



A Foundation for
Radical Possibility

2021-2031

Strategic Plan

English Edition



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Introduction

This strategic plan is two years late but right on time. We had planned to release it in January 2019, a full year before implementing changes to our strategy. But, we decided to wait. We were in the process of recruiting community members to our Board of Trustees, and we wanted these new board members to be a part of setting if's strategy for years to come. So, wait we did and spent 2019 on our community-centered transformation, guided by this quote from the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy's Power Moves Toolkit:

“To make the world a better place, communities need to build power; funders need to share their power with these communities; and they both need to wield their power to influence relevant audiences and decision-makers.”

To be clear, while we are all members of “the community,” we were seeking to share power with members of our community who live at the sharpest intersection of systems of oppression, namely race, class and gender identity . We were anchored by the belief that those most marginalized—Black people and people of the global majority who have recently lived with issues such as housing instability and homelessness; low wage work and wage theft; and unemployment and underemployment—should have decision-making power over the resources that are distributed in our communities.

Not only should private foundations like ours have trustees with this lived expertise on the board, community members should participate and lead at all levels of the foundation, including grantmaking, communications, strategic partnerships and mission-consistent investing. We spent 2019 making these shifts to better live into our values of equity and justice and set to work in 2020 to define our strategy. Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit. And while that alone was enough to upend life as we knew it, it was the long history of racism and its current manifestations that rendered Black people and people of the global majority vulnerable. Add to this the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor and we experienced a year like no other. Yet, we pushed through to create a strategy that drew from the wisdom of the moment— that life would never and should never return to the way it was prior to 2020.

As such, we hope our strategic plan makes certain things clear:

- **We are centering Black people.** The moment demands that we reckon with what has happened to and what has been stolen from Black communities and how social, economic and ideological violence against Black people is baked into every US system, from policing to the ways in which we educate our little ones.
- **We are centering people who live at the intersection of systems of oppression,** particularly race, class and gender identity, and we are creating platforms to facilitate truth-telling that shifts narratives about why large segments of our population are not thriving. In addition to Black people, this includes people of the global majority, a term we are now using to push back against any notion that people of color are the minority in the US or in the world.
- **We are building people power.** We have tried to appeal to those with power and now fully understand what the famous quote by Frederick Douglass means—power concedes nothing without a demand. We will dedicate more resources to community organizing, cultural organizing, civic participation and popular and political education.
- **There is no health without justice.** Communities will not be healthy until we repair harms and root out anti-blackness in ourselves and our institutions. This is long-term work, yet we will do it with urgency.
- **We will hold joy, rest, creativity, storytelling, beauty, love and relationship** while we do this hard work. These cannot be sacrificed in our fight for justice.

Our theory of change [page 13](#) encapsulates our five strategic goal areas—culture; healing; reparations and economic justice; community power; and institutions and structures—which fit together to help us achieve our vision. The values that undergird this plan are listed in the theory of change and on [page 14](#). You will note throughout the document that there are some terms that we have not used in the past. See [page 21](#) for a glossary.

In addition, we have more internal work to do. On [page 17](#), we share some of the ongoing internal conversations that we are having and hope you will join us in having them too.

Finally, this plan is a long-term plan. It will guide us for the next 10 years. While the strategies we use may change (see “[Appendix: 2021-2026 Strategies](#)”), the five strategic goals areas will remain the same. Though, we remain open to what the moments ahead teach us.

We thank the following community members for consulting with us on this strategic plan and we also acknowledge their organizational affiliations, namely, **Bread for the City, East River Family Strengthening Collaborative, Fair Budget Coalition, Miriam’s Kitchen, Restaurant Opportunities Center - DC, Safe Places for the Advancement of Community and Equity in Action, and Virginia Coalition of Latino Organizations.**

- **C. Arthur Blair**, Safe Places for the Advancement of Community and Equity in Action
- **Jacque Campbell**, Fair Budget Coalition
- **James Davis**, East River Family Strengthening Collaborative
- **Leonard Edwards**, Bread for the City
- **Robert Harvey**, Bread for the City
- **Bonnie Page**, Safe Places for the Advancement of Community and Equity in Action
- **Amalia Salvador**, Virginia Coalition of Latino Organizations
- **Venorica Tucker**, Restaurant Opportunities Center - DC
- **Rhonda Whittaker**, Miriam’s Kitchen

We also extend our deepest gratitude to **Naima Wong Croal**, PhD, MPH, Croal Services Group for her guidance and facilitation throughout our strategic planning process.

