

BRIDGING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY THROUGH OPEN DATA



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Social Entrepreneurship Initiative

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INTRODUCTION

The Inclusive Social Entrepreneurship Initiative



The Citi Foundation works to promote economic progress and improve the lives of people in low-income communities around the world. As part of these long-term efforts, they have partnered with Echoing Green since 2018 to support leaders of color and leaders who represent communities of color, emphasizing those who are creating employment opportunities for young men and women of color across the United States.

Echoing Green and the Citi Foundation know that talent is equally distributed, but opportunity is not. We've seen this challenge play out in the philanthropic and investing fields, particularly as it relates to inequitable access to sustainable and unrestricted funding for leaders of color. This is a problem we are committed to addressing through the Inclusive Social Entrepreneurship Initiative.

The Initiative, anchored and funded by Citi Foundation, harnesses Citi employee volunteers, Echoing Green's network of social entrepreneurs, and leaders from dozens of corporations, foundations, and organizations committed to advancing equity in the social entrepreneurship field.

Since 2018, Citi Foundation has directly invested \$2.5 million in emerging leaders of color; leveraged nearly 350 Citi employee volunteers and more than 3,000 hours to provide technical support

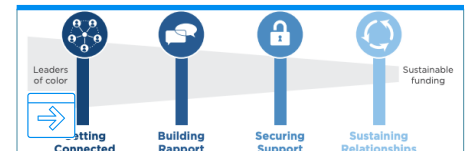
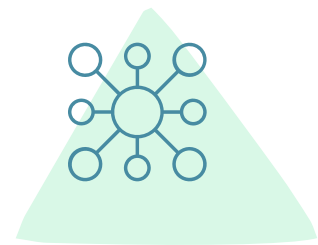
to these leaders; and helped convene nearly 300 stakeholders to share insights and learnings on building a supportive ecosystem for leaders and communities of color. By providing technical advising, sharing insights on the barriers and opportunities encountered by entrepreneurs of color in the U.S., and convening key partners to address inclusion in the social entrepreneurship field, the Initiative will create more in-roads for social entrepreneurs of color and innovative solutions impacting communities and young people of color across the U.S.

Data as a Gateway to Inclusive Entrepreneurship

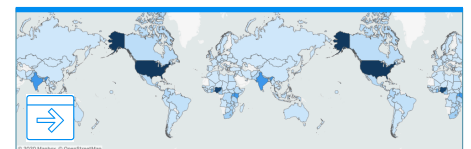
After more than 30 years of accelerating social entrepreneurs working at the intersection of social justice and social innovation, Echoing Green knows that support at the very earliest stage is crucial, especially for leaders of color.

There are several systemic barriers preventing entrepreneurs of color from growing their organizations, which Echoing Green outlined in its recent report with The Bridgespan Group, [Racial Equity and Philanthropy: Disparities in Funding for Leaders of Color Leave Impact on the Table](#) ➔. To shed light on the significance of race when it comes to how philanthropists identify leaders and find solutions, the report includes figures from the [Echoing Green State of Social Entrepreneurship](#) ➔, an annual report on Fellowship applicants' demographics, programmatic work, and funding.

This data found disparities among Black and white entrepreneurs repeatedly persisted even when controlling for factors like issue area and education levels. For example, among organizations focusing on the same work, the revenues of the Black-led organizations were 45 percent smaller than those of the white-led organizations, and the unrestricted net assets of the Black-led organizations were 91 percent smaller than the white-led organizations.



Racial Equity and Philanthropy: Disparities in Funding for Leaders of Color Leave Impact on the Table
<https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/library/philanthropy/disparities-non-profit-funding-for-leaders-of-color>



Echoing Green | State of Social Entrepreneurship 2020
<https://echoinggreen.org/news/state-of-social-entrepreneurship-2020/>

Findings like these help illustrate societal problems and can be used as a tool to accelerate social innovation. However, this type of open data is difficult to find, and the opaque, or nonexistent, processes involving open data across the public and social sectors directly affect innovators of color trying to get their organizations off the ground.

We know that proximate leaders are best equipped to implement solutions in their own communities. However, the barriers to finding, accessing, collecting, and sharing data on the populations social entrepreneurs of color are serving expose systemic inequities. This information helps leaders understand, resource, and fix the problems affecting community members. Without any full data sets or up-to-date numbers on policing, housing, employment, entrepreneurship, health care, and education, social entrepreneurs are having to put their advocacy and programmatic work aside in order to conduct this necessary research. Not only is this process a drain on time and resources, it also reinforces inequities around access to capital.

