

APPENDIX 3

Assessing Our Grantmaking for Its Racial Justice Potential

In 2004, the Applied Research Center produced a report entitled *Short Changed: Foundation Giving and Communities of Color*, which discusses ways that foundations concerned with social justice support communities of color, civil rights, and social action organizations. In recent years, foundation support for racial justice work appears to have declined. There is a lack of consensus among funders about what racial justice work is, and funders vary in their commitment to be more explicit and strategic in their support for racial justice.

This tool is designed to guide program officers and foundation executives in conducting such an assessment, regardless of the approach they take. The first common approach is to outline an issue area that strongly implies the need for racial analysis, such as poverty or environmental justice. Another approach is to dedicate funding to support a specific community, for example, to help an emerging Vietnamese refugee community meet its needs. A third, and most ambitious approach for these purposes, is to establish a funding program explicitly devoted to racial justice organizations. This tool should work for foundation executives funding in any of these approaches.

Please keep in mind that the tool is based on the highest standards for doing racial justice work. Even organizations and foundations that meet few of the criteria expressed in these two exercises can make incremental progress toward addressing the effects of institutional racism. The important thing is to use the tool to have the discussions and take the steps that move you closer to supporting racial justice effectively.

Racial Justice is the proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes for all. Embracing this definition of racial justice also has a few key underlying assumptions:

1. Racial justice is not the same as racial diversity, which only requires the presence of people in an organization. Racial diversity is a component of racial justice;
2. Racial justice requires an analysis and strategy for addressing racism in institutions;
3. The presence of people of color does not necessarily mean that you have a racial justice organization or program, even

though they may be providing needed services to a community of color; and

4. Racial Justice work specifically targets institutional and structural racism through a continuum of approaches that may include research, education, organizing, advocacy, and movement building.

“Defining justice work around issues of race is important, and advancing this language is crucial to developing more commitment to racial justice” –*Short-Changed: Foundation Giving and Communities of Color* (Applied Research Center)

PART ONE: ASSESSING A PORTFOLIO

If your foundation has a racial justice category, skip to *Reflection Questions*.

If your foundation has no racial justice category, start here –

1. Seeking evidence of commitment to racial justice

Central to establishing a commitment to racial justice is a mandate for the work in a foundation’s guiding language. Examine the documents, speeches and discussions that ground your foundation’s work. What are the pieces of language that implicitly or explicitly acknowledge race as a key societal factor?

2. Coding and counting your grants

Most foundations code grantees by demographics, geography, and issue area, but there is very little consistency in this coding. Nevertheless, it is useful for straightforward equity reasons to gather grant data by the codes that you already use, then to consider coding grants based on the racial justice criteria in the next section of the assessment.

- a. Determine how you’re doing on simple demographics. How many grants are you making to organizations located in and serving communities of color?
- b. Next, code by the identity of the leaders and the constituency, both professional and volunteer, to determine how many grants you are making to organizations of color. What is the comparative size of the grants to people of color-led institutions vs. white-led institutions?
- c. What are the types of grants being made to people of

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color-led institutions vs. white-led institutions – general support, project support, or capacity building support?

- d. Finally, determine what percentage of your grants are being supported through the three categories – communities of color, people of color led, and size and type of grants.

3. Count and compare grantees in a single portfolio and across portfolios to look particularly for:

- a. What are the patterns of funding organizations that are not of color to work in communities of color?
- b. Are there patterns of funding organizations of color at smaller levels, or with project support rather than general purposes funding?
- c. What are the patterns of funding organizations, of all colors, without a racial analysis? With racial analysis? (Is this analysis stated or unstated? Does the analysis lead to individual or institutional solutions?)
- d. What are the patterns of funding groups that do not espouse racial justice goals? With racial justice goals? Are these goals stated or unstated?

PART ONE: ASSESSING A PORTFOLIO REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Given this data, what is our pattern of grantmaking on racial justice? How are we doing?
2. How did this pattern come to exist? Which institutional decisions contributed to the pattern historically and contemporarily? What new decisions would take us closer to racial justice grantmaking?
3. If the pattern is due to a characteristic of the field in which our grantees work, what steps can we take to support racial justice grantseekers? Do we need to provide technical assistance for emerging organizations and communities to apply for our grants, or make it clear that we are open to racial analysis in applications?

