

POWER MOVES GLOSSARY

Ableism: Discrimination in favor of able-bodied people; the belief that people who have disabilities are somehow less human, less valuable and less capable than others.⁵¹

Advocacy: The act of promoting a cause, idea or policy to influence people's opinions or actions on matters of public policy or concern. Many types of activities fall under the category of "advocacy" and are legally permissible for 501(c)(3) public charities to engage in, such as issue identification, research and analysis; public issue education; lobbying efforts for or against legislation; nonpartisan voter registration, education and mobilization; litigation; education of government agencies at all levels; participation in referenda and ballot initiatives; grassroots mobilization; and testimonies before government bodies. There are no legal limits on how much non-lobbying advocacy a nonprofit organization can undertake.

Civic engagement: Any and all activities that engage ordinary people in civic life, such as organizing, advocacy and voter registration, education and mobilization. It often involves building the skills, knowledge and experience that enable people to participate effectively in the democratic process. Also known as "civic participation."

Community organizing: A process of building relationships, leadership and power, typically among marginalized communities, and bringing that power and collective voice to bear on the issues that affect those communities by engaging with relevant decision-makers. The issues raised, solutions identified and strategies developed to achieve those solutions all are defined and acted on by the leaders themselves, often with help from professional organizers. Community organizing can be one part of an overall advocacy or public policy campaign strategy, but it is distinguished by the fact that affected constituencies are the agents of change, rather than paid advocates or lobbyists who represent the interests of such constituencies.

Cultural competence: One's ability to communicate or interact with, or serve people who are of different cultures and backgrounds. Being culturally competent means that you are able to talk or relate to other people in ways appropriate to their culture. Cultural competence begins with deep awareness of your own views and culture, which will help you in understanding the views or culture of others.⁵² A related concept is cultural humility: "The approach of cultural humility goes beyond the concept of cultural competence to encourage us to identify our own biases and to acknowledge that those biases must be recognized. Cultural competency implies that you can function with a thorough knowledge of the mores and beliefs of another culture; cultural humility acknowledges that it is impossible to be adequately knowledgeable about cultures other than your own."⁵³

Disability: a physical (i.e. vision, hearing, mobility), cognitive, intellectual, mental, sensory or developmental condition, or some combination of these, which substantially limits one or more major life activity.⁵⁴

Disparities: Differences in outcomes, impacts, access, treatment or opportunities between under-resourced communities and the dominant group based on race, ethnicity, income, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, national origin, age or other characteristics.

Diversity, equity and inclusion: A set of principles, goals and strategies employed to overcome disparities in access and outcomes, representation and participation by marginalized population groups. Often referred to as DEI or EDI in philanthropy. Each concept is defined separately below.

Diversity: The demographic mix of a specific collection of people, taking into account elements of human difference, including but not limited to race, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age and disability status.

Equity: Achieved when you can no longer predict an advantage or disadvantage based on race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or ability. An equity framework is a proactive, strategic approach to improving outcomes that accounts for structural differences in opportunities, burdens and needs in order to advance targeted solutions that fulfill the promise of true equality for all.⁵⁵

Equality: All people are treated equally under the law. An equality strategy seeks to improve access to, or quality of, systems or services for all populations. This “rising tide raises all boats” approach is based on the expectation that improved systems or services for everyone will improve outcomes for those experiencing inequities. It may not, however, make up for the systemic deficits in resources and opportunities experienced by historically oppressed populations.⁵⁶

Implicit bias: The attitudes or stereotypes that affect one’s understanding, actions and decisions in an unconscious manner. Implicit or unconscious biases affect not only our perceptions but also our behavior, policies and institutional arrangements. Also known as implicit social cognition or unconscious bias. “Race in cognition” refers to how implicit and explicit mental processes – which are both altered by and contribute to racial inequities – affect individuals’ decisions, behaviors and lived experiences.⁵⁷

Inclusion: The degree to which diverse individuals are able to participate fully in the decision-making processes within an organization or group. While a truly “inclusive” group is necessarily diverse, a “diverse” group may or may not be “inclusive.”⁵⁸

Intersectionality: The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups,⁵⁹ for example a person of color and/or English Language Learner and/or LGBTQ and/or person with a disability.

