

Supporting a Community-led Vision for Housing Justice and Equitable Development

Fund for an Inclusive California



COMMUNITY POWER COLLECTIVE

Advancing Community Priorities Over Four Years of Partnership

The Fund for an Inclusive California is a collaborative philanthropic effort that centers community-driven solutions to the urgent need for housing justice that will create vibrant neighborhoods across California.

Over the last four years we set out to strengthen the power of communities in regions throughout the state to advance housing justice and equitable development at the local, regional and state level. In that time, we have witnessed the power of community leaders taking on the challenges and unanticipated windows of opportunity during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, organizing toward their goals and community priorities, and gaining momentum for policy wins.

We experienced firsthand the immeasurable impact that is possible when funders move out of the way of organizations, and operate with flexibility, agility and deep trust in the leadership and vision of our partners.

We remain inspired by the tenacity, power and vision of our partners and we are committed to deepening our support and bringing to scale the impact of nonprofit and movement leaders who are poised to lead us to a future of housing and racial justice.

This brief shares highlights from our efforts and learning, uplifting the work of the partners we support. While it sheds light on our impact and activities as funding partners, it also showcases what is possible with sustained, flexible funding driven by community priorities.



Snapshot of Context and Partners

As funders, we enter our work and partnership knowing there is a history and context already in motion. With powerful work already underway when we started funding and learning about these regions across the state, our goal was to hear their priorities and align our funding to their efforts.

Community Advisors are the nonprofit partners who have directed the development of the Fund from the beginning. They employ various strategies in their work, and serve a range of communities who are most impacted by unjust housing and inequitable development practices and policies in their respective regions.

An overwhelming majority of Community Advisors serve people surviving on low-incomes (91%) and immigrant communities (73%). They also serve youth (61%), unhoused families and individuals (58%) and seniors (55%). Over one-third of Community Advisors also report serving LGBTQ+ individuals (39%), Indigenous communities (36%) and formerly incarcerated individuals and their families (36%).

BY THE NUMBERS



4

Regions + statewide organizing networks

Bay Area
Central Valley
Inland Region
Los Angeles
Statewide



50

Community Advisors and grantee partners

Predominantly led by people of color directing on-the-ground work and strategies of the Fund.

79% OF COMMUNITY ADVISOR ORGANIZATIONS ARE LED BY PEOPLE OF COLOR.



11

Funding partners

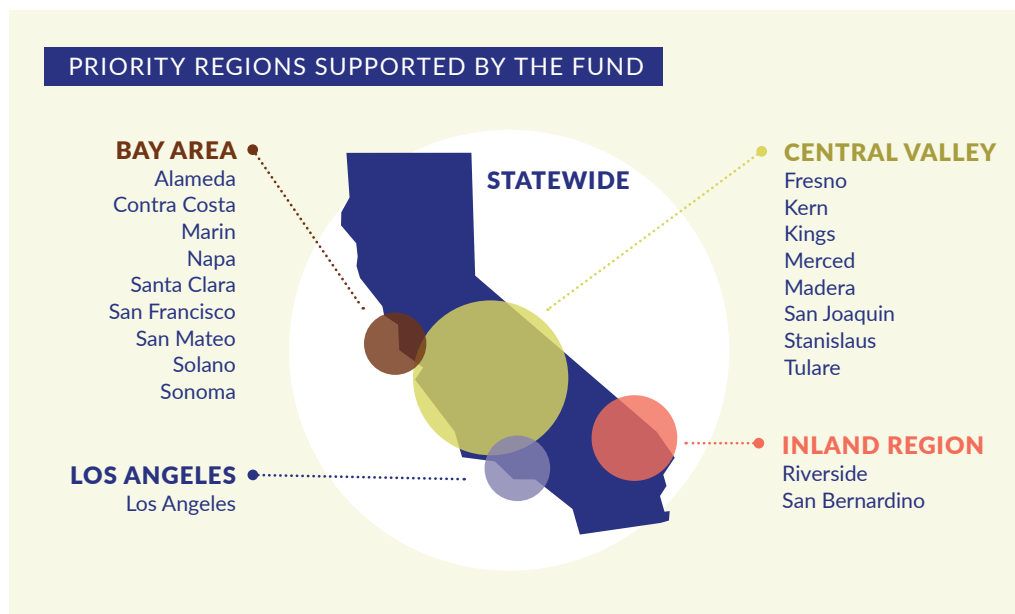
Funders comprise a diversity of public, private and community foundations across California.



