The Peace and Security Funders Group (PSFG) held its 2019 Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. with nearly 65 people from 38 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:

- A dinner discussion with Dr. Amitav Acharya (American University) and Dr. Maria Stephan (U.S. Institute of Peace) on the shifting world order and what this means for the future of global peace and security.

- Lots of networking opportunities including a reception to celebrate the release of the 2019 Peace and Security Funding Index, an Early Career Professionals Meet Up, and three issue-focused dinners.

- Member-led sessions on transforming grantmaking practice; the intersection of climate and security; and the connections between domestic and international peace and security work.

- Small-group peer coaching sessions.

- Six roundtables on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- A Movie Night featuring the PSFG member-supported documentary film “Wave Goodbye to Dinosaurs,” about women peacemakers in Northern Ireland.
Opening Dinner: Peace and Security at Home and Abroad in 2018

Michelle Dover (Ploughshares Fund) kicked-off the 2019 Annual Meeting with an exploration of this year’s theme: change. She examined the ways in which the peace and security philanthropic sector is adapting to rising authoritarianism and the shifting international world order, and transforming to be more diverse, inclusive, and equitable. Expertly moderated by Keith Porter (The Stanley Foundation), Dr. Maria Stephan (U.S. Institute of Peace) and Dr. Amitav Acharya (American University) discussed the ways in which the changes in the international architecture are creating new challenges to international peace and security; and how states, non-state actors, and civil society are responding to these new challenges.

Key Takeaways

- Nonviolent movements and campaigns are twice as effective as violent campaigns in achieving peace. However, the effectiveness of peaceful activism and organizing is declining as authoritarian regimes are becoming more effective in their suppression efforts.

- “Global North” practitioners should take care to understand how the “Global Majority” perceives the shifts in the international world order. These perspectives are often left out of the conversation, but must be considered due to the fluidity of international peace and security. When thinking about the future of the global world order, it is important to view it from a world historical framework, rather than simply a Western historical framework.

- The multilateral organizations created in the wake of World War II are not going away. Global hegemony is rare—only the U.S. and the UK have ever achieved it. The future global world order is likely going to be multipolar, and the multipolarity will include not just states, but also non-state actors and multilateral institutions.

Opening Plenary: Threats to Global Peace and Security

Building on the discussion of the changing world order at the opening dinner, participants heard three lighting talks from Chung-Wha Hong (Grassroots International), Anita Nayar (Regions Refocus), and Jonathan Matthew Smucker (Beyond the Choir) that explored how rising authoritarianism and increasing restrictions on civil society threaten global peace and security.

Key Takeaways

- There is a need to define a new liberalism and the next internationalism. Funders should support time to reflect and think about this new paradigm.

- Funders should encourage cross-sector and cross-movement organizing, and their interactions in order to enrich analysis and share thinking.

- Funders should also fund more face-to-face meetings and alliance-building among the organizations and activists they support. In order to better understand the outcomes of this type of strategy, funders should redefine how they determine “success.”
ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS: RESPONDING TO THREATS TO GLOBAL PEACE AND SECURITY

BUILDING A FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY
During this session, participants explored how to support a feminist foreign policy amidst rising populism, authoritarianism, and militarism. Participants discussed how to build a feminist foreign policy in response to the threats posed by growing nationalism and authoritarianism.

Key Takeaways
- To advance a feminist foreign policy, funders must break down silos and recognize the interconnectedness and interdependencies between physical security, climate, infrastructure, economic agency, and political participation.
- Supporting a feminist foreign policy requires that expertise from a diverse set of sectors, including public health, science, social justice, development, economics, and political science, be brought into the conversation. It is critical that these conversations happen within and beyond peace and security sectors in order to build constituencies and to build a larger, more diverse ecosystem across geographies.
- Funders should elevate locally-led perspectives, frameworks, and solutions, and ground those perspectives in the analysis that is used to inform policymakers and other funders. Related, utilize the tools and resources used by grassroots and indigenous actors as there is a wealth of knowledge there.
- A feminist lens must be intersectional in its understanding of equity and power.

MAKING THE CASE FOR PEACE AND SECURITY WORK: STORYTELLING AND MOVEMENTS
During this session, participants explored how to make the case for peace and security work amidst rising populism, authoritarianism, and militarism. Participants discussed the ways they can build more inclusive movements that get beyond the “usual” stakeholders.

