



# New Transitions Consulting

Organizational assessment, healing, and integration of equity and inclusion.

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Annual Convening Report  
Neighbor to Neighbor, Seattle Foundation

November 28, 2017

New Transitions Consulting, 2018  
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**NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR (N2N)'s ANNUAL CONVENING REPORT**  
**November 28, 2017**

**PURPOSE AND METHODS:** The Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N) Annual Convening brought together a diverse group of grantees, funders, and partners to share their various perspectives on community, philanthropy, and capacity building. At this gathering, N2N grantees shared their experiences, networked, and learned from others in their communities. Other attendees, including N2N Advisory Committee members, other funders, and partners, participated with the intent of learning from the participating N2N grantees. The overall purpose of the event was to share knowledge and perspectives in order to advance racial and economic equity in the region. The theme guiding the event was “Building our Multiracial Movement Together.” This guiding theme influenced the content of the panel discussion “Why Race Matters in our Work,” as well as the content of the small group Table Talks following the panel.

**DOCUMENTATION DESIGN:** New Transitions Consulting (NTC, Norma Timbang, Principal) attended the November 28, 2017 session to provide documentation of the proceedings. NTC team members, Andy Coate, MSW, Ann Luetzow, MSW, and Anjolie Ganti, MPH, MSW, took notes, focusing on documenting the content of conversations, significant quotes from participants, and salient nuances of engagement, i.e., interactions that seem critical or significant to the purpose and objectives of the project. Additionally, each table had a notetaker who documented the conversations that happened at each of the 15 tables. Notetakers from 11 of those 15 tables submitted their notes to NTC, and these notes were included as data in our analysis. Finally, Seattle Foundation sent all participants of the event a Survey Monkey survey to get feedback about the event. Of the 120 attendees, 35 responded to this survey. NTC utilized the content of these evaluations as data in the final analysis, and these responses also contributed to the suggested recommendations section that concludes this report.

**DATA ANALYSIS METHOD:** The NTC team members’ notes comprised the qualitative “data” to be analyzed by the NTC team. The NTC team members analyzed the data by identifying repeated themes and content. These themes were reviewed and compared to identify associations among them, then were organized into issue categories.

**SUMMARY OF DATA ANALYSIS:**

**COLLABORATION**

*“We are all neighbors; how do we act like neighbors?”*  
*- N2N Annual Convening participant*

In a time of extraordinary social and political divisions, those involved with the Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N) program came together to address the root causes of the deepest fissures in our communities. By gathering together, finding common ground to exchange experiences and ideas, folks identified several themes related to collaboration in community between grantees, funders, and the individuals and families who make up the communities these organizations serve. A sentiment that resonated across

this theme advises that we must come together so we can see the connections that make us a community.

### **Coming Together and Coalitions**

*“We must work together to change the racist systems in place for the sake of the next generation. We may never succeed without working together.”*

It is critical our communities change by coming together and listening to the collective needs or challenges faced by differing groups. We share many common challenges with people that have different races/backgrounds. Coalition building is the only way to move forward. As a collective front, we can exchange ideas and talents as well as show up for each other. Voices echoed just how essential it is for communities to work together to change systems through collaboration and coalition building.

- Platforms allowing community members to connect yield positive results. When sharing information, funds, and ideas is the norm, our communities can come together to solve the problems we have identified individually and collectively, a way to work toward greater system changes.
- Sustainable coalitions and networks can survive and thrive on their own.
- A need for Communities of Color to come together was identified. Coalitions must focus on roots of the symptoms of racism and other forms of oppression. White allies actively working towards understanding power, privilege, and oppression are also necessary for successful coalition building.
- Participants indicated that empowering communities by recognizing strengths and assets will allow for those who know what their communities needs are to be at the forefront of coalitions.
- Multiracial movements require conversations like those at convenings, according to participant feedback.
- Examples of local coalition building shared by community members:
  - “A couple of years ago there was a movement in the Asian community to align themselves/support the BLM movement”
  - When I was younger there was an immigration movement, where East African and the Latina community collaborated.
  - “A First Nations feast event targeted conversations around unity and togetherness”
  - “Our organization has planned many events in partnership with other community groups. We bring people of all ages and cultures together around a cause, such as voting party or dance party. Try to reduce barriers to participation by offering food, interpreters, transportation, stipends for community members for their time and expertise, childcare, sub-contract with local organizations/liaisons to do authentic outreach, etc.”
- “Seeing the faces behind these organizations will make us realize we’re working on the same thing and we can collaborate.”

## **Intersections Beyond Race**

*“Recognizing each other’s humanity makes it possible to change our collective conscious in order to counteract oppression.”*

“The approach to liberation is rooted in intersections. There’s so much happening in our communities and if we create a coordinated movement we can work together. That’s the only way we can actually achieve equity.”

- Religion, immigration status, sex, gender, sexual orientation, bi/multiracial identities, socioeconomic status, etc. are all additional intersections to bring to the table.
- “The Black community isn’t monolithic. We are so many other things. There are so many facets we need to grapple with.”
  - “Our race and ethnicity are not the only things that we identify as.”
- A barber shop set-up, which encourages talking, is modeled by grantee organization FAST. The model allows people not to feel alone and to be with people that they can relate to.
- “We have to have both unity in our own community as well as alliances to support each other’s movements.”
- “It’s unfair that people can lump someone into a group based on one piece of their identity.”

## **Building Trust and Relationships**

*“Relationships matter, take the time, that’s the only way to build a movement.”*

Relationship building is a key theme participants identified during the N2N November convening. Communities are built upon relationships. Approaching the work from an intersectional lens lends itself to developing a multicultural movement, where the ultimate goal is collective liberation.

