

# PROCEEDINGS

## From the First Annual Researcher/Practitioner Forum

### The State of Research on Diversity in Philanthropy

El Pomar Foundation,  
Colorado Springs, Colorado  
September 27–28, 2007

Convened by  
Council on Foundations  
ARNOVA  
The Foundation Center



COUNCIL *on* FOUNDATIONS



ARNOVA

Association for Research  
on Nonprofit Organizations  
and Voluntary Action



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## ABOUT THE REPORT

This report summarizes the discussions that took place at the first annual Researcher/Practitioner Forum which was held on September 27 and 28, 2007 at El Pomar Foundation's Penrose House conference facilities in Colorado Springs, CO. The Forum was co-sponsored by the Council on Foundations, ARNOVA and the Foundation Center and was made possible by a grant from the Lumina Foundation. The first annual Researcher/Practitioner Forum brought together 25 researchers and foundation representatives to discuss the state of research on diversity in philanthropy.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Council on Foundations, ARNOVA, and the Foundation Center wish to thank the Lumina Foundation for its support of the 2007 Researcher/Practitioner Forum and the Diversity in Philanthropy Project for its support of this publication. We would also like to thank Theo Gregory of the El Pomar Foundation for his hospitality in hosting the meeting, Joanne Scanlan for her vision in conceptualizing the Forum, Michael E. Cortès and Mary Ellen Capek for reviewing a draft version of the Proceedings, and Henry A.J. Ramos for help and support throughout the process of putting the Forum together. We also wish to acknowledge Steve Gunderson, president and CEO of the Council on Foundations, Stephen Rathgeb Smith, president of the ARNOVA board of directors, and Sara Engelhardt, president of the Foundation Center, whose leadership made this partnership possible. The opinions expressed in this report are those of the Forum participants and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Council on Foundations, ARNOVA, the Foundation Center, the Diversity in Philanthropy Project or the Lumina Foundation.

## ABOUT THE COUNCIL ON FOUNDATIONS

The Council on Foundations is a Washington, DC, area-based nonprofit membership association of more than 2,100 grantmaking foundations and corporations. The assets of Council members total more than \$282 billion. As the voice of philanthropy, the Council works to create an environment in which the movement can grow and thrive, and to provide Council members with the products and services they need to do their best work.

## ABOUT ARNOVA

Founded in 1971 as the Association of Voluntary Action Scholars, the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) is a neutral, open forum committed to strengthening the research community in the emerging field of nonprofit and philanthropic studies. ARNOVA brings together both theoretical and applied interests, helping scholars gain insight into the day-to-day concerns of third-sector organizations, while providing nonprofit professionals with research they can use to improve the quality of life for citizens and communities. Principal activities include an annual conference, publications, electronic discussions and special interest groups.

## ABOUT THE FOUNDATION CENTER

Established in 1956, and today supported by more than 600 foundations, the Foundation Center is the nation's leading authority on philanthropy, connecting nonprofits and the grantmakers supporting them to tools they can use and information they can trust. The Center maintains the most comprehensive database on U.S. grantmakers and their grants and conducts research on trends in foundation growth and giving. It also operates education and outreach programs that help nonprofit organizations obtain the resources they need. Its web site receives more than 54,000 visits each day, and thousands of people are served in its five regional learning centers and through its network of more than 370 Cooperating Collections located in every state and Puerto Rico. For more information, visit [foundationcenter.org](http://foundationcenter.org) or call (212) 620-4230.

Download Proceedings from the First Annual 2007 Researcher/Practitioner Forum on The State of Research on Diversity in Philanthropy at [foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/research/specialtrends](http://foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/research/specialtrends) or at [cof.org/files/Documents/Research/ResearcherPractitionerForum/RPPProceedings2007.pdf](http://cof.org/files/Documents/Research/ResearcherPractitionerForum/RPPProceedings2007.pdf).

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# FOREWORD

We are pleased to present in this report the proceedings from the first annual Researcher/Practitioner Forum that took place September 27–28, 2007 in Colorado Springs, Colorado, on the topic of diversity in philanthropy.

The forum was sponsored by the Council on Foundations, the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), and the Foundation Center.

The purpose of the Researcher/Practitioner Forum is to provide an opportunity for grantmakers (practitioners) and researchers to exchange ideas on key issues in philanthropy in order to help focus and generate research that improves the quality and effectiveness of grantmaking. Participants are invited based on their background or experience with the topic or their expertise as a researcher.

Why the focus on diversity at this inaugural convening of the forum? Increasingly, conversations in the philanthropic sector are converging around two key questions: 1) What are the participation rates and career opportunities in the field for individuals with diverse backgrounds? 2) How is philanthropy addressing the needs of diverse communities? Field leaders are increasingly grappling with such slippery concepts as “diversity,” “effectiveness,” and “impact” and attempting to understand the relationships among them. (For a list of publications related to these issues and diversity in philanthropy, please see the Diversity in Philanthropy Bibliography, which is available online at [foundationcenter.org/getstarted/topical/diversity](http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/topical/diversity). This bibliography was prepared for and distributed at the Researcher/Practitioner Forum.)

Over one-and-a-half days, 25 key grantmakers and researchers met to identify and prioritize the types of research most needed by the field with respect to the topic of diversity in philanthropy. Through a series of guided conversations, the group reached consensus on four key areas in which it felt research is most needed and began devising specific research strategies for examining this issue. Those areas were:

1. What is the relationship between internal commitments and practices around diversity and the external impact or effectiveness of a foundation’s service to its community?
2. What are the cultural or institutional obstacles to change regarding inclusion? What kinds of leadership, strategies and practices help to institute and sustain change? Who are the leaders of foundations? Who leaves and who stays in foundation philanthropy?
3. What is the relationship of diversity to equality, power, and democracy? What is or has been the role of foundations relative to issues of diversity and equality in the larger society?
4. How well do foundations relate to external constituencies?

The structure of this report closely follows the meeting agenda, summarizing the results of each session in the sequence in which they took place. In structuring the report this way we hope to give you a sense not only of the outcomes of the meeting but of the process by which those outcomes were reached.

We wish to thank the Lumina Foundation for Education for providing the funding that made this forum possible. We also wish to thank the El Pomar Foundation for its generosity in hosting the meeting and the Diversity in Philanthropy Project for its financial assistance to publish and broadly disseminate the report that follows. We would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Algernon Austin, former Assistant Director of Research at the Foundation Center, in recording the discussions at the forum and writing this report.

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# THE STATE OF RESEARCH ON DIVERSITY IN PHILANTHROPY

## Introduction

The first annual Researcher/Practitioner Forum, developed through a partnership among the Council on Foundations, the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), and the Foundation Center, was designed to do the following:

1. Facilitate a conversation between grantmakers and researchers on pressing issues facing the field related to the topic of diversity in philanthropy. (See Appendix A for a list of participants.)
2. Structure the discussion of how to define diversity so that differing definitions are efficiently heard and considered.
3. Provide grantmakers with an opportunity to describe to researchers the diversity issues on which they feel they most need research and data.
4. Prioritize the list of diversity issues for which research is most needed.
5. Provide researchers with an opportunity to suggest research strategies for addressing the diversity issues identified as most important by grantmakers.
6. Brainstorm mechanisms for moving the researcher/practitioner conversation forward on these issues.

