# SEATTLE FOUNDATION

the heart & science of philanthropy

# Fund for Inclusive Recovery
## Year 2 Grantee Learnings

June 2024

# Year 2 Learning and Evaluation Efforts

## November – December 2023

Seattle Foundation held focus group conversations where grantees **shared stories on their power and base building work** and tools they've found useful in their efforts.

## April – May 2024

Grantees **shared progress and challenges related to indicators of their choosing** to provide greater context on the second year of their FIR-related work.

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# FIR Learning Indicators

1. Increase internal operations and capacity

2. Deepen relationships through partnerships and coalitions

3. Create new programs and improve existing programs

4. Expand base of engaged community members

5. Develop new leaders in the community

6. Conduct community-led research efforts

7. Create and advance policies

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# Internal Operations and Capacity

## Progress

- **Increased people power** through hiring of 24 staff, contract members and 4 fellows and interns in addition to promoting current staff members

- **Increased organizational structure and increased efficiency** by building and deploying tools and processes (values aligned decision making frameworks, streamlined hiring and onboarding processes, CRM and project management software)

## Challenges

- **Experienced small applicant pools** and difficulties finding candidates that represent the communities served

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# Voices of Tomorrow

The Public Policy and Advocacy Protocol serves as a foundational document to govern annual decision-making process pertaining to Voices of Tomorrow's public policy and advocacy initiatives.

The diligent implementation will ensure that all strategies related to public affairs adhere to the mission, vision and values of Voices of Tomorrow while also clearly delineating unique roles and responsibilities of individuals and departments for our policy and advocacy work.

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# Partnerships and Coalitions

## Progress

- **Increased trust** through shared values and goals, clear expectations around responsibility/ownership, and the implementation of boundaries when needed

- **Increased longevity** of relationships beyond individual task, event, or program

- **Increased number and diversity** of partnerships with nonprofit organizations, government entities, and academic institutions

## Challenges

- **Time and investments needed** to be in authentic relationship with one another

- **Staff are juggling multiple responsibilities** and lack capacity to fully engage in partnership and coalition work

- **Partnerships hindered by competition for funding** opportunities/grants and feelings to gatekeep knowledge/information

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## Alphabet Alliance of Color

All of our collaborative events were born out of established trust and could only grow as trust was continually cultivated. Reliance upon each other was built through shared commitment in relationship, not just for the sake of completing a task, but to genuinely be in community with each other.

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# New and Existing Programs

## Progress

- **Using programs a channel for building trust** (consistency, removing barriers to entry/program participation) and meeting community needs

- **Increased inclusivity** within program staff, services and materials so that programs are a space where community see themselves reflected

- **Increased accountability** to community through program evaluation efforts

## Challenges

- In-person programming **requires greater staff capacity and accounting for additional logistics** (food, transportation, accessible space, etc.)

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# Rainier Beach Action Coalition

The FIR funding has been foundational in sustaining our Farmer Support programming, where we take youth out to the farms to help weed and harvest, support farmers in weighing/packing produce, invoice coordination and paperwork support.

Our Farmer Support Lead is a consistent face at the farms, helping weekly and providing emotional support. This creates a reputation of trust in the Rainier Beach Food Hub team where more and more farmers recommend and come to us.

# Engaged Community Members

## Progress

- **Fostering a stronger sense of community** through more in-person/face to face engagement

- **Increased analytical and speaking skills and greater confidence** of community members to understand legislation, provide public comment/testimony and speak with legislators

## Challenges

- **Striking the right balance for engagement** between outreach events as an entry point for community engagement with opportunities for deeper education and advocacy

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## Surge Reproductive Justice

In July of 2023, we moved into our new office space. Having a physical space has allowed us to host hybrid events for people to meet in person at our office and for accessibility, people to join online.

Being able to have face to face connection with community members who have only attended events virtually deeply supported our work to connect with people and bring people closer to the work.

