



VISIONARY RESISTANCE

INSIDE THE RAPID-RESPONSE
MODEL OF THE EMERGENT FUND

—

Founding Partners **WOMEN DONORS NETWORK
SOLIDAIRE**

Partners **DEMOCRACY ALLIANCE
THRESHOLD FOUNDATION**

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A NOTE FROM THE FUNDERS



The Emergent Fund started as a plane built in mid-air. We moved faster than comfort allowed in developing a funding response to the new threats posed by the 2016 election because the scale of the crisis that loomed was so large, multidimensional, and immediate. Resources were urgently needed in many places and without much time for deliberation.

Muslim-Americans faced a wave of hate crimes, immigrant communities faced criminalization and raids, Black and Latino communities faced ongoing attacks on human and civil rights, and LGBTQ communities faced attacks on basic protections.

As organizers in these communities began to evolve their responses, members of the Women Donors Network and Solidaire found themselves asking the same question- “How can our work rise to the level of this crisis?” The Threshold Foundation and the Democracy Alliance soon joined this partnership. We aligned our shared vision with three core strategies:

- 1** Center the expertise of the leaders from the communities we hoped to serve in both the decision-making and the funding;
- 2** Adapt and evolve our model in response to changing conditions and new insights;
- 3** Support visionary, intersectional work aimed at transformative collaborations, systemic change, and new solutions.

We put the onus on ourselves to invite the most insightful, well-connected and representative group we could gather to be the Emergent Fund’s advisors and decision-makers. To accurately reflect the communities we wanted the Emergent Fund to support, we assembled a powerful Advisory Council and Nominations Network that was immigrant, Latinx, Muslim, Black, Native, Arab-American, LGBTQ, and mostly women. Not coincidentally, **two** members of our Advisory Council are MacArthur Genius Award winning organizers of color (one awarded just as this evaluation goes to print)!

Beyond curating a wildly insightful group of advisors and decision-makers, we subjected ourselves and our process to continuous improvement. There were no hard and fast rules if we could figure out a better, smarter way. That proved to be both good practice and joyful in the flexibility and creativity that emerged.

Simultaneously, we designed an extremely lightweight process for the groups. We didn’t ask for 5-year plans, logic models, organizational charts, or budgets. The entire application could be completed in 15 minutes. We trusted advisors who knew the field well to make funding decisions without intensive paperwork from the groups. This allowed us to move over \$1 million in grants in 2-week cycles with an average grant size of \$20,000 and minimal overhead. This process resulted in a grants list of which we are all immensely proud.

We are pleased to share this evaluation. Beyond using these findings to improve our work with the Emergent Fund, we hope to offering this learning to our colleagues in philanthropy who join us in pursuit of bolder and more inclusive solutions to the unprecedented challenges and opportunities ahead.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the summer of 2017, following several rounds of grantmaking that began in January, the Emergent Fund took a pause to evaluate and learn about its model and the impact it had on selected grantees. TCC Group (TCC) was contracted to conduct the required evaluation and compile a final report on findings, characteristics of the model that could be shared with the philanthropic field, areas in which the model could be improved, and the impact the fund had on organizations that received a grant. This summary shares the high level findings from the final report.

WHAT WORKED

Grantees and other internal stakeholders to the fund were interviewed about what made the model work. Internal stakeholders shared how important the pre-established relationships and sense of trust were in helping the advisory council work well together. Among those internal groups, the division of labor was effective and helped lessen the time commitment for members involved. Grantees praised characteristics of the model such as the ease, speed and efficiency of the application, scoring process, flexibility, the focus on a diverse group of grassroots organizations, the trusting relationships of those working on the fund, and the intentional decision-making power given to community leaders. Grantees felt the model more closely adhered to the meaning of rapid response than other funds they had worked with in the past.

THE FUND'S IMPACT

Grantees of the Emergent Fund were able to serve several groups in the most vulnerable communities under attack after the election including immigrants, low-income individuals, and minority populations. Stories of the work they accomplished with the Emergent Fund grant highlighted activities that served to shift power and work towards longer-term transformation in those communities. Strategies that grantees used in their work included experimental tactics, alliance-building, and leadership training. Additionally, several grantees leveraged their Emergent Fund grants into matching funds from other funders.

ADOPTING THE MODEL

Through the evaluation findings, it became clear that there are several key actions that others in the field of philanthropy can take in order to adopt an Emergent Fund model:

- Transfer the burden of proof from organizations to funders
- Trust the expertise of frontline organizations
- Redefine the funder's role from expert to curator
- Be willing to take risks and support innovation
- Practice emergent strategy by challenging issue silos
- Prioritize community level funding
- Be explicit about power
- Reflect and iterate

INTRODUCTION



In November 2016, after the results of the presidential election, many sectors, philanthropy among them, took a pause. What needs would the philanthropic sector have to fill? What political or norm changes would communities need to prepare for? How could those on the frontlines most effectively respond to what was to come? These questions drove the creation of the Emergent Fund.

The Emergent Fund, established by Solidaire Network and the Women Donors Network, was intended to house funds from individual and large donors that could be granted to organizations doing power-building¹ work aimed at protecting communities who would likely be impacted by the new administration and sociopolitical climate. The fund had two desired impacts. First, that affected communities are increasingly protected in the wake of the Trump administration, and second, that power-building organizations have more opportunities to create an alternative future for affected communities facing injustice.

As Figure 1 shows (see next page), the fund used two main strategies to reach these impacts. The first strategy involved grantmaking itself, awarding monetary support to organizations or projects that met the Fund's criteria of: using emergent strategies, power-building, intersectionality, having leadership from affected communities, having a right-sized need, and representing geographically diverse communities. The second strategy involved ongoing development and fundraising for the Fund itself, with work focused on building awareness and support among current and future donors of the Fund.

After several rounds of receiving grant applications and awarding funds every other week (totaling over \$1 million in grants), the Fund's founding team wanted to assess what they had achieved and what they had learned.

This report shares learnings from a series of interviews and a survey, focused on the impact the Fund has had on grant partners, affected communities, funders, and other stakeholder groups, as well as what has been learned about how to create an effective funding model for rapid-response grantmaking.