Our Vision, Approach, Mission and Values

Our Vision

Black people and people of the global majority live powerfully, abundantly and beautifully in healthy, self-determined communities free of social, economic and ideological violence.

Our Approach

While our vision is utopic, it will not be achieved without a fight. Therefore, we will fight, and we will stand in solidarity with those who are also fighting for their lives.

Our Mission

We achieve our vision by centering the leadership and expertise of Black people and people of the global majority in the Washington, DC region who live at the sharpest intersection of systems of oppression, in particular race, class and gender identity. We build relationships to transform how philanthropic, nonprofit and government resources are deployed to disrupt institutions and structures that perpetuate anti-black racism and other intersectional discriminatory harms. We share power and decision-making and we support organizations that build the people's power to demand and achieve justice. We take risks that others are not willing to take and we are comfortable seeding bold ideas and sparking innovation. We speak our truth and support platforms for communities to tell their own truths, and we heal ourselves and facilitate healing in our communities.

Our Values

We carry out our work by adhering to the following values:

- We believe that truth-telling is a part of healing and that acknowledging past and current racial atrocities is integral to justice.
- We build trusting authentic relationships with communities, partners and colleagues where knowledge, power and resources are shared equitably.
- We are committed to innovation and risk-taking and embrace bold ideas that disrupt the status quo.



- We stand firmly with communities that have been most harmed by systems of oppression and support their ability to exercise power.
- We prioritize radical learning and share lessons to make way for progress and effective action.
- We acknowledge the inconsistencies and contradictions inherent in the philanthropic enterprise and aim to model the vision we believe is possible by ensuring that our own policies, practices and operations are transformative and reflect the values we hold.

Our Strategic Goal Areas

Anti-black racism permeates life in America. Our strategic goals address the core facets of racial justice needed to radically transform our region and nation. We plan to pursue specific strategies within each goal area over the next five years. See the Appendix for additional information.

Culture

Shifting narratives about anti-black racism and its ill impacts on society and creating new narratives that center the voices of people who live at the sharpest intersection of systems of oppression such as race, class and gender identity

The negative stereotypes about Black people are so plentiful, you already know what they are. These stereotypes have been formed over hundreds of years¹ and are so ubiquitous in our culture—the news we watch, the books we read, and the magazines we flip through—that the typical college-educated person in the United States is more likely to see or hear the word white associated with ethical and the word Black associated with violent² over the course of their lifetime. We cannot think of a single issue—housing, education, food access, economy, or healthcare—that is not infused with an anti-black racism narrative.

The word narrative is derived from the Latin word gnarus and Indo-European root gnu, which means to know. These anti-black racism narratives portend knowledge about why Black people have such a hard time thriving in the American context. Yet, the stories are at best incomplete and at worst intentionally destructive. These narratives are consequential and must be addressed to achieve racial justice. Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie shared in her Ted Talk the Igbo word nkali, which loosely translates to “to be greater than another.” It is what we would call power. Adichie says that stories are defined by nkali—how they are told, who tells them, when they are told, and how many stories are told are dependent on power. Power is the ability to not just tell the story of another person but to make it the definitive story.

¹ Kendi, Ibram X. *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*. New York: Nation Books, 2016.

² Verhaegen, et. al Prime and prejudice: co-occurrence in the culture as a source of automatic stereotype priming. *British Journal of Psychology*, 2011.

iF has worked over the years to shift narratives, but it has been a smaller part of our portfolio. We have used our annual meetings to talk about the issue of racism when very few local foundations would touch the subject. When the Baltimore uprising made it safer for other funders to talk about race, we joined with our colleagues to launch the Putting Racism on the Table series³. Yet, narrative remained on the fringe of our strategy. Over the next 10 years, we will devote more resources to shifting narratives, and we will do so by centering the voices of people who rarely have the opportunity to shape the narrative about their lives—why they struggle and how they overcome.

Healing

Creating spaces and practices that prioritize rest, rejuvenation, resilience and healing from the spectrum of systemic and interpersonal harms.