- “People have the candle and we can show them how to light it. Break the barriers down and invite people from other backgrounds to visit your place (favorite coffee shop, community organization, your business, etc). Give them the platform to ask questions, give them the chance to learn and find out what you are really about.”
- “We have a multiracial steering committee, gave community members grants, and worked with Beast.org. We had a food program for High schoolers, where they learn about sustainability and eat food. We partnered with WILD, Duwamish youth corps, leaders brought youth together. Watching them come together, and facilitate discussion themselves.”

Developing meaningful relationships, particularly across differences, entails a level of addressing fear and embracing discomfort. This transformative process, according to participants, leads to authentic relationship building and strong bonds can result when the hard work is put in.

- Participants note the need for more opportunities and spaces to dialogue and learn about each other’s fears as well as needs. “It is important to address fears as a fear is a prompt to action and organizing.”
- “For me, it’s systemic. In our church, we have all different kinds of people and you can’t be afraid to talk about things. White people can’t take things as an attack and People of Color can’t go around placing blame.”

- Participants indicated that honoring historical trauma and its impacts in current and upcoming generations is vital. Fear can be instilled within communities and “[young people] repeat what they are taught and where a mask.” Healing from historical trauma was identified by participants as a key step in breaking down barriers, building trust, addressing fear, and developing relationships.
  - A participant spoke to the fear currently held by young people in the Jewish community that has been passed on through generations saying that “we need community healing to build trust to work together.”
- Respect and active allyship are absolutely necessary in developing relationships with those who are outside of the community.
- Neighbor to Neighbor, as discussed by a Seattle Foundation representative during the panel discussion, echoed the sentiment of hard work needed to build lasting relationships, claiming N2N is “working hard everyday to ensure that increasing racial equity is core to everything we do.” The speaker continued by addressing why fighting for racial justice is so important, citing how the impacts of wealth inequality and institutional racism have shaped the foundation.

### **BUILDING POWER**

*“It is so important for our communities to have collective power.”*

*- N2N Annual Convening participant*

As community comes together, an opportunity to collectively build power exists. Within this theme, participants saw many strengths and areas with actionable steps to collaborate more effectively within and across their communities. Approaches to build power must be grounded in anti-racist ethics. Building power takes many shapes and the following sub-themes will explore some of these forms.

#### **Representation**

*“Who is at the table? Who isn’t at the table?”*

Who is represented on boards? In leadership positions? In funding spaces? How do these compare to how the organization is structured? Who they are serving? The greater community they’re a part of? Representation is a crucial factor to consider as communities are coming together to build power.

- How can representation in these spaces be changed to be more diverse?
  - “We have to understand the systems, then don’t get to participate.”
  - One participant noted they are a single mother who came to the US without education and sees a need for people such as them as board members who represent the community.
- Having community as a part of the recommendation panel is necessary. This needs to be multiracial and it is imperative Organizations of Color be present.
- Community partnerships are key. We cannot do our work without our partners.
  - “If nobody else will help us, we must help ourselves and help our leaders to know that we do matter.”
- We need tools to get out of funding cycles that aren’t sustainable. Community grant programs tend to be really white/mainstream, and now, in recognizing the importance of a multiracial

movement, they are taking goals for funding from the community itself. This shows how important it is to change the goals of funders to center community need.

## **Leadership**

*“How do you help folks to community? Lean in and engage civically.”*

Power can be built through leadership in community. Building a multicultural movement relies upon not only community showing up, but leaders emerging and serving as stewards on the path towards liberation. Although barriers exist, participants at the convening explored ways in which their organizations are leading the way as well as proposing strategies for further strengthening power in the community.

- As communities are engaged and empowered, a system of checks and balances maintains accountability of community leaders and sustained support of service recipients, organization staff, and the community at large.
- Creating pathways for marginalized populations to step into leadership roles is vital to the success of a movement truly in line with anti-racist values.
  - Leadership takes many forms and should be valued both in and out of community organizations. Community organizing, for example, yields powerful leaders whose voices need to be amplified and respected.
- Given the culture developed by myriad historical and current white-lead organizations, some POC-lead organizations at the convening shared experiences leading to distrust of systems maintaining the problematic status quo. As leadership shifts to reflect the community, the chances for the equitable building of power increases.
- The degree to which People of Color are called upon to be leaders and educators within the community without resulting action is an issue. A participant notes, “we are often tired of speaking up because we keep talking and there are no changes.”
- A common theme within the realm of power building through leveraging leadership roles lies with establishing and maintaining equitable hiring processes.
- Leaders also emerge in what one may not typically regard as a “leadership” role. Folks in organizations or communities speaking up when racial inequities are present and those who resist oppressive forces in so many different ways are critical to the movement.

## **Education**

*“Language used shapes the narrative that goes beyond the community.”*

Education pertaining to racial equity comes in many forms. Two primary forms came to the surface at the N2N convening, both of which are efforts to build power and shift toward a multiracial movement: education within organizations and education within communities.

**Education within organizations** may look like any of the following: Providing dismantling privilege trainings, noticing anti-blackness in POC communities, understanding the impact of language, teaching youth about how to decolonize language, knowing privilege as non-Black POC, etc.