There is an added challenge of even getting the funds needed to support these efforts due to an underinvestment in research around underrepresented communities. While Echoing Green's findings on racial inequities in funding and [Citi Foundation's research](#) ⇨ on low- to moderate-income communities, communities of color, and underserved people have illustrated critical insights, we can't support this work alone. Although many other financial services companies, philanthropic organizations, and intermediaries have also made tremendous progress in data and research sharing to accelerate entrepreneurs, the work is far from done. An intentional shift in the funding and philanthropic space is needed when significant gaps remain around research on sectors, geographies, legislation, employment, and populations. Further investments in this kind of data will help leaders of color secure capital faster; focus on establishing and testing their organizations; push for public policies; and, ultimately, implement solutions to better their communities. Funding



Citi Foundation | Knowledge Center
<https://www.citigroup.com/citi/foundation/knowledge-center/reports-and-resources.htm>

programmatic initiatives that truly lead to equity means funding research and data sharing.

This report spotlights three social entrepreneurs, the challenges they have faced in collecting research and insights, and the opportunities they foresee in leveraging data as a means toward social justice.

Our goal is to call on funders to address and examine their own mindsets, processes, and decision-making around open data, while centering the expertise and perspectives of proximate leaders of color to ensure these leaders can efficiently implement the solutions their communities want and need.

THE EFFECTS OF BARRIERS TO DATA ON PROXIMATE LEADERS OF COLOR

To highlight the challenges and solutions around open data, we collected insights from three social entrepreneurs headquartered in the Bay Area, California; Washington, DC; and Miami, Florida to share their experiences in finding, accessing, collecting, and sharing the data they need to move their social enterprises forward. Their perspectives tie back to the challenges we see in the philanthropic and investing fields around access to capital for leaders of color. The difficulties of navigating data across the social sector directly correlate with access to funding, creating a persistent cycle of inequity. While the challenges outlined are clear, these leaders surfaced concrete and hopeful solutions toward a just system for all.



BRANDON ANDERSON AND RAHEEM

Brandon D. Anderson founded Raheem to end police terror against Black people by making police behavior more visible and accountable. After losing his life partner to police violence during a routine traffic stop, Anderson discovered the officer had a long history of being physically abusive, particularly during traffic stops. Still, no one had ever reported the officer. According to Anderson, the process of reporting police is unnecessarily difficult and often intimidating. Raheem serves as the independent online service for reporting police in the United States, and its mobile tools deliver communities

Echoing Green Fellows |

Brandon Anderson

[https://fellows.echoinggreen.org/
brandon-anderson/](https://fellows.echoinggreen.org/brandon-anderson/)

Raheem

<https://raheem.org/>

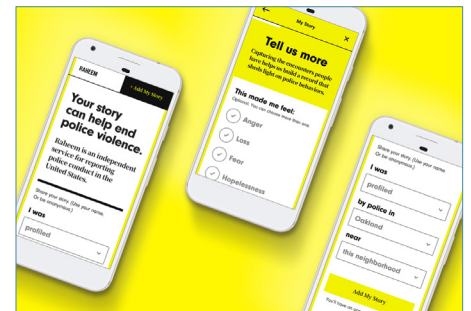


a secure, anonymous, and easy way to report police in real-time. A lack of clear, actionable data plays a major role in enabling police violence. Additionally, there is no national mandate for police departments across the U.S. to share data, so officers with violent records are able to transfer to other departments and states without a cumulative record on file. As a national organization, Raheem is closing this gap. They have helped thousands of people report police in over 200 U.S. cities and tied more than 275 officers to cases of police misconduct. Reports about police from communities help Raheem advance policies that reflect the lived experiences of people, shrink the role of the police, and invest in Black people.

Using Police Data to Address Community Needs

When people report police violence, Raheem connects the reporter to a free lawyer, files a complaint against the officer, and unites the reporter with a local advocacy organization—helping move the reporter from a victim of police violence to an advocate for abolition. In the U.S., reporting on police activity comes with barriers. There are 18,000 police departments in the country, each with its own process of reporting police misconduct. Most precincts require in-person reporting during business hours. As a result, 95 percent of people do not report police violence, and oversight boards miss the opportunity to have these experiences shape their policy agenda. With only 5 percent of community members currently reporting their interactions with officers, this gap in data has implications on education, mental health care, housing, transportation, and more.

According to Anderson, barriers to reporting police activities like unwarranted ticketing, violence, profiling, and harassment lead to the most vulnerable people, including Black people, trans people, people with disabilities, and people experiencing homelessness, being left out of community policies. Raheem classifies its reports into four categories: physical abuse, economic exploitation, patterns



Raheem's messaging and user interface.



of neglect, and psychological and verbal abuse. Specifically, Anderson sees incidents pertaining to people without shelter, domestic disputes, student disciplinary issues, and public transportation payment.

