



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/equitalegiving

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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.