

# FUND FOR WORKFORCE EQUITY EVALUATION

## Deliverable 1: Theory of Change Final Draft

### Theory of Change

The Fund's TOC is intended to articulate a pathway towards its vision to improve workforce programs and their outcomes, primarily for people of color, and help advance workforce equity. It includes core assumptions, context, and constraints; inputs; strategies and activities; outputs; and anticipated immediate-, intermediate-, and long-term outcomes/systems-level impacts. While the TOC will evolve over time as new findings emerge, it offers a means for the Fund to hold itself accountable to its intentions. The TOC draws upon the Fund's earlier conversations and strategic documents, and more recent grantee application materials.

### ASSUMPTIONS AND CONSTRAINTS

*The necessary conditions for change.*

- People of color are disproportionately employed in lower-wage jobs and could benefit from workforce training opportunities and other supports designed to increase their earning power.
- Although there are many workforce programs that serve large numbers of people of color with the aim of providing them with workforce training, most of those programs do not involve their participants, including those of color, in designing their programs.
- Many programs and services better meet the needs of their constituents of color when they engage them in providing input into program and service design and implementation.
- Funders and their institutions hold unique power to disrupt systemic racism and create a more equitable workforce development field.
- The purpose of the Fund is to offer capacity building support and \$60,000 to \$75,000 in grant funding for one year to grantees working to include, respect, value, and honor the perspectives of workers, learners, and job candidates of color in their workforce programs and policies.
- Grantees might be limited in the implementation of their projects by organizational constraints (e.g., leadership, funding, and staffing changes, experience with centering BIPOC workers and learners in workforce initiatives), and social, political, and economic constraints (e.g., economic recession, public health crises, local workforce and labor policies). As a result, grantees may require flexibility in how they use their grant funds.
- Current constraints on how public funding can be used, performance requirements, and other factors may impede or disincentivize the field to change.

### INPUTS

*What the Fund uses—resources required for the initiative.*

- Workforce Matters network
- Fund Advisory Committee
- \$1,000,000 pooled fund
- Consulting support (facilitation, learning, evaluation, and TA)

## ACTIVITIES / STRATEGIES

*What the Fund does.*

- Provides grants to organizations to test/pilot/expand strategies that center workers of color in designing and implementing workforce programs and policies.
- Provides TA support, including individual coaching, to grantee organizations that addresses specific capacity building needs.
- Facilitates a learning community to help organizations share learning.
- Funds an evaluation to capture implementation, output, and early outcome findings from the funded grants.
- Communicates lessons learned from the initiative with grantees, funders, and the field; and connecting grantees with other funder networks.

## OUTPUTS

*What the Fund produces—tangible products as a result of the activities.*

- Products of grants
  - # and types of individuals reached
  - # and types of advisory teams created
  - # and \$ of stipends or honoraria given
  - # and types of supportive services provided
  - # of types of new or expanded partnerships
  - # of other funding sources leveraged
  - # and types of implementation of new ideas/feedback provided by workers and learners
  - # of staff, consultant, or worker and learner hours for the development and implementation of projects
  - Assessment of funder support from the grantee perspective
  - Assessment of grantee activities and implementation from the participant perspective
- Products of TA support
  - # of sessions for gathering and utilizing client feedback, human-centered design and journey mapping, advisory and/or leadership councils, and community or worker organizing
  - # of one-on-one meetings with grantees
  - Assessment of TA provided from the grantee perspective
- Products of learning community and fund advisory committee
  - # of learning community sessions
  - # of funder advisory committee meetings
  - Assessment of learning community supports from the grantee perspective
  - Assessment of funder engagement from the grantee perspective
- Products of communication and evaluation
  - Participant advisory committee
  - Presentations on emerging findings
  - Interim report and final report

## OUTCOMES

*What the Fund achieves—behavioral changes resulting from outputs.*

### **Shorter-term outcomes: Lessons from worker and learner of color-centered/led initiatives shape and direct the Fund and grantee-led work, and increase support for workers and learners of color.**

- For the Fund and the field
  - Funders and the field recognize the grantee-level and systems-level facilitators and barriers to implementing projects that are worker and learner of color-centered/led.
  - Funders and the field test/pilot strategies to fund and support organizations engaging workers and learners of color in program design and implementation.
  - Funders and the field develop nuanced expectations of grantee activities and outcomes given the time and level of support provided.
  
- For grantees and participants
  - Grantees recognize the grantee-level and systems-level facilitators and barriers to implementing projects that are worker and learner of color-centered/led.
  - Grantees can articulate what it means to “center” workers and learners of color in programming.
  - Participants’ perspectives are included, respected, valued, and honored, and their input leads to changes or adaptations in grantee workforce programs and policies that better support worker and learner journeys.
  - Grantees create sustainability plans for projects they expect to continue after the end of the grant, including leveraging or securing funding from other sources and demonstrating efforts to continue to center workers and learners of color after grants end.
  - Grantees develop new or expand existing partnerships and engage in peer-to-peer learning around best practices to center worker and learner of color voice.

### **Longer-term outcomes / systems-level impacts: the Fund’s efforts to support worker and learner of color-centered/led initiatives spur increased funding, engagement of, and scaling of similar efforts.**

- More organizations explicitly take steps to engage, listen to, respond to workers and learners of color and design programs that respond to their needs, and continued deepening of efforts from organizations that are farther along on this journey.
- More funding is available to support organizations in centering workers and learners of color, particularly in designing and implementing programs and policies, and there is more deference to and flexibility in grantees’ use of federal and state dollars to implement solutions based on worker and learner engagement.
- Programs, funders, policymakers, and other stakeholders better understand effective ways to seek the input, participation, and leadership of workers and learners of color in designing and implementing workforce programs and policies and invest in these methods.
- Ability of workforce programs to meet needs of workers and learners of color improves, and overall system outcomes improve.