Brandon Anderson discusses Raheem on the TED stage.

Centering Policies Around People

If Raheem had full 100 percent usage across the U.S., every encounter with police officers would be reported to Raheem regardless of outcome. This would help build a robust, searchable national database of police conduct that could be leveraged by policymakers to address the root causes of community issues. Policies would be shaped by the experiences of the 95 percent of people whose stories never get heard. Communities could help build these policies in a way that would shrink the many roles police officers play, and use that funding to support professionals who are better equipped to respond to the majority of emergencies.

For example, those experiencing mental or physical disabilities make up a bulk of the emergency calls made in the U.S. Police officers have historically been sent to address these situations, but data

shows major insufficiencies in this process. In 2015, the Treatment Advocacy Center released a report⁽¹⁾, which found that those with mental illness are 16 times more likely to be killed by law enforcement. In 2016, the Ruderman Family Foundation released its own report⁽²⁾, which similarly found that one-third to half of the people killed by police in the U.S. between 2013 to 2015 had mental or physical disabilities. According to Anderson, this data, along with Raheem's reports, point to a need for policy changes around first responders. For example, to truly help people experiencing an episode related to their mental illness, policies could be re-written to re-route emergency calls and dispatch medical professionals with the expertise to care for those with health crises rather than sending police officers, which often escalates these situations.

Addressing mental health is just one way Raheem hopes to leverage police data to solve the root causes of community emergencies and shape policies around adequate data. By exposing the real needs of communities through policing data, Anderson hopes this will lead to policy changes that reallocate funding toward quality affordable housing; counselors and therapists in schools; fixing transit infrastructure or providing free transportation; developing concrete teams of social workers who know how to work with domestic violence disputes; and building mobile rapid response teams to specifically help those in need of mental health care.

Data on Supporting Black Social Entrepreneurs

While Anderson has received funding and publicity for his work with Raheem, he has experienced obstacles fulfilling the requirements needed to secure and maintain funding while simultaneously building out Raheem's team and product. If funders took the time to analyze existing data on emerging social entrepreneurs—or collect and report on their own—they would have a better understanding of



Brandon Anderson detailed Raheem's forthcoming study of public opinion towards the police on Medium.

<https://link.medium.com/hXkxTGCPg9>

how funders and founders can mutually support each other, Anderson said.

Many foundations do not fund social entrepreneurs until they reach a particular stage or have a proven track record, which is often defined by the funder. Even if Black leaders do have a track record, they still experience

disparities in funding⁽³⁾. When Black founders face historical barriers to capital from the very beginning as a result of bias, lack of trust, and power dynamics, it is difficult for these leaders to even get to the stage when most foundations are ready to fund them. According to Anderson, research from funders, along with conversations and space for feedback, would lead to more empathy-based relationships.

“As a Black founder, I spend so much time with foundations asking me the most and asking themselves nothing,” he said. “Foundations need to have a willingness to cultivate relationships, learn, and provide space for feedback.” Considering power dynamics and wealth inequality, there needs to be a consistent and early strategy toward healing and justice for Black people when funders are working to earn the founder’s trust, Anderson said. Instead of extractive reporting processes that primarily function for funders to collect what they need for their institutional check lists, he recommends trust-based relationships that include monthly or quarterly check-ins that provide space for the social entrepreneurs to share concerns they may have. Collecting this type of data would lead to co-creating healthier, more dynamic, and solutions-oriented funder and grantee relationships across the sector.

“If funders took the time to analyze existing data... or collect and report on their own—they would have a better understanding of how we can mutually support each other.”

INSIGHT:

Funders can play an active role in securing open data.

CARLOS MARK VERA AND PAY OUR INTERNS

Pay Our Interns is the only bipartisan, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that advocates for an increase in the amount of paid internships within the U.S. government, for-profit, and nonprofit sectors. As a formerly unpaid intern in the White House and Congress, Vera co-founded Pay Our Interns after bonding about the struggle of interning for free with his co-founder, Guillermo Creamer Jr. They realized the issue of unpaid internships directly correlates with another major disparity: the underrepresentation of leaders of color within the U.S. government and other major sectors.