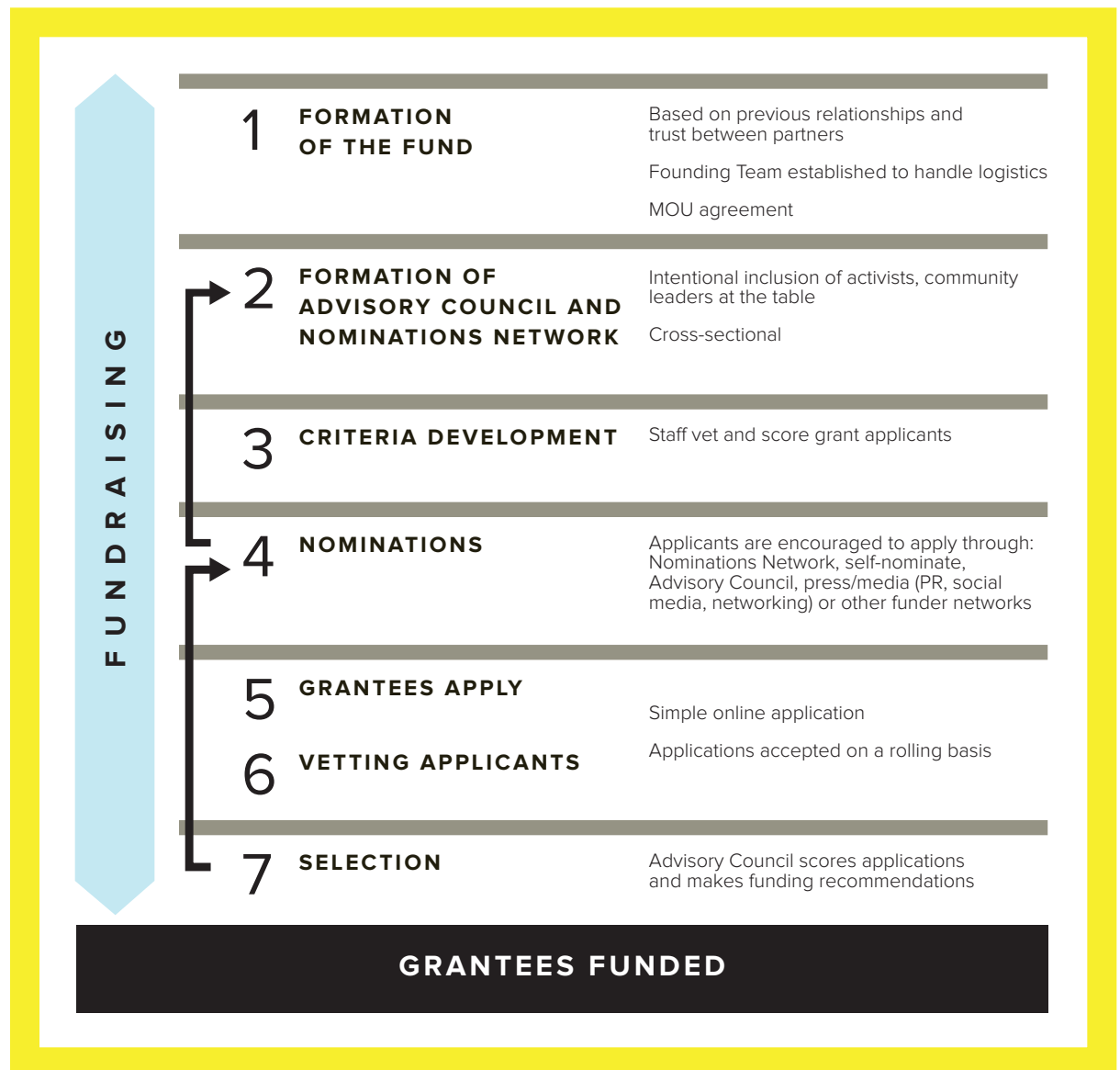
Findings are organized into two sections: those related to the Fund's model and those related to the impact of the Fund. Following the findings are recommendations and discussion questions to guide future work.

¹ By power-building, we refer to strategies developing community power through organizing and/or leadership development (including through new tools), direct action, and/or cultural work

THE FUND'S MODEL

FIGURE 1:
THE EMERGENT FUND MODEL

The figure below illustrates the steps taken from the Emergent Fund's formation to its successful dispersion of grants to community organizations. The arrows surrounding steps 2-4 and 4-7 demonstrate the iterative nature of the model.



WHAT WAS THE MODEL?

The Emergent Fund was purposefully created using a new model meant to change traditional hierarchical forms of grantmaking. Using inspiration from grassroots focused organizations, such as North Star Fund², the founders of the Emergent Fund worked to curate the group of decision-makers instead of relying on a paper trail. As the Fund was created, the founding team, a group of four staff members from Solidaire Network and Women Donors Network, leveraged their relationships to convene an advisory council. The advisory council was made up of activists and leaders from affected communities, regions, and sectors.

“The open narrative process was critical for us. The Emergent Fund was willing to make an investment in a radical idea that was not confined to the usual restrictions of other foundations.”
— Grantee

The founding team also appointed a group of individuals as a formal nominations network. These individuals were often leaders of grassroots initiatives and were encouraged to nominate organizations or projects they thought fit the goals of the Fund. While this group did carry additional weight in the grant review process, nomination forms were also available to be completed by other individuals, including those not affiliated with the formal nominations network. Once an organization was nominated, they were invited to complete the grant application. The grant application was intentionally kept brief and mainly involved a narrative description of the work and the goals of the organization applying for funding.

As the Fund was getting up to speed, the founding team worked with the advisory committee to create a list of criteria that could be used to judge the incoming grant applications. Changes to the scoring criteria were made on an ongoing basis to allow them to evolve as the advisory council and the founding team gained clarity around the types of organizations and projects the Emergent Fund could have the most impact on with the available funding pool.

Once an organization completed its application, staff from the founding team rated the application according to the funding criteria. Then the founding team created a book with their scores and funding suggestions on all the grant applications for the current week and facilitated a phone conversation with the advisory council. On this call, advisory council members were invited to provide feedback on organizations beyond what was available based on the grant application alone. Grantees that met the criteria were prioritized for funding, which was awarded every two weeks.

WHAT WORKED?

FROM GRANTEES

The brevity of the grant application process was greatly appreciated and set the initial tone for valuing grantee time.

Virtually all grantees noted how simple and fast the grant application process was. Grantees mentioned how the application process made them feel that applying for funding was feasible even with all of the other work on their plate and they appreciated that it removed some of the traditional hierarchy from the grantmaking process. Grantees who responded to the survey all agreed or strongly agreed that the application was clear and easy to complete and that it was the right amount of work for the funding received.

Accepting nominations openly, in addition to the formal nominations team, allowed for a broader range of applications.

While the nominations team was active in recommending organizations from their networks, some funded grantees were appreciative that there were other potential pathways to nomination. In addition to the formal nominations team, nonprofits could nominate other organizations they were aware of, and the straightforward nominations form made it easy to do so. This process was viewed as expanding the pool of organizations who were invited to apply for funding.

² North Star Fund uses an activist-led grantmaking committee to guide grantmaking in support of grassroots activist organizations in New York City.

The model struck grantees as more closely adhering to the meaning of rapid response than other funds they had worked with in the past.

