

Vision for Healing Justice in Philanthropy

Intentions & Guiding Principles

The Funders for Justice Healing Justice Strategy Group envisions a future where everyone has the resources and self-determination to heal, reduce, and transform harm from acute, chronic, and generational trauma in the ways that they choose, at a pace that they choose, and using methods that are rooted in their cultural and ancestral traditions. Healing Justice refers to a wide set of resiliency and survival practices that center the collective safety and well-being of communities, especially those communities experiencing the ongoing impacts of structural and state-sponsored violence, climate change and environmental injustice, colonization, slavery, and historical and contemporary thefts of labor and land. Healing justice was born from and continues to intersect and overlap with the theories and practices of Black, Indigenous, and Women of Color feminisms, disability justice, restorative and transformative justice.

As donors and foundations, we are accountable to the communities and movements we are funding and believe that shifts at the individual, institutional, and sector-wide level are necessary to build trust with grantee partners and support stronger movements for racial, gender, and economic justice. Investing in healing and healing justice is also a direct interruption of the capitalist notion that an organization's worth and fundability is based primarily on what and how much it can achieve, produce, or "win". As we shift and redistribute philanthropic resources to healing and healing justice led by the communities most impacted by oppression, the Healing Justice Strategy Group hopes to move closer to our aforementioned vision.

We humbly offer the following recommendations from the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice's 2019 report, *Healing Justice: Building Power, Transforming Movements*. The recommendations were developed in part from conversations with several Healing Justice Strategy Group members, their grantees, and other important movement leaders and elders. We acknowledge that while this list is not exhaustive it offers accessible starting points for conversation, learning, and action:

- Be clear in the framing of your work to applicants and grantee partners that you are aware of the impacts of trauma on the communities you support and on their movements for social justice. In order to do this, do your own work. Seek to understand how both historical and present-time trauma impact the communities you fund.
- Ask your grantee partners questions and listen openly, with awareness that conversations about healing and trauma must be held gently and respectfully. Without asking grantees to explain their trauma to you, create space for dialogue.
- Many different things fit within the framework of healing justice. Respect indigenous practices and organizational autonomy and remember that there is no one-size-fits-all model to healing. Ask grantee partners how they sustain themselves rather than providing a list of practices you support. Don't impose healing justice on grantee partners as "the new thing," but create space and opportunities for grantees to access resources if they wish.
- Set aside intentional, additional resources to support healing justice practices and communicate with your grantee partners that this funding exists. Assume it is needed. Make it accessible and with limited reporting. Encourage your grantees to use it.

- Be aware that healing does not have a goal or an endpoint. Work to move away from ableist notions that only see one type of body as healthy. Healing justice is meant to be expansive and self-determined by our communities, not defined by a medicalized or socialized idea of wellness.
- Stretch on how you measure impact. Healing and change work is ongoing. What are meaningful indicators of success? Invite narrative or other creative forms of reflection from your grantee partners. Ask them if and how they notice differences as a result of this support.
- Rather than defining capacity building practices for grantee partners, ask them what would most support their work. What would help them to build their own capacity or to feel that they have the energy needed to do their work? Capacity building is not always about doing more; within the context of healing justice and holistic security, it's about finding ways to do work without being harmed by it. It's being able to rest and remember ourselves, and remember why we are here doing what we are doing.
- Consider how your funding practices may be contributing to the stress and urgency that movements are experiencing. Are there ways in which you can move more slowly and deliberately? As funders, we need to practice this work ourselves. Healing justice calls on us to do our work to understand what feels urgent and why, and to be more mindful of how our sense of urgency impacts grantee partners. It is important that we are able to assess and shift our sense of urgency at every level of grantmaking, including grants management and operations as well as programs.

For more guidance from our members, please check out:

Astraea's Healing Justice Report:

<https://www.astraeafoundation.org/microsites/healingjustice/05-recommendations>

Healing Justice Guidance During COVID-19, Uprisings, & Beyond:

<https://fundersforjustice.org/healing-justice/>

“Intersections of Justice in the Time of Coronavirus” by Cara Page & Eesha Pandit:

<https://fundersforjustice.org/intersections-of-justice-in-the-time-of-coronavirus/>