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A Philanthropic Partnership for Black Communities



Hill-Snowdon
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Funders Network Seeks Increased Support for Black-Led Social Change Case Statement Urges Funding, Immediate Steps to Help Black Community Thrive

A call to action released this week by a network of funders urges foundations and grantmakers to markedly increase support to Black-led social change organizations. Their goal is to make Black communities thrive and empower the nation to take its most ambitious strides for racial and social equity.

[The Case for Funding Black-Led Social Change](#) intends to spark new energy to vitalize and strengthen the infrastructure for Black-led organizations. The 18-page document was issued by the Black Social Change Funders Network (BSCFN), an initiative forged by the leadership of ABFE: A Philanthropic Partnership for Black Communities and the Hill-Snowdon Foundation.

The Network maintains that a renewed commitment to investment by philanthropy is essential to invigorate Black-led organizations to respond to and solve this country's most pressing issues. The case statement points to an inequitable distribution of resources to Black-led social change organizations over the years that has hampered and restrained the growth, capacity and impact of these organizations.

The Case for Funding Black-Led Social Change is aimed at large foundations, social change grantmakers and Black charitable organizations. The case statement, coauthored by ABFE President and CEO Susan Taylor Batten and Hill-Snowdon Executive Director Nat Chioke Williams, indicates that less than 2 percent of funding by the nation's largest foundations is specifically targeted to the Black community. Calling investment in Black-led social change a "moral imperative," they recommend at least a 25 percent increase in giving by the nation's largest foundations over the next five years, with emphasis on strengthening the infrastructure for Black-led social change.

The case statement proposes sustained, long-term investments to build infrastructure in seven key areas: 1) Civic Engagement & Political Power; 2) Community Organizing & People Power; 3) Policy Advocacy & System Reform; 4) Economic Development & Economic Power; 5) Research & Intellectual Power; 6) Communications/Narrative & Social Power; and 7) Leadership Development & Strategic Convenings.

Calling attention to regional needs, the case statement advocates greater focus on infrastructure development in the South and Midwest, locations of significant Black populations and little philanthropic capacity. Funders are also urged to intensify grantmaking among vulnerable sectors including organizations with Black women, youth, LGBTQI and immigrant leaders.

To maximize foundation investments, the BSCFN recommends immediate steps:

- **Mapping the current infrastructure for Black-led social change.** To further understand the current Black-led infrastructure and its capacity, the BSCFN is calling on colleagues in the field to carry out scans by place and issue area.
- **Increasing Awareness.** Exposure to the lived experiences of Black people informed by research and training will shape philanthropy's commitment and approach to Black-led social change organizations. Additionally, supporting narrative change work for Black communities is important.
- **Developing Racial Equity and Diversity Plans.** Every foundation should be equipped with a racial equity plan to move funds toward Black-led social change and to ameliorate the impacts of anti-Black racism.

The case statement insists that new funding priorities are in the best interest of the nation.

“A dynamic and lasting infrastructure for Black social, institutional and political power is essential for dismantling structural racism and charting a course for an equitable, just and sustainable nation. Black-led institutions, aligned with multi-racial movements, can be empowered to win our most ambitious goals for national progressive change.”

For more information about the BSCFN and the case statement, contact Edward Jones, ejones@abfe.org. Visit www.BlackSocialChange.org for the text of the case statement.