



**Community Activation Network: CAN  
November 19, 2020 Meeting**

**Meeting Notes**

Members of the Community Activation Network (CAN) initiative met via Zoom on November 19, 2020. The meeting agenda was as follows:

- Welcome
- Follow-up to *Path Forward*
- CAN Voices Online Interview Report: A Few Insights
- Equity in Philanthropy Project Presentation
- *CAN-DID* Breakout Discussions and Report Out
- Closing

**Welcome**

Ann Coffey opened the meeting, welcoming all – especially new CAN participants. She then requested participants to hold the space in silence for a few moments in acknowledgement of all the challenges our community and its citizens are facing. She then reviewed the purpose of CAN and its seven Guiding Principles.

**Follow-up to *Path Forward***

Anthony Smith facilitated sharing among the participants in response to the question “What actions have you taken or contemplated taking to further the goals of *A Path Forward*?”

Responses included:

- AMPED: Opening a business incubator aimed at increasing Black involvement in the technology fields.
- James Graham Brown Foundation: Reviewing implementation of its goals in light of the document.
- SOS: Implementation of a CNA training program with reduced transportation barrier.
- Mayor’s Office: Supporting Evolve502’s work with reducing the achievement gap; coordinating with local organizations to create learning hubs.
- La Casita: Hosting conversations around creating a Black / Brown collective, beyond singular racial / ethnic groups; lifting up all marginalized and invisible groups together.

## CAN Voices Online Interview Report: A Few Insights

Dr. Shawn Gardner presented the preliminary results of the most recent CAN Voices Online Interview initiative. Major points of his presentation included:

- Respondents to the interview were overwhelming individuals who identified as white and as female and who worked for a nonprofit (as opposed to a foundation). There is a need to reach other voices in our community beyond this demographic.
- The four themes that emerged from the first set of interviews were confirmed, i.e.:
  1. Collaboration
  2. Funding Flexibility and Innovation
  3. Equity and Inclusion
  4. Awareness, Understanding, and Trust

If we were to put an order to these themes, however, comments from the interviews suggest that goals and activities around the Awareness/Understanding/Trust theme are necessary before work among the other themes is possible. Dr. Gardner recommended changing the order by making #4 Awareness, Understanding & Trust, #1.

- Two “sub-themes” emerged from the recent interviews, as well:
  1. A strong call for the inclusion of “overhead” in funding provided by foundations
  2. A difference in the manner in which “Blackness” was perceived and characterized among Black and non-Black respondents.

Anthony Smith facilitated a brief Q&A following Dr. Gardner’s presentation. Major points of the discussion included:

- Is further analysis of this data needed? Should we base any decisions regarding action based on this data? Is it complete? Is a more concerted / different effort needed to reach more voices needed first?
- Why did we hear primarily from white individuals who identify as male or female? Is this related to how the interview link was disseminated? Is it a measure of the trust these individuals have in the mainstream, establishment nonprofit sector? Their feeling of belonging within that establishment?
- Is there a part of the community that will never respond (specifically the unincorporated groups and individuals involved in the justice movements) that will never respond because they do not see themselves as part of the sector and, also, are not acknowledged as such?
- How we classify individuals – particularly those we classify as “other” is important and needs to be reviewed.

Ann reminded participants that we will take a deeper dive into the issues related to the interviews at CAN’s December meeting.

## Equity in Philanthropy Project Presentation

Micah Jorrisch, Harrison Kirby, and Lacy McNary briefly presented the work of the Equity in Philanthropy Project:

- The group was formed this summer by seasoned fundraising professionals who are on their own personal journeys related to racial injustice, recognize the inherent racism within the systems of their profession, and desire to get past merely “treating symptoms” to addressing root causes and building trust.
- The group did some research. Among the findings:
  - 90% of fundraisers are white
  - 80% of board members are white
  - 90% of foundation leadership is white
  - 40% of foundation boards have no non-white members
  - Louisville’s funding of nonprofits is below that of other peer cities
  - Black-lead nonprofits are funded at a lower level, have less assets, and as a result are forced to set smaller goals based on smaller visions and planning horizons.
  - There is a low level of trust in government, in each other, and in funders among community development corporations. There is a huge need for capacity building funding, relationship building and invitations to sit at the tables where decisions regarding funding, etc. are being made
- The group is working to promote the idea of Community Centric Fundraising (CCF) – an approach built on fundamental anti-racist principles and action steps.
- The group wanted to present its work to CAN participants to share its work with a broader community, get feedback, learn how their work may be dovetailing with other such work going on in the community, and build relationships and collaborations. It emphasized it is just starting out and is still learning.

## CAN-DID Breakout Discussions and Report Out

Given time constraints, the group agreed to forego breakout group discussions of the Equity in Philanthropy Project’s work in favor of a continued discussion among all participants. Major points of that discussion included:

- Are Black voices / leaders being included in this work? Many are already doing this work – especially Black women. CCF is not an all-encompassing model; there are others. Everything needs to be considered together.
- Getting feedback from minorities is not enough. It is not the same as inclusion and engagement of minorities. We need to bring minorities into the work at the beginning to help define the problems and outcomes. They are the ones who really know. Otherwise you create resentment and distrust.

- There needs to be more *investment* in invisible communities – beyond mere inclusion (around tables where ideas are considered and decisions are made, etc.) These communities are doing the on-the-ground, grassroots-level work – and are neither recognized nor nearly adequately compensated for it.
- *Marginalized* is a better term than *minority* and *invisible*. Invisible is a result of marginalization, the intentional act of pushing people to the margins. *Marginalized* denotes not only the act of marginalizing but points to the accountability of the perpetrators of that action.
- We need to watch how we categorize and classify and identify as we look at data. It's too easy to slide into binary thinking – when, in fact, we exist on continuums. We can inadvertently work toward data-driven solutions that actually reinforce the problems.
- How can CAN support the Equity in Philanthropy Project's work?
  - Get residents involved in philanthropy; bring in their voices as we consider philanthropy's unjust structures and processes.
  - Can others who are also doing this work share their models, etc. with the Project – so that the project can step back, learn from others' work, and move forward with others toward solutions?
  - Help the Project look not only at the gaps but at the actual *barriers* Black-led groups face, the barriers that perpetuate existing systems.

## Closing

Next steps were identified:

- CAN participants will take another look at the interview results at its meeting in December. Participants are asked to consider two questions in advance of that meeting:
  - What is the so what? of the data and information we have gathered?
  - How can we take action – or should we?
- The Equity in Philanthropy Project group will seek out other's working in this space; CAN participants who are interested in working in the space (or who are already working in this space) will connect with the Project.
- CAN members will invite additional individuals to join CAN – and send the contact information of the invitees to Ann so that they can be included in the next meeting notice.
- Contact Ann with thoughts and feedback regarding how CAN is going, how to make it better, how to move toward action, etc.

Next meeting: December 17