Although the term “healing justice” is new to the foundation, how intersecting systems of power and oppression (e.g. racism, patriarchy, classism, heteronormativity, ableism) impact the bodies of Black people and people of the global majority is not. Cara Page, a Black Queer Feminist cultural/memory worker, curator and organizer, and the Kindred Healing Justice Collective, define **healing justice** as “a framework that identifies how we can holistically respond to and intervene on generational trauma and violence and to bring collective practices that can impact and transform the consequences of oppression on our bodies, hearts and minds.” We honor the practice and lineage of healing justice movement work that began by Black and brown femme and women of color, centering folks of low incomes in the South through intersecting disability and environmental justice work.⁴

iF is still learning what healing justice means for our foundation internally and for our communities. During the summer of 2020, we hosted a four-part digital learning lab with DC-based healing justice practitioners to explore forms of healing that can be adopted within communities, community organizing and our foundation. We invited community members with whom we are building relationships to engage topics such as creating safety within our community without relying on authorities; cultural organizing (which includes storytelling); reclaiming the use of herbs and gardening to heal ourselves; and the role of healing justice in the fight against food apartheid in the region.

³ www.puttingracismonthetable.org

⁴ <https://transformharm.org/a-not-so-brief-personal-history-of-the-healing-justice-movement-2010-2016/>

In the coming months, we will assess how the nonprofit sector is incorporating healing into its strategies and will use that information to better support healing justice efforts. We will launch a healing justice grantmaking pilot and continue our digital learning labs with additional audiences.

Reparations and Economic Justice

Supporting economic justice movements, including the movement to pay reparations to Black people who are owed a debt as a result of historic and contemporary racial harms.

“At the very same time that America refused to give the Negro any land, through an act of Congress, our government was giving away millions of acres of land in the West and the Midwest, which meant it was willing to undergird its white peasants from Europe with an economic floor. But not only did they give the land. They built land grant colleges with government money to teach them how to farm. Not only that, they provided county agents to further their expertise in farming. Not only that, they provided low-interest rates in order that they could mechanize their farms. Not only that, today, many of these people are receiving millions of dollars in federal subsidies not to farm, and they are the very people telling the Black man that he ought to lift himself by his own bootstraps. And this is what we are faced with, and this is the reality. Now, when we come to Washington in this campaign, we are coming to get our check.”— Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

America has benefitted from uncompensated Black labor and genius. While popular narratives suggest that Black people lack wealth because of individual choices, it is the 401 years of collective harm by federal, state, and local governments, private industry and individuals that has created the wealth gap. Black wealth inequality began with the brutality of enslavement and has continued through legal segregation (Jim Crow), unpaid and underpaid labor, land theft and ongoing discrimination and stigmatization. These debts are long past due.

Reparations is a program of acknowledgement, redress and closure for a grievous injustice. ARC, the acronym that stands for acknowledgment, redress, and closure, characterizes the three essential elements of the reparations program for which we are advocating.

Acknowledgment involves recognition and admission of the wrong by the perpetrators or beneficiaries of the injustice. For African Americans⁵, this means the receipt of a formal apology and a commitment to redress on the part of the American people as a whole.

Beyond an apology, reparations requires those who benefited from the exercise of the atrocities to recognize the advantages they gained and commit themselves to the cause of redress. Redress potentially can take two forms, not necessarily mutually exclusive: restitution or atonement. Restitution is the restoration of survivors to their condition before the injustice occurred or to a condition they might have attained had the injustice not taken place. Of course, it is impossible to restore those who were enslaved to a condition preceding their enslavement, not only because those who were enslaved are now deceased but also because many thousands were born into slavery. But, it is possible to move their descendants toward a more equitable position commensurate with the status they would have attained in the absence of the injustice(s). Atonement, as an alternative form of redress, occurs when perpetrators or beneficiaries meet conditions of forgiveness that are acceptable to the victims⁶.

5 This is a direct quote that uses the term “African Americans”, but iF uses the term “Black people” and has defined it in the glossary.

6 Excerpt from *From Here to Equality: Reparations for Black Americans in the Twenty-First Century* by William A. Darity and A. Kristen Mullen

if has never taken a public position on reparations until now. As we transition from a focus on racial equity to a focus on racial justice, the distinction we are making between the two is that racial justice requires the acknowledgement and repair of the harm caused by centuries of discriminatory anti-black policies, practices and programs. For the first time in our history, we will be supporting efforts to pay reparations to Black people in the DC region.

In addition to our work on reparations, we will continue to support other economic justice initiatives, especially those that prioritize direct cash payment to people who are systematically marginalized.

Community Power

Providing the resources - financial and otherwise - to build and sustain the people's power to demand and achieve justice.