Echoing Green Fellows |
Carlos Mark Vera

[https://fellows.echoinggreen.org/
carlos-mark-vera/](https://fellows.echoinggreen.org/carlos-mark-vera/)

Pay Our Interns

<https://payourinterns.org/>



Most congress members start their political careers with an internship. These invaluable experiences are critical for professional growth; however, an internship in most major cities costs upwards of \$6,000⁽⁴⁾, according to a breakdown of out-of-state internship costs. As a result, the majority of individuals able to work Congressional internships either come from families of higher economic status or suffer significant financial pressure, according to Pay Our Interns. Vera believes that paid government internships will lead to electing politicians who are more reflective of their communities, which will result in better, more representative policies. To further this work, he sought out research and data on internships but quickly discovered a gap in information.

Filling the Internship Data Gap

“I came into this work in the dark,” Vera said. “Any data would have been helpful, but on a structural level, gathering numbers on interns was complicated.” Vera discovered that the U.S. Department of

Pay Our Interns partnered with NowThis in 2019 to create a video for National Intern Day.

<https://youtu.be/Q4XGLnsreAU>



Labor doesn't track the number of interns in the country. Pay Our Interns knows the number is over 1 million people, but it was difficult to make a case for paid internships when they didn't have any concrete information to examine. In 2017, Vera and his co-founder embarked on their own research report: *Experience Doesn't Pay the Bills*⁽⁵⁾. The report focused on congressional interns, and the team set out to uncover which congress members offered paid internships and which did not. While the report filled a gap in previously unknown statistics, Vera and his team did not have the resources to gather more nuanced information on the ethnicity of interns, which would have been helpful in examining representation at the intern level. To dig into this, Pay Our Interns released a second report in 2020: *Color of Congress*⁽⁶⁾. They teamed up with Dr. James Jones—lead researcher for the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies' 2015 report, *Racial Diversity Among Top Senate Staff*⁽⁷⁾—to understand how interns are racially represented in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The research found stark disparities between Latinx interns and white interns. Latinx students made up 20 percent of undergraduates nationally, but only 5 percent of interns in Congress. Additionally, 9 percent of members in the House identified as Latinx. By contrast, white students made up 52 percent of undergraduates nationally and approximately 68 percent of interns in the same season. Meanwhile, 73 percent of House members identified as white.

The report also found that interns of color are primarily concentrated in the offices of Black, Latinx, and Asian-American/Pacific Islander lawmakers whereas white lawmakers, of both political parties, overwhelmingly had white interns. With more white congress members, this cycle leads to underrepresentation, segregation, and uneven access to congressional internships. When considering these statistics, while also accounting for which students are able to afford unpaid internships, white students are more likely to get ahead. This sets them on a path to rise in the political landscape, influence



Pay Our Interns' July 2020 op-ed in Teen Vogue argued that lawmakers need to start hiring non-white interns and staffers.

<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/congress-interns-racial-disparities>

public policy, and become elected officials themselves. To break this detrimental cycle, the report calls on Congress to democratize the administration of congressional internships with expanded funding for stipends; increase engagement with and recruitment from communities of color; prioritize need-based applicants; and enact more transparent hiring practices. A more diverse pool of Congressional interns means a more representative U.S. government and policies that truly reflect the needs of communities.



Carlos Mark Vera spoke at the U.S. Conference of Mayors in January 2020.

The Opportunity Cost of Data Collection

While Pay Our Interns' research reports exposed critical hiring gaps within Congress, gathering the statistics was significant work. For the Experience Doesn't Pay the Bills report, Vera spent one year tracking down the data and was not paid for the report. Although this was crucial information that needed to be collected, it cost Vera and his team a year's worth of time and resources that could have been spent on direct advocacy and other initiatives.

"Many folks want to have the impact before you have the money. But it takes money to get that impact," Vera said. Having to continue their advocacy work while coming up with data on-the-ground consumed Vera's time, energy, and the limited resources he had. Pay Our Interns was fortunate to partner with Prof. Jones for the Color of Congress report, but they shouldn't have had to outsource the research, Vera said. Ideally, Pay Our Interns would have received funding to do this work—and enough funding to report on intern numbers beyond the House of Representatives.

"Many folks want [us] to have the impact before [we] have the money. But it takes money to get that impact."

INSIGHT:

With open data available to all, social entrepreneurs wouldn't need to expend scarce resources on fundraising for this work.

Funding Policy Work Through Trust-Based Philanthropy

The fact that Vera and his team had to collect this data themselves is a problem in itself. The U.S. Department of Labor should be mandated to track the number of interns in the country, Vera said. Funders need to both call on governments to manage their own data collection and also fund social entrepreneurs and activists like Vera who are forced to do this work themselves. Most importantly, those taking on data collection themselves should not need a proven track record in order to receive funding.