\$10.2M

Raised and committed

Granted through core operating support, recognizing the expertise of organizations to direct funding to its best purpose and their vision for the work.



From Community Advisors: What Makes the Fund a Unique Partner?

"F4ICA provided technical assistance to help us imagine and strategize our work as well as funding the creation of our coalition that included trust building and relationship building with other organizations. They trusted us in being able to invite and fund other organizations to bring to the table. F4ICA is a true partner and has been since the start. They listen and shape their strategies based on what they hear from the field and from organizers. It's a different dynamic that helps us to truly build power. Too often there are power imbalances with funders that are frustrating and not helpful to creating change. That has never been the case with F4ICA. They are a model for creating true partnerships among funders and community groups."

**CENTRAL VALLEY
COMMUNITY ADVISOR**

Community Advisors shared these key differentiators of the approach and partnership of the Fund for an Inclusive California:



Willingness to fund leading edge strategies

The Fund has been a valuable place to conduct funder education and serve as a beachhead for less known or "leading edge" strategies like rent control.



Deep honoring of grassroots organizations and their bases

Lifting up the narratives of people most impacted by unjust policies and systems through the work of grassroots organizations.



Investing in grassroots power building infrastructure and capacities

Not dictating a certain strategy or approach to reach narrowly-defined impact. Willingness to invest in movement building, leadership development, and other harder-to-measure approaches.



Focus on local and regionally differentiated infrastructure and capacity

The first four years of the Fund built local and regional capacity to advocate for and implement housing justice wins. There are few other field or funder spaces that are focusing on building housing justice infrastructure at the local, regional and state levels.

Impact of the Fund for an Inclusive California

Co-designed in 2018 with grassroots leaders, our work is guided by five outcomes that bring us closer to the community-driven vision of thriving and vibrant communities in California. Throughout the course of our partnership, we have held regional sessions, one-on-one meetings, and conducted surveys to gather feedback from Community Advisors on how to meaningfully partner as funders and how we can further support progress toward these shared outcomes.

01

OUTCOME

Strengthened the organizational capacity of core base-building organizations, coalitions and alliances working to advance and implement community-driven solutions.

Community Advisors highlighted how the Fund strengthened their organizational capacity to organize and build power for housing justice.

"The multi-year support allowed us to have the confidence to hire additional staff. The additional organizing staff capacity allowed us to increase our ability to build a deeper and wider leadership base in multiple districts and cities, as well as to grow our collective power to push campaigns and policies forward."

**BAY AREA
COMMUNITY ADVISOR**

"The support from F4ICA has enabled us to grow our tenant organizing work. Specifically in the last year we connected with over 800 tenants from buildings in [the region]. More recently, we engaged these residents as part of a citywide committee of tenants who are building power to address the lack of policy protections for tenants in [the area]."

**BAY AREA
COMMUNITY ADVISOR**

81%

responded that F4ICA's support helped increase their membership base

100%

responded that F4ICA's support helped increase the advocacy skills of base members

97%

responded that F4ICA helped increase the organizing capacity of local communities they work with





02

OUTCOME

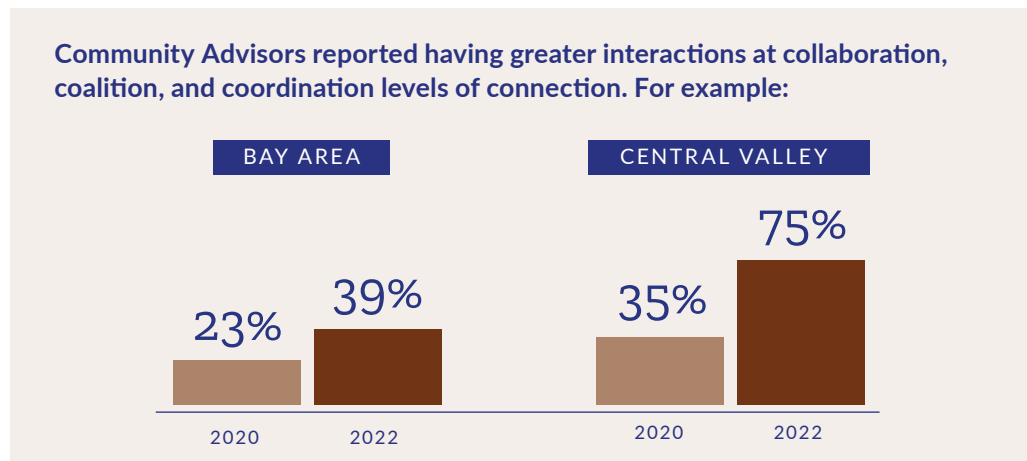
Expanded the “we” of the housing justice movement by supporting organizing groups with an intersectional approach as well as more nascent organizing efforts.