To facilitate a conversation between grantmakers and researchers, we created a meeting agenda (see Appendix B) that alternated between large and small group discussions. In the large group discussions, we shared assumptions about the parameters of “diversity,” explored the range of issues that might be amenable to research, and worked to achieve consensus on top research priorities. In the small group discussions, we homed in on the specific research topics of greatest urgency and proposed strategies for conducting meaningful research on those topics.

In preparing for this convening, we recognized that the concept of diversity could lend itself to multiple agendas regarding both research and practice, and we were concerned that much time might be spent wrestling with just what diversity means to different people. To forestall this possibility, we asked participants to prepare written definitions of diversity, which were shared with the group in advance of the meeting. Those definitions were presented by each participant without elaboration or discussion during the first session of the forum. (See Appendix C for these definitions.) This allowed the group to acknowledge the range of definitions represented in the room, and to gain a sense of the degree of like-mindedness among participants. This process also highlighted the important point that diversity in philanthropy is, at minimum, a three-dimensional issue involving:

1. Diversity of individual backgrounds and perspectives
2. Diversity of organizational culture and practices
3. Diversity of organizational types and focus of activity

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**The precipitating idea for the Researcher/Practitioner Forum was to...improve the applicability of research to the needs of practitioners.**

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The precipitating idea for the Researcher/Practitioner Forum was to bring grantmakers and researchers into closer contact with each other in the hopes of improving the applicability of research to the needs of practitioners. Clearly, researchers operate within particular theoretical frameworks and schools of thought that shape their research agendas in ways that maximize the value of research from an academic perspective. We

wanted to make sure that the pragmatic frameworks within which grantmakers operate were made explicit during the meeting, so that points of possible connection could be made between the research agendas of academics and the needs of practitioners.

To accomplish this, we felt it was important to include space in the agenda for practitioners to explain to researchers what sorts of issues were most salient to them. The second half of Session I (Grantmakers' Agenda: What Are the Big Issues Facing the Field?) provided this opportunity. The diversity issues of greatest relevance to practitioners coalesced into nine areas of concern (see page 12), dealing with themes such as the relationship between internal foundation diversity and grantmaking effectiveness, how to work with grantees on issues of diversity, and clarifying the relationship between research and practice.

In response, researchers were given an opportunity to explain how various research strategies might illuminate the questions raised by grantmakers. They suggested some key research considerations to keep in mind:

1. To what extent is research needed that treats diversity as an independent (or causal) variable that leads to particular (desired) outcomes? To what extent is research needed that treats diversity as a dependent (or outcome) variable that results from particular inputs?

## Perspectives on Diversity

Melissa S. Brown:

- "Because we live in a three-dimensional world, diversity is not confined to a single plane (say, race or ethnic heritage) but takes into account all possible 'paths' or combinations of pathways: age, religious preference, gender, life experience (married or not; children or not; military service or not; etc.), qualitative or quantitative modes of collecting information, and much more. In short, diversity means that we consciously choose (at the fork in the road) to incorporate the complete range of human experience."

Mary Ellen S. Capek:

- "Most people hear 'diversity' and think race and/or ethnicity. But focusing on race or ethnicity apart from class, gender, and other complex differences in organizations creates false dichotomies. It's essential that our working definitions of diversity get beyond 'add a few and stir' or 'fairness' and tackle persistent, often unnamed roadblocks for institutionalizing diversity and inclusiveness in organizations."



2. Looking at diversity strictly from the perspective of numbers and demographics may be inadequate to address issues such as social justice, power, or inequality.
3. We need to specify what types of diversity ought to be looked at (gender, race/ethnicity, foundation type, etc.)
4. How do we operationalize “effective grantmaking”?
5. Should we prioritize research that examines internal foundation diversity or research on how foundations can best achieve diverse external outcomes?

Subsequently, the large group was divided into four smaller groups, with equal representation in each group among researchers and grantmakers. Each group was charged with the task of identifying the four highest priority issues for research. The various issues that emerged from the small group discussions were consolidated into a list of eight research questions, five of which focused primarily on the internal aspects of foundations and three of which dealt mostly with the external efficacy of foundation grantmaking.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the biggest question begging for an answer was how diversity (or inclusiveness) at the board and staff levels in foundations might lead to more effective grantmaking. Researchers candidly questioned whether a feasible research strategy could be designed that would begin to answer this question. How extensive and potentially costly, they asked, would such a program of research be?

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**The biggest question [is] how diversity (or inclusiveness) at the board and staff levels in foundations might lead to more effective grantmaking.**

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Other questions that rose to the top:

- How do organizational culture and organizational leadership contribute to or inhibit the diversification of boards, staffs, and decision-making practices at different foundations?
- What determines whether foundations are successful or unsuccessful at retaining staff members of color?
- What do we actually know about the people who govern the activities of foundations—where do board members come from, what kinds of diversity do they represent, and how do they make decisions?

Strategies for initiating research into these questions were proposed (see “Research Priorities and Strategies” on page 19), leading into a discussion of what steps should be taken to keep the conversation between grantmakers and researchers moving forward. Recommendations that emerged included:

1. Establish links between the Researcher/Practitioner Forum and the annual conferences of ARNOVA and the Council on Foundations. Disseminate the forum proceedings at both conferences. Include a panel session at each conference that reports on the work done at the forum. ARNOVA should consider institutionalizing a diversity in philanthropy forum for researchers and grantmakers.

2. Post the forum proceedings on the websites of the Council, ARNOVA, and the Foundation Center.
3. Establish links between the Researcher/Practitioner Forum and the national Diversity in Philanthropy Project (DPP) (see Appendix D). Report on the work done at the forum at DPP advisory committee meetings. Post the forum proceedings on the DPP website: [www.diversityinphilanthropy.org](http://www.diversityinphilanthropy.org).
4. Consider establishing a research roundtable on diversity (involving key infrastructure organizations such as the Council, ARNOVA, and the Foundation Center, and reaching out to others such as Grantmakers for Effective Organizations) that would advocate for funding and create mechanisms for sharing resources.
5. Create a repository of learning for scholars and grantmakers to share available research on diversity.

The consensus among forum participants was that there is a strong need for work to be done in this area. We expect the discussions at the annual conferences of ARNOVA and the Council to stimulate further refinement of both the key research questions identified during the forum and the strategies suggested for investigating them, leading to the development of fundable research proposals.

The Council on Foundations, ARNOVA, and the Foundation Center have committed to allocating time and resources to moving the field forward in this area. For additional information and updates on initiatives growing out of the Researcher/Practitioner Forum, please see [www.cof.org](http://www.cof.org), [www.arnova.org](http://www.arnova.org), [www.foundationcenter.org](http://www.foundationcenter.org), and [www.diversityinphilanthropy.org](http://www.diversityinphilanthropy.org).

## Perspectives on Diversity (continued)

Peter Frumkin:

- “What is diversity? In managerial terms, which is the way we typically understand it, diversity in philanthropy means embracing an open and pluralistic approach to handling the internal and external stakeholders involved in the giving and receiving of grants. Diversity covers not just race and gender, but point of view, underlying practice model, and political ideology.”

Marybeth Gasman:

- “Although ‘diversity’ is often defined broadly, for the purposes of our discussion, I think that we ought to consider issues of race, first and foremost, as well as class and gender. Despite ardent denial by some segments of the U.S. population, we have a vast racial divide in our country. Class and gender play a role in this divide as well. Too often, we water down the definition of diversity because we are fearful of deep discussions of what separates us.”

## Defining Diversity

While the forum participants' definitions of diversity were largely compatible, there were important differences among them. Most of the participants understood diversity to be about including individuals of varied backgrounds and perspectives regarding race, ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, class, sexual orientation, and other characteristics.

