



**2018 Annual Meeting
May 15-17, 2018
Minneapolis, MN**

OVERVIEW



The Peace and Security Funders Group (PSFG) held its 2018 Annual Meeting in Minneapolis with 58 PSFG members from 35 organizations attending. The meeting provided a space for funders to network, engage in conversations about grantmaking strategies, and address the deeper and more complex issues that inform their work. The full meeting agenda, which includes links to speaker bios, is available [here](#).

Highlights included:

- An opening dinner with guest speakers Trista Harris (Minnesota Council on Foundations) and Jamila Raqib (Albert Einstein Institution)
- Lots of networking opportunities, including the ever-popular “speed networking” session, a reception at PSFG member the GHR Foundation, and a Young Professionals Meet Up
- Small group peer coaching sessions
- Member-led sessions on supporting movements, innovative grantmaking, crafting effective convenings, cybersecurity, and the Women, Peace, and Security Act
- Six small-group roundtables on diversity, equity, and inclusion

OPENING DINNER: PEACE AND SECURITY AT HOME AND ABROAD IN 2018

[Trista Harris](#) (Minnesota Council on Foundations) kicked-off the 2018 Annual Meeting with an exploration of how international peace and security issues are playing out in Minneapolis, and the intersections of peace, security, and racial equity. Thoughtfully moderated by [Amy Bisno](#) (American Jewish World Service), [Jamila Raqib](#) (Albert Einstein Institution) discussed how non-violent resistance movements are impacting peace and security. The conversation focused on the potential of strategic non-violent action to transform acute conflicts, and the ways in which funders can support these movements.

Key Takeaways

- Minneapolis-based funders often use a racial equity lens in their grantmaking in order to make the greatest impact in the communities they serve and to prevent their grantmaking from perpetuating cycles of marginalization.
- We are at a peak moment of mobilization and opportunity for social and political movements; however, modern movements often skip the necessary steps of capacity building. This trend means that movements can grow rapidly, particularly through social media, but that they are also decreasing in effectiveness.
- Repressive governments are learning to respond to and further repress movements in new ways. Funders can support movements by anticipating these tactics and assisting activists and organizers to get past them.

FISHBOWL DISCUSSIONS

FROM PROTEST TO POLICY: SUPPORTING MOVEMENTS FOR SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHANGE

During this session, participants reflected on the components of successful movements, discussed how funders can support movements without stifling them, and explored how funders can complement the work of the grassroots.

Key Takeaways

- Defining the movement and understanding its ecosystem is key. Who are the actors? What are their capacities? How is power being challenged and what are the tactics being used?
- Supporting movements is an investment that requires careful, long-term engagement and an assumption of risk. Funders need to be prepared to accept this risk and high rates of failure. Because funding movements requires more engagement, funders should dedicate more staff time to this type of grantmaking in order to build trust and ensure that the grantmaking is not harming the movement in some way.
- Funders need a strong understanding of counter and subversive movements as well as the movements they seek to support.

INNOVATIVE GRANT RESPONSES TO THE NEW POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

During this session, participants explored why and how funders have changed their approaches to addressing pressing peace and security issues. Using three different mechanisms as case studies, participants discussed the pros and cons of different funding modalities and the ways in which these mechanisms can enable grantees to capitalize on political opportunities.

Key Takeaways

- Embrace the “design-build” process and do not be paralyzed by what you do not know. Begin by researching key actors who can inform your work and allow ideas to evolve and change through the iterative process in order to foster innovation.
- Reach beyond your usual networks and accept greater risk for new, unproven work. This way, grantees and partners have flexible support with which to respond to the changing policy landscape.
- Listen to your grantees and partners—sometimes what a funder sees as an urgent need is not what the grantee sees as an urgent need.



MEMBER-LED SESSIONS

DESIGNING AND SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE CONVENINGS

During this session, participants shared and compared practices for designing convenings for and with grantees and partners. Participants identified best (and worst) practices, shared [resources](#), and learned practical tips they can use in their convenings.

Key Takeaways

- Be clear about the purpose of the meeting and ask your attendees what they would find most useful.
- Remember the power of place. Convene in meaningful, connected spaces that are relevant to the topic or goal of the meeting.
- Having two facilitators can be helpful: a process facilitator to keep the meeting moving and a content facilitator to be sure that the necessary content is being covered.

RESEARCH-BACKED DECISION-MAKING

During this session, participants explored different kinds of research, the limitations to using research, and the ways in which research can impact funders' decision-making. Participants also discussed the ways in which they currently use research in their work.



Key Takeaways

- Often times funders rely on “light” or think tank research rather than academic research because it is more readily accessible and because many funders have stronger connections to think tanks than academics. This distinction is important because it informs the kinds of information that is available for funders.
- Research provides evidence-based insights into commonly-held assumptions that funders have about their work. Research should not only be used to justify a current strategy, but also to challenge it. Using research to challenge and strengthen strategies will ultimately make them more effective.
- It is important to consider who sets the research agenda and what populations have access to the findings. Applying an equity lens to soliciting or conducting research can help mitigate some of these issues.

