



THE SOLUTIONS PROJECT

2020 EVALUATION SUMMARY REPORT

BY FRONTLINE SOLUTIONS



Philly Thrive

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to The Solutions Project grantee partners, funders, trustees, consultants, and staff who shared their perspectives through key informant interviews and surveys.

Thanks also to The Solutions Project Staff for their strategy and data collection support.

FOREWORD FROM THE SOLUTIONS PROJECT

As we reflect on what 2020 presented for The Solutions Project, our frontline grantee partners, and the movements for justice we support, it's clear that our values guided our decisions through times of crisis. Specifically, interconnectedness, care, and courage lit our path through a global pandemic, rising facism, and a racial reckoning that compelled the largest social uprisings in our country's history. Philanthropy can do so much more right now.

Inspired by our grantees who mobilized mutual aid and rent- or utility-relief in the wake of COVID-19, we provided wellness grants and a further streamlined grants process. We anticipated the need for at-home video production so our grantees' voices and stories could reach audiences, pivoting away from in-person events. We transitioned leadership of our organization following years of intentional planning that included my own journey from inaugural grantee to board member to president and CEO. We reached the highest amount of grantmaking yet and ended the year with a clear commitment to scale.

We value grantee feedback. I am humbled to listen as our frontline partners affirm these decisions as part of our independent program evaluation by Frontline Solutions. I'm also eager to learn where we can innovate and improve as together we grow.

We value our relationships. The Solutions Project knows that our success depends on the success of our grantees. We also understand the power imbalance inherent to grantmaking relationships. The Solutions Project commits resources and attention to third-party evaluation to gain an unfiltered view of the quality of our contributions to the field, including dollars out the door, media placement, and progress towards equity in our 100% Commitment to Justice. We also want to know how our frontline partners experience us. This evaluation is just one tool demonstrating our transparency and participation in relationships that are honest, accountable, and reflective. As we set and adhere to standards of practice for intermediary grantmakers, we push ourselves and philanthropy to do better. Frontline communities deserve nothing less from those of us in a position to move money towards the real strategies for change: community organizing and power-building. These strategies deliver the most effective and scalable climate justice solutions: those led by Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian American, Pacific Islander, and other communities of color, including immigrants and women—the people and organizations who are closest to the problems.

Let's create the future we want.

In Solidarity,



Gloria Walton
President and CEO
The Solutions Project



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a continuation of a learning partnership that launched in 2016, Frontline Solutions conducted its third external evaluation of The Solutions Project's grantmaking and overall partnership with grantees in 2020. Sources for evaluation learnings included The Solutions Project's internal systems and interviews with grantee partners, staff, peer funders, and philanthropic trustees, of which grantees hold a majority of seats governing grantmaking. Our primary learnings in four main indicator areas are outlined below:

INVEST *Right bet, right time:* The Solutions Project provides much-needed year-over-year general operating support to frontline organizations around the country and in Puerto Rico, with the majority of support going to organizations led by women-identifying and people of color.

INSPIRE *Building narrative and communications infrastructure:* Both capacity-building and direct narrative supports provided by The Solutions Project help grantee partners to build their base, fundraise, spread awareness of their campaigns and agendas, and win legislative and policy victories.

CONNECT *Strong organizations connected to rich ecosystems:* The Solutions Project is viewed as a connector and collaborator among grantee partners, peer funders, and trustees, and it played an integral role in attracting dollars from the Bezos Earth Fund to the field of organizations advancing climate justice in 2020.

PARTNER *Meaningful and supportive grantee/funder/intermediary relationships:* Grantee partners praised The Solutions Project for its support during the pandemic. They expressed overwhelming satisfaction with grant application and reporting processes and their overall relationship with The Solutions Project.

The evaluation yielded the following recommendations for The Solutions Project's grantmaking:

- 1 Expand reach to find and fund small, scrappy, frontline innovators.
- 2 Renew efforts towards the 100% Commitment for Justice.
- 3 Continue providing a diverse combination of both direct supports and capacity building for media and narrative.
- 4 Increase efforts to connect grantees with potential funders.
- 5 Continue to serve as a lead intermediary for funders.
- 6 Create intentional, strategic alignment between the board of directors and philanthropic trustees.
- 7 Communicate clearly with grantee partners about grant renewal plans.
- 8 Continue to invest in wellness for grantee partners.