“F4ICA funding has allowed us to convene and facilitate a regional coalition that is focused on housing justice, which is crucial to achieving our advocacy goals and also strengthening the movement in the region to win transformational change.”

**INLAND REGION
COMMUNITY ADVISOR**

Community Advisors highlighted how the Fund helped grow the housing justice movement by supporting relationship building, partnerships, and collaborations.

Community Advisors reported having greater interactions at collaboration, coalition, and coordination levels of connection. For example:



\$300,000 was distributed through our Emerging Opportunities funds to smaller organizations that were not explicitly housing-focused or that sit outside of the urban core where there is little to no organizing capacity, but that were critical to our partners’ efforts.

One Inland Region Community Advisor shared that their flexible operating budget was 10%, the remaining tied to project support and direct services. With general operating funding, the volunteer organizers were able to advocate for affordable housing for immigrant farmworkers, securing state funding to house farmworkers during the pandemic.

03

OUTCOME

Strengthened the organizing infrastructure across California by facilitating collaboration in and across regions and issue areas, and by supporting local organizations to play a more active role in state-level advocacy and civic engagement efforts.

Community Advisors highlighted how the Fund helped grow the housing justice movement by supporting relationship building, partnerships and collaborations.

"[The funding] helped us to build the first ever housing coalition in the Central Valley. Their support also helped us to engage new leaders, research and endorse a long term housing justice theory of change and move into new campaign areas."

CENTRAL VALLEY COMMUNITY ADVISOR

"The F4ICA helped us partner with more organizations both at the local and state level. These partnerships have been critical in moving forward important housing policies."

CENTRAL VALLEY COMMUNITY ADVISOR

"We were able to sustain participation in state policy efforts to ensure regional voice and representation."

INLAND REGION COMMUNITY ADVISOR

"The Coalition has made it possible for us to act regionally in the area of housing justice. We have learned from our partners and leveraged the resources to provide workshops and educational events around housing and rental assistance that addresses the negative COVID impact on low-income people."

CENTRAL VALLEY COMMUNITY ADVISOR

"There was this oversight hearing on extreme heat ... they kept talking about Fresno and the Inland Empire but there's no speaker from these two regions, which was really disappointing. The Fund is giving us the flexibility and capacity to build our presence in statewide spaces and make sure that regions don't get left behind."

CENTRAL VALLEY COMMUNITY ADVISOR

04

OUTCOME

"The partnership with F4ICA has assisted us not only leverage additional financial resources to do our organizing and power building work but it has also created a space of partners that all work together for a similar vision. It is very difficult to secure funding for community organizing and power-building work, F4ICA financial support has been very important for us to continue with our mission and vision."

INLAND REGION COMMUNITY ADVISOR

Elevated the vision of community-driven development, one in which low-income communities and communities of color are empowered to shape what sustainable development looks like in their local neighborhoods.

Community Advisors highlighted how the Fund elevated the vision of housing justice and equitable development through narrative shift, policy advocacy and shared visioning.

97%

responded that F4ICA helped shift the narrative in their region and/or at the state level

65%

of capacity building resources for the Central Valley supported the coordination of communications capacity and strategies to shift the narrative of housing in the region

"It has helped us get closer to defining the role and power of culture - cultural strategies and cultural spaces. Having to articulate this in the context of housing justice has helped us in making good arguments for the role of culture. Our advocacy has strengthened, and it has made us consider the idea of a 501c4."

**BAY AREA
COMMUNITY ADVISOR**

Narrative shift and communications strategy are areas where Community Advisors would like F4ICA to continue to direct its support, with 33% uplifting narrative shift as a key strategy for the Fund's next phase and 30% uplifting communications strategy.



