



CHILDCARE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Ms. Foundation for Women | Economic Justice Grant Program, 2012-2016

DOMESTIC
WORKERS
RIGHTS
ARE
HUMAN
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When
you're
tired
of
waiting
STAND UP!

What Do we WANT?
CHILD CARE!

2017

NNR Evaluation, Planning & Research LLC



NNR Evaluation Planning & Research LLC

This report was prepared by Nicole Robinson at NNR Evaluation, Planning & Research LLC.

NNR Evaluation, Planning & Research LLC (Milwaukee, WI) is a values-based social justice entity that helps build the evaluative power of organizations serving communities of color and constituent-led organizations. The lead evaluator is Nicole Robinson, MPH/MSW.

Ms. Foundation for Women is a nonprofit, public foundation. Its mission is to build women's collective power to realize a nation of justice for all.

Suggested citation:

Robinson, Nicole. (2017). Childcare Impact Assessment: Ms. Foundation for Women Economic Justice Grant Program. Milwaukee, WI: NNR Evaluation, Planning & Research LLC.

Page layout and graphic design by Ryan Aubert –
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With much appreciation, thank you to the 2012-2016 grantee organizations and stakeholders that participated directly and indirectly in the evaluation. This includes but is not limited to Susan Kovchok, Mary Ignatius, Matthew Henderson, Sarita Gupta, Jessica Sager, Susan Jacobs, Amaha Kassa, Ojiugo Uzoma, Marrissa, Nuncio, Cassandra Welchlin, Carol Burnett, Saru Jayamaran, Jeanne Jackson, Andrea Lee, Rachel-Micah Jones, Luna Ranjit, Anika Campbell, Cathy Sarri, Rachael Derello, Vanessa Huang, Clarissa Doutherd, Natalia Thompson, Ami Nagle, Caroline Hoteling, Pat Eng, Jonothan Njus, LaShawn Jefferson, and Sanjay Pinto. We are grateful to the Ms. Foundation for Women board and staff who worked with us during the course of the evaluation. A special thank you to Alyeamma Mathew and Naveen Khan for jumping into the evaluation whole heartedly and supporting the behind the scenes work.

Thank you to the Ford Foundation and the Kellogg Foundation for your generous support of this assessment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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public goods
economic justice labor
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grantmaking childcare
learning
role of government policy

Introduction & Learning Objectives

In the fall of 2016, Aleyamma Mathew, Director of the Women's Economic Justice Program, in close collaboration with Naveen Khan, Program Associate at the Ms. Foundation for Women, commissioned Nicole Robinson of NNR Evaluation, Planning & Research LLC to conduct an impact assessment of the Foundation's grassroots-led childcare agenda. This impact assessment was limited to the period of 2012–2016 and had **four learning objectives**: 1) document and assess the impact of the Ms. Foundation for Women's Economic Justice Program, 2) document and assess the organizing and advocacy work funded, 3) develop recommendations for the grant program's strategic direction, expansion, and infrastructure, and 4) conduct an exploratory organizational capacity-building assessment with selected grantees. This is the final report.

Data Collection & Analysis

This impact assessment was cross-sectional and drew primarily on qualitative data. Data were obtained from internal documents (e.g., grantee applications and final reports), staff, grantee, and stakeholder interviews, and external documents (e.g., grantee work products and published articles), and were analyzed using standard content analysis techniques. The limitations of this assessment are standard. The most important limitation is that policy gains reported by grantees through grantee reports and interviews could not be independently verified. It should also be noted that during the evaluation period, the larger political landscape shifted drastically after the 2016 presidential elections, turning the federal climate for a host of women's issues from favorable to unfavorable. Consequently, this colored the lens in which interview respondents viewed the childcare issue in general; the immediate fears, needs, and resiliency of their communities; their own campaigns and organizational priorities; and the possible ways in which the Foundation could support the movement.

Rationale & Theory of Change

The theory of change undergirding the Women's Economic Justice Program during 2012–2016 applies a social justice philanthropic framework for building connections with grassroots efforts in both the labor and early childhood education sectors.

Core components of the Foundation's approach were to

- **Build the collective power of those most impacted:** women of color and constituent-led advocates and organizers who are themselves experts;
- **Focus on the root causes of injustice** (systemic change) as defined and informed by an intersectional lens that is framed in a historical and structural context;
- **Provide sustained and consistent investments over time** through annual renewal general operating grants; and
- **Provide grantee capacity building opportunities** to create effective and sustainable organizations, build leaders, and take grantees to the *next level of operational, programmatic, financial, organizational, and political maturity.*

The Ms. Foundation for Women developed a three-pronged grantmaking strategy:

- **Support low-wage workers'** rights organizations and workers' centers organizing in sectors with more than 50% women's participation to conduct formative and participatory research on childcare access.
- **Support new and innovative campaigns that would increase public funding for childcare** at the local and state level.
- **Raise wages and the quality of jobs in the childcare sector.**

To accomplish this strategy, the Foundation

- **Provided general operating support grants** to key stakeholders including workers' rights advocates, parent organizing, and childcare advocacy organizations;
- **Provided capacity-building opportunities** that would directly support each grantee's campaign work; and
- **Conducted its own original research** that profiled grantees to make the case for universal childcare as economic policy.
- **Convened grantees to support leadership development, campaign planning, communications strategy, and engage federal agencies.**

As a new focus for the Women's Economic Justice Program, many components of the childcare strategy were fully implemented and refined over the five years; however, not all were. This is in part due to changes in the Foundation's organizational capacity and infrastructure following the Great Recession. The **institutional challenges** included fluctuations in available grant funds, limited use of strategic communications at the Foundation-level in coordination with grantee leadership, and lack of internal assessment procedures.

Major Findings

By 2016, the majority of organizations (83%) were Female-led and half (50%) of all organizations were led by Female Executive Directors of Color. 17% of all the organizations funded were led by women of color at all levels of the organization from the Board Chair and Board of Directors to the Executive Director and Key Management Staff. In line with the Foundation's theory of change and grantmaking strategy to provide long-term investments, sustained investments in the same grantees increased each year so that by 2016 the entire grantee docket had been previously funded for childcare. The average grant was \$35,000. The majority of organizations funded were on the east and west coasts. These organizations were relatively young (15 years was the average number of years open) with 17% characterized as "micro" organizations and 71% as "small" organizations. Many organizations were mobilizing bases of low-wage workers, working parents, and childcare providers; and within the context of their city or state, their organization was the primary organization mobilizing a base around childcare.

Foundation Uniqueness, Contribution, & Efficacy

Stakeholders and grantees overwhelmingly praised the Foundation's approach and people power—including the vision, commitment, performance, and technical ability of the Economic Justice Program's

Grants Portfolio

During 2012–2016, the Women's Economic Justice Program awarded 54 grants to 24 US-based nonprofit organizations totaling \$1,888,000. These organizations included:

Adhikaar for Human Rights
African Communities Together
All Our Kin, Inc.
Association for Supportive Childcare
California Child Care Resource and Referral Network/ Parent Voices
Center for Frontline Retail
Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Inc.
Childspace Cooperative Development, Inc.
Childspace Day Care Centers, Inc.
Coalition of Immokalee Workers
Domestic Workers United
Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama
Garment Workers Center
Illinois Action for Children
Jobs with Justice Education Fund
Mississippi Low Income Child Care Initiativea
Mujeres Unidas y Activas
The OLÉ Education Fund
Project South: Institute for the Elimination of Poverty and Genocide
Puget Sound Sage
Restaurant Opportunities Centers United
Retail Action Project
Vermont Workers Center
The Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham

Director, Foundation executives, and other Foundation staff, and the capacity-building consultants hired to work with grantees. They appreciated the nature of their relationships with various staff in the Foundation, describing them as “peer” partners that transcended the typical funder–grantee relationship. Interviewee accounts of the Foundation’s uniqueness recognized its overarching approach—supporting women of color and advancing a gender-race-class lens within the different movements it supports.

Specifically:

- **The Foundation’s philanthropic approach to creating spaces for women of color to drive policy was acknowledged and noted as an important niche in the broader philanthropic landscape.** As stated by one stakeholder, “Women of color and the experiences of women of color. Those experiences too often are just not front and center when we talk about women’s economic security, childcare, the whole swatch of economic justice issues. And so, Ms. is known for trying to bring that intersectional analysis to the conversation and I think that’s an important aspect of the work that’s being done.”
- **The Foundation is also known for funding smaller and newer organizations and supporting the growth of those organizations over time through ongoing investments.** Interviewees, in particular childcare organizations, also noted that it is one of the few funders to support organizing and policy work.
- **Its application of an authentic gender-race-class lens and commitment to cross-sector approaches to the issue of childcare and women’s economic security distinguishes the Foundation from other funders.**
- **The Foundation’s willingness to informally and formally support the leadership development of women of color is another distinguishing factor.** For example, “...I can’t really think of another one of our funders who goes that deep with their grantees, that it’s not just the grants that they provide, but it’s the capacity building support, the communication support, the program officer and the support staff. It’s just a very comprehensive and holistic approach to grantmaking that I think is just very unique and provides us additional support that we wouldn’t have otherwise.” Its ability to focus on strengthening organizations and providing informal one-on-one support to grantees is a critical function as an intermediary funder.
- **With respect to childcare, interviewees stated the Foundation was “really able to help drive a narrative at a national level,” supporting cross-movement and cross-sector conversations** between labor and childcare advocates “in a way that had not been seen elsewhere.”

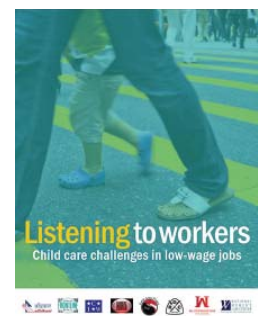
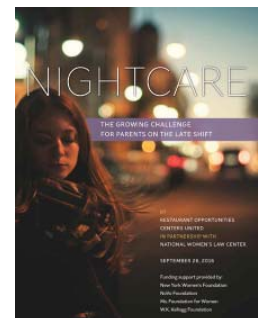
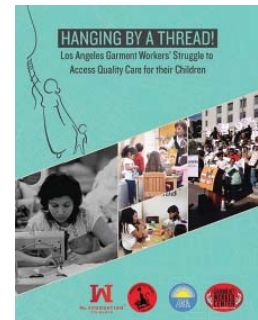
Grantee Achievements

During the past five years, the grantees achieved many policy gains, ranging from state and federal legislation to local and state administrative procedural changes. Formative research was used to identify policy goals responsive to the needs of low-wage workers, women of color, and women working in specific industries such as restaurant, garment, and retail.

- **Formative Research:** Nearly every grantee conducted some form of research to understand how childcare affected their members and explored and uncovered new aspects of the childcare debate (e.g., the relationship between childcare and immigrant workers, restaurant workers, and nightshift workers; the effect of reimbursement rates and quality rating

systems on sustainable childcare businesses and childcare worker wages). The initial Ms. Foundation grants funded research that added to the base of knowledge in the childcare sector and led to or informed formal policy recommendations and related campaigns. By employing a cross-sector and cross-movement approach, the grantee cohort—through convenings and initial research—built a common language, addressed issues, and had greater levels of collaboration that connected workplace issues in low-wage sectors to the accessibility and quality of childcare. Examples reports include:

- The Restaurant Opportunities Center published *Third Shift: Child Care Needs and Access for Working Mothers in Restaurants* and a second report called *Nightcare: The Growing Challenge for Parents on the Late Shift*.
- Garment Workers United published *Hanging by a Thread!: Los Angeles Garment Workers' Struggles to Access Quality Care for their Children*.
- The Women's Fund of Birmingham published *Clearing the Path*.
- Six workers' rights centers—Adhikaar, Coalition of Immokalee Workers, Garment Worker Center, Retail Action Project, Center for Frontline Retail, and Restaurant Opportunities Centers—worked in collaboration with the National Women's Law Center to produce *Listening to Workers: Childcare Challenges in Low-wage Jobs*.
- **Policy Gains:** The Ms. Foundation for Women's Economic Justice grantees collectively achieved over 50 success points. Examples include:
 - \$8 million allocated into TANF funds into the Mississippi Child Care Development Fund. This work extended services from 6 months to 12 months for TANF clients, transitional childcare clients, homeless children, foster children, and children in state protective custody—about 8,000 children in **Mississippi**.
 - Passed two soda taxes that would raise \$7.5 million for early childhood education and support 1,000 children and double the wages for over 100 educators (in Santa Fe, New Mexico) and fund 8,000 children and double the wages for 800 providers (in Albuquerque, **New Mexico**).
 - Secured for the past three years \$500 million in new funding to expand access to parents on the waiting list and provide modest increases in the reimbursement rate for providers in **California**.
 - Supported **Pennsylvania** state budget to add \$60 million in education spending to support 14,000 Head Start slots in the fall of 2017.
 - Developed and helped introduce fair workweek legislation. The **City of New York** is now debating a ban to on-call scheduling. Seventeen other major retailers began to phase out and end on-call shifts. The Attorney General in New York and several other states are examining the legality of on-call scheduling.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | v

Conclusion

One of the learning aims of this evaluation effort was to assess whether the Foundation's investment to understand and support the interconnectedness between labor and childcare access was a successful contribution to the movement. The data suggest it was.

- Labor groups, national networks, and other funders took up the issue of childcare, linking workplace policy to childcare access and childcare worker rights. Although several noted it was unlikely that childcare would become the main staple of their campaign work, it did provide more evidence for just workplace policies, uncovered new implications for childcare policy, and provided an expanded membership base (e.g., working parents) with which to engage.
- Childcare advocates and parental groups formulated a narrative around the economic consequences of the country's underfunded, segmented, and racialized childcare system and elevated the experiences of low-wage earners and women of color to inform or draft local, state, and federal policy.
- Both sectors engaged their bases in participatory research and leadership development so that members not only shaped policy through stories but authored policy, including administrative procedures. As with any new initiative, a significant portion of the work funded was research-based and aimed to understand the unique needs, barriers, and possible solutions to childcare access for low-income women, immigrant women, women of color, and women working in different employment sectors (retail, garment, restaurant, and nail salon). Through this research and in the space of the grantee convenings, grantee organizations engaged in cross-sector/cross-movement conversations to learn how and where their work intersected and identified opportunities for collaboration.

The Foundation's framework—an embodiment of intersectionality and social justice—contributed to this success. Grantees and stakeholders overwhelmingly acknowledged and praised the Foundation's role in and contribution to the growth and development of individual leaders and whole organizations and campaigns. The key factors were administrative (e.g., general operating grants supporting policy) but largely relational (e.g., skilled, strategic, and accessible staff, with organizing backgrounds, willing to partner and learn the organization's work, elevate the grantee's visibility, and act as a thought partner). Coupled with strategic capacity-building opportunities, the grantees reported feeling supported and nurtured by the Foundation.

Should the Foundation continue its focus on childcare? There is the question of the Foundation continuing its focus on childcare, and the findings from this evaluation alone cannot provide definitive answers. There was support for both options (a continued focus on childcare and a shift in priority) and a general recognition that all issues are important, particularly given the political climate. The introduction of new monies, other foundations, and intermediaries may offer an opportunity to collaborate on investments and/or share lessons learned. Altering the focus to privatization and funding campaigns that will highlight and link childcare to the wave of the privatization of public goods likely to be supported by the Trump Administration appears valuable and would essentially build another layer of strategy and capacity development to the work already underway.

In the past five years, many of the grantees progressed in building power: cultivating their members, developing alliances, and building technical advocacy capacity (e.g., messaging and communication) to achieve policy wins or enforce and maintain past gains. With continued investment, they may be poised to achieve more policy gains at the local and state levels and effectively resist federal policies that would be harmful for low-income women and women of color. The grantees made the connections between the Foundation's financial and non-financial resources to their work and related outcomes. Many described individual staff growth and stronger organizational capacity through their connections with the Foundation. Most organizations were female majority and women of color-led; many noted that their organizations were unique and critical players in their state because they harnessed constituent bases. Although not formally (and quantitatively) measured in this evaluation, grantee experiences suggest the Foundation's funds are supporting a valuable piece of the advocacy and organizing infrastructure in the country: women of color-led organizations.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered to enhance the next phase of the grant program:

- 1. Award multi-year grants as opposed to annual renewal grants.** Multi-year grants allow grantees the flexibility of creating long-range plans that may be riskier or bolder with the added security of promised funds in the coming year. The current political climate and the importance of the next elections warrants multi-year funding to support the financial and programmatic stability of grantee organizations.
- 2. As a grassroots philanthropic funder supporting movements, increase the grant size, and, if possible, increase the grant award each year. Offer a consistent grant size across years, avoiding extreme fluctuations and decreases in grant awards.** Grantees, especially organizations growing their membership or that are growing their infrastructure exponentially as new or startup organizations, would benefit from larger grants over time. If funding allows, increase the grant size each award year and avoid going below a certain amount. Over the course of the next five years aim to offer grant awards at a consistent level so that in a small period of time (i.e., five years) grantees do not experience extreme fluctuations. A larger award pot could support more organizations per year, contribute to larger grant sizes, fund more capacity-building opportunities, and have designated funds for the southern strategy arm of the grant program. Offering multi-year grants and larger grant awards (in each subsequent year) would be a demonstrated way to scale up the grant program. This recommendation has implications for fund development and leadership allocation of resources within the Foundation to support grant programs consistently and congruent with its own framework for social justice philanthropy.
- 3. If the Foundation changes direction or decides it will no longer make investments in an organization, consider adopting a formalized process to communicate that decision to the grantee 1–2 years in advance, help the grantee find replacement funds, and support an official phase out over one or more years.** The Foundation's grants appear to fill a niche. As a matter of strategy and values, the Foundation supports smaller nonprofit organizations, newer organizations, and leaders and areas of work that have been historically underfunded. The Foundation's theory of change and approach to grantmaking (as an intermediary funder and women's fund) is to provide deep investments over long periods of time. If the Foundation changes direction or "moves on" from an organization, consider developing and articulating a formal practice to phase out the grantee over multiple grant rounds.

4. **Regularly communicate the grant program's underlying philosophy, the Foundation's role, and added value as well as grantee achievements with other funders and stakeholders.** Some stakeholder interviewees "struggled" with defining the Foundation's role and were less familiar with the Foundation's grantees and their policy achievements despite the production of the Raising the Nation report. It was an original aim of the program to elevate the Foundation's visibility as a thought leader in this work but internal factors such as limited strategic communications impeded the full development of this aspect of the grant program.
5. **Consider drafting a baseline "state of the issue" at the beginning of each initiative to document, note, and celebrate progress.** The current grantee report provides helpful information to assess grantees individually, but there would be a benefit in documenting how the collective work of the grantees is changing the "ecosystem," however that is defined and through whichever markers (qualitative or quantitative) make sense to document, track, and monitor. This would scale up the program's internal monitoring assessment activities. Additionally, working with grantees to develop summative case studies of campaigns funded every three to five years will help link campaign activities to policy changes and improved conditions for women.
6. **Review, discuss, and consider implementing the recommendations made by the grantees and stakeholders.** As the Foundation makes larger organizational decisions during the concurrent strategic planning process, consider how these recommendations fit, support, complicate, or question the future work of the Foundation, the relationship between the Economic Justice Program and other departments, and the needs and resources of the Economic Justice Program in general. Supporting 501(c)(4) work (through the appropriate legal entity) and offering capacity-building opportunities on coalition management, federal transparency acts, and defense litigation seem particularly relevant. Examining the state of (c)(4) work and the number of women-led and women of color-led organizations and whether the Foundation could make a contribution to (c)(4) work in the same way it has for (c)(3) work is timely. As the Foundation makes these shifts, it will be important for the Foundation to continue to institutionalize, evolve, and promote its core practices rooted in intersectional and social justice philanthropy.

A background photograph showing a group of people in a meeting or workshop. In the foreground, a woman with short dark hair and glasses, wearing a yellow shirt, is looking towards the right. Next to her, a woman with dark hair, wearing a black shirt, is resting her head on her hand, looking down. In the background, other people are seated at tables, some looking towards the camera and others looking away. The overall atmosphere is one of a collaborative learning environment.

INTRODUCTION & Learning Objectives

leadership social justice

public goods

economic justice labor

philanthropy

grantmaking

childcare

learning

role of government

policy

INTRODUCTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In the fall of 2016, Aleyamma Mathew, Director of the Women's Economic Justice Program, in close collaboration with Naveen Khan, Program Associate at the Ms. Foundation for Women, commissioned Nicole Robinson of NNR Evaluation, Planning & Research LLC to conduct an impact assessment of the Foundation's grassroots-led childcare agenda. For the past five years, the Foundation has worked with and provided grants to organizations mobilizing childcare workers, parents, and labor rights advocates to secure affordable, quality childcare, a policy measure that would help ensure economic security for women, workers, and their families. This is the final report. It is limited to childcare-specific grants made under the Women's Economic Justice Program during the period of 2012–2016.¹

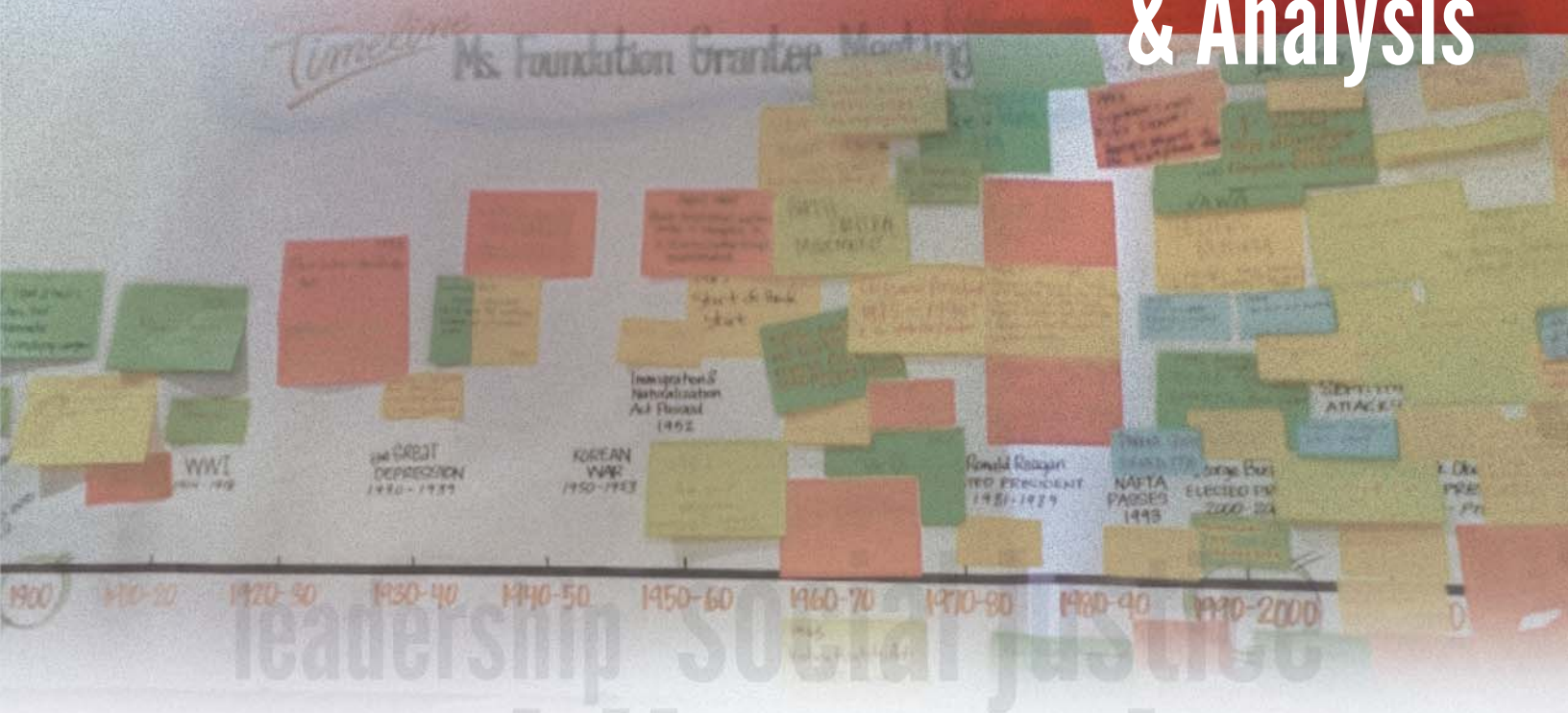
This impact assessment had **four learning objectives**:

- 1. Document and assess the impact of the Ms. Foundation for Women's Economic Justice Program** in the broader childcare advocacy field, its unique contributions as an intermediary and public funder, its methods of formally and informally supporting grantee work, and the theory of change and historical underpinnings supporting the grant program's strategy.
- 2. Document and assess the organizing and advocacy work that was funded and the results of that work over the past five years** (e.g., policy wins, changes in grantee advocacy and leadership capacity, changes in narrative, movement building, and coalition building).
- 3. Develop recommendations for the program's strategic direction, expansion, and infrastructure** using grantee and stakeholder interviews and feedback.
- 4. Conduct an exploratory organizational capacity-building assessment with 1–2 grantees.** The purpose of the organizational assessment was to test a standardized advocacy capacity assessment tool with the selected grantee. The results would help the grantee identify the organization's strengths and areas for growth and provide Ms. Foundation staff with information to develop useful capacity-building opportunities for their grantees. The results of the organizational assessment have been shared in a separate report.