- Diversity equity initiatives and trainings are a common approach many participants noted. Some non-profit organizations spoke to the feeling of urgency to better understand issues facing their communities.
- Organizations and governmental agencies stated many are updating their strategic plans to reflect the necessity of approaching their work with a race/equity lens.
  - Participants, particularly from larger organizations, spoke about engagement as an effective tool for understanding where folks are in their journeys in racial equity work. Every participant is coming into the conversation from a different position so bridging a variety of levels of understanding remains imperative.
- A participant noted the importance of white folks to educate themselves about the centuries of systemic racism that have shaped the current climate.

**Education Within Community** also takes various forms, for example immigrant and refugee communities educating their communities as well as education regarding US systems. Education is an integral part of many organizations' work and the following examples were all explored in group discussions.

- “Our approach is intersectional, all oppressed communities must focus on each other, black/immigrant communities as well. We have a high school education program for Pacific Islanders and we will bring in concepts of racial equity next year.”
- “African community members continue to identify themselves primarily by their nationality. African community members in the Coalition don't know much about health risks and how to address them and access resources. Parents want to make sure that their kids are doing the right thing, but can't always measure their safety because they don't know the system.”
- This is the Asian American experience. There is a generational gap that makes it difficult for parents to look after their kids and keep them safe when they don't really know how the system operates.
- Education is really important for parents in the African community. If they were given the opportunity to understand how the system works, they would be able to better support their kids in succeeding.
- “Professional development is important not just for teachers for but for parents, too. If I'm introducing a new concept or skill to the students, the parents should be taught and informed of this as well. They are the ones at home with the student, and should be given the same chance to help as teachers.”
- “Our organization met with the city and ethnic community centers to teach more about specific communities. For example, the Iraqi community worked on adding other refugee communities to showcase and teach each other. Include food, people will come for food.”
- Changing language as an approach to addressing racial equity is a useful tool. “Returning community members” is power building language as opposed to stigmatizing labels such as “ex-convicts”.
  - This involves educating communities about returning family members, neighbors (defined as anyone close by you), and the larger community.

## Investing in Youth

*“We need to educate our youth... power is in the young people.”*

Young people are a driving force in efforts to bring forth a multiracial movement. The collective power built by youth is well worth investing in as they are the bridge into a crucial period for social change.

- Movements of young people observed locally are often multiracial and intersectional.
- Youth are in touch with the community and navigate the rapidly changing social landscape in stride.
- Including youth in decision making about programming, events, etc. at organizations allows for authentic engagement with all community members. Youth are often left out of decision making spaces, even when they are most impacted by the outcomes of said decisions.
- Many youth-serving organizations spoke to strategies that allow for youth to empower themselves and their peers.
  - Youth as board members and advisory committee members, uplifting immigrant and refugee voices, addressing internalized racism, focusing on pride in one's identities, and advocacy efforts were just some of the many strategies N2N grantee organizations offered as examples of youth empowerment.
- We must create a space that is owned by the youth, the communities.
  - “Every human has something to teach us.”

## Discovering Strengths by Sharing Ideas

*“We don’t get together enough to talk about our strengths, to recognize what everyone brings to the table.”*

Often born out of trauma, strength is a uniting force that supersedes differences in identities. Coming together, focusing on strengths, sharing ideas, and engaging in cultural exchanges is yet another identified way to build power in communities. Having honest dialogues about what’s really going on opens real opportunities to change things in communities.

- “Meetings like the N2N convening make it easier for people to come together and share their ideas.”
- “We are suppressed, depressed, oppressed, but also a *strong* people.”
- Oppressive forces are divisive and encourage the separation of groups who are targeted by the same agent group. One participant noted it is sad that communities don’t come together, as this is enacting what we have been told to do by the oppressors.
  - “We know about our traumas, but we need to recognize our strengths to work together to make us stronger. Not enough of this exists.”
- One grantee organization shared that they “introduce our neighbors to Iraqi/Arab/women culture through events, food, outfits, traditions. It’s important to show our culture to others because we are so often misrepresented and misunderstood.”

## RESOURCES

*“Stability in organizations will help foster relationships.”*

*- N2N Annual Convening participant*

Communities are experts in their understanding of what they need to survive and thrive. Neighbors coming together rely upon funding to serve their communities and truly make an impact. Too often funding challenges impede organizations’ missions and result in struggles to keep projects and programs functional. N2N grantees shared their experiences in navigating funding and discussed the correlation that exists between stability, access to resources, and sharing strengths through relationships.

“Recently we started utilizing shared spaces that help lower costs of meetings and conferences. There also needs to be more opportunities for long term assistance, not just staying afloat and one time grants.”

### **Competition for Resources**

*“Small organizations are expected to do more with less money.”*

Nonprofits are often in a position where they need to compete with one another for the same funding, which is often too little in the first place. Often times, that can create further divisions within culturally-based community organizations. Many organizations spoke to this subtheme at the N2N convening and the following thoughts were echoed by several tables.

- Funding systems for NPOs are often set up in a way that forces organizations to compete against each other. It is a challenge when resources are limited to begin with.
  - Funding movement building is an opportunity participants wish to see. This allows for collaboration as opposed to processes that pit people against each other.
- “Small funding approaches can cause rifts between Organizations of Color as they are fighting each other for funding. We don’t have time to come together and discuss what we need.”
- One table agreed that it feels like the only way to compete for funds now is to have full-time development staff (additional cost not going directly to services) or apply for grants as a coalition.
  - “Small organizations are expected to do more with less money. This not fair or equitable. We struggle to make ends meet and are unable to pay for essential benefits such as health care for our employees.”

### **Access to Resources**

*“You really can’t find and connect with people unless you have resources to do so.”*

Access to and competition for resources are closely intertwined. Given their overlapping relationship, addressing access delves deeper into the nature of resource availability. Although often spoke about as a barrier, organizations pose opportunities particularly for funding sources to address while engaging in racial equity work.