All grant partners who had received funding through other rapid response grants said their experience with the Emergent Fund had transformed how they thought about rapid response. Several organizations were able to recall experiences with other rapid response

FROM ADVISORY COUNCIL

Having a diverse group of leaders from different sectors, regions, and communities, allowed for deeper insight into grantees than the Fund would likely have been able to get otherwise.

The advisory council was purposely created to help inform funding decisions at a level beyond the grant application. This had the benefit of allowing potential grantees to complete a more streamlined grant application, while also allowing for a deeper understanding of what the applicants were doing related to Emergent Fund's work.

A clear scoring rubric was essential given the limited pool of funding.

Having a crystal-clear scoring rubric that listed the specific criteria grant applications would be judged on was helpful for advisory council members. Though they were allowed to bring up their personal knowledge (or lack of personal knowledge) about any grant partner, the rubric created a shared understanding and alignment on what was and was not considered important.

A mechanism to prioritize grants, developed later on in the process, was a good way to ration limited resources.

In early stages of the Emergent Fund, all grantees that met a scoring threshold on the grant rubric were awarded funding. As more organizations were nominated and applied for funding, the advisory council realized this was not a sustainable model and, instead, switched to a live prioritization method, which allowed each advisory council member to rank the organizations they thought should be funded based on a combination of need, urgency, and quality. Often, this ranking method resulted in near consensus decisions and, quantifying the rankings in this way created a smooth process for making decisions regarding which organizations should be awarded funding.

“The fact that we could submit the grant through an online portal – and check the status – was incredibly helpful. The communication with staff was clear and had a very impressive turn-around.” — Grantee

“With Emergent Fund support, [our organization] turned momentum into targeted action, and built solidarity and our organizing capacity across marginalized groups, which resulted in new racial justice policies.” — Grantee

funds that involved long waiting periods, onerous applications, numerous interviews, small grant amounts, or highly inflexible funding. The Emergent Fund was seen as something entirely unique – a relatively large amount of general operating support, generally granted within a month of the original application, without requiring a burdensome grant application and reporting process.

The flexibility of the Fund allowed grantees to use money to meet urgent needs – even if the needs were different than the ones they articulated in their grant applications.

All funding awarded through the Emergent Fund was in the form of general support. This allowed grant partners to meet emerging needs even if their original intentions or goals had changed since they applied for funding. This was especially important given that groups focused on power-building in affected communities were often dealing with day-to-day shifts in tone and policy from the administration.

Trusting, pre-established relationships helped the advisory council function well from the start.

Most members of the advisory council had no prior relationships with one another before they joined the Emergent Fund. However, nearly all members of the council stated that because they all had a trusting relationship with at least one founding team member, they felt comfortable offering advice and receiving feedback from other council members.

The division of labor helped lessen the time commitment for members of the advisory committee.

Advisory members met nearly every other week while grants were being awarded and grant packets could run up to 75 pages long. Being able to rely on the founding team to do the back office work of compiling the grant books, as well as doing the initial pass on scoring grantees according to the rubric, allowed advisory committee members to engage with the information at a higher level and make the most efficient use of their skills and time.

HOW CAN OTHER FUNDERS ADOPT THE MODEL?

Transfer the burden of proof from organizations to funders.

Traditional grantmaking processes rely on potential grantees to prove their worth and impact. The Emergent Fund model transfers this burden of proof to funders, and more specifically to the advisory council, which is charged with having information as to important community needs and organizational reputations. This also serves to reduce the paperwork burden on potential grantees.

Trust the expertise of frontline organizations.

Funded organizations should be given the flexibility to respond to circumstances in the way that they perceive is best for their communities. General support funding allows organizations to be the experts in determining where their resources should go.

Redefine the funder's role from expert to curator.

Rather than have the funder be responsible for being an "expert" in a particular issue or geographic area, allow the funder to play a role curating relationships among decision-makers who have a deep existing awareness and integration into communities on the ground.

Be willing to take risks and support innovation.

An Emergent Fund will not work with funders that need a high level of control and that are unwilling to trust the process. Funders adopting this model should have a level of comfort with supporting new ideas, including those driven entirely by the community.

Practice emergent strategy by challenging issue silos.

Allowing grant partners to follow the strategies and goals they perceive as best requires funders to release clear silos of work. An immigrant rights organization might become involved in advocating for healthcare access, while a faith-based group may build a coalition with families affected by DACA. Allow the strategy to be driven by grant partners rather than forcing a strategy that artificially limits grantees to particular issue areas.

Prioritize community level funding.

There is a tendency to prioritize funding for national groups, in part because information on their work is more widely available than local groups. An Emergent Fund should also place intentional focus on directing resources to specific communities that are most impacted.

Be explicit about power.

Be clear that the intentions of the grant are focused on power building. Including power building as a criteria for potential grantees ensures that you are staying aligned with the focus on work that connects to a broader transformative plan.

Reflect and iterate.

Build in some reflection points, such as grantee surveys or advisory council interviews, to understand the impact of the funding and what can be improved and then make the relevant changes.

THE FUND'S IMPACT

“Having the amount all at once was so helpful in convincing other donors and funders to come in and add support. It allowed us to share with other funders and say we are making progress towards this.” — Grantee

Grantee programs supported by the Emergent Fund served multiple groups in the most vulnerable communities.

All of the grantees who responded to the survey indicated that their organization serves multiple types of communities, indicating a true commitment to cross-sectionality in their work. Survey data shows that the groups grantee organizations worked with the most were immigrant, Latino, and low-income communities.

Grantees were able to use their Emergent Fund support towards multiple strategies in their work including new and emerging strategies.

Over three-quarters of survey respondents (82 percent) were able to use their grants towards multiple types of work. Among the most popular types of work grantees accomplished were

alliance-building and planning events (see Chart 2). One grant partner described their work using these strategies: “With Emergent Fund support, [our organization] has aligned state partners toward a shared power plan leading into 2018 thru 2020 in one of 10 states that will determine the balance of power in the US Senate that is poised to advance:

- 1 A long-term shift in narrative and American Identity linked to a racial and economic justice policy agenda;
- 2 A social movement that brings people together across race, class, and place to aggressively contest for this agenda in a set of tipping point counties and districts; and,
- 3 Independent political power able to govern well beyond Election Day.”

Several grantees were able to leverage their Emergent Fund grants into matching funds from other funders.

Some were even able to push other funders to make grants more rapidly using the Fund as an example of true rapid response work. For example, one organization was able to take their \$25,000 grant from the Emergent Fund and use it to ask a local funder to match the grant, which allowed them to create a new full-time staff position. Receiving the entire sum at once was seen as maximizing the likelihood of receiving additional support from other funders, as it showed that a national group was supportive of the organization’s goals.