In 2019, the Board of Trustees approved the implementation of **if**'s first participatory grantmaking program as part of our community-centered transformation. To start, community members were given decision-making authority over one third of the grants budget. Grantcraft's publication entitled "Deciding Together: Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking" defined the concept as follows:

Participatory grantmaking cedes decision-making power about funding – including the strategy and criteria behind those decisions – to the very communities that funders aim to serve.

The publication also stated that participatory grantmaking is values-based, and the participatory grantmaking process itself is an important outcome. It involves community members in all parts of the grantmaking process, drawing on a wide range of other participatory practices. In addition, participatory grantmaking allows for a more thoughtful and informed decision-making process. It strengthens trust and credibility between donors and the constituencies with whom they work. It also promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion—in both the process and the outcomes. It gives participants opportunities to share information, network and develop collaborative efforts—all of which strengthen the larger movements in which they're involved.

In 2019, we conducted a pilot involving 17 community members from the Washington, DC region, who decided on grants to nonprofit organizations working to build the capacity of community members to advance racial equity. In 2020, community members from the District of Columbia decided on grants that were awarded to nonprofit organizations organizing and advocating solely in DC. While doing so, we practiced language justice and used interpreters and translators to ensure that everyone could participate in the language that would allow them to fully express their ideas. Community members who participated shared feedback such as:

“I have an expanded understanding and interest in decolonizing philanthropy as a form of change for the community.”

“The greatest impact was that it introduced to me a complete new means of community social intervention activism.”

“I felt like part of the group, independent of the fact that English isn’t my first language.”

Participatory grantmaking is not without its challenges. It is resource intensive and requires many hours of investment from both community members and staff. Like regular grantmaking, it can sometimes result in conflicts of interest. It can also be difficult to ensure representativeness.

In addition to the way we practice community power (e.g., through participatory grantmaking), we will seek opportunities to better support nonprofit partners, community members and collectives that are engaging in community organizing, cultural organizing and popular/political education. **if** has been supporting community organizing for many years as one part of our field-building approach to advocacy. This support will increase. The Black Lives Matter social movement and its call for greater investment in Black-led organizing was a key factor in our commitment to increase support for community organizing.

Institutions & Structure

Disrupting institutions and structures that perpetuate anti-black racism and other intersectional discriminatory harms.

Government Transformation. Government institutions created a racially-structured society that caused racial inequity by advantaging white people and disadvantaging Black people and People of the Global Majority. Beginning with 246 years of chattel slavery

followed by Congressional mismanagement of the Freedman's Savings Bank (which left 61,144 depositors with losses of nearly \$3 million in 1874); violent, government backed massacres like the decimation of Tulsa's Greenwood District in 1921 (a population of 10,000 that thrived as an epicenter of African American business and culture, commonly referred to as "Black Wall Street"); and discriminatory policies throughout the 20th century including the Jim Crow Era's "Black Codes" strictly limiting opportunity in many southern states; the GI bill; the New Deal's Fair Labor Standards Act's exemption of domestic, agricultural and service occupations; and redlining and related contract buying, the American government extracted and prevented the accumulation of wealth and all the security, choice and economic mobility that wealth enables in a capitalist society. These federal discriminatory practices were also mirrored at the local level.

iF will continue to build relationships and support coalitions to transform how government resources are deployed, with the ultimate goal of disrupting and dismantling the public and private structures that perpetuate these systems of extraction, greed and harm.

Philanthropic Sector Transformation. Since its inception, **iF** has engaged its peers through various working groups, projects and funder collaboratives in the Washington, DC region and across the country. Some of the working groups were time-limited such as the 2020 Census working group. Many are longstanding entities such as the Healthy Communities Working Group, the Greater Washington Workforce Development Collaborative and the Washington AIDS Partnership. Nationally, **iF** has been a member of several philanthropy serving organizations, including the Association of Black Foundation Executives, Grantmakers in Health, Funders Concerned About AIDS, Neighborhood Funders Group, Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees and the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy.

Through these relationships, we have shared our approaches to racial equity and have learned from other foundations and adapted their ideas. Moving forward, we will be very careful about our philanthropic partnerships. Given the sector's long history of racism, our engagement has not been without harm to the Black women and women of the global majority who work for the foundation. We will prioritize partnerships that focus on eradicating anti-black racism such as our new co-leadership of and membership in Resourcing Radical Justice, a collective that centers Black liberation as the path to a thriving Greater Washington region. We will also seek opportunities for community members to be involved in the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors as we work to break down the very clear lines that have been drawn between philanthropy and community

Theory of Change

VISION

Black people and people of global majority live powerfully, abundantly and beautifully in healthy, self-determined communities free of social, economic and ideological violence.