Although diversity in the abstract was generally discussed as including all differences, a few participants felt that, in practice, certain differences tended to receive little attention. Some participants argued that class was often overlooked. Another participant felt the same about religion. One participant stated that aggregate statistics about people of color masked the under-representation of Hispanics in foundation leadership positions. He added that we also needed to consider gender simultaneously because the Hispanics in foundation leadership positions tended to be female.

For many of the participants, however, the meaning of diversity goes beyond demographics and also includes organizational culture and practices. Participants spoke about respecting differences and being empathetic. Others argued that the organizational structure and culture must foster inclusion. One grantmaker spoke about the need for the people affected by policies to be included in developing those policies.

In addition to demographics and organizational practices, a few participants spoke of diversity with respect to organizational forms and activities. In other words, diversity in philanthropy would refer to diversity among foundation characteristics and diversity in forms of philanthropy. Further, an arts grantmaker, for example, could practice diversity by funding diverse forms of art.

It is precisely because of the breadth and flexibility of the term "diversity" that a few of the participants saw limits to its utility. One participant argued that a definition of diversity that includes everything is not helpful in getting people to focus on issues of social and racial justice. Some participants felt that issues of power, racism, and discrimination are lost or diminished under the rubric of diversity.

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## Grantmakers' Agenda: What Are the Big Diversity Issues Facing the Field?

The practitioners<sup>1</sup> were, not surprisingly, very practical in their research needs. They wanted research that would help them do their work better. There was overlap in many of their concerns, which may be summarized, as follows:

1. How can foundations achieve their diversity goals internally, on their boards and staffs, and externally, in effective grantmaking? What are the obstacles to achieving these diversity goals? What are effective models (or stories) about implementing diversity?
  - Many of the diversity questions the practitioners raised were about achieving diversity in foundations. Practitioners felt that there were obstacles to the recruitment and retention of specific groups in philanthropy. Some of these obstacles might be subtle and unconscious actions, such as requiring an unnecessary Ph.D. for certain foundation positions that might have the unintended effect of excluding certain groups. There was also interest in what characteristics of a foundation's culture and structure might facilitate or inhibit diversity. Practitioners wanted to know what could be done to further diversify the field.
  - Diversity was strongly linked to concerns for effective grantmaking in practitioners' minds. Although effectiveness was not defined, grantmakers were very interested in being both effective and diverse in their work. Practitioners hoped or assumed that diversity would lead to more effective grantmaking but acknowledged that the research linking these concepts has not been done and needs to be done.
2. How can we help grantmakers work more effectively with grantees on issues of diversity?
3. How can we involve unstaffed foundations in conversations about diversity in grantmaking?

### Perspectives on Diversity (continued)

Linetta J. Gilbert:

- "Differences of race, ethnicity, tribal representation, culture, class, gender, geography (or other factors) as well as difference of perspective all contribute to the definition of diversity. However, diversity without inclusion provides little more than evidence that differences exist. Diversity occurs when individuals or groups of people who are different bring their experiences to a process or project and whose perspectives influence and enhance the outcomes of the work are engaged or included in the process/project."

Joel J. Orosz:

- "Diversity is not chaos; it is a healthy variety within an overall theme. Diversity is not a single factor; it is an aggregation of many factors. Diversity is not an imposed scheme; it is an organic development... Diversity is thus the happy paradoxical melding of individual and group, difference and commonality, variation and unification."

4. How do grantmakers use research? How can grantmakers be persuaded to be more reflective about their own practices?
5. How can we use non-grantmaking tools (program-related investments, etc.) to achieve our goals?
  - For example, poor communities may also be impoverished in terms of the number and capabilities of local nonprofits. Traditional grantmaking may therefore be a rather weak tool to assist these communities since it depends on the existence of nonprofits to receive foundation grant dollars. One grantmaker wondered whether there were resources other than grantmaking available to foundations that could help them achieve their goals for impoverished communities.
6. How can we make nonprofits stronger and more successful?
  - What can foundations do in communities to increase the number of nonprofits that will further the goal of diverse grantmaking and to help existing nonprofits survive and thrive?
7. How can research help foundations achieve their missions and programmatic goals?
  - Grantmakers need research to guide their programmatic funding decisions. They are also interested in political frame analysis and public education so that they can better persuade others to support their causes.
8. How can research guide policy decisions in order to minimize unintended consequences?
9. There has been a large increase in the ranks of the very wealthy. How can we help and educate new donors?

## Researchers' Responses to the Grantmakers' Agenda

The researchers were highly sympathetic to the practitioners' needs but also aware of their own needs as researchers. They raised caution about pursuing studies that seem to expect predetermined conclusions, or work that might sidetrack them from their academic agendas. Nevertheless, the practitioners' questions and issues raised new questions and issues for the researchers.

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**[Researchers] raised caution about pursuing studies that seem to expect predetermined conclusions.**

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### Definitions and Priorities

1. Is "diversity" an independent (cause) or a dependent (effect) variable? Is it both? Neither? How should we operationalize "diversity" so that we can determine when there is more or less of it?
  - The definition of diversity was discussed again, but in different ways. From a researcher's perspective, should it be studied as the cause of outcomes (e.g., more or less effectiveness) or the result of certain actions?

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**Some participants felt that issues of power, racism, and discrimination are lost or diminished under the rubric of diversity.**

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To determine if one entity is more or less diverse than another we will need to develop acceptable concrete definitions. There was disagreement over whether and how a demographic definition of diversity should be used. Some participants felt that a demographic definition would be too narrow. Others worried that without the proper disaggregation a definition could obscure as much as it reveals.

2. Can we create a definition of diversity that will allow us to examine issues of power and inequality in foundations and grantmaking?
  - A numerical and demographic definition of diversity would not make explicit issues of power and inequality that are of concern to those with a social justice perspective.
3. We need to talk about the diversity of who or what. For example, the pattern of ethnic and racial diversity in nonprofits dramatically differs from the pattern of gender diversity in nonprofits.
4. Foundation type matters. Corporate and community foundations have shown more interest in diversity than have independent foundations.
5. Does diversity improve foundation effectiveness? What is the practice-based evidence? How do we operationalize “effective” grantmaking? How do we best develop benchmarks for effective grantmaking?
  - Recognizing effectiveness as a key issue, researchers wondered how would one define and measure “effectiveness.”
6. If one had to prioritize, should the priority be research on internal foundation diversity or on achieving diverse external outcomes?

### **Perspectives on Diversity** (continued)

Susan A. Ostrander:

- “One problem with the term ‘diversity’ is that it implies that what we want to talk about are simply ‘differences’ when instead we are referring to relationships of inequality and exclusion which, in order to address them, require transformational changes in established practices.”

Henry A. J. Ramos:

- “Diversity is about galvanizing the sum total of all available human assets and perspectives so that institutions and the larger society can maximize their knowledge, excellence and problem solving potential.”

## Researcher and Research Needs

1. We need better, more complete, and more systematized data collection. We need information on small grants and on non-foundation-based philanthropy. We need information on small foundations because some small foundations can have big local impacts.
2. Researchers need to have access to the inner workings of foundations to conduct qualitative research.
3. Researchers need to be able to conduct theoretical work in conjunction with more applied practitioner-directed work, and foundations need to support this theoretical work.
4. Since foundation funding is only one part of nonprofit funding, we need to understand how diversity relates to other forms of funding, like government funding.
5. We need a census of what foundations and other philanthropic entities are doing regarding diversity.
6. How are donors changing and how are these changes affecting foundations and philanthropy in general?
7. What do people in philanthropy who are not represented at this meeting think about diversity?
  - Some participants expressed the view that many smaller foundations did not see diversity or effectiveness as particularly relevant to their concerns. How might these grantmakers be brought into the diversity conversation?

