

Below are *unedited* comments from the CHF December 16 Advocacy Grantee Convening.  
CHF will review and synthesize these comments as they continue to center their work on health equity and racial justice.

**Padlet Comments:**

Advocacy and policy work takes a very long time and often doesn't result in immediate results. Be mindful of the time it takes to build trust with BIPOC communities and then to move that trust into action.

Advocate within the funding community to take steps away from white supremacy culture with their grants, since CHF has power.

Making sure there is intentional intersection of race and disability; proximity to the capital and better connection to those outside of the front range.

Are you addressing the inequity in the amount of money that white led organizations are getting vs BIPOC led organizations?

As a DEI consultant to some of my colleagues here, I can say that they love the "training" part of racial equity work, but in looking at their leadership and the history of who has not been in leadership roles, their lack of authentic commitment is evident.

Avoiding tokenism.

Balance upstream & downstream.

Bring EDs to the table as you develop equity work.

Build orgs by life cycle - fund based on risk/outcome.

Centering race needs to acknowledge cultural relevance.

CHF can help other Foundations/orgs to push them to define what equity means for them. Need to bring focus into how they are actually using the term in everything organizations are doing.

Community members need to be at the table and possibly invited into the conversation.

Community organizers need a sense of "this is mine" to be a part of decision making and feel successful.

Consider the elderly in the Latino community; their caregivers as they typically are family members. These caregivers are already taking care of their household. Also ensuring all resources are available in Spanish/spanish speaking staff that can help caregivers. Colorado's Latino elderly population is growing nearly twice as fast as other Coloradans over 65, and will more than triple between 2010 and 2030.

Continue, especially with racial equity, multi-year funding to support multi year efforts. Sometimes this takes generations, not 1-2 years.

Convene a learning community of other grantees in similar stages of this work to share experiences and best practices.

Creating bridges, not middle men.

Elderly and their caregivers.

Empowering by organizing and encouraging individuals to share their story in public and to elected officials. This is one way we can build local individual belief that one person and a group of persons can really make change.

Ensure budgets include enough to provide the "right" and comprehensive language services (including ASL).

Ensure multiple marginalized communities are considered.

Ensure that white-led policy organization are taking the lead of grassroots BIPOC led organizations in order to be funded. Many times these white-led organizations take funding, write BIPOC led organizations on the application and absorb all the funding.

Ensuring POC folks aren't bearing the brunt of this work and that resources aren't redirected to white orgs to do racial equity work.

Equity in pay for non-profit directors who are women of color. Equity in pay for all sectors in the work that we do.
Equity means that we invest in the upstream as well as the downstream (health care access, education access, etc). TCHF should balance between the two and not invest entirely in upstream at the risk of downstream.
Equity needs to be centered in every initiative from all funded orgs.
Facilitation at the community level about where/how to pull levers to shift p/Policy.
Finding ways to work on advocacy outside the front range.
Flexibility in funding across the spectrum.
Flexibility with Funding.
Fund development and supports for BIPOC candidates and elected officials.
Fund the work without restrictions because we know our work best.
Funders & Grantees understanding the depth of the work and how outcomes will look different than normalized concrete outcomes.
Funders to partner on giving trainings on health equity for organizations around the state who may not have the resources to do it.
Funders to think of ways to contribute to leadership pipelines for people of color to be key players in Colorado Health Equity work, including research.
Funding for at least five years.
Funding for more progressive charges over the long term -- tackling systemic issues (TABOR etc.).
Funding to bring in consultants to help guide antiracism and DEI work, regardless of where we are starting from, especially because many of our organizations are small and don't have staffing or knowledge to do this work.
Funding to build deeply inclusive, engaging and accessible coalition tables.
Funding to hire staff.
Grant writing and financial workshops that a free for BIPOC run non-profits.
Having community in training and leadership opportunities (prioritize capacity building).
Helping White-led communities step back so others can step into power.
How are you working with the organizations that you fund who are white-led on anti-racism work?
How do we do this work which has always been for all populations (legitimately - we serve people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds) while focusing on a specific racial population.
How does quantified data uphold systems of oppression?
How funding is framing for any orgs. To commit to dismantling systems of oppression, map out steps related to addressing the oppression that is upheld through organizational policies, practices, behaviors, and characteristics.
How Latino immigrant parents know the US systems. Power sharing practices, more than representation. Takes time to move forward work led by black and brown communities, movement building takes time. Including those that are always left out, language barriers, invitations in the right way are important.
Importance of offering different levels of training.
In the current environment it is not comfortable to not have the resources to start these changes to our organizations in order to combat racism within our organizations.