MAPPING AWARDED GRANTS

The map on the right shows the geographic diversity of grants provided by the Emergent Fund. Grants were awarded to 45 organizations in 14 states (and DC and Mexico).



CHART 1

THE TYPES OF INDIVIDUALS OR COMMUNITIES THAT GRANTEES SERVE

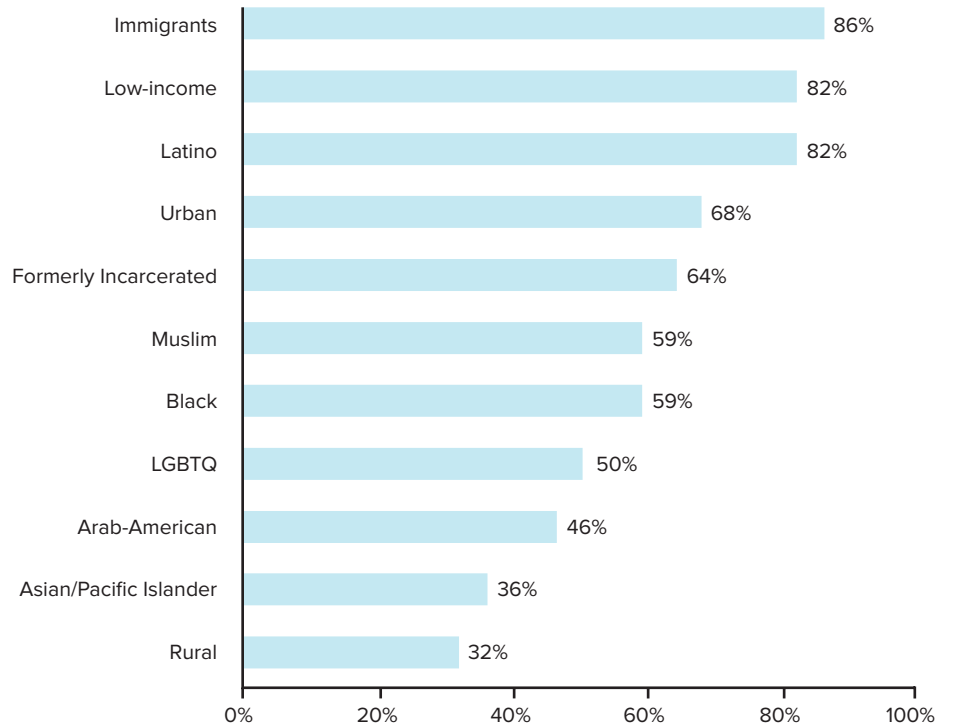
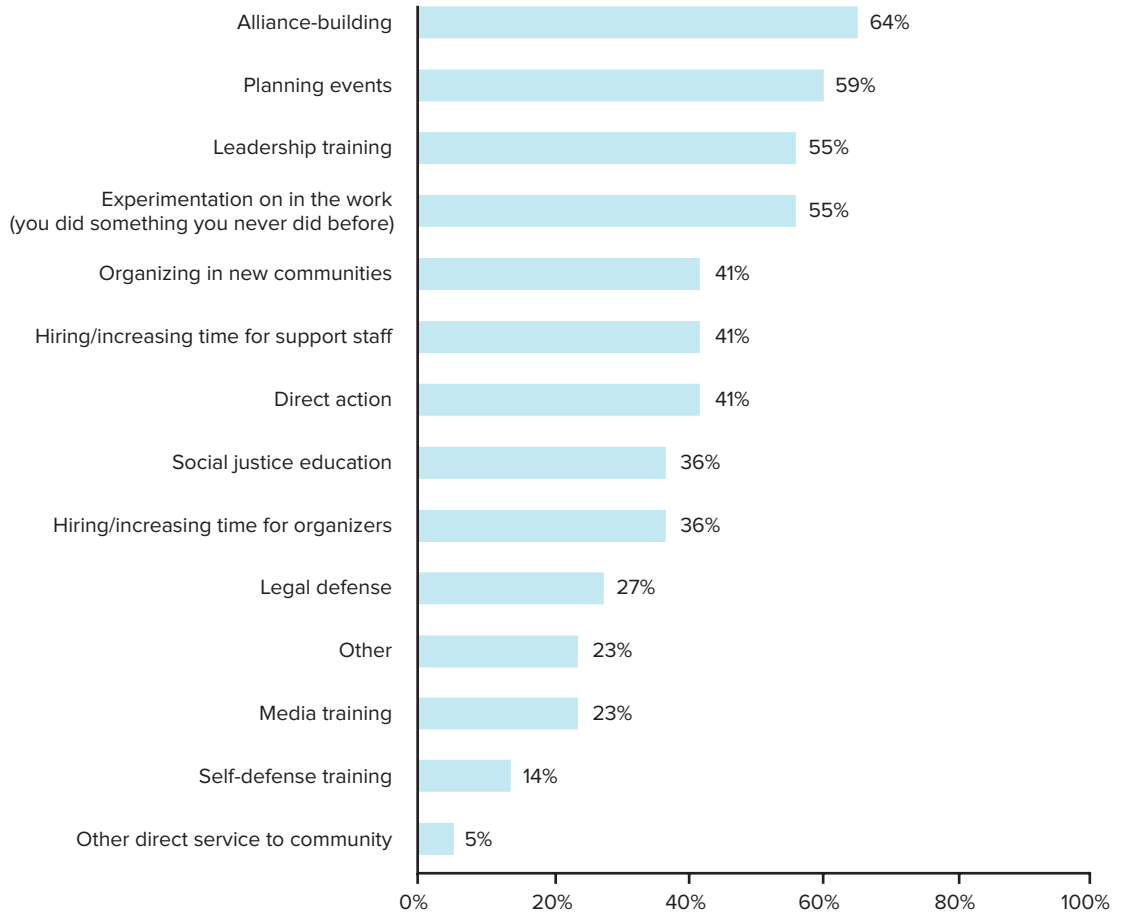


CHART 2

TYPES OF WORK ACCOMPLISHED BY GRANTEES AS A RESULT OF EMERGENT FUND SUPPORT



THE FUND'S IMPACT

WITH THE EMERGENT FUND, NUMEROUS ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVED RAPID-RESPONSE FUNDING; THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THEIR STORIES.



INDIANAPOLIS COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK (INDIANA)

“Indiana is 80 percent white, 2 percent Latino, and 10 percent black. Marion County is 30 percent black and 10 percent Latino. While we’ve worked hard for immigration reform, we’ve understood since our founding, that we had to build a multi-racial coalition leading with race, but that builds solidarity across constituencies.