Finally, some grantmakers noted that foundations may be more interested in funding research on diversity that would only be used internally, so that potentially negative information would not be made public.

## What Are the Priority Issues and How Might They Be Addressed Through Research?

In four small groups, practitioners and researchers developed a short list of priority issues.

### Group 1:

1. What is the relationship between inclusiveness and how well organizations serve the public?
2. What aspects of institutional culture within foundations tend to foster or inhibit inclusiveness?
3. How can we develop a diverse cadre of researchers who study and are engaged with diverse communities?
4. How can we help the field of philanthropy reposition itself on issues of diversity during a period of increased legislative scrutiny?

## **Group 2:**

1. What are the possible audiences for this research and what questions have the highest impact for each?
2. What are the best possible measures of the external impact of diversity policies and practices within foundations?
3. What are the best ways to understand the possible forms of foundation diversity initiatives and to measure their impact?
4. What are the best possible measures of diversity initiatives on the part of foundations?

## **Group 3:**

### *Pre-research:*

1. We need an examination of grantmaker and nonprofit organization needs, grantmakers' awareness of their limits, and nonprofits' perceptions of foundations.
2. We need an inventory of the current practices of grantmakers and nonprofit organizations and of the literature.

### *Research issues:*

3. We need research on the demographics of individuals who either leave or persist in philanthropy and on the feelings of institutional belonging among individuals of different backgrounds.
4. We need case histories of leadership styles that lead to successful and unsuccessful efforts to popularize and institutionalize diversity.
5. We need to know whether/how diversity, equality, power, and democracy are connected.

## **Group 4:**

1. What are the obstacles to diversifying the foundation field (workforce, governance, grantmaking)?
2. What is the relationship between a foundation's approach to diversity (its policies and practices) and its performance?
3. What is the role of foundations/philanthropy in affecting issues of inequality in the larger society?
4. How can foundations help create a stronger democracy?



## Can Common Priorities Be Agreed Upon?

The groups came back together and attempted to decide on a set of common priorities. The discussion moved in several different directions, and a broad set of questions relating to the internal aspects and the external effects of foundations were decided upon.

The question of whether researchers and practitioners could be engaged in a common research enterprise rose again. It is important to note that this debate occurred mainly among the researchers, not between researchers and practitioners. The issue was whether the practitioners really wanted advocacy or journalism, as opposed to detached, independent research that addresses big issues. Other researchers felt that it was a mistake to dichotomize pure research and applied

research. They thought that applied research can be of a high quality and theoretically informed, but it would be up to the researcher to find the theoretical issue behind an applied question. Another part of this issue, according to one researcher, may be the need to frame research differently for different audiences and purposes.

One grantmaker argued that grantmakers do want unbiased research. It is very important and useful for them to obtain accurate information. The grantmaker stated that many people want to please funders and therefore do not provide them with truthful information.

One researcher noted that it was not realistic to expect research to ward off impending legislation. Once legislation is being considered, it is too late. Foundations need to fund research before a crisis occurs, so that they have the information ready when they need to respond.

Participants pointed out that there has been a great deal of research on some of these issues. They wondered if the research was being read and whether research produced change. There were two main responses: (1) research only produces change if it is used; and (2) novel and shocking research does have an effect on practice.

One participant wondered what diversity lessons were available from foundation investments in leadership like the Leadership Learning Communities (<http://www.leadershiplearning.org>). This might be an important area for research.

There were questions probing the dynamics of grantmaking. To understand the effect of diversity on grantmaking, it is necessary to understand the grantmaking process. Some reports assert that staff diversity does not lead to more diverse grantmaking. One participant argued that staff diversity did lead to better connections with diverse communities. Some participants argued that a critical mass of staff may be

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**The issue [for researchers] was whether the practitioners really wanted advocacy or journalism, as opposed to detached, independent research that addresses big issues.**

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### The Question of Advocacy-Oriented Grantmaking

There was disagreement in the group about whether foundations do, can, or should engage in advocacy-oriented grantmaking. Everyone was clear that foundations face restrictions on lobbying, but some felt that progressive foundations should engage in the kind of advocacy-oriented work that they believe conservative foundations do. One person felt that

larger foundations were doing more of this type of work and that it was an attempt to make foundations more effective in bringing about social change. Others felt that few foundations do this type of work and that they are doing less now than in the past. One person felt that it was inappropriate for foundations to engage in advocacy.

necessary for diversity to have an effect on grantmaking. Others argued that the CEO and the board have the ultimate say over which organizations are and are not funded, and therefore CEO and board diversity may be related to diverse grantmaking. One person pointed out that program officers do, at least, have gatekeeping power.

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There seemed to be broad agreement that more research is needed about the boards and CEOs of foundations. Who are they? What are their values? How did they come to have leadership positions in foundations?

One participant argued that board and staff diversity should be seen as ends in themselves and not merely as means to a type of grantmaking.

Another participant argued that foundation staffs reflect society; if there are racists in society, there are racists on the staffs of foundations.

The attendees noted that the Center for Effective Philanthropy has done work on nonprofit views of foundations. They also suggested that there is other work that has been and is being done in this area. But one participant raised the point that we still do not have information on organizations that do not decide to apply for foundation grants.

There were additional areas in which participants felt that more research was needed. One participant said that there was a need to understand foundations' relationships with government and other entities. Another said that we need to research foundations' contracting (investments, consulting services, etc.) and its relationship to diversity because these practices can have a greater financial impact than grantmaking.

One participant stated that there was a great deal of research on the impact of foundations on society, but that it was mainly historical and probably not widely read.

The questions that emerged from the four groups were consolidated into eight. These questions were then divided into questions about the internal affairs of foundations and questions about the external effects of foundations.

## **Final Research Questions**

### ***Questions on Internal Aspects of Foundations:***

1. How do organizational culture and staff and board diversity relate to effective grantmaking?
2. What diversity practices have foundations put in place?
3. What do we know about the people who run foundations?
4. Who leaves and who stays in philanthropy?
5. What kind of leadership is successful at achieving diversity and what kind is unsuccessful?

### *Questions on the External Efficacy of Foundations:*

6. How does diversity/inclusiveness in foundations translate to external results?
7. Are foundations responsive to the needs of nonprofits?
8. What is the role of foundations relative to other engines of social change in terms of affecting issues of inequity and promoting democracy?

## Research Priorities and Strategies

On the second day, the group reorganized and re-conceptualized the research questions into four clusters. The larger group broke into four smaller groups to develop research strategies to address the questions.

### Group 1:

*What are the connections between internal commitments and practices around diversity and the external impact or effectiveness of foundations' service to their communities?*

Group 1 argued that this question is best addressed as three separate but linked research questions:

1. What is the foundation's internal commitment to diversity?
2. Does the foundation's commitment to diversity affect the foundation's practices, policies, and performance?
3. Do the foundation's diversity practices, policies, and performance affect community outcomes?

Researchers addressing these questions must begin with the foundation mission, the group concluded. What diversity means for a foundation depends on the type of foundation and its mission. Diversity has to be relevant to the skills needed for the foundation to accomplish its mission.

