4. We Prioritize Equity with Learning, Skill-Building, and Action.

Understanding that equity is integral to our success and required to achieve a more just society, we commit to the ongoing intention, skill-building, and action that supports becoming more equitable in our policies, practices, programs, and budgets. We commit to: learning about inequities in all forms in our community and our sector; listening to, believing, and elevating voices of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and people most impacted by systemic injustices; examining equity measures in internal operational and service metrics; developing skills and taking action to center equity in our organizations and our work; and collaboratively and transparently creating and soliciting feedback on our plan and progress.

NONPROFITS

- **Foster awareness and understanding of the construct of race, existing inequities, and equity and inclusion** principles with organization-wide dialogue, educating, and training. Center and uplift voices of BIPOC and of people most impacted by systemic injustices.
- **Build skills and reinforce behaviors that disrupt racism and other forms of systemic oppression and that advance equity goals**, in the four realms of self, interpersonal, organizational, and systemic (examples include conscious and empathetic communication, honoring experiential expertise, centering relationships, sharing responsibility, making decisions collaboratively, applying analysis of inequities to rethink systems).
- **Examine data disaggregated by race** both for external programs and services and for staff engagement, performance, compensation, promotion/retention; identify inequities and make a plan for action, including how success will be measured.
- **Take specific actions to center equity** in internal operations and external programs; operationalize with training and development, equity audits, and actions like pay equity adjustments and centering voices of those served in program development; hold leadership accountable for the work.

"Equity is not a program." "We're all learners. We're all teachers."—Nonprofit New York's *Leading Courageous Conversations on Race Equity*

FUNDERS

- **Learn about philanthropy's history of inequity and leading practices for funders to support equity and justice**; understand the role power and privilege play in funding dynamics and make changes that are more equitable, including diversifying staff and/or centering community voice in the grantmaking process.
- **Meaningfully expand funding portfolios** to include organizations led by and serving Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), and people and communities most impacted by systemic injustices.
- **Fund equity work for grantees and within our own organizations**, including dialogue, learning, training, assessment, skill-building, planning, consultation, and action, understanding that equity work requires ongoing investment.
- **Leverage resources for change that promote equity and justice**—for foundations, consider giving beyond the 5% annual payout; for corporate and government funders, consider additional new funding.

"Though it may sound daunting, institutionalizing racial equity and preventing institutional racism can be done. Like anything, it takes practice, partnering, learning, and leadership."—Annie E. Casey Foundation's *7 Step Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide*

"Seeking to achieve equity without addressing power and privilege directly is a fool's errand, and the failure of some in philanthropy (and nonprofits too) to understand this can be dangerous."—Nonprofit Quarterly's *Social Justice Toolkit Helps Foundations Assess Own Progress on Equity Goals* (referencing National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy's *Power Moves*)

FROM EQUITY IN THE CENTER'S *AWAKE TO WOKE TO WORK*

Equity = the guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically underserved and underrepresented populations, and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed to assist equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups.

Race Equity = the condition where one's race identity has no influence on how one fares in society. Race equity is one part of race justice and must be addressed at the root causes and not just the manifestations. This includes the elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race.

Social Justice = a concept of fair and just relations between the individual and society. This is measured by the explicit and tacit terms for the distribution of power, wealth, education, and healthcare, and other opportunities for personal activity and social privileges.

MYTH: Smash the myth that equity is only important for social justice organizations. **REALITY:** It's everybody's job.

"The public is demanding moral and economic leadership within the corporate sector that focuses on leaving the next generation of Americans a more equitable legacy than we were given."—*A CEO Blueprint for Racial Equity,* from FSG, PolicyLink, and JUST Capital

"Race, equity, diversity, and inclusion affect ALL nonprofits, and thinking your org is exempt indicates a level of privilege and lack of awareness that may be detrimental to the work. No matter what your organization's mission is, you still need to think about these things: disproportionality of impact, inequitable access to services, and root causes of injustice."—Vu Le's Nonprofit AF blog, *So You Don't Think Race, Equity, and Inclusion Are Relevant to Your Mission*?