“What we faced is, ‘We only fund organizations with budgets of \$1 million and up,’” Vera said about trying to get funding for Pay Our Interns’ work. It should have been an easier process to get initial funding for Pay Our Interns’ first report, and the fact that they needed to outsource the research of their second report reveals flaws in funding processes and decision-making. “If we’ve already shown impact, make it easier for us to do the research. We’ve already done two reports,” Vera said. He acknowledged Pay Our Interns’ privilege in that aspect, however, because they already had more social capital than others securing initial funding—but the lack of trust in founders with concrete impact shows continued barriers even with proven impact.

Along with strict guidelines on the maturity of organizations, Vera has found that funders are reluctant to support anything that has to do with the government, and many funders stick to directly funding immigration, education, racial justice, environmental work, and other social issues. However, policies impact all of the



Pay Our Interns messaging and social media posts.

“Funders are reluctant to support anything that has to do with the government, but policies impact all of the social issues funders are supporting.”

INSIGHT:

Funders should embrace policy change work and recognize how policies directly affect social change.

social issues funders are supporting, Vera said. So, while entrepreneurs may eventually get funding to publish reports, it's still difficult to secure support for direct policy work, and this slows down all streams of work. According to Vera, trust-based philanthropy that centers the founder's expertise on how to achieve their solution, rather than focusing on burdensome grant requirements, would improve the funding process. Acknowledging outdated historical practices, risk tolerance, conscious and unconscious biases, and power dynamics in a way that moves toward trust for the entrepreneur and their work will remove barriers toward impact and advance social justice and social innovation.



FELECIA HATCHER AND THE CENTER FOR BLACK INNOVATION

Felecia Hatcher is on a mission to rid communities across the globe of innovation deserts by working with global leaders and government officials to create inclusive, diverse tech and startup ecosystems. In 2013, Hatcher co-founded The Center for Black Innovation (formerly Code Fever Miami), which is reshaping Black communities into thriving and value-producing innovation spaces. The organization attracts and nurtures talent through curated

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<https://fellows.echoinggreen.org/felecia-hatcher/>

Code Fever Miami
<http://www.codefevermiami.com/>



events and programming. Their BlackTech Weekend and BlackTech Week—ecosystem-building festivals based in Miami and nine cities across the U.S.—foster civic and economic engagement, and their VC-in-residence program brings investors directly to Black and Latinx founders. The Center for Black Innovation’s plan is to raise a \$10 million fund to increase the number of Black-founded, high-growth tech firms. Ultimately, the organization aims to reshape policies impacting diversity and inclusion, and change the narrative about what diversity and inclusion means for the innovation sector.

As a result of Hatcher’s work, Miami has become one of the most authentically diverse startup ecosystems in the U.S., helping proximate startup founders of color access opportunities and capital pathways and exposing more than 3,000 students and parents to tech and entrepreneurship skills training, in partnership with Knight Foundation, Comcast, Morgan Stanley, Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Ford Foundation, and others.

The Narratives on Black Innovators

Although Hatcher has been leading inclusive ecosystem building for eight years, she continues facing barriers in securing support for and communicating The Center for Black Innovation’s impact as a result of a lack of data around Black leaders in Miami and beyond. “Most of the data is focused on the deficit, failures, and incompetence of Black social entrepreneurs and their organizations. We then have to spend a great deal of time confuting this,” Hatcher said.

For example, one report⁽⁸⁾ detailed that Black women represent the highest growing group of new entrepreneurs across the board. But there was little data on their organizations once they started, and there is no follow-up data on how they are succeeding. The report did note that a lot of them were owner operators or sole proprietors but that they weren’t hiring. In that regard, these founders were celebrated for launching their organizations but then it was implied

**“TOO MANY PEOPLE
EDUCATE THEMSELVES
OUT OF THEIR DREAMS
BECAUSE THEY KEEP
RESEARCHING INSTEAD
OF TAKING ACTION.”**

- Felicia Hatcher
PIMP YOUR BRILLIANCE EP. 14



**I'm a person that believes
you start small
but you constantly think big.
Constantly.**

Felecia Hatcher

Co-founder, CodeFever + BlackTech Week



Felecia Hatcher's promotional
messaging and social media posts.



that they're not viable. Moreover, these reports do not dig into why hiring may be difficult and the root causes of any barriers to growth. According to Hatcher, there is a gap in research on sustainable Black-led organizations that have longevity. Reports released by InBIA⁽⁹⁾, Data for Black Lives⁽¹⁰⁾, Black Tech Mecca⁽¹¹⁾, JP Morgan Chase & Co⁽¹²⁾, digitalundivided⁽¹³⁾, and Echoing Green⁽¹⁴⁾ have helped fill this gap, but they're not enough. Right now very few data sets are meant to represent all Black entrepreneurs.

