



## **INTERNAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT**

*Approved by CFGB Board December 2020*

### **Our Commitments**

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Our Community Foundation is committed to addressing our region's most challenging issues and providing hope for current and future generations. As we work to achieve our vision for a just, prosperous and unified region where all people are empowered to reach their full potential, we envision a world where race and zip code no longer predict life outcomes, and where barriers no longer limit the success of any individual.

We believe in learning from the past to inform our vision for the future. Just as our community's role in the Civil Rights movement catalyzed change throughout the country, today there is a similar sense of optimism across our region that we can be united in building a more equitable and inclusive community. We know that meaningful change will require bold leadership, collaboration and a long-term commitment to equity and inclusion. Our Foundation is committed to redoubling our efforts and moving forward with determination and courage. We believe that when we better equip those who have been historically left behind, we will be a stronger, more economically viable community where we all prosper.

We know that equity and inclusion of all individuals is critical to our shared future, and we are embracing a broad definition of equity that includes all groups that are marginalized, excluded, and under-resourced. But because of the pervasive role race plays in determining an individual's life outcomes, we are specifically focusing on how systemic racism, particularly against African Americans, impacts our whole region. We believe that by engaging and supporting diverse voices, experiences and perspectives, we can ensure that all people are included and valued as members of our community.

### **The Past Informs Our Future**

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In conversations throughout the community and across demographic and ideological divides, we hear a consensus that we should be forward looking as we seek solutions to current inequities. While this will be our primary focus, we recognize the importance of understanding the past and how it continues to influence the present. We believe acknowledging the legacy of past injustices is a necessary part of our community's healing process.

### **Systems Play A Critical Role**

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In order to make more than symbolic progress on the issues that affect disadvantaged people in our community, we must acknowledge that systemic barriers and injustices have disadvantaged certain groups, particularly people of color. In our community, data shows that race serves as a reliable predictor of an individual's educational, health, and economic outcomes. Sustainable change requires us to examine the systems that have created and sustained this inequity, to support grassroots leadership and focus on advocacy and policy change when necessary.

## **The Community Foundation's Role**

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We are committed to better modeling the importance of equity and inclusion both internally, in our organizational culture and processes, and externally, in our grant making and related practices. We commit ourselves to utilizing four primary strategies to address racial equity on an ongoing basis. These include:

- Supporting equity and inclusion through our grantmaking.
- Taking a leadership role with the understanding that we cannot do this work alone and that we are one piece of a much larger puzzle.
- Utilizing our role as an impartial convener to bring disparate groups together to coalesce around strategies to advance this work.
- Committing ourselves to being a learning organization that reads reality truthfully, understands that we do not have the answers, and approaches this work with a sense of humility.

## **Movement to Action**

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We recognize that we are an institution with great privilege and responsibility and that we cannot successfully apply a racial equity lens to our external work without first turning the lens inward. We have committed to analyzing our internal policies, practices, and behaviors and are committing to the following:

- We will identify and develop non-traditional recruiting methods to diversify the pool of underrepresented candidates for open staff positions.
- We will foster an inclusive culture that allows our staff to actively participate and in which we value and welcome a broad spectrum of ideas and perspectives
- We will work to ensure diverse representation at all levels within the organization through mentoring, leadership development and career tracking.
- We will work to ensure an equitable representation of vendors for contracts with a particular focus on underrepresented businesses.
- We will work to ensure more diverse, underrepresented community members are involved in grant review processes and other program activities.
- We will strive to partner with organizations that are working toward equity and inclusion in all aspects of their structure and work and will make equity and inclusion a key component of grantmaking criteria.
- We will pursue opportunities to increase program focus on and funding for equity and inclusion, with a particular focus on racial equity and justice.
- We will be intentional about partnering with and supporting grassroots organizations and leaders.
- We will collect and systematize the use of equity data to assess impact and inform grantmaking.
- We will be proactive in our role as a convener of peers and others to advance equity and inclusion, while recognizing our roles as learners and partners in this work.
- We are committed to providing opportunities for donors to learn about diversity, equity and inclusion to build mutual understanding and increase our collective philanthropic impact.
- We will work to ensure that our communications are inclusive and sensitive to various audiences and reflect the diversity of our communities.
- We will provide learning opportunities that build an understanding of the inequalities that exist, how power dynamics have benefitted some and burdened others, and how addressing these issues can help strengthen our community.