



Support Center Working Lunch Series: *Investing in Nonprofit Talent to Magnify Impact and Equity*

In 2018, Support Center launched a series of conversations drawing from nonprofits, funders, and capacity building organizations. These “working lunches” offer participants a brief landscape of the field followed by reflections on coordinated strategies. The goals for the working lunch series are to: brainstorm ideas for coordinated efforts to address a particular challenge for nonprofits; identify any interest in working collaboratively as a result of the working lunch; clarify potential roadblocks; and determine any next steps if there is interest.



Lakimja Mattocks, Rusty Stahl and Yolanda Caldera-Durant collaborated to organize the session.

On Thursday, March 14, 2019, twenty participants gathered at Grace Institute for a conversation on *Investing in Nonprofit Talent to Magnify Impact and Equity*. Representatives from the following organizations participated: American Express, Building Movement Project, Candid (Foundation Center), Common Fund Institute, Fund the People, Human Services Council, Jet Blue, JP Morgan Chase, JPMC Foundation, Next Step & Beyond LLC, Support Center, United Neighborhood Houses.

The session began with Fund the People sharing highlights from their Talent Justice initiative looking at the needs of nonprofit human resources and the investments currently being made. Fund the People’s *Talent Justice Toolkit* was created to provide practical guidance, promising practices, and illustrative data to help funders, nonprofits, and others maximize investments in the nonprofit workforce.

Fund the People shared their perspective on supporting the nonprofit workforce as an effective strategy for increasing performance, impact, and sustainability. Nonprofit people are nonprofit programs. Evidence shows that investing in hard-working nonprofit professionals and organizational “people-systems” can advance equity and inclusion, and drive increased nonprofit performance, impact, and sustainability. Yet there continues to be a deficit of philanthropic investment in nonprofit talent within grantee partners and more broadly in the sector.

As recent research demonstrates, the sector continues to struggle to advance racial equity and inclusion across the nonprofit career life cycle - access to nonprofit careers, advancement to mid-level management, and ascension to executive leadership. Funders and nonprofits need to

change their practices to support professionals of all backgrounds across the nonprofit career lifecycle. Without such investments, entry-level and mid-career leaders are left with limited opportunities to access experience and living wage jobs, advance in their careers, and expand the value they contribute to their organizations and communities.

Based upon the discussion, the range of investments includes leadership, professional and career development for individuals as well as HR infrastructure, planning and organizational culture. In small groups, participants in the working lunch discussed this range of investment and current challenges in the sector for nonprofits and for funders.

For nonprofits, a number of recommendations emerged including the following:

- **Recognize the Changing Workforce:** There are major shifts in the workforce (greater diversity, the emergence of Generation Z, and expectations around salary and work/life balance) that require an investment in talent development and talent retention through HR policies and practices. Necessary steps include improving compensation for early career professionals, improved paid internship opportunities, and reduction of staff burnout and stress management.
- **Making Human Resources a Priority:** Organizations are thinly staffed and often too busy trying to survive to thrive. This reflects the challenge in the wider world faced by the people we serve; however, all nonprofits need to prioritize professional development and leadership development. What if we all saw this as a critical line item in the budget and established internal leadership development academies?
- **Creating a Development Culture:** How do we integrate professional development with the work creating opportunities for learning through de briefing and providing learning opportunities? In particular executive directors should understand this as a key priority.
- **The Role of Adequate Funding:** Underfunding from government in particular impacts staff retention. Nonprofits need to advocate for adequate funding to effectively staff programs.
- **Potential for Collaboration:** The size of an organization impacts its ability to have HR staff and other talent supports. We would recommend exploring shared back office HR supports as an additional resource to small organizations in particular.



Talent Justice: Practices that utilize investments in nonprofit staff to advance intersectional racial equity across the nonprofit career lifecycle.

Talent-Investing: Intentional deployment of resources to support and develop professionals and leaders in the nonprofit workforce.

In the case of funders, we believe that investments in people will follow from more intentional prioritization of talent investing. Funders can see themselves as co-investors and talent builders rather than “buyers” of programs and services. In particular, several examples and recommendations emerged through the discussion.

- **Recognizing Diverse Approaches:** Not all funders are approaching the problem of talent development in the same way; there is a diverse group of funders including government, private and large scale national, regional and very local funders engaged in this dialogue. We need to understand that there won't be a “one size fits all” approach.
- **Defining the Issue:** It would help to have an accepted definition from funders around talent development as well as some guidance on specific amounts of funding set aside for talent development.
- **Integrating Talent Investing into Grantmaking:** There was a consensus around building development funds into grants or encouraging this through general operating support funding. Some private funders such as Ford (BUILD program) and Kresge are changing how they fund grantees to support greater talent investment.

Follow Up Resources

Support Center Workshops & Leadership Programs

Support Center offers programming in several formats that are designed to share knowledge, build leadership skills, and provide tools and techniques that help leaders respond to the needs of their community. Check out the different opportunities below.

- [Public Workshops](#)
- [Certificate Programs](#)
- [Emerging Leaders Cohort](#)

We also invite you to access the new free [Talent Justice](#) resources that include the [full report](#), [executive summary](#), [toolkit](#), and infographics. In order to access this content, Fund the People asks for our contact information.