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# Develop New Leaders in Community

## Progress

- **Scaling** from program participant to formalized leadership and facilitator roles

- **Developing strong systems of care to sustain leadership for the long haul** (focused on wellness, rest, compensating people for their time and expertise)

- **Using cohort models**, allowing for relationship building while advancing policy and advocacy work

- Providing opportunities at **varying scales/commitment levels**

## Challenges

- **Asking too much of individuals** (in terms of work or level of commitment) leading to burnout

- Getting people further engaged in leadership development efforts **when their basic needs aren't being met**

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## Collective Justice

As an organization, we are tapping into our ecosystem and scaling up people that we're already in relationship with.

We're starting our Heal Inside Circles in prisons in June. Collective Justice has been locked out of prisons for four years. We've continued to hold deep relationships with incarcerated community members and two Circle alum who are still inside will serve as facilitators along with two facilitators who were formerly incarcerated.

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# Community-Led Research Efforts

## Progress

- **More reflective and representative data** that speaks to the experiences of community members

  - 7 research reports produced

  - 2 surveys with 200 participants

  - 7 focus groups with 35 participants

  - 20 1:1 interviews

- Using research findings as a **tool for storytelling, education and outreach and to inform policy priorities**

## Challenges

- Grantee organizations are **still developing skills, knowledge and capacity** to conduct research rooted in community

- **Obtaining accurate, reliable data** that genuinely reflects the experiences and perspectives of community members

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## UTOPIA Washington

This year, we are working to revamp our policy recommendation for the City of Seattle to also include data and stories from our sex worker community for a holistic approach on the importance of creating systems that honor the autonomy of the sex worker community.

Our goal is to obtain accurate, reliable data that genuinely reflects the experiences and perspectives of sex workers, thereby enabling us to draw meaningful conclusions and provide valuable insights for our research objectives.

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# Create and Advance Policies

## Progress

- **Legislative wins** and seeing loss as a step toward future progress

- **Mobilizing** to meet the moment

  o City Councilmember Maritza Rivera's amendment for the City of Seattle Equitable Development Initiative

- **Celebrating and honoring the work** done in the legislative cycle

## Challenges

- **Maintaining momentum and energy** after setbacks

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# Legislative Wins

## Open Doors for Multicultural Families

**HB 1541 Nothing About Us Without Us:**
Requires people from underrepresented groups be included on any temporary task force, work group or advisory committee investigating an issue that impacts underrepresented populations.

Budget Provisos:
- $5 million for Multicultural Village
- $250,000 for Intersectional Developmental Disabilities Conference



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# Legislative Wins

## Surge Reproductive Justice

Through their advocacy efforts, Surge secured the following:

- $200,000 for the development of a statewide doula hub
- Funding to establish the reimbursement rate at $3,500



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# Mobilizing to Meet the Moment

City Councilmember Maritza Rivera's amendment to place a conditional hold on $25.3 million allocated in the 2024 budget for the City of Seattle's Equitable Development Initiative



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# Equitable Recovery and Reconciliation Alliance (ERRA)

In a very short timeframe, we mobilized our Steering Committee members and our partners at the Crescent Collaborative to send a joint official letter opposing the funding cut. Alongside many other incredible community advocates, were able to secure the support of several council members in opposing the motion to cut funding.

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# Rainier Beach Action Coalition

This came into play when Seattle City Councilmember Maritza Rivera sponsored an amendment proposing to freeze $25million of Equitable Development Initiative funding, of which RBAC is a current recipient of upwards of $4 million, to support the development of the RBAC Growth Center and Food Hub. With budget cuts looming, it is always communities of color that are on the chopping block first.

With profound community organizing and solidarity, we've managed to get Rivera to backtrack on her faulty approach to democracy and leadership and public service, so EDI is in the clear for now.

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# CHOOSE 180

Advocating and fighting for justice fills us with a sense of hope that we can create better systems and lives for our young people, and it can also leave us feeling hopeless and defeated when we see bills stall and flame out on committee floors.

We urge you to use the ashes of those bills to reignite and reinforce your courage to continue to advocate. Every effort we put into liberation is a seed for the liberation of the collective, even if at times it does not feel like it.

Take time to grieve, with the Spring replenishing your power, as we get ready to sharpen our tools to continue la lucha, to transform systems of oppression.



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