INTRODUCTION

Grantmaking through a Pandemic, Racial Uprising, and Leadership Transition

An evaluation of The Solutions Project's grantmaking over the past year must be grounded in the unique context of 2020: a year that required flexibility, responsiveness, and new ways of working. In the face of COVID-19, The Solutions Project made major shifts, including shortening the grantmaking process and removing reporting requirements altogether. Realizing that grantees would need to produce media content under new conditions, The Solutions Project sent ring lights, iPads, and other equipment so that frontline stories could continue to be told. Eleven organizations were given \$2,000 sponsorships in early summer to address staff wellness needs in the midst of a pandemic and racial uprising. Leaders of grantee organizations were also provided with free memberships to Blackbird, a digital collective that supports and advances women of color and allies with virtual wellness programming to drive positive social change and economic impact.

The autumn brought further change, this time for The Solutions Project as an organization. Gloria Walton became the president and CEO in October, with Sarah Shanley Hope staying on as vice president of brand and partnerships. The next month, after a series of conversations with Walton, Jeff Bezos gave The Solutions Project an unrestricted \$43 million grant over three years—more than the organization has received in its entire history—as part of a total \$151 million committed by the Bezos Earth Fund to climate equity as a direct result of Gloria Walton's advocacy. Recognizing the urgency of the moment, The Solutions Project granted over \$1.4 million (more than 70% of its total giving for 2020) in December alone. Grantee partners received this unexpected money at record speed, within a few weeks of being invited to apply. Frontline's evaluation of The Solutions Project's 2020 investments takes place amid these transitional moments and unusual circumstances. As a learning partner, Frontline has shifted our research questions and framework in order to tell a more complete story about the organization's lessons in such a year.



United Farm Workers Foundation



METHODOLOGY

Data was collected from grantee proposals and reports recorded in The Solutions Project's internal systems. Frontline reviewed press clips of grantee partner coverage in the media in 2020 and Conspire for Good's Social Listening Analysis for 2020. Frontline also conducted interviews with grantee partners, staff, funders, and philanthropic trustees. These included:

12	grantee partner interviews	3	funder interviews
7	philanthropic trustee interviews	3	staff interviews

Categories of Indicators

Starting in 2016, The Solutions Project and Frontline have been engaged in an iterative process of developing and updating an evaluation framework. The framework is designed to foster understanding about the effectiveness of The Solutions Project's grantmaking processes, grantee partner satisfaction, and ongoing grantee needs. Each year, Frontline considers several main categories of indicators and collects data to distill relevant learning.

This report presents Frontline's findings related to each of the following core areas:

INVEST

Right bet, right time: Are leaders of organizations that receive grants primarily people of color? Are they primarily female-identifying (or non-binary)? Are they working on the front lines? Does grantmaking support place-based and community organizing strategies while also building on successful work within the 100% narrative? Are grants appropriately prompt, and do they meet the unique needs of grantee partners?

INSPIRE

Building narrative and communications infrastructure: Are mainstream media narratives influenced? Are compelling stories of impact amplified? Is grantee infrastructure for communications bolstered? Do grantee organizations occupy greater platforms for influence and tell their stories more effectively? Are storytellers and media messengers increasingly leaders of color and/or female-identifying?

CONNECT

Strong organizations connected to rich ecosystems: Is frontline leadership gaining access and influence within power centers? Are locally-rooted movements being scaled and best practices or assets being shared? Are thriving ecosystems of actors being cultivated at the intersection of multiple sectors?

PARTNER

Meaningful and supportive grantee/funder relationships: Do grantees feel that they can be transparent, collaborative, and open with The Solutions Project staff? Are they satisfied with the application, approval, and grantmaking process? Are The Solutions Project staff responsive to grantee needs for in-kind supports as well as funding? Does The Solutions Project center the needs of frontline organizations and grantee partners in strategic decisions?



