



Bolstering Bay Area Black-Led Organizations

Background

Since the 2008 economic recession, nonprofit organizations have been the subject of great examination as leaders work to **preserve the continuation of vital community programs and services**. National IRS data indicate that since 2010, over 400K registered nonprofits have either closed their doors or lost their 501(c)(3) status. **Bay Area Black-Led Organizations, which are lifelines to Black communities and are critical vehicles for community empowerment and civic participation, have been especially impacted.** Many are still recovering from a period of fiscal belt tightening, restructuring and even closures; operating without strategic plans, marketing strategies or plans for succession as there is no system to attract emerging Black leaders to replace long-term ones.

Although vital to their communities, BLOs are shrinking in numbers and often lack the resources and connections to withstand sudden shifts in the economy, including unprecedented increases in rents or changes in funders' priorities that limit grants to invited applicants only. These challenges have resulted in compromised services to the low and moderate income communities they serve. *Note:* Black-Led Organizations are defined as registered nonprofit organizations with Black staff and/or Board leadership.

Community Response

To bolster Black-Led Organizations, **The East Bay Community Foundation, The San Francisco Foundation, The Kapor Center for Social Impact, The Y & H Soda Foundation, The California Endowment, The California Wellness Foundation, Akonadi Foundation, the Walter & Elise Haas Fund and the County of Alameda** have come together with a great sense of urgency and readiness to invest in solutions via a collaborative, capacity-building initiative designed to support the growth, sustainability and impact of these organizations in four Bay Area Counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco and San Mateo. At this critical time, "band-aid" solutions will not meet the measure of the need as BLOs are lifelines for communities across the Bay Area. Our primary goals are to:

- Enhance the growth, sustainability, impact and sense of community among BLOs to ensure their long-term ability to more effectively address the needs of the Black communities they serve.
- Develop a replicable approach to collaborative capacity-building that further develops the nonprofit sector with a lens toward race and equity.



BAY AREA BLO LANDSCAPE

There are more than 200 BLOs in the Bay Area with the majority located in Oakland, San Francisco and Richmond, CA. Combined, Bay Area BLOs manage over \$540 million and employ over 8,400 people.

- BLOs primarily serve Black, Latino, low and moderate income and underserved groups
- For the majority, at least 50% of clients are Black and 30% serve a client-base that is more than 80% Black
- Most BLOs have small budgets of less than \$500K with 42% having no reserves or endowments
- Many do not own their own space
- 62% have staffs of 10 or less and 84% have staffs of 20 or less
- Although almost 50% of leaders plan to leave their organization in 3 to 5 years, there is no formal pipeline for training, development and advancement of future Black leaders



“If there is no struggle, there is no progress.”

— Frederick Douglass

Key Components of the Initiative

- 1 BLO Accelerator:** An intensive 6-month program designed to bolster the growth and sustainability of emerging, innovative community anchors that have a vision for growth, promising ideas and a willingness to work in new ways to catalyze personal, organizational and community change. This program focuses on providing a cohort of 5 organizations in the core 4-county service area support in planning, management, marketing, finance and innovation; access to coaches and technical supports; and a pitch opportunity. Successful participants will receive a 3-year investment with technical support.
- 2 BLO Stabilizer:** A 3-year program for mature community anchors in the core 4-county service area designed to minimize risk and guide organizations through transition via leadership development, board recruitment and succession planning.
- 3 Cross-Cutting Programs and Services:** Peer networking and learning and an annual conference will be available to all BLOs in the core 4-county service area as well as Marin and Santa Clara Counties.

2018 Accelerator Launch

As the Lead Agency with primary responsibility for Initiative management, including receiving and disbursing funds on behalf of participating funders, The East Bay Community Foundation seeks applications to be part of the BLO Accelerator.

Who should apply? Registered 501(c)(3) organizations headquartered in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco or San Mateo Counties with Black staff and/or board leadership (i.e. ED/CEO and/or Board Chair), a demonstrated commitment to equity and justice, a minimum service history of 5 years and strong ideas for growth primed to benefit from technical support and investment.

What is the review process and criteria? All applications submitted online by 5:00 p.m. on 1/31/18 will be reviewed by a subset of participating funders who will select and interview a group of Finalists and recommend 5 Accelerator Cohort members to be ratified by all participating funders and announced on February 23, 2018. Selection criteria includes Organizational and Leadership Capacity and Fit for the Initiative: the Ability to fully participate, learn and partner across sectors; Alignment with the Initiative’s zeal for equity and justice accomplishing good through the coordinated acts and engagement of many; and the Potential for proposed ideas to benefit from technical support and investment, enhance organizational growth and sustainability and expand community impact.

What are the expectations and benefits of Accelerator Cohort membership? From March to August of 2018, EDs/CEOs must participate – with 2 colleagues (i.e. board member, staff, or volunteer) – in 5 in-person learning sessions and team coaching and technical assistance to develop their bold idea. Participating BLOs will receive a \$25,000 stipend; intensive training; customized coaching; an opportunity to pitch their idea to funders and/or donors; and an investment of up to \$100,000/year for 3 years to support the development of their idea.

KEY DATES

- Accelerator Application Released: 1/5/18
- All Questions Submitted to eastbaycommunityfoundation@walkerac.com: 1/22/18 by 5 p.m.
- All Applications Due: 1/31/18 by 5 p.m.
- Finalist Interviews Held: 2/12/18 – 2/15/18
- Accelerator Cohort Announced at the BLO Kickoff Event: 2/23/18

SAVE THE DATE for the BLO Kickoff Event: February 23, 2018 at 3:30 p.m.

On Friday, February 23, 2018 from 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. a Kickoff Event for the Initiative – open to all BLOs across Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties – will be held in Oakland. Network with and feel the collective power of your peers; meet the funders and consultants supporting this work; and learn how to engage in this Initiative. Stay tuned for more!