With Emergent Fund’s support—in a “No Sanctuary” State, we partnered with American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and ran a legal and public pressure strategy. As a result, the Mayor and Sherriff signed an affidavit ending immigration detainers (ICE) in the county – setting a precedent. Additionally, we grew our Solidarity Network across Indiana, in 14 counties with 300 rapid responders and aligned state partners to a shared power goal for 2018-2020.”



#TEXAS RAPID RESPONSE PLAN: A COLLABORATION OF TEXAS ORGANIZING PROJECT, THE WORKERS DEFENSE PROJECT, AND THE TEXAS CIVIL RIGHTS PROJECT (TEXAS)

“I applied to Emergent Fund as a donor advisor. I recommended a set of groups that were coming together on a strategy. The groups were able find alignment, choose among themselves who would anchor the strategy, and hire a staff person to play a decision-making role.

Texas has 21 media markets in 7 cities; but these organizations don’t always talk because of their geographical location. With Emergent Fund we created a three-part strategy: 1) organizing; 2) direct service tied to organizing; and 3) media work and nationalizing the story of Texas. We wanted people across the country to know that Texas was under attack.”



#ITTAKESESTROOTS TO #GROWTHERESISTANCE FOR VISIONARY OPPOSITION (NATIONAL)

“ We are engaged in cross-sectoral work, and incorporating motivated people to work for justice. With support from Emergent Fund, #ItTakesRoots organized direct actions within the first 100 days of the Trump presidency. This included the Women’s March and Climate March. We have organized meetings on the Hill where frontline leaders were able to share the real impacts of climate change on their communities with their Congress representatives. We also led a People’s Congress where grassroots groups from around the country met together to strategize and exchange ideas around building local, municipal, and tribal power.”



ARIZONA CENTER FOR EMPOWERMENT (ARIZONA)

“ Through Emergent Fund we supported a two-day Community Summit – where 200 community members learned about their rights, economic justice, LGBTQ, women’s issues, civic engagement, youth organizing, and public education – all from a political perspective. As a result of the convening, we launched a six-week “Political Education” course for youth and adults. We built teams in high schools and colleges to register people to vote and launched our door-to-door canvass to get our community registered to vote. We hosted 15 DACA renewal clinics (Monday to Saturday) and over 25 presentations about DACA, knowing your rights, and beyond DACA.”



CAMPAIGN FOR SOUTHERN EQUALITY (NORTH CAROLINA)

“ We work across the South to promote LGBTQ equality – both legal and lived. In response to requests from the transgender community – we launched “Protect Yourself” –14 free clinics in 13 communities to inform LGBTQ southerners about their rights and how to increase their safety. We have served 150 people through those clinics. Emergent Fund’s support made it possible to offer rapid response grants through our Southern Equality Fund. So far, we’ve awarded \$7,000 in grants to 18 grassroots organizations across the south – from supporting GSA at a rural community college to a bail fund that helps people in jails and detention centers.”



Photo: Domestic Worker Legacy Fund

DOMESTIC WORKER LEGACY FUND (NATIONAL)

“ The current moment requires new vision, new narratives, and new leadership at every level of American political life. We seek to build power for domestic and care workers in the political arena – namely workers of color, immigrant workers, and women. With Emergent Fund, we were able to sustain the #Resist network (created by MeetUp) to create a platform for 165,000 and growing everyday people to take action and fight for change through over 1,000 local online hubs. We’re also building a new online media platform, Sunstorm, targeting working women of color from all walks of life, a constituency largely untapped with a huge potential to shifting politics.”

HOW CAN THE MODEL BE IMPROVED?



A FEW SUGGESTIONS WERE PROVIDED:

Onboarding advisory council members.

An onboarding, whether through phone call, a pre-recorded webinar, or a document, would allow advisory council members to gain a fuller understanding of the Fund's creation, purpose, and history, as well as the function of the model itself.

Provide additional opportunities to grantees.

Though this would require additional work, several grant partners mentioned how helpful it would be for the Emergent Fund to offer additional opportunities. Suggestions from grantees included:

- Connections to other funders who are interested in supporting power-building organizations;
- Periodic check-ins with grantees – survey data indicated grantees want more occasions for checking-in with the funders and to continue to build these relationships;
- Connections to other grant partners or nonprofits doing similar or complementary work;
- Highlighting grant partners in Emergent Fund communications to help raise the visibility of individual grantees; and,
- Providing capacity-building support in the form of skill-building trainings, particularly in the areas of communications and narrative development, and reaching out and talking to funders.

“The EF should look at the long arch of this “resistance period” for short- and long-term advances. Many of the rapid-response funds have not lasted very long. Even with the chaos of the administration we believe we need both long-term infrastructure and short-term rapid response.” — Grantee

Providing more clarity to new grantees on certain areas.

Several grantees suggested that more details about the Fund would have been welcome, such as blurbs describing organizations that had been funded previously, more information on the nominations process, guidelines for how long the grant application answers should be, and how various other foundations are involved in the Fund.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING — YOU PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN THE EMERGENT FUND MODEL.

FOUNDING TEAM

Jenifer Fernandez Ancona*
Women Donors Network

Leah Hunt-Hendrix*
Solidaire

Iara Peng
Solidaire

Ashindi Maxton
Women Donors Network

* Also part of the Advisory Council

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Chrissie Castro
Indigenous Women Rise

Kathryn Conour
Threshold Foundation

Cristina Jimenez
United We Dream

Cathy Raphael
Women Donors Network

Lateefah Simon
Akonadi

Charlene Sinclair
Center for Community Change

Loan Tran
Southern Vision Alliance

Shireen Zaman
Security and Rights Collaborative

Sam Vinal
Solidaire

NOMINATIONS NETWORK

Austin Belali
Youth Engagement Fund

Adrienne Maree Brown
Emergent Strategies

Jessica Byrd
Democracy in Color

Charlene Carruthers
BYP100

Shalini Eddens
Urgent Action Fund

Jennifer Epps-Addison
Popular Democracy

Alicia Garza
Black Lives Matter

Sameera Hafiz
National Domestic Workers Association

Van Jones
Dream Corps

Thenjiwe McHarris
Blackbird

Maurice Mitchell
Blackbird

Gaby Pacheco
TheDream.us

Gihan Perera
FL New Majority Fund

Nitika Raj
Independent

Rashad Robinson
Color of Change

Don Ragana
Native American Rights Fund

AUTHORS

Thana-Ashley Charles
TCC Group

Deepti Sood
TCC Group

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Special thanks to the staff at Proteus Fund for their work in setting up and managing the fund.