Intersectionality and **Cross-movement Building** were at the core of the impact assessment. This assessment was designed to elicit an understanding of how the Ms. Foundation for Women's Economic Justice Program's gender-race-class analysis and approach to bring together the early education and labor organizing sectors informed its grantmaking strategy to fund advocacy led by and ultimately benefitting low-income women, women of color, their families, and their communities.

¹ The Women's Economic Justice Program has made special opportunity grants and capacity grants in other areas. These grants were not included in this analysis.

DATA COLLECTION & Analysis



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DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

This focused impact assessment was cross-sectional² and drew primarily on qualitative data. Where possible, data from written documents and staff, grantee, and stakeholder interviews were compared to both substantiate and supplement the information obtained. The chart below summarizes the data collection and analysis approach. The limitations of this assessment are standard. The most important limitation is that policy gains reported by grantees through grantee reports and interviews could not be independently verified. Further, of the campaigns that had policy wins, the majority were monitoring policy implementation and enforcement during the time of this assessment. Therefore, apart from measuring increased access to childcare, it was too premature to conduct a systematic review of how the daily lives of women on the ground had changed as a result of the new policies.

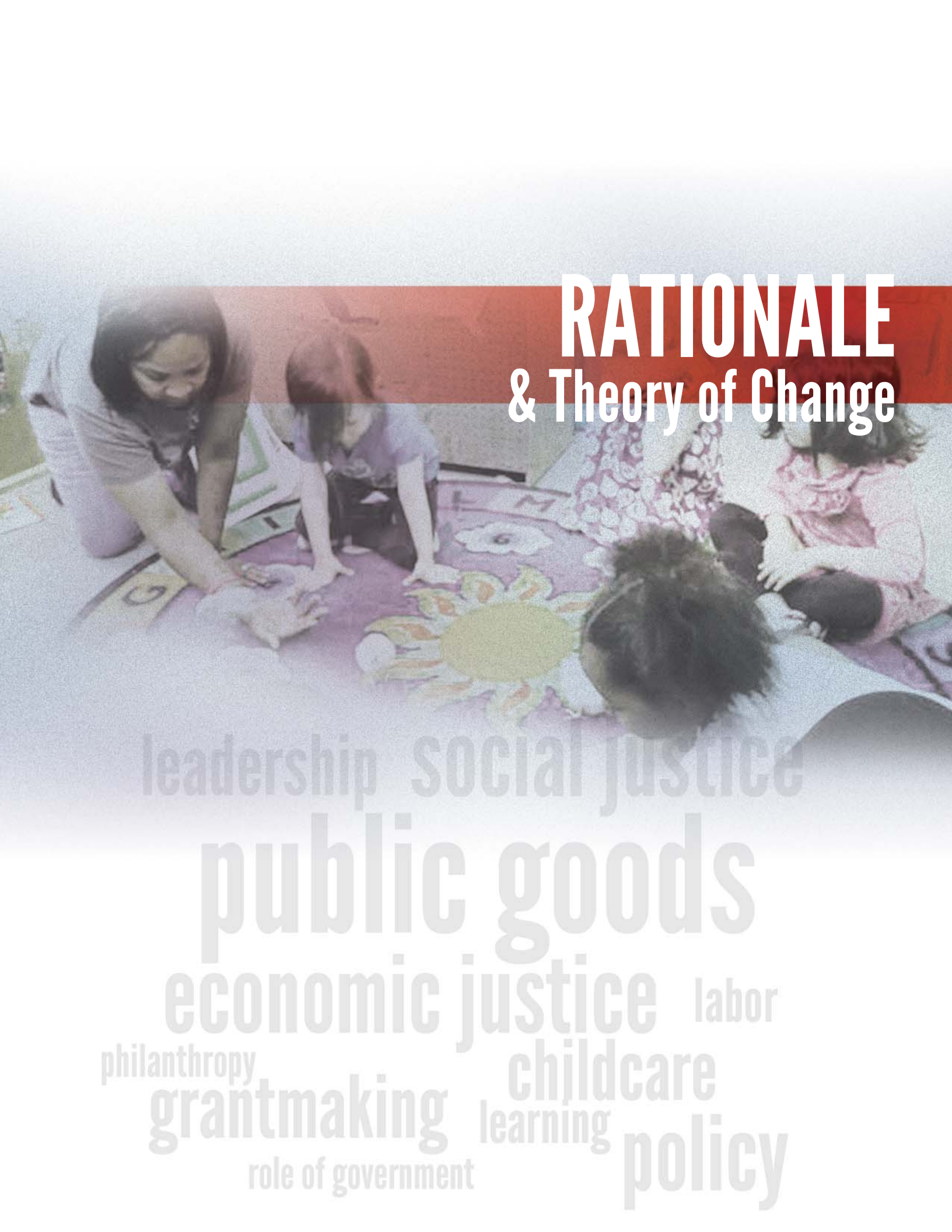
Data Sources and Methods	Data Collection & Analysis
Grant Materials	Grant materials were reviewed for the years 2012–2016. Materials included the annual grantee docket, grantee applications and final reports, and grant-funded products and deliverables such as research reports. Standard content analysis was used to aggregate and triangulate the data.
Internal Documents	Internal Foundation documents were reviewed for the years 2012–2016. Documents included internal summaries of grant activities and achievements, grantee cohort meeting materials, Foundation-funded research reports, formal grantee leadership development efforts, Foundation proposals and final reports, and internal planning notes. These data were supplemented with historical and theoretical insights obtained from a series of interviews with the Director of the Women’s Economic Justice Program, Aleyamma Mathew.
Grantee & Stakeholder Interviews	<p>Between November 2016 and March 2017, 22 grantees and stakeholders (e.g., past funders, board members, consultants, and peer organizations) participated in telephone interviews. The interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes and were recorded and professionally transcribed. All interviews were confidential, with only the external evaluator having access to the audio recordings and interview transcripts. Interview data were synthesized using standard content-analysis techniques to identify themes and relationships between themes. A sample of the interview questions appears below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kinds of initiatives were supported with the Foundation’s funding? Who benefits from this work? What’s changed or is different now in the lives of women and families since you’ve been funded by the Foundation? • Can you share an example of when the Foundation has been successful as a funder, thought leader, or change maker in its own right? Can you share an example where it has not been successful?

² A cross-sectional study analyzes data from a specific point in time.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about the internal infrastructure supporting the grant program. Describe how its theory of change has influenced grant priorities and administration over the past five years. What niche does the Foundation fill in philanthropy? What is unique about its funding approach? How is the Ms. Foundation similar to or different from other funders? • What do you see as the Foundation's most important limitations, challenges, or weaknesses? • With the recent elections, the political landscape has changed. How will this affect your organization and your work? What can the Ms. Foundation do to support your organization and organizations like yours in 2017 and beyond? What are the unique needs of women of color-led groups in this political landscape? • Where should the Foundation focus its grantmaking and support the movement? Are there any opportunities to be proactive at the local, state, or federal level?
Political Content	<p>The impact assessment formally began in October 2016, about a month before the 2016 presidential elections. The results of those elections changed the political landscape in ways that are still being understood, including the type of childcare policies that might be championed by the new administration.³ As a result, a select number of news articles, policy statements, and other materials were reviewed to understand childcare advocacy in this new context.</p>
Member Checks	<p>A formal review, also called member checks, is a common method to verify that the themes identified are accurate and interpreted appropriately. Two member checks took place. At the April 2017 grantee convening, preliminary findings and a copy of the draft report were shared with grantees. At that meeting, nine grantee representatives agreed to review the findings in closer detail and provide written or verbal edits. These grantees were asked to reflect on the report using the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, what do you think the report captures best? What was missed? • From your or your organization's perspective, do you feel your experience is represented in the report? • Are there ways this report can be useful to your organization? Please describe. • Do you have any other additional feedback or thoughts? <p>Two grantees ultimately provided suggested changes to the report, including suggestions to enhance the layout and structure of the report to facilitate its use.</p> <p>In a second member check, the report was also reviewed by and discussed with Foundation staff, who provided additional comments and suggested changes throughout the report.</p> <p>The final draft reflects the feedback and additional information obtained from the formal review process.</p>

³ See <http://www.msn.com/en-us/money/markets/ivanka-trump-finds-her-cause-and-democrats-love-it/ar-AAnTD9H?li=BBmkt5R&ocid=spartanntp>

Please continue for
Rationale & Theory of Change

A photograph of a woman and three children sitting on a large, colorful, patterned rug. The woman is on the left, leaning over and looking at a book. A young girl is in the center, also looking at the book. Another child is on the right, and a third child is in the foreground, looking down. The background is a plain wall.

RATIONALE & Theory of Change

leadership social justice

public goods

economic justice labor

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policy

OVERVIEW

The theory of change undergirding the Women's Economic Justice Program during 2012–2016 applies a social justice philanthropic framework⁴ for building connections with grassroots efforts in both the labor and early childhood education sectors to advance the program's vision for economic justice.

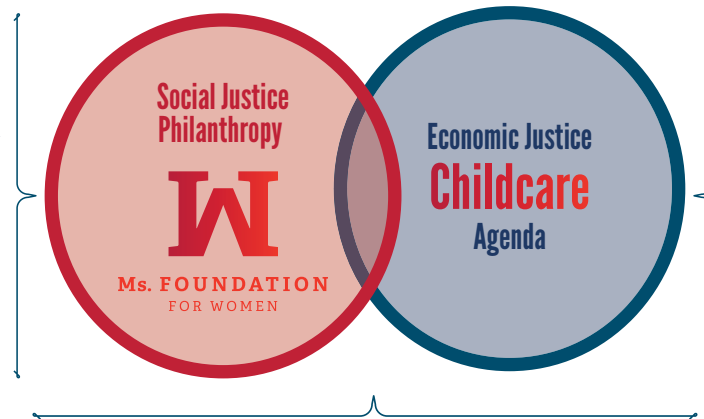
Core components of the Foundation's approach were to

- **Build the collective power of those most impacted:** women of color and constituent-led advocates and organizers who are themselves experts;
- **Focus on the root causes of injustice** (systemic change) as defined and informed by an intersectional lens that is framed in a historical and structural context;
- **Provide sustained and consistent investments over time** through annual renewal general operating grants; and
- **Provide grantee capacity building opportunities** to create effective and sustainable organizations, build leaders, and take grantees to the next level of operational, programmatic, financial, organizational, and political maturity.

Conceptual Framework of the Foundation's Childcare Approach

Social Justice Philanthropy

- Build collective power by focusing on women of color- and constituent-led policy and advocacy
- Systemic change informed by intersectionality lens
- Long-term investments (annual general operating grants)
- Continuous capacity building
- Early investor



Grantmaking Program

- Fund and provide capacity building to workers' rights, parents, and childcare advocates to increase public funding and access to affordable, quality childcare; and define childcare as a labor issue by engaging workers' rights centers
- Combine original research and analysis with strategic communications to elevate and reframe childcare as economic policy and critical public good

Social Justice Philanthropy

- Leadership transition
- Organizational shifts in focus
- New departments created
- Strategic planning underway
- Emphasis on organizational positioning
- Strategic communications limited

External Landscape

- Favorable context at federal level (pre-2016)
- Women of color in leadership positions
- Few grantmakers focused on childcare
- Established links between lack of affordable, quality childcare and economic security for women

⁴ For more information see the report by Anna Wadia called Building the Power of Women of Color to Change Public Policy: Lessons Learned from Ms. Foundation for Women Grantmaking (2008).

In 2012, childcare was not a central issue within philanthropy or labor. During that time, both funding and organizing in the childcare sector had dwindled after welfare reform in the 1990s, causing childcare advocates to piece together funding from a handful of local and smaller foundations. Subsequently, the number of workplace victories that gained media attention—including the fast food workers’ strike, “Fight for 15” and the passage of the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, along with the growing interest in women’s economic security by elected officials—created political “space” to work on childcare. To increase the visibility of the childcare sector, it was imperative to link the childcare issue to the labor movement and demonstrate the link between workplace policies and accessible childcare. Through its support of grassroots organization, the Foundation would strengthen the social justice infrastructure.

In response, the Ms. Foundation for Women developed a three-pronged grantmaking strategy

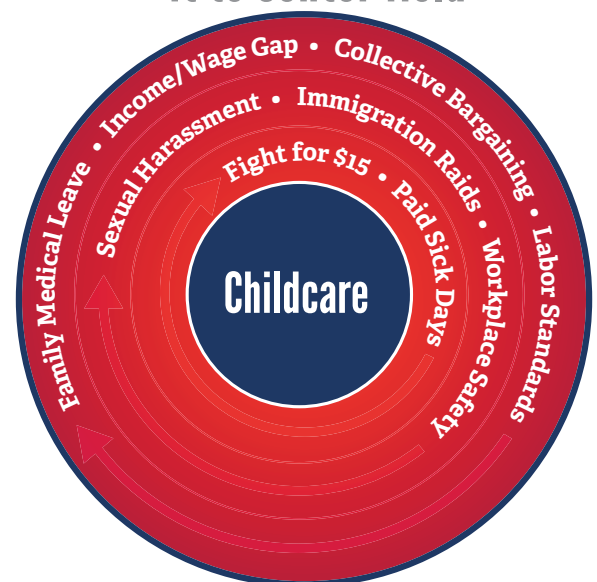
1. **Support low-wage workers’** rights organizations and workers’ centers organizing⁵ in sectors with more than 50% women’s participation to conduct formative and participatory research on childcare access.
2. **Support new and innovative campaigns that would increase public funding for childcare** at the local and state level.
3. **Raise wages and the quality of jobs in the childcare sector.**

To accomplish this strategy, the Foundation

- **Provided general operating support grants** to key stakeholders including workers’ rights advocates, parent organizing, and childcare advocacy organizations;
- **Provided capacity-building opportunities** that would directly support each grantee’s campaign work; and
- **Conducted its own original research** that profiled grantees to make the case for universal childcare as economic policy.
- **Convened grantees to support leadership development,** campaign planning, communications strategy, and engage federal agencies

This work, and the participatory research led by grantees, theoretically and empirically connected workplace policies to childcare access and helped develop narratives and campaigns that would increase public investments in childcare and improve workplace conditions for childcare workers. Lastly, in its original approach at the outset of the newly designed program, the Foundation aimed to influence the philanthropic field, and with the use of strategic communications, position both its grantees and the Foundation as thought leaders in childcare. The diagram above visually depicts how the Foundation took childcare as a “sideline” issue and made it the center of its women’s economic justice work.

Creating Urgency: Taking a sideline issue and moving it to center field



“When the Ms. Foundation decided to take on childcare it was radical. No one was positioning childcare at the center of their economic justice agenda. Now we are talking about workers as parents and using a two-generation approach but when the Ms. was doing it, nobody else was really doing it. That’s how bold it was.”
— Jessica Sager, All Our Kin

⁵ The Foundation initially was concerned that small organizations would experience “mission drift” and increased workloads, especially for organizations with smaller staff. However, grantees reported that integrating childcare into their work increased membership and sparked important discussions on gender roles within the membership.

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHILDCARE AS AN ECONOMIC JUSTICE ISSUE

As part of an earlier strategic planning process and due to tighter funding restrictions resulting from the Great Recession, in 2012 the Foundation revamped its grants programs to focus solely on specific issues. This marked an intentional, strategic shift by the Foundation to concentrate its investments on a single policy issue area that would directly impact a woman's career mobility, earnings, and family stability as well as support its broader, long-term goal of mitigating the barriers that keep women from advancing in the workplace and achieving economic security.

Trends in the Data

The Foundation's analysis argues that women's economic security is central to a stable economy. As women's labor participation has increased and for women to thrive, they need access to quality childcare. Several compelling data trends support this argument:⁶⁻⁷

- Women are the primary caretakers in households regardless of income and race. The 2013 Pew Charitable Trust report shows that in 40% of all households, women are the primary income earners.⁸
- Women make up over 60% of the low-wage workforce.⁹
- Overwhelming research over the past 15 years shows that early child development is critical and directly correlated to health, economic security, and general wellbeing outcomes across the lifespan.
- In many communities, middle- and low-income families lack affordable, quality childcare. Exorbitant childcare costs rival rent and food expenses. As a result, low-wage workers and earners are increasingly dependent on informal care.
- Workers with untraditional hours are even more compromised and require weekend and overnight care.
- Lack of affordable childcare directly affects a woman's employment status, mobility, and earnings (e.g., missed promotions and reduced hours).¹⁰
- Most childcare workers are low-income women of color. Workers in this field receive low wages and limited benefits (if any), such as sick leave and overtime pay, and have limited rights and labor protections (if any).¹¹ Low wages in this sector are the result of inadequate state and federal subsidies—and historical gender- and race-based devaluation of childcare work and employer discrimination.
- Projected continued growth in low-wage jobs in female-dominated occupations, which disproportionately impacts women of color, means that a dual emphasis on affordable childcare and quality childcare jobs is paramount.
- Childcare advocacy has been predominantly headed by education advocates focused on quality, rarely using an economic security lens or the unique needs of low-wage workers of color to inform policy goals. Similarly, the gender equity work in the labor field has been largely focused on workplace policy rather than issues outside of the workplace (like childcare) that also directly impact women's economic security and mobility. However, both sectors had organizations that were engaging communities of color, building constituent leadership, and mobilizing bases that the Foundation could connect with and invest in.

⁶ See Raising Our Nation (pp. 6, 12)

⁷ The grantee-led research is described in other sections of this report.

⁸ See <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/05/29/breadwinner-moms/>

⁹ See https://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/final_nwlc_lowwagereport2014.pdf

¹⁰ Also see http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/kids-cost-study_us_585a9358e4b0eb586484a4f7

¹¹ Also see <http://cscce.berkeley.edu/files/2016/Early-Childhood-Workforce-Index-2016.pdf>

External Landscape¹²

The external landscape during 2012–2016 partly shaped the theory of change and the Foundation's strategies and is summarized below:

- **Women of Color were in leadership positions of major organizations working at the intersection of labor and women's rights.** By 2012, many women, specifically WOC-led workers' centers who had asserted a different approach to the labor movement, were at the helm of these organizations and were very visible changemakers with long histories of political activism. Many were considered the go-to leaders in both the labor and women's rights movements and were "pushing the edges" of both movements.
- **The White House and other prominent figures were discussing women's rights at the national level.** For example, the first bill signed by the Obama Administration (Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009) signified that his administration was an ally to the labor and women's movements. Nancy Pelosi released the "When Women Succeed, America Succeeds" policy agenda in 2013. Maria Shriver released The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Pushes Back from the Brink in 2014. This research included a policy analysis of low-income women of color. In June 2016, the White House hosted "the United State of Women," which featured President Obama among many prominent women's leaders, and highlighted issues important to women, including childcare.
- **National policy organizations and unions began framing existing workplace policy campaigns—such as minimum wage, paid sick days, and family medical leave—as women's rights issues and began using a gendered lens.** These major workplace campaigns were gaining traction in major cities across the country with philanthropic support. Childcare became included in overall policy platforms for unions and larger policy groups that had previously not focused on gender.
- **By 2015, many local and state representatives began advocating for increased funding for early childhood education and began including childcare as part of these discussions.** During this time, there were early wins in states like Washington, which committed \$60 million for its state preschool program, in addition to other multi-million dollar investments in early education.
- **Where, prior to 2015, few foundations were investing in childcare as a central focus, more recently, several prominent foundations have begun initiatives specifically geared toward childcare.** When the federal government shifted its policies to "welfare to work" under the Clinton Administration, philanthropic entities followed suit and began funding campaigns targeting workplace policies as a way to advance women's rights. As a consequence, economic anti-oppression work was then relegated to workplace sites targeting employers. More recently, several national foundations have increased their investments in childcare organizing as part of their broader economic agenda.
- **There was a growing opportunity to elevate the role of government and re-frame childcare as a vital public good and essential economic policy.**
- **There was also an opportunity to re-invest in women of color-led organizing that had historical connections to the welfare rights movement,** which worked in support of low-income communities.
- **It appeared childcare was becoming part of the national policy platform and is a bipartisan issue.** Both 2016 presidential candidates had raised childcare as an issue. Under the Trump administration, childcare, although not a priority issue, will be a policy objective. The Foundation is still exploring how its theory of change will be impacted, but the core components (linking labor and childcare, reframing childcare as a public good and essential to economic policy for women and low-wage workers, and building collective power) will remain the same. It is currently deepening grantee understanding of the role of government as a provider of public goods and recognizing privatization as a threat to childcare.

¹² Sources: Staff and stakeholder interviews, Raising Our Nation report, and internal documents.

JUSTIFICATION FOR CORE COMPONENTS

Creating Urgency: Core Components of Childcare Strategy

Drawing on welfare rights movement, pull labor into a conversation about a public good (childcare) and link them to childcare organizations

Create explicit link between workplace policy and childcare access and improve workplace conditions at childcare sites through grants and capacity building support to workers' rights, parents, and childcare advocates; original research and analysis; and strategic communications

Reframe childcare as a role of government

Reframe childcare as a public good essential to economic policy and as part of the role of government. Bring back concept of childcare as a public investment; counter personal responsibility narrative

Position women of color as experts and changemakers

Use research, capacity building, and strategic communications to position grantees and the Ms. Foundation for Women as thought leaders

CORE COMPONENTS

Affordable, Quality Childcare

Internal Theoretical Analysis & Rationale

How did the welfare rights movement influence the Foundation's approach?

In the 1970s, the National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO) was led by Johnnie Tillmon, an African American seamstress who became the Executive Director and led a national campaign to pass the Comprehensive Child Development Bill. The NWRO led a broad coalition of civil rights, women's, and labor organizations to mobilize bipartisan support for the bill. "The welfare rights movement reinforced the idea that childcare was not merely an individual responsibility but part of a deep fabric of public supports that people deserved" (Raising Our Nation, p. ii).

But, in the 1990s the conversation ended abruptly; first with government shifts, then philanthropic shifts in how welfare was viewed. This meant **childcare was not recognized as a public good nor was it recognized as a labor issue**. The shifts in strategy and resulting loss of investments defunded the space where women of color organizing for economic security was its strongest. To repair and reorient childcare as a labor issue and a public good, the Foundation's strategy aimed to link the labor and welfare rights movements together. Its approach also acknowledged how both institutions, welfare and labor, had been and still are racialized and genderized and that the policies supported would need to reflect the lived reality of those most impacted: low-income workers, parents, and women of color.

Foundation brought together low-wage worker rights centers, childcare advocacy organizations, parent advocates, and childcare workers organizing groups to connect public subsidies to workplace policy and organizing. The strategy funded five worker centers that organize labor sectors with more than 50% of women's labor participation. To help labor conceptualize childcare as a labor issue, the Foundation funded initial research to link workplace policy and childcare access. That research made the connection between subminimum wages, lack of paid sick days, lack of family medical leave, and erratic scheduling as barriers to childcare access and quality. Lastly, it would elevate the job quality problem among childcare workers, who often work without benefits, and the government fee and reimbursement structures that prevented them from setting up sustainable childcare enterprises. The resulting work facilitated cross-movement organizing that recognized their constituencies were the same.