We carry out our work with these values:

- We believe truth telling is a part of healing and acknowledge past and current racial atrocities is integral to justice.
- We build trusting authentic relationships with communities, partners and colleagues where knowledge, power and resources are shared equitably.
- We are committed to innovation and risk-taking and embrace bold ideas that disrupt the status quo.
- We stand firmly with communities that have been most harmed by systems of oppression and support their ability to exercise power.
- We prioritize radical learning and share lessons to make way for progress and effective action.
- We acknowledge the inconsistencies and contradictions inherent in the philanthropic enterprise and aim to model the vision we believe is possible by ensuring that our own policies, practices and operations are transformative and reflect the values we hold.

We will use the following philanthropic tools:

- Grantmaking
- Strategic Communications
- Program-Related Investments
- Needs Assessment, Research and Evaluation
- Convenings
- Issue Campaigns
- Capacity Building
- Dissemination and Publication
- Strategic Partnerships

We actively seek racial justice
by investing in, partnering,
and sharing lessons on:

REPARATIONS & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Supporting economic justice movements, including the movement to pay reparations to Black people who are owed a debt as a result of historic and contemporary racial harms.

INSTITUTIONS & STRUCTURES

Disrupting institutions and structures that perpetuate anti-black racism and other intersectional discriminatory harms.

CULTURE

Shifting narratives about anti-black racism and its ill impacts on society and creating new narratives that center the voices of people who live at the sharpest intersection of systems of oppression such as race, class and gender identity.

COMMUNITY POWER

Providing the resources, financial and otherwise, to build and sustain the people's power to demand and achieve justice.

Theory of Change

HEALING

Creating spaces and practices that prioritize rest, rejuvenation and healing from the spectrum of racialized harms which range from systemic racism to everyday aggressions.



Our Approach to Racial Justice

1. **History** — Grounding work in history and structural analysis that identifies accumulated causes of disparate outcomes and devises strategies accordingly.
2. **Disaggregated Data** — Disaggregating data by race and place to identify groups and places where intervention is most likely to create the biggest impact.
3. **Racial Equity Tools** — Using tools like racial equity impact assessments (REIAs) and racial equity action plans (REAPs) to inform key investments, decisions, policies, and practices.
4. **Community Leadership** — Most impacted communities lead the development of solutions.
5. **Policy and Systems Change** — Change happens at the policy level, not the program level. **BE BOLD!**
6. **Justice** — Right the wrong in proportion to its harm. This requires acknowledgment and repair, which lead to the closure of racial gaps and ultimately healing.

Limitations

There are two limitations of this plan worth noting. The first is the absence of community wealth building from our economic justice strategy. We made an intentional decision to spend most of our resources on reparations in the coming years and will find opportunities to weave in other economic justice strategies over time. The second is the absence of a strategy that addresses the corporate sector. Through shareholder advocacy, we have been able to address some aspects of corporate power; however, it is notably missing from the institutions and structures strategic goal area. Corporations must also work to eradicate anti-black racism, but from our experience attempting to influence the private sector, we do not believe we are best positioned to build those relationships. We hope our other philanthropic partners with private sector inroads will make this a priority.

Internal Conversations at **iF**

We began internal conversations at **iF** that could not be fully resolved in our strategic planning process. These are ongoing questions that we are tackling, and we hope you, too, will engage them. We present four here, but we are sure that others will emerge as we seek to transform ourselves and our institution.

How do we come to this work as our authentic selves and disrupt professional norms rooted in white male supremacist ideas about what is valued in the workplace?

At our first meeting with Two Brown Girls, the racial justice consultancy that we contracted to support our community-centered transformation, we adopted a lens to guide our transformation that was less about what needed to change and more about what we needed to accept. Instead of making a list of norms that needed to be challenged, they suggested that we all practice coming to the table as our authentic selves, from the clothes we might wear to the way we might talk. Professional norms had previously dictated these behaviors for us, but where did these professional norms come from?

