



**MINNEAPOLIS  
FOUNDATION**

# **OUR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK.**



## It's a New World

We are entering a new world—one that's filled with equal parts opportunity and uncertainty. Historically dominant cultural norms are being challenged by a society that is increasingly diverse, but systemic inequities continue to threaten the freedom, security, and vitality of our communities. Technological advances are taking place at lightning speed, realizing dreams for some and deepening disparities for others. The largest generational transfer of wealth in history is underway even as our society struggles to redefine prosperity and address the inequities that result from wealth and positional power.

We are living in turbulent times. The challenges run deep and their intersections only intensify their complexity. Traditional theories of change no longer apply.

To drive real change that will be felt by all, we must be inventive—in our thinking and our actions.

## A Framework for the Future

The Minneapolis Foundation developed a new strategic framework to guide our work into the future—a future that requires us to be bold, optimistic, and responsive to the voices of those most affected by challenges in our community. A cornerstone of the new framework is inclusivity, recognizing the essential role of active listening as we design community-driven solutions. That's why one of the first steps we took in our strategic planning process was just that:

### Listening. We...

- Hosted multiple community listening sessions to gain insight into how we can best support nonprofits and community partners, helping us to refine our role as a community foundation.
- Surveyed our donors and conducted national research to understand how we can best support generous individuals, families, and businesses on their philanthropic journeys.
- Consulted professional advisors—some of the best advocates amongst generous Minnesotans—to better understand what their clients are looking for in a philanthropic partner.
- Invested hundreds of hours with our board and staff to challenge the status quo and redefine what it means to be a servant leader in our community.

Over the past two years, we have listened and learned. In the spring of 2020, as we were finalizing the details of our new framework, we found ourselves facing unanticipated turbulence in the form of a global pandemic. With the new framework as our guide, we quickly mobilized to listen, partner, and respond to the immediate and longer-term needs of our community. In the most intense of times, we uncovered the true strength of the collective. And we are just getting started.



# Our New Mission

Together, we drive collective action to realize strong, vibrant communities.

## Our Values

### **Change is personal.**

We work to change ourselves by listening, learning, understanding, and taking responsive action.

### **Internal mirrors external.**

We reflect internally the community we hope to see externally.

### **Equity is a responsibility.**

We see and remove personal and systemic barriers that hold inequities in place.

### **Proximity is necessary.**

The closer we get, the more we understand, empathize, and transform; we can always get closer.

### **Civic participation is powerful.**

Places and systems that value and work for everyone foster the diverse participation needed to solve complex problems.

### **Hope is essential.**

Recognizing the challenges of today does not eliminate our ability to see—and create—a better future.



## Finding Strength in the Collective: How We Do Our Work

We believe that those closest to issues are best positioned to understand and address them. We partner with others to sow and nurture the seeds of strong, vibrant communities by:

- Promoting civic participation and leadership;
- Fostering belonging, connection, and inclusion;
- Increasing access to opportunities that advance upward mobility.
- Seeing and dismantling barriers that hold inequities in place.

## Our Role

- We create intersections in civic life that foster a generous community of donors, organizations, staff, volunteers, and residents who listen, learn, and take responsive action to address pressing needs.
- We support donors and partners as they express their generosity—personally, collectively, and across generations.
- We invest in community-shaped and community-driven solutions—using all available tools and resources.
- We use our access and influence to amplify and elevate the voices and leadership of others.
- We create measurable meaning and impact across our work through research, evaluation, and knowledge-sharing.
- We demonstrate philanthropic and organizational excellence in impact, integrity, and innovation.

## Outcomes We Seek

- Communities are changing in ways that promote local leadership and engagement; foster belonging and inclusion; increase access to opportunities; and dismantle conditions that hold inequities in place.
- Partners, donors, and grantees value being part of a broad, generous community and actively work to advance community-driven solutions.
- Diverse relationships and innovative tools enable the Foundation to reach a broader community and advance its mission.
- The Foundation is fiscally healthy, leads the field, and fosters a culture of excellence and respect.



## As We Move Forward,

we will listen to community partners and use robust metrics as we strive for continuous improvement in all the work we do. We are strong in our resolve to meet today's challenges and excited by the opportunities we see to build a brighter future. The road ahead is long, but we look forward to walking it with you.

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