4. If we are satisfied with our own patterns of funding, how can we bolster that? For example, do we communicate the accomplishments of our grantees effectively to colleagues internally and externally? To other grantees? To other funders? To the media?

PART TWO: EXAMINING A SPECIFIC GRANT TO DETERMINE ITS RACIAL JUSTICE POTENTIAL

This section includes questions to ask, based on ARC's working principles for racial equity and guidelines for developing an organization that supports racial justice. Please review these principles and guidelines attached.

BEING EXPLICIT

1. **Addressing Race:** Does the applicant focus explicitly (not necessarily exclusively) on racial justice as a core element of their work?
 - a. Do they include a racial analysis in their statement of problem?
 - b. If yes, what is their analysis of racial dynamics?
 1. *How does the organization address race in the work?*
 2. *How does race affect outcomes of the work?*
 3. *How does the work attempt to remove disparities or inequitable outcomes?*
2. **Awareness and Communication:**
 - a. How do they define racial discrimination?
 - b. Are they aware of effects of racial discrimination?
 - c. Do they speak openly about the effects of racial discrimination, inequities, or tensions internally?
 - d. Are there opportunities for staff and board to engage in collective dialogue, learning or training around developing an analysis around race?
 - e. If so, how is it operationalized? Is this reflected in the mission, values, principles that guide the organization's work?

3. Building and Expanding Leadership:

- a. Do they systematically develop new leaders who can articulate and act upon a racial analysis?
- b. What is their leadership development program or approach? At what levels of the organization do these leaders work?
- c. What is the system of support for emerging and current leaders?

4. Challenging the Rules:

- a. Are they aware of and willing to challenge unspoken rules against talking about race explicitly in policymaking? This could include internal policies, local governmental systems, or state and national policies and laws.
- b. Do they have an internal education plan and an external communications plan?

5. Spreading the Word:

- a. Among their stakeholders, are there mechanisms to communicate issues of racial discrimination?
 1. If yes, list examples from newsletters, speeches, campaign flyers and other materials:
- b. How do they make the case or inform the community of a racial analysis and its importance?
- c. Do they have a strategy for deflecting external demands to prove that discrimination is intentional by focusing more on impact than intention. For example, do they have systems for collecting and disseminating relevant data?

List the systems here:

DIRECTED ACTION AND ADVOCACY:

Institutions vs. Individuals: Does the applicant take action for or against specific institutional policies and practices, both public and private? If yes, please answer the following questions:

- a. Do they recognize that institutional behavior is set in a variety of ways: legislative, regulatory and practical (unspoken rules and patterns)?
 1. Which items do they identify as needing improvement?
 2. How easily can they identify the power dynamics within the institutions that affect their community?
- b. Do they explicitly articulate the role of government in relation to race and private institutions?

List examples:

- c. Do they generate new policy or regulatory proposals, or propose new frameworks for approaching problems on a local, state, or national level?

List the proposals:

- d. Are the proposed solutions designed explicitly to eradicate racial disparities? How do they monitor the implementation of policies to determine whether the new policies are working?

STRATEGIC ALLIANCES:

Is the group interested in building alliances based on a litmus test that emphasizes shared analysis and strategy rather than solely on the basis of shared identity?

- a. Do they have a clear analysis of how institutionalized racism interacts with other systems including class, gender and sexuality?
- b. Do they give significant attention to interacting with other constituencies and organizations to build reciprocal supportive relationships? If they do not, is this reflected in their long-term planning?
- c. Do they have both tactical allies focused on specific short-term goals, and strategic allies based on a shared worldview and long-term goals?

List the tactical:

List the strategic:

- d. How do they ensure that all parties in an alliance have equal power and participation? How does each party in the alliance develop its own capacity to contribute base, money or contacts?
- e. How do they sustain their alliances structurally (campaign meetings, one-on-ones, annual retreats, shared infrastructure)?
- f. What are the joint projects grounding their alliances? ■