"Why do I think funders need to talk about equity?

- Because philanthropic institutions hold power and resources, two tools which help reverse the systems that perpetuate inequity.
- Because I'm not sure philanthropy would exist if there was not systemic financial inequity. If funders do our jobs right, the problems that plague our communities will be eradicated and we eventually put ourselves out of business.
- Because philanthropy has a responsibility to the public and nonprofits, however the breadcrumbs of accountability from funder to community impacted by systemic inequity may be hard to follow.
- Because funders are not typically representative of those experiencing poverty.
- Because intention doesn't equal impact. Despite best intentions, implicit bias is still a reality for everyone, including funders.
- Because I wonder if funders aren't careful—is it possible that we could end up serving the problems of inequity instead of making the change our communities need and nonprofits are creating?" —*Equity in Philanthropy,* from Giving Compass and Triangle Community Foundation

Learn More

VISIT 7PRINCIPLES.THECNE.ORG TO ACCESS OUR LIBRARY OF TOOLS AND RESOURCES.

4.1: Have we made a written commitment to equity?

YES **NO** **NOT SURE** **N/A**

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps **PRIORITY:** **High** **Medium** **Low**

4.2: Do we engage in learning about and reflecting on philanthropy's history of inequity and leading practices for supporting equity and justice, to better understand the role of power and privilege in funding dynamics and to make changes that are more equitable?

YES **NO** **NOT SURE** **N/A**

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps **PRIORITY:** **High** **Medium** **Low**

4.3: Do we take time to understand the community's strengths, center community voice in our problem-solving, and incorporate both into our grantmaking strategy?

YES **NO** **NOT SURE** **N/A**

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps **PRIORITY:** **High** **Medium** **Low**

4.4: Do we engage in courageous and uncomfortable conversations about racial inequity and other forms of injustice?
For example, do we create a psychologically safe place to have honest conversations, acknowledge inequities and injustices, validate the experiences of people facing them, and emphasize our commitment to equity and justice?

YES **NO** **NOT SURE** **N/A**

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps **PRIORITY:** **High** **Medium** **Low**

4.5: Are we in ongoing discussion with staff and board about institutional racism and systems of oppression, including in our own organization?

YES **NO** **NOT SURE** **N/A**

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps **PRIORITY:** **High** **Medium** **Low**

4.6: Do we meaningfully fund organizations led by and serving Black, Indigenous, and People of Color and people and communities most impacted by systemic injustices?

YES **NO** **NOT SURE** **N/A**

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps **PRIORITY:** **High** **Medium** **Low**

4.7: Have we identified internal and external inequities (in our own organization, in our funding/grantmaking, in our community) that need priority attention to change?

YES **NO** **NOT SURE** **N/A**

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps **PRIORITY:** **High** **Medium** **Low**

4.8: Do we take action and hold our leaders accountable for operationalizing our commitment to equity, internally for our own organization and externally for the nonprofits we fund and the community we serve?

YES **NO** **NOT SURE** **N/A**

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps **PRIORITY:** **High** **Medium** **Low**

4.9: Do we fund work of nonprofits that advances equity, and do we budget and resource equity work within our own organization?

YES **NO** **NOT SURE** **N/A**

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps **PRIORITY:** **High** **Medium** **Low**

4.10: Are our staff and board diverse and reflective of the community we serve, and do we resource development of diverse future leaders?

YES **NO** **NOT SURE** **N/A**

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps **PRIORITY:** **High** **Medium** **Low**

4.11: Do we leverage our resources to fund change that advances equity and justice? For example, with additional, new funding; or by giving beyond the 5% annual payout required of foundations.

YES **NO** **NOT SURE** **N/A**

If so, HOW? If not, WHY?

Brainstorm: How Do We Improve? Ideas, Learning, Next Steps **PRIORITY:** **High** **Medium** **Low**