



# Nonprofit-Funder Dialogue Series

## Getting Resources to Nonprofits Led by People of Color

### About the Project

How might community impact look different when partners come to the table as equals to co-create solutions for social challenges? What transformative opportunities are possible when partners demonstrate transparency and vulnerability to break down barriers?

We believe that real social change requires nonprofit organizations and foundations to develop deeper, more trusting relationships. While the inherent power dynamics are always a challenge, we believe that the way forward is to focus on shared goals and challenges in a space where candid — even if uncomfortable — conversation is supported. Participants referred to this as a “brave space.” To this end, the Nonprofit-Funder Dialogue Series was designed to build trust and to challenge traditional roles and power dynamics between funders and regional nonprofit leaders.

The Dialogue Series was a collaboration between the Dorothy A. Johnson Center at Grand Valley State University and Co.act Detroit, with facilitation provided by The Eureka Group.

### Shared Recommendations

- Funders should assess who they are NOT funding.
- Funders should practice proactive philanthropy.
- Better align foundation goals with community needs.
- Funders need to hear, and nonprofits need to share, the whole story about the organization.
- Work to educate foundation staff, trustees, and donors about systemic challenges and power dynamics, and share successful strategies.
- Streamline application and reporting and provide more general operating support and multi-year funding.
- Build opportunities for grantees to cooperate rather than compete.
- Support rest.