Key Takeaways
- Ask practitioners and grantees what they need in order to meet their missions, but be ready to ask yourself about the things you as a funder can provide. Practitioners do not always know what they need or what kinds of support are available.
- Statistics and data are valuable for assessments, but audiences need to be moved by an issue in order to get engaged. Stories with relatable protagonists will create empathy that challenges peoples’ beliefs and forces them to consider new perspectives and ideas.
- Funders should support organizers, leaders, and activists with skills beyond the immediate projects or campaigns that they are funding to ensure the longevity of their success.
RESPONDING TO RESTRICTIONS ON GRANTEES
During this session, participants discussed how closing space for civil society directly affects funders; how funders can identify and push back against restrictions; and how funders can best support grantees operating in restrictive environments.

Key Takeaways
- Closing civic space is happening all over the world, not just in fragile contexts. Six out of every 10 countries around the world impose legislation that directly restricts civil society’s ability to operate. Up to this point, most of the work addressing closing civil space has focused on diagnosing the extent of the problem.
- Tactics to restrict civic space include lawfare (e.g., lawsuits, trespassing charges), financial threats, physical threats (e.g., threats to an organization’s property), and reputational threats (e.g., attacks on social media).
- To push back, funders can engage in legal action, communications and storytelling campaigns, and advocacy strategies.

MEMBER-LED SESSIONS

PERSPECTIVES ON TRANSFORMING GRANTMAKING PRACTICE
During this session, participants discussed the ways in which they can improve their grantmaking practices to better serve grantees. Participants explored the kinds of feedback that they receive from grantees and trends coming out of effective philanthropy research.

Key Takeaways
- Be in partnership with your grantees. Partnership can take many forms, including being flexible, offering general support or capacity building support, sharing ideas, convening grantees, and having open and transparent conversations with grantees. Know the balance between legal requirements of grantmaking and the kinds of practices that will help your grantees be more effective.
- The philanthropic sector is changing. Grants management positions are becoming higher priority positions and more integral to the strategic planning process, so it is important to be aware of the bias that can be baked into that role. Grants managers need to be cognizant of the different funding needs that different grantees have, and what vehicles and systems are the best to use for funding different grantees.
- You are an advocate for your grantees. Be transparent with foundation staff and leadership along the decision-making process, and be clear sighted about the challenges that your grantees may face along the way.
A CLIMATE LENS FOR PEACE AND SECURITY
During this session, participants discussed how peace and security funders can take a “climate lens” to their grantmaking and programming, and promote a strategy with the dual benefits of building peace and addressing the effects of climate change.

Key Takeaways

• Conversations on climate and security often focus solely on threats, rather than opportunities for collaboration and innovation. Funders should encourage a new narrative of climate and security, centered on the ways in which communities, governments, and other actors are equipped to be drivers of solutions.

• Good governance is critical to environmental peacebuilding at both the local level and the international level. There is a real opportunity for philanthropy to support good governance and democracy-promotion in pursuit of principled climate change strategy.

• Women and indigenous communities bring unique capabilities to environmental protection and peacebuilding because they are at the frontlines of our changing climate, and should be brought into discussions about solutions. Similarly, youth around the globe have enormous courage and energy around addressing climate change, and are showing real leadership.

CONNECTING THE DOTS: PEACE AND SECURITY AT HOME AND ABROAD
During this session, participants discussed how domestic organizations are thinking about approaching peace and security work; how activists are connecting with one another across continents; what challenges and opportunities they see for engaging on peace and security issues; and how funders can begin to connect the dots between domestic and international issues in order to build stronger coalitions to advance peace and security work.

Key Takeaways

• Exchanges, delegations, and learning trips for activists are profound ways to build relationships, understanding, and solidarity across issues and geographies.

• Funders should support activities in this realm that do not have concrete outcomes; rather, the focus should be on relationship-building.

