



## Ferguson and Other Structural Racism Flashpoints: The Philanthropic Strategic Response and Role

Organized by Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity (PRE)  
Sponsored by Ford Foundation, Kellogg Foundation, and Open Society  
Foundations  
~September 24, 2014

This meeting was convened in response to the co-sponsoring funders, as well as recognizing the need for shared space among funders and activists to strategize both about the most effective ways to address the current moment before us, but also thinking more about the long-view and how better to be prepared as we know other flashpoints have occurred and will occur. Particularly in thinking about what we know of the cycle of structural racialization, with our progress will come more backlash and being prepared to tackle the next reaction is critical to our continuing to advance toward racial justice. We were thrilled with the incredible responsiveness of so many busy people, and yet also know there were so many voices we would have liked to have had in the room and couldn't include given space and time limitations. We are sharing the synthesis below as a way to help expand this discussion, which was designed to be relevant far beyond the crisis and important movement-building in Ferguson, MO, but also recognizing that it is a moment that also needs direct energy and support. -- *Lori Villarosa, Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity*

*Editor's Note: The following comments are primarily excerpted from direct transcripts. However, other than the invited opening discussion statements, other comments are not necessarily sequential, but rather grouped by key themes that arose through the day. Overall, there were more than 40 pages of valuable transcripts from a rich discussion, full of complex and useful commentary from each individual. It was extremely challenging to decide what to cut as the room was so filled with experience and wisdom – particularly when, due to our large group and the time constraint; folks already had sharpened points quite succinctly. Thanks to Maggie Potapchuk for doing the lion's share of synthesizing, and Jessie Gallogly, Caroline Timbers and Harriet Moon for transcribing and note-taking. While the majority are excerpts of direct transcripts made from recording, comments after lunch are only from notes and therefore more paraphrasing. Additionally, where activists were speaking apart from the funders, we have left off individual names to protect anonymity. If anyone is interested in more complete transcripts, please let us know.*

### OPENING COMMENTS

*Eric Ward, Ford Foundation*

- We are here because of the shooting death of Michael Brown, which sparked large-scale non-violent protests, including some small violent responses, which were then responded to by a hyper-aggressive police response.
- We gather here today to address this issue, and to encourage people to step back and look at this in a broader view; and to consider how we respond to the needs of the community. The ability of our movement to marshal the resources to respond to each flashpoint in advance is quite beyond our capacity today. So how do we respond to these emerging issues around the country? Not only in Ferguson, but in major urban areas? Backlash is important in terms of responding to, because if not we potentially lose resources and undercut our credibility.
- Is there something different about people's push for democracy, is there something different about emergency management-like curfew, and other responses like those in Katrina and South Africa and Detroit. What kind of democracy will we have? Inclusive or exclusive? I propose we look at tangible ways to build power, and how we prepare for backlashes using Ferguson as a case study, how do we respond to these emerging issues?

- There is also a question of narrative – that includes both communications, social media and ways that we frame what is occurring in this country. What we’ve learned in terms of Ferguson is that it would not have been a national story without African Americans and their allies that eventually pushed this and forced the media to respond. What does this mean in terms of how we move forward and how we frame these issues that are occurring around us? As an organizer once said to me: “if we can’t frame the future in a way that is tangible and exciting were going to have a hard time convincing our communities to move forward in that way.” It’s time for us to begin to discuss how we frame what the future looks like – what inclusive democracy looks like – and what’s the path forward?
- We start this conversation less than one year away from the 50th anniversary of the March Across the Edmund Pettus Bridge – the march from Selma to Montgomery. ... As Heraclitus once said: “You cannot cross the moving stream twice in the same place.” We ask ourselves today, what has changed? What looks different? And perhaps while our role here today is not to cross the bridge then perhaps we can begin the conversations to lift up those important pieces that point to how we best build a path to the bridge that the next generation will cross.

**MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:**

**Activists and Funders Concerns:**

To empower the residents locally means you have to find out what folks need and want, as opposed to folks just parachuting in and bringing their agendas. And that’s the hard part and the long term piece that lots of times you can’t get funders to fund – they want something with immediate outcomes.

*Jamala Rogers, Organization for Black Struggle*

I think what we learned [after Katrina] over time along the way was firstly when there’s so much instability, then a layer of the organizing and a layer of the civil society infrastructure has to be devoted to dealing with the widespread, collective trauma of the community you’re organizing. And it’s very difficult if you don’t have a very explicit way of entering into organizing with a view to move a set of core leaders into a healthy, stable place so that they can really lead.

*Saket Soni, National Guestworker Alliance/New Orleans Workers’ Center for Racial Justice*

...Those issues [electoral politics] aren’t bad ones – and they will be on-ramps for people – but I think that the real value proposition is that we have a community of folks who believe that their voices should be heard. They have the newest tools and technology of the time and they can amplify their stories and their voices in new ways. And the question for us is how are we going to support infrastructure on the ground to actually do that work?

*Rashad Robinson, Color of Change*

However, what we don’t see is a long-term investment in organizations that are led by actual young people, and specifically young, Black people. But they should have an organization that they can be a part of – or an organization that they are able to start. So the capacity wasn’t there in many ways for local Black organizing in the way that it should have been. ...

*Charlene Carruthers, Black Youth Project (BYP100)*

...And unless we understand what’s driving it, and interrupt and get ahead of it, we’re going to always be behind in terms of these flash-points. So, I want to say that the thing we focus on the least is understanding the strategic use of the anxiety about ‘the other’. ... one of the things we do over and over again is actually participate to some extent in the narrow focus of race without it being connected to the economy, without it be connected to politics, without it being connected to the environment. And I want to suggest that race, in a fundamental way, is actually driving all of these things.

*John Powell, Haas Diversity Research Center at the University of California*

... It’s rare to have a moment when we can focus on police reform. And we need to make sure that every community across the country has an agenda for what to do, what to ask for, and that we build a national movement to help people advance that agenda where they are.

*Angela Glover Blackwell, PolicyLink*

... I want to ask about the relative value of building a national infrastructure to respond to localized issues – particularly in light of state level mobilization and whether we would rather be well-served to support learning and transition of local organizations to invest more in organizing capacity – democratizing these high tag funding collaboratives through partnerships and connections.

*Reverend Starsky Wilson, Deaconess Foundation*

One is just to go back to the shifting demographics and make sure that we differentiate the difference between changing number and changing power. ... under White supremacy a racial order doesn't shift just because numbers shift.

*Cathy Cohen, University of Chicago, Black Youth Project*

... we've got to be ready to do litigation that's not parachuting in, but working with folks on the ground to give them the space to do organizing. ... So how do we as a national organization support them ...[to] be able to build the capacity of folk on the ground so that they're able to have their own internal communications capacity.

*Judith Browne Dianis, The Advancement Project*

The competency around race and philanthropy is still extremely low. ... I think that there are actually more willing folks in the field, but I think they need to be supported in the work around race. ... So many of the organizations like ours that support foundations on issues of race, we're seeing the money to invest in the field on these issues decrease. So collectively, how do we work together to increase the competency?

*Susan Batten, ABFE*

The demographic change that the country is going through is grounded in Asian and Latino communities and Black communities are particular kind of flashpoint in the modern effort to a 21st century racial hierarchy. It's not that we never saw it before, but the numbers are changing the context. So one of the things I'd like to put into the mix is how we take up opportunities around cross-racial community building in this period – which I think it quite complicated and deserves devoted, concentrated attention.

*Rinku Sen, Race Forward*

...we align our thinking about supporting infrastructures as they come into majority populations. So those infrastructures can redefine the role of government and how governance applies to everybody, from policing to education. The easy thing to do is to react. The hard and most strategic thing to consider and I hope for philanthropy to begin investing in, how do we begin to look at owning government – preparing people to play their role in government, understanding how government is a collective venture that we all should have a role in...

*Derrick Johnson, One Voice Mississippi*

– the whole emergency management seemed unique – it seemed an acceleration beyond what happened in Katrina and certainly beyond what's happening in Detroit. If that's true, is it or is it not important to weigh in quickly in way that says "this is completely unacceptable." What type of response do we have has a racial justice movement to this new situation, if it is new.