How does the role of government and public goods influence the Foundation's approach?

Despite its community-wide impact, childcare is not considered a public good due to longstanding race and gender politics. Racism has been used "to fragment and weaken [the US] childcare system" (Raising our Nation, p. 18) such that "[race] has all too frequently been used as a wedge, blocking efforts to make childcare a widely accessible public good. Confronting head-on the past and present use of ugly racial politics must play an important part in any large-scale effort to develop a childcare system that better serves low- and middle-income people of all backgrounds" (Raising Our Nation, p. 3).¹³ Racism also affects childcare workers' ability to organize; this class of workers had previously been excluded from federal laws protecting a worker's right to unionize. Racial hierarchy helps upper-income women secure affordable childcare and other homecare, further distancing this issue from a mainstream advocacy agenda.

The use of block grants as a funding mechanism has created variability at the state level in terms of the quality and availability of childcare across income groups, and underinvestment across the board impedes the development of an affordable, quality childcare system and quality childcare jobs. "Despite the existence of public programs that seek to extend childcare access to those who would not otherwise be able to afford it, public underinvestment remains the major background condition for the system's shortcomings" (Raising Our Nation, p. 3). Based on this, the Foundation's long-term strategy would focus on federal-level reforms to increase funding, and the short-term strategy would focus on changes in local- and state-level spending and regulations. See a list of the Foundation's policy recommendations in Appendix 1.

Why focus on low-income women of color and position them as experts and changemakers?

The Foundation's most central value and critical component to its theory of change is that the people most impacted by public policy should be at the center of advocacy and policymaking and, further, that the funded work will improve the lives of women, particularly women of color and low-income women.¹⁴ Given the durability of this country's racism and sexism, low-income women of color are disproportionately affected by the lack of flexible, affordable, quality childcare. The context also presented an opportunity to "deepen the conversation and support women of color-led organizing efforts" (Raising Our Nation, p. iv).

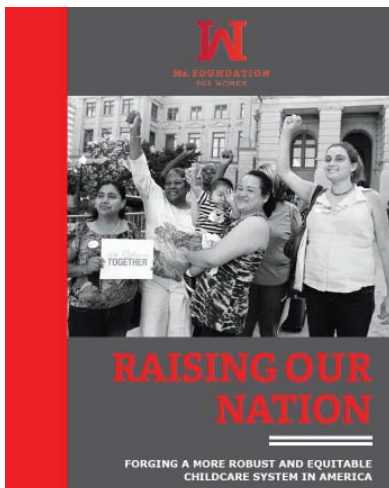
¹³ Learn more about the vetoed 1971 Comprehensive Child Development Bill (Raising Our Nation, p. 7).

FOUNDATION ROLE & APPLICATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE PHILANTHROPY

What was the Foundation's role?

To implement the core components of its strategy, the Foundation:

- **Provided general operating support to its grantees** and expanded funding opportunities to several organizations that had never received funding by the Foundation prior to this initiative or had not been working on childcare policy.
- **Offered annual grantee convenings to facilitate cross-movement conversations between childcare advocacy organizations and low-wage worker rights organizations and support individual leadership.** The convenings were used to identify areas of alignment, and develop shared understandings of the bigger picture and the root causes of childcare access issues. The convenings consisted of mini-trainings and peer-learning, as many grantees were developing campaign plans and messaging and integrating a gender lens into their campaigns. Synergy between the two groups increased after the initial research reports were released and showcased the intersections between their respective movements. Buy-in to the process took time, as one grantee reflected, “Why are we at this table? and over the course of multiple years of participating I could get more of a sense of her vision of why she wanted to get all these different groups in the room talking to each other. Kind of a different part of the ecosystem, but a bigger ecosystem, that we were all part of.”
- **Introduced new frameworks.** The Raising Our Nation report (2016) offered an original historical assessment on the status of childcare policy today using an intersectional lens and was essentially a primer of childcare, as it included an overview of the different federal agencies overseeing childcare funds and the types of childcare available.
- **Connected grantees to federal agencies.** In 2015, the Foundation brought its grantees to Washington, DC to meet with the senior representatives at the Department of Health and Human Services to discuss how federal policies were impacting women's access to childcare at the local and state levels; they discussed long waitlists, low wages, and the pitfalls of using poverty thresholds to determine eligibility and benefits. In 2015, grantees met with the Office of Public Engagement under the Office of the Vice President, and other White House staff to discuss childcare policy. These meetings were part of a strategy to identify up to five agencies that could influence childcare for low-income women and families, build a platform for federal-level advocacy, and capitalize on the increased visibility childcare was receiving.
- **Cultivated leaders.** Capacity building did not focus on traditional organizational development. In 2015, grantees participated in “Strength in Numbers”¹⁵ which focused on financial management and fundraising. One grantee increased their capital campaign to \$5 million after receiving consultation from Kim Klein. The organization had raised almost all of the funds by the time of the evaluation interview. Another grantee brought an affiliate member to the training. Their affiliate had just received its 501(c)(3) status. The member was able to apply the financial management training to set up the right financial protocols at the outset. In 2016, the Foundation supported nine economic justice leaders in its “Public Voices Fellowship”¹⁶ to position each leader as an expert on the national stage, not just in their local communities. The fellows collectively wrote and published 32 op-eds in major national mainstream media outlets. As described in other sections of this report, this capacity-building process was well received.



¹⁴ “Drawing on their lived experiences across gender, race and class and their roles as caregivers, workers and community leaders, women of color develop and implement solutions that address not only their own needs and priorities, but also those of their families, communities and society as a whole” (Wadia, 2008). Between 2003 and 2007, 41% of the foundation's funds went to women of color-led organizations (Wadia, 2008).

“When we had our grantee cohort meeting in D.C. and then had meetings with federal representatives, that meeting was 90 percent women of color. I think it’s creating spaces that put women of color in the lead that is very intentional. It doesn’t just happen organically. It happens because of intention and I’ve been in other national cohort meetings of childcare organizing and its 20 percent women of color are in the room. I just really think Ms. recognizes that it’s not going to happen organically. There has to be an intent to fund organizations that put women of color at the center and that’s reflected when we have meetings and when we’re together. It’s just a beautiful space when we come together and are strategizing and learning from each other. It’s just very meaningful.”

– Grantee



“I’ve been part of the cohort that’s been part of the op-ed project, which is the partnership Ms. created. I think we were 12 leaders, women of color, to help get our opinion pieces published in different media, blogs, online, offline, and that has just been so, so incredible. We’ve built a comradery amongst the cohort partners– and it’s worked. We’ve all published and published pieces that our members have been able to be a part of. It’s just been so cool and just really lifelong skills that we can continue to take with us. We’re hoping that we might be able to get a second round or next iteration [of the fellowship].”

– Grantee



Which kinds of organizations were funded under this model?

Through grantmaking and capacity-building opportunities, the Foundation sought to forge alliances between different organizations working on each aspect of the childcare issue:

workers’ rights centers, parent advocates, and childcare organizations. A select number of well-known anchor organizations in the labor movement were selected to influence the labor sector and spearhead the childcare research in that sector. Longtime childcare organizations were selected if they had deep connections in the community—that is, they recruited members and transformed them into organizing agents. Most of the funded organizations were selected because they engaged in base building and mobilization to change policy. A few of the organizations had received funds before from the Foundation..

“Our role as a public foundation and a women’s foundation is to be incredibly adaptable and open. We understand that many women of color organizations have greater challenges receiving funds from major foundations, in part because of the inherent racism and sexism within philanthropy. We know that gender-based funding is low in foundations across the board, and a gender analysis is lacking in almost every single sector and issue area. We supported organizations whose staff was really committed to their communities. Because I know that inherent in their work is the base-building work that makes advocacy and policy around low-wage worker rights and childcare access.”

— Aleyamma Mathew
Director, Women’s Economic
Justice Grant Program

¹⁵ See <https://forwomen.org/grants-2/meet-our-grantees/strength-in-numbers-convening-february-2015/>

¹⁶ See <https://forwomen.org/grants-2/public-voices/>

INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES

As a new focus for the Women's Economic Justice Program, many components of the childcare strategy were fully implemented and refined over the five years; however, not all were. This is in part due to changes in the Foundation's organizational capacity and infrastructure, which affected consistent application of its own philanthropic framework. It should be noted that the theory of change underlying the grant program today is being refined to be responsive to changes in the external landscape after the 2016 national elections.

Structure During this time, there were changes in the Foundation's organizational capacity and infrastructure, partly because of the strategic planning process, changes in funding, fluctuations in core grantmaking philosophies, and changes in leadership staff. This impacted the Women's Economic Justice Program in notable ways. For example, in 2013, the Foundation started a new communications department and a new policy and advocacy department to position the Foundation as a national voice for women's issues. As a result, grant funds were reduced and diverted to the new departments. Consequently, the Economic Justice Program had considerably less funding to re-grant that year. With a smaller pot of funds, the program granted at a significantly lower rate. Just five labor organizations were funded to conduct participatory research on childcare. The total 2013 award amount was \$53,000, whereas the prior year it was \$500,000.

Communication Use of strategic communications at the Foundation level was limited and impacted its positioning as a thought leader in childcare throughout philanthropy. The Foundation was able offer its grantees opportunities to develop messaging, shape narrative, and increase their visibility as childcare experts through the Public Voices Fellowship program, a capacity-building program that helped to proliferate the voices of women of color in public media. At the Foundation level, however, strategic communications work was limited. For example, there were missed opportunities to promote and strategically engage the philanthropic community during the release of the Raising Our Nation report in 2016. These additional opportunities could have included a funder briefing (with grantees present). Another opportunity could have included a real-time response to the childcare policy positions being pushed under the Obama Administration. Organizational challenges also impacted the number of tables the Foundation could influence and its ability to exercise its role as a convener. As a new player in childcare—and with an approach to push childcare policy among workers' rights organization—the Foundation needed more communications strategy and a consistent presence at strategically identified tables of influence.

Fundraising As a public foundation, the Foundation can only give the money it raises, and that amount varies each year. As an intermediary funder, the Foundation has inherent strengths. It has closer connections to its grantees and offers tailored capacity-building support. It can also take bigger investment risks by supporting smaller organizations and organizations with an emerging track record. Yet, grant awards are dependent on the funds raised and it cannot offer multi-year grants as a result. To overcome this issue, it invites a select number of organizations each year to submit applications, many of these organizations have been previously funded. During 2012-2016, the Foundation began offering Southern Strategy grants, which are also funded through the Women's Economic Justice Program. To do this, it must reduce the number and size of its childcare grants. Ideally the Foundation would be able to steadily increase childcare grants each year and draw from a separate pot of funds to support Southern Strategy grants.

Scale Closely related, the Foundation seeks to incubate work, strengthen grantee organizations, and expose them to larger foundations. As described later, the Foundation intentionally connects its grantees to other foundations that might continue or deepen the Ms. Foundation's early investment. Without organizational planning and strategy, the program was limited in how much it could provide this assistance at the scale needed.

Assessment Formal, internal mechanisms to regularly assess success were limited to grantee reports, site visits, and informal conversations. Ideally, baseline assessments and ongoing documentation would strengthen the Foundation's assessment of its role and impact. The Foundation plans to do more internal assessment in the future.

A photograph of two women in an office setting. The woman on the left, with reddish-brown hair, is wearing a maroon long-sleeved shirt and a patterned scarf, and has her arm raised in a celebratory gesture. The woman on the right, with dark hair, is wearing a light blue button-down shirt and is looking at a laptop screen. The background shows office doors and a plant.

GRANTS Portfolio

leadership social justice

public goods

economic justice labor

philanthropy

grantmaking

childcare

learning

role of government

policy

GEOGRAPHIC REACH (2012-2016)

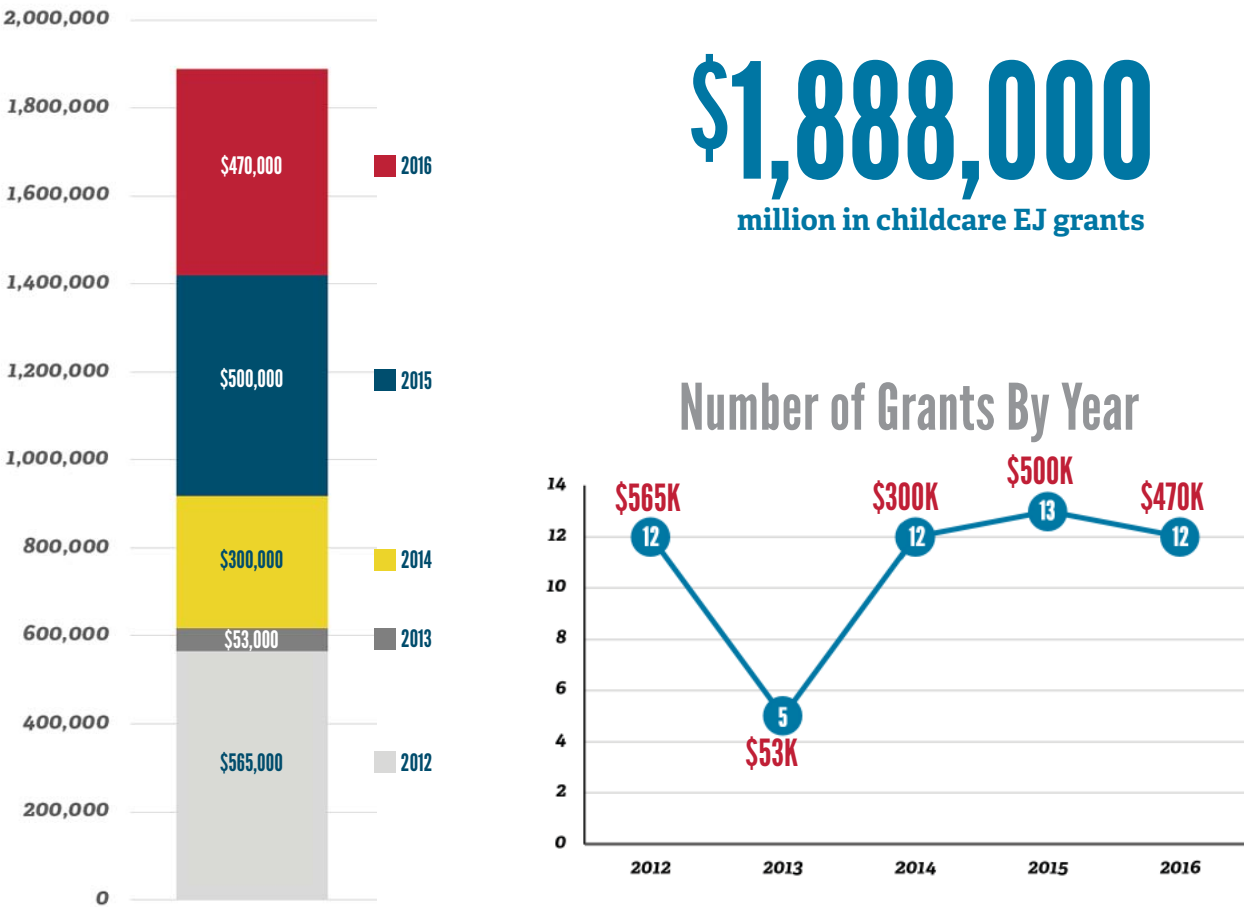
Across the country, 24 organizations received economic justice (EJ) funding in 2012–2016. The majority of grantees (67%) were located on the east and west coasts (East Coast: n=12 organizations, of which six were located in New York; West Coast: four). A quarter of all grantees (25%) were located in New York. The remaining regions included the South (5), Southwest (2), and Midwest (1).



- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 African Communities Together | 13 Illinois Action for Children |
| 2 Adhikaar for Human Rights | 14 Project South: Institute for the Elimination of Poverty and Genocide |
| 3 Center for Frontline Retail | 15 Mississippi Low Income Child Care Initiative |
| 4 Domestic Workers United | 16 The Women's Fund of Greater Birmingham |
| 5 Retail Action Project | 17 Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama |
| 6 Restaurant Opportunities Centers United | 18 Coalition of Immokalee Workers |
| 7 All Our Kin, Inc. | 19 The OLE Education Fund |
| 8 Vermont Workers Center | 20 Association for Supportive Childcare |
| 9 Childspace Cooperative Development, Inc. | 21 Puget Sound Sage |
| 10 Childspace Day Care Centers, Inc. | 22 California Child Care Resource and Referral Network/ Parent Voices |
| 11 Centro de los Derechos del Migrante, Inc. | 23 Mujeres Unidas y Activas |
| 12 Jobs with Justice Education Fund | 24 Garment Workers Center |

GRANT AWARDS (2012-2016)

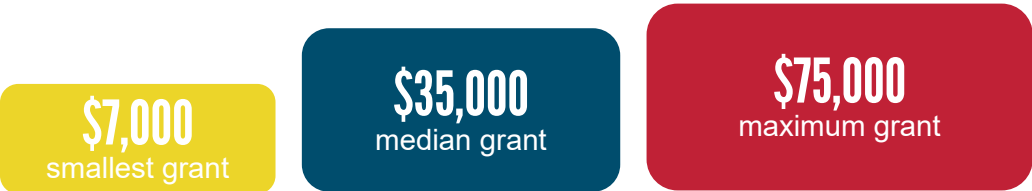
During 2012–2016, the Women’s Economic Justice Program awarded 54 grants to 24 US-based nonprofit organizations totaling \$1,888,000. The grant total by year and the number of grants awarded by year appear in the figures below.



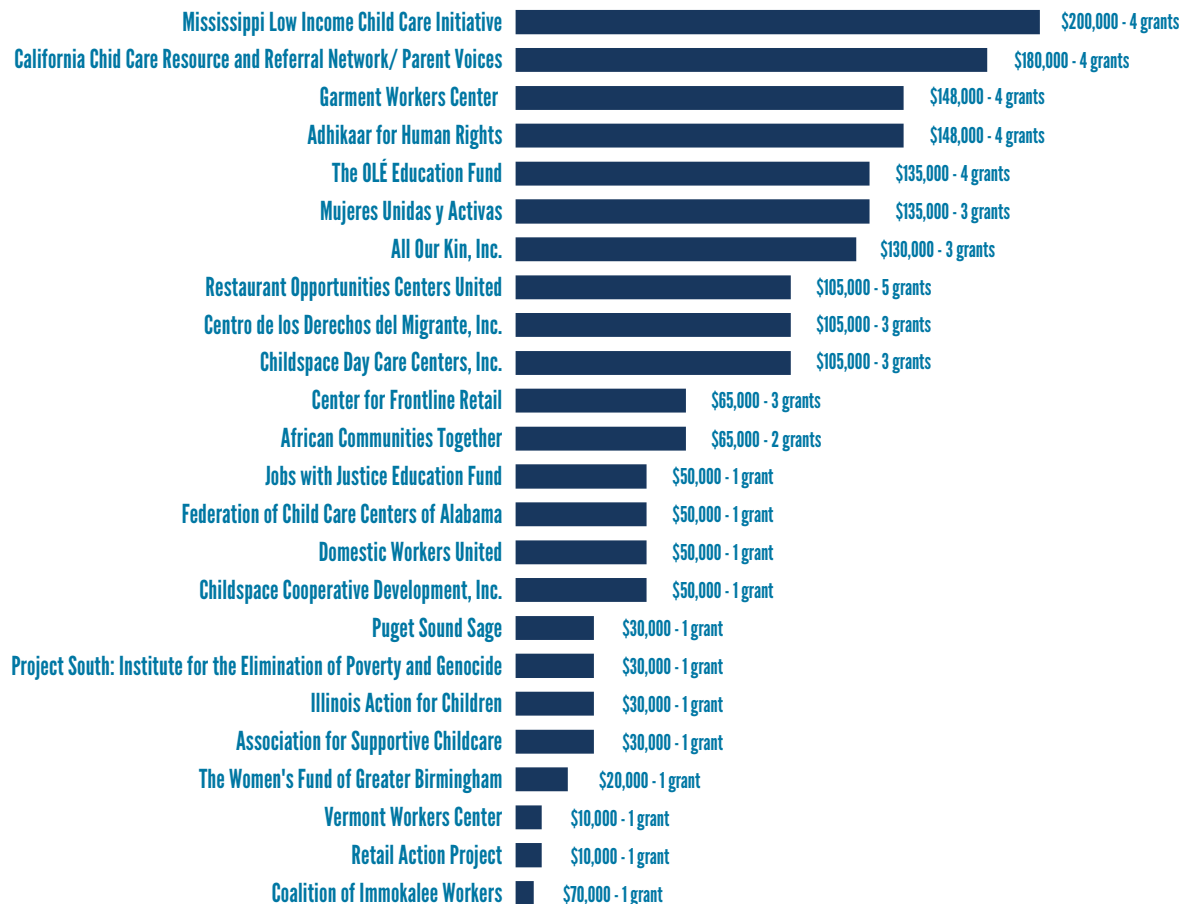
Grant Size & Number of Awards by Grantee

More than half of the childcare grants awarded were over \$30,000 (67% of all grants or 36 grants); 37% (20 grants) were over \$50,000. A total of 17% of the grants (9 grants) were less than or equal to \$15,000. Nearly all of the smaller grants were awarded in 2013 and 2014.

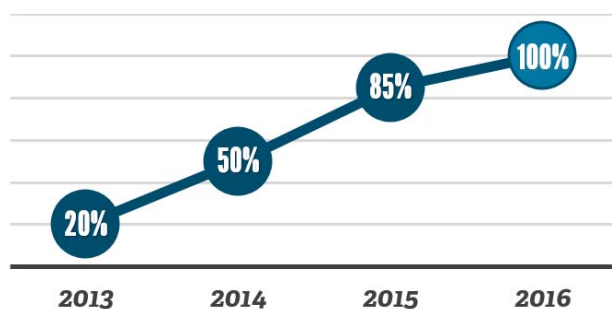
Grant Range (2012-2016)



Number of Grants & Total Grant Investment by Grantee Organization



Sustained Investment by Year: Percent of Grantees Receiving Multiple Grants



- 50% of funded organizations (12 organizations) received one grant during this timeframe. The remaining half received 2–5 grants. See figure above.
- **In line with the Foundation's theory of change and grantmaking strategy to provide long-term investments, sustained investments in the same grantees increased each year:** 20% of the 2013 grant recipients received a second childcare grant—50% in 2014, 85% in 2015. A total of 100% of the 2016 grantees had been previously funded for childcare at least twice (and more often three times). The limited number of regrants available in 2013 and slight changes in grantee selection between 2014 and 2015 affected sustained investment rates.

TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONS FUNDED (2012-2016)

Funded Regions

- Almost half of the grant dollars awarded were to organizations located on the East Coast (48% of grant dollars); 27% West Coast, 16% South, 9% Southwest, and 2% Midwest. See figure on the right.

Years Open

- The number of years open ranged from 1 year to 43 years; the median number of years open was 15.
- Two of the younger organizations have a fiscal sponsor.

Staffing

- The number of full-time staff ranged from 2 to 255; median 9 full-time staff. The number of part-time staff ranged from 0 to 11; median 2 part-time staff.

