



*Community-Developed Principles
for Black Equity.*

A Guide for Pursuing **Black Equity & Racial Justice** in *Philanthropic Initiatives and Government Systems*

Research, empirical data and anecdotal evidence are clear: *racial injustice* continues to serve as a destructive force in society, undermining our democratic values of liberty, justice and self-determination for all.

Progress on Black equity and racial justice must be part of any forward movement in the United States, and will only be achieved when philanthropic investments, public policies, and institutional practices boldly confront racial injustice.

These Black equity principles, which are grounded in the essence of Black joy, community and resilience, were co-created by the Black Equity Initiative grantee organizations to serve as a guide and call to action for any funder or government body seeking to disrupt racial injustice at scale.

TRUTH

Liberation begins with acknowledgement and honesty about the need to equitably shift the power relationship between black and white populations. This includes recognition of:

- ▶ Los Angeles, and indeed, the nation, have historical legacies rooted in institutional and systemic racism, both explicit and implicit, in intention and implementation.
- ▶ The lived experiences of oppressed people are real, serving as part of our collective consciousness and hard evidence of systemic harm.
- ▶ Political apathy and political neglect have created the socio-economic and socio-political conditions that perpetuate inadequate power dynamics.
- ▶ Current policies and practices within systems, including philanthropic institutions, have either severely limited or outright failed to advance the interests of Black people.
- ▶ The greatest gains in advancing a fully inclusive society have come from the success of community-led approaches to dismantling racism and oppression.
- ▶ We need to fundamentally re-imagine Southern California to be a region fully inclusive of Black people and Black communities.

STRENGTH

For success to be sustained, the infrastructure for success must be strong. The history of institutional dis-investment in Black people must be undone if we are to pursue progress toward true equity at scale. This requires intentional public and philanthropic investment that supports:

- ▶ Building community and institutional infrastructure that builds power through people, money and policy.
- ▶ Developing individuals as leaders, capable of occupying seats at decision-making tables.
- ▶ Developing organizations as institutions situated within an eco-system of networks and partners.
- ▶ Harnessing community assets — the Quantum, or infinite, Intelligence that exists within individuals and becomes multiplied within the collective (social, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, political and cultural wisdom).

STRATEGIC DISRUPTION

Pursuit of Black equity is not for the shy or faint-of-heart. It requires taking immediate bold action, stepping outside of familiar and traditional comfort zones, and committing to the long haul through the ebbs and flows of change. Funders and system changers who pursue Black equity recognize the struggle is:

- ▶ Simultaneously urgent and timeless. Disrupting systemic oppression cannot wait. Its calcification in our democratic and economic systems is deeply entrenched and must be ubiquitously dismantled. Anti-Black racism is not a “funding trend”.
- ▶ Large in scale. Resources should match the significance of the cause. Ongoing investment is required and should be sustained until we see the full eradication of indignity.
- ▶ Rooted in liberation and the full restoration of human dignity for all.
- ▶ Grounded in legacy, one that is intergenerational and community-sustaining.
- ▶ Intentionally uncomfortable and personally challenging to those who benefit from white privilege. The goal of strategic disruption is not to reform systems, but to transform them.

LOVE

Black equity must be grounded in love — honoring the inextricability of our shared humanity. Love in the pursuit of Black equity includes:

- ▶ Acknowledging that relationships are based in trust, cultivated by mutual respect and sustained through time.
- ▶ Facilitating avenues by which people can pursue self-and-community care.
- ▶ Healing that transforms the conditions of mind, body and soul within people and communities; and invites consciousness of self and society.
- ▶ Preserving the richness of Black culture and honoring the history of Black people as pioneers of consciousness, culture and social justice for all people.

The Principles for Black Equity were developed by the Black Equity Initiative grantees over a 12-month period. The following organizations co-created this framework (in alphabetical order): A New Way of Life Re-Entry Project, Anti-Recidivism Coalition, Black Women for Wellness, BLU Educational Foundation, The Brotherhood Crusade, Centinela Youth Services, Collective REMAKE, Community Coalition, Congregations Organized for Prophetic Engagement (COPE), LA Black Worker Center, LA Community Action Network, Leaders Up, Special Needs Network, St. Joseph Center (year 1), Strategic Concepts in Organizing Policy and Education (SCOPE), Youth Action Project, and Youth Justice Coalition (year 1).

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