In a 2019 Stanford Social Innovation Review article⁷ by Aysa Gray, the author maps the origins and implementations of white professionalism. She quotes American grassroots organizer-scholars Tema Okun and Keith Jones who state that white supremacy culture at an organizational level is apparent in the belief that traditional standards and values are objective and unbiased; the emphasis on a sense of urgency and quantity over quality; perfectionism that leaves little room for mistakes; and binary thinking. These norms are deeply embedded in our workplaces and lead to very specific ways of showing up that are sometimes completely counter to who we really are.

We are unpacking these ideas and testing them in small ways, such as changing our dress code policy to allow people of all walks of life to come as their authentic selves. If you like to dress formally, you can do so. If you are a casual dresser, that works too. If you are non-gender conforming, your way of dressing can reflect your identity.

We will be living and working with this question for some time to come. These professional standards are deeply ingrained, and we haven't yet scratched the surface.

⁷ The Bias of 'Professionalism' Standards. https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the_bias_of_professionalism_standards

Should foundations be run and staffed completely by those who are living at the sharpest intersection of systems of oppression, or can mixed leadership across class lines with attention to power dynamics be equally as transformative?

To tackle this question, we hosted a mock Verzuz battle at our 2020 board and staff retreat. If you are not familiar with the term, Verzuz battles came about at the beginning of the COVID pandemic as a form of entertainment in which two music artists alternated playing their hit songs live on Instagram. At the board and staff retreat, a board member kicked off the “battle” by arguing that philanthropy is essentially foregone tax revenue and that this wealth is held outside of the commons. She stated that philanthropy is private action for the public good but without accountability to people with lived experiences, it breeds the inequity it wants to address. Others argued that if we believe the system needs to give up its power to achieve justice, it should come first from the most privileged institutions; philanthropy is the epitome of privilege. So, if philanthropy can’t give up its power in this way, what does it mean for broader structural change?

On the other side of the argument was a **iF** staff member who argued that when lived expertise is partnered with subject matter expertise, that’s where the magic happens. An authentic partnership balances power and without this mix, a class divide will occur. Others jumped in to share that Black people’s financial positions are precarious because of race and Black people with middle class status are not completely shielded from the impacts of racism. Another board member closed by saying we need people from all walks of life. It elevates ideas and conversations and is a strength of the organization.

We ultimately decided that while this “battle” was framed in binary terms, there may be a number of ways to ultimately further our transformation. The conversation will continue as we work to achieve consensus.

What does it mean to use a Black feminist framework to rebuild our institution?

The Essie Justice Group, an organization of women with incarcerated loved ones, hosted a webinar in August 2020 about applying a Black feminist framework to their employee policies. We were enthralled by this idea and participated to learn more. As a precursor to sharing sample employee policies adopted by their organization, the webinar host introduced a few hundred attendees to some important themes from Black feminist politic. This included:

- intersectionality, which acknowledges that Black women are at the center of multiple

oppressions (e.g., class, race, gender identity), in particular Black queer and transwomen, which creates compounded harm and wisdom;

- love without disposability, which suggests that certain people in our society have been rendered disposable and are only extended love and benefits if certain conditions are met, an idea that must be countered in the workplace;
- our bodies, our relationships and our intimacies belong to us and thus the Black feminist politic rejects coerced heterosexuality and heteronormativity;
- connection as resistance to political isolation, a theme that calls us to value relationship and connection to self, histories, passion and purpose in the workplace;
- vulnerability is an asset, and thus workplaces should be a place where people can mess up, where authenticity and imperfection is expected, allowed and appreciated;
- a non-extractive approach to value and new ways to think about typical workplace transactions such as performance and outcomes;
- wisdom in our historic relationships to power, which acknowledges that Black women have been inside of long layered traditions that harm us, thus employers need to know this and find ways for that wisdom to inform the work and the organization's culture;
- daring and fearless love is our revolutionary commitment, which means that we might have to push the envelope when standard regulations and human resource policies tell us that we need to create workplaces that do not align with our values.

We are at the very beginning of this question and will be diving more deeply in the years to come.

What is our view on capitalism? How has capitalism shaped our institution and will we continue to use the tools of capitalism to sustain the foundation into the future?

While **iF** has always supported economic justice efforts, we have not fully dealt with the question of how capitalism has shaped our own institution. Our assets came about from the sale of Group Health Association (GHA), one of the very first health maintenance organizations (HMOs) in the country. We are proud of the racial justice underpinnings of GHA, which sought to provide pre-paid healthcare to workers in racially integrated settings. However, GHA was born in the 1930s and while it was an organization that was ahead of its time, we wonder what systems of oppression it absorbed at its founding and how capitalism, which cannot be disentangled from racism, shaped its sale in the 1990s.