INVEST: RIGHT BET, RIGHT TIME

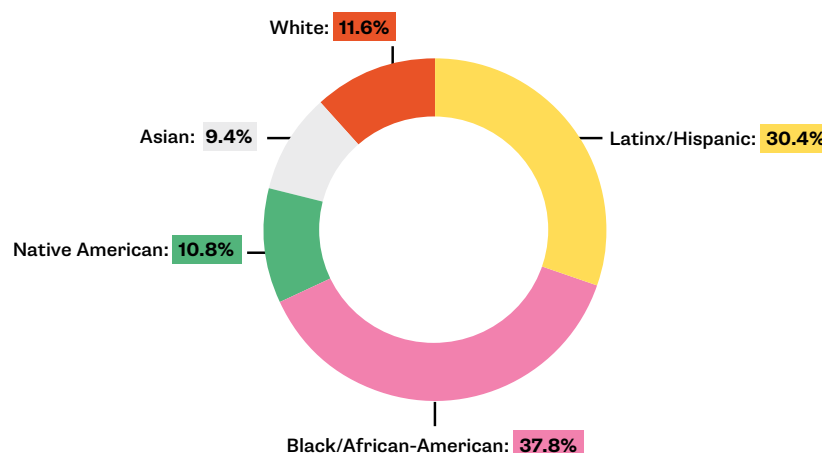
Climate philanthropic dollars in the US overwhelmingly go to white- and male-led, highly established organizations. The Solutions Project believes that frontline organizations led by women and people of color have the ingenuity and experience to solve climate problems and build a more equitable future. Support that comes at the right time for small, nimble organizations can make all the difference in their capacity to build power for communities.

What we learned

Many grantee partners emphasized that unrestricted support from The Solutions Project was a lifeline in their early days and a key reason that they exist today. General operating support allows organizations to bring on additional staff, invest in office space and utilities, and lead how they know best. Grantees noted that funding from The Solutions Project also provides them with the capacity to take part in narrative change work. Grants from The Solutions Project were dispersed rapidly in 2020, as in previous years, many within a few days of application. Giving spanned the continental United States and Puerto Rico, with a greater concentration of grants in California, New York, Georgia and Florida to support place-based strategies. Overall, eleven percent of grantees in 2020 were first-time grant recipients from The Solutions Project (down from more than one-third in 2019, when the organization made its groundbreaking 100% Commitment to Justice). All grantee partners engage in power building, community organizing, and/or economic and community development.

The Solutions Project's 2019 [100% Commitment to Justice](#) includes a promise to invest 95% of its resources in leadership of color and 80% in organizations led by women-identifying or non-binary individuals. Given the influx of dollars late in 2020, The Solutions Project decided to double down on current and past grantees. This allowed grassroots organizations to be quickly resourced during a time of crisis. A trade-off, however, was making further progress towards the Commitment to Justice. In 2020, the total proportion of dollars given to an organization led by a person of color was 89%, and the total proportion of dollars given to an organization led by a woman or non-binary person was 68%. Although these proportions are down from 2019 benchmarks (91% and 79%, respectively), they represent considerably more support to women and people of color than is seen in the field of climate funding as a whole. This organizational decision was also in support of leadership transitions in select grantee partner organizations where women-identifying or non-binary leaders and leaders of color were coming in as executive directors in the first half of 2021.