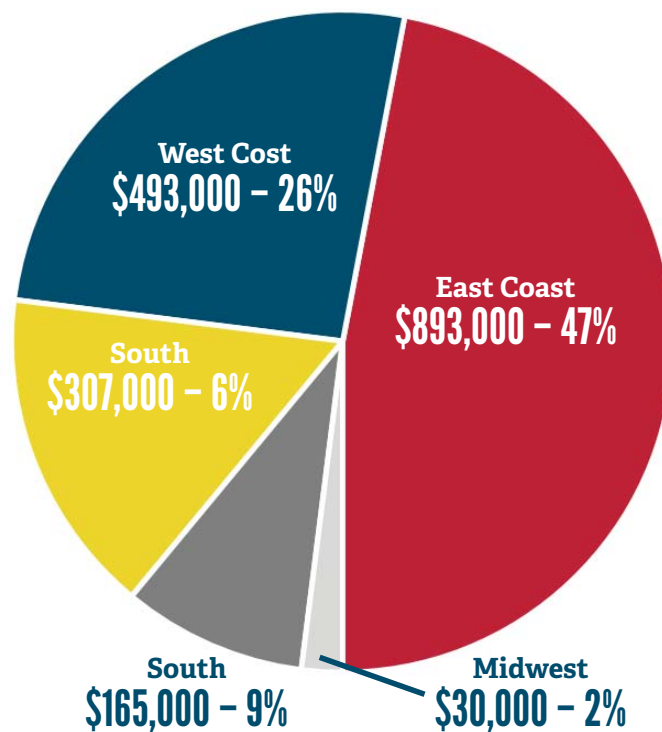
Nonprofit Size (using annual budget)

- 58% of the organizations (14) had annual budgets of \$1 million or less. The smallest grantee organizational budget was \$28,783, the largest budget was \$35,006,506, and the median budget was \$910,049.
- 17% of grantees (4) are micro organizations—organizations with annual organizational budgets of \$500,000 or less.¹⁷
- 71% are small organizations (17)—organizations with annual operating budgets over \$500,000 but less than \$10 million.
- 13% are medium organizations (3) with budgets over \$10 million. These organizations tended to be childcare providers.

First-time Grants

- Economic justice grantee organizations are mostly new awardees for the Foundation. The majority of grantees, 67% of the organizations funded (n=16), received their very first Ms. Foundation grant during this time period (2012-2016). One-third had been funded by the Foundation prior to 2012 (33% or 8 grantee organizations).

Grant Dollars By Region



58%

Percent of grantees have annual budgets of \$1 million or less.

67%

Percent of grantees were first-time Ms. Foundation for Women grant recipients.

¹⁷ See classification at http://pkscribe.com/nonprofit_news/votes-tallied-classifications-of-small-medium-large-nonprofits-set/

Base

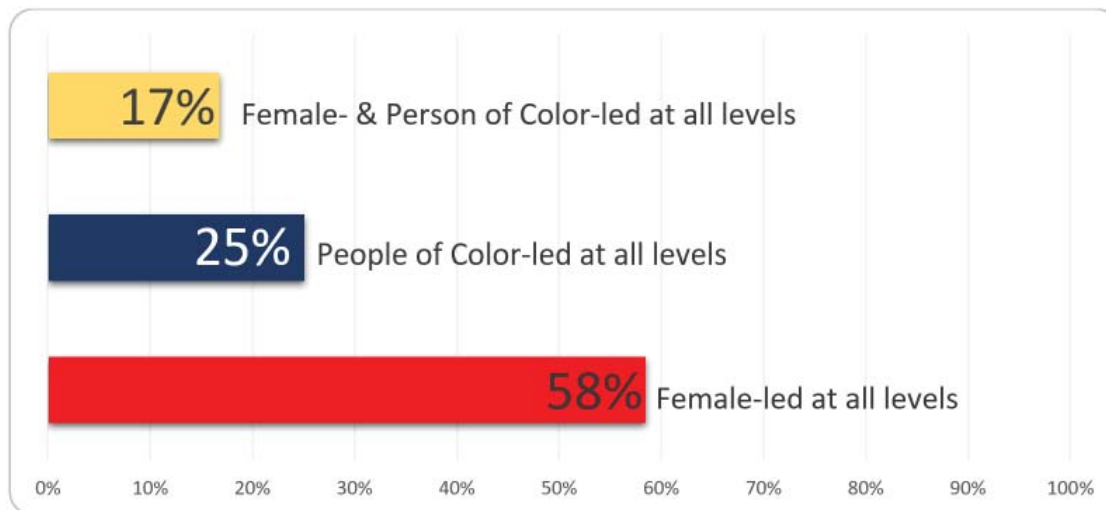
Grantees were asked to describe their organization in respect to other organizations working on childcare in their state. Several grantees described themselves as one of the few critical “players” who represented working parents and childcare, many of whom are low-income and women of color. They were also seen as an important leader organizations within the organizing infrastructure, finding inherent in gender-based organizing a need to work across movements and sectors. For example:

- “We end up being the grassroots entity [and doing] the fieldwork for a lot of campaigns and coalitions that are grassroots [that] aren’t doing the ongoing community organizing. We’re part of a lot of coalitions, a part of campaigns, and they’re always asking us, “do you have a parent for this? Do you have a parent impact for that? Can this parent testify at this hearing? Could this parent speak at this press conference?”
- “We’ve been organizing parents and early educators as well as early learning center owners for about seven years to expand access to high quality early education. We’re one of the few organizations that have real constituents that have a stake in the campaigns. There’s certainly a lot of advocates who’ve been involved for longer than we have, but are more traditional advocacy organizations that don’t really have any sort of grassroots constituency to them. We’re the only ones with grassroots constituency.”
- “...Here and in Mexico we’re one of the only games in town that support workers who have worked in the United States and that’s going to end up being something that we’re going to need to figure out how to address.”
- “I think we are a fundamental player in our state around economic justice, because we represent women who are at the intersection of both immigration issues, labor rights issues, workforce issues and economic justice.”



Gender & Race of Grantee Leadership Across all Levels

The Majority of Grantee Organizations Are Female-Led at All Levels of the Organization



- **17% of all grantees funded (4 organizations) were female- and people of color-led at each level of the organization** (levels: Board Chair, Board of Directors, Executive Director, and key managerial staff). These four organizations were the Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama, Center for Frontline Retail, Adhikaar for Human Rights, and Garment Workers Center. Three out of the four organizations were 2016 grant recipients and received multiple childcare grants. This type of organization represents the “highest form” of inclusion with all levels consisting of women of color.
- **25% (6 organizations) were led by people of color at all levels of the organization.**
- **58% (14 organizations) were female-led at all levels of the organization.**

“Some of the most creative work within the labor movement is by worker centers, and many of these worker centers are led by women of color, and represent sectors of our economy that are some of the fastest growing jobs in the country— restaurant work, garment work, retail, the care sector from child care to domestic workers to elderly homecare workers. I believe the investment in women of color does not stem from, “Let’s help those poor, poor women of color,” but in fact that women of color are becoming a powerful force to be reckoned with — they are critical to our economic stability. If we want to invest in creating long-term and systemic change, we have to invest in the organizations and institutions that are leading this fight and ensuring that women of color voices are included not because of their vulnerability, but because of their power and popularity.”

– Aleyamma Mathews, Director of Women’s Economic Justice Program
Ms. Foundation for Women

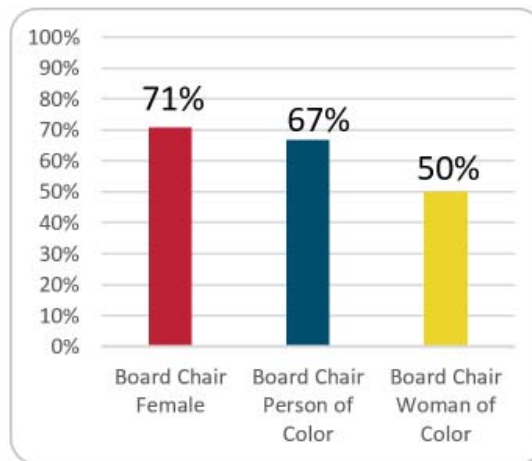
Note: Data were unavailable for one grantee from the 2012 cohort. All percentage points were calculated using 24 organizations instead of 23 organizations, resulting in a more conservative estimate. Data were derived from the grantee’s most recent grant application. If a data point was missing or unavailable, the last known data point was used as a proxy. For example, if the number of full-time staff was missing for the most recent grant year, the last known estimate was used.

Gender & Race of Grantee Leadership by Position

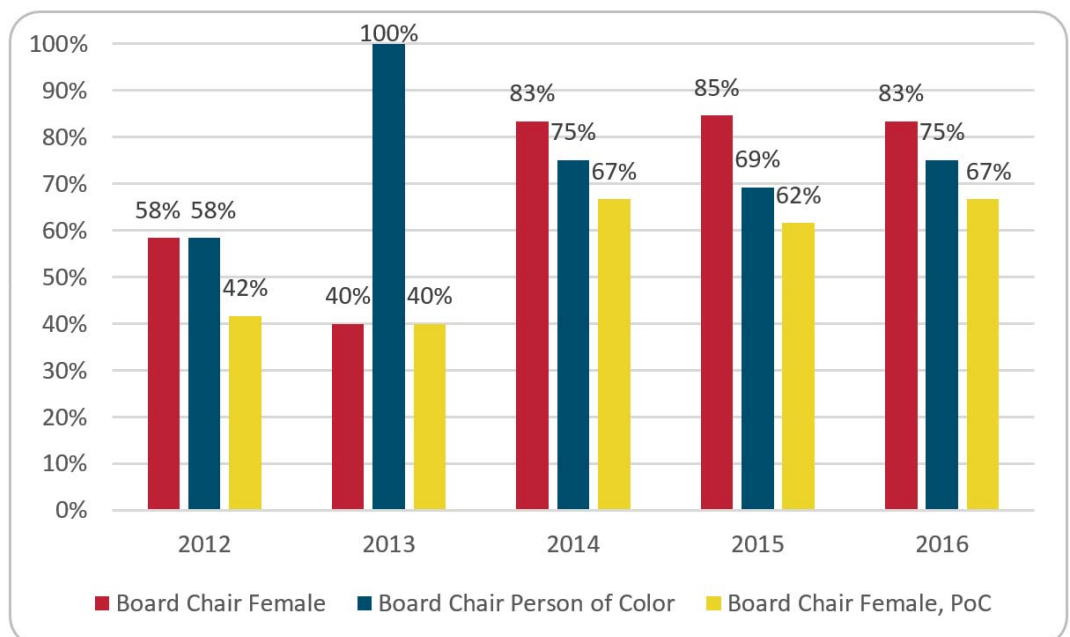
Key Results

- Nearly 3 out of 4 **Board Chairs** (71%) were female, 67% were people of color (PoC), and 50% were women of color across all years. A total of 83% of **2016** grantee Board Chairs were female; 67% were women of color.
- Of the 24 organizations, 3 out of 4 **Board of Directors** were majority female. In **2016**, 92% of the Board of Directors were majority female, and half of the Boards of Directors were both majority female and majority people of color.
- In total, 79% of the **Executive Directors** were female; slightly less than half were women of color (42%). In **2016**, half of all Executive Directors were women of color.
- The vast majority of **key managerial staff** were majority female (92%); 67% of **2016** grantee organization key managerial staff were both majority female and majority people of color.

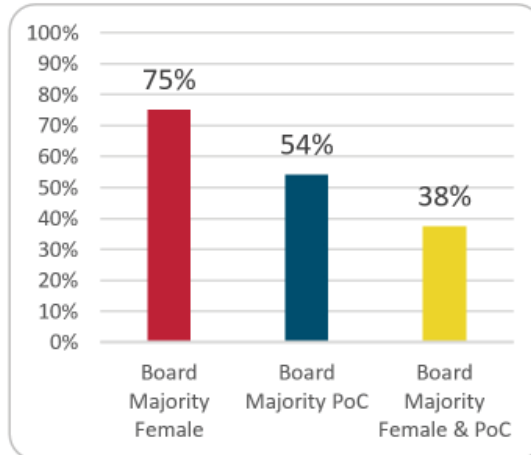
BOARD CHAIR: Overall Scores



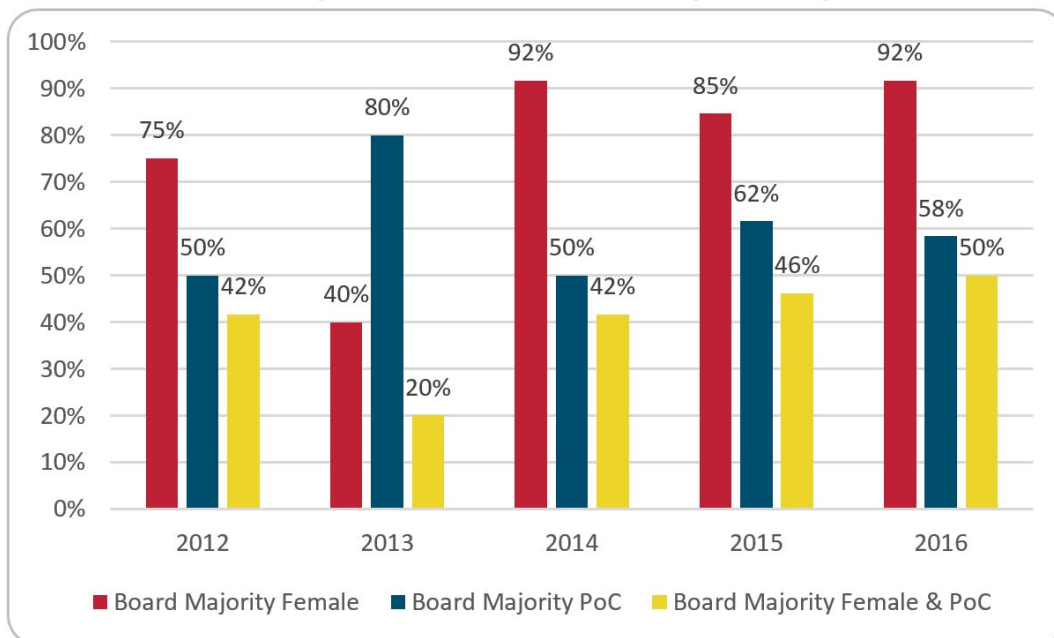
BOARD CHAIR: Percent Female, PoC, Women of Color



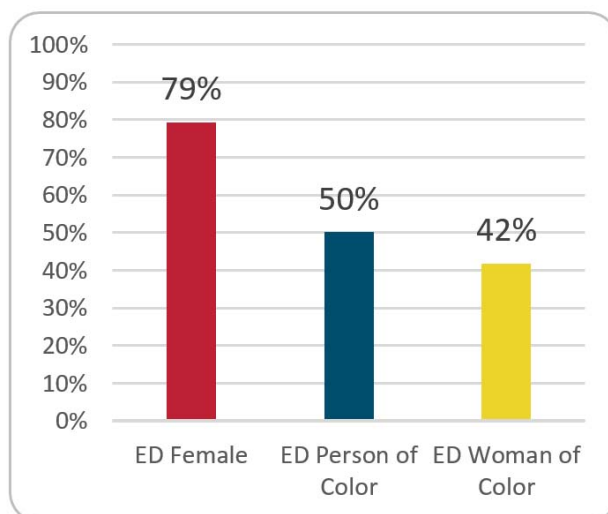
BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Overall Scores



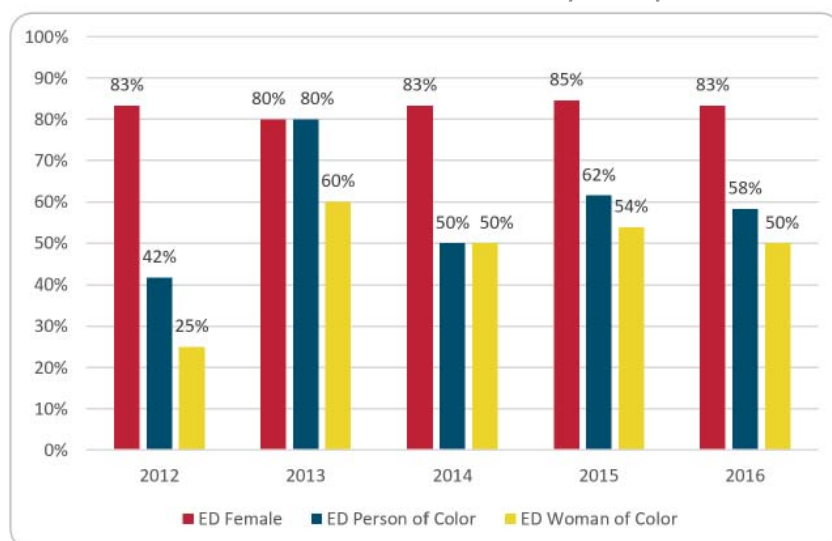
BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Percent Majority Female, Majority PoC, or Majority Female and Majority PoC by Year



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Overall Scores



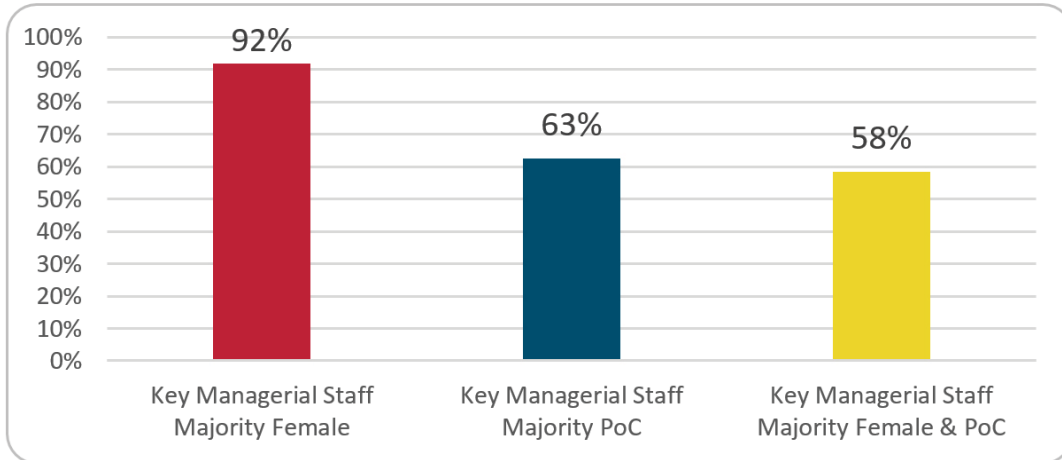
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Percent Female, PoC, Women of Color



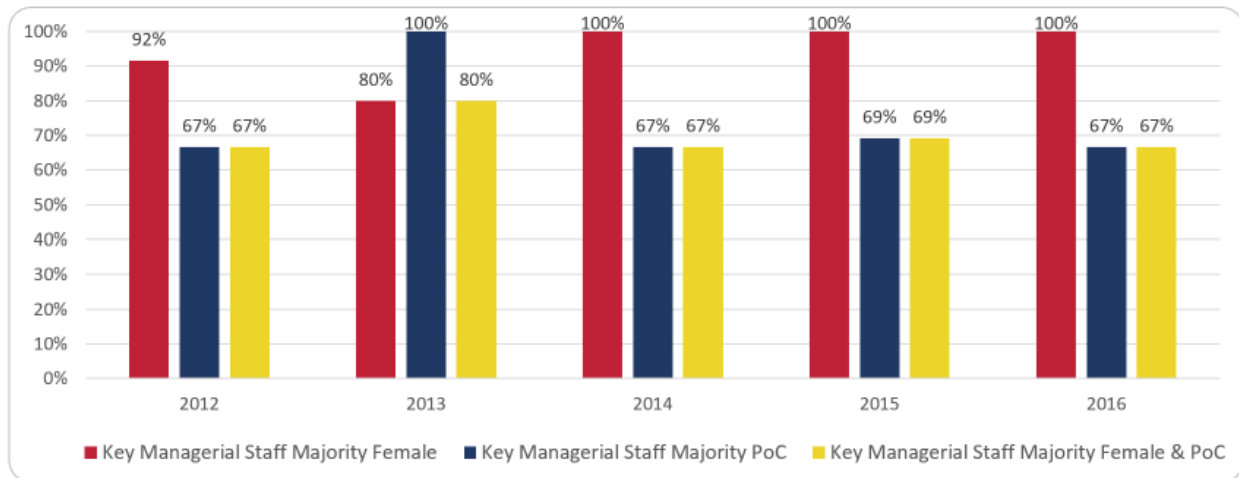
“When I look at how funding has flowed with the [other foundations], I feel like there’s been a real lack of holding both a race and gender justice lens to how they’re approaching and funding groups. And often what I’ve heard is this notion that in this moment, what we need is to fund more political groups that will get the issue over the finish line, which have been predominantly male run organizations that do not have a track record of working on childcare. For me, that has not resulted in wins. And in fact, what it did was undermine organizations and a lot of the really important years building relationships on the ground in a way that I think really has prevented some of the strategies from being successful and moving forward. That’s one of the biggest differences...it’s really important that Ms. continues to hold that understanding and thought process around strategies moving forward in philanthropy.”

– Grantee

KEY MANAGERIAL STAFF: Overall Scores



KEY MANAGERIAL STAFF: Percent Majority Female, Majority PoC, or Majority Female and Majority PoC by Year



"I think the difference is really supporting organizations who are led by women of color. I think that explicit framework is very different from other foundations. I'm in many meetings where I'm the only woman of color who's organizing – everybody's organizing women of color and people of color, but the leadership doesn't reflect that."

– Grantee

Please continue for
Foundation Uniqueness & Approach

FOUNDATION

Uniqueness & Approach



leadership social justice
public goods
economic justice labor
philanthropy grantmaking childcare
learning policy
role of government

PERSPECTIVES ON THE FOUNDATION'S UNIQUENESS, CONTRIBUTION, & EFFICACY

Stakeholders and grantees overwhelmingly praised the Foundation's approach and people power—including the vision, commitment, performance, and technical ability of the Economic Justice Program's Director, Foundation executives, and other Foundation staff, and the capacity-building consultants hired to work with grantees. They appreciated the nature of their relationships with various staff in the Foundation, describing them as “peer” partners that transcended the typical funder–grantee relationship. Interviewee accounts of the Foundation's uniqueness recognized its overarching approach—supporting women of color and advancing a gender-race-class lens within the different movements it supports. Many noted its contribution to the childcare arena as evidenced by the selection of grantees, a mix of labor and childcare advocates, which positioned childcare as a women's economic security issue warranting increased public investment. Of the grant program's achievements, the knowledge generated and the activism sparked by the formative participatory research that many grantees conducted were the most pronounced and praised by the interviewees.

Approach & Niche

The Foundation's philanthropic approach to creating spaces for women of color to drive policy was acknowledged and noted as an important niche in the broader philanthropic landscape: As stated by one stakeholder, “Ms. has a great potential for shaping some of the debate around women's economic security with the footprint of being a national women's foundation. They're just a very important and special voice at the table and have been looked to and will be looked to be a touch point on the status of women, what we know about how to improve the lives of women and girls.”

Further that, “Women of color and the experiences of women of color. Those experiences too often are just not front and center when we talk about women's economic security, childcare, the whole swatch of economic justice issues. And so, Ms. is known for trying to bring that intersectional analysis to the conversation and I think that's an important aspect of the work that's being done.”

The Foundation is also known for funding smaller and newer organizations and supporting the growth of those organizations over time through ongoing investments, such that “They're more willing to fund these groups. I do think the Ms. Foundation has really stood out doing this. It's harder for these groups to get money. They're smaller. They're less organized, they don't have a track record. They don't have the same resources. The groups that they focus on (e.g., grassroots organizing) are important to have in the mix because they provide another approach to change, which is what we need in the environment.” Examples in this cohort would be Center for Frontline Retail, which acquired its 501(c)(3) status in 2014, and All Our Kin, which expanded to three additional cities after its pilot year and is planning to expand into New York City. Through their connection to the Ms. Foundation they began developing relationships with national organizations to influence federal policies affecting informal care settings and established a national board of directors.

“The Ms. Foundation has seeded a lot of organizations and given them early flexible funds that have allowed them to come into existence and to grow [and become] ready to get funding from larger foundations.”

– Stakeholder

Intersectionality

Its application of an authentic gender-race-class lens and commitment to cross-sector approaches to the issue of childcare and women's economic security distinguishes the Foundation from other funders. Consider the following:

- “I think Ms. Foundation fundamentally came out of the movement and continues to be committed to the movement and it has a really incredible team that, because of their previous experiences and personal experiences, – I think they’re just really brilliant. They’re just smart, brilliant, strategic folks who I think use the position they’re in to help make connections that sometimes those of us on the ground can’t always see, because we get so immersed in the community we’re in or the particular issue we’re working on.” In addition, “I think it’s just been helpful that some of the key staff on the initiative come from organizing and understand organizing culture.”
- “They certainly are able to bring a racial and justice lens to the conversation and to the work that other foundations sometimes don’t remember to bring. They certainly bring that intersectionality to the conversation that sometimes other foundations focused on economic security don’t bring. That’s an important voice to have in the room and they are very able to do that.”
- “The main difference is [the Foundation] just gets the importance of paying attention to gender, and that is a contribution that is so valuable to the work that we do. We’ve got some funders who pay attention to poverty, and some funders who pay attention to racial inequity. But having a foundation that pays attention to poverty, race, and gender is so important, because of the intersectionality of those issues on the work that we do, here.”