- Representatives of small CBOs mentioned feeling overwhelmed with all the work that needs to happen yet not being able to address the work because accessibility to resources is severely lacking.
  - Technical Assistants need to be able to speak the language the community needs.
  - Transportation is a barrier in accessing resources for both organizations and service recipients.
- Inequitable, oppressive systems lead to additional barriers in accessing resources.
  - “Refugee communities are apprehensive in asking for money to meet the needs of their community. They also don’t really know how to do it.”
  - “We created an event that was self-sponsored by the community due to no funding being provided for this type of work.”
  - “My community is separated based on immigration status. Historically, individuals who have migrated from Mexico internalize xenophobia. Right now, we have a crisis where people who are undocumented are discriminated against and threatened (calling ICE). Undocumented Latinos are lacking support and resources.”
- “History hasn’t changed that much. Look at the current education disparities Black schools often face. Look at the resources and books offered to schools that have large numbers of blacks and minority students. Much has not changed; we still face inequalities when it comes to education, socio-economic resources, etc.”

### **Funder Accountability**

*“How can we rethink fundraising?”*

As outlined in the Competition for Resources and Access to Resources sections of the *Resources* theme, traditional funding methods are not sustainable for the majority of organizations. More progressive funding programs, such as N2N, are digging deeper to answer questions communities are bringing to the table about funder accountability. Community-driven resource allocation is a far more accessible way to approach funding, according to community members. By bringing neighbors together to discuss these difficult ideas, mutual benefits for the community and funders can emerge.

- Transparency in funding processes says to the community that funders are accountable to their communities.
  - Grantees at the November N2N convening brought up questions regarding process. Who is on grant panels? How are funding decisions made? How are funders reaching out to communities to understand the real needs versus perceived needs? How can communities help steer where funding goes? What are ways the grant process could be more interactive and inclusive? What are methods to mitigate competition for scarce resources? What are we doing to change outdated and problematic systems?
- “In getting funds together, we need tools to get out of funding cycles that aren’t sustainable. Community grant programs were really white/mainstream, and now they are taking goals for funding from the community itself. This shows how important it is to change the goals of funders to center community need.”
- Are funders actively seeking to mitigate the impacts of funding disparities?

- “Where are the investments being made? When race work is done in abstract, access and inclusion aren’t addressing root causes of structural racism.”
- A general consensus among many groups was a need for more training on both sides of the funder/grantee relationship, for community to be strong, strategic advocates and for funders to listen more and respond to needs as defined by the community.
  - Given the innate power differential, gatekeeping is a genuine fear. Regarding community members and leaders as the expert can bridge this gap.

### **BRIDGING RACIAL IDENTITIES**

*“I think a multiracial movement is important for our communities in fact it is vital for the success and growth of our community. However, we have an issue with not looking back at our history, I believe if we talk and reflect more about our history it will help bring forth positive change.”*

*- N2N Annual Convening participant*

Rich conversations stemming from neighbors talking to other neighbors who may belong to different communities resulted in thoughtful sharing of stories, exposure to a vast array of experiences and perspectives, and opportunities for learning. One participant spoke to the composition of his neighborhood drastically changing during his 40 years of residence and the accompanying cultural shift where he was essentially a stranger in his own home. This was a resounding theme among Participants of Color, albeit differing in specific experiences. Underneath the theme individuals all seemed to desire a sense of community with their neighbors. By processing identity and race in a highly diverse setting, addressing divisions within and between racial and ethnic communities, and processing the role of white allies and white fragility, community was strengthened and program participants were able to come together in a unique way.

### **Processing Identity and Race**

*“How do you raise a child as an American while maintaining culture?”*

Two primary concepts emerged throughout dialogues processing identity and race: how people identify versus how they are seen in the United States, as it pertains to immigrant and refugee communities; and internalized oppression, as experienced by a wide variety of individuals and Communities of Color.

- The social construct of race varies throughout the world. Several participants noted they learned about race when they came to the United States.
  - “Discrepancies between how people identify and how they are seen in America speak to internalization of institutional racism.”
  - “Somali people tend to distance themselves from the black (African American) community. Recently, members have been able to understand that they are considered black in American society and are impacted by oppressive systems. Oppression disconnects us from our humanity.”
  - “Privileges exist within own community, but we don’t think about it until it is in US adjusted terms.”
- “Labels have meaning and being mixed race in America creates an identity crisis for many people. You can feel like you don’t fit on any side. Internalized oppression!”

- Young POC are pushed to be exceptionally successful according to “US standards” - this is a common narrative but leaves those striving for these goals struggling. Those who do “succeed” are considered the exception to the rule.
- “My personal experience has been with my daughter she has gone to private schools which are majority all white schools. She is now struggling with race and due to her classmates teasing her for being black she now views race differently than I do. She has believed this narrative that her classmates have tainted her with that if you're black you're less valued and less liked. The bullying she has experienced in all white schools has influenced her thinking and she believes that if you're white you're presented with more opportunities and being white is better than being black.”
- “POC folks seeing ourselves reflected in a positive light can help us reclaim identities and narratives”

### **Addressing Divisions Within and Between Racial and Ethnic Communities**

*“Race is used to pull people apart as opposed to resolve conflicts and unite people.”*