PROPORTION OF DOLLARS GIVEN BY RACE OF GRANTEE PARTNERS' CEO/ED IN 2020

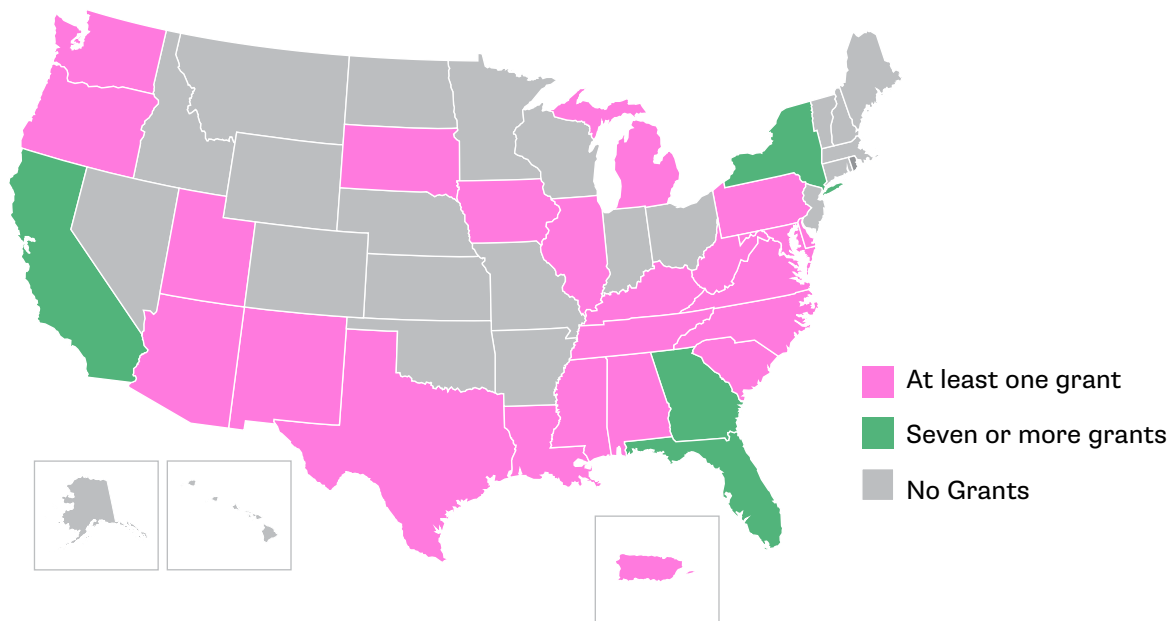


Size and number of grant awards in 2020

48
grants
\$1,970,000 total

11
grants
\$22,000 total

Geographic location of grantee activities for 2020



MOVING FORWARD

The Solutions Project now has steadier funding than ever before and a public goal of raising \$100 million for climate justice solutions through its model. Therefore, the organization has a renewed opportunity to support organizations led by women, nonbinary persons, and/or people of color to the level specified by the 100% Commitment to Justice. As current grantee partners grow and mature, The Solutions Projects should also continue to seek out and resource the smallest, scrappiest frontline organizations—those who are delivering incredible results and innovative climate justice solutions in historically disinvested communities. This will ensure continued growth in the field of climate justice and provide frontline organizations with traction in resourcing their work.



INSPIRE: BUILDING NARRATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLATFORMS FOR INFLUENCE

Organizations fighting for climate justice faced a new set of narrative challenges in 2020, including making narrative connections between the pandemic and climate change and maintaining momentum in the national dialogue about a just transition. As the country's attention turned to racial justice during the summer months, several organizations were thrust into the limelight before they were fully prepared. Visibility remains profoundly important for the most impacted communities, who are so often erased from the narrative on climate change, especially climate solutions.

What we learned

For the first time, the grantee partners we interviewed reported equal weight between narrative supports and funding from The Solutions Project. Almost all grantee partners shared stories or examples of how media and storytelling supports impacted their work in 2020. The Solutions Project offered a comprehensive mix of capacity building and direct service supports throughout the year, which allowed all grantees to take advantage of media programming if desired. This is a notable change from 2019, when grantees, staff, and consultants reported that some grantee partners struggled to use narrative supports due to low capacity. Staff also sought to better understand how The Solutions Project could better anticipate the needs of grantees and bring more resources for frontline partners to build their own communications capacity. This is the focus of Communicating Our Power, a new partnership with Climate Justice Alliance and Center for Story-based Strategy that will include grants and narrative programming to an initial cohort of 20 frontline organizations.

Grantees expressed that working alongside The Solutions Project to identify and address their narrative needs allowed them to tell their own stories in more meaningful and impactful ways. Grantee partners reported that The Solutions Project staff and consultants gave feedback on campaign strategies, helped identify narrative strengths, and offered advice on social media. The Solutions Project also provided guidance to grantee partners who organized their own activities with public figures. One grantee partner said that communications staff from The Solutions Project were integral in giving advice when their organization hosted a Facebook Live event on COVID-19 with Dr. Anthony Fauci.

