Young people are creating the world they want to live in now and into the future by reimagining and transforming communities and systems. Through their activism, youth organizers have historically and are currently at the heart of intergenerational justice movements as leaders on the front lines and agenda setters for lasting change. Deep and sustained investment is required to bring about the fundamental improvements young people envision in their lives and in their communities.

The Northern California Youth Organizing Funder Collaborative harnesses philanthropic and community resources to support and amplify the work being led by youth organizers.
Launched in 2019, the Collaborative is a network of foundations and individual donors committed to creating more equitable, just and effective social, economic and political systems, starting with the Greater San Francisco Bay Area and expanding to adjacent regions. While our individual missions span a range of issues such as advancing racial equity and economic inclusion, expanding access to affordable, quality health care, and improving life outcomes for young people through education – collectively, we value the role of youth organizing groups in advancing justice and equity for their communities today. We also value the intentionality with which they cultivate and develop young leaders for the future, particularly young Black, Indigenous and People of Color leaders.

Our fund is anchored by two leaders in the field of youth organizing and philanthropy:
- Youth Organize! California serves as a convener, capacity builder, and strategist for engaging leaders in youth organizing.
- Northern California Grantmakers serves as the pooled fund manager, grants administrator, and funder convener, drawing on our funder collaborative experience and expertise as the philanthropic membership association for Northern California.

In November 2020, the Collaborative launched the Youth Power Fund, providing a rapid response six-month grant of $20,000 each to 25 youth organizing groups through an intergenerational decision-making process. In March of 2021, the Collaborative provided an additional $10,000 to each organization to support mental health needs and stipends for youth (in response to needs expressed during a January 2021 grantee design session with youth, staff, and funders).

To build lasting movement infrastructure to collectively fund and cultivate a robust youth organizing ecosystem with shared strategies to engage more young people, expand their power, and address pressing issues. Many, but not all, participating funders directly support individual youth organizing groups in the region. Working closely with aligned funders, researchers, and groups on the ground, and with the facilitation support of Youth Organize! California, the Collaborative is committed to utilizing collective expertise to support emergent and established youth organizing and leadership development strategies in Northern California.
VISION

Young people imagine a future where we heal ourselves so we can heal others, where we lead with hope, courage, bold ambition and dreams to create a world rooted in healing, education, abolition, economic justice, youth voice & governance, environmental and climate justice, and housing for all.

What are your highest hopes for the Youth Power Fund? (youth, staff, funders Jan 2021)

Tell the multifaceted story of youth organizing
Highlight the range of strategies youth organizing uses to create social change - from policy and youth-led action research, to arts and cultural strategy, to civic engagement, narrative and social media strategies, and direct action tactics.

Provide sustained resources in the ongoing Covid crisis
Young people and their families are continuing to experience the crisis under COVID everyday, and organizations need greater general support to meet their needs.

Move from competition to interdependence
The culture of fundraising often puts organizations in competition with each other - so how can we be more connected, mentor each other, and build deep relationships? This can happen through shared spaces for political analysis and skills building, healing, innovating and testing new organizing methods together, and participating in exchanges and strategy development across organizations.

Mentor and develop organizers for the long haul
Mentorship can support staff at critical junctions of their careers - for organizers first entering the field, to taking on lead roles, and especially for supporting BIPOC community leaders in transitioning to director or executive director roles.

Center most impacted youth
Ensure that we center Black, Indigenous, trans, undocumented, and systems impacted youth. When we center those who have been most impacted by the systems we seek to transform, we invite unapologetic youth voice and power to shape the visionary dreams we need to set free.

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POWERBUILDING MILESTONES

What forms of power do we need to build as a youth organizing movement?
What milestones will we celebrate along the way?
(youth, staff, funders Design Sessions April-June 2021)

Power of Numbers & Civic Engagement
- Leadership pathways for youth and staff
- Collective space for learning, strategy, and coordination
- New structures for youth governance and decision making
- Expand our base and deepen our intergenerational partnerships

Power of Healing Justice
- Youth organizing is healing centered
- Access to healing, safe spaces, and mental health services in community

Power of Resources & Money
- Resource young people and their families (regardless of documentation status) to remove barriers to organizing
- Youth organizing is fully funded

Power of Narrative and Communications / Cultural Strategy
- Deep investment in narrative training and skills building

LEADERSHIP FROM THE FIELD

- Youth and funder grantmaking committee (fall of 2021)
- Steering committee of youth, staff, and funder reps to provide oversight, direction, and accountability
- Strategy & co-design spaces with the field (youth, staff) & funders - as needed

HTTPS://NCG.ORG/NORTHERN-CALIFORNIA-YOUTH-ORGANIZING-FUNDER-COLLABORATIVE

YOUTH POWER FUND
**SHARED GOALS**

The Collaborative aims to:

- **Support increased capacity of, and relationships among, youth organizing groups** to grow power to advance justice and equity and to transform lives and communities.
- **Advance a regional ecosystem** of youth organizers, program leaders, funders, and key partners that sustains a pathway of prepared and connected/engaged youth leaders.
- **Center youth as active leaders in grantmaking**, with decision making power in design and funding.
- **Coordinate with other collaborative efforts** to amplify impact at the regional and state levels.
- **Inspire funders to prioritize youth organizing** and direct a larger share of resources to support the growth of this ecosystem.