THE AFTERMATH: WHAT HAPPENS AFTER CAMPAIGNS SUCCEED?

During this session, participants explored the following questions: once you get a treaty, policy, or change you've been working toward, what do you do next? Do you switch your focus to implementation? How do you decide what to fund next?

Key Takeaways

- Success does not equal completion. Funders should consider how to win/lose “forward.”
- Cross-organizational relationships, and how you build and sustain them, are critical.
- The ways in which we frame the stories of success for ourselves and others is important.



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI) ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

SESSION TITLE	KEY TAKEAWAYS
DEI 101: A FRAMEWORK FOR WHERE TO BEGIN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations have the power and responsibility to integrate DEI into all aspects of their work as grantmakers, economic entities, community citizens, and employers. • Funders should be intentional, strategic, and action-oriented in their approach to DEI. • Intercultural competency and self-awareness are essential and should be viewed as both personal and professional skills.
DISCUSSING DEI WITH GRANTEES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to show your grantees that DEI is a priority and to demonstrate the ways in which your institution is working on this. • Have open and proactive conversations with your grantees, then integrate this into your policies and programs.
ADVANCING DEI WORK INTERNALLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When hiring for new positions, consider what is needed to be successful in that position and eliminate requirements that are not necessary (e.g., education requirements). • Make sure that your efforts in DEI are not only conducted and implemented at the surface level. In order to successfully advance DEI within your own institution, DEI needs to become a core value, not just an occasional practice.
SHARING CHALLENGES: WHAT WE'VE BEEN GRAPPLING WITH IN OUR DEI WORK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEI is not just a “pipeline” issue; rather, there are larger structures in place that need to be addressed and broader definitional questions that should be explored. • Even though this work is challenging and uncomfortable, funders should proceed with humility and not shy away from it.
BEYOND A STATEMENT: MAINSTREAMING DEI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus less on numbers and quotas and focus more on the structures and barriers in place that are stifling a DEI agenda. • Lead with humility and recognize when you get something wrong because mistakes will happen. Remember that learning from these mistakes will allow for progress.

**DEI ABROAD:
WHAT DOES DEI
LOOK LIKE WITH
GLOBAL
GRANTEES?**

- Evaluate your grant proposal process and determine if there are unnecessary barriers to entry.
- Determine if your work overseas is informed by a wide range of people and experts from that region.
- Allow local communities to set the agenda and allow them to exercise their agency in decision-making that affects them.

POWER HOUR DISCUSSIONS

For the notes and key takeaways, please contact the PSFG members who led the Power Hour.

CYBERSECURITY AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

[Monica M. Ruiz](#), The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

THE WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY ACT IN THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION: WHAT'S NEXT?

[Cynda Collins Arsenault](#), One Earth Future Foundation

MEASURING PROGRAM IMPACT AND LEARNING

Kristina Ward, Bush Foundation (contact [Genevieve Boutilier](#))

CLIMATE SECURITY: HOW CAN FUNDERS LEVERAGE IMPACT?

[Jen Smyser](#), The Stanley Foundation

POLICYMAKING 101

[Alex Toma](#), Peace and Security Funders Group

HOW DO YOU MAKE FUNDING OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH HAVE IMPACT?

[Nyeleti Honwana](#), Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation

CLOSING LUNCH

The Annual Meeting culminated with lunch and laughs as the Theater of Public Policy brought peace and security issues to life via unscripted comedy theater. [Dr. Mary Curtin](#) (Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota) began with a discussion of the shifting global context, the primary threats to and opportunities for peace, and how to shape the new era of international politics. Following the discussion, the cast of the Theater of Public Policy re-imagined the conversation through long-form improv comedy.



RESOURCES

OPENING DINNER: PEACE AND SECURITY AT HOME AND ABROAD IN 2018

[From Dictatorship to Democracy](#)

FROM PROTEST TO POLICY: SUPPORTING MOVEMENTS FOR SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHANGE

[A New Generation: How a Funders' Collaborative Sees the Prospects for Youth Organizing](#)

[Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress](#)

[International Center on Nonviolent Conflict Resource Library](#)

[25 Powerful Ways Funders Can Support Social Movements](#)

INNOVATIVE GRANT RESPONSES TO THE NEW POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

[OpenIDEO Bridgebuilder Challenge](#)

DESIGNING AND SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE CONVENINGS

[Designing and Supporting Effective Convenings Worksheet](#)

RESEARCH-BACKED DECISION-MAKING

[Conflict Management and Peace](#)

[Journal of Peace Research](#)

[Peace Policy](#)

[Peace Science Digest](#)

[Political Violence at a Glance](#)

[Research-backed Decision-making Session Handout](#)

THE AFTERMATH: WHAT HAPPENS AFTER CAMPAIGNS SUCCEED?

[The Aftermath: What Happens After Campaigns Succeed Worksheet](#)

DEI ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

[Foreign Policy Interrupted](#)

[Keystone Accountability](#)

[NGO Source](#)

[Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention](#)

[Social Transformation Project](#)

[White Supremacy Culture](#)

[Women Also Know Stuff](#)

[Women of Color Advancing Peace and Security](#)