The group suggested that exploratory case studies should be done on these research questions to further refine the issues. It also urged the development of a detailed conceptual model that articulates the hypothetical relationships among elements of internal foundation culture, grantmaking practices, and the effectiveness of grantmaking outcomes.

### Perspectives on Diversity (continued)

Jiannbin Lee Shiao:

- "In recent decades, diversity has...become an institution, a web of norms and rules that govern social relationships, providing a basis for strategic actions, which can be described as both protective and constitutive."

Gwen Walden:

- "'Diversity' means creating an environment in which each individual is able to achieve his or her full human potential."

## Group 2:

*What are the cultural or institutional obstacles to change regarding inclusion? What kinds of leadership, strategies, and practices help to institute and sustain change? Who are the leaders of foundations? Who leaves and who stays in foundation philanthropy?*

Group 2 organized its questions into three areas of the internal life of foundations—organizational culture, leadership, and continuity and change—and then further refined the research questions.

### *A. Culture*

1. How does a foundation's organizational culture help or hinder progress on diversity?
2. Does diversity change a foundation's organizational culture?

### *B. Leadership*

1. What leadership styles are the most and least effective in addressing issues of foundation diversity?
2. What factors lead to increased foundation diversity?
3. What roles do board members, CEOs, staff members, and others play with respect to issues of foundation diversity?
4. What are the core competencies required of leaders in dealing with issues of diversity?
5. How do we track the roles of allies and networks in foundation diversity?

### *C. Continuity and Change*

6. How can we best track the dynamics of foundation staff turnover or longevity from a diversity standpoint?
7. Can foundations address diversity issues while minimizing conflict—and if so, how—or is conflict inevitable and even healthy?

To address these questions, Group 2 called for improved data on internal foundation characteristics. There is also a need for qualitative data. Case studies, focus groups, and confidential or anonymous testimonies could all be useful techniques for obtaining these qualitative data.

## Group 3:

*What is the relationship of diversity to equality, power, and democracy?*

Group 3 rephrased its question into three narrower research questions:

1. How have foundations addressed issues of racial equality in the larger society (historically and currently)?

2. What has been the role of foundations in promoting more democratic power structures?
3. To what extent have foundations promoted systemic change to existing power structures that block equal access to resources?

The group operationalized “racial equality” to mean: Did the grantmaker use, ask about, or consider issues of racial equality in funding? “Promoting more democratic power structures” was defined as targeting funding for increasing the participation and influence of historically marginalized groups in initiatives aimed at influencing government policy. The group did not have enough time to fully address question three, but they began to approach it from the issue of increasing access to higher education.

This research would require a review of the relevant literature and assessments of the applicability of the standard methodologies. The groups saw grants analyses, internal documents, and interviews as useful data sources.

#### Group 4:

##### *How well do foundations relate to external constituencies?*

Group 4 concluded that the diversity issues of greatest salience with respect to the external activities of a foundation could not be determined *a priori*. For example, an arts foundation may have very different types of external activities and diversity issues than a health foundation has. One could go even further and imagine that a health foundation focusing on advancing medical research and treatment may differ significantly in its external relations and associated diversity issues from another health foundation that focuses on improving access to health care for the poor.

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**An arts foundation may have very different types of external activities and diversity issues than a health foundation has.**

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#### One Participant’s View of the Forum

Mike Cortés, one of the researchers invited to participate in the Researcher/Practitioner Forum, described the following key themes that he saw emerge and recur over the course of the meeting:

1. Diversity is an imprecise concept of limited value for research, except when defined in terms of specific organizational goals and contexts.
2. Many participants agreed that “inclusiveness” is a more useful concept than “diversity” in today’s society.
3. Because researchers’ goals and institutional incentives are fundamentally different from those of practitioners, both sides should be represented by experienced boundary-spanners, continually working at finding common ground through ongoing communication, mutual assistance, cooperation, and joint activities such as presenting at each other’s conferences.
4. An underlying motivation for practitioners’ and researchers’ joint interest in diversity is our shared commitment to social justice.
5. Although practitioners’ interest in diversity might be rationalized in terms of increasing organizational effectiveness, testing that hypothesis through research might be lengthy and costly, and ultimately might fail to demonstrate a statistically identifiable causal relationship.

The first step for a researcher would therefore be to understand the foundation's external activities by engaging in exploratory research using surveys and interviews. Once these activities were understood, then a researcher would have to find out what the specific diversity issues are in the foundation's activity areas. At this point, a researcher could then make evaluations and recommendations regarding how the foundation addresses the diversity issues in its sector.

For this research, it would be important to collect data from the foundation and the nonprofits in the field of activity. Also, data should be gathered from people at multiple levels within the foundation and the nonprofits. Understanding how the foundation attempts to bring about social change and how it works to maintain its legitimacy would be key areas of investigation.

## Next Steps

The conveners of the meeting asked the participants what they thought the next steps for research on diversity in philanthropy should be.

One participant called for researchers to further develop the research agendas. He wanted researchers to specify and elaborate upon the presumed causal models or develop alternative models. These models would have to be systematically tested. Researchers would have to determine whether it made sense to test the model in a quantitative, large-dataset approach or in a qualitative, case-study approach. Another participant argued for developing models from an analysis of exemplary case studies.

Some participants thought that the next step should be building the resource base for conducting research on diversity in philanthropy. One participant called for developing a research roundtable on diversity that would advocate for funding and also create mechanisms for sharing resources. Another wanted to see an increase in the number of scholars of color working in this area.

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**Many participants agreed that sharing and teamwork would be essential for the advancement of research on diversity in philanthropy.**

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Many participants agreed that sharing and teamwork would be essential for the advancement of research on diversity in philanthropy. Another suggested that ARNOVA should institutionalize a diversity in philanthropy forum for researchers and grantmakers. Researchers would also need to attend grantmaker meetings for the research to continue to advance. A participant proposed having a conference of researchers and grantmakers that included

non-U.S. foundations. Funders would have to commit to providing resources to sustain such exchanges. Funding would also be necessary to draw more researchers to the topic.

One researcher called for a dynamic repository of learning for scholars and grantmakers to share and be aware of current diversity research. Diversityinphilanthropy.org was suggested as a repository.

## Endnote

1. Many of the participants were both practitioners and researchers. "Practitioner" and "researcher," therefore, refer to perspectives as much as they do to particular individuals.

# APPENDIX A

## 2007 RESEARCHER/PRACTITIONER FORUM PARTICIPANTS

***Melissa S. Brown***

Associate Director  
The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University

***Mary Ellen S. Capek***

Senior Consultant  
Diversity in Philanthropy Project  
Principal  
Capek & Associates

***Michael E. Cortés***

***Peter Frumkin***

Director and Professor of Public Affairs  
RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service  
Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs  
University of Texas at Austin

***Marybeth Gasman***

Assistant Professor of Higher Education  
Policy, Management, and Evaluation Division  
Graduate School of Education  
University of Pennsylvania

***Linetta J. Gilbert***

Senior Program Officer  
Community and Resource Development  
The Ford Foundation

***Theophilus D. Gregory***

Vice President of Outreach  
El Pomar Foundation

***Ernest B. Gutierrez***

Program Director (Former)  
Special Initiatives  
The Kresge Foundation

***David Hammack***

Hiram C. Haydn Professor of History  
Case Western Reserve University

***Jeffrey Hirota***

Vice President of Programs  
The Denver Foundation

***John Kostishack***

Executive Director  
Otto Bremer Foundation

***Martin C. Lehfeldt***

President  
Southeastern Council of Foundations

***Eugene Miller***

Assistant Director  
Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society  
The Graduate Center  
City University of New York

***Rachel Mosher-Williams***

Project Director  
Nonprofit Sector and Philanthropy Program  
Aspen Institute

***Gary D. Nelson***

President  
Healthcare Georgia Foundation, Inc.

