



FUNDER PLEDGE

To Support the Safety & Security of Movement Organizations

Why This Pledge?

BIPOC-led groups on the frontlines of social justice fights face sustained attacks from well-resourced, powerful opposition forces, putting their lives and organizations at risk and compromising their ability to secure victories. Movement groups report digital, physical, and psychological security threats; politically motivated attempts to strip them of their nonprofit status; political prosecutions for their constitutionally-protected activism; and targeted surveillance and criminalization of them and the BIPOC, queer, trans, and migrant communities in which they organize.

Sadly, these threats are not new. Social justice movements have always been met with vigorous and often violent opposition, dating back to the nation's origins of slavery and genocide. In recent years as social justice movements have gained increasing visibility, these threats have gained reinvigorated steam.

Defining Safety & Security

For movement groups, **Safety** is “the condition of being and feeling protected from danger, risk, or injury and creating the conditions where those injuries can’t happen.

Security refers to “the process of ensuring safety.” “Safety and security” encompass a broad range of conditions, practices, and feelings that allow for thriving, self-determined, and liberated communities and impactful social justice movements.

— from *Funders for Justice's 2022 Safety & Security Institute Report*.

The stakes are high, and the need is great. We believe that philanthropy's failure to provide BIPOC-led social justice groups with robust, long-term support has made it nearly impossible for movements to build durable safety and security infrastructure. We have come together with a sense of urgency to align our giving and mobilize a robust philanthropic response that matches the scale, duration, and sophistication of the attacks BIPOC-led social justice groups face. We encourage our philanthropic colleagues to join us in taking the pledge.

As a group of philanthropic institutions, we pledge to do the following:

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1 BUILD TRUST, LEARN, AND EDUCATE

- Build strong trusting relationships with, and learn from, our grantees and movement partners about the threats they face and what they say they need to keep themselves safe.
- Educate others in philanthropy about what we've learned.

Funders need to understand that the current threats to organizing in BIPOC, queer, and trans communities are not new. Over time, movements have developed ways to build safer cultures and organizations, using such frameworks as harm reduction, transformative justice, healing justice, abolition, conflict resolution, and defund strategies. What they need from donors is sustained resources to do this work at scale.

Examples

Some common security approaches groups are using include: building relationships with aligned groups and communities, creating healing spaces, shoring up organizational physical and digital security practices, attending to organizers' well-being, accessing legal support, developing intra-movement conflict resolution practices, providing mutual aid and direct services, and adopting community-led alternatives to law enforcement.

As part of building trust and educating ourselves, we further commit to:

- Understanding and taking threats seriously and believing groups when they identify what they need to keep themselves safe.
- Proactively asking groups about their safety and security needs and help them identify where they need more resources.
- Educating foundation leadership to make sure that groups are not seen as "risky" investments just because they are being targeted.
- Ensuring that groups can raise their safety concerns without negative funding repercussions.

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2 ASSESS OUR GRANTMAKING

Assess our grantmaking for alignment with the needs of movement organizations and funders who share our values and are mobilizing resources for this work.

3 FUND AT SCALE AND FOR THE LONG TERM

Move more financial resources that are responsive to both the short- and long-term strategies and approaches to build movement safety and security. This includes:

- Deploy funding particularly to those most targeted: BIPOC-, queer-, trans-, and migrant-led organizations, particularly in red cities within blue states or red states where abuses are historically deep-rooted and rampant.
- Provide rapid response funding and invest in long-term movement safety infrastructure through both multi-year general operating support and additional resources specifically for safety and security.
- Loosen internal grantmaking restrictions so you can nimbly support groups to keep themselves safe, however they see fit (e.g. mutual aid strategies, direct services, legal support for individual protestors and organizations, purchasing land to create safe spaces, shoring up internal financial systems, etc.)
- Build capacity through support for convenings, collective mapping, joint strategizing and assessment, campaign planning, relationship and coalition building, leadership development, secure technology, and development of security cultures steeped in racial justice values.
- Ensure that grants include a fair percentage for indirect costs to account for organizational and staff needs (e.g., child care, health benefits, living wages, etc.)
- Invest in the intermediaries already funding this work.