In addition, **iF** continues to invest its assets in the stock market, and while we have a 100% mission-consistent portfolio, questions remain about this tool of capitalism and how we will continue to use it in the future. The fact that the stock market is at an all-time high when so many are unemployed and homeless due to COVID is an indication that there is a disconnect between wall street and main street. We must reckon with these contradictions.

There is also the question of how our grantmaking, other programming and our larger strategic framework disrupts and transforms capitalism and opens the way for new forms of economy that are racially just. We will begin our own learning journey around these ideas in the coming years.

Glossary of Important Terms

Anti-Black Racism: Term used to specifically describe the unique discrimination, violence and harms imposed on and impacting Black people specifically.⁸

Black People: We define Black and Blackness (the state of being Black) in overlapping ways: (1) the mix of physiological, geographical and cultural traits that define Black people as people of African descent, many of whom were moved to specific regions in the world through the Trans-Atlantic slave trade (including continental Africans, African Americans, Afro-Caribbeans, Afro-Latinos and people of mixed ancestry who identify as being Black; (2) Black or Blackness is a political and historical reality of shared colonization and oppression at the hands of Europeans and Anglo-Americans and the resistance to this subjugation. Blackness is a political construct of survival and resistance against racialized oppression.⁹

Civic Participation: The active engagement of people in the decision-making processes that shape their communities and their lives, which is critical to a healthy society. We only realize the full promise of democracy when people participate; when all segments of a community have fair and equal access to institutions of government and meaningful opportunities to voice their opinions about important issues driving the public policy agenda.¹⁰

Community Organizing: the process of building power through involving residents or members of a group in identifying problems they share and the solutions to those problems that they desire; and identifying the people and structures that can make those solutions possible.¹¹

Cultural Organizing: Cultural organizing exists at the intersection of art and activism. It is the use of art and culture in organizing and advocacy efforts.¹²

Economic Justice: A set of moral principles for building economic institutions, the ultimate goal of which is to create an opportunity for each person to create a sufficient

8 Movement 4 Black Lives Policy Platform Glossary

9 The Case for Funding Black-Led Social Change. <https://www.nfg.org/resources/case-funding-black-led-social-change>

10 Funders Committee for Civic Participation. <https://funderscommittee.org/about/#mission>

11 <https://www.bolderadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Community-Organizing-People-Power-Beckwith.pdf>

12 <https://highlandercenter.org/programs/methodologies/cultural-organizing/zilphia-orton-cultural-organizing-project>

material foundation upon which to have a dignified, productive, and creative life beyond economics. Therefore, an economic justice argument focuses on the need to ensure that everyone has access to the material resources that create opportunities, in order to live a life unencumbered by pressing economic concerns.¹³

Healing Justice: A framework that identifies how we can holistically respond to and intervene on generational trauma and violence and bring collective practices that can impact and transform the consequences of oppression on our bodies, hearts and minds.¹⁴

Health: A state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.¹⁵

Intersectionality/Intersectional Discriminatory Harms: A lens for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other. We tend to talk about race inequality as separate from inequality based on gender, class, sexuality or immigrant status. What’s often missing is how some people are subject to all of these, and the experience is not just the sum of its parts.¹⁶

People of the Global Majority: We use “people of the global majority” (PGM) interchangeably with “black, indigenous, and people of color” (BIPOC), since black, indigenous, and people of color represent over 80% of the world’s population. This wording points out the demographic inaccuracy of the euphemism “minority” and can feel more empowering for some people.¹⁷

Political Education: The study of how power is used and decision-making is conducted at district, state and federal levels of government.

Popular Education: Education with the goal of transforming structural oppression, where the educator and student teach and learn from each other. Popular education assumes the world is an unfolding historical process and begins with the student’s history, present and unwritten future.¹⁸

¹³ <https://www.bu.edu/sph/2017/01/29/on-economic-justice/>

¹⁴ <https://www.beam.community/healing-justice>

¹⁵ World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/about/who-we-are/frequently-asked-questions>

¹⁶ <https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1052&context=ucf>

¹⁷ <https://www.pgmane.org/about>

¹⁸ <https://infed.org/popular-education/>

Power: The ability to make decisions over one's own life, to determine where resources go, who they go to, where they don't go, and who they don't go to. It is the ability to shape the narrative of what is right, what is wrong, what is just, and what is unjust¹⁹

Race: A social/political construct used to confer advantage and disadvantage based on the false belief in a hierarchy of human value. In terms of biology, race is not real. Those of us in the human race are 99.9% alike. And, there is more genetic variation within race than across race, but the idea of race, as it has been constructed, is socially and politically real and shapes the life outcomes of all who live in this country.

