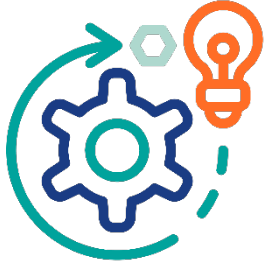


# OUR VISION IN ACTION: BLACK LED POWER BUILDING

## KEY TAKEAWAYS



- Flexible and multi-year funding is fundamental to creating long-term impact for Black-led organizations.
- It is key to support ongoing work versus new initiatives because there is great insight and understanding in work already in progress that is led by people who are deeply experienced and committed to this work.
- Black liberation is good for everyone.
- An intersectional lens that prioritizes Black-led groups that serve women, queer, and trans folks is essential.
- Philanthropy should not rely on Black and POC grantees to educate them, but instead pay Black experts who do this work explicitly to get them up to speed.

## BLACK LED POWER BUILDING OVERVIEW

Grove's Board allows staff the flexibility to adapt grantmaking strategies, and invest collaboratively in developing and/or new programs, across its overarching programmatic areas. All of our programs have living strategies that can make slight shifts in regional focus, partners, and issues areas when there is a need. In early 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Grove Boardmember Eva Grove made an additional financial contribution to the Foundation. Together, board and staff decided to allot an equal amount for each program area and the remaining amount would be used for flexible or discretionary funding.



In June 2020, after the murder of George Floyd and the onset of the racial reckoning, Grove staff decided to reallocate the foundation-flexible money specifically to Black-led organizations working on power building, civic engagement, or that had a specific focus on ending state violence. The Civic Engagement program officer identified overlapping connections to Black power building efforts, and contributed funds from her budget to bolster support. She also made deeper in existing grantees that were Black-led in the organizing space.

## GRANTMAKING STRATEGY

Grants would be given to organizations that have the following four qualities:

Once the Board approved guidelines and the source of funds, a committee of staff members were allowed to make specific grant decisions. This new funding strategy allowed us to offer much needed long-term, general operating support and the opportunity to be responsive and nimble to grantees' more urgent needs.

- 1 BLACK LEADERSHIP, PRIORITIZING LEADERSHIP BY WOMEN AND LGBTQ LEADERS WHEN POSSIBLE**
- 2 POSSESS SHARED VALUES WITH THE GROVE FOUNDATION.**
- 3 FOCUS ON POWER BUILDING AND SUPPORT GROUPS THAT ARE ON THE GROUND, TRYING TO SHIFT POWER (THROUGH ADVOCACY AND ORGANIZING AND LOCAL WORK), RATHER THAN DOING DIRECT SERVICE**
- 4 HAVE ONGOING AND ROBUST PROGRAMS ALREADY DEDICATED FOR THESE PURPOSES**

We relied on equity-minded funders/intermediaries like Borealis, Groundswell, State Infrastructure Fund, and Hill-Snowdon to vet grantees already doing Black power building work. This strategy allowed existing grantees to skip formal proposals and receive funding more quickly. We funded in places that have a rich history of strong movement infrastructure and organizing around issues like environmental and racial justice. Greater Birmingham Ministries (GBM) and Women Engaged (WE) are just two of the organizations we funded.

**Greater Birmingham Ministries (GBM)** has a long history of working across faiths, economic backgrounds, and races in Alabama. Founded in 1969, GBM is a multi-faith and multi-racial organization. GBM works across issue areas and directs its efforts on community-driven solutions, such as voter restoration, combating voter suppression, food security and access, workers' rights, immigration, and health care. They have incubated more than 20 organizations including state-wide networks, shelters, and advocacy organizations (ex. Alabama Arise, Partnership Assistance to the Homeless (PATH), Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice).



**Women Engaged (WE)** was founded in Atlanta in 2014 by feminist researcher and human rights leader Malika Redmond and public relations expert and art activist Margaret Kargbo. WE works across some of our core issue areas at Grove - voter engagement, women's rights, and youth leadership development. WE played a key role in outreach and turnout during the 2022 midterms. Their mission is to support the power-building of Black women and young adults creating a world where compassionate, fact-based, equity-centered approaches are used to develop and implement public policy and actualize social transformation. In addition to engaging potential voters as young as seventeen and a half, the organization also promotes women's human rights.

## TRUSTING BLACK LED ORGANIZATIONS



The South is where social change begins and has a deep history of effective organizing. We believe that it is key to support ongoing work versus new initiatives because there is great insight and understanding in work already in progress that is led by people who are deeply experienced and committed to this work. And we know that flexible and multi-year funding is fundamental to creating long-term impact. To be a supportive funder requires an understanding that Black liberation is good for everyone. Having an intersectional lens that prioritizes Black-led groups that serve women, queer, and trans folks is essential.

Many Black-led organizations have been doing the work for years, long before 2020, often with little investment. We believe in building trust with our grantees so that we're able to be nimble in our support. For example, we were able to provide funding for Power Coalition in Louisiana after Hurricane Ida hit in 2021 due to our already established and strong relationship. And after the Jackson Water Crisis in Mississippi, Grove committed funding to [People's Advocacy Institute](#) to get community members essentials like water and diapers.

At our core, we understand that "change" cannot be achieved when anchored to a specific period or restricted funds. As a trust-based funder, Grove is committed to flexible and consistent funding for grantees to make the greatest impact by minimizing red tape and providing tailored support. The Grove is investing in emerging leaders and movements by uplifting local, state, regional and national expertise to create long-lasting change by addressing social justice challenges.