- Participants representing groups from Lao, Ethiopian, and Somali communities, to name a few, all spoke to the divisions within their communities and how they are coming together with their communities to find common ground to address shared challenges, create space for all groups within their community, and dialogue across differences.
  - “There is a lot of division and prejudice within the Lao ethnic groups. It’s very sad when people that share so much in common cannot see past their differences in order to work together for the whole community. We are using N2N funds to organize conversations between Lao groups for addressing shared challenges.”
  - “The Ethiopian Community Center has been around for many years and has been led by one ethnic group. The organization has to deconstruct this dynamic and serve/create a space open for ALL Ethiopians (and collaborate with all East African Communities).”
  - “The Somali community has similar dynamics taking place. In fact, it’s the reason we went into a civil war. We have tribes (ex Bantu community) that are treated unequal. We are in an internal war with each other.”
- Participants noted a “divide and conquer” mentality within multicultural communities. Different communities face certain issues in different ways but are all impacted under the oppressive force of racism.
  - “We are most impacted by immigration policies and we do not have support from other multiracial communities. Internally various Latin American communities are pinned against each other by immigration status.”
  - Class and wealth distribution disparities perpetuate this issue.
  - “It’s not just about the fact that we’re Black, but there are isms and schisms between us that we don’t want to address, don’t feel comfortable talking to funders about.”
- “As someone who is very racially and ethnically mixed, I didn’t get the luxury of not knowing how to engage around issues of racism because it has been reality since birth, whether it was people questioning my “true” race or telling me I’m not enough of a race to ‘claim it’.”

- “If we can’t talk about the dynamics between us, such as the inequities and injustices happening all the time, this is a key reason why multiracial organizing is so difficult. These systems are ingrained within us; these schisms divide us, and we internalize them. There is so much trauma.”

### **Role of White Allies**

*“If racism wasn’t an issue, none of the other issues white people are concerned about would be problems any more.”*

Events put on for the N2N community bring together people of different racial and ethnic identities. This space provides an opportunity for personal reflexivity through exposure in dialogue that may otherwise not be occurring. Multicultural connections are being made in these N2N settings.

- White solidarity is essential in a multicultural movement.
  - “White fragility is impeding on the movement.”
  - “White folks should work on their issues and work in solidarity.”
  - “We must continue to build allies with white people. They have the power, resources, and access to change things.”
  - “We need to create more safe spaces and address white fragility. Although a space might feel safe it still protects white fragility. We are unable to have real conversations that are impactful because white folks always need to feel powerful in these spaces. Let’s be real and be more raw and honest with ourselves and call out things when they are not right.”
- “As a POC, you have to acknowledge that you’re different from the dominating group. You see racist systems in workforce, schools, economy, higher education, prisons, etc. It’s going to take a lot more than POC working together. White folks need to help disrupt those institutions from inside too.”
- “Working for the government, I struggle with white coworkers. These principles are incorporated theoretically but they aren’t incorporated into daily life. We need to be able to reflect and share on a personal level, but this stuff is considered too personal for work. It isn’t transformative because of this, these institutions have so much to learn from the community.”
- “My experience is that within my community I can easily have conversations around race since race affects me daily. However, if I were to have this same conversation at work it wouldn’t be the same. It’s not easy to have this conversation with my white colleagues. I have started to call things what they are and I am no longer afraid to use certain terms in order to make others feel comfortable.”
- “My personal experience with race and having conversations around race with white people has been they always feel like that have to say or do the right thing instead of having honest raw conversations. In spaces with other white people I feel that they are focused on being kind and brave and train themselves to say the right words but should rather be honest with themselves first.”

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Through conversations about racism, racial justice movement work, and philanthropy, Annual Convening event participants illuminated a host of recommendations ranging from suggestions for this particular event, the N2N program, the Seattle Foundation, and the field of philanthropy in general. Beyond contributing to conversations at this event, participants were invited to complete an evaluation survey for the Annual Convening on Survey Monkey. These participant responses also informed the recommendations delineated below.

Recommendations are organized into four categories: (1) Annual Convening Recommendations, (2) N2N Program Recommendations, (3) Recommendations for Philanthropy / Funder-Community Engagement, and (4) Collective Liberation.

### **ANNUAL CONVENING RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Roles and Facilitation**

Some participants expressed confusion regarding the roles at the event. With community members, independent consultants (note takers, facilitators), Seattle Foundation representatives, and other funders in the room, more clarification of roles and transparency of intentions and more flexible facilitation has been requested for future convenings. Specific suggestions include:

- Clarify roles in advance
- Encourage transparency and direct communication regarding roles at the event
- Explore ways for note takers, facilitators, and funders to participate in multiple ways
  - “As we focus on community members serving as notetakers and facilitators and in some cases funders too, we might include in the materials about taking off your notetaker or funder or facilitator hat publicly if you want to participate in a different role.”
- “Please consider structuring facilitation with more flexibility so that facilitators can hand off the role, and/or the table groups could choose one question to dive into deeply rather than trying to address multiple questions.”

#### **Conversation Norms and Intentionality**

Some participants struggled to understand the Color Brave Space guidelines, claiming they are too abstract and include too much jargon. Further, there was no organized discussion of how to honor or enforce these guidelines. More elaboration of these guidelines and how they could inform interactions, and what to do if people are not following them could be helpful for future events. Further, participants requested more opportunities for intentional relationship building. Specific suggestions include:

- Set ground rules and clarify any questions folks may have
- Invite participants to reflect on personal areas of privilege and be intentional about creating space for People of Color, women, etc.
- Establish ways to uphold these agreements (eg. let people know they may be interrupted if they are not following guidelines)

- “Intentional relationship building with others at our dinner table. A small exercise that allowed us to get to know each other before jumping right into the exercise would have been nice.”
- Incorporate icebreakers into the structure of the event

### **Focus on Action**

Participants appreciated the opportunity to connect and discuss racism, but also requested to have more tools and opportunities to focus on how to move forward:

- “It’s very easy when talking about this kind of stuff to talk about is abstractly, so i wish we had a tool or prompt for how to take these discussions and make them more actionable.”
- “Continue more on the action, movement forward.”
- Focus on reflexivity, inviting participants to reflect on their identities and identify ways to address power and privilege beyond the event.

