

# Fund for Workforce Equity



Round 1 Learnings – June 2024

Welcome--  
Introduce  
yourself in  
the chat!

- Name
- Pronouns
- Organization
- Location



## Welcome

We'll get started in just a few minutes. While you're waiting, please note the following:

- Today's conversation is being recorded and will be shared via our website:  
[www.workforce-equity.org](http://www.workforce-equity.org)
- Please keep your line muted unless asking a question.
- Please use the **chat** to introduce yourself and provide feedback and/or ask questions during the presentation
- We will have some time at the end for Q&A

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Workforce Matters is a **national network** of grantmakers that draws on expert and practitioner knowledge and works together to **strengthen workforce development philanthropy** such that it empowers workers, learners, and job seekers to realize their full potential; dismantles inequities based on race, gender, ability, and other individual characteristics; and **advances equitable education and employment** outcomes for youth and adults.

# Purpose and Goals

## **Purpose:**

- Share insights and lessons learned from the Fund for Workforce Equity's first round of grants.
- Provide space for questions and reactions from funders and field partners.

## **What we hope to accomplish:**

- Build understanding of the ways in which the Fund and FWE grantees worked to center the voices and experiences of workers and learners of color, what we learned, and how that is shaping future efforts.



# Agenda

## I. Fund for Workforce Equity Round 1

### Overview

## II. Key Learnings and Takeaways

## III. Early thinking about Round 2

## IV. Feedback and Q&A

# About the Fund for Workforce Equity



[www.workforce-equity.org](http://www.workforce-equity.org)



# Overview

- Launched as a new fund in 2022
- Provided flexible resources and support to 15 organizations seeking to pilot and learn from strategies that **center workers and learners of color in workforce policy and program design and implementation**
- Built on recommendations in our [Racial Equity Framework for Workforce Development Funders](#)
- Supported by 21 Workforce Matters funders + WFM supporting members
- Informed by an Advisory Committee comprised of funders and field partners
- Supported a number of priority populations, geographies, interests, per funder interest

# Goals

- **Support workforce organizations** in developing and implementing strategies to engage workers and learners of color in informing workforce policy and program design and implementation, thereby making workforce programs and policies more responsive to their needs.
- **Support learning** among both funders and workforce organizations in order to expand the use of effective strategies to center and amplify the voices of workers and learners.

# Four Key Strategies

- **Grants.** Flexible grants of between \$60,000 and \$75,000 to pilot and learn from different ways of authentically engaging and centering workers and learners of color in workforce program and policy design and implementation
- **Learning Community.** A learning community to support peer learning and dissemination of methods and lessons learned
- **Technical Assistance.** Access to expertise and resources including power sharing, gathering and utilizing feedback, and journey-mapping
- **Evaluation and Learning.** An evaluation to support investment in and dissemination of promising practices

# How Grantees Used Funding

- Stipends or honoraria
- Supportive services that enable workers and learners to participate in program design and implementation
- Support for new or expanded partnerships between workforce training organizations and organizations that focus on building worker power and agency
- Support for the implementation of ideas/feedback provided by workers and learners

Staff, consultant, or worker and learner time for the development and implementation of:

- feedback mechanisms
- worker and learner-centered evaluation methods
- worker and learner-centered outcome metrics
- worker and learner advisory and leadership councils, fellowships, or similar efforts to invest in worker and learner leadership
- methods that increase the civic engagement of worker and learners

# Learning + Evaluation

- Led by SPR Associates
- Theory of Change, Interim Report, Final Report, Grantee Profiles, and dissemination activities
- All reports available at [www.workforce-equity.org](http://www.workforce-equity.org)

# What's Next?

## Round 1

1 year grants, up to \$75,000

Open RFP / 1 review round

Funders that contribute \$60,000+ can direct funds to specific populations/geographies

5 virtual learning community meetings over 12 months

Targeted technical assistance available over 1 year, some open to applicants

## Round 2

2 year grants, up to \$100,000

Open RFP / 2 review rounds

Funders that contribute \$75,000+ can direct funds to specific populations/geographies

Learning community meetings over 24 months, including 1-2 in-person

Targeted technical assistance available over 2 years, some open to applicants

## Round 2 Learning Questions

- What does it take to move institutional efforts to center workers and learners from the lefthand side of the spectrum to the right (from “inform” toward “empower”)?
- How does worker/learner engagement contribute to building worker power?
- And how does building worker power impact workforce development efforts?
- What types of resources, technical assistance, and learning opportunities support the institutional shifts needed to center worker learner/voice?
- What does it take to integrate and sustain these efforts over the long-term?



# Eligibility

The Fund for Workforce Equity is open to any nonprofit (501c3) organization providing workforce development services primarily to or within historically marginalized or excluded populations, including workers and learners of color, Native Nations and communities, people with disabilities, including but not limited to the following:

- Previous applicants to the Fund for Workforce Equity
- Previous grantees of the Fund for Workforce Equity
- Previous applicants to the WGNCC
- Collaborative or partnership efforts
- Worker centers, worker rights organizations, labor management partnerships

# Priorities + Populations

- **Populations:**

- Workers and learners with disabilities, refugees and immigrants, youth and young adults

- **Geographies:**

- California-based grantees, Detroit/Southeast Michigan, Western NY, Southern states

- **Approaches:**

- Applicants that align or integrate worker rights and workforce development and/or that focus on building worker power to improve working conditions and economic mobility
- Applicants committed to applying lessons learned to their own employment and organizational processes.

*Please note that this list is subject to change as we continue to receive feedback and input from funders and field partners.*

# Your Input + Feedback

- **Learning Questions:**

- Are there other learning questions that you think we should consider for Round 2?

- **Technical Assistance:**

- What types of technical assistance topics/focus areas would be helpful to groups who are engaging in this work?

- **Overall:**

- Any other considerations that we should keep in mind for Round 2?
- What additional questions do you have?

# Thank you to our 2023-2024 Supporting Members

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