“We have a partner in The Solutions Project. We can pick up the phone and say, ‘We need some exposure. Do you have any resources?’ They have been responsive to our requests.”

—Grantee partner



Good Life Garden



In addition, The Solutions Project responded to emerging needs by providing direct support. This included sending ring lights and iPads to organizations so that they could create their own media during quarantine. The Solutions Project also helped organizations create scripts, edit footage, write and place op-eds, and negotiate participation in high-profile media events and opportunities. Additional support included arranging speaking opportunities and platforms and brokering additional funding.

Both capacity building and direct supports contributed toward increased media coverage for grantee partners in 2020. Grantees bolstered their public profiles, name recognition, and awareness of their agendas. Several gave examples of major wins emerging from narrative reach. One organization noted that support from The Solutions Project led to one of their videos going viral and receiving a million hits three weeks before a vote on major climate legislation. The legislation passed, marking a huge win for the organization after four years of campaigning.

“The act of simply amplifying our voice, sharing our story, is the first step in the broader work of changing the narrative on Indigenous people. Bringing some visibility to our people, our voice, our work is the first step of narrative change.”

—Grantee partner

Leveraging Celebrity Voices for Change

Celebrity interactions arranged by The Solutions Project cause a ripple effect, starting with something as simple as a retweet and leading to cascading reverberations of attention. One grantee partner related the story of what followed after Mark Ruffalo re-shared their COVID-19-related call to action on his social media. Not only did Ruffalo’s post itself draw increased attention to the organization’s fundraiser, but the online fundraising platform also noticed Ruffalo’s post and decided to match funding for the call to action. Ultimately, this series of events led to the most successful fundraising campaign in the organization’s 13-year history. Another organization explained that musicians Ricky Reed and St. Panther sponsored their fundraiser through an album release event and St. Panther attended their ballot party during the 2020 election. In addition to an influx in funding, these celebrity interactions led to greater campaign awareness and increased exposure through the musicians’ YouTube channels.

MOVING FORWARD

The Solutions Project should persist in offering a user-friendly, customizable array of narrative supports. Grantee partners would continue to benefit from access to a diverse selection of both capacity-building opportunities and direct services.



CONNECT: STRONG ORGANIZATIONS CONNECTED TO A RICH ECOSYSTEM

Connecting organizations to power centers that enrich leadership and strategy development is crucial to moving climate justice work forward and garnering large-scale support. Frontline Solutions spoke with grantee and funder partners to learn more about The Solutions Project's role as a connector/intermediary within the movement.

What we learned

Grantee partners described The Solutions Project as an advocate among funders, although most stories provided in 2020 were drawn from past funding cycles. Several grantees noted that they were connected to fewer new funders through The Solutions Project's network than in previous years. The reasons for this may be two-fold. First, The Solutions Project operated without a program officer for much of 2020, which may have limited the capacity of staff to make connections on behalf of grantees. Second, many funders doubled down on current grantees in 2020 to ensure that they could survive the pandemic and accompanying economic downturn. It was a difficult year to encourage other funders to expand their grantee networks. Nevertheless, all grantee partners shared that they feel connected to a larger movement, fostered by The Solutions Project, that extends beyond the work of their individual organizations.

Most grantee partners experienced an increase in the number or strength of their relationships with policymakers in 2020. For some, this was reflected through representation in public dialogue and/or congressional hearings. However, others reported that the pandemic disrupted their ability to connect with policymakers. Grantees noted that their work on narrative development—supported by The Solutions Project—has been used as a tool to pass and frame policy. They also noted that The Solutions Project helps them to increase their reach and relationships, which ultimately impacts their political power.