## **N2N PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Create space for Communities of Color to gather and build relationships, discuss strengths**

The data revealed a need for resources and energy to convene Communities of Color to focus on strategy, strengths, and building power. The N2N program could contribute to this effort by:

- Providing more intentional spaces for relationship and capacity building
  - “More meetings like this make it easy for people to come together and share their ideas.”
  - “Relationships matter, take the time, that’s the only way to build a movement.”
  - Survey respondents most frequently requested the following gatherings:
    - Community capacity, organizing and leadership training for interested individuals or organizations
    - Informal, regular gatherings in Kent, South Seattle or White Center amongst N2N grantees and partners
    - Racial Equity / Undoing Institutional Racism training (by ethnic group, by neighborhood or by organization)
- Providing resources to support communities in hosting these gatherings on their own
  - Current lack of funding for such initiatives
  - “We created an event that was self-sponsored by the community, due to no funding being provided for this type of work” (regarding an event focusing on unity and togetherness)
- Expanding the conversation, ensuring that racial equity is discussed beyond the walls of these gatherings
  - “Important to have these conversations beyond places like this and with people who have never had conversations about racial equity.”

## Accountability

In providing racial equity trainings and working with white allies, funders need to be accountable to Communities of Color and center the experiences and needs of People of Color.

- Provide a report back on the status of N2N's racial equity trainings
  - "Helped advocate for N2N to have a racial equity training, for white people to learn about what institutional racism is. We need to know where we're at."
- Engage in ongoing dialogues to ensure that racial equity goals are being met
- Prioritize transparency

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHILANTHROPY / FUNDER-COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### Funding

Participants consistently identified lack of funding as an issue for their organizations. Further, this scarcity of funding creates rifts between organizations and communities, at times preventing or inhibiting the ability of organizations to come together, form coalitions, or work collectively.

- "Lack of funding causes rifts between Orgs of Color, fighting each other for funding. We don't have time to come together and discuss what we need."
- "Nonprofits need to compete with one another for the same funding (which is often too little money in the first place). Often times, that can create further divisions within culturally-based community organizations."

In order to support racial equity initiatives and provide relevant, responsive funding within Communities of Color, participants suggest the following:

- Provide access to grant information and grant writers
- Provide technical assistance in the language the community needs
- Establish an Innovation Fund to fund creative work
- Eliminate geographic restrictions on communities (particularly important for refugee communities because they move around a lot)
- Identify or provide more opportunities for funding to support general operations
- Provide more opportunities to connect during the grant application process
- Address structural racism, not just access and inclusion

### Representation

Lack of representation from Communities of Color in funding circles and decision-making is exacerbating issues experienced by community groups. Specific recommendations include:

- Prevent non-POC groups from telling community groups what to do
- Include community representation on recommendation panels
  - Needs to be multiracial, Organizations of Color must be present
- Ensure community representation to inform where funding goes and how it is administered to avoid competition
- Change the goals of funders to center community need

- Training on both sides, for communities to be strong and strategic advocated, and for funders to listen more and respond to community

### **BUILDING TOWARD COLLECTIVE LIBERATION**

*“If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”*

— Lila Watson, Aboriginal Activist

Collective liberation means acknowledging that all of our struggles are intimately connected, and that we must work in solidarity to create a world where everyone has equitable access to housing, income, food, education, and health care. Through the dialogues and connections made at the Annual Convening, a need to focus on systems-level change and intersectionality while centering racial justice emerged. Participants acknowledged the interconnectedness of struggles facing their communities and identified the need to think creatively and expansively to truly work toward justice.

- “The approach to liberation is rooted in intersection. There’s so much happening, homelessness, etc. If we have coordinated movement we can work together, that’s the only way we can actually achieve equity.”
- “Would be a mistake to start a movement and call multiracial movement -- I want for us to be able to call racial equity.”
- “Race and ethnicity are not the only things that we identify as.”
- “You have to bring up women, as you are bringing up POC as well as sexual orientation.”
- “To ‘live united’ we have to address these things that are above all of us.”
- “It is so important for our communities to have collective power.”
- “We need to change our collective conscious in order to counteract oppression.”
- “Recognizing each other’s humanity makes it possible to change our collective conscious in order to counteract oppression.”
- “We have to have both unity in our own community as well as alliances to support each other’s movements.”

### **LIMITATIONS OF THE DATA:**

As previously noted, NTC only received notes for 11 of 15 tables at the event. Therefore, table notes for four tables were missing from the analysis altogether. The individual styles of the notetakers varied drastically, resulting in a wide variations in the data set. NTC notetakers floated from table to table, and were not present for the entirety of any of the conversations at the tables. This resulted in potentially missing context for some of the participant comments, or incomplete representations of these conversations. Despite these limitations, the themes identified above resounded throughout the data.