We encourage you to check out the [Talent Justice Toolkit](#) that offers many useful resources to address important issues to advance intersectional racial equity in the nonprofit workforce. Topics include eliminating bias in recruitment and hiring practices and performance reviews, strategies for equitable compensation, challenging white dominant culture to build real inclusivity, and much more.

Help Promote #TalentJustice - Sample Language for Social Media

Please help Fund the People to spread the word about #TalentJustice. Below is sample language to use on social media. If you're feeling really creative you can pair these social media posts with our Talent Justice infographics. We invite you to follow what's happening with the Talent Justice Initiative by following @fundthepeople + @talentjustice.

- No one should feel INSECURE working at a nonprofit - more at talentjustice.org
#talentjustice #fundthepeople #insecure
- #TalentJustice = #RacialEquity. Find out how at TalentJustice.org

- Foundations: Invest in equity NOW. See how at TalentJustice.org #FundthePeople #RacialEquity #talentjustice
- People of color face systemic barriers to entering the nonprofit workforce, esp lack of connections. See the whole list of barriers - and what to do to remove them - at talentjustice.org
- Is your organization's culture leaving diverse talent out of the advancement pipeline? Recognizing a problem is the first step - the next is using the tools at TalentJustice.org to build an equitable and workplace.
- Different leaders have different styles - and that's a good thing! How can we make sure the leaders of the nonprofit organizations of today don't all look and act like the leaders of the past? TalentJustice.org has the toolkit to get you started.

Special thanks to our participants including:

Scott Adams, JetBlue Airways

Gabriela Barria, Support Center

Richard Brown, American Express

Yolanda Caldera-Durant, Fund the People

DeeDee Dickey, Candid (Foundation Center)

Keith Green, NextStep&Beyond LLC

Michelle Henry, JPMC Foundation

Frances Kunreuther, Building Movement Project

Zach Litif, Support Center

Diane Manning, JPMC

Lakimja Mattocks, Support Center

Angela Perry, United Neighborhood Houses

Michael Seltzer, Baruch College

Michele Smalley, JP Morgan Chase

Rusty Stahl, Fund the People

George Suttles, Common Fund Institute

Keith Timko, Support Center

Jason Wu, NY Human Services Council

Access to Nonprofit Work

People of color face systemic barriers when entering the nonprofit workforce.



"Paid internships, in my mind, are essential to building a diverse and strong workforce because very few people are going to be able to take a free internship."

Eliminate Bias in Non-Profit Recruitment and Hiring

- ✓ Focus on qualifications and experiences needed to perform the job, rather than advanced degrees or specific years of experience
- ✓ Engage in targeted outreach and do not rely on your usual networks.
- ✓ Implement implicit bias training for hiring search committee members.
- ✓ Standardize the candidate review and interview process.

Funders and nonprofits are making insufficient investments in equitable access to the nonprofit workforce.



Talent Justice promotes equitable nonprofit workplaces and opportunities for career growth. Learn more at talentjustice.org



Talent Justice Initiative



Fund the People



***The Working Lunch Series:
Investing in Nonprofit Talent to Magnify Impact and Equity***
Thursday, March 14, 2019
11:30-1:30pm (EST)
Grace Institute
New York, NY

Thank you for your interest and participation at this Support Center event held in partnership with Fund the People. To help you continue to expand your knowledge and obtain practical guidance on the talent-investing framework, we encourage you to access the following resources that are featured in Fund the People's free Toolkit at www.fundthepeople.org/toolkit. To unlock these resources you simply need to provide your name and email address. We invite you to contact us with questions and to share your experiences with talent-investing by contacting Yolanda Caldera-Durant at yolanda@fundthepeople.org.

- [Glossary of Terms](#) - Offers definitions for key phrases used throughout the Toolkit. One of the signs that the field has not prioritized investment in the nonprofit workforce is the lack of useful language with which to discuss it – so we are road testing new terminology.
- [Top Reasons to Invest in Nonprofit Talent](#) - Succinct anecdotes that can be used to introduce the concept of talent-investing to foundation staff and board trustees, and to communicate the compelling reasons for investing in nonprofit talent.
- [Investment Deficit by The Numbers](#) - Infographic that offers data on the deficit of investment of the U.S. nonprofit workforce.
- [Investing in Equity Inside the Nonprofit Workforce](#) - Our brief statement argues that advancing equity and inclusion in nonprofits is inextricably intertwined with investing in the nonprofit workforce.
- [Guide to Investing in Grantee Talent](#) - Helps you invest in the human capacity of grantee organizations to effectively advance their missions.
- [Talent-Investment Menu](#) - Outlines the different investment partners, key roles, spheres of investment levels, and where along the talent-investment menu funders and nonprofits can focus their talent-investments.
- [Discussion Guides for Funders & Nonprofits](#) - These discussion guides for funders and nonprofits support meaningful conversations about funding talent development and help define next steps for action.
- [Field Stories](#) - Brief, original accounts chronicling how six different types of foundations invest in grantee talent.