



PSOs for Housing Justice

March 20, 2025 | 1:00pm – 2:15pm ET

Attending: Michael Durham, Kyle Malone, Lauren Bennett, Arpita Jindani, Kevin Douglas, Rachelle Matthews, Robin Mockenhaupt, Cema Siegel, Jennifer Angarita, Adrienne Wells

Guests: NA

Regrets: Sarah Frankfurth, Elisa Harrigan, Katy Pellisier, Patte Koval

Agenda

- Welcome | Grounding | Introductions
- Discussion: Immigration and Housing Justice with Kevin Douglas, Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees
- Federal Policy Updates/Discussion
- Open forum for peer updates
- Closing
 - Next meeting is May 15

Notes

Michael opened the meeting with a [poem by Nikki Giovanni](#). We introduced ourselves with warm sentiments about this group.

Kevin Douglas presented an overview of the federal government's assault on immigration justice and how GCIR is meeting the moment. While the narrative prior to the election focused on halting "illegal" immigration, restrictions on lawful immigration took place immediately after inauguration, including shutting down asylum altogether, ending the refugee resettlement policy, and reintroducing the so-called "remain in Mexico" policy. In addition, we're seeing increases in enforcement and militarization across the country: Guantanamo Bay being used to confine deportees; using agencies like the DEA for immigration enforcement, which is outside their purview; cracking down on previously insulated safe spots like churches and homeless shelters; invoking the Alien Enemies Act; resuming construction on the border wall, and more.

GCIR's response has included efforts to convey to funders how immigration justice affects all of us and democracy in general. It calls into question what it means to be a citizen, a democracy. Kevin described many organizing efforts at the federal level, such as spearheading the Foundations on the Hill events last month. Organizing philanthropy, they have stood up new communities of practice to encourage more peer connection/learning on transnational movements and economic justice, respectively. They've developed new focus areas on children and youth and increased work on economic justice, which affects everyone. GCIR is also revamping its state and local strategy with special attention to states with the most violent

policies and potential to influence other states, like Florida and Texas. They have also upped their work in regranting.

Having shared many other encouraging initiatives in the midst of such terrifying policy, Kevin opened the door for ongoing PSO collaboration, with a note that their capacity is limited, and as a staff composed of people directly impacted by these issues, they're diligently taking care of their wellbeing.

In discussion, we pointed out the parallels between narrative work in the immigration space and narrative change in homelessness advocacy: one camp emphasizing the humanity of directly impacted people and the moral obligation to take care of one another, with another emphasizing how policies that benefit directly impacted folks also benefit privileged people and institutions. We also named the intersections of criminalization affecting both sectors.

Jennifer shared stories of people in the philanthropic sector also being targeted by immigration enforcement and reminded us that in states and jurisdictions that have passed English-only legislation, reports have shown police conducting English tests in roadstops. She also shared their own funding to [NAKASEC](#) for their know-your-rights work.

Switching gears to federal updates specific to HUD and homelessness programs, Lauren and Jennifer shared that Continuum of Care (CoC) grant agreements were delayed initially, then were released with language prohibiting funds from supporting any equity-like work, then were rescinded, and now we're in limbo. We're also tracking rollbacks to the Equal Access Rule, which prohibited discrimination against protected classes. Funders Together and FHO are partnering on joint policy-focused calls since the inauguration and are standardizing future editions as a semimonthly series that responded to federal developments in real time. We're maintaining a [webpage of federal administration actions](#) specific to philanthropy. In all of this, we're balancing the reality that philanthropy will never be able to fill the gaps left by federal funding cuts, but simultaneously, now is the time for [bold actions from funders](#).

In overall discussion, we reflected on the nuances inherent to attacks on federal agencies, recognizing that perhaps some agencies should be dismantled, or at least we should acknowledge that agencies we're fighting to protect have indeed inflicted harm on oppressed people. We discussed how philanthropy should be preparing for the next elections now, but so many potential voters are completely disconnected from these movements and don't care about electoralism. How do we play defense and offense at the same time? What are we building for the long-term? And what do we mean by "we"?

With time running short, we concluded with words of encouragement and promoted our next meeting on May 15th.