Grantmaking Policies

Interviewees, in particular childcare organizations, also noted that it is one of the few funders to support organizing and policy work:

- “The main difference is that almost all of our funders are interested in our direct-service work, and so Ms. funding is so important because it is supporting our policy work. We have one other funder who has supported some of our policy efforts, but that’s been local. It’s been state-based funding. The other thing I would say about the Ms. Foundation investment is that in addition to supporting our policy work, which is a critical need, it’s also connected to this broader national cohort and national movement, and [it has been] incredibly valuable for us.”
- “[The difference with] the Ms. Foundation is having the ability and the budget to really do things that won’t be funded by other funders is really helpful. I mean it’s not like any other foundation.... I’ve been here for a long time but this center, without support from the Ms. Foundation, could not afford my position.”

The Foundation employed three types of grants to build the grant portfolio: project-specific innovation grants, general operating grants, and convening grants. Innovation grants allow both the Foundation and the grantee to test out a campaign strategy before committing to long-term investments and long-term campaign work. In the case of childcare, the project-specific grants funded initial research that would inform policy and grantee issue campaigns. To support cross-sector and cross-movement work, multiple general operating support grants were provided to workers' centers and childcare advocacy groups. Convening "grants" were used to bring the grantee cohort together in person for planning and strategizing, although the funds used were not official grants.

The Foundation "trusts" its grantees to allocate its funds in way that is strategic and useful to them. Several grantees pointed to the flexible use of grant funds where policy aims and key activities can be modified. For example:

- "I don't feel like we have to make something up to feel like we fit in to what Ms. is trying to accomplish. They fundamentally get why we need to be at the table. They trust us to decide what we need to do with the money and what we're working on and what we need to advance at any given moment so I don't feel a lot of pressure to constrain or bend ourselves into something just to feel like we fit. Those are some of the things I really appreciate about Ms."
- "We've done stipends, okay, because we have people that come to these meetings and we're being paid – we do stipends because it helps them get to these meetings. That's great. We provide food and babysitting, so that these parents can come to these advocacy meetings that we're having. All of those little things, no foundations are going to allow that. The Ms. Foundation is very generous in the way they allow you to use your funds."
- "The flexibility of the grant has been really crucial, we came into this open minded, trying to really understand what our community's needs were and we've been able to identify what those needs are and other potential areas that we could support our community with, and the grant allowed us that flexibility to learn what our community needed and then figure out a way to provide that support."



The grantmaking process received very favorable feedback. The process was collaborative, with the Foundation taking an active role as a thought partner. The grant was flexible, allowing the grantee to craft a strategy based on what the community needed. For example: "I think what's helpful about the process is that it's paired with a conversation, 'Here's what we're expecting. What do you guys really think that you can do? What's the value in this initiative for you?' That kind of conversation with the program staff has been helpful. I don't think the process is especially burdensome, either on the written-application side or on the reporting side or site visit. It's actually a lighter lift than a lot of other foundations."

Informal & Formal Capacity Building

The Foundation's willingness to informally and formally support the leadership development of women of color is another distinguishing factor. As noted in the Foundation's theory of change, strengthening organizations and building the leadership capacity of women are products of the Foundation's financial and non-financial support. (Informal support is provided in the form of informal technical assistance, the formation of deep relationships enabling connections to other funders and partners, and public recognition of grantee campaigns that produce other funding and partnership opportunities). Consider the following:

- "I just think what our program officer has done for us and how she supports us and how she's just thinking about and creating opportunities for us to show our leadership and to bring our members along the ride. It has just been fantastic. She's just really great and just Naveen and Angelique and all of the other support staff at Ms. –they just really nurture the grantees and are just thinking about ways to highlight our work, to get our name out there. I can't really think of another one of our funders who goes that deep with their grantees, that it's not just the grants that they provide, but it's the capacity building support, the communication support, the program officer and the support staff. **It's just a very comprehensive and holistic approach to grantmaking that I think is just very unique and provides us additional support that we wouldn't have otherwise.**"
- "I would say out of our funders they're probably one of the only "high-touch" funders. It's actually been quite appreciated. They have connected us with other resources that have been really wonderful for the organization. I think more than just a funder we really consider them a pretty big resource and ally. It's very different. They really are the only funder I would say that is like that. It's been like that in a very sort of direct way in that they're communication is not just by e-mail, but they really do check-in and hold calls and convene both as a cohort, people are part of an Economic Justice mentee/cohort, but also individually. You know the resources they've connected us – they will send other funding opportunities, but also capacity building opportunities."
- "They're just so different in so many ways, which is just – the grantee cohort convening, the capacity building programs that they offer. I don't think there's ever been a time where I've asked for help and they've said no."
- "Aleyamma, our program officer [and director of the EJ program], is somebody who I can turn to and say, "Hey, you know do you know somebody at the foundation that you could help us connect with?" And even if she doesn't, she might have another connection for me so that's positive."
- "They generate research and connect me to organizations that are either doing work, or exploring an issue, or have some experience. It goes beyond just the funding; I just feel like the foundation is constantly looking out for resources that can be shared, and connections that can be made."
- "It was through the Ms. Foundation that I actually got introduced to another women's foundation-- just extending their networks to us and so that we could also grow financially with other organizations, which I think is amazing. Not every program officer does that, I learned."

- “Aleyamma was definitely our program officer and champion. We got to know most of the staff really well and learn so much from each and every one of them. That was amazing for me in terms of my professional and personal growth, and I know – I can’t speak for my staff, but I know many of them really loved and enjoyed working with Ms.”
- “Our program officer has connections with federal agencies and has been willing to make connections to people that have been important for promoting issues that we’re concerned about or connecting around our work.”
- [At the awards ceremony] “We got to get all fancy and share our work with a lot of people who probably never heard of us and never knew what we were about. That was just an unbelievable experience! It helped us build our reputation even with groups in our state. It’s just legitimized our impact.” Another grantee also mentioned the awards ceremony as a space where they met a donor who would become their largest funder. Obtaining a Ms. Foundation grant also signals to other funders that the organization is stable and productive.
- “I appreciate how Ms. holds up the work of its grantees and it really helps amplify our voice. I don’t even have communication staff, we have very limited visibility in a lot of ways for the work that we do and so sometimes Ms. has been really critical in helping to get us a broader reach for people to see what we’re up to.”
- “We don’t have a lot of national grants; we’ve got three. And even though it was the smaller one of the three, it has national respect, and so it kind of put us on a playing field both in terms of our staff getting to know people, funders and donors.”
- “I mean I think we have a great relationship with the Ms. Foundation. It really is a long-term relationship that we’ve had and I think what’s really interesting is that they will send people our way that have questions about our sector or our region, and that tells us that they understand the experience and the knowledge that we have with our hands in all these different pots.”

“It was one of the more amazing grants that we received because – and it wasn’t just Aleyamma. It was everyone in the organization. All of our staff knew most of their staff and so I think everyone was accessible. Everyone was supportive. I can speak for myself as a new executive director. Teresa and I had several conversations around just being in the role and what it meant, especially as a woman of color, being new to this. We’re learning as you go and keeping your head above water. I felt supported on a personal level, but also on a professional level as well.”

-- Grantee

The relationships were respected even when the grantee submitted an unsuccessful application. For example, “The one year that we weren’t funded, I called our program officer, and I said, ‘Can we sort of talk about it and get feedback?’ And that was so helpful, because she was so open... it was so great to have the kind of relationship where we could talk openly about why they make their funding decisions and what might make us more competitive for a certain pot of money, and just again, not to have an opaque process, but to have one that’s really transparent and open and includes dialogue is really wonderful.”

Its ability to focus on strengthening organizations and providing informal one-on-one support to grantees is a critical function as an intermediary funder. For example, one interviewee stated, “Ms. is not like a traditional foundation where it’s the family money or the corporate money or it’s been handed down through the generations and it has a traditional board. Program officers [in those foundations] tend to be a little less hands-on than the foundations that are intermediaries. [Intermediaries] tend to just know the grantees really well. They know the localities well. They know the work really well, and that is really helpful intelligence that they bring to philanthropic and policy conversations.”

As the following grantee explains, “Most of our funders just really want to see their report you know mid-year, at the end of the grant period. When I’ve reached out to other funders for help I have gotten the response that that’s not really what they do. Ms. is unique.”

Approach to Childcare

With respect to childcare, interviewees stated the Foundation was “really able to help drive a narrative at a national level” and support “transformative” versus “transactional strategies.” They further praised the approach to funding and supporting interconnections between labor and childcare advocates “in a way that had not been seen elsewhere.”

- “I remember when I went to my first cohort meeting, it was both exciting and incredibly humbling to be in a room and feel like we’re trying to impact the issue of childcare. There were all these stakeholders that I didn’t know. What’s been a strength is the diversity of stakeholders and the broad umbrella of stakeholders that the Ms. Foundation has been able to bring together. And with a real eye towards having a very strong race and gender analysis behind this work that has, I think, shaped who they then were considering part of cohort and who needs to be in relationship with one another. What I appreciated about Ms.’ approach was the notion of building a cohort and the notion of these are people in this field that need to be in relationship to one another if we’re going to make a difference long term.”



“I think it is well-known in the field what a role Ms. played in childcare.”

– Grantee

- “I feel like the unique contribution for Ms. is to bring the low-wage worker, particularly workers of color, immigrant worker, conversation to the table to help devise new narratives and new strategies that help lift up the issue in new ways.”
- “The strategy behind the portfolio is really awesome -- to be thinking about such a huge important issue from the different perspectives and being in the room with people who are working on subsidies and access and quality and conditions for workers and just having that diversity of perspective on such a critical issue I think is really awesome. It's awesome that there's a combination of groups that are doing grassroots and policy advocacy. I've really enjoyed those spaces and felt like it's challenged me to think a little bit more about what we should be doing to move a more progressive agenda on the issue of childcare.”
- “It's obviously a mix of – there's some organizing groups, and then there's some that are more traditional service providers, and then a bunch of organizers and service providers alike doing some level of advocacy. I think that it's helpful to be in an initiative with some groups that are working with a specific constituency and membership. I think that that was part of the attraction to us of the initiative.”

The Foundation aimed to create cross-movement/cross-sector conversations at various levels over the past five years. Many of the grantees interviewed reported learning from/with other grantees, sharing information on strategy and tactics, and sometimes even partnering with other grantees within the cohort to advance policy, build and mobilize their respective bases, or develop some aspect of the organization. These relationships were usually initiated or deepened at Foundation-sponsored grantee convenings. Peer learning was instrumental in developing the cohort and fostering cross-movement and cross-sector organizing. For example:

- “We've already learned so much from being part of this cohort, and I'm sure we can continue to learn. Here's a quick example: When we faced these unbelievably awful subsidy cuts, I sent an e-mail to another Ms. Foundation grantee, “Help. What do we do?” and she sent me back this amazing two-page e-mail full of her strategies and what's worked for them before. I mean, it was so great to have someone that I could count on and reach out to in that way.”
- “I listened to what the other grantee was saying [about the rating system] and she was saying, “look, not all programs can meet that level because of where they are in the city and the level of children coming through and the reimbursement rates.” To her, the reimbursement rate is critical in raising that and not based on quality. So I came back to my state - I sit on a committee where they're pushing for increasing money in these three and star four programs so that if you maintain your star levels, you get more money. I went to that table and I said, “look, that money is not stable. We get a different governor in here, that money could go away. Let's focus on the reimbursement rate, the base rate” and I got that right out of that convening. I was able to look at it in a different light, because I heard what she was saying. I thought you know what, she's right. You can't focus all your money on the threes and fours [star providers]. You need to do

the base rate because if that three and four star money goes away, you're screwed....You know we're going to be going to the governor saying this is what the cost is. We're already talking about how we can increase this base rate. That convening really allowed me to look at it in a different light."

- "I think we got a lot of value and enjoyment out of the convening part. I know that it can always be tough to ask grantees to be convened. It was important for us to strengthen our connection to another grantee that works near us, works with a constituency that overlaps with us, and a lot of their members also live in some of the same neighborhoods that we do but we had never really collaborated with [them]. ... Their membership includes a good number of immigrant workers and they have been sort of squarely wrestling with night child care for people who work late shifts. We've learned from their process to provide formal or informal child care, and some of the barriers to entry that they ran into. There's been just a lot of learning from each other. We've also thought that any initiative that they develop, if they develop a site, a facility, a program, whatever, or vice versa, that we could potentially work together – that there would be some spillover between clients from our side and from theirs."

"We had to learn that over the last 10 years in our policy advocacy work and to recognize that's just how that process goes, so it can never just be about the policy you're trying to win and that change that you're trying to make; it has to be about the leaders you're developing, the way you're building your institution, your organization, the way we're building coalitions, how we're coming into connection with other communities, how we're coming into connection with other movements. I do think if there's anything we learned that helps us for this moment it's just having a long view; having deep relationships and alliances across a lot of communities and knowing that we'll just have to continue to build more of those and figure out how to have each other's backs and also push for each other where needed. I guess that's what, if anything, has prepared us for right now."

– Grantee



Please continue for
Policy & Advocacy Gains

A group of people, mostly women, are seated around a large, curved conference table in a meeting room. They appear to be engaged in a discussion or working on documents. The room has large windows in the background, and the overall atmosphere is professional and collaborative.

POLICY & Advocacy Gains

leadership social justice

public goods

economic justice labor

philanthropy

grantmaking

childcare

learning

role of government

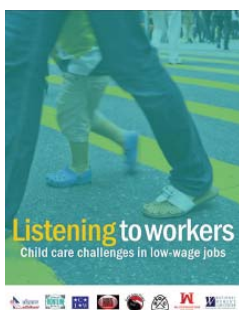
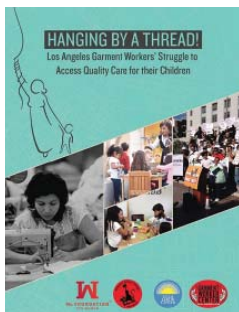
policy

POLICY & ADVOCACY GAINS

During the past five years, the grantees achieved many policy gains, ranging from state and federal legislation to local and state administrative procedural changes. Though it is beyond the scope of this report to provide detailed descriptions of the different strategies and tactics used to achieve these gains, it should be noted that grantees in their reports to the Foundation offered various accounts of their workplans, partnerships, lessons learned, and increased capacity to improve the conditions of working women and their families. In this report, we provide a summary of their formative research, member leadership development, and policy achievements of various types.¹⁸

Formative Research

Nearly every grantee conducted some form of research to understand how childcare affected their members and explored and uncovered new aspects of the childcare debate (e.g., the relationship between childcare and immigrant workers, restaurant workers, and nightshift workers; the effect of reimbursement rates and quality rating systems on sustainable childcare businesses and childcare worker wages).¹⁹ The initial Ms. Foundation grants funded research that added to the base of knowledge in the childcare sector and led to or informed formal policy recommendations and related campaigns. By employing a cross-sector and cross-movement approach, the grantee cohort—through convenings and initial research—built a common language, addressed issues, and had greater levels of collaboration that connected workplace issues in low-wage sectors to the accessibility and quality of childcare. The work was notable in that many traditional approaches to cross-movement building happen only across “popular lines” and are rarely cross-sector. The Foundation’s grantees began cross-sector framing around childcare, recognizing workers as parents and educators as workers.



Foundation Funded Reports

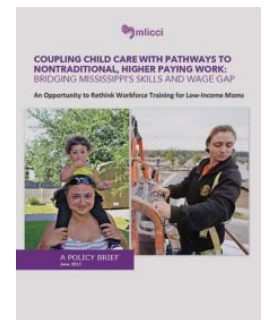
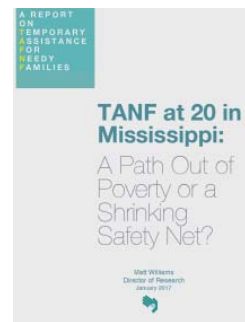
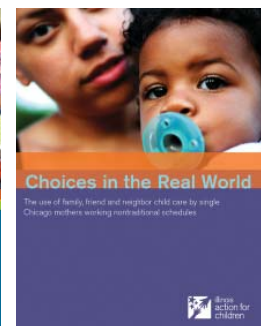
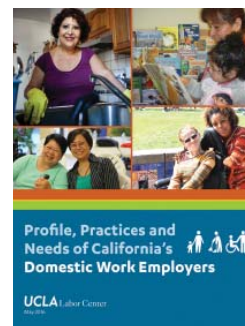
- The Restaurant Opportunities Center published *Third Shift: Child Care Needs and Access for Working Mothers in Restaurants* and a second report called *Nightcare: The Growing Challenge for Parents on the Late Shift*.
- Garment Workers United published *Hanging by a Thread!: Los Angeles Garment Workers' Struggles to Access Quality Care for their Children*.
- The Women's Fund of Birmingham published *Clearing the Path*.
- Six workers' rights centers—Adhikaar, Coalition of Immokalee Workers, Garment Worker Center, Retail Action Project, Center for Frontline Retail, and Restaurant Opportunities Centers—worked in collaboration with the National Women's Law Center to produce *Listening to Workers: Childcare Challenges in Low-wage Jobs*.
- African Communities United surveyed 350 ACT members to learn about their childcare needs

¹⁸ To simplify reporting, we do not name every grantee's organizational partner, ally, and champion and recognize in doing so that we may unavoidably attribute the work solely to the grantee in instances where that is not appropriate. Similarly, if the data were available, we named other funders if such funds were used in tandem with the Ms. Foundation grant or if such funds leveraged the Ms. Foundation's initial investment. To provide some context, we name the city and state and in some cases the actor most responsible for informing, implementing, or enforcing the policy change. To make this summary digestible, we do not provide a full list of the benefits stemming from each policy gain unless to add clarity or present an example of the dynamism in this work. Admittedly this approach limits the amount of detail provided on how a policy could affect any number of factors related to childcare access, quality, and affordability.

¹⁹ It is beyond the scope of this section to provide a review of the results; instead, our focus is to demonstrate how the initial research leveraged additional investments, informed policy work and narrative shifts, and supported leadership development.

Reports Leveraged from Initial Foundation Grants

- In California, Mujeres Unidas Accion conducted the first-ever study on Domestic Work Employers in California: *Profile, Practices and Needs of California's Domestic Work Employers*.
- Illinois Action for Children released *Choices in the Real World*.
- In Mississippi, MLICCI also co-released a report with the Coalition on Human Needs titled, *The High Cost of Being Poor in Mississippi*, another report called *TANF at 20: A Path out of Poverty or a Shrinking Safety Net?*, and *Child Care Provider Perspectives on the State's Child Care Payment Program*. They also released a policy brief called "Coupling Child Care with Pathways to Nontraditional, Higher Paying Work: Bridging Mississippi's Skills and Wage Gap."
- Puget Sound Sage used research to identify possible commercial spaces for childcare centers as part of an initiative to win "Sound Transit 3." This policy win required 80% of transit agency surplus be used for affordable housing. It also created an opportunity to locate affordable childcare facilities at light rail stations across the region.
- Childspace surveyed Pennsylvania providers on the subsidy rate.



"[Another foundation] is going to fund us for further research on this issue. It's kind of become a much bigger project than we initially ever thought it would be, as a result of Ms.' initial investment."

– Grantee

There are several research projects (directly funded and leveraged) that were still in progress at the time of the final grant report:

- In New York, the Center for Frontline Retail is partnering with the Office of the Public Advocate to survey low-income retail workers on their child needs. Data collection will conclude in 2017.
- Project South engaged parents through focus groups in Atlanta to define "accessible and quality childcare."
- The Women's Fund of Birmingham will survey area businesses to examine childcare-related benefits to identify potential models and make a connection between childcare and employee retention.
- MLICCI developed a mapping tool of licensed childcare providers in the lower three coastal counties and are currently using it to refer students in the Women in Construction program. They are currently surveying participants to track the benefits of coupling childcare services to job training programs and the impact on attaining higher-paying jobs. If the project is successful, the results will be shared with the entire Mississippi workforce system so that the program is adopted system-wide.

- OLE commissioned a study with University of New Mexico on the “Cost of Care” to understand how much should be paid to childcare workers to provide livable wages.
- All our Kin has partnered with the University of Connecticut’s Center for Economic Analysis to conduct an assessment on the economic impact of investing in family childcare businesses.

Below are a few examples of how the research helped grantee campaigns increase funding and broaden their base:

- GWC held meetings with its members to dig deeper into the findings. Through that work they launched a “Women’s Circle” as a safe place for women; many of the women found a connection to the childcare stories being shared. When launching the Women’s Circle, issues of misogyny were addressed. For example, some male members felt a woman’s place was in the home despite understanding the need to work a lot when making low wages.
- Adhikaar partnered with Cornell University to create a nanny training program; 74 nannies have completed it. The training covers health, nutrition, workers’ rights, and OSHA training, and it was translated into Nepali.
- All Our Kin established a Provider Steering Committee in 2015 as a mechanism to increase provider involvement and feedback in the organization’s work. The committee now has seven members who work closely with the Public Policy fellow (a position funded with Ms. Foundation support).
- Several of the workers’ rights centers noted that workers who did not initially want to get involved in the organization’s issue campaigns were motivated to become involved in the childcare issue. Their motivation: childcare was badly needed and very few organizations were working on this issue or connecting with them as low-wage workers.

Research Supported Campaigns

Catalytic funding was used to leverage other funding opportunities: Several grantees shared examples of how their research report was used to leverage additional philanthropic resources.

- Garment Workers Center secured Kellogg Foundation funding to work in partnership with the UCLA Labor Center to launch a two-year “Parent Leadership Project.”
- The Women’s Fund for Greater Birmingham was able to secure funding from Wells Fargo, Alabama Power, and the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation and hold, with Ms. Foundation staff, a forum with the corporate community to discuss their research report.
- Restaurant Opportunities Center received funding from the Kellogg Foundation to expand their work on childcare co-operatives and conduct exploratory research on night care.

Participatory research²² method developed leaders within the grantee membership base:

In reflecting on the participatory research process, another grantee stated, “It has taught us how to do this type of research with our members. From that experience we adapted and tweaked the model for member-led, worker-led research. We just completed another survey on health and safety conditions in factories, and we’ll be releasing that report in early December. It was all because of the childcare report we had a lot of support from research justice organizations and allies that helped us to do this. For this second one, we were able to do it on our own in many ways. We conducted the survey completely on our own. We drafted it completely on our own. Then we pulled in part of the same research team from the last report to help us analyze the data and draft a report. To me that’s huge. We gained a tool, you know? That our organizers felt strong enough to go out and do it on their own with our members. To me that showed growth for us as an organization.”

The grantee went on to say, “As [for] the members that participated in our research, they received training on how to engage workers on a cold contact basis. How do you go out there and convince somebody to take a survey with you and quickly, and deliver a rap on what you’re trying to do or how to recruit your peers and your friends in the factories to engage in this. ...Those skills translate to membership recruitment skills. Some of those leaders that participated in the research are ongoing leaders that will support recruitment. ...Once members develop that confidence in leadership, they’re willing to speak to the media, they’re willing to take on their boss at the factory or support another worker who wants to take on their boss at the factory. They’re all stepping stones.”

Cross-movement strategies addressed structural and political fragmentation:

For example, one grantee shared an example of how this approach created a united front, which strengthened their campaign. “It’s really important to bring together the multiple stakeholders to move a comprehensive and thoughtful and visionary campaign around expanding access to childcare and having the workforce to be able to provide that care. The case study really demonstrated that it mattered a lot that we were able to engage parents in the conversation around the quality of childcare and the needs of a childcare workforce so that down the line in the campaigns that were happening around the country, we [could counter arguments] that pitted parents against childcare workers. These were two case studies that really demonstrated the power of that, of having parents and childcare providers standing together, demanding of the budget or the system in the state to have more revenue to support both the increase of wages and working conditions as well as to expand access.”