Income is often used a predictor of outcome, but wealth is often a much better prediction. And wealth is DEEPLY tied to racist policies from exclusion from social security, GI bill, red-lining -- the fact that Medicare is federal and Medicaid is state-by-state. Anti-racist work can often take the form of building wealth -- really close ties to family economic security as a policy priority.

Intersection of POC/Disability community.

Intersection of race and WEALTH.

Invest in BIPOC leadership development! Supporting young BIPOC folx on Boards of Directors, on the Colorado Health Foundation, as leaders of non-profits, as development directors, etc.

Investment in human capital/understanding/trainings builds the field.

Just as everyone is a DEI expert, everyone is now "community-led"...how are we authentically engaging the community?

Keep in mind different starting points for different organizations.

Keep in mind the toll that it takes on BIPOC staff members working for social justice their own communities. This toll is different for BIPOC staff members than it is for white staff members.

Keep moving the board to demonstrate that the "power" is committed to anti racism.

Leadership Pathways: CHF can help organizations move through this path of serving communities of color but being led by white people so that the future can reflect the community's reality.

Longer term funding.

Look at an organization's track record for retaining and promoting POC.

Make sure the board represents the community of the organization they serve and that the leadership focus on anti-racist lens.

Many white-led organizations receive grants to do racial equity work when they themselves create the conditions that oppress and push out BIPOC folx.

Messy, slow work means that work slows down -- funding one year policy agendas doesn't make sense if it takes more than a year to really learn community priorities. Further training and learning takes time away from external work.

Movement building in Black and Brown communities take time.

Need longer timelines to understand community needs and communicate with community members before work can truly be done authentically.

Need to be attentive to the demands that we are placing on community of color leaders as we ask that they give time to all of the other organizations that want those connections.

Need to look at disparities among races through data.

No large disproportion in income between the directors and the staff within the organizations that are staffed by and/or serve the BIPOC communities. And being able to use funding for SALARIES!

Nonprofit business development.

Often, funding goes to one organization that then reaches out to those not funded to collaborate on the same work. Funders need to look at all of the "players" because we need each other to make an impact. One organization cannot send its staff for free-it creates inequities and competition among organizations that should be collaborating.

Partnerships are tricky for BIPOC led/serving orgs.

Power-sharing outcomes and Sustainability - How to incorporate community-informed priorities and let them lead the work.

Provide training/information on the historical roots of various systems of oppression in which we operate -- this could provide not only important understanding of just how far back and deeply rooted these systems are for those of us doing this work, but also inform potential levels for policy change.

Questions on applications about "partnerships with other orgs" could acknowledge the nuanced challenges of BIPOC orgs--how we partner, how we don't, and why we might not be able to partner with many dominance-led orgs.

Racial justice and equity is a process to learn and unlearn and is a process the BIPOC communities FEEL. Authentic work is just the way the work happens...Support by helping BIPOC through training and having a healing space. Talking about racism is traumatic for BIPOC community members. We have avoided these conversations due to this difficulty...need a safe space, support for organizers who are leading these conversations (vicarious trauma).

Reaching all through policy - changing criminal justice system for individuals who experience mental health and sud conditions, thereby working with individuals of various racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Recognizing systemic issues with funding - money was "earned" on the backs of slaves and now communities of color are expected to fundraise that money back.

Resources for organizations on the ground doing the racial justice work and education for the public. This work is exhausting and as most things, Black and Brown folks are out here doing the work to educate white people but there is no after care for the organizations to care for themselves while doing the work.

Resources for Race Equity (and other dimensions of equity) onboarding and training for new staff/board/vols.

Shifting to qualitative data collection and upholding that as a means to changing the way and goal of what data is and does (how does quantified data uphold systems of oppress.

So much funding has gone to increasing the racial equity knowledge and practice of white-led organizations - money should be directed to BIPOC led organizations to support our leadership.

Streamline/simplify application processes and make funds meaningfully accessible to groups with less staff capacity. Unrestricted grants with fewer deliverables to enable orgs to direct funding to their own priorities and be responsive to policy/advocacy opportunities as they arise.

Support both grassroots advocacy and direct lobbying.

Support funding for nonprofits to develop strong "business minded" models and structures that build equitable sustainability. This is a HUGE gap in funding, and nonprofits don't get the investments needed to invest in this aspect of their strategic planning and structural planning work.

Support organizational who are at different points of this journey.

Sustainable funding for community leaders. Many community leaders do work for free.

Tear down the white-supremacist ideals of perfection where BIPOC owned organizations are expected to achieve above and beyond white-led organizations in order to even get recognition.

