Fund for Shared Insight Theory of Change 2017 – 2023

Fund for Shared Insight Goal Statement

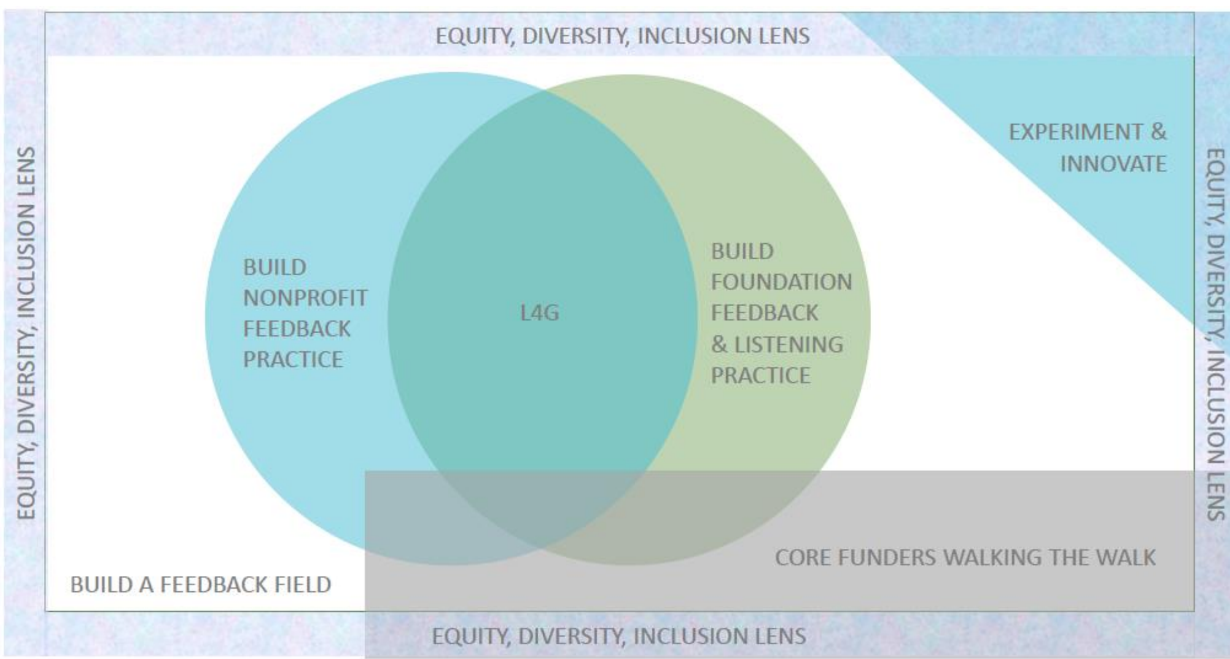
Foundations and nonprofits are meaningfully connected to each other and to the people and communities we seek to help, and more responsive to their input and feedback.

Fund for Shared Insight Impact Statement

The communities and people we seek to help, especially those whose voices are least heard, are better off in ways they define for themselves.

To achieve these goals, Shared Insight is taking a multi-pronged approach across inter-related focus areas using its dollars, influence, communications and convening power to achieve outcomes toward our goal.

Shared Insight Focus Areas



The pages ahead will elaborate our theory/hypothesis; assumptions; what we've learned; how this work reflects our equity, diversity, inclusion lens; and our draft implementation markers for each of these areas of work. But first we want to highlight the two ways in which we approach our work.

How We Do Our Work

There are two ways in which we do our work to achieve our theory of change across all five of the categories:

1. We emphasize the critical importance of building trust between nonprofit organizations and funders in order that feedback can be honestly shared. Shared Insight itself and its core funders will aim to model these relationships with the nonprofits we fund. We may not make grants in this area but we expect to address this issue in our convenings, communications, how we provide technical assistance, and so on.
2. We believe, in a fundamental way, that amplifying the voices of those least heard in and of itself represents important values of equity, diversity, and inclusion in that historically and currently marginalized communities are those who are least heard. And, we as Shared Insight and its core funders, seek to bring a lens of equity, diversity, and inclusion to our work, being mindful and supportive of these concerns. We may not make specific "EDI" grants but expect to address this through our outreach in funding, e.g. to different geographies, as we did in the deep South; cultivating a diverse pool or technical assistance providers and consultants; through how we structure our convenings, communications, and conversations; and how we integrate this lens into all of our planning and ongoing work with the assistance of experts who can advise us on our journey.