In describing influence on the broader field of philanthropy, peer funders reported that The Solutions Project works collaboratively to determine movement needs. Many mentioned The Solutions Project's leadership in garnering investment from the Bezos Fund as an example of how the organization incorporates the leadership of grantees and funders to garner support for a larger movement. Furthermore, funder partners shared that The Solutions Project's thought leadership in the field is highly valued among intermediaries and funders; in particular, one funder partner took note of The Solutions Project's rapid COVID wellness supports by replicating those supports for their current grantees.

MOVING FORWARD

The Solutions Project should continue to connect grantee partners to the larger funder and partner ecosystem to drive the field forward. Recent investment could be used to hire additional staff to further this crucial aspect of The Solutions Project's approach. Additionally, The Solutions Project should continue to deepen its impact as a leading intermediary through strategic, collaborative thought leadership and practical innovations.



PARTNER: MEANINGFUL AND SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

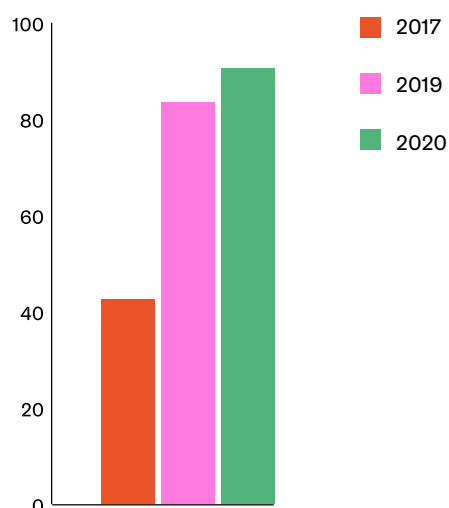
Communicative, learning-focused partnerships between funders and grantee partners are crucial amid the rapidly shifting landscape of needs caused by a pandemic. Grantees have stepped in to fill gaps related to COVID-19, distributing food, N95 masks, and cash cards. However, as one partner explained, “There are nuances to the needs.” For example, the urgent need for prepared meals can be connected to larger conversations about food sovereignty and the necessity of a new food system. Organizations on the ground are seeing opportunities to build new systems for COVID recovery that can be tied to a regenerative economy. Strong funder partnerships would help support grantees to make the shifts they need for both acute and long-term strategies.

What we learned

Grantee partners described The Solutions Project as being a key partner in the midst of the pandemic and noted that additional funding and resources for wellness and removal of grant reporting requirements all eased some of the burden of working in communities facing hardship and trauma. Beyond the immediacy of COVID-19, grantee partners overwhelmingly reported that The Solutions Project’s multi-year, general operating support provides space to foster innovation and experimentation. “They are allies in the importance of culture and creativity,” commented one grantee partner.

Other grantees emphasized that The Solutions Project values grantee partner learning—and wants to know about the struggles as well as the successes. All grantee partners interviewed in 2020 reported that they would feel comfortable reporting a negative outcome of a grant-funded activity to The Solutions Project. This represents an increase of 8% from 2019 and more than 50% from 2017.

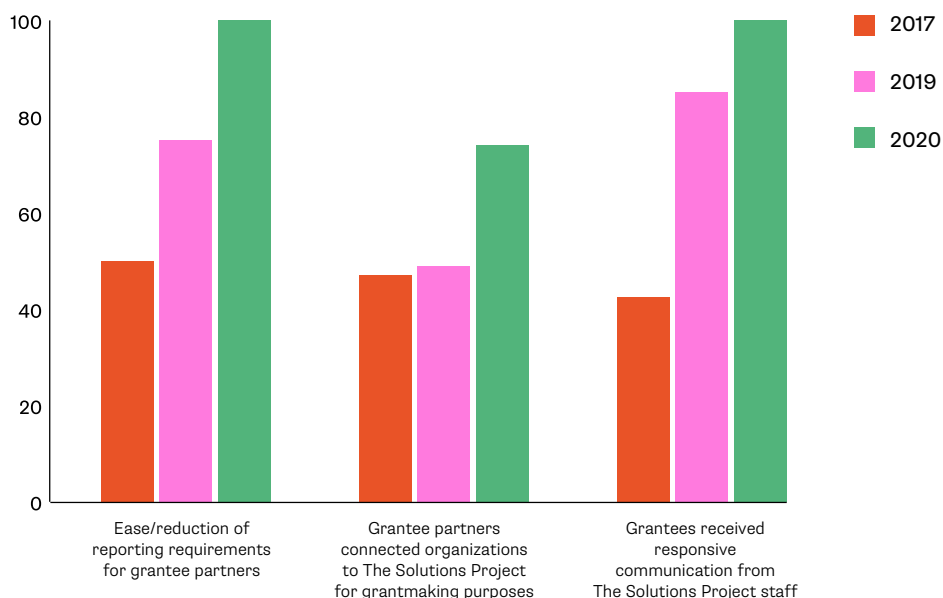
Changes in Grantee Partners’ Comfort Sharing Negative Outcomes of Grant-Funded Activities