Felecia Hatcher (far right) hosted a panel of women entrepreneurs during Black Tech Week.

This lack of data paints an incomplete picture and frames Black leaders as unsuccessful, which is a major issue with Hatcher's fundraising efforts. According to Hatcher, there is a lot of storytelling, rather than solid statistics, that often feels anecdotal in the social entrepreneurship space. Black founders are depicted as anomalies, which makes long-term sustainable funding difficult. "The right data can show we are not a one-off or a trend," Hatcher said. Most importantly, it would make it easier to get longer term multi-year commitments.

The Catch-22 of Finding Data and Raising Funds

According to Hatcher, when grantees have to reconcile and make a case for why their work is necessary without having research to lean on, it makes it hard to justify long-term funding. “In addition to anecdotal stories, you need a research team that’s tracking any data from the beginning. That’s what leads to sustained finding. Anything that makes reporting easier leads to large foundations wanting to invest in your organization,” Hatcher said.

There are Black entrepreneurs and communities that are succeeding, but they are not talked about, and existing data isn’t used to strengthen those stories. Increased data collection would make it easier to explain The Center for Black Innovation’s ‘why,’ Hatcher said. By not having enough hard data that shows the ROI of funding organizations like The Center for Black Innovation, it’s difficult for Hatcher to make the case for her work to funders. “I truly believe that we would be trusted more, with larger amounts of funding, if there was better local and national data that supports the business case for our work,” Hatcher said.

From a funder landscape, with all the DEI programs out there, no one is deliberately or specifically tracking the successes or failures of Black social entrepreneurs in accelerators. “No one is asking questions like, ‘How many touchpoints does it take them as they navigate the ecosystem for them to succeed? How many are having real conversations with VCs? How many conversations do they need to secure funding?’” Hatcher said.

“I truly believe that we would be trusted with more funding if there was better local and national data that supports the business case for our work.”

INSIGHT:

When the only available data on Black leaders is deficit-based, Black entrepreneurs spend valuable time disputing false narratives and working to prove their potential.

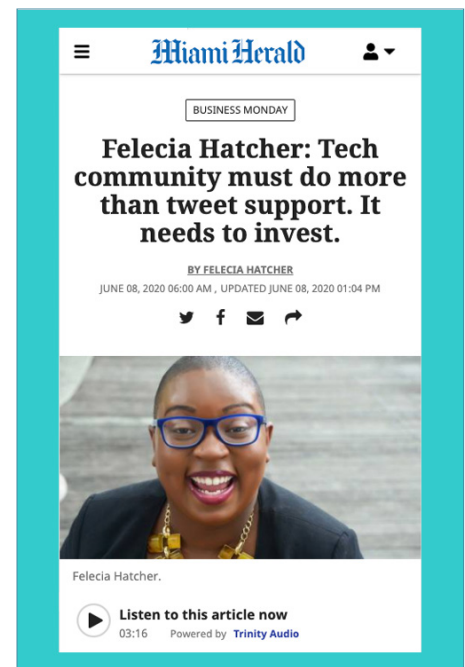
Not having that information and not being able to find it from private, public, or educational institutions is problematic because this data is at the root of Hatcher's work. Larger organizations can do more to track this research. In terms of Hatcher's work, this would allow leaders in the Black innovator space to present potential funders with relevant points on the current state of employment and funding, and also share the anticipated impact the funders would make by supporting organizations like The Center for Black Innovation.

"The things we care about are the things we want to measure because we need to see return on impact. Not tracking means you don't care," Hatcher said. Moreover, not having this research places unnecessary burden on entrepreneurs like Hatcher who, as a result, have to spend time proving their impact despite their evident expertise.

Bolstering Black-Led Organizations and Communities

Ideally, business bureaus and chambers would collect and share more data on organization growth in general. A lack of data around Black social entrepreneurs is directly connected to a lack of data in Black communities. "Many locally don't support our work because there is very little real data locally, and the information that is captured and disseminated doesn't really apply enough for real decisions to be made," Hatcher said. Local chambers should be the ones responsible for tracking small-business data, but Hatcher has found that many can't tell you the amount of Black-led small businesses that exist in her county. "This is a large part of why we're adding a research team is to collect that data for them and then create content or mechanism to disburse that data," she said.

The Center for Black Innovation acquired Black Tech Mecca in 2020 to build a process for both collecting and distributing data on Black tech innovation and entrepreneurial communities. Having this data



Felecia Hatcher's op-ed in the Miami Herald pushed for tangible support from the tech sector.