For more detailed definitions of "voices least heard", "meaningfully connected", and "more responsive" please see the Appendix.

1. BUILD NONPROFIT FEEDBACK PRACTICE

Theory/Hypothesis

In general, nonprofits want to listen to the people they seek to help, but do not currently have the capacity to listen systematically and on an ongoing basis to the people they seek to help. They need tools, resources, and supports to build capacity for technical and adaptive skills to implement a high-quality feedback loop which we define as designing a survey, collecting feedback, analyzing feedback, responding to feedback, and closing the loop. Shared Insight aims to provide funding and tools and resources to help nonprofits meaningfully connect with the people and communities they seek to help and have conversations with their funders about what they are learning from feedback.

Assumptions

- There is a need for high-quality feedback loops among customer-facing nonprofit organizations in the United States, but we do not assume there is a demand for this. Therefore, we need to build a market for high-quality feedback practice.
- Different kinds of tools are needed by different kinds of nonprofits (e.g. customer-facing, advocacy, international, etc.), some of which may not be about feedback

What We've Learned

- Funding individual organizations to build custom feedback systems is not the best, most efficient use of funds or way to scale nonprofit feedback practice
- We can successfully build the capacity of customer-facing nonprofit organizations to implement high-quality feedback loops through Listen4Good
- Collecting feedback through a simple survey tool can help customer-facing nonprofits make changes in their services and organizations based on feedback from the people they seek to help
- A network of trained feedback coaches can provide high-quality technical assistance to build nonprofits' capacity to implement high-quality feedback loops

How Does This Reflect Our Equity, Diversity, Inclusion lens?

- We conduct outreach to diverse geographic areas, issue areas
- We prioritize nonprofits that listen to and reflect people whose voices are least heard through our grantmaking
- We prioritize outreach to communities and organizations whose voices are least heard
- We recruit for diversity among our L4G feedback coaches
- We are mindful of how our L4G tool can be administered in multiple languages and multiple formats (e.g. paper, online, in-person)
- We use equitable evaluation principles in assessing our work and progress (e.g. we require organizations to look for patterns in their client feedback by key demographic characteristics such as client: gender, race/ethnicity and age.)

Current and Past Activities	Future Activities
Communications about need for nonprofits to build capacity for high-quality feedback loops	Continued communications and marketing of L4G and learnings from feedback
Shared Insight Gatherings (2016, 2018)	2020 Shared Insight Gathering (proposed)*
Co-funded Listen for Good grants	Co-funded Listen for Good grants (January 2020)
Built high-quality interactive online tools	Kauffman Kansas City Cohort (June 2019)
Created curriculum for building organizational capacity for high quality feedback loops	Website-only rounds (June 2019)
	Figure out L4G scaling strategy and implications (by December 2019)
	L4G public launch in June 2020 (into Phase III)

Implementation Markers:

- Execute Listen for Good growth plan
    - 217 co-funded grants 2016 – 2018
    - At least 100 "website only" grants – June 2019
    - Kauffman Kansas City Cohort – June 2019 focused on modified TA program
    - Co-funded round – September 2019 due diligence, start January 2020
    - Figure out L4G scaling strategy – December 2019
    - Public launch in June 2020 (into Phase III)
- Disaggregate data by race and ethnicity (and other variables as appropriate); TA resources explain why disaggregation is important and what to do if data shows equity concerns
- Train 10+ diverse feedback coaches nation wide
- Optimize balance of online support and customized 1:1 coaching through multiple experiments
- Promote more explicit examples of "better practice" including addressing client disparities in experience and outcomes
- Share nonprofit lessons learned at regular intervals
- Development of viable business model for L4G going forward
- Tripwire: Organizations in successive rounds report significantly smaller capacity growth in the first six months.
- Tripwire: Growing numbers of organizations are not making changes based on feedback

Short-Term Outcomes (June 2020):

- Greater participation in L4G with indicators of 200+ nonprofits participating and sustaining high-quality feedback practices.