*Eric Ward, Ford Foundation*

I'm really interested in having deeper conversation about how do we do our work in this emerging political economy in a way that's not anti-Black – that's not afro-phobic and not simply based on numbers.

*Charlene Carruthers, BYP*

The things we're missing on policing because we're focusing on Ferguson will embarrass us in five to ten years. Because we're missing gender justice .... It is racial justice but we're not getting videotape of it because women are victimized and brutalized by law enforcement in a different and invisible space as compared to men.

*Phillip Atiba Goff, Center for Policing Equity*

... we are an emerging community among communities of color – and I think it's important for us to have the ability to do that deep education internally about what the Racial Justice movement is ... There's so much work that we have to do on the ground to make sure that our communities are fully engaged in this ... And in order to do that it requires funders to invest long term in the capacity building of our institutions beyond just programming.

*Nadia El-Zein Tordova, National Network for Arab American Communities*

There needs to be an understanding of White supremacy – being able to say that – as we talk about the institutions and even the framing of the questions – what race are these institutions accountable to and who are they set up to protect? ... to really have those real conversations about what should be the solutions, what's at the root of this?

*Hiram Rivera, Philadelphia Student Union*

Democracy is really at stake here and something that's important to know is that the effort to build unity between the African American and Latino communities are severely underfunded and they don't fit into one philanthropic category, so they don't fit at all. ... So then you have leaders who reach way beyond the individual or organizational capacity and you have burn out and you lose the historical memory that makes it possible to build a racial justice movement.

*Maria Poblet, Causa Justa*

... funders are very reluctant to get involved with groups that challenge the White power structure. I'm calling upon the funders to re-think the way we do funding to the community and walk with them rather than coming up with all sorts of reason why we shouldn't fund them and we should go with the established groups.

*Bridget Flood, Incarnate Word Foundation*

We need to build Black organizations that have political clout, we need to develop leadership through those and support that and be bold, aggressive, and uncompromising about that.

*Nat Chioke Williams, Hill-Snowdon Foundation*

### **Ideas for Next Steps**

*Jocelyn Sargent, Kellogg Foundation reporting from the Funders' Group:*

- How do we move this from a flashpoint to a social justice movement? ... That's part of the movement building question – so how do we strategize together to research that, but also what does that look like?
- The changing demographics to do matter... So the question we have is how do we in this moment something that actually leads us to influence what those demographic changes are going to mean? They're going to happen.
- ...How do we connect communities of color together while building capacity intra-community and connect those relationships in a line so that it's not competitive.
- We want to think through funding strategies that align our work across foundations...How do we send the message that just doing the kind of things that respond to the policing of Ferguson is not really going to change the situation.

I wanted to pick up the point too about community foundations and that infrastructure: What can be done to seed it and support it? How do we support and strengthen local funders to be there for the long haul, but how do we do it in a way that increase their capacity to take risks on these issues around race & racism and be stronger in funding organizers.

*Lori Villarosa, PRE*

*Glen Harris, Center for Social Inclusion reporting from the Activists' Group:*

- The need for on-the-ground grassroots funding (the non-sexy work, general operating costs, incubator etc.; also investing in technology, and building leadership and analysis building)
- Movement infrastructure (inside/outside game, what does this mean to redefine government, reclaiming it); need for convening's and ongoing communication between activists, there are opportunities for single-issue work like police reform, climate change; we need a racial justice bat signal to send the resources to assist; develop a flashpoint play book
- Reframing the narrative and frame breaking (we have a huge opportunity to add an international frame, but we need to build capacity and tools for folks on the ground in using that narrative); also what are we doing to address racial anxiety, making stronger our ability to frame the connection between race and class
- How does philanthropy build will? What does philanthropy need for support from activists?

We need a partnership between researchers, foundations and community groups; it will take deep relationships across discipline.

*John Powell, Haas Diversity Research Center*

We need to remember to link local context to the international; the same corporations that are repressing and operating in Detroit and Ferguson are also in London, Sao Paulo and so on. ...All these movements have been international, local with global perspective. Funding can play a critical role in helping application of best practices nationally and internationally.

*Clarence Lusane, American University*

... It is important to bring young people together across race, across gender, across sexualities to define their own vision. ... Young people are defining the world they want to see, not in a transactional mode and it's not about reciprocity for the moment, is transformational and needs to be supported.

*Judith Browne Dianis, The Advancement Project*

Data integration from law enforcement is necessary and the least sexy thing, but so necessary.

*Phillip Goff, Center for Policing Equity*

How can we leverage the conversation to get deeper; it is a huge opportunity to push for policy change and to push for change in a different set of values; i.e. the fact that our democracy is also hurting White communities.

*Glen Harris, Center for Social Inclusion*

What we are experiencing/seeing in Ferguson is so global; we need to tell the story so that people can locate themselves within it... We need to speak to these things in a way that makes for a compelling story, clear and articulate so many different kinds of people can hear it including Whites.

*Scott Nakagawa, ChangeLab*

Encourage and create opportunities for healing to be part of organizing work – in terms of dealing with systemic racism and in response to trauma. ... Create space to explore these reactions without making those folks “wrong.” There is so much pain and anger and mental impact from systemic racism that we don’t create space for people to unpack.

*Marjona Jones, Veatch Program*

Re: BMOC – critique is about the inclusion of women and girls of color. The dynamic between men and women of color needs to be addressed; we need to work on building a movement that benefits communities of color in a gender inclusive way.... I also want to bring up structural racism in philanthropy; how would Huey Newton have accepted foundations dollars?

*Allison Brown, OSF*

... There are a lot of times we are paying somebody to think for us. In this type of meeting and the wisdom in space - we are not funded to have this intellectual space long term. ...We need to figure out a framework around democracy and expanding democracy is important - to address neoliberalism and the effect on democracy; with money in politics, with White folks.

*Gihan Perera, Florida New Majority*

#### **ACTIVIST DISCUSSANTS OPENING STATEMENTS:**

*Jamala Rogers, Organization for Black Struggle*

- What has been happening in Ferguson since the shooting is there are a lot of people at the table trying to do good work. A lot of the injustices have been peeled back – the injustice that a majority African-American city is ruled by Whites (Whites dominate in the police department, school board, and the city council). So even though there’s an occupying force in Ferguson, the underlying causes are still poor education, lack of opportunities, unemployment that is only exacerbated by an occupying police force that continues to connect with a very exploitative municipal government that gets at least a third of its funding from exploiting the residents there through minor offenses.
- To help empower the residents [locally] means you have to find out what folks need and want, as opposed to folks just parachuting in and bringing their agendas. And that’s the hard part and the long term piece that lots of times you can’t get funders to fund – they want something with immediate outcomes.
- ...Over the last several years we saw the funding for organizing that helps to organize other organizations for the social justice movement – but we’re not really on the ground, organizing people for empowerment and systemic change in their own areas.
- So if we’re talking about this being a pandemic – which it is, police violence is all over – we have to act like it’s a national problem. That means having a national infrastructure ...and in many cases the folks on the ground doing police violence work are very small, organized but very under resourced. I would just say that Ferguson is not in a good place right now – and it’s not just Ferguson, but it’s ¼ of North County that has a similar circumstance that we have to address.

*Saket Soni, National Guestworker Alliance/New Orleans Workers’ Center for Racial Justice*

- ...After Katrina it was apparent that the role of the governments is to be a coercive role of state power and particularly the militarization of police, FEMA and other branches of the government that was a really important ingredient to keeping a power structure. So on one hand you had 80% of the population displaced and actively looking for work and on the other hand you had immigrants brought in with the promise of work. So you had the city turned into the largest construction site and the largest labor camp in the United States. ... It was important for the power structure to frame Black and Brown people as rioting and looting – as the violent ones. You needed a violent actor and then you needed a force for good.