***Joel J. Orosz***

Distinguished Professor of Philanthropic Studies  
Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy and  
Nonprofit Leadership  
Grand Valley State University

***Susan A. Ostrander***

Professor of Sociology  
Tufts University

***Francie Ostrower***

Senior Research Associate  
The Urban Institute

***Henry A.J. Ramos***

Principal  
Mauer Kunst Consulting

***Cristina M. Regalado***

Vice President of Programs  
The California Wellness Foundation

***Kimberly S. Roberson***

Program Officer  
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation

***Jiannbin Lee Shiao***

Associate Professor of Sociology  
Associate Director, Ethnic Studies Program  
University of Oregon

***Larry Smith***

Director  
Third Millennium Philanthropy & Leadership Initiative  
The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University

***Arturo Vargas***

Trustee  
Community Technology Foundation of California

***Gwen I. Walden***

Director  
Center for Healthy Communities  
The California Endowment

## Forum Co-Sponsors

### Council on Foundations

***Renée Branch***

Director of Diversity and Inclusive Practices

***Takia Glover***

Research Coordinator

***Steve Gunderson***

President and CEO

***Judith A. Kroll***

Director of Philanthropic Research

### ARNOVA

***Thomas Jeavons***

Executive Director

### The Foundation Center

***Algernon Austin***

Assistant Director of Research (Former)

***Lawrence T. McGill***

Senior Vice President for Research



## APPENDIX B

# 2007 RESEARCHER/PRACTITIONER FORUM AGENDA

### Thursday, September 27, 2007

- 8:30 a.m. Welcome**  
Steve Gunderson, President and CEO,  
Council on Foundations
- 8:45 a.m. Session 1**  
Introductions and Diversity Definitions  
Practitioners' Agenda: What Are the Big Issues  
Facing the Field?
- 10:45 a.m. Session 2**  
Research on Diversity in Philanthropy:  
The Knowledge Base and the Knowledge  
Gap
- 1:30 p.m. Session 3**  
What Are the Priority Issues and How  
Might They be Addressed Through  
Research?  
A. Breakout Groups  
B. Group Reports
- 4:15 p.m. Session 4**  
Moving Towards Consensus: What Priorities  
Have Emerged from Today's Work?

### Friday, September 28, 2007

- 8:30 a.m. Welcome**  
William J. Hybl, Chairman and CEO,  
El Pomar Foundation
- 8:45 a.m. Remarks**  
Renée Branch, Director, Diversity and  
Inclusive Practices, Council on Foundations
- 8:50 a.m. Session 5**  
Review of Research Priorities  
(Second Thoughts?)
- 9:15 a.m. Session 6**  
Outlining Research Strategies for Priority  
Topics (Breakout Groups)
- 10:45 a.m. Session 7**  
Group Reports and Discussion of  
Next Steps



# APPENDIX C

## DEFINITIONS OF DIVERSITY

### Melissa S. Brown

Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University

My children taking Latin will tell me:

Di = a variant of dis-, meaning “to separate” or a word for “two” Ver = turn or rotate (think of vertigo)

So, at its roots, diversity is the result of

- a) taking an alternate path (as when two roads diverge) or
- b) turning twice (or more?) as one would do to get a 360 degree view of something.

Because we live in a three-dimensional world, diversity is not confined to a single plane (say, race or ethnic heritage) but takes into account all possible “paths” or combinations of pathways: age, religious preference, gender, life experience (married or not; children or not; military service or not; etc.), qualitative or quantitative modes of collecting information, and much more. In short, diversity means that we consciously choose (at the fork in the road) to incorporate the complete range of human experience.

### Mary Ellen S. Capek

Capek & Associates

#### ***Deep Diversity, Naming Norm, and Organizational Effectiveness***

1. In our book *Effective Philanthropy: Organizational Success through Deep Diversity and Gender Equality* (MIT Press, 2006), Molly Mead and I landed on the phrase “deep diversity” as a frame for expanding our definitions of diversity and inclusiveness. Most people hear “diversity” and think race and/or ethnicity. But focusing on race or ethnicity apart from class, gender, and other complex differences in organizations creates false dichotomies. It’s essential that our working definitions of diversity get beyond “add a few and stir” or “fairness” and tackle persistent, often unnamed roadblocks for institutionalizing diversity and inclusiveness in organizations. We define “deep diversity” as necessarily

- Wide to include the breadth and web of differences that weave through most modern organizations: gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, class, disability, geography, age, learning styles, and other physiological, social, cultural, and economically defined differences that categorize groups of individuals, but also
- Deep into an organization’s DNA, or to use another metaphor, deep into the taproot of an organization and intertwined in the wide network of roots that anchors and feeds the whole of an organization’s culture.

2. This definition is helpful, as far as it goes, but in both research and applications, I’m finding it essential to push beyond even this expanded definition of “deep diversity.” In analyzing the case studies and other research informing our book, it became obvious that understanding and applying knowledge of deep diversity meant framing diversity in the context of organizational culture, which means struggling to understand the insidious, often subtle and unacknowledged preference for “normal” and “the way we’ve always done it here.” “Norms” are fundamental building blocks of both organizational cultures and civil society more broadly defined, but like HDL and LDL cholesterol, there are good norms and bad norms. Like high-density lipoprotein (HDL), “good” norms protect our health and the health of our organizations. But too much low-density lipoprotein (LDL) circulating in our blood forms plaque, a thick, hard deposit that clogs arteries. Bad norms get in the way of our health and the health of our organizations.

At its extreme, Norm becomes racism, sexism, heterosexism, homophobia, transgender phobia, classism, fundamentalism, egotism, ableism, ageism, and xenophobia, and abuse of social, economic, and political power. Most organizations have learned to avoid at least the appearance of these egregious manifestations of Norm. But it is the hidden assumptions, the unspoken

expectations, and unyielding attitudes that make Norm so dangerous for deep diversity. Norm assumes the face of neutrality, the appearance of “universal”—generic, genderless, objective, colorblind, classless—in determining policies, procedures, and informal cultural interactions and assumed values that in fact are neither neutral nor universally shared. Who gets to decide “proper and acceptable behavior”? Who decides who looks “normal”? Why do these controls and guides so often become blind spots that get in the way of effective organizations? Organizations that have figured out how to “name Norm” and struggle to institutionalize deep diversity have learned the process is not about “doing the right thing”: it’s about building vital and effective learning organizations.

And that link to effectiveness is key. Shallow diversity organizations are seldom effective. They miss a wealth of talent and imagination in diverse stakeholders and compel any “not Norm” people in the organization to “cover,” to bend and twist to “fit in” to existing (and often dysfunctional) organizational cultures. Kenji Yoshino’s 2006 book, *Covering: The Hidden Assault on our Civil Rights* (Random House, 2006) is a helpful analysis of how these issues play out within recent legal decisions. For additional information, Yoshino’s website provides some useful summaries: [www.kenjiyoshino.com](http://www.kenjiyoshino.com). In my current work, I’m trying to apply research from our book and some of Yoshino’s ideas to organizational culture. For additional background, check the website for our book: [www.effectivephilanthropybook.org](http://www.effectivephilanthropybook.org).