²² Participatory research emphasizes community participation in the research process and using the results to work toward change.

BASE BUILDING & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The grantees interviewed as part of this evaluation shared many examples of how they engage and grow individual leaders and provide support for the members to become involved in their campaign work. The lowest membership base reported was 100, and the largest was 24,000, with varying levels of active participation, however defined.

One of the major challenges for grantees was staff capacity to engage and develop their membership on a consistent basis. They also noted how important leadership development was to help prepare their members for organizing and advocacy campaign activities. Speaking in public and representing the organization or campaign were leadership skills that had to be developed. For example, in mainstream advocacy spaces the paid organizer tends to use jargon and speak English fast and does not create spaces for immigrant leaders (for example) to genuinely participate in meetings. Grantees addressed this and other leadership needs in a variety of ways. One grantee, for example, created a Spokesperson Training Curriculum to train its members on how to leverage their stories and engage the public, decision makers, and policymakers to advance organizing and policy goals.

“We’ve had kind of this arc of engagement with the Ms. Foundation, so when we first came in, we were this tiny organization trying to seize this moment, get these dollars, begin to grow, begin to change the state conversation, right? Over the next three or four years, we were increasingly successful in doing that. We expanded to three or four cities in the state. We’re now in four cities. We greatly expanded the numbers that we were able to reach in terms of family childcare providers and children and parents, again, really changed the conversation first at the local level, then at the state level, and then even at the national level, I think there’s been a radical reframing around childcare and around the role of family child care in particular.”

– Grantee

Below are a few examples of how membership was approached:

- “We support and coach them through speaking to the media, testifying at a hearing, going to a legislator’s office, writing an action and seeing an event [through], running a meeting. It’s sort of like having them do it and then coaching them, debriefing and talking about what felt good and what they didn’t feel so confident in, and then tailoring stuff to support them for the next time. I think there’s a place for curriculum and training, but often there’s so much emphasis on that and less on actually supporting leaders to then effectively exercise – put it in practice. We’ve landed more on putting it in practice [rather] than [just] training. We do have trainings too around the budget process that we do every February in four parts of the state. And we talk about effective storytelling and how the budget process works and getting parent’s input and feedback on the barriers and obstacles they’re facing in either keeping a childcare subsidy or accessing one.”

- “Yeah, there’s just a large group of lay members who have a real political analysis of how their organizing work around early education fits into the broader struggle for economic and social justice. And these members and leaders have a wide variety of skills, the ability to organize other people that are interested in the issue, the ability to message important things about the work or legislation. We’re fighting, for example, both the elected officials and with the press. I think that has definitely increased their ability to make an impact and win. I think it also just makes people stronger, better, happier, more fulfilled to be organizing and to have a more sophisticated analysis of what’s wrong about the world and how they can change it. I think all of our members who helped out with the domestic violence work [related to childcare], in particular, feel proud of their accomplishments because it’s a concrete success, but also because it’s one that they really exposed themselves and put themselves at greater risk speaking out about their experiences. It took quite some time, in fact, to get the critical mass of women who were willing to do this together. It was a long time in coming, but when it happened, it was really an overwhelming group that were very outspoken with legislators and press. And really, I think, it made them feel much stronger and capable of changing something that was particularly nasty going on with the state. Where they were essentially trying to save money by preying on these women and putting them in situations that led them to not want to apply for childcare assistance because it was so fraught with fear around this issue of exposing themselves to their abusers.”

“We bring a firm voice.”

– Grantee

- “So one of our new strategies is to develop a women’s circle. We’re also looking at ways to just support families where they are, again knowing that we can’t change our mission and be the childcare advocate and do a ton of work on childcare access, but we can meet, we need to better meet members where they are, which is using a lot of informal care in their communities and in their homes and the buildings in which they live.”



- “That’s been a really amazing opportunity for her to develop her voice in the media and in writing as a Spanish-speaking immigrant woman writing her own op-eds and getting her perspective out there about what’s going on politically.”
- “It was really important to have both homecare workers who are employed through agencies and to have homecare workers or domestic workers employed by individual families and individuals themselves. It was really good to have them in the room together to be able to talk about where are the real challenges, where are the real opportunities for growth, and for them to develop their own vision of what their workforce can and should be given the really huge demand for care in our society right now. It was really powerful. They both, I think, gained a lot from it, learning about different models and approaches around the country, but also obviously brought so much to the discussion as well.”

POLICY & ADVOCACY GAINS | 45

- “The group was a way to address external and internal factors that affect parenting as well as the critical issues surrounding parents in Black communities including: social class, power, safety, education, wealth, job security, burdens of racial discrimination, inequality and economic disparity, and balancing the civic responsibilities of every individual as an American citizen.” The group was made up of 13 mentors who held 45 local meetings and engaged 681 parents.
- Puget Sound Sage graduated 20 emerging leaders. Several graduates now serve on different advisory boards and committees. For example, one graduate was appointed to the Advisory Committee for the Best Starts for Kids Levy, which will raise \$65 million annually, and the Director was appointed by the County Council to serve on the Communities of Opportunities Governance Council, which decides how to spend \$6 million annually.



Policy Gains

Childcare Funding

- Defeated cuts to childcare and prevented the loss of \$74 million, which ensured providers received payment and children did not lose care in **Illinois**.
- Supported SB2450, which passed. It allowed the **Illinois** Department of Human Services to continue processing childcare payments (2013).
- Supported SB3601, which imposes accountability requirements on **Illinois** Department of Child and Family Services licensing obligations. Many providers feared retaliation during the licensing process for reporting unfair and inconsistent treatment.
- \$8 million allocated into TANF funds into the Mississippi Child Care Development Fund. This work extended services from 6 months to 12 months for TANF clients, transitional childcare clients, homeless children, foster children, and children in state protective custody—about 8,000 children in **Mississippi**.
- Attempted to pass constitutional amendment in **New Mexico** to quintuple funding for early childhood education with funds from a land grant permanent fund.
- Passed two soda taxes that would raise \$7.5 million for early childhood education and support 1,000 children and double the wages for over 100 educators (in Santa Fe, New Mexico) and fund 8,000 children and double the wages for 800 providers (in Albuquerque, **New Mexico**).
- Secured for the past three years \$500 million in new funding to expand access to parents on the waiting list and provide modest increases in the reimbursement rate for providers in **California**. In the original governor's budget, no new funding had been allocated for childcare.
- Passed Proposition 30, an increase in income tax for seven years and an increase of a fourth of one cent on sales tax for four years in **California**.
- Passed and advocated for soda tax to support the costs of universal childcare in the City of **Philadelphia**.
- Secured three new co-op members who purchased ownership share in a \$2.2 million-dollar business in **Philadelphia**.
- Supported Pennsylvania state budget to add \$60 million in education spending to support 14,000 Head Start slots in the fall of 2017.
- Provided childcare scholarships to ALICE-qualifying families enrolled in family childcare programs. ALICE is asset-limited, income-constrained, and employed families that are above the federal poverty level but are below the basic cost-of-living threshold in **Connecticut**.
- Ensured Care4kids funding remained stable during a period of deep cuts to other state programs in **Connecticut** and defeated attempts (in 2016) to remove families from the program.

Childcare Access

- Maintained 25,000 children on the subsidy role using petitions in **Alabama** in 2012.
- **Philadelphia** passed universal pre-kindergarten, which will help 110,000 children and had the unexpected benefit of helping 1- and 2-star facilities become 3-star using the former quality rating system (e.g., the grantee developed a model application and sample of materials and coached 15 providers in filling out the government application. One of these providers expanded to 80 slots to serve 270 children, all subsidized, and hired 8 full-time staff who were all African American, low-income women).
- Secured guaranteed universal pre-K education, which at the time would bring in 1,800 additional 3–5-year-old children into pre-school programs in **Vermont**.
- Secured and enforced 12-month authorization required under the new Child Care Development Block Grant regulations that will impact over 1 million children in **California**.
- Defeated language in the **New Mexico** state plan that would impede the new requirement to provide 12 months of uninterrupted care.
- Expanded childcare subsidies citywide as a union member benefit for Retail, Wholesale & Department Store Union members. Fifteen members received childcare subsidies totaling over \$115,000. The grantee is currently holding workshops with members on how to access childcare subsidies, ensuring workers have access to computers, and reducing the waitlist (estimated to be at 40,000). They described the childcare issue as a way to agitate members, folding them into the organization's larger fair scheduling campaign in **New York City**.
- Expanded access to childcare sites in zip codes where workers live and work. It was extended to the 34th Street Square area in **New York**.
- Eliminated the 20-hour work week requirement (in **New York** and **California**: AB 2150, AB 60).
- One grantee formalized a memorandum of understanding with a childcare provider (Para Los Niños) to provide childcare services in proximity to the garment district in **California**; the site will now offer dedicated enrollment for childcare workers and provide evening meal services. Outreach and training programs will include how to apply for subsidized care, wage rights, factory health and safety, and immigrant rights.
- Hired staff to provide technical support to the Caring Hands Childcare Providers and streamline a job dispatch program to line workers with employers in **California**.
- Began a new program linking women construction workers to childcare through the partnership with the Moore Community House Women in Construction in **Mississippi**.
- Maintained **Washington's** no wait list policy for families eligible for childcare subsidies.
- After three attempts, increased the subsidized childcare budget by \$9 million to increase reimbursement rates and allow more parents in **New Mexico** with full-time minimum-wage jobs to qualify.
- Continued working to defeat cuts to childcare for 11- and 12-year-olds who would "age out" of benefits in **California**.
- Licensed 78 providers in **Connecticut**. Each license enables 4–5 new parents to enter the workforce and pay down debt, open a savings account, move to larger apartment, and earn at least \$5,000. This work also helped to decrease the time it took to acquire a license.

Childcare Quality & Childcare Workers' Wages

- Trained childcare workers for rating system in **Illinois** when QRIS was first rolled out.
- Secured **Vermont** SB 5.9, which gave collective bargaining rights to care workers in the state, but in a slim vote educators voted not to form a union. The vote affects 1,200 early educators.
- In **New Mexico**, 15 workers' centers held union elections. This led to the first multi-employer collective bargaining agreement between Quality Early Learning Association (QELA) and AFT Early Educators United, affecting 750 childcare business owners. QELA was launched during the Ms. Foundation grant period.
- Implemented the childcare food program in Mississippi.
Helped eliminate the QRS system in **Mississippi**, which was too costly for most providers to implement. It will be replaced by another system to-be-announced.
- Garnered 50% increase in tiered bonus payments through the Keystone STARS stakeholders committee in Philadelphia, which was approved in just four months and provided retroactive payments.
- Raised the reimbursement rate in **Philadelphia** to \$8,500 per child.
- Several workers from the restaurant industry became licensed childcare providers to fill the gap in overnight, in-neighborhood, affordable care; these providers accept subsidies. This was a **multi-state initiative** affecting New York, Detroit, and the Bay Area. Leveraging other funds, the grantee plans to pilot a childcare cooperative project to offer childcare during nontraditional hours and provide overnight care.

Other Administrative Policy

- Supported HB 241 to allow **Alabama** homecare providers to continue to provide care to six or more children without the installation of a sprinkler system.
- Supported the creation of an electronic Time & Attendance System and a TAS advisory group in **Alabama**.
- Recruited 11 centers (9 pending) into the new Child Care and Adult Food Program (CACFP) through a sponsorship agreement with the Child Nutrition Office at the Department of Education and gained \$2,500/month to pay for food, food staff, and nutrition education and training in **Mississippi**.
- Added a checkbox to the childcare system's application that allows applicants to self-identify as survivors of domestic violence. The change would help these parents gain access to services without being put at risk from a former abuser in **New Mexico**.
- New regulations allow women to earn 75% of their income during family leave or pregnancy disability, and helped to repeal the maximum family grant rule so TANF recipients could continue to receive cash aid if they have another child in **California**.
- Continued working to include family childcare centers under the state's sanctuary status in **California**.
- Shortened the Care4kids application form within **Connecticut's** childcare subsidy program.
- Advocated for the main childcare insurance company to translate documents into Spanish or link providers to bilingual phone and online support. Over 50% of providers in **Connecticut** are Spanish-speaking.
- Attained an administrative procedural change related to reference checks to streamline the family childcare provider application process through the **Connecticut** Department of Public Health. The correction should prevent delays of up to a year and affect an estimated 175 new providers each year.

- Supported the creation of an Office of Early Childhood Education through the governor's office (**Connecticut**), which would impact 4,025 licensed providers and over 231,000 children under the age of six. The purpose of the office was to streamline state and federally funded programs. The office's funding stayed the same in 2017 despite the state's \$900 million deficit.
- **Bridgeport** school system changed bus routes to drop children off at family care providers. Norwalk Children's Museum established a family childcare provider membership discount. Norwalk Early Childhood Center held evening meetings so family childcare providers could attend.
- Defeated **Mississippi's** plan to require parents to get fingerprinted to receive benefits.

Workplace Policy

- Developed and helped introduce fair workweek legislation. The **City of New York** is now debating a ban to on-call scheduling. Seventeen other major retailers began to phase out and end on-call shifts. The Attorney General in New York and several other states are examining the legality of on-call scheduling. Other legislation includes the Schedules that Work Act (2014) prohibiting employers from providing a retail employee with less than 20 hours of work during any 14-day period (local), providing workers the right to request schedule and location modifications from their employers without fear of retaliation (local), and requiring that workers are paid for at least four hours for on-call shifts to make on-call shifts less desirable (state).
- Zara workers in **Manhattan** received \$1–3 hourly wage increases and access to full-time wages; similar campaigns are planned for **Worcester**, and the grantee is also working to increase the minimum wage for retail workers. A key part of the strategy was the creation of the Shoppers Alliance, about 15,000 consumers who supported ethical business practices and were willing to boycott the store.
- Enforced the Domestic Worker Bill of Rights, the strongest right to overtime protections in the country. Enforcement included helping to pass SB1015 to end the sunset provision of the 2013 bill, which required overtime pay for domestic workers and gives clearer guidelines for overtime for 2 million households that rely on domestic workers. As part of enforcement in **California**, the #sanctuaryhomes campaign was launched for employers to pledge not to use deportation as a form of retaliation—since the overtime law requires employees to file complaints, some may fear deportation, which weakens the law.
- Other **California** legislation is pending, such as SB54: The California Values Act, SB6: Universal Representation, SB482: Sleep Time Exemption for Caregivers (oppose), AB206: Workers Compensation Reform, AB450: Protecting Immigrant Workers from Raids (support), SB562: Californians for a Healthy CA Single Payer Healthcare.
- Through the Fight for 15 Campaign and related advocacy, 19 states have increased their minimum wage.
- Elimination of tipped minimum wage as part of the One Fair Wage Campaign. **New York's** tipped minimum wage increased.
- Achieved new minimum wage and paid sick leave ordinance in **Los Angeles**.
- Created City Office of Wage Standards in **Los Angeles** to receive wage claims and conduct investigations on failure to provide minimum wage or paid sick days.
- Supported **Los Angeles City and County** legislation on wage enforcement and collection mechanisms.



POLITICAL Context

leadership social justice
public goods
economic justice labor
philanthropy grantmaking childcare
learning policy
role of government

POLITICAL CONTEXT

As mentioned earlier, a majority of grantee and stakeholder interviews took place shortly before the 2016 presidential elections. The win of Donald Trump meant that grantees and stakeholders would have to pivot and clearly define the Foundation's future role in supporting this work. **They believed the Foundation's overarching approach—funding women of color grassroots organizations was “even more critical than ever.”** While the changed landscape presents an opportunity to build on the coalitions and knowledge exchanges that have occurred over the past five years among the Foundation's grantee cohort, the new landscape will require new alignments, defenses, research, and resources. Among their many concerns, the grantees acknowledged the resiliency of their communities, expressed a preparedness to take on new threats, and relayed that on the ground, fear could be harnessed into energy and excitement around what could be possible in the climate.



During the evaluation project, the Foundation was engaged in its own strategic planning effort to reflect on the work carried out over the past few years, strengthen grantmaking processes, and identify opportunities for grantees while supporting grassroots social justice infrastructure and power.

As the political climate shifted, the Women's Economic Justice Program Director, Aleyamma Mathew, commented, “Most of all, we need to formulate how the grant program can respond to the new climate that uses racism, sexism and xenophobia to mobilize violence and corporate control. Ms.’s response to this moment won’t actually show itself clearly until at least another year or two. What are some of the issues that will impact childcare even more under this new reality? How do we evolve the focus on grantmaking? Focusing on the impact of privatization in this sector is just an example of what it can evolve into.

What we need is a much more collective framework that unites people under the same umbrella, and I’m going to call that umbrella the fight around privatization, because what I fear happening in the childcare world is what we have seen in the public education world, where public schools were defunded, and private interests stepped in to ‘rescue’ it. The administration has already demonstrated its support for privatized strategies through the appointment of several federal agency heads, including the Department of Education Secretary DeVos, who believes in voucher programs and charter schools.

How do we look to the power of women of color as a guiding star on how to organize and connect impacted communities, respond to regressive policies, and design new ones that ensure social, economic, and political equality for all? The current moment allows us to light a fire around the role of government and its responsibility to the people. It gives us another opportunity to redesign this country to actualize its promise of equality.”

Below are few examples of the grantees' initial thoughts on how to operate in this environment:

- **Values-based Organizing:** “We just held our annual leadership retreat where we bring together about 25 parent leaders and about 15 staff. It was a very emotional moment because we had to come together and reel from realizing that all of the hateful rhetoric that was part of this campaign is now almost going to be institutionalized. [The retreat] allowed us to have a conversation around all of the isms and to reaffirm and intentionally to talk about the impact on families who are Muslim, who are undocumented, who are people of color, who are LGBTQ, the ones who have been targeted. It allowed us to explicitly say that our fight is to ensure that these marginalized communities are at the center of our work and that childcare for these communities is now more critical than ever.... I think moving forward, the need to create community for these families where they feel safe, where they feel like other people have their backs, where they feel they can be listened to and not solution-ized. It's our commitment as an organization to be really explicit and educate all of our members around these values and that we are not going to support a system that breaks families up. And that we're going to really fight and put those communities at the center of our work.”
- **Deep Leadership Development:** “We feel we need so much more capacity than we have right now. We're a fairly stable, a good organization, but we're feeling the need to ramp up what we do on such a broader level than what we're doing right now. **We need to be even more of an organization that does really deep leadership work as well as strictly just campaign and organizing work.** We are going to need to figure out how to reach thousands and thousands of more women all the time and figure out how to have connection with each other, how to create new structures of how we communicate information and build leadership. We needed to do that before, but it feels much more urgent now. There's such a need to still up our ability to be there for the community the way the community needs us right now.”
- **Employing Cross-Issue/Cross-Movement Approaches:** “If there's anything we're learning is the linear way in which we're trying to win on issues doesn't work. It doesn't resonate with everyday people who are not part of our movement that we need to be reaching. There's a way in which we shoot ourselves in the foot if we're like, there's groups are working on paid leave — Here is a group working on childcare. Here's groups working on eldercare without ever acknowledging that, for the average person, they need all three. I think we're in a moment post the elections where we have to really align ourselves as movements, deploy our talents differently. It's something for Ms. to be conscious of and thoughtful about what role Ms. can play in supporting those kinds of efforts to have the impact we want in the long run.”
- **Preparedness Against Threats:** “I'm concerned that organizations like mine will be targeted by this administration. We are an immigrant women organization. We are very clear that we work with undocumented women and so I have particular concerns about how to keep my members safe and how to keep our data safe and what internal structures we need to have to make sure that we don't unintentionally put our own people at risk.”
- **Need Diversified Funding:** “Now more than ever, we should diversify our funding. Before, 90 percent of our funding came from foundations. As you know, that's not very sustainable for our organization. We rely so heavily

on especially national foundations like Ms. and other funders, I think the organization should definitely start to diversify funding and look into other ways to be sustained.”

- **Rapid Response Funding & Related Infrastructure:** “As the person who fundraises for us, I’m trying to figure out how do I find funding to increase our ability to respond to worker retaliation? Do I want to be building an emergency fund or having a person who can take on retaliation claims? ... If you don’t act fast against retaliation, then you might as well not have acted at all.”
- **A Movement Moment for Unity:** “We’re having to do so much defensive work that it’s taking away from this positive work that we’re excited about. But on the other hand, the potential is greater, in some ways, now than it was before, because there’s so much of a desire to push back, to win, to unite. Our industry and our issues are being seen as real bread-and-butter issues that could help kind of win back a populace that was lost.”
- **More Recruitment:** “This is a time for us to figure out ways to get out there even stronger with our recruitment efforts. ... The stronger our membership is the more we’re able to resist and build a fight.”
- **Build Supporters:** “The research is helpful to build your supporters like on the ground and build your support with community allies and stewards and with the local policymakers. But, this administration, they’re not going to be acting in our interest. It’s not a matter of showing them the data, we have to resist them.”
- **Defensive Work:** “We are having to do a lot of defensive work in preparation for deportations, or attacks on Muslims, or attacks on LGBTQ folks in our industry – we’re having to line all of that up. At the same time, we’re seeing an outpouring of support of people wanting to work with us, or for us, or allies wanting to fund our campaign work. I think that will help drive this work, as well.”
- **New Partnerships:** “We had a meeting today with an ally, someone we’re trying to build a new and very unique partnership with Frankly it’s this election that pushed our conversation today. I’m actually grateful for that and I’m looking forward to that. We worked on a campaign last year and it didn’t pan out at all. We sort of dragged our feet on regrouping and looking at how we work together in the future. I feel like from today’s meeting we have put our heads together.”
- **Balance Long- and Short- Term Work:** “We need one team holding onto the long-term arc of the work and continuing to push the work forward so that we are positioned to move this offense and the proactive policies forward. And at the same time, we need to have a set of what we call sprinters who are ready in this moment to be agile and flexible, and able to go to do some of the defense work because we will definitely have to play defense on some of the core policies.”
- **Proactive Planning:** “Again, we’re trying to be proactive with legal services, sources of private philanthropy, strategies for supporting families in need, and how can we leverage local resources. We’re doing our best to prepare for a potential storm, but it’s still a very scary time, and one thing we’re very clear on is that while we are an organization that works specifically on childcare, childcare intersects with any number of other issues. And anything that’s bad for families is something that is bad for us and our mission and our vision, so it goes beyond the implications for the childcare system itself.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

From Grantees & Stakeholders



leadership social justice

public goods

economic justice labor

philanthropy

grantmaking

childcare

learning

role of government

policy

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM GRANTEES & STAKEHOLDERS

During the grantee and stakeholder interviews, interviewees were asked to provide recommendations to strengthen the Economic Justice Grant program and the Foundation's activities overall. They were asked to provide suggestions related to the grant portfolio in general, the grantmaking process, staff-grantee interactions, grantee capacity-building needs and opportunities, the Foundation's niche and role, and the grant program's direction and focus with respect to the new political context. Their suggestions were based on interviewee experience with past grants and Foundation projects and in recognition of the current political landscape. The suggestions of both stakeholders and grantees (past and current) were combined and categorized; they are listed below to facilitate use.

Grant Awards & Allowable Activities

1. **Increase the grant award amount and establish multi-year grants to achieve greater impact in this current political landscape.** The most frequent observation (from both stakeholders and grantees) was related to the size of the Foundation's grant awards. It was noted that the grant awards are smaller compared to other funders and given the scope of the work carried out, including participation in other Foundation activities such as the convenings. They also noted that while second- and third-year grants were typically awarded, offering multi-year grants from the start has many benefits. Multi-year grants would help grantees develop longer-term plans and take greater risks knowing the funding would be available. Multi-year funding would also support the Foundation's own goals to provide consistent and intensive investments in grantee organizations over time. Consider the following:

"The process has been pretty clear, the timelines have been pretty clear, the communication with the program officer has been very helpful, availability of communication with the program officer has been really good. The only thing I would say is that it would be nice if the Ms. Foundation had more money than they've got."

