



Community Foundation Equity Network

Cover page to Invitation Letter

Increasingly, community foundations are taking tangible actions to ensure that race and ethnicity do not determine life outcomes. The Community Foundation Equity Network (Equity Network) was developed to support these efforts, and is a signature learning opportunity from CFLeads. The aim of the Equity Network is to share knowledge, advance learning, build internal capacity and further each foundation's ability to implement strategies that increase equity in the community and address the drivers of racial disparities. The Equity Network's approach recognizes the power of community foundations to use a variety of tools, including 1) local data-gathering and dissemination, 2) cross-sector collaborations, 3) community/resident engagement, 4) public policy know-how and influence, and 5) financial resource development to build communities where all can contribute and prosper.



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Deborah A. Ellwood
President and CEO

November 20, 2018

Dear Colleague,

CFLeads is pleased to offer the attached application for participation in the 2019/2020 Community Foundation Equity Network. We sincerely hope you will consider forming a team to apply for this game changing and historic opportunity.

In Pursuit of Equity – The Time is Now

The United States faces enormous disparities in all aspects of well-being. Health, education, economic security, neighborhood safety, transportation access and many other outcomes vary tremendously by race, ethnicity, education and income. We know these disparities are inter-connected. And we now have evidence that they are bad for all of us.

We must pursue a goal of equity in order to drive economic growth and strengthen social policy for the betterment of all our communities.

Goals and Approach of the Community Foundation Equity Network

Funded by the Racial Equity in Philanthropy Fund of Borealis Philanthropy, the 2019/2020 Community Foundation Equity Network is designed to help community foundations take actions to ensure that race and ethnicity do not predict life outcomes in the communities they serve. It is a year-long learning opportunity.

The original concept was developed in response to community and national foundation interest in advancing equity and a desire among community foundations to better understand and make progress on the issue. It is modeled on the inspiring success of the first cohort of the Community Foundation Equity Network, which met throughout 2017 and 2018.

Using an iterative, action-oriented approach, each team will identify its own specific challenge(s) to work on throughout its engagement with the 2019/2020 Community Foundation Equity Network. National content experts will guide the network's activities by providing substantive information on current research, sharing best practices, and connecting teams to appropriate resources.

Makeup of the Community Foundation Equity Network

The second cohort of the Community Foundation Equity Network will be made up of:

- Community foundations that have embraced equity as an organizational priority or that have incorporated equity into their mission and work;
- Teams from six (6) community foundations from across the country;
- Up to 5-person teams; and
- Individual teams that include:
 - a board member;
 - the CEO;
 - senior staff from involved department; and
 - if appropriate, community partner(s)

We see inclusion of the chief executive officer, who has the ability to effect change internally and externally, as vital. In addition, each team should also include a community foundation board member who can build the board's commitment to positioning the foundation to advancing equity outcomes in the community.

Equity Network Resource Team

The Community Foundation Equity Network will be guided by a Resource Team made up of CFLeads staff, who have experience working with hundreds of community foundations each year, and our content partners, which include PolicyLink, a nationally recognized leader and expert in equity issues and Public Equity Group, a national consulting firm specializing in organizational strategy:

- PolicyLink (www.policylink.org)
- Public Equity Group (www.publicequitygroup.org)

Equity Network Format and Meeting Elements

Built on the knowledge that community foundations deepen their practice through an intensive, iterative process with their peers, the Equity Network will meet three times throughout 2019 and early 2020. Each meeting will take place over two full days, with travel occurring prior to the first day and after the second.

Meeting elements include:

1. Customized content from national experts in racial equity.
2. Substantive presentations on equity from community foundations from both inside and outside the network.
3. Structured peer advising.
4. Team action planning.
5. Informal networking time.

Benefits to Your Community Foundation

- Your community foundation will have a better understanding of the historical and contemporary equity context -- nationally, regionally, and locally.
- Your team will have increased community foundation staff, board, donor, and community stakeholder understanding of strategies that increase equity.
- Your community foundation will have an increased understanding of what organizational capacities are needed to advance equity strategies. You will increase the alignment of board, senior management, and staff around your equity vision or work.
- Your community foundation will have an increased understanding of what is required to build external competencies to advance equity strategies.
- Your team will gain regular, organized and well-structured exchange with colleague foundations that, like you, are highly motivated to advance equity. Through this interaction, you will build strong peer connections to draw upon in the future for problem-solving or collaborative action.

Required Community Foundation Commitments

To participate in the Community Foundation Equity Network, selected community foundation teams commit to:

1. The creation of a 4- or 5-person team as outlined above
2. Full team attendance at all three meetings of the network:

Meeting 1: Spring, 2019
May 22 – 23, 2019

Meeting 2: Fall, 2019
September 18 – 19, 2019

Meeting 3: Winter 2020
February 5 – 6, 2020

3. Participation in the entirety of each of the three meetings, which start with breakfast on Day 1 and conclude at approximately 4:00 p.m. on Day 2.
4. 90-minute team interviews in advance of each meeting.
5. Completion of team homework to be presented at each meeting.
6. Active engagement with other participating community foundations to further learning.

Community Foundation Financial Responsibilities

There is no fee to participate. If selected, community foundation teams will be responsible for travel and accommodations for all team members to all meetings.

CFLeads will provide food, space, content expertise, agenda development, meeting planning, meeting facilitation, and logistics coordination with support from the Racial Equity in Philanthropy Fund of Borealis Philanthropy.

Application Process and Timing

1. Please register your interest at the link on our webpage (www.CFLeads.org) by December 28, 2018.
2. **To be considered for inclusion in the Community Foundation Equity Network (Class 2), please send your Application via email to Caroline Merenda, Director of Operations and Program Services, at cmerenda@cfleads.org by January 7, 2019.**
3. You may be asked to participate in an interview with a member of the Resource Team. We will then review applications with announcements of the selected community foundation teams by February 15, 2019.

Please submit your application using the attached application form.

Please send completed application to:
Caroline Merenda, Director of Operations and Program Services
cmerenda@cfleads.org
(800) 292-6149, ext. 610

Questions may be directed to: Angela Brown, Vice President for Policy and Program
Abrown@cfleads.org (617) 854-3544

As a national network of community foundations committed to increasing community foundation effectiveness and community impact, CFLeads is pleased to offer this unique peer learning opportunity to community foundations interested in advancing equity in their communities.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,



Deborah A. Ellwood
President and CEO