- I think what we learned over time along the way was firstly when there's so much instability, then a layer of the organizing and a layer of the civil society infrastructure has to be devoted to dealing with the widespread, collective trauma of the community you're organizing. And it's very difficult if you don't have a very explicit way of entering into organizing with a view to move a set of core leaders into a healthy, stable place so that they can really lead.
- Secondly, any response, whether a communications response or a legal response or a policy response has to have a feeder loop where immediate and direct experiences from the bottom are really what is fueling the strategy. Because we can all dust off all sorts of solutions and policy papers, but ultimately all of that has to match the situation - and demands are much more imaginative when we have the ability for people to frame the situation. People who are experiencing the situation have to frame it for themselves and then lead a fight for a solution.
- I think we learned the importance of integrating communications, organizing, political and legal approaches into one strategy – that doesn't mean all of those approaches have to be housed in one organization, but we have to have a way of integrating those approaches.
- ... things don't become flashpoints naturally. Things become flashpoints because we know what we're looking for and we know how to push something into a place where you break the sound barrier.
- In New Orleans now, what we are seeing is a pretty massive transfer of dollars and technology into the hands of local police and immigration agents. ... So it's not just the case that LA has the highest number per capita deportations in the country of any non-boarder state – it's that there's an enormous budget to give every ICE agent and police officer a biometrics device .... This is quite an alarming thing. The last few years, the people who've been experiencing this type of assault and occupation have really been organizing and have really been able to go from surviving to building a strategy. And I think that's what we're aspiring to here. To go from survival to strategy and turn a flashpoint into a movement.

*Rashad Robinson, Color of Change*

- We've been engaged in a number of these flashpoints and along with Jamala and a number of others, we delivered 900,000 petitions to the White House and then went in for a meeting to push the Department of Justice and the White House around these issues. The petitions are not just pieces of paper – through them we hear the stories and voices and comments from everyday people. ... I continue to hear the same things from people: "It seems like there's a lot more police brutality ... We're not in a new age of police brutality; we're in a new age of social media. We have moved outside of communication age to the participation age, where everyday people are their own media makers and have the ability to amplify their own political voice in ways that they did not have five or ten years ago.
- And the generation of millennials feel much more empowered to not have to wait for a single leader to tell them that it's time or to move to tell their story, but to amplify it through their own voice. We have a Left that is talking about electoral politics to this community – and this from my perspective is a real moment to drive and build a new movement around something bigger. But I think what's bigger is our challenge of what policy solutions actually meet the moment?
- And being down on the ground in Ferguson – the young folks do not have a lot of faith – not in electoral politics, not in political leaders or any single organization – and they're not joiners the way that their parents or grandparents were. They're not going to be card-carrying members of the NAACP or ACLU – they're going to move outside of these moments and the best that we can do ... give on-ramp opportunities and do the good messaging. They're talking about larger police reforms and a level of accountability. And then there are the things that we may end up getting because we have a more organized White Left and we're heading into an election.
- So the things that people come to Color of Change with now: militarization – which allows our movement to ignore implicit bias and the long-term impact of police brutality in Black communities. We could solve the problem of police militarization tomorrow and Eric Gardner still would have been choked by a police officer with his bare hands.

- And then I hear electoral politics ... all would have been solved through electoral politics. Those issues aren't bad ones – and they will be on-ramps for people – but I think that the real value proposition is that we have a community of folks who believe that their voices should be heard. They have the newest tools and technology of the time and they can amplify their stories and their voices in new ways. And the question for us is how are we going to support infrastructure on the ground to actually do that work? What are we going to do to ensure that the OBS's [Organization of Black Struggle] of the world are actually ready when those moments happen? That the organizations at the national level are prepared to be rapid response engines and to be able to push back against the bad facts and bad data when they come out – in a national media context. And that's where I just don't see us ready. Our local Black infrastructures right now are funded to move in and outside of election cycles, not to be engaged long term. And if we are not on-ramping people well on the off seasons we're not going to do the electoral work well in the on seasons.
- In the fight back that I've seen around Trayvon Martin, Renisha McBride, Jordan Davis, Michael Brown while there is a lot of pain and a lack of trust, there is something aspirational there. Folks believing that they still can stand up and fight back. And it was none of our organizations that made this a national issue – it was that young people had had enough and that we still have to a certain extent a free and open Internet in this country, which allowed their voices to travel without the corporate filters. And those are all the things that we have to remember as we move into the next work with our communities – that they contours will continue to change over the next 5 and 10 years, but we have a moment now when goods work can be done. And if not, I think it is going to be even more challenging to do the type of electoral work and other work to convince people that their vote and their voice matters.

*Charlene Carruthers, Black Youth Project (BYP100)*

- BYP100 is a national organization of Black 18 – 35 year old activists and essentially what we do every day is we train, we mobilize, and we organize our folks around issues that we care about and specifically we are focusing on criminalization of Black people and so for us it was a natural issue to focus on because we emerged out of a flashpoint. And the flashpoint we emerged out of was the George Zimmerman verdict. ... we were actually gathered together that weekend of the Zimmerman verdict and we had a choice to make as young people about what we would do, folks who had been organizing across the labor movement and racial justice movements....
- And so what we decided was that we really wanted to engage in the long-term process of base-building. A base that is not being organized nationally in a way that we believe it needs to be. And to do it in a way that is both queer and feminist, bringing that lens to the space. And so, what we know and what we said in many ways in this room is that young people have always been at the forefront of agitating the people in this room into action. However, what we don't see is a long-term investment in organizations that are led by actual young people, and specifically young, Black people. But they should have an organization that they can be a part of – or an organization that they are able to start. So the capacity wasn't there in many ways for local Black organizing in the way that it should have been. ...
- ... what we need to pay attention to, how are we investing in young people's work? And also recognizing that we're skilled organizers. We're not just activists. We're coming to the table with the ability to actually plan strategically, sit at tables, have conversations and provide an analysis and move people. And move leaders.
- And so, one narrative that we are becoming uncomfortably – for me – and tragically familiar and comfortable with is the narrative of the young Black man who is gunned down by a police officer or a self-appointed vigilante. What we're not as familiar with thanks to the work of organizations like Color of Change are the stories like Renisha McBride. And so the narrative we tell about criminalization and mass incarceration in this country has to be broadened and deepened, and not just to be inclusive of Black women and girls, and Black LGBT folks but actually centering those narratives in the story.
- We are not going to dismantle the prison industrial complex if we do not pay attention to the fastest growing population in our prison system, Black girls and women. ...do we want to find ourselves in ten years talking about how we're going to keep our sister because we didn't pay attention then and we didn't pay attention now to what's going on.

- And so, as we look at these structural racism flashpoints and how we engage in our work, it's absolutely investing in long-term capacity building but not just in the traditional sense. ... We absolutely need to invest in local Black organizing that centers around Black LGBTQ folks; that is led by women; that is led by young people. And oftentimes, it's a point of frustration for me, because there are organizations that do this work every day, but either they're not seen, or they're not heard, or they're not in this room.

*john powell, Haas Diversity Research Center at the University of California*

- I want to actually have us focus a little bit on the trends. As we talk and think about this work, you may say they're pretty disparate. I want to suggest that there are some larger trends that I think are really important for us to understand and to inform the work.
- First of all, there is increased polarization, both at a political, economic, and I'll say, at a level around the collective self, who we are. Secondly, there are trends in terms of gentrification in certain areas and distressed urban areas happening both at the same time.... And in terms of the kind of polarization in terms of cities, what you're seeing is gentrification, so that as in Ferguson as in other places what you see is Blacks and people of color being pushed out of urban areas into suburban areas where there is not an infrastructure period, including an organizing infrastructure in a way there was in cities – and not that cities had enough, but there is even less in these suburbanized areas. Third, we're also seeing extreme polarization economically. ... We have the growing wealth gap that actually not only affects Blacks and particularly all Blacks, but certainly Black women, but also affects the White middle class. So you have a declining White middle class. Four, you also have growing racial anxiety in the country. It's been growing for many years, and it's actually more pronounced on Democrats and moderate Whites than it is in conservative, White men and Republicans. And, so how do these things fit together?
- And Lori and I had this back-and-forth in terms of this metaphor.... Climate change tells us we're going to have more hurricanes, it tells us we're going to have rising tides, it tells us we're going to have droughts and fires in California. It doesn't tell us where. But it tells us that we're going to have this on-going process of these flashpoints. And I think it is very important as we put out the fires in California, we should think about what's driving it? And I'm concerned that we don't have a strategy in terms of what's driving it.
- The focus on the flashpoints – what we're not seeing. There's going to be more Fergusons. ... And unless we understand what's driving it and interrupt that and get ahead of it, we're going to always be behind in terms of these flashpoints. So, I want to say that the thing we focus on the least is understanding the strategic use of the anxiety about the other. Sometimes its expressed in terms of race, sometimes its expressed in terms of immigration but the right has strategically used – and of course, my colleague Ian Haney López has written a book called *Dog Whistle Politics*, where you actually use the anxiety about the other to support neo-liberal politics that then produce growing wealth and equality and a lack of responsiveness in the political process for all populations.
- So there is a powerful relationship. So one of the things we do over and over again is we actually participate to some extent in the narrow focus of race without it being connected to the economy, without it be connected to politics, without it being connected to the environment. And I want to suggest that race, understanding it much more fundamentally, is actually driving all of these things. And it's not what we have, it's who we are. If we get that right, then I think we can actually we will have fewer Fergusons, have fewer people pushed out of the urban core, and we can actually talk about how to actually turn around the large society to create a fair and inclusive society for everyone.
- We have not engaged in that fight around who we are collectively and how do we create a space that is diverse. Diversity by itself actually is fraught with many different possibilities, and again, it is being used largely by the elites to create anxiety for political and economic outcome. It seems to me that we have to build infrastructure and a collective at different levels; national, local, economic, I would even say, and the things we don't understand.