– Grantee

- "It's a lot of work for not as much money as maybe some of the other grants. And it would be frustrating if the programming and the stuff that they asked you to do wasn't useful, but because it has been useful, it's been good.... So even though the grant size is small and what they ask of you is a lot, I think the programming is useful and we've been able to leverage that support for additional funding [by other funders]."
- "In this landscape, it might necessitate maybe not a three-year, but a two-year or something where it's allows you to probably even make bigger promises."
- "They've got the vision, the commitment, I just wish they had more money to re-grant – can [other funders] put more funding into Ms. to really anchor this work? That would be really cool."
- "One thing that Ms. should really think about is how to make more multi-year commitments. ...It is also going to make a difference in a group's ability to assess the risks they can take and the strategies they can pursue. It's really different if they only know they have a yearlong grant versus if they know they have a two-year commitment or a three-year commitment. I just think the degree to which the Foundation can think about where do they stand around multi-year grants would make a really big difference in the long-term investments."

- “I feel foundations should be committed to support groups for the long haul. The funding has been year-to-year, although it’s been renewed multiple times, it’s still year-to-year and year-to-year fund raising. It’s a very, very difficult thing. We started getting funding because another organization cycled off. We were happy when the opportunities came up, but at the same time it’s difficult when you get funded for a couple of years, and then you get cycled off. It makes it very difficult as an organization to make long-term plans and long-term organizing work becomes harder. I would like to see the funders stepping up for multiple year grants and investing in the ecosystem in the long term, in the long run.”
- “I think particularly when the foundation has an interest in engaging diverse voices and women of color, you have to be able to invest in people over the long haul and not just a few years to give them enough resources to really do the work that you want them to do.”

A few grantees offered another take on the Foundation’s grant size. These grantees noted that while the grant award was not large compared to the organization’s annual operations budget or when compared to the grants received from other sources, the Foundation’s grant was used to support highly strategic and innovate work. For that reason alone, the grant, regardless of its size, was notable. The following quotes raise the questions of how can Ms. Foundation grants be strategically used to create alliances across movements? When should the Foundation invest in anchor organizations or larger national organizations?

- “Ms. gives smaller grants than other organizations, and I feel like, because of that, they have thought that they should fund smaller organizations, because that’ll have more impact. I don’t know that that’s necessarily the way it always has to be. You can certainly fund smaller organizations, but you can use smaller dollars in strategic ways even with larger organizations, to fund these kind of collaborations, or to fund a very specific piece of work for people coming together and working together on a specific issue. A previous grant officer at Ms. had done a really smart, really strategic grant with us, they gave a small grant to us and large national women’s organizations to work together. These were mainstream national women’s organizations that had never heard of us, never would’ve worked with us otherwise, [we were] a little worker organization led by people of color and immigrants. That [grant] made a world of difference: the women’s organizations started prioritizing our issues as really big national gender justice issues. Now we have bills introduced in Congress, and huge industrywide national change has happened after those initial conversations with the national mainstream gender justice organizations. It isn’t always the case that giving smaller grants means you should stop funding large organizations because as we grow, we want to keep working with Ms. – they’re a wonderful partner! I just think they should think about the small grants differently with large organizations; they should think about it as providing strategic interventions for those kinds of strategic collaborations, or strategic events, or strategic moments.”

- “It’s just smaller – most of our other grants are bigger, so it hasn’t been a major source of funding for us, but it’s been very strategic. It was only \$20,000 but it helped us leverage other money. I think for us, the national recognition that the Ms. Foundation is funding us was very beneficial for us as we were growing. I think that by funding those initial surveys and interviews, it helped us leverage some larger grants to do a much longer longitudinal study as to why these women get the jobs and keep the jobs, and why other women don’t. We’ve used it as kind of a base for more comprehensive research and larger grants.”
2. **Begin supporting 501(c)(4) work that compliments 501 (c)(3) policy and organizing work.** A few grantees with experience operating both (c)(3) and (c)(4) organizations noted how the work could be complementary. They also noted just how important electoral advocacy was for their issue, building power, and making progressive change. As one grantee put it, “I don’t know if Ms. considered raising (c)(4) dollars, but that is something that more foundations are doing now, and I think it is valuable so that we can engage in more hard politics and win elections that’ll protect our members and help us advance policies.” Another added that (c)(4) efforts would put “policymakers in a place to help enact the policies of the (c)(3) organization.”

Grant Direction & Priorities

3. **Continue funding community organizing, organizations building and mobilizing their base around a progressive agenda, and women of color-led organizations.** Grantees noted that the Ms. Foundation’s awards, although smaller, were also unique—few funders invest in local policy and advocacy work, fewer are willing to invest in startup or small organizations, and few have relationships with women of color-led organizations.²³ Grantees reiterated the need for this type of funding and the value of it, especially given the current climate. For example:
 - “Mostly what we have looked to the foundation to do is really support our policy work because it’s really hard to get money to support policy and advocacy, not that the direct-service funding is all that easy.”
 - “I really feel this is a time for a movement. The people’s movement must reevaluate its strategies and we must be more militant, we must be more active and in the streets and more direct with our message in ad campaigns. We need foundations to support that. We need support for on-the-ground organizing.”
 - “I think groups that should be funded are ones that are wanting to organize a base around childcare, so fund those organizations that are either building their membership or are going to activate people around a really progressive agenda.”

²³ According to Foundation staff, less than 1% of all philanthropic funds go toward women of color-led organizations. Historically philanthropy has not supported these organizations as a result of structural reasons related to race and gender.

4. **Most grantees suggested that the Foundation continue with a focus on childcare, but not all grantees supported ongoing childcare investments.** In general, the grantees interviewed articulated that all issues are important, interconnected, and will simultaneously be attacked under the current administration. They lamented instances where funding one issue meant another issue might receive fewer resources. Grantees with advocacy programs focused primarily on childcare recommended that the Foundation continue to support this issue. As part of their argument, they referenced opportunities to be proactive at the state and local levels and that the strides made over the past few years could be maintained. Grantees working on multiple campaigns related to workers' rights, protections, and wages provided mixed suggestions. They were supportive of a continued focus on childcare but also noted that in their own day-to-day organizing, other campaigns were priority.

For example, "if I were to be honest, I don't think childcare is the biggest thing they should take on right in this – given the moment, given what's happening. I do think economic inequality is the most fundamental issue. It's so deeply connected to race and gender. [How could Ms.] look at economic inequality in an intersectional way? ...What November 8th did to us was essentially divide the 99 percent, killed the dream of a united 99 percent. And so, if we want to fight economic inequality, we need a united 99 percent that deals with race and gender. Finding campaigns that can get at the economic inequality, like, minimum wage (there are plenty of other issues that you could use) but doing it in this intersectional way, using race and gender, and having those conversations, to me, would be the most important contribution that Ms. could make, right now. And, again, there aren't a lot of funders who are focused on intersectionality, in the way that Ms. really could."

Stakeholder interviewees also did not provide concrete advice for the Foundation in terms of a continued focus on childcare. "Given the size of the portfolio, for Ms. to stick to the groups it supports, and help them have a voice during this very challenging time. I think that's really an important contribution." And, should it change direction, "I think when you talk about changing priorities, they probably should lay out who they're supporting, and how much it is, and what pulling out the grants might mean to the strength of these organizations."

Several childcare grantees were clear about what it would mean should the Foundation change direction. "If Ms. changes course, we're screwed. I don't know how we would – I guess it's just a fear that I have, is that because our issue is quote/unquote childcare, funding might get diverted to other quote/unquote issue areas that – it's all critical. I don't want to create this division or this pitting against one another. Our members are impacted by all those things. For childcare, the president has a tax credit plan. We haven't heard yet, 'we're ending federal funds for childcare'. I haven't heard that yet, but I know that childcare is a critical, critical, critical issue for our members."

Further that "our ability to at least remain steadfast at the local and state level is going to be where we can continue to get wins and support childcare and increase childcare funding for our members. I don't know what it means at the federal level and to what extent there's going to be horrific policy changes. I haven't heard them yet. I wouldn't be surprised, but that all means we have to be prepared and ready to go when it happens so that we can rapidly respond. If we can continue to support the organizing efforts that we're already doing. If funders change course and decide well, 'childcare's not an issue right now, we need to focus on these other things' then when the childcare shit storm happens, it's going to be a lot harder for us to ramp up and be ready to go on day one."

A few interviewees noted that should the Foundation continue to support childcare, its role in the funding landscape would be less clear. As documented earlier, the Foundation was a groundbreaker in childcare, particularly through its use of a social justice grantmaking. Stakeholders and grantees noted the Foundation's contribution to the issue and the value of its gender-race-class lens, connection to women of color leaders, and the grant program's elevation of organizations with women majority bases. They also noted that underlying the Foundation's approach was infrastructure development. But given all this, there are now other foundations investing in childcare advocacy, and a few interviewees wondered what this meant for the Ms. Foundation. For example, "I think Ms. has really catalyzed [childcare], but now there are much larger foundations giving much larger funding to huge state campaigns and organizing campaigns. So, I don't think that's the right place for Ms. – either Ms. finds a niche within that larger childcare organizing space or it picks a new issue."

The Foundation can use its role in philanthropic advocacy, working with other philanthropic partners, to influence the childcare field. Even with the introduction of other foundation childcare initiatives, several participants offered some concerns about the changed funding landscape and how the Ms. Foundation can take a leadership role to help grantees navigate it. One grantee described what is lost when only policy gains are prioritized by funders: "It's the difference between going for a quick win versus what actually are the important components that we're not willing to compromise away that lends itself towards transforming the system itself. We've started to see this dynamic that I mentioned earlier with the resources being pulled away from women leaders and women-led organizations. We definitely reached out to Ms. and to have a conversation to say, 'hey, are you seeing this too? Are there ways you can help intervene that would be helpful to all of us? How do we help make more usable the work that is being done in the field?' I do think that Ms. has been a great flat partner and strategist, helping us think through these questions."

Another stated, "Aleyamma and the Ms. Foundation have been a real pioneer in the childcare issue. Right now there's new funders coming in and supporting childcare, but I wonder if there's a way to leverage that, the model that she's developed and the relationships and the expertise that those groups have to position this work within the broader advocacy and funding community that's looking at childcare."

Few interviewees had suggestions for how Ms. should target its grants geographically. Of those suggestions that were shared, it was recommended the Foundation focus on the South and Southwest and on states where there are key members of congress.

Current Political Context

The interviews began shortly before the 2016 national elections and concluded during the first quarter of the Trump Administration. Many interviewees were still trying to understand what the new administration would mean for their current campaigns, their membership, and their organizations. They offered a series of provisional recommendations based on their emerging understanding of the landscape and the Foundation's potential role. They suggested the following:

5. **Continue to offer general operating grants and maintain flexibility in grants so that organizations can respond to an unpredictable political context.** While interviewees were anticipating an onslaught of negative policies on multiple issues directly affecting women, they also noted that past strategies (or “playbooks”) would no longer be useful. Existing workplans and planned activities may not be appropriate, feasible, or sufficient. They were encouraged by new alliances and the durability of existing partnerships but that the commitment of some allies and elected and administrative officials was still shifting and would not be clear for some time. If the funding were flexible, it would allow grantees to adapt workplans to an everchanging political context without penalties. A few also described the project-based funding approach used by other funders and encouraged those funders to “really trust the organizations to do the work and that comes from general [operating grant] funds.”
6. **Help grantees become less vulnerable to attacks from the federal government or withstand attacks.** Vulnerable organizations include organizations that receive government funding (funds that could be pulled from the grantee) and organizations with immigrant and low-income bases. At the time of this evaluation, grantees were receiving consultation to safeguard member data and further ensure 501(c)3 compliance. Interviewees suggested the Foundation centralize this information in a member-based web portal. A few suggested the Foundation help organizations establish litigation funds, provide technical assistance on how to work with legal defense, and use the Administrative Procedures Act²⁴ and Freedom of Information Act²⁵ processes. These suggestions seem particularly relevant given how much the courts have been used at the federal level to respond to White House policy.

“I think constituent-led organizations are going to feel under attack and overwhelmed, and need support that helps them feel like they have others watching out for them. I think there will be real attacks—attacks that threaten the ability of organizations to exist and that’s an area where foundations often shy away from backing their grantees up. The Foundation needs to support organizations through thick and thin [and that] is something that can be very valuable. The environment’s already difficult enough for women and minority led organizations and I think it’ll just be more so. Doubling down on the same sorts of support will be very helpful.”

– Grantee

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GRANTEES & STAKEHOLDERS

²⁴ See <https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/summary-administrative-procedure-act>

²⁵ See <https://www.foia.gov/>

- 7. Push for a productive resistance.** Several interview respondents indicated that one approach being debated in the sector is “see what we can get” from the White House, but these interview respondents adamantly rejected this approach, arguing now is the time to fight for big wins at the state and local levels to provide “easy” contrasts to the federal administration. They also argued that this approach might unintentionally provide political cover for the administration or be construed as supportive of the administration’s agenda. Resistance is not without its complications. As one stakeholder suggested, “How do you resist productively, in a way that draws certain lines while at the same time continues to advance the conversation, and advance the work that’s being done to try to expand childcare and to improve child quality? How are you persuasive without [being] willing to compromise?” Another stated, “This debate’s happening already amongst some advocates, kind of like, ‘let’s get what we can and keep trudging on.’ I just think that’s wrong for this time that we’re in. Even in the childcare community we have a bit of a debate right now and some people want to make overtures to the Trump administration and see what we can get. We’re just like, ‘No.’ There’s a group of us that say, ‘No, that is not a strategic thing to do.’”

The same grantee added, “We need to have a big fight about childcare and I feel like this team [the Ms. cohort] really set the foundation for that and if we just sort of retreat into a bunch of state campaigns only we’re going to lose the momentum that was created by the 2016 election and not set ourselves up for 2020. It’s like everything we should be doing to set ourselves up for a win in 2020 with a president and a Congress that’s going to be more supportive of family economic security and an agenda around that. And then, hopefully, a win after that election with some real money going into childcare.”

- 8. Continue funding organizations that are mobilizing women.** For example, “Identifying those organizations who are working directly for those – with those families. Not for them, with them, and seeing the role of grassroots, member-based organizations as key to challenging what’s about to come down. Whether it’s the deportation raids or whether it’s Roe v. Wade overturning, Obamacare overturning, all of these things are going have a direct impact on our members. We have to be able to have the tools and resources in place to fight back.”
- 9. Help grantees monitor national politics and facilitate learning about what’s working and helping in this new context.** Grantees will have a lot to monitor and may not have the capacity to monitor every White House policy. Convenings were identified as a useful space to discuss what is happening nationally and allow grantees to share what is happening in their state or region. For example, “To the extent that the Ms. Foundation can help us in doing this, we again are not really a policy organization. This is new to us, to be having these conversations and thinking about how to position ourselves in this way, and although we’ve been successful in sort of a friendly climate, I would love support and tools and funding for how to navigate this potentially less-friendly climate, and then I think to the extent we can learn from other grantees about the strategies that are working best at the state and local levels, too, since that may be where we’re turning for a lot of our support.”

“Our communities are incredibly resilient and incredibly determined and so this is a very bad political moment, but I have the privilege and honor of working with a group of people who have faced many things and far worse and are very determined to keep continuing to build with each other and build for their families and build for their communities.”

– Grantee

10. **Fund culture change.** “Again, to the point where Ms. can really be thoughtful about how do you fund the culture change and narrative work, that’s needed. **Not messaging, but real culture change where we’re valuing care, we’re valuing children and we’re valuing care providers.** Those feel like important components that need to happen in the field but also need to be resourced. And the degree to which Ms. can be a player in helping to support the organizing of people feels important right now and needed. (emphasis added)”
11. **Support state and local work.** “In that context, the support that we need from Ms., I think, is going to be pretty profound in terms of resources flowing to local and state campaigns, because those are really going to be the places or the laboratories, if you will, where we can really experiment and model what childcare and family care policies could look like and how they get financed. I think a real push to resource these state and local efforts is going to be important. I also think there’s going to be a need for Ms. to be helping on the defensive side. Defense, for me, is both the policies that could come under attack with the new administration, the vicious budget fights and stuff you can imagine, but then there’s a second realm, which is actually developing protection squads around care workers who are on the frontlines but are probably the most vulnerable in terms of – especially in relationship to Trump’s stance on immigration. Those are some things Ms. could be a really good partner in thinking through with the movement groups what is needed right now and how could resources flow in a way that really support the building of both those muscles, the defense and the continuing to move the offense, especially at the state and local level.”
12. **Create multi-racial, multi-issue tables, acting as coalition convener, and envelope those who are not yet part of the movement into this work.**
- “It’s like no other funder. [Its] kind of an ally organization, a partner, not just a funder. That is actually a role that Ms. could play: they could be a bit more of a coalition convener.”
 - “They could really build bridges of coalitions across party lines, racial lines, religious lines; I’m not convinced that’s happening yet. You read about the women’s marches, which I think is a very powerful statement and I think there’s a lot of potential there, but I don’t know if that touched White rural America.”
 - “I think that could be a real role for Ms., either to help convene those coalitions or to fund those kinds of collaborative agendas would be really amazing.”

“I don’t want it to sound like all the work we’ve done has been in vain. I think all the work we’ve done has been in readiness for this moment. We have a lot of credibility. We have a lot of partnerships – private, philanthropy, policymakers at different levels, people who really believe in our work, people with whom we’ve built relationships over the years. Part of why we’ve done this is to maximize the good times, but also knowing that there would be crises like this, to have everything we possibly can in place when we have to weather storms like this one, so I don’t want you to think that the investment is not worthwhile.”

– Grantee

- “There are so many women in particular from all different backgrounds who are incredibly fired up about what just happened. Things that we all knew to be true is just so much clearer, right? It’s just all out in the open now, right? I do think there’s a movement building opportunity to figure out what does it look like to build a cross-racial, cross-class women’s movement not based on individual organizations, necessarily, that puts women of color at the center and the ways in which women of color are being targeted and all women are being affected.”
 - “How do we take advantage of the desire of so many people to want to do something right now and to not feel powerless right now.”
13. **Continue assessing grantee “results,” not in terms of policy wins but rather raising the visibility of the issue or other newly defined assessment markers.** For example, “For me to say they should look at the efficacies of organizations, I don’t know if that’s fair. They should look at their organization’s visibility in the state, how the organizations have highlighted the issue, promoted the issue. Have the organizations helped get the issue more visibility?”

General Areas

14. **Extend capacity-building opportunities to the board, frontline staff, and constituencies of grantee organizations.** Many grantees praised the formal and informal capacity-building supports as described earlier in this report. A few suggested the Foundation open such opportunities to other members of the organization, including the board, line staff, and constituent members to further strengthen the organization. As one grantee stated, “Helping board and staff just align their vision in a retreat would have been an amazing opportunity. And then having a funder in the room as well to talk about that aspect of the relationship. You’d have the funder, the board, and the staff all communicating on the same page.” Also, “I think one of the things staff appreciate, especially after wearing many hats and working really hard, is their professional development and growth in the organization and feeling that growth in terms of the knowledge that they acquire. Any capacity building supporting that development and that growth, I think would be amazing for staff.” Lastly, “It would be amazing if some of that skill building might be offered not only to the leaders of organizations but to the constituencies of organizations as well, so actually bring someone out to do some training with our folks around mobilizing or communicating with legislators or using social media tools, for example. I’d love to see some trainings like that.”

Very few grantees wanted a formal capacity-building program focused on traditional organizational development topics. Several grantees expressed mixed experiences with other traditional organizational capacity-building programs supported by other funders. They noted that it was easier if the grantee organization identified the area for development, chose the consultant, and engaged in long-term projects where the consultant would be available before, during, and after implementation. Most grantees overwhelmingly supported the Foundation’s current approach to capacity building using the cohort model and targeting areas that would immediately help the organization’s operations and programmatic infrastructure.

- 15. Help grantee organizations forge or experiment with corporations as project partners.** A small number of interviewees (fewer than five) offered suggestions related to working with corporations on childcare. They stated that funding projects targeting the private sector could help

- develop greater understanding of what incentives might drive support for quality childcare;
- identify best practices for expanding employee benefits packages to include childcare subsidies, particularly among female employees earning lower wages; and
- identify private sector corporations that would be willing to work with grantees to improve access and strengthen the workforce.

A few grantees are already working closer with corporations. For example, one grantee is working with a developer of a new retail site to train 800 workers in their Membership Organizing Training to learn about their rights and the history of labor organizing. Another example entails another grantee working with Unite Here Local 8 to create affordable childcare options for hotel and convention workers as part of the \$1.5 billion expansion of a local convention center.

- 16. Make daylong site visits a part of the multi-year grantmaking process and whenever possible attend grantee events.** When describing the informal technical assistance offered by the Program Officer, grantees were supportive of staff visits and encouraged daylong visits. For example, “I think it would’ve been amazing to have the Ms. Foundation spend a day with the organization. I know that’s a lot in terms of the work that needs to get done, but I think it’s amazing when especially funders can be on the frontlines with staff, with the executive director and just see what a day to day looks like and how the work is pushing forward. ... It’s one thing to talk about it and write about it, but it’s another thing to just experience it firsthand, which I think would give folks a more holistic picture of what grantees are doing in the work and how it’s being pushed forward.”
- 17. Continue supporting the organizations’ member engagement strategies, which may resemble more direct service at times; providing services builds trust and deepens relationships that are important to building leaders.** For example, “Because of that [providing education and legal services] I know our members had trust in us. We had very strong, deep relationships with our members. So, as a result we were able to just have more in-depth – I guess we understood the issues much better so that when the policy change conversation happened we’re able to push for the things that our members really needed. If we are only focusing on just the policy issues I don’t think we would be able to get our members to come out and have the same level of trust in the organization.”
- 18. Offer more fellowships modeled after the Public Voices fellowship.** Every grantee interviewed that participated in the Public Voices fellowship enthusiastically praised this project and the concrete work that came out of it. They recommended the Foundation offer more fellowships similar to Public Voices. For example, “I loved being part of the Public Voices fellowship! I learned so much from it. I got so much from it. I would love for Ms. to think about another kind of cohort training model like that one, maybe specifically around, for example, federal advocacy strategies what we learned from Bush. I feel like the cohort model is really great because you learn so much from your fellow participants, and the way the Public Voices training was structured, where we came together over a course of several days over the course of a year, was really great, because it gave us space in between to do our own work, but also gave us a dedicated time.”

The Foundation's Role

The interviewees also saw the Ms. Foundation's role as supporting a unified movement, building multi-issue/multi-racial coalitions, and stepping into its own advocacy. They suggested several ways the Foundation could expand, shift, and elevate its role:

19. Expand the use of the Program Director and other staff as advocates and spokespeople for advocacy campaigns. As discussed earlier, the Foundation, specifically the Program Officer and the Executive Director, were described as extremely helpful thought partners; for example, “they’ve come with us to state legislatures, to talk to legislators about their views as Ms. Like, no funder has ever done that before, with us, and that’s been amazing.” The interviewees suggested the Foundation’s elevated role as an advocate would be beneficial:

- “I think given who Ms. is, it’s really good for them to be accessed. That is a good and appropriate role for them. It is not the role for every foundation but for them to have a public voice, to have a voice around what we know works best for women and girls, this is a good time to use that voice... I don’t know to what degree Ms. is comfortable with that kind of straight-up advocacy that foundations can do legally, but I think for the foundations who have that ability that this is a good time to exercise it.”
- “It’s going to be really important, given that the Trump administration has claimed childcare as a major component, to really think about how and what ways Ms. can leverage its influence in this moment – whether it’s through donor bases or whether it’s through Ms. Foundation itself in helping to influence and position more movement groups to be in the room, in spaces helping to shape those policies moving forward. Or, being able to be in spaces to counter proposals that we think are harmful for our communities. I think there’s something about the role of the foundation in helping to position the [grantee] organizations in the right spaces.”
- “To the extent that Ms. Foundation can fund and help lead through reports and other things to hold up family economic security and the truth behind what’s really happening; that’s so important. ...so it’d be incredibly important role for the Ms. Foundation to be the one to hold that up and they give us something to be part of.”
- “I feel like coming out of this election and this political moment with the amount of misogyny that we saw and the rise of patriarchy, I just feel like we’re going to need more spaces where on a very practical level, different women actors who – whether they’re researchers or policy analysts, they’re organizers, they’re leaders. You’re going to need to create communities of women, who together, are really consistent in applying a good gender justice frame to the work, [can have] a defensive posture and look for the opportunities to move on the offense and move the work forward. There just has to be a different kind of realignment of our assets that way. I think Ms. is well poised to help begin to look for where those gaps exist and where we can be connecting dots so that we all feel like we’re part of one unified movement.”
- “There are these really uniting issues, like, raising the minimum wage and providing childcare, [that cut] across partisan, race, class, gender divides. We need to use those issues to have conversations with people and unite people around that common interest. That’s what is really hopeful, and we’re doing it. The question for me is, can the larger childcare community pivot in that way and think about using childcare for broader base-building, rather than using it for policy?”