- Nonprofits self-report average capacity gains of one point on a five-point scale during L4G grant period
- 50% of nonprofits make changes based on feedback by 18 months
- Nonprofits self-report intentions to continue feedback work post L4G grant
- L4G develops sustainable and optimized toolset (online/coaching) to support organizations' feedback practices

Medium-Term Outcomes:

- L4G website supports increasing number of nonprofit users
- 80% of nonprofits report that L4G impacted their program effectiveness by 18 months
- 30% of nonprofits maintain feedback practices (using L4G or other tools) following conclusion of L4G grant

Long-Term Outcomes (June 2023):

- More nonprofits are seeking supports and resources for doing high-quality feedback
- Clusters or ecosystems of feedback loop activity develop across groups of nonprofits in the United States as a result of L4G
- L4G experiences positive growth as a market-based offering for building nonprofit high-quality feedback loops

Outstanding Questions:

- What is the scale approach for L4G?
- Is L4G an ongoing capacity-building initiative? If so, do we need to find it a future home?

2. BUILD FOUNDATION FEEDBACK PRACTICE

Theory/Hypothesis

In general, funders say that listening to the people they seek to help is important, but they do not currently have the capacity to listen systematically and on an ongoing basis to their grantees and the people they seek to help. They need to be encouraged by peers to use existing tools to listen to their grantees and act on what they hear. They need tools, resources, and supports to build capacity for technical and adaptive skills to incorporate high-quality feedback from grantees and the people and communities they seek to help into their work and to inform their own strategies, goals, activities, and grantmaking. Shared Insight, as a peer funder collaborative, can create multiple avenues for funders to access tools and resources, hear about peer examples, and learn from each other.

Assumptions:

- Funders need to have meaningful connections with the nonprofits they fund in order for feedback practices to be effective
- Funders will be most influenced by their peers and by being engaged directly in supporting the work of high-quality feedback loops.
- Engaging foundations as co-funders to make feedback grants to their own grantees may lead them to more behavior change and interest in this topic than funders who are only hearing about it
- Funder behavior change is hard and doesn't happen organically or quickly in our experience and thus requires an array of activities that are targeted at different levels and levers of change
- Funders first need to understand what a high-quality feedback loop is, then be inspired about how feedback loops can be a tool for increasing nonprofit and foundation effectiveness, before they can incorporate feedback into their own work

What We've Learned:

- Funders are influenced by their peers
- Co-funding with Shared Insight through L4G can lead to increased buy-in and support for feedback
- L4G co-funders are making changes to their foundation practice based on feedback
- Closed funder networks can have easier reach and achieve more outcomes in terms of funder behavior change
- Equity, diversity, inclusion is a motivator for this work

How Does This Reflect Our Equity, Diversity, Inclusion lens?

- Foundations that want to be more inclusive and/or move down the path toward incorporating an EDI lens themselves need to have the priority and practice around listening and responding to the people they seek to help whose voices are least heard
- We conduct outreach to foundations in diverse geographic areas, issue areas

- We prioritize partnering with foundations that fund nonprofits that listen to and reflect people whose voices are least heard through our grantmaking
- We prioritize outreach to funders who work in communities and with organizations whose voices are least heard
- We recruit for diversity among our core, sidecar, and L4G funders; in particular prioritizing funders led by people of color

Current and Past Activities	**Future Activities**
Engage Shared Insight core funders in walking the walk (sharing commitments and status at core funder meetings)	Shared Insight core funders publicly share about how they are walking the walk (or struggling to do so)
Core funder lunch and learns	Core funder lunch and learns
Shared Insight Gatherings (2016, 2018)	2020 Shared Insight Gathering (proposed)
Listen for Good co-funder/grantee meetings	Regional gatherings featuring funders, nonprofits, beneficiaries (Irvine 3/28/19, Barr/TBF 7/18/19)
Core funder dinners including CEOs and local sidecar and L4G co-funders	Core funder dinners including CEOs and local sidecar and L4G co-funders
	Co-funded L4G grants as funder engagement strategy with requirements of funders (January 2020)
	Focus on Shared Insight L4G co-funders as community of practice with high-touch peer-to-peer coaching
	Create and curate existing tools and resources for co-funders to use at various stages of feedback loop cycle to engage with nonprofits and reflect on implications for foundation practice (by June 2019)
	Test tools and resources for co-funders on core funders and L4G co-funder friends (by December 2019)
	Engage foundations who have done CEP GPR and/or have GlassPockets as potential new partners in this work
	Fund knowledge project for program officers about feedback practice or meaningfully connecting with the people we seek to help as a funder (e.g. GEO, CEP, NCRP, etc.)
	Commission field-level research on how funders use and perception of feedback for measurement and strategy development (late Phase II or Phase III)