### Mike Cortés

My dictionary suggests “inclusion of diverse people . . . in a group or organization.” The critical issue, of course, is “diverse” with respect to what? The answer depends on the goals and purposes of the organization.

For example, a grant-making organization might seek to support the arts in a local community. Supporting the arts in general in one entire community would involve at least two kinds of diversity. First, grant-making would support a diversity of art forms. Second, grantees would reflect the diversity of subcultures comprising the targeted community. In most U.S. communities, those subcultures are defined in part by ethnic traditions, racial identities, sexual orientations, and in some instances, physical ability or disability. Therefore, those defining characteristics of local community subcultures would be taken into account by grant-makers as they sought to serve all the various components of the community as a whole.

Diversity might be more complex for other organizations. For example, another grant-making organization might seek to reduce political and economic disadvantages suffered by minority groups throughout the world, in the interest of social justice. In that case, its grant-making would benefit diverse minority groups

in diverse nations. Each nation might have its own ways of identifying members of minority groups resulting in discriminatory treatment. That discrimination might be racial, sexual, ethnic, age, religious, or some other defining characteristics. It depends upon how people are perceived by politically and economically dominant cultures in each nation. Nations vary. One ethnicity might be a disadvantaged minority in one nation, and a dominant group in another. The defining characteristics of disadvantaged minorities *in each national context* would be taken into account by the grant-making organization as it pursues its worldwide program.

### Peter Frumkin

University of Texas at Austin

What is diversity? In managerial terms, which is the way we typically understand it, diversity in philanthropy means embracing an open and pluralistic approach to handling the internal and external stakeholders involved in the giving and receiving of grants. Diversity covers not just race and gender, but point of view, underlying practice model, and political ideology. In broader sector and policy terms, diversity means something far bigger: a variegated landscape of institutions and actors that together represent a full use of the tremendous freedom and endless possibilities granted to the field of philanthropy by the current policy regime.

### Marybeth Gasman

University of Pennsylvania

Although “Diversity” is often defined broadly, for the purposes of our discussion, I think that we ought to consider issues of race, first and foremost, as well as class and gender. Despite ardent denial by some segments of the U.S. population, we have a vast racial divide in our country. Class and gender play a role in this divide as well. Too often, we water down the definition of diversity because we are fearful of deep discussions of what separates us. The term “Diversity,” should also encompass a commitment to social justice and a passion for equity.

### Linetta J. Gilbert

The Ford Foundation

Diversity is an understanding that difference is valued and even essential to achieving excellence. Differences of race, ethnicity, tribal representation, culture, class, gender, geography (or other factors) as well as difference of perspective all contribute to the definition of diversity. However, diversity without inclusion provides little more than evidence that differences exist. Diversity occurs when individuals or groups of people who are different

bring their experiences to a process or project and whose perspectives influence and enhance the outcomes of the work are engaged or included in the process/project.

### Theophilus D. Gregory

El Pomar Foundation

Diversity is the variety of attributes, backgrounds, cultures and ideas brought by individuals to any situation. A healthy community requires an inclusive climate built on the foundation of trust and respect for individual assets, talents and perspectives. Diversity and inclusion add significant value to our organizations and community by maximizing everyone's contribution to a shared quality of life. (*Adapted from the City of Colorado Springs Diversity Definition*)

### Ernest B. Gutierrez, Jr.

The Kresge Foundation

Diversity is the reflection of the de facto globalization of the world, that is, with the mass migrations that have characterized the flow of humans around the world, into and among societies. Women and people of color are present in the general populations, but not in certain institutional segments. For example, the financial worlds of Wall Street and the City of London are disproportionately dominated by white males. Likewise, our nonprofit sector, including foundations, continues to be dominated by whites, especially males. Although women have made considerable progress, power continues to be concentrated among white males, and people of color, immigrants, gays and lesbians, and the disabled are underrepresented on governing boards and staffs. The corollary that goes with diversity pictures that are out of harmony with the communities served and our populations as a whole, means that inclusiveness is not widely practiced.

### David Hammack

Case Western Reserve University

In the United States, foundations and indeed all nonprofits owe their existence, their legal form, and their tax privileges above all to America's remarkably successful efforts (from the Constitution and the First Amendment forward) to manage religious diversity in such a way as to minimize serious religious conflict. Hence, serious discussions of "diversity" must take recognize religious diversity as well as differences of race (especially the historical realities of harsh racism against Native Americans and African-Americans) and gender. Serious discussions of diversity must also take economic inequality into account.

### Jeffrey Hirota

The Denver Foundation

*Please note below the distinction between diversity and inclusiveness as it relates to the work of The Denver Foundation.*

**Diversity** describes the extent to which an organization has people from diverse backgrounds and communities working as board members, staff, and/or volunteers.

**Inclusive** organizations not only have diverse individuals involved; more importantly, they are learning-centered organizations that value the perspectives and contributions of all people, and strive to incorporate the needs and viewpoints of diverse communities in the design and implementation of universal and inclusive programs. Inclusive organizations are, by definition, diverse at all levels.

### Martin Lehfelddt

Southeastern Council of Foundations

Diversity (I happen to prefer the term "inclusiveness") as it applies to the field of philanthropy, should be characterized by the willingness and ability of foundations and grantmaking associations *to enrich their understanding of and sensitivity to the communities they serve* by identifying, recruiting, and engaging people of different genders, races, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, generations, and points of view as board members, staff members, community advisors, investment managers, professional advisors, and vendors, and to serve as models for similar behavior by the nonprofit organizations they support.

### Rachel Mosher-Williams

The Aspen Institute

In the context of discussion and research on the most critical issues facing philanthropy today, I think "diversity" should take into account the range of:

- **Types** of foundations (large, medium, small; private, community, family, operating; etc.);
- **Donor characteristics** (alive, dead, young, old, progressive, conservative, intense engagement with philanthropy or none at all); and
- **Philanthropic vehicles and models** (donor-advised funds, online philanthropy marketplaces such as Missionfish or GlobalGiving, social investments and PRIs, limited-life foundations, etc.). This area is in an intense period of change and is a particularly important focus for near-term research on the field.

Underlying and, in many cases, informing this philanthropic diversity are, of course, the diversity of *cultural, ethnic, religious, and political perspectives* that characterize donors, foundation staff and trustees, and their grantees. It is the diversity of all these different players that affect the way philanthropy is done.

### **Gary D. Nelson**

Healthcare Georgia Foundation

The foundation views diversity as the integration of individual and group differences based on race, national origin, religious beliefs, geography, physical abilities and characteristics, sexual orientation, economic circumstances and lifestyle into organizational policy, practice, and decision making. The foundation seeks to collaborate and conduct business with individuals and organizations who share this commitment to diversity, as reflected in the composition of their Boards and staffs and in the programs they implement. To that end, the foundation embraces this commitment in its own governance, operations, and grantmaking policies and programs.

### **Joel J. Orosz**

Grand Valley State University

Diversity is not chaos; it is a healthy variety within an overall theme. Diversity is not a single factor; it is an aggregation of many factors. Diversity is not an imposed scheme; it is an organic development. Diversity is exemplified by a vibrant neighborhood, in which individuals build houses in different styles within broad common bounds; in which people of many different backgrounds congregate together; and in which people do all of this freely, without coordinated planning or external coercion. Diversity is thus the happy paradoxical melding of individual and group, difference and commonality, variation and unification.