- My father is 94 years old. He lives in Detroit. He saw the film, *Race: The Power of an Illusion*. My father cried when he saw that film. He said, “I’ve lived everything in that film. I hadn’t put it together.” We have not put together our stories together. It’s not enough to sort of talk about these individual incidents. We have to have a coherent story and a way of talking about that gives people not just voice, but also power. And connect it. That takes energy, that takes resources, and it takes an analysis.

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**GROUP DISCUSSION/ BY THEMES:**

**POLICE REFORM AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

*Angela Glover Blackwell, PolicyLink*

- ... it’s rare to have a moment when we can focus on police reform. And we need to make sure that every community across the country has an agenda for what to do, what to ask for, and that we build a national movement to help people advance that agenda where they are.

*Cathy Cohen, University of Chicago, Black Youth Project.*

- We have seen the militarization of the police before if we think back to the war on drugs. What are the lessons that we learned from that? And how does a focus on reform – and this is what makes me nervous- figure into a larger, or maybe another, strategy around incarceration. And criminalization? Prison abolition? How do all these fit together? If we settle – and I don’t mean settle -for reform what does it do to the other parts of our progressive movements and Black communities and people of color communities?

*Phillip Atiba Goff, Center for Policing Equity*

- There’s an important inside/outside game to be played as we’re looking at police reform. And I think that’s a model for doing racial justice reform more generally.... The Center for Policing Equity is putting together the first national database of police behavior. That’s an inside game.
- Attorney General made an announcement-a national initiative to promote public trust and justice. ... the first federal dollars ever to combat racism in law enforcement on a national level that will hit state and municipal law enforcement. The framework on that is, for me, policing justice or justice within the criminal justice system is the racial justice issue of this generation. It’s not just the Black racial justice issue of this generation, it’s the racial justice issue of this generation.
- We don’t have good narratives for racial justice, we don’t have good literacy on policing justice. We need both of those things. We have persistent and increasing inequality and we don’t have good language for that. It becomes about character as opposed to outcomes.
- ...we don’t have evidence-based approaches to social justice. I think policing can be the organizing space to start doing that.
- The things we’re missing on policing because we’re focusing on Ferguson will embarrass us in five to ten years. Because we’re missing on gender justice .... It is racial justice but we’re not getting videotape of it because women are victimized and brutalized by law enforcement in a different and invisible space as compared to men.

.....

**COMMUNITY ORGANIZING & SPECIFICALLY BLACK-LED ORGANIZING**

*Derrick Johnson, One Voice Mississippi*

- An assessment of philanthropy is needed and their role in supporting Black-led organizing on the ground and to support that infrastructure.

*Eric Ward, Ford Foundation*

- There were 2000 municipal governments and 30,000 incorporated cities in the US. When we say we need to invest in community organizing –that’s quite a task – and I would like to get a sense of what that looks like. ... So what does that look like tangibly?

*Makani Themba, The Praxis Project*

- ... Most of the organizing and a lot of advocacy that's funded that's taken for granted that's completely normalized, not even evaluated, not looked at very strongly with millions of dollars flushed down the toilet every two years, every four years – that to me is organizing money that we don't talk about.
- ... Part of what I want to challenge us to think about is why there really does need to be the investment [in organizing]. I don't want to just take the money question and say, "Yeah, we need more money." Yeah, we do – but there are really serious privilege questions here about why the organizing and the power balance looks the same as the money balance.

*Reverend Starsky Wilson, Deaconess Foundation*

- ... I want to ask about the relative value of building a national infrastructure to respond to localized issues – particularly in light of state level mobilization and whether we would rather be well-served to support learning and transition of local organizations to invest more in organizing capacity – democratizing these high-price tag funding collaboratives through partnerships and connections.
- We find in our communities that there is very little support for organizing locally – the lack of access to national support unless there is a flashpoint. ... We have a Young Millennials organization now that's because of the Internet, because they're hot they could become the next Black Youth Project ... encourage my local funding colleagues to do that in ways that are appropriate and sustainable beyond the flashpoint. I think our national funders can lead some of our local colleagues out into this in ways that are sustainable.

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**CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS**

*Derrick Johnson, One Voice Mississippi*

- I think police reform is great, but I think a broader umbrella of all of that is: with the significant demographic shift that has taken place ...we align our thinking about supporting infrastructures as they come into majority populations. So those infrastructures can redefine the role of government and how governance applies to everybody, from policing to education.

*Judith Browne Dianis, The Advancement Project*

- We're doing re-granting to folks on the ground for school discipline because our partners don't have entree to funders. They don't have the ability to say: "We don't need a \$70,000 grant, what we're trying to build is much bigger – we can't even hire one person and give them benefits with \$70,000." And so when we see these crises happen the folks on ground are not ready.
- ... we have to report to foundations on the diversity of our staff and the work we're doing – how it impacts communities of color – is that foundations have to be doing that too. They have to be reporting that to us. How are you meeting the needs of communities of color? Because if we're growing and becoming the majority then we've got to be ready to step into that moment when we are the majority.

*Rinku Sen, Race Forward*

- The demographic change that the country is going through is grounded in Asian and Latino communities and Black communities are particular kind of flashpoint in the modern effort to a 21st century racial hierarchy. It's not that we never saw it before, but the numbers are changing the context. So one of the things I'd like to put into the mix is how we take up opportunities around cross-racial community building in this period – which I think it quite complicated and deserves devoted, concentrated attention.

*Eric Ward, Ford Foundation*

- Yes demographics are changing and those outside the RJ movement haven't acknowledged that. But there are those inside the RJ movement haven't acknowledged that either. So even our demographics are changing – what does that mean in terms of how we respond to these situations – African Americans are going to quickly not going to be the majority minority – and how does this shift or influence?

*john powell, Haas Diversity Research Center*

- The demographics are not changing in the way we think they are. Recently 55% of Latinos said they would self-identify as White – if that number sticks then in 2043 there will be more White people than there are today. So it's the political stuff that we have to engage in – the demographics themselves won't do the work. We have to be very strategic when we engage these things and I think we're not always.

*Cathy Cohen, University of Chicago, Black Youth Project.*

- One is just to go back to the shifting demographics and make sure that we differentiate the difference between changing number and changing power. ... under White supremacy a racial order doesn't shift just because numbers shift.

*Lori Villarosa, PRE*

- On the demographics, on our side we're not having enough candid conversation about what that means in terms of folks' identity and power – I think we feed right into some of the myth along with everybody else by not acknowledging some real challenges.

*Hiram Rivera, Philadelphia Student Union*

- ... the last thing you want to be in this country is Black – because Black history in this country has been one big flashpoint. So we work, work, work to own government – if you look at Philadelphia the mayor is Black, the chief of police is Black and that's one of the worst places for Black people to live.
- Who is the institution ultimately accountable to? ...our country is rooted, created and survives off the consumption of Black bodies and therefore that shapes the relationship with any other group of color but also the institutions.