The "Latinx" community is very diverse- funding needs to look at not only immigrants, but also on Latinx folx who also face numerous inequities.

The equity and antiracism work takes time-it has to proceed at the pace of trust. We need foundations to recognize that we are all in different places and will develop at different paces.

There are deep nuances related to how different racial and ethnic groups view and understand and more importantly, experience "race." And while the "castes" underlying these differences look similar from afar, these between and among group differences deeply impact engagement, historical knowledge, and work in those communities. Understanding these critical ways of "knowing race" matters, both on the ground and also as funding comes down the pike.

There are organizations who have been doing anti-racist work for a long time; they naturally fit into the equity and anti-racists space. Then...there are organizations who are earlier in this journey...these organizations deserve and need support...and the supports may be different than those needed by orgs who have been doing this a long time. Think of this as a life cycle and invest in orgs at different points on this lifecycle.

Tokenism.

Understanding the importance of zoning to who lives where and has access to what now, and prompting new or underutilized policy interventions from advocacy orgs.

We are not even in the recovery phase of COVID yet. We need funding that is longer term.

We are working within a racist system. The solutions sometimes can be racist in itself. We need funding and some guidance to help us do this work, and break our "normal" patterns within the organization.

We do not want organizations to just hire a token person of diversity. Even within a small organization we want to have staff, and out community that we serve to reflect the changes we want to see. We need someone who is the expert to come into the organization to teach us.

We need examples.

We need financial support.

We need to invest in changing systems and we cannot do that alone.

We want a genuine connection to the communities we serve from you all. Not a helicoptering. A genuine commitment to engaging our community members as the experts in their own lives.

We want to highlight the progress that the foundation has made to support the immigrant community was great.

We want to see this work continue even when it loses it current "popular" status.

What are orgs. racial justice agenda? Need a shared agreement to what that means and how to create the world we want to live in.

Where do we start?

White-led organizations can be bridges to traditional halls of power. POC-led organizations have inherent lessons to teach to white-led organizations and should be compensated for being disruptors and playing that role. And white-led organizations can be funded to teach policy details and concepts so that POC-led orgs are able to interact directly (hence bridge, not middle men) with people in power on the policy details.

Willingness to take 2-gen approach- see the long game and fund us as we build trust.

Work with organizations that create relationships centered around data, dollars, and decision-making.

#### CHF's Journey Presentation Chat Comments:

I am wondering how you are using your own journey into centering race to influence other funders. Even though I have seen a greater "outward facing" effort by other funders to become more equitable, when the funding priorities get released, and when funding is distributed in actuality, the distributions are not equitable. I would love to learn more about your own advocacy efforts at that level?

As you focus on communities of color and strive to be anti-racist, can you share with us a few of the challenges you're working through as an organization? And perhaps some approaches to work through these challenges.

Is there a rapid response opportunity for vaccine outreach? I'm concerned based on the initial rollout that equity is not high on the list. Maybe the new task force could help, but more needs to be done.

Have those invitations of NP execs already happened? How can we be part of it?

Really interested in the investment shifts the Foundation is making. I think there is a big commitment from a lot of the nonprofit world to invest differently. Thanks for sharing the target and goals. Wole love to hear more about how you are sorting that out.