Mission investing (also known as “**impact investing**”): The range of tools funders can use to align investment of their non-grant assets with mission and goals. These include program-related investments (PRIs), hiring of diverse investment managers, screening out from investments those companies that profit from harm of the planet or people, and shareholder activism to influence corporate behavior.⁶⁰

Philanthropic openness: Communicating about your goals and strategies, making decisions and measuring progress, listening and engaging in dialogue with others, acting on what you hear and sharing what you have learned.⁶¹

Power: Control, influence or authority. Rashad Robinson said, “Power is the ability to change the rules.”⁶² Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “Power is the ability to achieve a purpose. Whether or not it is good or bad depends upon the purpose.” In a social change and equity context, distinctions are made between “power over” and “power with.”⁶³

Power analysis: An understanding of how power is operating systemically. In social change movement building, power analysis is a visual mapping tool that helps its users determine, for a particular systemic problem, who has power to influence that system and whether those with power are likely to support, oppose or remain neutral with regard to your proposed solutions.

Racial equity: The condition that would be achieved if racial identity is no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, on how one fares.⁶⁴

Social movement: When “people become mobilized around issues they hold dear; at some level, they share a powerful vision about

what is wrong with society and how it must be improved; and they engage in lots of diverse activities not under any one leader’s direct control. The resulting political motion and its effect lead to a change in attitudes, practices and public policy.”⁶⁵

Strategic social justice philanthropy: An approach to philanthropy that uses all the tools at your disposal to change the systems that perpetuate inequity, with input and involvement of the communities harmed by inequities. It aligns social change goals, strategies and progress measures, while ensuring that people prioritized for benefit help shape and implement those goals, strategies and measures.

Structural racism: The macrolevel systems, social forces, institutions, ideologies and processes that interact with one another to generate and reinforce inequities among racial and ethnic groups.⁶⁶

Systems change: Addressing the systemic barriers that create inequities. Grantmaking focused on systems change commonly supports advocacy, community organizing and civic engagement, supporting power building among communities so that they can better shape the systems that affect them. For example, in addition to (or instead of) delivering culturally tailored health care services, this approach might focus on changing the norms and policies that cause or enable health disparities (e.g., community engagement, consultation and decision making in city planning; standards of culturally competent service delivery).⁶⁷ Programs or services that deliver individual benefits to marginalized populations do not advance equity unless the systems delivering those benefits are themselves equitable.

Targeted universalism: The use of targeted strategies (designed to address disparities for specific populations) to achieve universal goals, in contrast with the usual approach of universal strategies (policies that make no distinctions among different population groups) to achieve universal goals. For example, sidewalk curb cuts were implemented to allow people with wheelchairs to travel across the street, but they benefit everyone (cyclists, rolling luggage carriers, caregivers with baby strollers, etc.).⁶⁸

Under-resourced communities (also “**Marginalized communities**”): Populations that experience disparities, are politically disenfranchised or otherwise marginalized. Funders may use other terms such as “disadvantaged,” “vulnerable,” “at-risk” or “underserved.” NCRP defines this broadly, including but not limited to 11 of the special populations tracked by the Foundation Center, i.e., economically disadvantaged; racial or ethnic minorities; women and girls; people with AIDS; people with disabilities; aging, elderly and senior citizens; immigrants and refugees; crime/abuse victims; incarcerated and formerly incarcerated; single parents and LGBTQ citizens.

White privilege: The concrete benefits of access to resources and social rewards and the power to shape the norms and values of society that whites receive, unconsciously or consciously, by virtue of their skin color in a racist society.⁶⁹