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## **INFRASTRUCTURE BUILDING – COMMUNICATION, CAPACITY BUILDING, FUNDERS' ROLE**

*Judith Browne Dianis, The Advancement Project*

- ... we've got to be ready to do litigation that's not parachuting in, but working with folks on the ground to give them the space to do organizing. Or litigation that slows things down when folks doing organizing need to slow down, or speeds things up – and then having communication infrastructure. That's what you always have to have, but no one on the ground has it. ... So how do we as a national organization support them ...[to] be able to build the capacity of folk on the ground so that they're able to have their own internal communications capacity.

*Rinku Sen, Race Forward*

- How do you build it? How do you express it and how do you operationalize it – I know these are questions that Latino, Asian, American Indian and Arab organizations are asking themselves. And there are some dangers – and part of the state strategies is going to be divide and conquer and try to separate all those other people of color from Black communities. Again, nothing we haven't seen before – but likely to take on new forms – the Internet has to be factored in.

*Makani Themba, The Praxis Project*

- I want to lift up the division of labor. These are complex interlocking problems and there are a number of strategies that are equally important. We have been working for many years to try to surface a change model – we know the component parts, I think we're still experimenting with how they fit together.

- About the rules – the rules are invisible. ... You can tell the color of a place by how visible the rules are. In DC you have less than 24 hours for any rule making. You find out at 8am that there's going to be a hearing at 10am – because that's another piece of the infrastructure we don't have – that to understand the rules and how they work, play out and are racialized – then we're evaluating our outcomes as if we're all in Vermont.

*Nadia El-Zein Tonova, National Network for Arab American Communities*

- I think we are an emerging community among communities of color – and I think it's important for us to have the ability to do that deep education internally about what the Racial Justice movement is – how to get involved, how to do community organizing. There's so much work that we have to do on the ground to make sure that our communities are fully engaged in this and there's also that deep seeded alliance building and having those deep conversations that unfortunately are not happening right now so that we can be fully engaged in this movement. And in order to do that it requires funders to invest long term in the capacity building of our institutions beyond just programming.

*Hiram Rivera, Philadelphia Student Union*

- There needs to be an understanding of White supremacy – being able to say that – as we talk about the institutions and even the framing of the questions – what race are these institutions accountable to and who are they set up to protect? And that helps us understand their responses, be they Ferguson or even if they're our own institutions ... to really have those real conversations about what should be the solutions, what's at the root of this?

*Susan Batten, ABFE*

- The competency around race and philanthropy is still extremely low. ... I think that there are actually more willing folks in the field, but I think they need to be supported in the work around race. ... So many of the organizations like ours that support foundations on issues of race, we're seeing the money to invest in the field on these issues decrease. So collectively, how do we work together to increase the competency? I think we have to break it down regionally, small it down, and come up with a strategy.

*Gihan Perera, Florida New Majority*

- One is how are we building our baseline, long-term infrastructure. And then, what is it that we want to do in these particular moments.
- The right has done a tremendous job of taking advantage of flashpoints and moving us to the right. They are prepared for that and we are not.
- ... we said it was an undemocratic response by the police. But in fact, you know, what I saw in Ferguson was a tremendous democratic response by the people in the streets there and the community.
- If we do it right, then I think it actually builds organization on the ground; it builds organizers. We can look to these flashpoints to actually build organization.

*Cathy Cohen, University of Chicago, Black Youth Project.*

- And to make sure that we push back against what they call the digital native myth. That if in fact you're young and part of a certain generation you have certain types of skills that allow you to be effective on the internet. We know, in fact, that young people need skills, they need literacy, and they need open media spaces. So, if in fact, we are committed to a type of new media activism then we also have to think about public schools that filter out any sort of new media activity during the school year, right?
- We also have to really struggle with does the implication of voice lead to consequential politics? And I think also, does it change how we imagine and operationalize organizing on the ground.



**DEMOCRACY [INCLUDES GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT]**

*Derrick Johnson, One Voice Mississippi*

- ... a group of SNNC veterans got on a conference call, about Ferguson. And what I took away was we keep repeating the process of organizing for protest and not organizing for power. And the convenience of many who want to play electoral politics - it's about democrat vs. republican but in a Black context it goes much farther than Democrat vs. Republican – it's about owning government. How do you get people to understand that they're not victims of process?
- ...we align our thinking about supporting infrastructures as they come into majority populations. So those infrastructures can redefine the role of government and how governance applies to everybody, from policing to education. The easy thing to do is to react. The hard and most strategic thing to consider and I hope for philanthropy to begin investing in, how do we begin to look at owning government – preparing people to play their role in government, understanding how government is a collective venture that we all should have a role in...At this table how do we get people to understand they own government as opposed to reacting to situations?

*María Poblet, Causa Justa*

- Democracy is really at stake here and something that's important to know is that the effort to build unity between the African American and Latino communities are severely underfunded and they don't fit into one philanthropic category, so they don't fit at all. ... Nothing is more in the self-interest in Latino communities like the one I come from than to form alliance with the Black community – but it's organizations on the ground doing that are the ones that are the least resourced – and so when there are flashpoints the capacity to respond or to pivot isn't there. Or when it is there it's aspirational. So then you have leaders who reach way beyond the individual or organizational capacity and you have burn out and you lose the historical memory that makes it possible to build a racial justice movement.

*john powell, Haas Diversity Research Center*

- Also, you think about Reagan's thing in terms of devolution and all these different governments and municipalities that are actually multiplying – it's a strategy that they're using – how do you actually move things away from control and influence of Black and Latino votes? We're talking about capturing things and they're saying if you capture it we're going to change it so that it's not relevant anymore.

*Eric Ward, Ford Foundation*

- It seems from what I've heard in Ferguson ... – the whole emergency management seemed unique – it seemed an acceleration beyond what happened in Katrina and certainly beyond what's happening in Detroit. If that's true, is it or is it not important to weigh in quickly in way that says “this is completely unacceptable”. What type of response do we have has a racial justice movement to this new situation, if it is new.

*Gihan Perera, Florida New Majority*

- What does democracy actually look like – even if it's not structured or organized in the ways that we're comfortable with. But those are the things that happen in addition to the policy stuff. And I would agree with them, what is this moment? And what does this moment make strategically available for us to move? And I also agree that police is one of them.



**ECONOMICS AND RACE**

*Saket Soni, New Orleans Works' Center for Racial Justice*

- ... how do we change the emerging economy of race where we are? That seems to be a pretty fundamental question. We've shifted well from "either/or" to "yes, and" – and now it's "yes and yes and yes". There's policy accountability and there's full employment and there's fair employment and all of these things that make up a total political economy of race. And particularly the context of a shrinking and attacked public commons we really have to think about how to deal with and shape our own political economy of race in our own location.

*John Powell, Haas Diversity Research Center*

- A lot of the funding goes to economics and what we're really saying is if we understand the relationship between economics and race it actually gives us a different lift. We haven't done that – we still think of them as two distinct things and they're not.

*Charlene Carruthers, BYP*

- I'm really interested in having deeper conversation about how do we do our work in this emerging political economy in a way that's not anti-Black – that's not afro-phobic and not simply based on numbers.

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**FUNDERS SMALL GROUP**

*Vic Malhotra, Ford Foundation*

- Rapid response – that seems like a concrete thing that was put on the table and we know that that infrastructure is weak and that there are things that can be done. I think about how far the AMEMSA communities have come in addressing the flashpoints that come up around Muslim, South Asian and Arab American hate crimes. That community spoke out after Ferguson and connected it to the experiences of other communities in solidarity, without hijacking it.

*Marjona Jones, Veatch Program*

- Encourage and create opportunities for healing to be part of organizing work – in terms of dealing with systemic racism and in response to trauma. ... Create space to explore these reactions without making those folks "wrong." There is so much pain and anger and mental impact from systemic racism that we don't create space for people to unpack. It's empowering when people can speak from their truth.

*Lori Villarosa, PRE*

- When we talk about how to really strengthen support on the ground – from my own vantage point, having been in philanthropy with my work actually starting at the intersection of philanthropy and racial justice in 1992 with the LA uprising – and knowing that there was more traction there – we used to have more efforts with national funders really working with community foundations to strengthen their ability to focus on these issues and to be there for that support. And I would really like to have some conversation about why that is no longer the case and what opportunities there are.