05

OUTCOME

Modeled equity-driven collaborative philanthropic practices that are rooted in racial and economic justice by creating a learning community to catalyze increased philanthropic funding for power-building organizations.

Community Advisors highlighted how the Fund has influenced peers in philanthropy to increase their support and investment in power building and housing justice.

94%

responded that F4ICA's support has helped them be recognized as a trusted organization by other philanthropic institutions

"[I] learn and consume information about the activities, updates and needs of Community Advisors so I can be better informed about their work and communities, and bring it back to my institution."

FUNDER PARTNER

"[Through F4ICA]'s organizing and advocacy, we have made connections with other philanthropic allies in the region."

STATEWIDE COMMUNITY ADVISOR

The relationships and connections I have been able to build are important. I got further quicker in those relationships because of the [F4ICA]. [I am] benefiting from the direct perspective of Community Advisors and what is bubbling from the Steering Committee."

FUNDER PARTNER

91%

responded that F4ICA's support helped establish new or deepened relationships with funders

"Increased our visibility with other key funders, supported the expansion of our community organizing/base-building work, given staff the opportunity to focus on developing a vision and workplan for this important work without the pressure of only peripherally related deliverables (as is the case with other funding opportunities)."

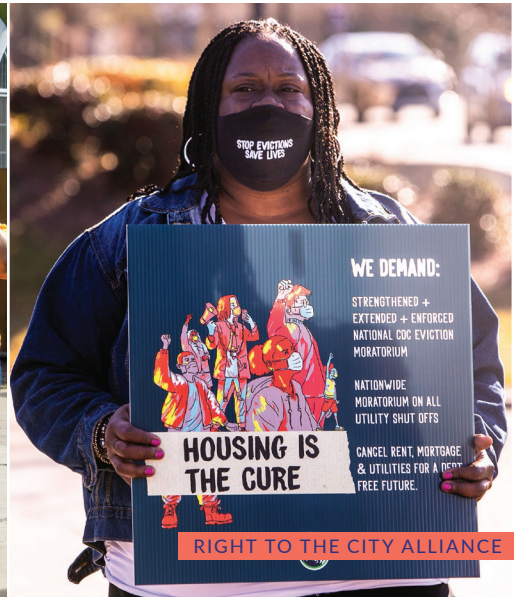
LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY ADVISOR

"There are always power dynamics with funders and community-based organizations, and I feel [the F4ICA] set an example for how to have these conversations and create a process that feels safe. [They] were very intentional about creating a process that wasn't just about the outcomes. It was really about how do we create a conversation and an ongoing process together."

LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY ADVISOR

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDING PARTNERS

Akonadi Foundation
Amplify Fund of the
Neighborhood Funders Group
California Community
Foundation
Chan Zuckerberg Initiative
East Bay Community
Foundation
Liberty Hill Foundation
San Francisco Foundation
Sunlight Giving
The California Endowment
The James Irvine Foundation
Weingart Foundation



A Look Ahead from the Field

Five years ago, grassroots organizations in the housing justice ecosystem had a prominent focus on tenant rights and tenant protections. Now, organizations are holding a longer-term view, inclusive of both the defensive fights such as tenant protections as well as moving into longer term, proactive solutions through equitable community development that preserves and produces more affordable housing.

As phase one of F4ICA work continues to reveal new learning, planning for phase two, which sets a five year course in motion, is underway with a tremendous volume of work upon which to build. Expanding the pool of available philanthropic resources will remain a priority, as will expanding our philanthropic practice of leading in partnership with communities, listening to their expressed priorities, and leveling out the balance of interests between both philanthropy and the communities it supports.

The next phase of F4ICA will place increased emphasis on supporting specific regional strategies, expanding the available pool of capital in current focus regions and new areas, and growing the core of philanthropic actors in the housing justice ecosystem.

Support the Fund for an Inclusive California

In our initial phase of work, the Fund successfully mobilized philanthropy to support community power building, defend wins and make advances in housing justice and equitable development. We are committed to deepening our support of the housing justice movement to realize a generational vision of thriving communities.

LEARN MORE



Reach out to us at F4ICA@commoncounsel.org to get involved, and visit fundforaninclusiveca.org to learn more about our work and partners.