



#JusticeIsTheFoundation

FAQ: Racial equity and racial justice in K-12 grantmaking

- **Where does the data come from?**
 - Grants referenced in these findings come from Candid databases. Candid, the leading source of information about philanthropy and nonprofits worldwide, compiles and combines data on philanthropic giving from IRS filings, direct reporting by grantmakers, and public sources, such as foundation websites and news articles.
 - The main data set for K-12 grantmaking features grants from U.S. private foundations and public charity grantmakers (including community foundations) awarded 2017-2019 and available in Candid's database.
 - Findings that reference changes in funding over time use Candid's annual *Foundation 1000* sets, which capture all grants of \$10,000 or more awarded by a set of 1,000 of the largest U.S. private and community foundations each year. Currently, the most recent Foundation 1000 set is for 2018.

- **How did we define "racial equity" and "racial justice"?**
 - Use of the terms "racial equity" and "racial justice" and the distinction we draw between the two are based on the 2019 report, [Grantmaking with a Racial Justice Lens](#), produced by [Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity](#) (PRE).
 - PRE's report advances the idea that racial equity is an important starting point for many, but racial justice "evokes a higher standard." Racial justice "[brings] into view the confrontation of power, the redistribution of resources, and the systemic transformation necessary for real change."
 - Our definitions align with this conceptual distinction:
 - **Definition of racial equity in K-12 grantmaking:** Grantmaking awarded to benefit people of color in the K-12 education context, broadly. Often, this grantmaking acknowledges racial disparities in K-12 education outcomes and focuses on closing the achievement gap.
 - **Definition of racial justice in K-12 grantmaking:** Grantmaking awarded to address the underlying systems and structures that generate and reinforce racial inequality in K-12 education.
 - Our approach positions racial justice grantmaking as a subset of racial equity grantmaking. In other words, all racial justice grantmaking is also classified as racial equity, but not all racial equity grantmaking is considered to be racial justice.

- **How did we identify grants aligned with definitions for racial equity and racial justice? What was the search strategy?**
 - To identify grants aligned with definitions of racial equity and racial justice in K-12 education, we looked at key words in grant descriptions and recipient names, as well as relevant coding.
 - Candid indexes each grant and recipient organization in its database to the [Philanthropy Classification System](#), adding codes to describe the subject, population served, and support strategy.
 - The exact search criteria—i.e., the combinations of key words and coding—that we used to systematically identify grants for racial equity and racial justice in K-12 education appear [here](#).
 - We also manually reviewed grants meeting search criteria for racial justice in order to further refine the set and ensure alignment with our definition.

Examples of grants that align with racial equity but not racial justice			
Funder	Recipient	Grant Description	Notes
The Collins Foundation	Elevate Oregon	Support culturally responsive, school-based, teacher/mentor programs to promote academic achievement, personal responsibility, and resilience among Portland-area youth, primarily from low-income communities of color	Programs focused on improving educational outcomes for children of color (equity, not justice)
College Futures Foundation	Sacramento Region Community Foundation	Bring together local education institutions to improve college completion rates among young men of color in Sacramento high schools, award need-based scholarships to low-income students in Sacramento County, and increase funds from donors to provide long-term funding for those scholarships	Scholarships for K-12 students of color (equity, not justice)
National Philanthropic Trust	Blue Engine	Human services	Here, the recipient, Blue Engine, has a population code for 'Ethnic and racial groups.' Based on this population coding, the grant is included as supporting racial equity, rather than more general K-12 funding.

Examples of grants that align with racial equity but not racial justice			
Funder	Recipient	Grant Description	Notes
William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund	United Way, Middlesex	Monitor the use of the Racial Equity Impact Tool and the effectiveness of staff training within the Middletown Public School district. Mobilize parents of color to demand and support major changes in their children's education. Focus attention on the academic and other relevant outcomes for children of color through the development of data collection and data tracking methods. Identify and address obstacles to school success for children of color.	Grants that focus on building power among communities of color to effect changes in K-12 education
W.K. Kellogg Foundation	National Equity Project	To generate the institutional and structural changes necessary to advance racial equity within the workforce development and educational systems by developing leaders who can apply both a racial equity and systems-thinking lens to the organizations they lead and the systems in which they work	Grants that focus on structural change to advance racial equity/justice in K-12 education
The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation	The Schott Foundation for Public Education	To support and engage communities (student, parents, organizers) to effectively advocate for the teaching and learning they want for their children	Grants that are awarded to or from a select group of organizations that exclusively work on issues of racial justice in K-12 education (Schott Foundation for Public Education, Communities for Just Schools, Nellie Mae Education Foundation.)

- **What were some challenges we encountered?**

- **Data recentness:** While Candid increasingly works directly with foundations and searches the web for data on real time grantmaking, the majority of Candid’s grants data comes from IRS filings. This method results in a 2-3 year lag from the time that grants are made to the moment when they appear in Candid’s database. For this reason, the most recent year for which we have a critical mass of grants data from U.S. grantmakers is 2018.
- **Challenging definitional questions:** We looked to PRE’s [Grantmaking with a Racial Justice Lens](#) to shape our definitions of ‘racial equity’ and ‘racial justice’ in K-12 education, but applying these conceptual distinctions to existing grantmaking data was not always so clear cut. For example, we chose to categorize grantmaking for racial bias trainings as equity rather than justice, a decision that may be at odds with how some organizations see their work. Additionally, we elected to take an expansive approach in defining equity. We recognize that others may define and operationalize terms like ‘equity’ and ‘justice’ differently.
- **Limited grants information:** A grant may fundamentally be about issues of racial justice, but if a grant description is missing or vague, we wouldn’t be able to capture it as such. In this sense, our category for racial justice grantmaking is best explained as grantmaking *explicitly* supporting racial justice. An exception is that our knowledge of certain organizations working in this space—e.g., Schott Foundation, Community for Just Schools, and Nellie Mae Education Foundation—allows us to include some organizations, even when their grant descriptions don’t meet the criteria above.

Additionally, we would have liked to consider whether recipient organizations were BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, people of color)-led in determining whether grants were awarded with a racial justice lens. While Candid is collecting data on leadership and staff demographics via the [GuideStar profile](#) program, we only have this information for a very small subset of nonprofits and could not make use of it here.