*James Head, San Francisco Foundation*

- ... on the philanthropic side, community foundations need to be in the conversation. Our mission is to serve the community and whether we do it well or don't do it well is a different conversation for a different day, but it is our mission. There are 700+ of them around the country – they are in every community whether urban or rural. ... In philanthropy there are a number of us that focus on race and equity and we need to know who else wants to be around the table. PRE is doing phenomenal work around this - there are 10 or 15 of us who have been meeting for at least the last 8 or 9 years focusing on race and equity in philanthropy.



*Decker Ngongang, AECF*

- ... Many folks disqualify themselves from the conversation because they feel that it's over professionalized – that lived experience language and framework doesn't match the Ivy League speech of the foundations. How do we find ways to connect to their lived experience? We're also bringing language that sometime distances them from us.
- How are our CEOs going to the public and speaking with peers around this work?

*Bridget Flood, Incarnate Word Foundation*

- Key issue for people working on the ground: funders support well established groups that are embedded and sustainable – those groups are seen as “go to” by wide civic structure and funding community. That means African American groups in the neighborhoods are not being funded, they're terribly under resourced. What happens is they're been set up to fail.
- ... funders are very reluctant to get involved with groups that challenge the White power structure. I'm calling upon the funders to rethink the way we do funding to the community and walk with them rather than coming up with all sorts of reason why we shouldn't fund them and we should go with the established groups.

*Lori Bezahler, Hazen Foundation*

- ... How do we challenge our sector to take greater risks? ... One of the problems for foundation staff who want to provide sustained support for the critical work grassroots organizations do, building powerful leadership embedded in communities, is the way their work is judged within those institutions. It dis-incentivizes the kind of philanthropy that leads to sustainable structural change. The way "strategic philanthropy" is often understood getting a specific foundation- identified policy outcome in a very short time is the sole focus of the work and so there may be money for mobilizing large numbers of people, but rarely for the slow, patient work of true organizing. Without a powerful, educated constituency and leadership, we will continue to find ourselves responding to crises rather than driving an agenda.
- We've been very successful in funding collaboratives. The fact is that there is an urgent need for change and so people may think, we've been doing this for so long and things are still terrible. Unless we can respond to that critique and articulate the success that organizations have had we won't be able to make the case for continuing to fund long-term work that builds grassroots leadership and power in communities of color.
- Educate, agitate, organize is a mantra of organizing. Political education is important in order to contextualize lived experiences and develop an analysis of current conditions that goes beyond any one person or moment in time. We all need to have a grasp of the historical context in order to communicate how structural racism is pushing against the core values of democracy.

*Lorraine Ramirez, Neighborhood Funders Group*

- ... how do we organize funders to have this conversation so it lasts in our institutions? It's not just us at the table who are the ones in our institutions who want to talk about this and nobody else, right? It's ok because these people are doing it. So we know that we need to organize and have a conversation in our institutions

*Eric Ward, Ford Foundation*

- I want to come back to this piece, that it's not merely an issue of police accountability, but also how these global governments are going to govern, and how states and the federal government will or will not intervene in these moments. ...
- ...I think, in a very small moment about whether we're going to signal to future governments that this is an acceptable way to respond to large-scale protests, or that it is not. And I think that window is closing. ...
- I think it is the role of our movement to say that this was completely unacceptable. I hate to be as blunt, but I feel like the role of the field is to melt out some very serious punishment at certain levels to send a message that this type of response, as we move towards an inclusive democracy, is just completely unacceptable.

*Damon Todd Hewitt, Open Society Foundations*

- ... I think the idea is that we have to be able to walk and chew gum at the same time. We have to think about the issues that are going to actually help pivot these massive institutions to work, even the small ones. But also ways to use the positions we have to provide some of the support, and I don't necessarily mean, immediate use on the ground, day-to-day. I mean at least a medium term agenda for the local community.

*Marc Krupanski, Open Society Justice Initiative*

- We have been focused on combating racial and ethnic profiling in Europe for the past decade or so. We're beginning to make connections as well in Latin America, Canada, and Australia. And we're starting now as well with reform-minded police and this involves workshops and seminars around good practices, tactics, and strategies. It has had some positive results. One thing I want to flag is that policing tactics and strategies are being shared internationally – so should our responses. And it is something that I would be very interested in exploring further with you all.

*Jocelyn Sargent, Kellogg Foundation*

- ...how do these flashpoints turn into a progressive social justice movement. ...– how would we strategize together to figure out what it looks like so we can build the mechanics into it.

*Nat Chioke Williams, Hill-Snowdon Foundation*

- ...One question was that whether we talk about criminal justice or discrimination in housing or whatever the issue is, to me all these things relative to the Black community basically are symptomatic of the fact that we need to build Black political institutional power. ... Organizationally, what is the national organization that has a systematic vision for Black power in this country?
- So, for philanthropy, it's simple. We need to build Black organizations that have political clout, we need to develop leadership through those and support that and be bold, aggressive, and uncompromising about that.
- The other thing is that we talk about what can funders do? How can we have more of an impact? ... but when we have spaces like this where we can actually strategize together, to split it off, actually, I think re-ifies and reinforces these divisions that don't allow us to be strategically competent together.

*Lori Villarosa, PRE*

- Nat raised an important point: recognizing that many of the folks in foundation world are also in the strategy and struggle together and some of the dynamics of separating the activists from the funders could be seen as a problem. This was something that was called for from both sides and we discussed the value of discussing and strategizing together, but also recognizing that different roles and relationships do have an impact and it can be very important to know what lane folks are in.

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**ACTIVIST SMALL GROUP** *(Because this session was based on notes and not transcripts, and activists were speaking apart from funders, we have left off names in this spot only. Excerpted comments may include paraphrasing)*

- We need to invest in tech developed young people of color.
- We need emergency responders - - what is place? What are practice? What are they doing or by accident? What are the emergency flashpoints? ... we don't have coordination efforts in the racial justice world. ... We need to get on the same phone - get at same place where things are happening – then when someone pulls the red handle - there is a call within 24 hours. The second thing is we need to be able to communicate the direct action basics for community of our racial justice folks.

- The recommendations and critiques of foundations mentioned in the synthesis document we have heard consistently over the past 20+ years. The question is how we can support foundations to work on addressing some of these recommendations and critiques. How can we support and encourage progressive foundations to organize with their colleagues.
- I am also concerned about flashpoint regions, like St. Louis, that does not have a philanthropic community with a track record for funding focused on racial equity, nor a community engagement muscle. There needs to be a progressive foundations' rapid response team to go to flashpoints and support their colleagues.
- Need more organization core support – as well as emergency reserves and an organizing fund...Too many grassroots groups can't get funding from folks in this room and some don't even support organizing at all. How do we make sure respond on the ground? We need our own internal "bat signal" for the folks.
- Being able to have our own incubator in these moments. Folks in Katrina didn't have Dream Defenders. How do we get resources need a way to get money quickly? We lose a lot when you become a c3 organization. We need to hire someone for them - without foundations asking what you did that money – having that level of flexibility.
- There is a possibility us doing joint call and create a funders statement – I am not a fan open letter. Though something to say when lots of people want racial harmony that is not possible without organizing for racial harmony. So if you are not funding organizing than you are in untenable position.
- ...Foundations gave a lot of money out the first two weeks [after Katrina] – but the emperor had no clothes. We need to build infrastructure of organizations because now those organizations don't exist after 5 years. The funders walked away and now the organizations are closing doors.
- We resisted people coming . . . A month ago when there are not a lot of cameras - what is going to happen in that community seeking power - or will power go back as usual. There needs some type of design to advance progressive agenda. We can't focus on silo issues - it is all about taking government deeper.
- We need longer term funding - some things takes longer than 12 months to accomplish. We need it longer than someone's term in office. We need to make sure they stick with it so we just need some longer-term grants. There are a lot of short-term grants for training right now in Ferguson.
- ... This happens rarely - if we had space protected so there is support so we could build that leadership. We need to take a page from the conservative playbook – they have a leadership council on messaging – they are power brokers - but they go up and down the conservative spectrum. They figure what they need a message around an issue, then they do the polling and data collection – make the investment and then develop a message. ...We have folks in criminal justice that are profoundly underfunded. When it comes to sexy things to get funding or not.
- There needs to be long term investment and general support connect actually flashpoints training on how to shift power dynamics. There needs a basic infrastructure to pressure and have a policy winner. We just need ability have more conversations.
- The trend we need stay in front – we need to build a container - how do we get ahead of it . . . like the right has done to invest in think tanks in communities ...we do need leadership but we also need an echo chamber.
- Ferguson resonates nationally and internationally people around the world. ...There was feedback from Russia, China, and Gaza - holding up signs. We need to link, we need to bring into the discussion. We need broader capacity and figure out how to move the racial discourse.