APPENDIX: GRANTEE SURVEY³

QUESTION 1

Please select the name of your organization from the list below. Note: we are only using this information to track which organizations need to receive reminders to complete the survey.⁴

QUESTION 2

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	N	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
...take action on an issue impacted by the 2016 election.	22	4.27	4.5%	4.5%	14%	14%	64%
...build or deepen its alliances with other sectors or those working on other issues.	21	4.52	5%	0%	9.5%	9.5%	76%
... experiment with new ways of doing work.	22	4.27	4.5%	0%	14%	27%	54.5%
...focus on power-building (e.g., developing community power through organizing and/or leadership development (including through new tools), direct action, and/or cultural work).	22	4.63	4.5%	0%	4.5%	9%	82%

³ Due to rounding error, not all totals will add up to exactly 100%.

⁴ We asked this question for distribution purposes, but the responses will not be provided, to protect the privacy of the survey respondents.

QUESTION 3

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	N	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The grant application was the right amount of work for the amount of funding we received.	22	4.55	0%	0%	0%	46%	55%
The grant application was clear and easy to complete.	22	4.68	0%	0%	0%	32%	68%
The length of time between submitting our Emergent Fund application and receiving funding allowed my organization to respond in a more timely way to post-election community needs.	22	4.59	0%	0%	0%	41%	59%
It was clear to me what criteria were being used to determine funding.	22	4.14	0%	5%	14%	46%	36%
The grant amount my organization received was enough to allow us to make an impact in the quality of our work.	22	4.23	0%	5%	5%	55%	36%
The grant amount my organization received was enough to allow us to make an impact in the quantity of our work.	22	3.50	5%	14%	27%	36%	18%
I have suggestions for how the grant application can be improved.	21	2.67	5%	33%	52%	10%	0%

QUESTION 4

If you have any suggestions for how the grant application or grant process can be improved, please share them below.

Verbatim Responses

“Question on how org approach/plan is adapting to the current situation. Funds like this are so needed for groups moving fluidly and plugging in new gaps, questions like this can help filter funding ongoing long term work.”

“The nomination process should be clearer, I thought a Solidiare or Women Donor Network donor had to nominate a group.”

QUESTION 5

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

As a result of my organization's Emergent Fund grant, my organization was able to...

	N	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
...increase our visibility to funders of interest.	21	3.66	5%	10%	14%	57%	14%
...form new relationships with donors interested in our work.	21	3.28	5%	24%	19%	43%	10%
...increasingly showcase our strategies and approaches to our community work.	21	4.00	5%	0%	10%	62%	24%
...gain additional funders.	21	3.23	5%	14%	38%	38%	5%
...gain additional funding from existing funders.	21	3.23	5%	14%	33%	48%	0%

QUESTION 6

What type of work were you able to support with your Emergent Fund grant? *Please select all that apply.*

Category	N	Frequency
Alliance-building	14	64%
Direct action	9	41%
Experimentation in the work (you did something you never did before)	12	55%
Hiring/increasing time for <i>organizers</i>	8	36%
Hiring/increasing time for <i>support staff</i>	9	41%
Leadership training	12	55%
Legal defense	6	27%
Media training	5	23%
Organizing in new communities	9	41%
Other direct service to community	1	5%
Planning events	13	59%
Self-defense training	3	14%
Social justice education	8	36%
Other (please specify)	5	23%

Verbatim Responses from Those Who Selected "Other"

"Educational tools"

"Grassroots capacity building / exchanges"

"Legal Observer and Know your Rights trainings"

"Media advocacy"

"We were able to elevate senior organizers by hiring new support staff, and then have the relationships set to receive and implement other sizable grants."

QUESTION 7

My organization works with individuals or communities that are... *Please select all that apply.*

Category	N	Frequency
Arab-American	10	46%
Asian/Pacific Islander	8	36%
Black	13	59%
Formerly incarcerated	14	64%
Immigrants	19	86%
Latino	18	82%
LGBTQ	11	50%
Low-income	18	82%
Muslim	13	59%
Rural	7	32%
Urban	15	68%

QUESTION 8

Please indicate the extent to which the following forms of support from The Emergent Fund would or would not be helpful to you in your work.

	N	Mean	Not at All Helpful	Unhelpful	Neither Helpful nor Unhelpful	Helpful	Very Helpful
Additional funding from The Emergent Fund	21	4.95	0%	0%	0%	5%	95%
Connections to other funders	21	4.90	0%	0%	0%	10%	90%
Connections to other Emergent Fund grant partners	21	4.67	0%	0%	5%	24%	71%
Communications or media work (e.g., writing about your organization in an Emergent Fund publication)	21	4.61	0%	0%	5%	29%	67%
Capacity-building work (e.g., trainings, technical assistance)	21	4.10	0%	0%	33%	24%	43%
Formal opportunities for peer learning (e.g., convenings)	21	4.10	0%	5%	29%	19%	48%
Other (please specify)	8	3.63	0%	0%	62%	13%	25%

QUESTION 8 CONTINUED

If you rated an 'Other' form of support above, please describe it here.

Verbatim Responses from Those Who Selected "Other"

"Language and cultural access support"

"Some way for the Emergent Fund spend 1 on 1 time (30 mins) with each grantee (who has capacity) to learn and hear more about the work so that you all can help connect us to other funders/donors. The 1 on 1 convo can be helpful in addition to the reporting. This can deepen the understanding and the lessons we are learning on the ground and build a relationship with you all. Not all groups will access this of course."

"The JustFund portal seems like it will be a great resource as well."

QUESTION 9

Please describe what you were able to do with your Emergent Fund support so far and what impact that work has made on the communities or issue areas you work in.

Verbatim Responses

"1) Held a national gathering of over 40 Asian grassroots base building organizations
2) Held 2 national coordinating committee meetings and exchanges"

"Expand sanctuary work: toolkits, technical assistance to local campaigns, national convening."

"Hired on two staff people that had been volunteer-only for years. This has grown the organization exponentially and brought in hundreds of people on the ground."

"In light of the challenges facing the [communities we serve] since the inauguration, we were able to use this funding to provide much-needed legal education and support as well as some elements of civic engagement."

"Launch a mini-grant with an advisory board that is representative of multiple directly-impacted communities (Muslim, POC, LGBTQ, Youth, Immigrant & Undocumented); Set up collaborative spaces through convenings and joint planning; Schedule trainings on technology, rapid response development, and other areas; Begin establishing bi-lingual capacity to our rapid response cohort."

"Partial salary position to pay for director of special projects time to spear-head the Muslim organizing project."

"We were able to develop a powerful short documentary series. They will soon be released and we will be able to measure impact soon."

"We were able to launch a 24-hour Rapid Response hotline that community members can contact when they are targeted by ICE or other federal authorities, or to obtain connections to legal resources. We have trained volunteer legal observers and conducted Know Your Rights trainings. We have distributed the hotline number widely in the community. Initially we envisioned it primarily as providing legal observers to document interactions with ICE and other authorities and to provide accompaniment. We have broadened it to also become a question line for undocumented residents for connections to legal resources among other things."