Implementation Markers:

- Growing number of funders attend meetings about feedback (e.g. Shared Insight Gathering, regional gatherings, sessions at philanthropy conferences)
- Core and L4G CEOs attend meetings about feedback (e.g. core funder dinners, core funder lunch and learns, regional feedback gatherings, Shared Insight Gathering)
- Core funders, sidecar funders, Listen for Good co-funders host meetings about feedback (e.g. lunch and learns, regional gatherings)
- Diverse set of 150 L4G funders
- Dedicated (people) resources to implement funder engagement plan
- Engage L4G funders in learning about and sharing what they learn from feedback (e.g. participate in learning community, write about this work, speak about this work)
- Reach new funders through presentations at philanthropy conferences and other gatherings featuring peer funder, nonprofit, beneficiary voice in diverse geographies (target 3-5 conferences in FY2019)
- Create funder engagement strategy targeted first at L4G co-funder community
- Plan CEO convening focused on topic of listening and feedback (could be Larry Kramer or Don Howard co-hosting other CEOs)
- Make the case for feedback/listening to funders that prioritize EDI; make the case for EDI to funders that prioritize feedback/listening
- We are increasingly being asked to present about feedback at philanthropy conferences
- Tripwire: Lack of participation in sessions about feedback at philanthropy conferences

Short-Term Outcomes:

- More program officers within foundations are incorporating feedback into their work
- Growing number (20) Shared Insight funding partners willing to share how they are incorporating feedback into their work, how they are changing, what they are learning
- 50% of Shared Insight funding partners make some change in their internal practices related to feedback (e.g., changing grant reporting templates, doing the GPR, asking/supporting grantees in feedback beyond L4G co-funding)
- 30% of Shared Insight funding partners indicate that L4G has contributed to the changes they've made in their internal practices related to feedback

Medium-Term Outcomes:

- More foundations are funding feedback capacity-building for nonprofits
- More funders are seeking supports and resources for listening and for doing high-quality feedback loops with their grantees and the people and communities they seek to help

Long-Term Outcomes:

- Many foundations can point to specific examples of how feedback has informed their strategies, changed how they operate
- A majority of funders recognize the value of feedback, understand how it complements monitoring and evaluation
- Feedback, along with monitoring and evaluation, is an expected norm in philanthropy

3. BUILD A FEEDBACK FIELD

Theory/Hypothesis

Building individual nonprofit and foundation organizational practices around high-quality feedback loops will not be enough to sustain broad scale practice change. Additional supports and infrastructure will be required to make this a regular way of doing business throughout the sector.

Assumptions

- A field is composed of five components:
  1) shared identity
  2) standards of practice
  3) knowledge base
  4) leadership and grassroots support, and
  5) funding and supporting policy[1]
- We need feedback to be enough of its own "thing" to be able to get the attention it needs to become a regular practice
- There is not enough research about why feedback is "the smart thing to do"
- Research by itself is necessary but not sufficient and it is unclear how important that research will be to influence nonprofit and foundation behavior.
- The existing feedback infrastructure is insufficient to support the mainstream practice adoption we want to see happen with funders and nonprofits

What We've Learned:

- The feedback field is nascent but may be at a transition point away from making the case to building up more tools, resources and supports for practice.
- In general, the field is strongest around shared identity and agreement on values and goals
- In general, the field is less strong related to standards of practice, knowledge base, and funding.
- The feedback field is currently fairly defined and confined to a few key actors.

How Does This Reflect Our Equity, Diversity, Inclusion lens?

- We are thoughtful about who is involved in developing the standards of practice
- We seek to have our feedback research reflect different points of view and different research teams that bring diversity to the table
- We prioritize investing in more diverse organizations to lead the growth of infrastructure in this field (e.g. instead of just focusing on the typical white-male-led organizational capacity building organizations or measurement & evaluation consulting firms)

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[1] The Strong Field Framework: A Guide and Toolkit for Funders and Nonprofits Committed to Large-Scale Impact. The Bridgespan Group. June 2009. The James Irvine Foundation.