## Appendix A

### South Seattle Small Gathering Notes N2N Convening November 28, 2017

- Attendees
  - Ron Angeles- Rainier Beach Emergency Hub
  - Miko and Sam- AGEUP/South End Ultimate
  - Benji-The Service Board
  - Farhija-Somali Family Safety Task Force (SFSTF)
  - Linda- African Americans Reach and Teach Health Ministry (AARTH)
  - Maria-South Park Information and Resource Center (SPIARC)
  - Jihan-Somali Health Board
  - Hana-Independent Consultant
  - Sharon-KVRU105.7 Rainier Valley Radio
  - Larry- Fathers and Sons Together (FAST)
  - Cathie- Fathers and Sons Together (FAST)
  
- What is urgent in our community? Why are we here? (Each group member responded as they went around in a circle. Some built off of answers given by others.)
  - Media access is becoming even more limited.
    - Matter of accessibility, particularly for marginalized populations.
    - Information is power and creating alternative channels of communication is a form of resistance.
  - Building relationships builds strength and lowers barriers to access.
    - Sharing information and holding space is invaluable in creating community.
  - How are we giving young people power to succeed?
    - Pathways for young POC is becoming even more challenging. Community work done in organizations (paid positions) often hires those who have college degrees.
      - Barriers to education continue to grow-no money to go to schools of social work, DACA situation, etc.
  - Gentrification
    - Community members, especially young people, are spending more and more time on public transportation to go to schools and spaces where they feel accepted and fit in.
    - Long commutes to work, appointments, etc. limit ability to access services and community resources and groups.
    - How can we overcome barriers that are both physical and strategic?
  - How can we create opportunities for youth to have power and send them into community to do work?
    - Youth are experts in their communities. Strategy for creating pathways is necessary.

- How to create opportunities for community-based participatory action research (CBPAR)?
  - “Research with” rather than “research on” not only yields more accurate research results but also empowers communities to create their own narratives.
- Systemic racism is impacting health programs and overall health in communities.
  - Access, transportation, childcare, etc.
- How do we work together and not pit one another against each other for the limited resources that exist in our community?
- Mental Health care access
  - Disruption of the systems we had before? Internet?
  - EX. Fear of filling out forms to get children free preschool in Seattle
    - Possibility of reprimand from ICE, CPS, Muslim ban, etc.
  - People may not know all of their rights. Big organizations are asking questions that can trick folks into giving information that can put their families in jeopardy.
- “People are afraid of our own people now.”
  - Group member expressed they were shocked that we now have to fear our community. Dialogue about how this has been happening forever and is a real issue that results in lack of safety, violence, and perpetuation of systemic oppression, particularly in communities of color.
- Next steps- How can we move together? (Each group member was asked to give a one-word answer as a closing check in.)
  - Vocal, hope, power, unity, *strategy*, youth, community, empowerment, resilience, trust, networking.

## Appendix B

### Kent Small Gathering Notes

Open dialogue facilitated by neighborhood representative to be led as desired by the grantees. Facilitator will take brief notes as well. Space and refreshments provided by N2N. Neighborhood facilitators are natural 'connectors' and seen as trusted point people in the neighborhood. Grantees choose the primary neighborhood focus area.

Risho Sapano, facilitator

Yahyah, community center of Washington – connections back to 1999/2000

Vena – project culinary training, first year

Janet – first five years and beyond, early learning

Charles – “BEST”

Kevin Baker, Baker Consulting around cultural diversity (facilitator)

Tina, African Coalition of African Leadership, somewhat new

Patricia, Empower, increase legal representation

Jacqueline Garcia, Circulo de Mamas, small grassroots orgs

Nadia, Iraqi Women's Association

Taffy, UTOPIA, qtpoc grassroots org

Judy is facilitating because Risho is stuck in traffic.

- UTOPIA – volunteer-run since 2009. Taffy is the first paid staff, was a volunteer first
- Most folks in the room are volunteers
  - Stipends, perhaps paid a little – the norm
- Issue for small nonprofits: transition to getting paid
- Most N2N grantees aren't paid workers
- “It's a big challenge, you want to pay living wages.”
- Most have outside jobs.

Risho : how are you able to pay for your operation? Barrier for many organizations to expand and grow

How are you surviving, being a small organization? How are you supporting the operation and the growth of your organization?

- Someone gets the grant, someone doesn't. winners and losers. We are going to do this work anyway. Wish there weren't any losers. Too many losers.
- Not enough resources to scale up.
- Need funds to pay for fees associated with programming, no resources for this
- Need more general operating grant applications
  - Need more backbone support

- As people of kent, can share resources, not just barriers
  - Usually people don't share resources
  - Sharing is important
  - Importance of cultural exchange
  - Usually communities are insular, other communities not showing up to other community's events
  - Resource fairs, bringing together different agencies, reaching out to more people
    - Not just one organization
    - Brings everyone together
  - Entire role around Latino community, do you think there is a real solidarity between cultures and different communities? "My experience is that we are not connected on any level. We don't know the barriers and issues for other communities, or their priorities. What is the best way to connect with other cultures? To connect and share resources."
  - How do you see it?
    - Everyone working on their own stuff. We spend so much time writing grants. Need to make space/make a point to connect.
    - We need to make it a point to meet/share resources. "If somebody gets a huge grant from Kent, everyone should know about it." We want to know what you did/how you did it.
    - Who is doing outreach? Can people get other communities to their group.
    - So many leaders – who? What organization?
    - Can other communities' services be expanded to other communities?
  
- Do other groups want to connect? Exclusion from services because you're not a part of the group.

How to attend each others events, get to know each other. Build relationships and community.

Kent cultural diversity group, other groups, not attending. So important to make these personal connections.

When we combine our resources, we will be stronger.