QUESTION 9 *CONTINUED*

Please describe what you were able to do with your Emergent Fund support so far and what impact that work has made on the communities or issue areas you work in.

Verbatim Responses

“Some of the key activities that we've accomplished with support from Emergent Fund are: organizing direct actions within the first 100 days of the Trump presidency, including actions in DC and sister actions in local communities - Women's March, Climate March, May 1 Marches; provided training on non-violent direct action & media/spokesperson trainings to hundreds of community leaders; and organized meetings on the Hill where frontline leaders were able to share the real impacts of climate change on their communities with their Congresspersons. We also led a People's Congress where grassroots groups from around the country met together to strategize and exchange ideas around building local, municipal, and tribal power, deeply engaging in cross-sectoral work, and incorporating people that are feeling motivated to work for justice, but who don't have the background or experience of taking their lead from frontline communities (new activists).”

“The funding provided support (housing, transportation, internet, food, etc.) for our volunteer organizers to continue building capacity in new communities who are directly affected by immigration policy. These communities learned about the Cosecha strategy and were supported in joining the movement. We have increased our circles throughout the nation and circles are increasingly prepared to take direct action.”

“We have been able to participate in the inauguration protest and send a delegation of community members. We held a campaign launch for [our program] with community members.”

“We were able to build a Rapid Action Network that is now responding to deportation cases and other racialized attacks on our communities.”

“I was on my way home from Church, when ICE agents approached me. Within minutes I was taken straight to a detention facility in Chicago, where I stayed for five months. My two citizen children, ages 7 and 12, cried every day until thanks to the calls and action of [organization name removed], I was released,” [an individual] told over 300 people, Catholic Archbishop Thompson, and Bishop Jennifer Baskerville-Jones assembled to call on members of congress to put families first and reject efforts to fund over criminalization of people of color in the Federal Budget.

With Emergent Fund support, [my organization] turned momentum into targeted action, built solidarity and organizing capacity across marginalized groups, that resulted in new racial justice policies:

- After months of sustained direct action, Marion County Sheriff Layton joined Mayor Hogsett to file an injunction to end ICE Detainers - the practice of holding immigrants in jail without cause on behalf of ICE. The first in the state to challenge Indiana's 2011 anti-sanctuary law, this set a model that can be replicated across Indiana to close the front door to the deportation pipeline
- On June 29th when beloved father Aaron Bailey – an unarmed Black man – was murdered by the police officer during a traffic stop, [my organization's] Black, Latino, and White Faith Leaders were among the first responders. Within 4 days, not only had [my organization] propelled this case into the national Black Lives Matter spotlight, we negotiated a set of ‘first-in-the-nation’ reforms that included: revisions to IMPD Use-of-force policy, Kirwan Institute ‘Implicit Bias’ Training for all officers, an independent investigation into the murder, and a citizen's oversight board. This was a major test of [my organization's] rapid response system set-up post-election that prepared hundreds to act as moral observers and accompany those traumatized by law enforcement or ICE
- Moved the city council to put down \$20 million to implement [my organization] catalyzed overhaul of the criminal justice system: pre-trial services, diversion programs for the sick, addicted, and poor, and a robust crisis intervention center.

Over 3,500 people acted together with [my organization] to advance these policy goals through 15 public confrontation actions, media events, direct actions, 50 negotiation sessions with public officials, and 4 prophetic resistance training to support organizing 40 organizing teams. Officially launched in April 2017, [my organization's] rapid response system has interrupted at least 4 deportations and provided accompaniment for over 20 families to court dates, ICE Check-Ins and potential traumatic encounters. [My organization] trained over 350 people as rapid responders, accompaniment, and other roles – expanding our reach to 3 new counties and engaging high-profile clergy such as Bishop Kevin Rhoades, Archbishop Charles Thompson, and others to act publicly against hate tactics and hate policy. With Emergent Fund support, [my organization] has aligned state partners toward a shared power plan leading into 2018 thru 2020 in Indiana – one of 10 states that will determine the balance of power in the US Senate that is poised to advance: 1. A long-term shift in narrative and American Identity linked to a racial and economic justice policy agenda; 2. A social movement that brings people together across race, class, and place to aggressively contest for this agenda in a set of tipping point counties and districts; and 3. Independent political power able to govern well beyond Election Day.”

QUESTION 10

What would have been different at your organization had you not received this grant?

Verbatim Responses

“Due to the grant, we were able to respond at a rate faster than we would have been able to without the funding. For example, being able to add support staff for the DACA Renewal clinics and all the know your rights presentations/trainings. The funding also, added capacity to continue to create teams across the city to organize and build power to move people into action.”

“It would have been difficult to complete the series without the grant.”

“It would have been more difficult for the volunteer organizers to provide support and build capacity in the circles throughout the country.”

“We may have had to shut down the org without funding to pay support staff. This grant gave us access to other funders as well.”

“We would have to pull resources together in other ways.”

“We would not be able to respond to the great need that exists in the same level, which increasing some staff capacity.”

“We would not been able to do both events, in NYC and DC. Additionally we used resources to contract artists to help co-create art for the actions.”

“We would not have been able to establish a robust mini-grant fund to strengthen the partnership of the organizations within our rapid-response cohort and our re-granting would have been more limited; We also would not have been able to invest in important technology support for the cohort to rapidly respond utilizing tech that is new to them (PowerBase civiCRM, mass SMS text, etc.)”

“We would not have been able to hold our national convening or have capacity meet in person.”

“We would not have been able to respond as quickly and broadly to the threat of deportation to our undocumented residents, nor to respond so quickly to the climate of fear that it has created.”

“We would not have been able to respond issues as rapidly or as many. Our membership would have been less engaged, and our staff would have been overworked because if increased capacity.”

“We would not have been able to support the engagement of as many frontline organizations in coming to DC for actions and trainings, and in supporting their local actions and trainings.”

“We would not have had the resources to dedicate with this campaign. Due to your support, we were able to hire another full-organizer to focus on criminal justice reform. Additionally, we are also talking to community members about criminality in black communities in the "Trump Era," tying the current administration to the overall narrative of problematic criminal justice reform.”

“We would not have staffing to respond to post-2016 election trauma.”

“While we would have moved forward regardless of funding, this support allowed us to implement the rapid response system, equip staff and leaders with tools and materials, expand training capacity to reach new counties and communities.”

“Would have had to delay when things happen, slow down plans.”

QUESTION 11

What long-term goals do you think make sense for The Emergent Fund?

Verbatim Responses

“As [our organization] and others across the country have recognized, advancing a racial justice agenda will require: 1. A long-term shift in narrative and American Identity linked to a racial and economic justice policy agenda; 2. A social movement that brings people together across race, class, and place to aggressively contest for this agenda in strategic states (including conservative strongholds); 3. Independent political power able to govern well beyond Election Day.”

