

# Responding to the Moment: Participatory Approaches in Philanthropy

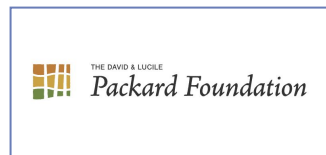
Philanthropy New York

June 2024



# FUND FOR SHARED INSIGHT Funders

## Core Funders



## Sidecar Funders



# GOAL STATEMENT

More leaders and staff in nonprofits and foundations listen, respond, and shift power to those most impacted by structural racism and systemic, intersectional inequities.

# IMPACT STATEMENT

Communities and people most impacted but least consulted by philanthropy and nonprofits are better off in ways they define for themselves.

Our work is about listening, responding,  
and shifting power.

# What does it mean to listen well?

- Listening with a willingness to change in response to what you hear.
- Listening to a broad range of voices, with specific attention to people and communities not typically consulted by philanthropy and nonprofits.
- Committing to an ongoing process, not a one-time activity, that includes closing the loop by reporting back on what you hear and how you plan to respond.
- Engaging with people and communities as partners throughout the process, from framing the initial questions to making meaning from what you hear to determining how to respond.

## Listening & Feedback: A Funder Listening Action Menu

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### **Funder Listening Action Menu**

# Listening & Feedback: A Funder Listening Action Menu

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1. Support grantees to listen well

2. Use listening and feedback to inform grantmaking

3. Use listening and feedback to inform strategy development

4. Use listening and feedback to inform measurement, learning, and evaluation

5. Use listening to learn directly from people and communities

6. Listen through participatory practices

7. Listen by changing the composition of staffs and boards



# Participatory Philanthropy

Participatory philanthropy is a broad approach that calls for participation not only in grantmaking, but **across the entirety of a foundation's functions**, including governance, grants administration, and evaluation.

Participatory grantmaking is an approach under the participatory umbrella that cedes decision making around grants.

# Participatory Philanthropy

Participatory approaches in philanthropy center the leadership, wisdom, and voices of communities. They shift power from philanthropy's traditional power centers (i.e., the donors and institutions that control the money) to the **people and communities directly affected** by the issues being addressed.



# Where does participatory philanthropy come from?

- It's not new, but it's becoming increasingly prominent as a practice in the sector
- Funding Exchange members have been practicing participatory grantmaking since the 1970s
- Some global funders have adopted the practice since the early 2000s
- It is inspired by the disability rights movement slogan, “nothing about us, without us”

# And why do it?

- Do it because it's the **right thing** and the **smart thing** to do
- People have a right to be involved in decisions that affect them, including funding decisions
- And who knows better than the people closest to the issues how to solve them?
- There are many benefits, including more effective and sustainable grant decisions, trust building, innovation, and it promotes equity, diversity and inclusion
- Many more benefits



# Poll 1: How well do you understand participatory philanthropy?

1. I don't know much, and am here to learn.
2. I understand some core concepts, but have questions.
3. I understand it very well!

## **Poll 2: How far along are you in implementing participatory processes at your organization?**

1. We've not started, or are not interested.
2. We've started exploring or learning.
3. We've started implementing participatory practices.
4. We're well into implementation.



# Fund for Shared Insight Participatory Climate Initiative

Learn about it here:

<https://fundforsharedinsight.org/video/a-look-at-shared-insights-participatory-philanthropy-project/>

*Fund for*  
**Shared** Insight

# **Participatory Philanthropy Toolkit**



# ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

- Based on our experience in the Participatory Climate Initiative
- Created to share insights and recommendations for foundations in different stages of participatory practice.
- Resources for funders just getting started, and for experienced funders who want to deep or expand.
- Not a one-size-fits-all manual for any funder's participatory practice.
- Our recommendations or approaches need to be adapted to the specific context and communities..

# Find the toolkit

<http://bit.ly/participatoryphilanthropy>



# Toolkit Structure

## Introducing the Toolkit

We created this resource to offer insights, recommendations, and the nuts and bolts of design and implementation to inform and inspire your own journey toward more participatory practices.

- [Participatory Philanthropy Primer](#)
- [How to use the toolkit video](#)
- [Glossary of Terms](#)



## Funder Readiness Assessment

Find here questions and discussion prompts to advance conversations about participatory philanthropy within your organization before deciding how you might implement new practices or programs.

- [Financial Resources](#)
- [Power](#)
- [Capacity and Time Constraints](#)
- [Practitioner Skills](#)



## Key Insights and Recommendations

Drawing from Shared Insight's own participatory grantmaking initiative (see the "How We Did It" section for details), we offer reflections on our experience and ideas for how you can apply the learning to your own philanthropy. Here are nine insights and the practices we recommend in response.

1. [Use Expansive Definitions and Approaches](#)
2. [Take a Holistic Approach to Funding](#)
3. [Be Open to Communities' Definitions of Geographic Boundaries](#)
4. [Explore Trust-Based Participatory Philanthropy](#)
5. [Aim for Radical Hospitality and Inclusion](#)
6. [Increase Participation in Each Phase of Work](#)
7. [Embrace Interconnectedness \(Including Conflicts of Interest\)](#)
8. [Identify and Shift Administrative Risks and Burdens](#)
9. [See Beyond the 501\(c\)\(3\)](#)





## Resources for Funders Ready to Go

When you are ready to start planning your participatory work, go here for sample documents and templates, like budgets and a project outline.

- [Operating Budget Checklist](#)
- [Participatory Project Outline](#)
- [Sample Project Scope](#)
- [Project Roles](#)



## How We Did It: Shared Insight's Participatory Climate Initiative

The Participatory Philanthropy Toolkit is based on the first-hand experiences of the funders, consultants, and community members who were involved in our Participatory Climate Initiative, a one-time program to explore participatory practices in grantmaking. This case study offers a detailed description of each phase of that work — what, how, and when it all happened — with takeaways to inspire or kickstart your own participatory processes.

1. [Planning Phase](#)
2. [Design Phase](#)
3. [Grantmaking Phase](#)
4. [Implementation Phase](#)
5. [Webinar Videos: An In-Depth Look](#)



## Participatory Philanthropy: Discussions and Hot Topics

### News

#### An Update for Our Participatory Philanthropy Toolkit

Fund for Shared Insight  
April 17, 2024



### Viewpoint

#### Representing Brooklyn from the Ground Up

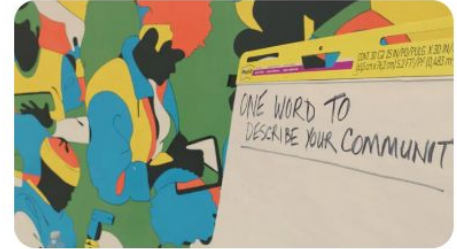
Sabrina Hargrave  
Brooklyn Org  
March 19, 2024



### Video

#### Brooklyn Org Listens Neighborhood to Neighborhood

Fund for Shared Insight





# Keep these bookmarked

<http://bit.ly/participatoryphilanthropy>

[www.fundforsharedinsight.org](http://www.fundforsharedinsight.org)



# Stay in touch!

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**Introducing**

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**Eileen Farbman (Kolibri Foundation)**