Current and Past Activities	Future Activities
Grants to feedback infrastructure organizations (e.g. Feedback Labs, YouthTruth)	TBD
Grants to fund feedback research (e.g. REDF, IPA)	Additional feedback research grants to explore the relationship between feedback and outcomes
Shared Insight Gatherings (2016, 2018)	2020 Shared Insight Gathering (proposed)
Train diverse set of technical assistance providers nationwide	Continue training diverse feedback coaches nationwide
	Do comprehensive analysis of L4G dataset including disaggregating of L4G data by race/ethnicity and other variables
	Engage GuideStar to include feedback as part of core capabilities of nonprofit organizations
	Hold regional gatherings of funders, nonprofits, featuring beneficiaries
	Communications about feedback as standard practice (e.g. three-legged stool of measurement)
	Communications to build feedback knowledge base (e.g. case studies, videos, teaching notes, amplify research findings)
	Create tools and templates that are publicly available for nonprofits and funders to implement high-quality feedback loops

Implementation Markers:

- Develop online technical assistance resources through interactive Listen for Good site
- Train 10+ feedback coaches nationwide
- Increased “airtime” about feedback in philanthropic media and conferences
- Increased “airtime” about feedback in nonprofit media and conferences
- Feedback and three-legged stool of measurement taught in leading academic centers
- Launch Listen for Good public in 2020
- Define what “critical mass” means for our long-term outcome goal of reaching nonprofits
- Define what “critical mass” means for our long-term outcome goal of reaching foundations

Short-Term Outcomes:

- Maintain/increase degree to which the US feedback field has a shared identity (i.e., definitions, value for, goals for field)

- The network of stakeholders working on US feedback practice grows (more/more diverse participants in convenings, workgroups, etc.)
- Standards of practice articulated and adopted by key actors
- Key field documents reflect an explicit connection to/focus on equity

Medium-Term Outcomes:

- Standards of practice are more widely disseminated/understood/accepted
- More tools and resources aligned with standards or practice are created and disseminated that reflect EDI considerations and promote high-quality practice
- Knowledge base around the connection of feedback and outcomes is expanded
- Research is easier to find?
- Key stakeholders more broadly reflect the constituents who provide feedback/more diversity among key stakeholders

Long-Term Outcomes:

- The US feedback field is increasingly “mature” (either fully in the “networking” stage or moving to “maturation”)
- L4G exists as a sustainable part of the nonprofit infrastructure
- L4G has a permanent “home”
- Field-building funding has expanded beyond Shared Insight partners
- The “market” for feedback among foundations and nonprofits has expanded to a critical mass
- There is a constellation of players that are capable of taking on this work and moving it forward

4. EXPERIMENT AND INNOVATE

Theory/Hypothesis

Feedback loops implemented through L4G are one powerful way for foundations and nonprofits to listen. However, L4G for U.S.-based direct service nonprofits is not the only way that foundations and nonprofits can meaningfully connect with each other and the people and communities we seek to help. Non-direct service organizations are interested in listening. International organizations are interested in listening. We are interested in exploring other ways to listen and meaningfully connect.

Assumptions

- The core funders are interested in being emergent and want to explore and experiment with other ways to help foundations and nonprofits meaningfully connect with each other and the people and communities they seek to help
- We will benefit from having a "R&D" area for our work to test new ideas and ways of listening to those whose voices are least heard

What We've Learned

- There is growing interest among foundations around listening to the people and communities they serve
- There is growing interest from international funders about incorporating listening into their work
- In the advocacy/policy space, there are opportunities for funders to build the capacity of nonprofits to meaningfully connect with the people and communities they seek to serve through policy and advocacy which are not about feedback loops
- In the advocacy/policy space, there are opportunities for funders to more meaningfully connect with people and communities which are not about feedback loops

Criteria for activities to be considered in this category

- Work that is related but doesn't fit into current TOC
- Right-sized investments (no more than 15% of available grantmaking dollars and human resources are devoted toward all experiments and innovations in this category on an annual basis)
- Goal or pursuing activity would be to learn if it's something that should become part of the core work going forward
- Core funders should consider walking the walk on this activity
- Pilots by nature, small levels of investment to help us determine future strategies
- Time-limited by nature in experimentation (shorter timeframe)
- Core funders or staff are excited about it (not the key thing in the criteria) OR could be we pursue an open RFP about other ways of listening
- Consistent with our EDI lens – part of it is about access and power and decision-making

How does this reflect our equity, diversity, inclusion lens?