“Continue to do small grants that don't require a lot of submission and are unrestricted.”

“Continue to fund organizations/movements that are radical, led by the most affected, and creative.”

“Continue to support frontline organizations, their alliances, and movement support organizations. We deeply appreciate the opportunity for rapid response funds, and that is a very valuable opportunity for grassroots organizations. We appreciate You!”

“Continuing to invest in rapid response work that supports directly impacted communities; A deep commitment to language and cultural access for multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and multi-racial spaces; A continued commitment to organizations that intentionally lead LGBTQ work; Continued leadership development opportunities for youth involved in the work”

“I think that it is imperative to have a focus connective narrative with communities of color and the current administration. During our conversations, we are noticing that more black voters are disengaging from civic engagement now more so than ever. We must create focused campaigns run by directly impacted folks for directly impacted folks.”

“Increasing the base of support for the fund, making introductions to other donors, increasing grant size to allow for the creation of new staff positions. General operating support is the most useful in building a social justice grassroots base.”

“It's important to secure funding for these organizations for long-term. We are starting to plan for next year, and we are not sure if we will be able to maintain our current capacity because we are not sure if the influx of money we saw will be multiyear or not. It would also be good for the fund to help organizations connect to funders more efficiently.”

“Long-term goals that make sense for the Emergent Fund can be: - Fully funding a project from point A to Z - Long term funding for general program - Providing access/support to grantees to other potential grants.”

“The EF should look at the long arch of this "resistance period" for short and long term advances. Many of the rapid response funds have not lasted very long. Even with the chaos of the administration we believe we need both long term infrastructure and short term rapid response. How long does the EF think it can sustain itself? EF should make an assessment and let the grantees know. This will impact our understanding of how to grow in this period. Is this year's funding (including EF and other rapid response fund) sustainable? This funding need to extend at least a few more years for us to experiment and do defense work. We appreciate that EF is investing more and at a higher amount in basebuilding organizations. Thank you.”

“The Emergent Fund is a great opportunity for small, grassroots organizations. I would continue to provide the funding support for movement-oriented work.”

“The quick turnaround of funding for urgent issues arising from the changing political landscape is critical. Emergent Fund will also fund more progressive causes or projects that some funders won't touch.”

“There are not many rapid response funds, and that is a huge need in social justice group. Especially under Trump, there will be more of a need to respond. It would be great to have a continued rapid response, and also that the Just Fund portal proves to be a useful platform.”

“To provide spot relief to areas where there's most need and not enough funding.”

“What we would be helpful for us would be if The Emergent Fund continued to exist as a funder to continue supporting the work of our and other organizations in these critical times, as well as connecting us to other potential funders on a meaningful level to broaden the impact.”

QUESTION 12

What recommendations do you have for how the fund could be improved (e.g., logistics, types of support, etc.)?

Verbatim Responses

“Clarity of guidelines”

“Increasing amount”

“Keep the application simple, the response quick, and continue to support the grassroots directly.”

“Language access support and assessment would be incredibly helpful as we expand our work and draw in Spanish-speaking organizations to collaborative rapid response; Assistance with other language inclusivity as well for immigrant communities in a non-urban setting”

“More support and check-ins so that if we don't get funding for a second year, we have some other openings.”

“The response time for the award notification can be shortened.”

QUESTION 13

What worked well in the grant process?

Verbatim Responses

“It was a very easy and uncomplicated process and made the whole timeline much simpler.”

“It was easy and fast.”

“It was relatively short and the response was timely.”

“Rapid response and your openness to listen to the wisdom of community leaders.”

“Simple process, quick turnaround”

“Super easy application, great communication, very clear.”

“The application form was brief, which was helpful.”

“The application was very straightforward and the process very timely.”

“The application was well designed and short.”

“The fact that we could submit the grant on an online portal was incredible helpful. In addition to the ability to check the status online. The communication with staff was clear and had a very impressive turn-around.”

QUESTION 13 *CONTINUED*

What worked well in the grant process?

Verbatim Responses

“The grant submission process was fairly streamlined and easy.”

“The length of the application and the time receiving the funds.”

“The open narrative process was critical for us. The Emergent Fund was willing to make an investment in a radical idea that was not confined to the usual restrictions of other foundations.”

“The submission and response period moved quickly and allowed us to begin planning our work without significant delay. This was incredibly helpful given the current context and rapidly changing conditions in our geography.”

QUESTION 14

How did you hear about The Emergent Fund? *Please select all that apply.*

Category	N	Frequency
A member of the Emergent Fund staff, Advisory Council, or Nominations Network	10	46%
An event	1	5%
Another Emergent Fund applicant or grantee	3	14%
Another organizing group	3	14%
Media	3	14%
Searching online	1	5%
Social media (the only form of social media that respondents mentioned was Facebook)	3	14%
Other	0	0%



WOMEN DONORS NETWORK

Women Donors Network's (WDN) mission is to advance a just, equitable, and sustainable world by leveraging the wealth, power, and community of progressive women donors. We are a vibrant community of 200+ individual women philanthropists with a purpose. Together we make contributions of more than \$175 million a year toward social change.

WDN develops individual women donors to be our most powerful selves. At the same time, we support the field with bedrock funding and incubate high-impact initiatives that create long-lasting change.

solidaire

Solidaire is a community of individual donors and foundation allies who are committed to funding progressive social movements. We work together to address the deep systemic causes of injustice and inequality by consolidating our efforts and collaborating in our giving to increase resources for those who are fighting for a world that is more beautiful, equitable, and just.

DEMOCRACY ALLIANCE

The Democracy Alliance, founded in 2005, is the largest network of donors dedicated to building the progressive movement in the United States. We play a leading role in fostering the infrastructure necessary to advance a progressive agenda for America. We invest in every aspect of progressive power-building – from policymaking to organizing grassroots communities to winning state and national issue and electoral campaigns. We address the most pressing challenges of our day through investments in three connected areas: a just democracy, a fair economy and an environmentally sustainable future.



Threshold Foundation is a progressive foundation and a community of individuals united by our commitment to create a just, joyful, and generative world. For more than three decades, Threshold Foundation has been a catalyst for social and environmental change by seeding hundreds of nascent organizations, and by supporting the inception of multiple donor networks and socially responsible businesses throughout the world. We are a multi-generational membership organization devoted to aligning our resources with our values while fostering a fertile training ground for the full and authentic expression of our passions and purpose.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

For over 35 years, TCC Group has partnered with foundations, nonprofits, and companies to tackle complex social problems through strategy, collaboration, and insightful evaluation. At TCC Group, we work to foster sustainable social change.