### **Susan A. Ostrander**

Tufts University

Most often when we use the term “diversity,” we really mean efforts to include people from historically marginalized and excluded groups in organizational decision making, and efforts to develop (in regard to this Forum) philanthropic practices that are inclusive of the particular issues and ways of seeing and acting that these groups bring to the table. In the contemporary U.S., these groups most often are people of color, women, gays and lesbians, low income people, and increasingly, non-citizens. One problem with the term “diversity” is that it implies that what we want to talk about are simply “differences” when instead we are referring to relationships of inequality

and exclusion which, in order to address them, require transformational changes in established practices.

### **Francie Ostrower**

Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, Urban Institute

Generally, in relation to philanthropy I would define diversity broadly to refer to variety and levels of homogeneity/heterogeneity along multiple dimensions of ideas, institutions, and people. Diversity in philanthropy encompasses: a) heterogeneity/homogeneity within philanthropy itself (including philanthropic approaches, as well as the demographic composition of donors, grantees, staff, and boards); and b) the level to which philanthropy reflects, promotes, and/or inhibits diversity in society. For purposes of this forum’s specific discussion, ethnic and racial diversity and philanthropy seem key—and I hope that these will also be discussed in relation to class diversity.

### **Henry A. J. Ramos**

Mauer Kunst Consulting

Diversity is about galvanizing the sum total of all available human assets and perspectives so that institutions and the larger society can maximize their knowledge, excellence and problem solving potential.

### **Cristina M. Regalado**

The California Wellness Foundation

The California Wellness Foundation (TCWF) includes a statement about its commitment to diversity as listed on every Request for Proposal document for grantseekers:

*“Given our commitment to traditionally underserved populations, the Foundation encourages cultural diversity, representativeness and inclusiveness in the boards, staff and individuals served by the organizations we fund. This principle is shaped by the conviction that all segments of society benefit from pluralism and equal opportunity.”*

The California Wellness Foundation has published a *Code of Ethics* on its website and included in that section is how we promote inclusiveness in hiring, retention, promotion and board recruitments and among the constituencies served:

*“Given the diversity of California’s population, the Foundation seeks to engage individuals on its Board and staff who are representative of that diversity and committed to incorporating the values of pluralism and inclusiveness into every aspect of their work. We also seek to fund organizations that embrace those values in their mission and activities.*

*Our commitment to diversity is shaped by the conviction that all segments of society benefit from pluralism and equal opportunity. The diverse composition of our staff, Board,*

*grantees and populations served illustrates that we honor this commitment.”*

Grantmakers in Health (I serve as vice chair of the board) adopted this diversity statement in 2003:

*“GIH is committed to promoting diversity and cultural competency in its programming, personnel and employment practices, and governance. It views diversity as a fundamental element of social justice and integral to its mission of helping grantmakers improve the nation’s health. Diverse voices and viewpoints deepen our understanding of differences in health outcomes and health care delivery, and strengthen our ability to fashion just solutions. GIH uses the term, diversity, broadly to encompass differences in the attributes of both individuals (such as race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, and socioeconomic status) and organizations (foundations and giving programs of differing sizes, missions, geographic locations, and approaches to grantmaking).”*

### **Kimberly S. Roberson**

The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation

My definition of diversity: people with differing backgrounds, cultures, and/or perspectives who aim to engage together in an activity or endeavor.

### **Jiannbin Lee Shiao**

University of Oregon

Diversity is a new keyword that encompasses many of the same issues previously associated with “pluralism” though it raises questions particular to the contemporary post-civil rights period. When its distinct dimensions are not recognized, discussions of diversity can become either simplistic or extremely messy. First, diversity is a new name for a longstanding **demographic phenomenon**, the existence of a plural society, which can be described in terms of both quantity and quality. For example, how many Latinos are present in a particular organization, and what kind of interactions do they experience there with Blacks and with Whites? In recent decades, diversity has

also become **an institution**, a web of norms and rules that govern social relationships, providing a basis for strategic actions, which can be described as both protective and constitutive. For example, how much do diversity rationales serve as shields for existing policies such as affirmative action, and to what extent do they generate new practices or even new policies or programs? In addition, diversity has also become a **cultural discourse** evident in both attitudes and ideologies. For example, how do Americans feel about the level or quality of diversity in their neighborhoods, and what kinds of diversity are believed to be more or less compatible with social cohesion? Underlying each of these aspects is the question of **which differences matter**, and in turn, whether the answers are the same for social interaction, policy, and community.

### **Arturo Vargas**

National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials

Diversity in philanthropy is the practice of ensuring that the work of a foundation is informed by and reflects the views and experiences of Board and staff members who have had the life experiences that reflect those of the programmatic mission of the foundation and the populations that are served.

### **Gwen Walden**

The California Endowment

“Diversity” means creating an environment in which each individual is able to achieve his or her full human potential. This definition necessarily implies that we live in an open society governed by democratic institutions. In such a system, individuals are both responsible for, and benefactors of, their shared fate, and resources are allocated fairly and effectively to serve the public good.





## APPENDIX D

# ABOUT THE DIVERSITY IN PHILANTHROPY PROJECT

The Diversity in Philanthropy Project is a voluntary effort of nearly 40 leading foundation trustees, senior staff and executives committed to increasing field-wide diversity through open dialogue and strategic action.

We believe that diversifying perspectives, talent and experience can help ensure philanthropy's continued leadership in a rapidly changing society. Therefore, building on philanthropy's best traditions and aspirations, we're working together to develop a new, field-wide agenda for diversity.

Launched as a three-year initiative (2007-2009), this project seeks to expand diversity, equity and inclusion in board and staff representation, grant making and contracting.

Following are the core activities and strategies that we seek to promote:

- **Voluntary peer-support:** Encouraging collaboration between philanthropic leaders to realize the benefits of a more diverse sector.
- **Transparent and actionable data:** Partnering with supporting organizations to track and report field-wide diversity performance, and share new research and knowledge.
- **Tools, best practices and talent:** Creating a long-term resource for accessing learning models, best practices and talent banks of diverse board and staff candidates, advisors and contractors.

### Our Supporters

The Diversity in Philanthropy Project receives funding and other support from the following grant making institutions and philanthropic leadership networks:

- Annie E. Casey Foundation
- C. S. Mott Foundation
- Chicago Community Trust
- Council on Foundations
- Dade Community Foundation
- David & Lucile Packard Foundation
- Donors Forum of Chicago
- Ford Foundation
- Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers
- Healthcare Georgia Foundation
- Humboldt Area Foundation
- Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation
- Lloyd A. Fry Foundation
- Marguerite Casey Foundation
- Montana Community Foundation
- Native Americans in Philanthropy
- Needmor Fund
- New York Regional Association of Grantmakers
- Philanthropy Northwest
- Prudential Foundation
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Rockefeller Brothers Fund
- Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors
- Rosenberg Foundation
- San Francisco Foundation
- The Atlantic Philanthropies
- The California Endowment
- The California Wellness Foundation
- The Foundation Center
- The James Irvine Foundation
- The Russell Family Foundation
- W. K. Kellogg Foundation
- Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation
- William & Flora Hewlett Foundation
- Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

## Advisory Board

The Diversity in Philanthropy Project's work is administered under the guidance of the Project's national advisory board, and by an impressive multicultural team of consultants.

### *Robert K. Ross (Chair)*

President and CEO, The California Endowment

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### *Richard Woo*

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### *Gary L. Yates*

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*For more information please view our website at [www.  
diversityinphilanthropy.org](http://www.diversityinphilanthropy.org).*