- It is imperative that the other ways of listening we pursue should focus on helping diverse organizations listen to the voices least heard
- All ways of listening should increase client/beneficiary power

Current and Past Activities	Possible Future Activities
Advocacy/policy scan by Aspen Institute	Facilitate convenings around advocacy/policy paper findings and implications
	Pursue grantmaking pilot for advocacy organizations
	Pursue international L4G pilot in Asia in partnership with Asian Venture Philanthropy Network (Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia)
	Pursue international L4G pilot in Africa with Tostan in Dakar, Senegal
	Pursue international L4G pilot in Latin America with Tinker Foundation (Caroline Kronley)
	Engage Einhorn in how they incorporate voice into their future strategy
	Explore participatory grantmaking (Phase III)

Implementation Markers:

- Apply a power analysis to the triangle of clients/beneficiaries, nonprofits, funders; if this work is done well, beneficiary power will increase and they will hold nonprofits more accountable, in turn nonprofit power will increase and they will hold funders accountable in new ways, and funders must be prepared for this as a signal of success (even if it doesn't feel good!)
- Explore funding in one new area by 2020
- Tripwire: If core funders who recommend a pilot project do not commit to adopting the practice from the pilot, then it is not something we will pursue

Short-Term Outcomes:

- Shared Insight has new knowledge/greater clarity about potential expansions areas of work/makes go-no go decisions about other work ideas

Medium-Term Outcomes:

- Shared Insight refines its theory of change based on lessons learned from more exploratory work
- Philanthropic field learns from experiments/others take on potential expansions based on lessons learned

5. CORE FUNDERS WALK THE WALK

Theory/Hypothesis

If we can't get our highly engaged core funders to make changes in their institutions it's hard to imagine making philanthropic change at scale. We are talking about two things in walking the walk:

1) how our funder collaborative works to reflect our values and theory of change,
2) how individual funders live up to their commitments to have their individual institutions reflect the values and activities in our theory of change.

Assumptions

- The Shared Insight collaborative of funders is highly influential as a group
- The core funders are highly influential on an individual basis
- A funder collaborative often has freedom to do things more freely and flexible
- We should not be hypocrites
- We will be more successful by engaging in the work of changing ourselves before/as we ask others to change; this may help inform the work in a powerful way

What We've Learned

- L4G co-funders are drawn to participate in co-funding feedback because of the opportunity to partner with national, high-profile Shared Insight funders
- L4G co-funders say other funders will listen to them because of their affiliation with the Shared Insight funder group
- Sidecar funders typically get involved with funding Shared Insight because of personal relationships with core funders

How Does This Reflect Our Equity, Diversity, Inclusion lens?

- As a funder collaborative, we do all the things in our EDI memo
- We give each funder space to elevate EDI commitments and a safe space to monitor those in a peer context in the core funder meetings

Current and Past Activities	Future Activities
Individual funder commitments around feedback and EDI	Think about the role Gita might play in building the capacity of funders around the table
Commitment to bringing a lens of EDI to our Shared Insight work	Gita will coach Melinda about EDI and how to incorporate it into all areas of Shared Insight's work
Identifying places in our theory of change where our EDI lens shows up	Track our progress against our theory of change in these areas where EDI shows up
Engage Shared Insight core funders in walking the walk (sharing commitments and status at core funder meetings)	Shared Insight core funders share commitments and status and ideally

	movement on those commitments at core funder meetings*
Engage Shared Insight core funders in walking the walk	Shared Insight core funders publicly share about how they are walking the walk (or struggling to do so)*
Core funder lunch and learns	Core funder lunch and learns*
Listen for Good co-funder/grantee meetings	Regional gatherings featuring funders, nonprofits, beneficiaries (Irvine 3/28/19, Barr/TBF 7/18/19)*
Core funder dinners including CEOs and local sidecar and L4G co-funders	Core funder dinners including CEOs and local sidecar and L4G co-funders*