- 20. Continue developing its practice for funding work at the intersections.** “I do think that it is a time for figuring out how to work more at the intersection of these issues, because they’re being attacked at the intersections. It’s really hard to do that in practice, and I know that Ms. has struggled to do that.” And, “How do we think across issue areas and across silos? The attacks that will come on worker rights, the attacks that will come on healthcare, the attacks that will come on immigrant families? Philanthropy often makes those separate worlds, and certainly non-profits often operate in these kind of silos, but it’s many of the same families. It’s many of the same communities. And the degree to which philanthropy can be working to tighten up the distances between philanthropy and the work of grantees to help support those families and communities I think is really important work in the years to come.”

Another interviewee agreed, stating, “I think sometimes that’s what happens with paid leave and childcare is, “Well, we can go get our paid leave thing done, sorry childcare.” But not doing service to families who, for them, these issues are tied together. We must have a different way of having our agendas more tied together so that we’re not so easily peeled off when there’s a potential solution on one front.” Further, “I think I would urge Ms. to continue to fund in the areas that it’s funding now, which I think are going to be even more critical than ever, but also to maybe think about ways or spaces where we can come together across those areas and build a common front. I think there’s a lot of energy and a lot of potential connection that we can be leveraging as advocates.”

- 21. Conduct philanthropic advocacy by extending and leveraging the Foundation’s reach into traditional philanthropic tables to share its expertise using a gender-race-class lens and supporting women of color-led organizing around childcare.**

The Foundation should:

- **Conduct public education on issue areas.** This would entail joining grantmaking tables and holding funder briefings. For example, one stakeholder stated, “I think there is more that could be done with traditional foundation settings. Ms. could bring an important voice to some of those more traditional foundation rooms that is an area for growth. ...We just need their voice in some of those rooms to be able to engage in the conversation when intersectionality is not being raised and remind us of just the importance of having a gender and race lens.” And, “If I think about the sort of national foundation meetings that I have been to in recent years, Ms.’s name just doesn’t come up, and that frustrates me a great deal because I think they have a lot to contribute.”
- **Engage in joint funding with other funder partners.** This might also mean the Foundation works with other funders to support a joint initiative: “What I think would be really helpful is if Ms. could help get those other funders to continue to put money in childcare. ... it’s not a lot of money that needs to be put into this field to help hold up a narrative and to help fund really good work in the state. It’d be great if Ms. with a vision around women, around families and equality, could help anchor a strategy with other funders to put more money in.”

“If I think about the sort of national foundation meetings that I have been to in recent years, Ms.’s name just doesn’t come up and that frustrates me a great deal because I think they have a lot to contribute.”

- **Promote the Foundation's model of social justice grantmaking, capacity building, and political orientation in the field of philanthropy.** This may also mean sharing its model with other funders:²⁶
 - "I think if Ms. could do training for other funders, they should. Training on how to be a good funder 101. It's not just the application process, which is how they were similar to other funders. They almost provide wraparound services for us as a funder. A lot of foundations say we don't have extra money for that. Maybe Ms. can share some of their best practices in terms of how do they offer capacity building opportunities and technical support opportunities for grantees. I think that would be great."
 - "I know our program officer is constantly trying to find ways to make the case, in other philanthropic foundation network funder meeting places, that foundations need to step up and learn more and apply more analysis related to gender, in the work that they do. And I really appreciate that."

22. Develop a strong communications strategy. Strategic communication was intended to be a major facet of the Foundation's childcare initiative, and some communications-related efforts were implemented (e.g., Public Voices fellowship as both leadership development and a communications-related capacity effort), but ongoing strategic communications was limited. One pitfall was the lack of a strategic plan and multi-layered activities to help grantees change the narrative by moving segments of society to act on issues of care at the national level and influence federal and state actors. Another pitfall was the lack of the sustained integration of grantees as spokespeople, authors, and experts among Foundation-led communication activities (that is, sustained opportunities to position grantees as experts as it did in the Public Voices fellowship).

Interviewees encouraged the Foundation to continue investing in changing the narrative and supporting grantees in being the voice for that narrative to increase visibility, identify/make champions, and move constituents to action, for example:

- "Anything we can do to continue to move voters away from this – 'it's a personal family responsibility' to 'it's a shared community responsibility and public responsibility to help our kids succeed' it's so important. I think storytelling helps with that, because you see a parent struggling to do right by their kids and it's not like they've failed, it's just the systems rigged against most people in this country."
- "I do feel like the program needs to think a little bit about what role it wants to play in developing, supporting, and elevating spokespeople, spokespeople who are working in this care sector. If there's going to be a lot of discourse on childcare, how do we make sure we have the voices that we need and want front and center to be trained, supported, and able to be effective voices that can build our movement, but can also change the discourse or shape the discourse around childcare. I would encourage the program to think about that."

There was a very small subset of interview respondents who were curious about how their narratives could be translated to White working class communities and the White women who voted for Trump. There was interest in developing greater understanding around what motivated those groups.

²⁶ To some extent the Foundation was able to support the growth of a local women's fund, the Women's Fund of Birmingham, a grantee. Through the process the grantee added capacity- building assistance to its grantmaking model.

CONCLUSION & Recommendations



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CONCLUSION

This evaluation has documented and assessed the Ms. Foundation for Women's Economic Justice Program (2012–2016)—its intersectional approach to social justice grantmaking and capacity building in the area of childcare, a new priority and strategic shift for the Foundation. It also documented the results of investing in the organizing and advocacy work of its grantees—workers' rights centers, community–labor partnerships, parent advocates, and childcare centers—over the past five years. The report documents their formative research, leadership development, and policy gains designed to re-position and situate childcare as part and parcel to the country's economic policy and long-term strategy to achieve women's economic security. This retrospective evaluation consisted of grantee, staff, and stakeholder interviews, including funders, and a review of internal and public documents (e.g., grantee reports, published reports). During the evaluation period, as noted throughout the report, the larger political landscape shifted drastically after the 2016 presidential elections, turning the federal climate for a host of women's issues from favorable to unfavorable. Consequently, this colored the lens in which interview respondents viewed the childcare issue in general; the immediate fears, needs, and resiliency of their communities; their own campaigns and organizational priorities; and the possible ways in which the Foundation could support the movement.

One of the learning aims of this evaluation effort was to assess whether the Foundation's investment to understand and support the interconnectedness between labor and childcare access was a successful contribution to the movement. The data suggest it was.

- Labor groups, national networks, and other funders took up the issue of childcare, linking workplace policy to childcare access and childcare worker rights. Although several noted it was unlikely that childcare would become the main staple of their campaign work, it did provide more evidence for just workplace policies, uncovered new implications for childcare policy, and provided an expanded membership base (e.g., working parents) with which to engage. For example, “No, [we had not done childcare before]. Our focus was really low-income retail workers, and our main campaign was just focusing on sustainable scheduling for retail workers. This was new and innovative for our frontlines. It was definitely necessary in terms of our membership, who were parents, and the access to childcare being a barrier to being at work and being available for work. It was new but totally made sense when we looked at the proposal and our work.”
- Childcare advocates and parental groups formulated a narrative around the economic consequences of the country's underfunded, segmented, and racialized childcare system and elevated the experiences of low-wage earners and women of color to inform or draft local, state, and federal policy.
- Both sectors engaged their bases in participatory research and leadership development so that members not only shaped policy through stories but authored policy, including administrative procedures. As with any new initiative, a significant portion of the work funded was research-based and aimed to understand the unique needs, barriers, and possible solutions to childcare access for low-income women, immigrant women, women of color, and women working in different employment sectors (retail, garment, restaurant, and nail salon). Through this research and in the space of the grantee convenings, grantee organizations engaged in cross-sector/cross-movement conversations to learn how and where their work intersected and identified (and in some instances embarked on) opportunities for collaboration.

The Foundation's framework—an embodiment of intersectionality and social justice—contributed to this success. Grantees and stakeholders overwhelmingly acknowledged and praised the Foundation's role in and contribution to the growth and development of individual leaders and whole organizations and campaigns. The key factors were administrative (e.g., general operating grants supporting policy) but largely relational (e.g., skilled, strategic, and accessible staff, with organizing backgrounds, willing to partner and learn the organization's work, elevate the grantee's visibility, and act as a thought partner). Coupled with strategic capacity-building opportunities, the grantees reported feeling supported and nurtured by the Foundation. While grantees and stakeholders offered over 19 recommendations, they did not offer shattering criticism on core components of the grant program.

Should the Foundation continue its focus on childcare?

There is the question of the Foundation continuing its focus on childcare, and it is the findings from this evaluation alone cannot provide definitive answers. There was support for both options (a continued focus on childcare and a shift in priority) and a general recognition that all issues are important, particularly given the political climate. The introduction of new monies, other foundations, and intermediaries may offer an opportunity to collaborate on investments and/or share lessons learned. Altering the focus to privatization and funding campaigns that will highlight and link childcare to the wave of the privatization of public goods likely to be supported by the Trump Administration appears valuable and would essentially build another layer of strategy and capacity development to the work already underway.

In the past five years, many of the grantees progressed in building power: cultivating their members, developing alliances, and building technical advocacy capacity (e.g., messaging and communication) to achieve policy wins or enforce and maintain past gains. With continued investment, they may be poised to achieve more policy gains at the local and state levels and effectively resist federal policies that would be harmful for low-income women and women of color. The grantees made the connections between the Foundation's financial and non-financial resources to their work and related outcomes. Many described individual staff growth and stronger organizational capacity through their connections with the Foundation. Most organizations were female majority and women of color-led; many noted that their organizations were unique and critical players in their state because they harnessed constituent bases. Although not formally (and quantitatively) measured in this evaluation, grantee experiences suggest the Foundation's funds are supporting a valuable piece of the advocacy and organizing infrastructure in the country: women of color-led organizations.

Summary of Impact

- Invested over \$1.8 million in 24 organizations over five years through project-specific innovation grants and general operating support grants. The funding streams had tremendous added value as being one of a few available funding sources for policy and advocacy work in childcare.
- The vast majority of grantee organizations were Women led and Women of Color led with active bases. Many were small organizations.
- Cross-sector and cross-movement building occurred among workers' centers and traditional childcare advocates.
- Grantee organizational capacity was strengthened (e.g., to conduct primary research, write op-eds, integrate childcare economic justice narrative into existing campaigns, increase membership) through their connection to the Ms. Foundation.
- Grantees led local and state campaigns to increase access to childcare, increase public funding, and improve childcare workers' rights. These campaigns were responsive to low-wage workers and women of color. See the Policy Gains section of this report for more information.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered to enhance the next phase of the grant program:

- 1. Award multi-year grants as opposed to annual renewal grants.** Grantees and stakeholders recommended the Foundation offer multi-year grants. They cited many benefits, including long-range plans that may be riskier or bolder with the added security of promised funds in the coming year. The current political climate and the importance of the next elections warrants multi-year funding to support the financial and programmatic stability of grantee organizations.
- 2. As a grassroots philanthropic funder supporting movements, increase the grant size, and, if possible, increase the grant award each year. Offer a consistent grant size across years, avoiding extreme fluctuations and decreases in grant awards.** Grantees and stakeholders recommended the Foundation increase its grant awards. The grants data showed grantees received between \$7,000 and \$75,000 in funds, with the average grant being \$35,000. Without comparable data of other childcare grants from other foundations, it is unclear whether the Foundation's grants are on the low end (probably the smallest grants of \$10K or less can be considered low for any program). The grants were used in campaigns that yielded important benefits, and the funds are one of the few available that support childcare policy through general operating grants—that alone could be used as rationale to offer larger grants. Grantees, especially organizations growing their membership or that are growing their infrastructure exponentially as new or startup organizations, would benefit from larger grants over time. If funding allows, increase the grant size award each year and avoid going below a certain amount. Over the course of the next five years aim to offer grant awards at a consistent level so that in a small period of time (i.e., five years) grantees do not experience extreme fluctuations. Increasing the total award money available each year could also be an explicit aim. A larger award pot could support more organizations per year, contribute to larger grant sizes, fund more capacity-building opportunities, and have designated funds for the southern strategy arm of the grant program. Certainly, there is value in increasing the grant size itself, and surely the Foundation would be doing this if the funds were available. Offering multi-year grants and larger grant awards (in each subsequent year) would be a demonstrated way to scale up the grant program. This recommendation has implications for fund development and leadership allocation of resources within the Foundation to support grant programs consistently and congruent with its own framework for social justice philanthropy.
- 3. If the Foundation changes direction or decides it will no longer make investments in an organization, consider adopting a formalized process to communicate that decision to the grantee 1–2 years in advance, help the grantee find replacement funds, and support an official phase out over one or more years.** The Foundation's grants appear to fill a niche. For example, one grantee stated the organization would not be able to afford her position without the Foundation's funds, and another characterized the organization as being “screwed” should it not be funded. As a matter of strategy and values, the Foundation supports smaller nonprofit organizations, newer organizations, and leaders and areas of work that have been historically underfunded. The Foundation's theory of change and approach to grantmaking (as an intermediary funder and women's fund) is to provide deep investments over long periods of time. If the Foundation changes direction or “moves on” from an organization, consider developing and articulating a formal practice to phase out the grantee over multiple grant rounds. This recommendation has implications for development staff in aiding grantees to secure new funding and building the grantee organization's fundraising and development capacity.

4. **Regularly communicate the grant program's underlying philosophy, the Foundation's role, and added value as well as grantee achievements with other funders and stakeholders.** Some stakeholder interviewees “struggled” with defining the Foundation's role and were less familiar with the Foundation's grantees and their policy achievements despite the production of the Raising the Nation report. The interview respondents in this evaluation recommended the Foundation use its voice and share its model with other funders. Funder briefings might be useful platforms. It was an original aim of the program to elevate the Foundation's visibility as a thought leader in this work but internal factors such as limited strategic communications impeded the full development of this aspect of the grant program. This recommendation has implications for the workplans of other departments, including the Foundation communications and development staff.
5. **Consider drafting a baseline “state of the issue” at the beginning of each initiative to document, note, and celebrate progress.** The current grantee report provides helpful information to assess grantees individually, but there would be a benefit in documenting how the collective work of the grantees is changing the “ecosystem,” however that is defined and through whichever markers (qualitative or quantitative) make sense to document, track, and monitor. This would scale up the program's internal monitoring assessment activities. The timeline activity used with grantees could be a model for how to track progress going forward and identify where/ how/when funds are used to shape trajectories at different levels (grantee-, issue-, community- levels) and among different sectors (e.g., funders and policymakers). This baseline activity would help document the Foundation's contribution to shifts in narratives, shifts in policy, shifts in infrastructure, and shifts in power. Other evaluation activities could include building an evaluation design plan at the start of a grant year, identifying what key learning questions will guide the evaluation, data collection and monitoring, and internal reflection. Lastly, working with grantees to develop summative case studies of campaigns funded every three to five years will help link campaign activities to policy changes and improved conditions for women.
6. **Review, discuss, and consider implementing the recommendations made by the grantees and stakeholders.** As the Foundation makes larger organizational decisions during the concurrent strategic planning process, consider how these recommendations fit, support, complicate, or question the future work of the Foundation, the relationship between the Economic Justice Program and other departments, and the needs and resources of the Economic Justice Program in general. Supporting 501(c)(4) work (through the appropriate legal entity) and offering capacity-building opportunities on coalition management, federal transparency acts, and defense litigation seem particularly relevant. Examining the state of 501(c)(4) work and the number of women-led and women of color-led organizations and whether the Foundation could make a contribution to 501(c)(4) work in the same way it has for 501(c)(3) work is timely. One of the grantees, for example, indicated their state was able to use 501(c)(4) campaigns to create a very favorable environment in their state, where it had traditionally been previously closed to progressive advocacy. As the Foundation makes these shifts, it will be important for the Foundation to continue to institutionalize, evolve, and promote its core practices rooted in intersectional and social justice philanthropy.

APPENDICES



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APPENDIX 1

ABOUT NNR EVALUATION, PLANNING & RESEARCH LLC



Nicole Robinson, MPH/MSW
NNR Evaluation, Planning & Research LLC

I've been practicing evaluation for the past 11 years mainly helping nonprofit organizations engaged in community organizing, policy and systems change, and civic engagement. I've conducted numerous program evaluations in many styles (e.g., participatory, advocacy) and formats (e.g., cross-sectional, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods). As a trainer, I provide training and capacity building to organizations in evaluation, linking evaluation to organizational management and long-term planning. I am pursuing my doctorate in social work at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. I currently perform most evaluations through NNR Evaluation, Planning, & Research LLC, a values-based social justice entity that supports the evaluative power of organizations building the power of communities of color and other constituents. I obtained a master's in Social Work and in Public Health from the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor. I am Black and Mexican.

APPENDIX 2

CHILDCARE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Childcare Access

- Make childcare affordable for all families – Expand eligibility, eliminate waiting lists, and reduce or eliminate co-payments through increased funding for publicly subsidized childcare.
- Broaden the scope of coverage – Expand and coordinate existing childcare programs to make services available all day and all year, to young children of all ages and parents with varying schedules.
- Improve the stability of coverage – Eliminate administrative barriers by allowing for periods of job search and streamlining application and verification procedures. Reduce the “cliff effect” by adjusting income eligibility rules.

Job Quality

- Increase wages – Raise the floor through increased minimum wage standards, and cultivate high-road employer practices with respect to wages and other working conditions.
- Mandate fair scheduling – Require advance notice of work schedules and pay requirements when workers report to work but are sent home early. Establish the right to request flexible or stable schedules.
- Expand leave requirements – Guarantee and expand access to paid and unpaid family leave as well as paid sick days, ensuring that parents are able to care for children after birth and when they become ill.

Childcare Quality

- Expand access to training for childcare providers – Subsidize higher education and other childcare-specific training for providers, helping them to provide higher-quality childcare services.
- Increase and stabilize pay for childcare providers – Reduce turnover by mandating higher pay and reimbursement rates for providers. Establish wage and career ladders so investments in education are reflected in increased pay.
- Enhance the attention that children receive – Where relevant, reduce child-to-caregiver ratios to the levels recommended by childcare experts, promoting improved safety and higher-quality care.

Source: Raising Our Nation (2017), Ms. Foundation for Women

APPENDIX 3

GRANTMAKING APPROACH

Excerpts from the **Building the Power of Women of Color to Change Public Policy: Lessons Learned from the Ms. Foundation for Women Grantmaking (Wadia, 2008)**

- “[Long-term general support] give the organizations the flexibility to do what is needed to organize and win campaigns. It is important for support to be long-term, because building power and changing policy takes time, and financial security allows leaders to spend less time fundraising and more time developing relationships and engaging in policy advocacy. (Wadia, 2008, pg. 26)”
- Adequately fund the long and hard work of organizing and base-building and provide the resources it takes to change policy. Understand that policy change is a slow process with a lot of ups and downs; community organizing, base building, leadership development and coalition-building take time and involve activities not immediately tied to policy campaigns.
- “As we have noted, grantees attributed much of their success to building relationships, connections and networks. Funders can promote these connections in many ways. First, they can strive to build deep relationships of trust with grantees. Second, through convenings, listservs, conference calls and peer-to-peer exchanges, funders can foster connections among the grantees. Two Ms. Foundation practices were cited as particularly important to movement building: funding grantees to bring an allied organization to convenings and inviting both former and current grantees to convenings. Finally, foundations often have access to powerful organizations, decision-makers and other funders, and can play an important role in linking grantees to these key players” (Wadia, 2008, p. 27).
- Deliberately reach beyond the “usual suspects” and identify potential women of color-led grantees.
- Provide tailored technical assistance in skills such as fundraising, communications and organizational development.
- Build deep relationships of trust with your grantees; provide grantees with opportunities for networking and relationship-building through convenings, listservs, conference calls and peer-to-peer exchanges; and help grantees make strategic connections with powerful organizations, decision-makers and other funders” (Wadia, 2008).

APPENDIX 4

MORE SAMPLE QUOTES

- “Why are we fighting over the crumbs? I’m done with that. Let’s make this a big fight and win some big money.”
- “This is a movement-building moment.”
- “I really don’t like being in the position of being on the defensive, but we’ve just been put in that position.”
- “I think this moment calls us to think about and use many different kinds of strategies some of which we don’t know – we’ve never imagined or tried before. Because I’m not sure that some of our traditional mechanisms are going to work for us.”
- “I think the ways in which we can lift up the inherent resilience and strength of our communities and ways in which our communities are brave and courageous is going to be really important here versus seeing ourselves as victims or constantly defending ourselves. Our communities are strong and I don’t think our organization takes credit for that, per say, although we do a lot of work to build up people to believe in themselves; their strengths, their leadership skills, their sense of community, their sense of being part of a movement. That will continue to be really important.”
- “I don’t think any of our formal alliances are thinking of trying to push something proactively on the federal level. I think we are very much trying to figure out what we have to protect and defend.”
- “I think that the Ms. Foundation is doing a wonderful job and I think that the work that they’re going to need to do in the next four, God forbid eight years, is really going to be critical to sustaining all the work that we’ve done so far, and not sliding back.”
- “I just think none of us know exactly what’s going to be coming at us from the federal level that we’re going to have to defend against or fight against. I think it’s going to be a balance of trying to figure out what can we continue to work on at the local level, or on the statewide level, in terms of shoring up access to different programs or resources at the same time that we keep an eye on what’s going on federally and how it might affect those [issues] – and be a real point of resistance against it.”

APPENDIX 5

SUMMARY OF GRANTEE & STAKEHOLDER RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase the grant award amount and establish multi-year grants to achieve greater impact in this current political landscape.
2. Begin supporting 501(c)(4) work that compliments 501 C3 policy and organizing work.
3. Continue funding community organizing, organizations building and mobilizing their base around a progressive agenda, and women of color-led organizations.
4. Most grantees suggested the Foundation continue with a focus on childcare but not all.
5. Continue to offer general operating grants and maintain flexibility in grants so that organizations can respond to an unpredictable political context.
6. Help grantees become less vulnerable to attacks from the federal government or withstand attacks.
7. Push for a productive resistance.
8. Continue funding organizations that are mobilizing women.
9. Help grantees monitor national politics and facilitate learning about what's working and helping in this new context.
10. Fund culture change.
11. Support state and local work.
12. Create multi-racial, multi-issue tables, acting as coalition convener, and envelope those who are not yet part of the movement into this work.
13. Continue assessing grantee "results," not in terms of policy wins but rather raising visibility of the issue or other new assessment markers.
14. Extend capacity building opportunities to both board, frontline staff, and constituencies of grantee organizations.
15. Help grantee organizations forge or experiment with corporations as project partners.
16. Make daylong site visits a part of the multiyear grantmaking process and whenever possible attend grantee events.
17. Continue supporting the organizations' member engagement strategies, which may resemble more direct service at times; providing services builds trust and deepens relationships that are important to building leaders.
18. Offer more fellowships modeled after the Public Voices fellowship.
19. Expand the use of Program Officer and Foundation Officer as advocates and spokespeople for advocacy campaigns.
20. Continue developing its practice for funding work at the intersections.
21. Conduct Philanthropic Advocacy by extending and leveraging the Foundation's reach into traditional philanthropic tables to share its expertise using a gender-race-class lens and supporting women of color-led organizing around childcare.
22. Develop a strong communications strategy.