• A rights-based framework can be useful in building connections between organizations and activists, particularly as they face forces that try to clamp down on civil society.
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| DEI 201                             | • Ultimately, DEI initiatives and activities should have the end goal of “equity,” meaning that there are no disparities across the organization.  
• This work requires naming the problems that exist. Once the problem is named, then teams can work to shift the culture of the organization and work with leadership to shift power. |
| BEYOND CONSULTANTS                  | • Empower, educate, and engage all levels of staff.  
• Diversity is just the first step—move to inclusion and equity by having serious conversation about power. Use leadership transitions as an opportunity to put values into practice. |
| ADVANCING EQUITY IN PEACE AND SECURITY PHILANTHROPY | • Starting points can be small: funders can start making an impact within teams even before there is organization-wide change.  
• Reject the “checking a box” mentality. This work must be long-term and systems-wide. Ensure that you are stepping up your support of groups who are doing this practice. |
| DEVELOPING DEI INITIATIVES FOR YOUR SECTOR | • Change happens from the top, down; it is important that leadership is onboard and creates a culture that welcomes and values diversity. Leadership should also empower employees to facilitate change.  
• Use your grants data as a guide. Oftentimes, grants data can help uncover inequity in your grantmaking. |
| GETTING BEYOND DIVERSITY            | • While is can be complicated to incorporate social inclusion analysis with existing constraints (budget, timelines, capacity), it’s crucial to use this lens to implement and fund effective programs and practices.  
• Two critical rules exist when thinking about implementing a social inclusion lens: nothing about us without us and do no harm. |
| FUNDING DEI WORK                    | • Avoid “diversity bingo” and tokenism; focus on deeper conversations about how grantees are addressing inequitable systems, and work to recruit, support, and advance diverse staff and boards.  
• DEI work is expensive. Funders must be willing to provide substantial funds specifically for this work and to sustain it across many levels.  
• DEI work is both the right thing to do and critical to this community’s success. Funders should prepare for conflicts that may arise from funding DEI work to ensure that it does not result in paralysis. |
For the notes and key takeaways, please contact the PSFG members who led the Power Hour.

**CURRENT POLITICAL CLIMATE AND FOUNDATION PRACTICE**
Lukas Haynes, David Rockefeller Fund

**FUNDING LOCALLY: WHAT WORKS AND WHAT DOESN’T**
Bridget Moix, Peace Direct

**ENGAGING POLICYMAKERS**
Yifat Susskind, MADRE

**DISCUSSION FOR FUNDERS WORKING ON REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS**
Kerri Kennedy, American Friends Service Committee

**MANAGING POWER DYNAMICS**
Mike Edington, Wellspring Philanthropic Fund

**NEXT GENERATION SECURITY ISSUES**
John Carl Baker, Ploughshares Fund

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**CLOSING PLENARY: POWER AND PRIVILEGE IN PEACE AND SECURITY PHILANTHROPY**

In this candid, fireside chat-style session, Dana Kawaoka-Chen (Justice Funders), Ambassador Bonnie Jenkins (Women of Color Advancing Peace, Security, and Conflict Transformation), and Ellen Friedman (Compton Foundation) engaged in a conversation on the intersection of equity and peace and security philanthropy. They discussed the role foundations have played in shaping peace and security, and explored how funders might democratize and diversify.

**Key Takeaways**

- The scale of philanthropy’s response must meet the scale of the challenge. Climate change, immigrant rights, gun violence, nuclear weapons, and so many other peace and security issues disproportionately affect people of color and indigenous communities. Funders need to use a DEI lens in their philanthropy in order to positively effect these populations.

- Instead of asking, “What can we do?” funders should ask, “What is necessary for justice? What are the structures in place that are maintained by an inequitable and oppressive system that has led to the peace and security threats we are trying to address?” Funders should also ask themselves, “Are the foundation’s practices in line with the values that drive our grantmaking?”

- Weaving in a DEI lens into peace and security grantmaking requires not only a consciousness of the problem, but also an intentional effort to change practice. This type of practice must be exercised every day.
RESOURCES

OPENING DINNER: THE SHIFTING WORLD ORDER AND THE FUTURE OF PEACE AND SECURITY
Constructing Global World Order: Agency and Change in World Politics
The End of American World Order
Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict

MAKING THE CASE FOR PEACE AND SECURITY WORK: STORYTELLING AND MOVEMENTS
Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics

PERSPECTIVES ON TRANSFORMING GRANTMAKING PRACTICE
Netgrant.org

CONNECTING THE DOTS: PEACE AND SECURITY AT HOME AND ABROAD
Kumu
Derry Girls
Network Weaver

DEI ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS
Awake to Woke to Work: Building a Race Equity Culture
Decolonizing Wealth: Indigenous Wisdom to Heal Divides and Restore Balance
Delivering Through Diversity
Equity in the Center
Gender Champions in Nuclear Policy
Kairos Center
National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy
People of Color Also Know Stuff
Power Moves
Putting Racism on the Table
Race to Lead: Confronting the Nonprofit Leadership Gap
Racial Equity Institute

CLOSING PLENARY: POWER AND PRIVILEGE IN PEACE AND SECURITY PHILANTHROPY
Justice Funders
Resonance: A Framework for Philanthropic Transformation
Women of Color Advancing Peace, Security, and Conflict Transformation