Advocacy is a priority of the CHF is this going to continue and what format will it take?
Would love to know more about training that we can share with our Board, Staff and Community.
There are already so many organizations/resources that both intentionally and unintentionally center whiteness along with prioritizing processes, practices, and policies that benefit white communities (low-income, lgbtq+, ability...) over communities of color, immigrant communities, and non-english speakers. The work and institutional shift of CHF is so deeply needed and appreciated.
<b>CHF's Legislative Advocacy Agenda Presentation Chat Comments:</b>
CHF...I would love to hear what questions were asked to help review and discuss with your team and your board.
Will you be sharing your succinct list? - Yes, will be published on CHF website.
Can you talk more about what types of structural changes you have in mind? Or do you have some in mind as of now?
Could we suggest that the policy suggestions include a recommendation that procedures used to implement those policies are also very carefully considered so that communities will in fact benefit - and so that relationships between communities of color and government can be healed or strengthened?
How can they be reformed to include all Coloradans including undocumented immigrants but that also doesn't put them in immigration danger considering the Public Charge passed by the Trump Administration.
The fear that immigrants face around ambiguous immigration status and accessing services is palpable. Is there a way for the state to assure the immigrant community that there will not be "punishment" for accessing mental health and other health services?
I would add that recommendations could include how processes are informed by BIPOC, and especially implemented by BIPOC communities—e..g Nothing for us without us!
Nothing for us without us!
The process for qualifying and getting signed up and redetermination for medicaid is not "easy" or client-centered.
From the provider side, please make charting requirements friendlier so more providers in rural places would be more willing to accept Medicaid.
The legislative process is not community centered --goes too fast and focused on paid lobbyists who are almost never from our communities and those without those resources are marginalized.
Still too much focus on lobbyists not people.
I think the court ruling on the fact that the session does not have to be 120 consecutive days could loosen up the timeline to allow folks to participate in a slower, more intentional process.
I think COVID has helped show us how those processes can be different -- we had 15 folks on a zoom negotiating amendments last session -- power was not limited only to those standing closest to legislators or who could fit into a small Capitol conference room and participating didn't require being in the capitol, which made it much more accessible -- I really hope we can keep some of that direct virtual engagement with policymakers going even when the pandemic fades.
Can CHF facilitate, when the pandemic is under control, site visits for elected officials to communities of color, especially when that is a small part of their district and an even smaller part of their voter population so that they can "experience" the community rather than relying on lobbyists to tell them about community?
They crave connection with their constituents until they are held accountable with the constituents that disagree with them.
TCHF being a facilitator in connecting community with state and cong/senators is a great idea.
It would also be great if facilitating and connecting policy makers with community would involved TCHF and local nonprofits.

We can review job descriptions to get rid of educational requirements in the many places they are not necessary to get more community people employed in these agencies.
I think we need support for human resources staff on how to break down unnecessary barriers so we can recruit more diverse staff.
Many structural changes come from rules committees, procedure - and are not even legislation.
Will there be opportunities to impact little P policy as well?
Organizations that state a commitment to “racial equity/justice” must provide a clear plan for how they will shift leadership, power and decision-making to the BIPOC folx. Beyond a nice, shiny “equity statement”.
I think it is really important to have a foundation who is willing to invest in work at the local government level. In our experience, that type advocacy of work is rarely funded, especially in rural areas.
So community comment is limited and is not directly at policy makers. While lobbyists talk directly to them. And they wonder why the lobbyists have more sway... Access is completely different.
I think there is a huge opportunity to back up communities of color to fund the programs they are asking their public resources to go towards. If Govts see a match, they are more likely to do something that could then be institutionalized. And the CHF being at the table could then empower the community members at the table.
Expertise on changing local government, CHF can open a lot of doors for us.
It would be really helpful if remote testimony was opened up to more locations and included translation services.
COVID has presented an opportunity for this, I hope we can continue the momentum.
Having more POC in the legislature and state agencies would be great, AND ALSO we have to make sure those rules are sufficiently and fairly compensated. We have a large percentage of women legislators, but also very low-paid state legislators -- we need to increase diversity in those space and increase compensation -- especially for POC who bring so much lived experience and expertise.
You mentioned ballot initiatives. I recently read a reflection on the fact that Kent Thiry can buy a Gallagher Amendment ballot initiative by himself, but grassroots organizations cannot. Are you talking about addressing that disparity?
Racial equity competence should be key criteria for cabinet and SES appointments.
Will the CHF be more definitive with equity so that any advocacy work is specific to BIPOC on issues of social determinants of health?
So lobbyist will work with those officials to set policy- it gets implemented before constituents are aware until they are negatively impacted. How many times IU have hear policy makes say the agree with constituents and then not vote in alignment with them because of processes policies and procedures is unfortunately staggering.
Need to experience more work on equity with vaccines. Please let me know how we can partner and help in keeping that forward on the agenda.
Love that you all are talking explicitly about power and building power.
One final comment -- as folks think about behavioral health (per Karen's comments at the beginning of the meeting, that it came up in every community during the road trip) -- one thing I have been wondering about, having curiosity about, is how much of those behavioral health issues are caused by biological or internal/medical issues and how many are actually due to social context -- insufficient housing, economic security, etc.
I am very pleased that the foundation decided to go bilingual (English/Spanish). Keep up with the good work.
Thank you to everyone for showing up today and diving into these conversations that are much needed!
Thank you so much for all your hard work putting this on! COPA has enjoyed hearing the changes and shifts Colorado Health Foundation is making. Racial equity work will really impact all Coloradans.

Great conversation & appreciate CHF providing this opportunity!

That's a great point. I do think there's a longstanding vein of libertarian/small gov't philosophy among CO voters that has been even more resistant to change than partisan alignment over the past couple of decades, and that still makes many ballot measures, especially those to do with revenue and taxes, an uphill battle. Thanks everybody!