- ... There are a lot of times we are paying somebody to think for us. In this type of meeting and the wisdom in space - we are not funded to have this intellectual space long term. There is no amount of money getting smaller – we need to we need have resources differently and strategically– not give this money for organizing actually asking for it differently for the organizer
- There is energy to actually put together some framework on converging on flashpoints - create some guidelines to come out the meeting – a partnership. Second point we need a think tank and communication - ultimately keep people in motion and also anchor other things. We need bigger pieces of funding to keep the door open for the possibilities as the flashpoint unfolds.
- We are being asked for accountability for outcomes of work to prove we are changing the world and overthrowing White supremacy and yet asked to lie to foundation board that is what we are doing.
- Within our Lifetime, a racial equity and healing network has been building for the past two years. We are launching an Implicit Bias Campaign, which is anchored in 8 jurisdictions as well as developing rapid response protocol. How can we connect with each other - and encourage us to not reinvent the wheel but rather to work collectively to build this network.

### **REPORT BACKS FROM SMALL GROUPS**

Lori brought the group back together after lunch; sharing concern raised in the Funders Group about separating. She reiterated that the planning team had heard from both sides a strong desire and value in both being together, and in recognizing the different roles and perspectives we each come from. Activists later weighed in that they'd appreciated some space to strategize amongst themselves as they had not done so in person yet nationally.

### **REPORT FROM FUNDERS' GROUP**

*Jocelyn Sargent, Kellogg Foundation*

- How do we move this from a flashpoint to a social justice movement? There was some conversation about the policy accountability piece, which is an important policy fix, but how do we then address the embedded governance issues that are behind that. That's part of the movement-building question – so how do we strategize together to research that, but also what does that look like?
- The changing demographics to do matter. Eric put it very well: demographics are destiny. So the question we have is how do us in this moment something that actually leads us to influence what those demographic changes are going to mean? They're going to happen.
- Connected to that: how do we connect communities of color together while building capacity intra-community and connect those relationships in a line so that it's not competitive. Makani's point about rethinking the resources for community organizing. We talked about how we might do that a little differently and what the mechanics and logistics are for us as funders. It's not a small pot that's competitive – how do we rethink these resources? As economic development as John pointed out and in other ways.
- We want to think through funding strategies that are align our work across foundations. I think this kind of is an example – we could have had three different meetings, but Ford, OSF and Kellogg all worked together to bring you together so that we don't tax your limited time resources. So how do we do more of that? We need more input from the field about that.
- Eric raised the issue that this is a very important moment to signal that this is an unacceptable public policy response. ... how do we send the message that just doing the kind of things that respond to the policing of Ferguson is not really going to change the situation.

*Lori Villarosa, PRE*

- I wanted to pick up the point too about community foundations and that infrastructure – what can be done to seed it and support it?
- How do we support and strengthen local funders to be there for the long haul, but how do we do it in a way that increases their capacity to take risks on these issues around race/racism and how to be stronger in funding organizers.

*Carmen Anderson, The Heinz Endowment*

- ... Question is around building will for a broader agenda. How do you build will to get there at the board level and the partnership level – so that it's an institutional viewpoint?

*Katayoon Majd, Public Welfare Foundation*

- How do foundations work to build excitement about movement building – rather than just policy outcomes?

### **REPORT FROM ACTIVISTS' GROUP**

*Scott Nakagawa, ChangeLab*

- One of the things that got brought up in the room is that these emerging crises are a bunch of emerging trends that we need to get ahead of; we have these communities in crisis, shifting demographics, and the infrastructure to mobilize and react is lacking in these contexts
- We see a lot of work for empowerment rather than building for power, and protest organizing rather than organizing for power – need to support that shift of proactive infrastructure building in communities.

*Glen Harris, Center for Social Inclusion*

We identified some specific needs

1. the need for on-the-ground grassroots funding (the non-sexy work, general operating costs, incubator etc.; also investing in technology, and building leadership and analysis building)
2. movement infrastructure (inside/outside game, what does this mean to redefine government, reclaiming it); need for convening's and ongoing communication between activists, there are opportunities for single-issue work like police reform, climate change; we need a racial justice bat signal to send the resources to assist; develop a flashpoint play book
3. reframing the narrative and frame breaking (we have a huge opportunity to add an international frame, but we need to build capacity and tools for folks on the ground in using that narrative); also what are we doing to address racial anxiety, making stronger our ability to frame the connection between race and class
4. How does philanthropy build will? What does philanthropy need for support from activists?

## **AFTERNOON DISCUSSION**

### **Provocative Reflections and Questions**

*Charlene Carruthers, BYP*

- The people in my organization are not simply interested in voting registration but they care about police brutality; we have the skills and if we got the support to take them to scale we could accomplish a lot.

*john powell, Haas Diversity Research Center*

- I agree it is an important moment that builds off other moments. I want to challenge the notion that communities know what they need, I think they know what they are experiencing but we need to engage with them because they don't always see what they need. ...A good example during the housing crisis, they thought it was the banks but it was actually the secondary market. I had this conversation with many groups and no one even knew what the secondary market was.... We need a partnership between researchers, foundations and community groups; it will take deep relationships across discipline

*Allison Brown, OSF*

- How can we build global alliances to help the world pay attention to what's happening in the U.S.? How can we build the same kind of alliances that existed in the Civil Rights movement and Black Power movement?

*Clarence Lusane, American University*

- One of the most important studies in the 1990s looked at racism in Brazil, South Africa, and U.S. and how these communities were organizing.
- We need to remember to link local context to the international; the same corporations that are repressing and operating in Detroit and Ferguson are also in London, San Paulo and so on
- All these movements have been international, local with global perspective. Funding can play a critical role in helping application of best practices nationally and internationally.

*Lori Bezahler, Hazen Foundation*

- Educate, agitate, organize –and educating people and organizations politically – don't assume they simply have this knowledge. Political education is important in order to contextualize what's happening. Need to communicate how structural racism is pushing against the core of democracy.

*Judith Browne Dianis, The Advancement Project*

- ... It is important to bring young people together across race, across gender, across sexualities to define their own vision. ... Young people are defining the world they want to see, not in a transactional mode and it's not about reciprocity for the moment, is transformational and needs to be supported
- We can change all the policies in the world but if you can gun down Black people in the street not enough will have changed

*Charlene Carruthers, BYP*

- Funder community and racial justice community have to be willing to fund organizations that do cutting-edge work.

*Jocelyn Sargent, Kellogg Foundation*

We need this for a long-term vision, capacity building takes a long time to pay off, and it's really hard to convince funders how crucial this is.

*Hiram Rivera, Philadelphia Student Coalition*

- Thinking about the capacity; we are a part of BOLD which provide training and support for Black EDs and organizers... there is a network of folks that are trained to play that role; the role they have played nationally can't go without being highlighted.

*Susan Batten, ABFE*

- We don't know enough about these groups, we have to figure out a way to lift up the infrastructure that does exist, to talk about their successes and wins. We are under-networked.

*Angela Blackwell, PolicyLink*

- We could come up with a strategy; while we are having a big conversation we could be having a strategy for the police reform movement. I think this means that we should do one thing well and comprehensively; and I think it will impact all the other areas





## **POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS**

*Phillip Goff, Center for Policing Equity*

- Data integration from law enforcement is necessary and the least sexy thing, but so necessary

*LaJune Montgomery Tabron, Kellogg Foundation*

- We have to be very strategic and engage with all the levels at the same time, and work in tandem. This is a very important moment to make sure that we are all connected. Infrastructure is very important to do this work so scale can occur.

