



FRE February Call Notes

February 14, 2019 | 12:30 – 2:00 EST

Welcome and Introductions

- Participants introduced themselves and shared whether their work was place-based, national, or a mix of both.
- For some, there's a difference between their grantmaking work (which is national or global for some) and their racial equity work (which might be more locally-based).

Update from SPARC

- Regina Cannon and Jeff Olivet from the Center for Social Innovation (C4) provided an update on the work that SPARC is doing and about to undertake
- Prior to 2016, SPARC was meeting with Funders Together, Oak Foundation, and other organizations to discuss how to lift racial equity to the center of the work to end homelessness.
- 8 official SPARC communities: New York, Ohio, Minnesota, Georgia, Texas, California, Oregon, and Washington state
- They have begun doing research in new communities: Chicago, IL; Philadelphia, PA; Denver, CO; Santa Clara, CA; and Washington, DC.
- Phase Two: From Research to Implementation
 - The problem has been documented, but now the real question is how can this be translated into action.
 - This is where this group comes in. How can we push grantees, set outcome metrics, etc.
- Update on Staff and Funding:
 - New Staff and larger team that's located across the country:
 - Regina Cannon – Atlanta
 - Jeff Olivet – Cambridge, MA and Washington, DC
 - Keisha Edwards – Phoenix
 - Maya Beit-Arie – Boston
 - Nastacia Moore – Indianapolis, IN
- SPARC Community of Practice
 - Starts next week
 - Long-term plan to document disproportionality linked to action and documentation of that action

Questions and Discussion with Jeff and Regina

- There is a deficit attitude among staff who are on the frontlines of serving folks who are experiencing homelessness that results in bias, resistance (at first) to harm-reduction models, and a white savior complex.

Please do not distribute these notes beyond the community of practice.

- SPARC has seen this and wants to support a mentality that people experiencing homelessness are still the captains of their lives. We need to remove hoops that folks need to jump through.
 - Deep paternalism that goes with system design – this has a clinical superiority complex and a white savior complex. Rarely are people experiencing homelessness included in systems creation processes.
 - A way to solve this is to bring folks with lived experience into the process early.
- **What's "promising" about the work you mentioned in Santa Clara County?**
 - This work started last week so it's in new stages. This will be a year-long engagement.
 - They have a strong road-map in place.
 - There is an engaged funder who is hands on and all-in is helpful. Lots of money in this has helped raised the profile.
 - Leaders at the table are committed and will take action.
 - There is a driven and data-focused Continuum of Care
 - Strong group of community advisors. Groundwork is in place for a strong collaboration with the community
- **How are you balancing the voices of lived experience with funders at the table? There is usually a power differential there.**
 - Continuing making sure people with lived experience are at the table, and to name it – be open about who is in the room
 - Push through discomfort and continue working together
 - Rethink what power means. Think through the "us" "them" dichotomy that's in place
 - Pull wisdom from all perspectives
 - Humility is vital
 - Be mindful about how we enter the room. Listen. Consider our privileges.
 - Listening groups that are safe spaces – then sharing this information with a larger group
 - As funders we can demonstrate the value of these voices by funding people with lived experience to be at the table. It's also important to fund the framework or backbone needed to support those voices i.e. staff time, training.
- **Where are you seeing the voices of CEOs, trustees, and other business leaders to be effective around equity? How are you seeing that show up? Where are those voices speaking to equity through policy and/or economic structure change?**
 - Considering intersecting issues and how systems change in other systems might affect homelessness.
 - Kaiser is a good example in Sacramento
- **Can you share about your experiences in these study areas with engaging non-homelessness focused groups, that may represent communities of color and may also have difference priorities for the populations they represent?**
 - SPARC has tried to keep the conversation specifically at the intersection of racial inequity within homelessness.
 - It's near impossible to keep this conversation away from other systems that directly intersect.

- Minnesota – encampment by the highway that was populated almost entirely by Native American system. They partnered with a Native American advocacy group to come to this encampment with real understanding and this resulted in a change in the homelessness system’s approach.
 - If the homelessness system becomes anti-racist, it still needs to collaborate with other systems to ensure that anti-racism lens is centered in all systems.
- Other notes from Jeff:
 - Funders Together is included in SPARC grant from Oak to help assist in this work.
 - There’s also a national racial equity working group (includes the Alliance, AWWA, True Colors, USICH, Community Solutions).
 - There was just a convening for this group in DC in January.
 - This group will continue meeting to work on a research and policy-change work

Themes from Intake Calls

- Centering people of color with lived experience in the work and disrupting power dynamics
- Best practices for how to have conversations with other stakeholders, CoCs, grantees, etc. around racial equity
- How to redesign grantmaking practices and rethink partnership to embed racial equity
- Trying to learn from grantmakers in other systems who do racial equity work to gather lessons learned and what can be applied to the homelessness system

The March Convening – March 6-8 in Portland

- Tina Gridiron from The Giving Practice introduced TGP and shared what’s in store for the March convening.
 - Giving Practice has been around for 20 years and is a division of Philanthropy Northwest. Two colleagues will be joining her at the convening in March
- 3 things to expect in March:
 - Building relationships and deepening our sense of trust in engaging in this group
 - Peer-learning and sharing about what others are doing in this work. Want to bring in many different voices.
 - Thinking about how to bring strategic and forward thinking action steps. We don’t want to spend all of our time talking but figuring out how we move to meaningful action.

Resources for this community of practice

- Stephanie walked participants through the [FRE webpage](#) and where resources live
- Bookmark this page, because it’s not accessible through the main Funders Together website

Foundational knowledge for FRE

- In order to really dive into this work, we need to come prepared with shared knowledge.
- You don’t need to be an expert but we also don’t want to have to spend the first year of this CoP on foundational knowledge.
- Stephanie sent list of foundational knowledge everyone should have and resources.