<https://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article243274016.html>



Felecia Hatcher introduced a session at Code Fever Miami,

will also lead to policies centering Black entrepreneurs and communities. “We need better policy on a local and state level that creates greater opportunities to investment funding and resources,” Hatcher wrote in a Miami Herald op-ed⁽¹⁴⁾. Better policy starts with providing politicians and policy makers with the research and data they need to enact change.

According to Hatcher, those in the political landscape in South Florida have little context of the Black innovation space. For example, the State of Florida has a fund for high-tech companies, Hatcher said, but it is lacking in investments toward Black companies, and no one talks about that. “We need to arm politicians with data points to help them identify entrepreneurs,” Hatcher said. “Our work is largely affected by housing, transportation, and education, and it directly correlates with why we need to fund innovation and tech work.” Adding this work will give policymakers real hard numbers that they can infuse into conversations and make better legislation. Complete data sets on Black populations will elevate Black leaders. As a result, those who need to access and share this data will have the right information and tools to further their social innovation work for Black communities.

CLOSING AND CALLS TO ACTION

To build an ecosystem that is truly inclusive for entrepreneurs of color, the funding and philanthropic spaces must acknowledge historical and systemic barriers these leaders face when securing capital, resources, and information to further their work. Current funding practices will only take these innovators so far if conditional terms remain around restricted funding, mandates on reporting, years of experience, money raised, and exclusive issue areas. Funders must consider how race intersects with these conditional terms. Applying additional barriers that work together to lock out entrepreneurs of color prevents the systemic social change we need from proximate leaders.



Access to data is just one barrier standing in the way of social progress led by leaders of color. Reimagining funding processes and reshaping practices to account for systemic inequities in finding, accessing, collecting, and sharing data will have a ripple effect. If the funding and philanthropic fields champion open data more widely—and intentionally leverage data in an inclusive and equitable way—entrepreneurs will have more opportunities to get the capital and resources they need to design transformational reports, policies, programs, and databases to strengthen their communities. We can bridge economic opportunity through open data by actively prioritizing the needs of proximate leaders of color and the communities they are serving.



Re-evaluate Your Processes and Incorporate Inclusive Open-Data Practices

Is your funding addressing the root causes of inequities? Does your decision-making acknowledge systemic racism and barriers to capital? The funding space needs to recognize the overlapping barriers that leaders of color face at the earliest stage, and consider how current processes and requirements prohibit these leaders from furthering their work. Inequities only compound as leaders of color continue to grow their organizations. To combat this, commit to funding leaders regardless of a proven track record.

Provide unrestricted funding, regardless of how much capital they already have, to help these leaders launch and sustain their work.

Are you collecting and sharing data that supports the well-being of leaders of color? Funders have a responsibility to call for and invest in data around leaders of color and the culturally relevant support they need. Examine the information you collect and share around Black, Indigenous, and people of color in your portfolios. Consider how this data may be restricting or advancing their leadership and impact.

These entrepreneurs are on the front lines of social change, and asset-based data that centers their well-being is critical for their progress.

Center the Perspectives of Proximate Leaders in Your Decision-Making

Are you creating space for open and honest feedback from your grantees? Extractive reporting and requirements for funders takes time away from social entrepreneurs doing the research needed to advance their work. Knowing the obstacles that systemically work together to lock out leaders of color from opportunity, funders need to create spaces to have honest conversations with grantees.

Listen to and address their needs around funding, reporting on their progress, and co-designing a mutually beneficial relationship that centers equity and impact.

Are you asking social entrepreneurs how your dollars could be used for optimal impact? Funders need to trust that proximate social entrepreneurs and those closest to the problems know the best pathways to implement their solutions.

Rather than sticking to traditional methods of funding that do not consider systemic biases, reimagine a process that is trust-based and positions leaders of color as the experts in their work and communities.

They know the best ways to achieve their solutions—they just need an ecosystem ready to fully support their visions. ■

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About the Citi Foundation

The Citi Foundation works to promote economic progress and improve the lives of people in low-income communities around the world. We invest in efforts that increase financial inclusion, catalyze job opportunities for youth, and reimagine approaches to building economically vibrant communities. The Citi Foundation's "More than Philanthropy" approach leverages the enormous expertise of Citi and its people to fulfill our mission and drive thought leadership and innovation. For more information, visit citifoundation.com.