*Vik Malhotra, Ford Foundation*

- I want to encourage us to think of concrete things that promote an inclusive democracy

*Rev. Starsky Wilson, Deaconess Foundation*

- In Ferguson we have the opportunity of learning while doing; if this could become a laboratory of sorts; this is the opportunity of learning and skill-building.... We have an opportunity for entry into learning through acting; I invite you to use this space as a place of learning

*Glen Harris, Center for Social Inclusion*

- How can we leverage the conversation to get deeper; it is a huge opportunity to push for policy change and to push for change in a different set of values; i.e. the fact that our democracy is also hurting White communities.

*Scott Nakagawa, ChangeLab*

- What we are experiencing/seeing in Ferguson is so global; we need to tell the story so that people can locate themselves within it.... We need to speak to these things in a way that makes for a compelling story, clear and articulate so many different kinds of people can hear it including Whites.
- We have a real need to the development of analysis; it needs to be clear, and we cannot get lost in the confusion. We need to bring in resources from academia and government; while the view from the bottom up is valuable, it's not the whole story.

*Allison Brown, OSF*

- Re: BMOC – critique is about the inclusion of women and girls of color. The dynamic between men and women of color needs to be addressed; we need to work on building a movement that benefits communities of color in a gender inclusive way
- How to capture the momentum of young people using social media? How can we capitalize on that?

*Saket Soni, New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice*

- This may be an opportunity to teach about the racial equity analysis, this is a moment for that too.
- The work on the ground is important and building capacity with that work and support at the national level; I want to underscore that point and the incubator model and that is not always well funded.

*Gihan Perera, Florida New Majority*

- We need to figure out a framework around democracy and expanding democracy is important - to address neoliberalism and the effect on democracy; with money in politics, with White folks.

## **Philanthropy Critique and Challenges**

*Lori Bezaier, Hazen Foundation*

- One of the core challenges that we in philanthropy are faced with the way that philanthropy is currently understanding its role and frame, especially as it applies to understanding outcomes

*Jamala Rogers, OBS*

- In St. Louis we have been trying to get local control of the police department and we finally got that last year – took us 30 years, and we could have done it sooner perhaps with funding

- ... We researched the best practices of civilians' oversight board, we know the good, bad and ugly. Now the mayor is interested and fast tracking police reform, they wanted none of this 5 years ago. How do you put this in a grant? It is difficult to craft a grant how we are going to do it.
- The organizing we did door by door was not sexy work; hard to point to an outcome for that kind of work, we could not guarantee that the end of the grant process we would get local control

*Bridget Flood, Incarnate Word Foundation*

- The problems identified by the grassroots are not considered valid until they are recognized and named by academics; which can be a major frustration.

*Allison Brown, OSF*

- I also want to bring up structural racism in philanthropy; how would have Huey Newton have accepted foundations dollars?
- I think that we are in philanthropy who want to be mindful of the work without getting in the way of it; how can foundations partner with you in a way that doesn't get in the way?

*Derek Johnson, One Voice Mississippi*

- I grew up in Detroit and one thing about philanthropy is that we are quick to silo ... we have to have a deeper analysis about what confronts us, and we need to have a current frame in how we respond, and I hope the philanthropy world will respond.

*Lori Villarosa, PRE*

- I hope that we don't lose the importance of Black political power and Black organizing. How do we not lose the transformative piece? Conceptually, what's next?
- We have seen an increase in talk about Black organizing from foundations, but we have yet to see the money following.
- Cincinnati came up with an economic development reform strategy, but they missed a lot of the other things going on there with that narrow approach.

**CLOSING REMARKS**

*Allison Brown, OSF*

1. Collective trauma is present and needs addressing before we move to strategize and while moving forward.
2. Moving from survival to strategy, we need to be proactive not just reactive. We need to understand the drivers that keep getting us to these moments. We all sit in this room right now because Michael Brown was walking around his neighborhood and a police officer killed him; we have to be bigger than that moment. We have to think about Black children who can't navigate freely because of structural racism. Thinking about the fabric and the framework that contributes to children being gunned down in their own streets
3. We need cross-racial unity building is especially important as we sit at this juncture (it is the anniversary of Freedom Summer)
4. I want to highlight owning government and really having a voice in government, thinking beyond just going to the polls. And even thinking about settings like Philadelphia where Black people are in government
5. Also the idea of women and girls and their inclusion in this work, we need to address the gender dynamics here

Thank you and this is not the end of this conversation, I want to make sure we are thinking about it as a larger national and international frame, and how we can be coordinating with international and national allies.



Attendee List:  
*Ferguson and Other Structural Racism Flashpoints: The Philanthropic Strategic  
Response & Role*  
September 24, 2014

Funders and Affinity Groups (Co-sponsors in Blue/Bold)

1. Susan Batten, Association of Black Foundation Executives (ABFE)/Joint Affinity Groups
2. Lori Bezahler, Hazen Foundation
- 3. Allison Brown, Open Society Foundation**
4. Nat Chioke Williams, Hill-Snowdon Foundation
5. Harold Fields, Denver Community Foundation
6. Bridget Flood, Incarnate Foundation
7. Damon Todd Hewitt, Open Society Foundations
8. Marjona Jones, Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock
9. Katayoon Majd, Public Welfare Foundation
10. Vivek Malhotra, Ford Foundation
11. Eddy Morales, Democracy Alliance
12. Judtih Mazdra, Open Society Foundations
13. Lorraine Ramirez, Neighborhood Funders Group
14. Altaf Rahamatulla, Ford Foundation
- 15. Jocelyn Sargent, Kellogg Foundation**
16. Lynn Scherer, Kellogg Foundation
17. Christopher Scott, Open Society Foundation
- 18. Eric Ward, Ford Foundation**
19. Alice Warner-Mehlhorn, Kellogg Foundation
20. Rev. Starsky Wilson, Deaconess Foundation
21. Jasmine Tyler, Open Society Foundations

Activists (Project team and those in planning calls in blue):

1. Angela Blackwell, PolicyLink
2. Judith Browne Dianis, Advancement Project
- 3. Charlene Carruthers, Black Youth Project 100**
4. Cathy Cohen, University of Chicago/Black Youth Project
5. Sakira Cook, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
6. Phillip Atiba Goff, UCLA/Consortium for Police Leadership in Equity
7. Glen Harris, Center for Social Inclusion
8. Derrick Johnson One Voice Mississippi (& Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation)
- 9. Clarence Lusane, American University Political Science and International Relations**
10. Scot Nakagawa, ChangeLab
- 11. Gihan Perera, Florida New Majority**
12. María Poblet, Causa Justa / Just Cause
- 13. Maggie Potapchuk, PRE Consultant/MP Associates**
14. john powell, Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society

15. Hiram Rivera, Philadelphia Student Union
16. Rashad Robinson, Color of Change
17. Jamala Rogers, Organization for Black Struggle
18. Rinku Sen, Race Forward / Colorlines
19. Saket Soni, National Guestworker Alliance/ New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice
20. Makani Themba, Praxis Project (& Communities Creating Healthy Environments National Program Office of RWJ Foundation)
21. Nadia El-Zein Tordova, National Network for Arab American Communities: A Project of ACCESS
- 22. Lori Villarosa, Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity (PRE)**

Attending via Phone\*:

- 1. Ellen Buchman, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights (after 12:30)**
- 2. Eleanor Clement Glass, Silicon Valley Community Foundation**
3. *Leslie Gross-Davis, Open Society Foundations*
- 4. James Head, San Francisco Foundation**
5. *Grace Hou, Woods Fund of Chicago*
- 6. Nike Irvin, California Community Foundation**
- 7. Marc Krupanski, Open Society Justice Initiative**
8. *Laura Livoti, Common Counsel Foundation*
9. *Kavitha Mediratta, The Atlantic Philanthropies (afternoon)*
10. *Cassie Schwerner, Schott Foundation for Public Education*
11. *Jamie C. Schearer, Board Member - Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland Bund e.V. and Board Member, Europeans Against Racism*
12. *Maisha Simmons, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*
13. *Nonet Sykes, The Annie E. Casey Foundation*
- 14. LaJune Tabron Montgomery, Kellogg Foundation**

(\*Those in italics either on phone partially or unable to attend. Callers in Bold participated in discussion.)