***These activities also appear in the Build Foundation Feedback and Listening Practice section**

Implementation Markers:

- Core funders have ongoing conversations at core funder meetings about our commitments related to the theory of change and how to turn the lens inward, while acknowledging the diversity of core funders as institutions (e.g. EDI might look different for each, each has a different capacity to participate in L4G)
- Core funders share publicly about how they are walking the walk (or struggling to do so)
- Core funder lunch and learns
- Core funders reflect on how Shared Insight and individual core funders' practices promote trusting relationships with nonprofits
- Core funders reflect on how Shared Insight and individual core funders' practices promote meaningful connection with the people and communities we seek to help
- Shared Insight approaches lines of work with an EDI focus; we do the racial equity analysis for our own bodies of work
- Examine our own histories and how race affects our work
- Examine and discuss history of racism and genocide in geographies where we are holding meetings
- Learn from our grantees on EDI
- Don't ask anything from our grantees that we don't do ourselves
- Disaggregate our own data (e.g. look at our GPR data, who we fund, etc.)
- Learn from other funders

Short-Term Outcomes:

- Shared Insight: Shared Insight staff and consultants build race equity competency; Shared Insight materials, products, processes and staffing reflect greater commitment to race equity.
- Core Funders: Core funders increasingly share about and engage in practices related to feedback in their own work; more core funders speak, present, write and otherwise influence their peers in this work.

Medium-Term Outcomes:

- Shared Insight: Shared Insight practices increasingly grow in unconscious competence.
- Core Funders: Core funders increase their personal and organizational commitment toward Shared Insight priorities.
- Others: Other funders and influencers in the sector know about Shared Insight's lessons learned and journey; Other funders are increasingly open to/interested in feedback.

Long-Term Outcomes:

- Shared Insight: Shared Insight influences other funders and funder collaboratives in modeling and living equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Core Funders: Core funders adopt more practices that align with Shared Insight priorities.
- Others: Greater uptake among funders of Shared Insight priorities.

APPENDIX

Definition of “the voices least heard”

Since our founding, Fund for Shared Insight has focused on listening to the voices least heard in order to improve nonprofit and philanthropic practice and, ultimately, improve lives and communities. The phrase "voices least heard" has dual meaning for us. First, it refers to people whom nonprofits and foundations seek to help, such as families accessing food pantries or free clinics, youth attending afterschool enrichment programs, residents living in public housing, recent immigrants using legal-aid services, or individuals participating in job-training programs. This definition typically excludes intermediaries, such as teachers, volunteers, social entrepreneurs, or others who might help manage, shape, run, or deliver nonprofit programs and services.

Secondly, “voices least heard” refers to people who are the least heard in our broader society due to historic inequality and enduring structural barriers. While nonprofits and foundations should listen to all participants and intended beneficiaries, Shared Insight further prioritizes marginalized groups. This definition includes people of color, people with disabilities, LGBTQ people, people living in poverty, and, depending on the context, others, such as people in rural communities, where structural conditions have isolated or excluded their voice. We understand that these definitions are complex and evolving, and that our thinking will continue to evolve in service to our overarching goal of better listening as a vehicle to positive and just social change.

It is important to note that:

1) We do direct grantmaking that prioritizes the voices least heard because this is an underinvested area in our sector
2) At the same time, we are building tools that will benefit the broader sector – to encourage feedback across stakeholder groups and make feedback a natural part of what we all do (leveraging our more limited/targeted investment in Listen for Good)

Definition of “meaningfully connected”

"Meaningfully connected" could mean things such as: increased understanding of people's and communities' needs, ideas, and preferences; increased trust with community members and our nonprofit partners who are often in and close to community; increased sensitivity to what matters to people and community; and increased awareness of power dynamics and making efforts to transform them.

Definition of “more responsive”

"More responsive" is about changing behaviors. It could mean funders are funding the issues and needs that surface through community input and feedback; including and considering those perspectives in their strategic thinking; or refining their approach to grantmaking. For nonprofit organizations, “more responsive” could mean changing how programs and services are delivered to address feedback received from the people they serve.