Same goal: provide resources and serve our communities. Find resources/a **space**/SHARE

## Appendix C

### White Center - Small Gathering Notes for N2N 11/28/17

Facilitator asked the Group to share what they do.

- Tracy - Lao Heritage - preserve our culture and recipient from last year
- Yes Foundation White center - culture matters – Pacific Islander HS students around education - grant for past few years
- Collectiva - presentations and services for immigrant community - ofc in Burien and do community organizing - immigration services - community development and education- human rights workshops and have group of community members going thru leadership development - will have them do more workshops. I'm a legal advocate (Leo) - do legal work and come in with community engagement facilitation
- Yes Foundation - several times grantee - work focused in White center.... have taken impact a little bit south, children youth and families
- Sili - N2N advisory committee - always looking for White Center projects
- Shauna - Evergreen community center - white center, little bit of West Seattle - discounted rates for families who want to swim
- Reyna - S. King Coalition on Discipline - workshops at White Center salvation army - family friendly - parents whose kids are in surrounding areas - focusing on school discipline rights and to close that disproportionality and opportunity gap

Tracy asks: How / what is it that you need or are looking for in WC (White Center) - how to incorporate in each other's work - thru training - with very limited resources that we all have - work close together and not duplicate; what is a project about, who is best to do; prevent competition. Maybe you could tell us a little bit more of what your challenges are - figure out how we can work together - funding, we know. What else?

- Leo - Training community organizing and development. Cohort of community members and are training them with leadership skills for them to get engaged with their communities and start doing workshops. Know your rights workshops - rapid response trainings - education on how to support undocumented people - outsourced to our communities because capacity is limited; within community and leadership development lots want to engage in cultural meetings, but all volunteer based and not compensated for the work - they get burned out and disengage - how to keep engaged? How to ve them do the necessary work that they are doing?
- Emijah (just entering) - South King County Coalition on Discipline (SKCDC) - lot of people I know in the community....
- Tess - SKCDC - one of our main goals is to reduce disproportionate discipline that are affecting black and brown males - top priority

- ?.... our focus has been similar to community development, having workshops and trainings that would educate us on our rights and policy at the state level on discipline; more than that beyond legal rights....
- Sameth - family advocacy; development; families;
- Tess - big end of the year celebration for families and students - making it thru school year - last year having that brought a lot of community members together; every kid got an award to call out their strengths - recognize children in front of their peers
- Roxanne - lived and worked in white center - now with Best Starts for Kids (BSK) - helping communities of opportunity apply for funding - my heart stays in white center - facilitating one of the groups....
- Victoria - with colectiva
- Shauna - Teen nights and more teens engaging in that - free swimming lessons for middle schools and teenagers - hopefully trying to get teenagers in ....
- Ilays - Eat with Muslims - get outside of your box and build relationships with neighbors
- Pulemau -Every January we take HS PIs to Olympia.... advocacy training and law process - none of us are like super masterful in that – need to pull in different resources; never have enough
- Sameth - Know your rights (trainings) - Community to Community work - what's been coming out is the normal layout of know your rights might not speak to specific groups .... Southeast Asian groups and how to work as activists with deportees; need materials and ways we can access this info - we need to learn how to work with lawyers and see how can be culturally translated to our communities ; as well as peer to peer trainings where we incentivize community members to education on know your rights; post-conviction relief funds; money has gone out, but not filtered to people who need it the most; 200 Southeast Asian .... waiting for interviews; how to reach communities other than the current platform of know your rights

Tracy: how can we come together?

- Sili - one thing I don't hear enough of is really the issue of race; in this climate where white supremacy is up creates, another barrier; communities are not speaking to this; part of the purpose of N2N is to address equity - we are in a region where we are responding to that - trying to help elevate this conversation; at the place where we can't be scared about being about race; just wanted to remind all of us; also know we have to deal with racism, but don't get a chance to talk about that; throwing out there, I know you are all addressing in a variety of ways but help N2N be more effective on this as well
- Emijah - Racism, not just race

T - How can people be competitive?

- Sili - need to be able to hear the story without filters; the community needs to be in a place where we are non-judgmental; we don't want to fall into the same old way that we fund; how do we do philanthropy - be present; how do we get the philanthropists to behave; what's really at the core is how does it get to this place where you are really wanting to build a strong vibrant community; how do we stop just doing status quo; how

do we listen to what the community is telling us.... this is what they really need and to translate it into N2N....

- Tess – I like that it's not just submit grant app, but having face to face with real people; not just something on paper; brought my kids and people not trippin'; welcomed us and interviewed us face to face; makes it more personal; you give us a chance to present ourselves and get to know us as people - trying to use similar model with our subgrants; can do oral presentation because some people learning style differences; people who might not get to the 2nd round opportunity; gives them opportunity; for me, being in situations of etiquette, of presenting self to someone who might give lots of money - some people might want to have that experience and have this method for people for who this accommodates better; more personal

Tracy - how can this be open-minded; how can this group be creative and we want this need.... That need....

- Emijah - thank you for the process; helpful for me moving forward; the grant if possible could be more open to what we are able to say; I think people go in our minds like this is a test; something we have to fight against; now we can have real talk; thought it was helpful that it got named in terms of what you mentioned for the coalition's work; if there is a way to get the wording - certain communities need to know its ok to talk about some things. The conversations are already happening in the community; not having funders tell us how to do our work; be transparent about how connecting to the community; we are going to talk to the funders and say this; trying to build healthy relationship in the community; doesn't take away general aspect of the grant - that would make a difference; how do we build solidarity; how are we walking away together, but not diluting ourselves and taking away our own dignity. Sharing our message.