*In 2018, TSP went through a major strategic pivot and opted for qualitative interviews with twenty-five grantees to inform that direction rather than evaluate that year’s grantmaking program.

All grantees indicated that The Solutions Project staff are helpful, supportive partners of their work. All grantee partners who were interviewed also reported satisfaction with the ease and relevance of The Solutions Project's grant application and reporting processes and the speed of the grant decision and payment processes. The elimination of reporting requirements was appreciated by grantee partners, and satisfaction increased by 50% on this indicator from 2019. Nearly two-thirds of grantee partners interviewed had connected other organizations with The Solutions Project for grantmaking purposes (up from approximately half in 2019), and all grantee partners reported receiving responsive communication from staff in 2020.

Changes in Satisfaction with TSP's Grants Process as Reported by Grantee Partners



*In 2018, TSP went through a major strategic pivot and opted for qualitative interviews with twenty-five grantees to inform that direction rather than evaluate that year's grantmaking program.



Casa Familiar



“I wish there was a way to really capture the significance of our relationship. The Solutions Project is teaching us to be more creative in how we leverage opportunities and resources. We are also teaching them—we are feeding off of each other, and there is a ripple effect that keeps getting wider.”

—Grantee partner

When asked how The Solutions Project could improve as partners, grantees provided a range of responses that were largely customized to the individual organizations. These included providing more opportunities to gather with other grantee partners, more opportunities to work with celebrities and influencers, and more information about renewable energy technologies. A few grantee partners expressed the desire for The Solutions Project to fund other organizations in their geographic area, and a few expressed the desire for greater clarity and advance notice on the timing and amount of funding that they can expect from The Solutions Project each year, which is a key insight for both The Solutions Project and its funders who support the grantmaking program with multi-year funding.

Trustees reported that decisions about grants are made by consensus, and that frontline organizations led by women and people of color are prioritized in strategic decision making. The fact that the trustee body is made up of majority movement leaders as well as philanthropic professionals has pushed the organization to be movement-aligned in its grantmaking decisions. Trustees praised the leadership transition and were enthusiastic both about Walton joining the organization at the helm and Shanley Hope staying on as a vice-president. Notably, the majority of trustees expressed that they enjoy working together and missed being able to meet in person. Lack of direct communication and integration of strategy between the trustees and the board of directors was highlighted by trustees as an area of concern for the second year in a row. There is an opportunity here for The Solutions Project to both strengthen communication between these two important stakeholder groups and be more transparent about the intent behind the trustees as an informed, movement-aligned body with authority over the grantmaking program independent of both the board of directors and funders of the grantmaking program.

“Having additional funds become available unexpectedly, and the manner in which they had us apply, really signals that they listen to our needs, hear us, and are putting action to words in transforming relationships.”

—Grantee partner



Luis Olmedo Comité Civico del Valle

“Among trustees, we have a collaborative space where everyone has the ability to shape the agenda. Conversations are strategic, intentional, and have lots of integrity, and we learn a lot.”

—Trustee

MOVING FORWARD

Now that The Solutions Project has a clearer picture of its budget for the coming years, staff have the opportunity to give current grantee partners more advance notice about the possibility of grant renewal, the timing of funding cycles, and the level of funding available. Conducting an annual joint meeting (or some other touch point) between the board of directors and grantmaking trustees will help these two bodies align strategy.



INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Amid the chaos of 2020, The Solutions Project stepped up to the plate to partner with grantees in new and deeper ways. The organization became more flexible, doing away with grant reporting to alleviate the burden on grantees during a difficult time. They moved grants faster than ever before—proving that it is not difficult to get money to organizations quickly when strong relationships are already in place. They invested in grantee wellness, acknowledging the trauma and pain that frontline organizations encounter when working in the communities hit hardest by climate change. Finally, The Solutions Project continued to provide the unrestricted funding and media supports that they have become known for among their grantees. In distilling primary learnings from the 2020 evaluation process, Frontline Solutions offers the following strategic insights and recommendations for moving forward:

- 1 Expand reach to find and fund small, scrappy, frontline innovators.** As The Solutions Project substantially expands its grantmaking in 2021, there will be opportunities to expand the organization's network of grantee partners. The Solutions Project's current grantee partners have matured and built capacity since their earliest days. Given that so many reported that The Solutions Project's early funding was integral in their growth and success, the organization should continue to expand its reach to identify and support nascent or historically disinvested grassroots organizations that are truly working on the front lines of climate justice for communities.
- 2 Renew efforts towards the 100% Commitment for Justice.** After making a groundbreaking commitment in 2019 to provide 95% of grant dollars to leaders of color and 80% to women leaders, The Solutions Project's proportion of giving to leaders from these demographics decreased somewhat in 2020. Although the metric itself is important, The Solutions Project is also on a larger journey of continually pushing itself to address field-wide gender and racial inequities in philanthropy and media attention. In 2021, the goal of 95% / 80% should continue to serve as a guiding metric to help staff and trustees center the leadership of women and people of color in all funding and strategy decisions.
- 3 Continue to provide a diverse combination of both direct supports and capacity building for media and narrative.** Compared to 2019, more grantee partners were able to take advantage of media supports in 2020, and these supports led to major base-building, legislative, and fundraising successes. The Solutions Project should continue to provide a winning combination of both capacity-building and direct service offerings so that grantee partners in all stages of narrative development and capacity can take advantage of The Solutions Project's media expertise and resources.
- 4 Increase efforts to connect grantees with potential funders.** Compared to previous years, fewer grantee partners reported that The Solutions Project connected them to new funders in 2020. Advocating for grantees with other funders has been a strength of The Solutions Project in the past but, given the current times, may require new strategies and additional effort. As The Solutions Project brings on additional grantmaking and programs staff in 2021, capacity to make these connections will increase.



- 5 Continue to serve as a lead intermediary for funders.** Funder partners highlighted The Solutions Project's unique role as an intermediary working diligently to meet the needs of both grantees and funder partners. Funders noted that they look to The Solutions Project's strategic and thought leadership in propelling the work forward in addition to the practical examples of trust-based philanthropy. Given recent large-scale investment in its work, The Solutions Project should continue to both lead and deepen its impact in this area.
- 6 Create intentional, strategic alignment between the board of directors and grantmaking trustees.** The Solutions Project is more than just a funding intermediary; it is also a capacity builder, co-creative partner, connector, and information hub. Given that several grantmaking trustees reported feeling disconnected from the organization's larger strategy, an annual touchpoint between the board of directors and philanthropic trustees would help align strategy and build important relationships between these two leadership bodies.
- 7 Communicate clearly with grantee partners about grant renewal plans.** Uncertainty about its own funding streams has made it difficult for The Solutions Project to assert whether, when, and at what rate grants with current grantee partners will be renewed. Now that The Solutions Project has a clearer and larger budget for the next three years, grantee partners would benefit from knowing whether their grant will be renewed, how much funding they can expect, and when future grant cycles will occur.
- 8 Continue to invest in wellness for grantee partners.** Grantee partners noted the significant impact of The Solutions Project's willingness to invest in wellness for organizational leadership. This was particularly true given high levels of stress from the pandemic, state-sanctioned violence, and other emotionally charged events during 2020. Moving forward, The Solutions Project should continue to support wellness as a strategy to encourage self-care and minimize burnout among its grantee partners.



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