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About Echoing Green

For more than 30 years, Echoing Green has been on the front lines of solving the world's biggest problems, raising up the transformational leaders willing to speak truth to power and challenge the status quo. The organization finds emerging leaders with the best ideas for social innovation as early as possible and sets them on a path to lifelong impact. Echoing Green's community of nearly 1,000



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social innovators includes past Fellows like First Lady Michelle Obama, the founders of organizations like Teach For America and One Acre Fund, and public figures like Van Jones. Built and refined over three decades, Echoing Green discovers tomorrow's leaders, today, and then funds, connects, and supports a new generation of social impact leaders. For more information, visit echoinggreen.org.

LINKS

Brandon Anderson and Raheem**1) Treatment Advocacy Center | People with Untreated Mental Illness 16 Times More Likely to Be Killed By Law Enforcement**

<https://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/key-issues/criminalization-of-mental-illness/2976-people-with-untreated-mental-illness-16-times-more-likely-to-be-killed-by-law-enforcement->

2) Ruderman Family Foundation | Media Coverage of Law Enforcement Use of Force and Disability

https://rudermanfoundation.org/white_papers/media-coverage-of-law-enforcement-use-of-force-and-disability/

3) Stanford News | Venture capital funds led by people of color face more bias the better they perform

<https://news.stanford.edu/2019/08/12/race-influences-professional-investors-judgments/>

Carlos Mark Vera and Pay Our Interns**4) Yahoo | Here's How Much Your Summer Internship Will Really Cost You**

<https://ca.movies.yahoo.com/much-summer-internship-really-cost-103058496.html>

5) Pay Our Interns | Experience Doesn't Pay the Bills

<http://payourinterns.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Payourinternsreport.pdf>

6) The Color of Congress: Racial Representation Among Interns in the U.S. House of Representatives

<https://payourinterns.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Color-Of-Congress-Report.pdf>

7) Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies | Racial Diversity Among Top Senate Staff

<https://jointcenter.org/racial-diversity-among-top-senate-staff/>

Felecia Hatcher and The Center for Black Innovation

8) Behind the Numbers: The State of Women-Owned Businesses in 2018

<https://www.wbenc.org/blog-posts/2018/10/10/behind-the-numbers-the-state-of-women-owned-businesses-in-2018>

9) InBIA

<https://inbia.org/>

10) Data for Black Lives | Reports

<https://d4bl.org/reports.html>

11) Black Tech Mecca | Research

<https://www.blacktechmecca.org/research>

12) JPMorgan Chase & Co. | Racial Gaps in Financial Outcomes, Big Data Evidence

<https://institute.jpmorganchase.com/institute/research/household-income-spending/report-racial-gaps-in-financial-outcomes>

13) digitalundivided | Data & Research

<https://www.digitalundivided.com/data-research>

14) Echoing Green | About the State of Social Entrepreneurship Report

<https://echoinggreen.org/news/about-the-state-of-social-entrepreneurship-report/>

15) Miami Herald | Felecia Hatcher: Tech community must do more than tweet support. It needs to invest.

<https://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article243274016.html>

Introduction and Sidebars

Racial Equity and Philanthropy: Disparities in Funding for Leaders of Color Leave Impact on the Table

<https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/library/philanthropy/disparities-nonprofit-funding-for-leaders-of-color>

Echoing Green | State of Social Entrepreneurship 2020

<https://echoinggreen.org/news/state-of-social-entrepreneurship-2020/>

Citi Foundation | Knowledge Center

<https://www.citigroup.com/citi/foundation/knowledge-center/reports-and-re-sources.htm>

Echoing Green Fellows | Brandon Anderson

<https://fellows.echoinggreen.org/brandon-anderson/>

Raheem

<https://raheem.org/>

Brandon Anderson detailed Raheem's forthcoming study of public opinion towards the police on Medium.

<https://link.medium.com/hXkxTGCPg9>

Echoing Green Fellows | Carlos Mark Vera

<https://fellows.echoinggreen.org/carlos-mark-vera/>

Pay Our Interns

<https://payourinterns.org/>

Pay Our Interns partnered with NowThis in 2019 to create a video for National Intern Day.

<https://youtu.be/Q4XGLnsreAU>

Pay Our Interns' July 2020 op-ed in Teen Vogue argued that lawmakers need to start hiring non-white interns and staffers.

<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/congress-interns-racial-disparities>

Echoing Green Fellows | Felecia Hatcher

<https://fellows.echoinggreen.org/felecia-hatcher/>

Code Fever Miami

<http://www.codefevermiami.com/>

Felecia Hatcher's op-ed in the Miami Herald pushed for tangible support from the tech sector.

<https://www.miamiherald.com/news/business/biz-monday/article243274016.html>