Racism: A system of structuring opportunities and assigning value based on a social interpretation of how we look. Forms of racism include:

- **Interpersonal racism:** Bigotry or discrimination by an individual based on race.
- **Institutional racism:** Policies, practices and procedures within our societal institutions that work better for white people than for people of the global majority, whether intentionally or inadvertently.
- **Structural racism:** The history and ongoing reality of prejudice and discrimination across all institutions, cultural norms, interpersonal interactions and dominant narratives, combining to create a system that subjugates and exploits people and communities of the global majority. Once these structures are in place, no one has to actively think about race, privilege or discrimination for these systems to disadvantage people of the global majority.

Racial justice: The elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them. Racial justice threatens the status quo. The idea of subverting white privilege for a more collaborative and representative democracy feels unsafe, messy and even unfathomable to implement. We would have to transform policies and people/culture and the systems of authority that play synergistically between them. We would have to change the basic rules of governance which operate to maintain white privilege and marginalize communities of color. We would need to amplify alternative narratives and cultural frames in mass media, school books and popular culture that advance the basic notion that all people deserve respect and a life of dignity and agency.²⁰

¹⁹ <https://qz.com/1391762/black-lives-matter-co-founder-alicia-garzas-definition-of-power/>

²⁰ America Healing Racial Equity Resource Guide and Building a Home for Tomorrow: Racial Justice Infrastructure as if we Believed it were Possible by Makani Themba

Reparations: Payment of a debt owed; the act of repairing a wrong or injury; to atone for wrongdoings; to make amends; to make one whole again; the payment for damages; to repair a nation; compensation in money, land, or materials for damage.²¹

Systems of Oppression: Discriminatory institutions, structures and norms, to name a few, that are embedded in the fabric of our society. All the “-isms” are forms of oppression.²²

Violence: The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.²³ Violence can be social (e.g., incarceration), economic (e.g., poverty) or ideological (e.g., social dominance).

21 National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America.

22 <https://sfpirg.ca>

23 World Health Organization. https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/en/summary_en.pdf

Appendix: 2021-2026 Strategies

Reparations and Economic Justice: Supporting economic justice movements, including the movement to pay reparations to Black people who are owed a debt as a result of historic and contemporary racial harms.

- Normalize reparations
- Pay reparations
- Direct cash payment programs.

Community Power: Providing the resources—financial and otherwise— to build and sustain the people’s power to demand and achieve justice.

- Participatory grantmaking to engage community members in making grant decisions
- Fellowship for community members to gain experience in philanthropy
- Capacity building and grants to BIPOC-led grassroots groups, community members and collectives.

Healing: Creating spaces and practices that prioritize rest, rejuvenation, resilience and healing from the spectrum of systemic and interpersonal harms.

- Assess how nonprofits are using healing justice locally and use the findings to advance healing justice in the nonprofit sector
- Healing justice digital learning labs to learn about various healing justice strategies
- Healing justice grantmaking pilot to fund healers to support communities and nonprofits.

Culture: Shifting narratives about anti-black racism and its ill impacts on society and creating new narratives that center the voices of people who live at the sharpest intersection of systems of oppression, in particular race, class and gender identity.

- Laying the groundwork for a Museum of Racism and Health
- Releasing a book on if’s community-based transformation
- Community communications platform
- Coined in Blood graphic novel/comic book series on the racial wealth gap.

Institutions and Structures: Disrupting institutions and structures that perpetuate anti-black racism and other intersectional discriminatory harms.

- Support local coalitions in DC and VA/MD counties pushing local governments to adopt a racial equity approach
- Partner with local governments to advance anti-racism work
- Fund a project to rate government policies as racist or anti-racist.
- Fund the development of a digital political education academy that centers Black people's relationship to government
- Participate in anti-black racism funders tables to influence funders to support advocacy and organizing and to coordinate funding to Black-led grassroots groups
- Participate in funder partnerships to encourage community involvement in philanthropy and create pathways for community members to engage in the sector.