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4 STRENGTHEN INTERNAL SAFETY AND SECURITY PRACTICES

Strengthen our own safety and security practices across all internal functions, including grants management, legal, and operations.

Make sure our internal practices do not unwittingly put groups at further risk. For example, ask grantees before naming them publicly on our website and in other communications, and shore up our foundation's own digital security.

How FFJ Can Support You

No one foundation can meet the needs alone, and continuous learning is required to be responsive partners to movement groups. FFJ is here to help your organization do this work.

We offer the following:

- 1:1 strategy and implementation support for you and your institution
- Education opportunities with movement partners and other funders to learn about the field's evolving safety and security needs and strategies.
- An extensive set of resources from movement organizations for safety and security
- Recommendations for where to fund, and connection with peer funders who are supporting that work.

About FFJ's Safety and Security Money Moves Group

The Funders for Justice (FFJ) Safety and Security Money Moves Group envisions a future in which BIPOC-led movements secure liberation and justice, free from threats and harm to their physical, emotional, spiritual, and economic well-being. The Group mobilizes money, resources, and support for social justice grassroots groups and BIPOC communities to develop holistic safety and security approaches in the face of pervasive, escalating threats from far-right state and non-state actors and agencies, as well as dangers rooted in climate crises, racial capitalism, settler colonialism, and imperialism.

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Principles of Alignment

Philanthropic investments must match the scale, duration, and sophistication of intensified attacks that movements are facing. Such attacks must be understood as the latest in a centuries-long history of attempts by state and non-state actors waging fierce and violent opposition against social justice movements.

Funders must revise grantmaking strategies and approaches to account for the interlocking and compounded impacts of surveillance technology, White Nationalist threats, and the collusion between state, police, individual actors, elected officials, and corporations. Philanthropy must deploy significant investment to BIPOC-, queer-, trans-, and migrant-led organizations, particularly in red cities within blue states or red states where abuses are historically deep-rooted and rampant.

Building security requires embracing movement frameworks that uphold racial justice. Building holistic safety cultures must happen within movements and broader society, but also within philanthropic institutions. Funders can learn from and leverage the diverse tools and frameworks that come from movements to build safer cultures and organizations. Frameworks such as harm reduction, transformative justice, healing justice, abolition, conflict resolution, and defund strategies are essential to building holistically safe and secure communities and institutions.

Building safety and security is an ongoing, holistic process and requires long-term, bureaucracy-free investment strategies in BIPOC, queer, trans, migrant, and low-income communities. This shift in grantmaking approach builds sustainable organizations, healthy movement ecosystems, and resilient movement infrastructure. By supporting strategies such as convening, collective mapping, joint strategizing and assessment, campaign planning, deep relationship and coalition bridge-building, leadership development, and secure technology and security cultures steeped in racial justice values, funders are simultaneously investing in resilient, power-building infrastructure that lasts.

To take the pledge, email us at:
pledge@funders4justice.org

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A Message from Movement

What does safety and security look like to my organization?

Safety for our organization looks like taking the necessary steps (including asking people what their needs are around safety, supporting those needs with the best of our ability, i.e., security at community spaces, additional locks to the office) to ensure individuals feel safe and protected from harm and danger while in our physical and virtual spaces. Security at our organization looks like some forms of digital knowledge and security, having conversations with folks who have movement related security to provide voice to smaller things we can do while we do not have a security and safety team, and following through on suggestions from those who we receive wisdom from on safety and security for our organization.

How would adequately funded safety and security practices help us improve our programs/advocacy and help us achieve success?

It would reduce a level of stress and anxiety around how we are going to resource ways to support safety needs like paying for security, supporting self defense teach in's, purchasing cameras, and other security related issues. There would be less time and energy around safety and more time to support community needs.

Where do I desperately need support in creating safety and security in my community?

Funding to have a security and safety team. As an executive director of a small fiscal project, we do/I do not have the capacity to learn, understand, and implement what's so desperately needed to work to ensure we are safe and provide safe spaces for our people.



Markasa Tucker-Harris
Executive Director of the
African American Roundtable (AART)