

# What's the one thing you want funders to do differently to support the pro-immigrant and -refugee movement?

A number of NCRP nonprofit members working on immigrant rights and justice offer advice to foundations and donors who want to help secure a thriving future for all our communities.

"Philanthropy is rooted in the love for humanity, literally and etymologically. So we simply ask that funders commit to divesting from anti-human agendas: Those that advocate separation of families, ethnic and religious bigotry, and toxic political discourses. Philanthropists are not mere spectators; they are our leading voices in the public sphere and we want them to take it back from anti-human influences."

Dr. Abbas Barzegar, Director, Research and Advocacy Department  
Council on American-Islamic Relations



Zainab Arain, Manager, Research and Advocacy Department  
Council on American-Islamic Relations

"How funders can support the current moment of the future immigrant rights movement now is resources for long-term hiring, training and development of immigrant leaders of color in all areas of the immigrant rights movement, particularly in organizing, advocacy and legal representation.

This is a critical moment for the immigrant rights movement – more capacity is needed for now and the coming years."

Sara Benitez, Vice President of Organizing and Campaigns  
Faith in Public Life



"For those of us working in the Deep South, investment by funders in the immigrant rights movements is an opportunity for both transformational change and to deliver a high return on investment. An investment in this work in this historically underfunded geographical area brings life-changing impact at the local and ground levels where resources immediately touch communities. Services, organizing and community development are the 3 areas where HICA will continue to build a movement for racial equity and social justice, and we need more funder partnerships to achieve this goal."

Isabel Rubio, Executive Director  
Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama



"In spite of incredible pressures, the grassroots groups and leaders in immigrant and refugee communities are engines for creative anti-poverty initiatives, the development of women and girls and live at the front lines of the nation's eroding civil liberties. 'We don't fund immigrant rights' can't be a response when our problems and our solutions are so interconnected. It is time for philanthropy to take immigrants and refugees out of the constraints of outdated immigrant and refugee program silos and unleash a new wave of creativity and solutions to benefit all communities."

Cristina Jiménez, Executive Director  
United We Dream Network



"It's critical that funders do all they can to support, nurture and incentivize the intersectional ways that the pro-immigrant and refugee movements connect to other issues impacting low-income communities of color. For instance, Iraqi refugees or undocumented immigrants from Central America are also confronted by food insecurity, police accountability and the lack of access to holistic mental health services. We need funders to issue RFPs that allow nonprofits to respond in creatively integrated ways to the multilayered challenges and dynamic opportunities around these movements in this moment."

Rami Nashashibi, Executive Director  
Inner-City Muslim Action Network



"Given the divisiveness drilled into the minds and hearts of Americans every day, we need social justice organizing that intentionally builds cross-race solidarity. It would be wise for philanthropy to STOP funding in 'immigrant justice' and 'criminal justice reform' silos, and instead promote and invest into strategies that seek to confront the criminalization of people of color more broadly. Perhaps this would also encourage more social change organizations to take on the difficult but necessary work to build bridges between Latino and African American communities."

Wes Lathrop, Executive Director  
Faith in Florida



"Mass incarceration and mass detention are not separate issues. Every time a prison gets converted into a detention center and every time criminalization is used to prevent people of color from moving to a new neighborhood, we see the shared agenda behind all efforts to control the movement of Black and Brown bodies. The caging of human beings needs to be abolished, full stop. For that to happen, funders need to break down their funding siloes and start supporting criminal justice reform and immigration justice work under the same abolitionist umbrella."

Ursula Price, Executive Director  
New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice



"It's important for funders to understand that general support funding for capacity building and reacting in the currently anti-immigrant climate is crucial to our movement. In the last few years, we have seen an increase of sweeping anti-immigrant policies at the local level. In Virginia, for example, Culpepper County has signed a new 287(G) agreement, Carolina County has opened a new ICE detention facility, and there were a number of ongoing struggles. Having general support funds allows organizations to have the flexibility to react to unforeseen circumstances that would be detrimental to the immigrant community."

Monica Sarmiento, Executive Director  
Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights

