs to hear these outcomes?*
- *Are the outcomes sufficiently compelling to begin a dialogue with additional funders? What would that dialogue look like?*
- *How else can these outcomes be used/communicated to the field nationally?*
- *If the data are not surprising, then why don't funders institutionalize these priorities? (E.g., Why don't they respond to an expressed need for operational support?)*

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Phase 2: Invite activists to a gathering to discuss the data, consider how to create an equitable relationship with funders, and develop a strategy to engage funders.

Invite 6-8 funding leaders (as indicated in survey) to partner with WOL to consider how best to share survey results—written report/social media/webinar—and engage other funders in dialogue about the questions that emerged from the data.

Share survey data with key funders, groups and intermediaries who focus on justice work (E.g., Funders for Justice, Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity, affinity groups, Bay Area Justice Funders Network, Resource Generation, NCRP, Solidaire) and request their support, as collaborators and catalysts, for a gathering of activists.

Work with foundation leaders to develop a survey for funders about racial healing and justice organizations to begin to assess their perception of relationships, their concerns and challenges, and their hopes for equitable partnerships.

Phase 3: Gather funding leaders and activists to discuss a plan for strategic partnerships and institutionalizing racial equity practices within the philanthropy field

Work with “partner funders” to create a day-long symposium for funders who value racial equity and healing yet are unsure how to invest in and message about racial justice. Share results of survey and *opportunities for partnership* to confront and dismantle structural racism. Let partner funders take the lead on challenging and inspiring other funders.

Phase 4: Provide webinars for WOL members and other interested groups to increase their capacity such as making the case, understanding foundation practices.