**HOW WE COLLABORATE**

A coordinating committee of dedicated funders works closely with Youth Organize! California and Northern California Grantmakers to plan and implement collaborative activities:

- **Relationship Building** - We engage in regular funder-to-funder and funder-to-organizer activities that cultivate knowledge, understanding, and trust so that on-the-ground work can be sustained and strengthened over time.
- **Shared Learning** - We co-create a learning agenda to enhance our working knowledge by drawing on the expertise of participating funder and organizing partners, research from field and academic leaders, and insights from national colleagues like those in the Funders Collaborative on Youth Organizing (FCYO).
- **Collective Investment** - Together, we will build and disburse a pooled fund in a manner that adds value for all our funding partners. Outcomes include creating a table where long-standing youth organizing funders can attract additional funding for their grantees; national funders can find local partners to attain regional impact; and funders who do not have a youth organizing strategy can harness youth power working on their issues.
- **Participatory Strategy and Grantmaking** - We bring youth leaders to the decision-making table to engage in the activities and strategy of the Collaborative, including their insights in reviewing applications and in the design of the grant and shared learning processes.
- **Aligned Funding and Support** - We will engage with like-minded funders so that their strategically aligned grantmaking efforts will complement and amplify the impact of the pooled fund.
POOLED FUND OVERVIEW

Phase 1: Recovery & Response, September 2020 - May 2021

- In November 2020, the Collaborative made six-month grants of $20,000 each to 25 youth organizing groups through a participatory youth grantmaking process to support youth-led, grassroots campaign work that advances racial equity and economic inclusion in the Bay Area.
- In response to concerns raised during the January 2021 design session, a supplement of $10,000 was added to each grant, to support summer youth stipends, mental health supports, and other immediate needs as the organizations continued to navigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic downturn.
- During Phase 1, the funder collaborative engaged with the 50 youth and staff grantees through a 4 part virtual series to design Phase 2, incorporating a collective vision of what a strong youth organizing ecosystem would look like and how to support its development.
- Phase 1 is supported by Crankstart, the Gerbode Foundation, Heising-Simons Foundation, San Francisco Department of Children Youth and their Families, San Francisco Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, The California Endowment, and the Walter and Elise Haas Fund.

Phase 2: Reinvest and Reimagine, January 2021 - December 2023

- Engage youth and organizational leaders from Phase 1 grantees in the design of the Phase 2 pooled fund guidelines for longer-term, larger grants to support programmatic and organizational development and sustainability.
- Raise at least $1.5 to $2 million to fund Phase 2 collaborative grantmaking and shared learning.
- Welcome and engage additional contributing and aligned funders in building the youth organizing ecosystem in the Northern California region.
- Partner with youth leaders in the grant decision-making.
- Evaluate the impact of our collective investments, capacity building and funder-to-field collaboration, and share our learnings with philanthropy and youth organizing partners.

Capacity Building

Capacity building offerings will be open to grantees and groups who applied but were not selected for funding as a way to resource and strengthen our collective ecosystem. All sessions are optional -- and unfunded organizations will receive a stipend to support their time and participation.

- 2 day long organizing staff convenings
- Youth leaders retreat (Fri-Sun)
- Staff peer coaching circles (organized by capacity building topics)
- Funds for optional self-organized peer exchanges (through peer coaching circles)
POOLED FUND GUIDELINES

Who is eligible to receive funding?
501(c)(3) organizations that are led by (staff and board) and organizing young people of color, women, immigrants, and LGBQ-TGNC communities who are actively working to dismantle white supremacy, especially, but not limited to, Black or indigenous membership groups. Organizations with fiscal sponsors are also welcome to apply but must provide a letter stating that they can receive funds if awarded and any required documents.

Phase Two Grant Awards
This is a competitive grant program, which means not all qualifying and meritorious proposals will be funded. Approximately 25 to 30 organizations will be funded at ~$30,000 in the first year of a two-year grant; the second year amount will be determined based on fundraising results.

The Fund will support organizations that:
- Center youth (13-24) in leading collective action, planning, and decision-making for grassroots organizing in their community and make connections between local issues and broader systemic change
- Provide healing, mental health, and material support to young people in their membership and/or community.
- Are under $2 million in youth organizing program budget size, especially, but not limited to smaller organizations.

The fund will maintain its focus on groups in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties, and begin a relational expansion to regions adjacent to the greater Bay Area.

Selection Process
Selection committee will be composed of funders and youth organizers who are committed to building the field of youth organizing in the Bay Area.

Timeline:
Early September - Announce fund to youth organizing groups & Northern California funder community
Friday, October 29 - Application deadline
December - Review committee makes decisions
January 2022 - Disbursements of grants (grant period begins Jan 1)

For more information, contact:
- Albert Maldonado, The California Endowment (amaldonado@calendow.org)
- Tessa Callejo, San Francisco Foundation (trc@sff.org)
- J Ishida, Youth Organize! California (jsi@yocalifornia.org)
- Kate Seely, Northern California Grantmakers (kseely@ncg.org)

PHASE 1 FUNDED ORGANIZATIONS