The **EQUITABLE GIVING** Project

**AN EQUITY LAB INITIATIVE**

**HOW CAN EDUCATION PHILANTHROPY BE MORE EQUITABLE?**

The Equitable Giving Project was created to better understand how education philanthropy can be more equitable through elevating the voices of underrepresented grant-seekers. Between October 2020 and April 2021, project partners The University of Delaware’s Center for Research in Education and Social Policy, The Equity Lab, and Goodbets Group designed and administered a comprehensive survey to learn more about the experiences of those seeking funding from education-focused philanthropic organizations. Their responses provided a rich view into their lived experiences and a call to arms to funders interested in creating a more equitable playing field.

Learn more about the research and what you can do to help at [theequitylab.org/equitablegiving](http://theequitylab.org/equitablegiving)

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**KEY FACTS**

- 221 grant seekers responded to the survey.
- The majority of respondents identified as members of underrepresented groups: nearly 90% as people of color, more than 2/3 as women, and almost 20% as LGBTQ+.
- 72% of respondents had applied to three or more organizations in the past five years.

**KEY FINDINGS**

Respondents overwhelmingly believed that their personal identity played a significant role in funding decisions, with racial and ethnic identity most often named as the defining characteristics.

Leaders of color noted a perceived bias from funders against non-normative leadership styles and small, minority-run organizations.

Relationships with funders were named as crucial to funding success.

The process of applying for grants is time-consuming and often confusing, leading some to stop seeking such funding.

**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Offer grant-seekers additional opportunities to showcase their work, such as speaker series, showcases, and networking circles.
- Provide mentoring, coaching, and feedback to grant-seekers.
- Create opportunities for grant-seekers and funders to build relationships outside of the grantmaking process.
- Consider redesigning the funding process to further reduce barriers for leaders of color.

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