

Program Values

Immediate and Deep Investments

Leveraging the Ford Foundation's grant and local funding, we hope to create transformational change by investing unrestricted dollars in Black-led cultural institutions, intermediary organizations and cultural anchors in our neighborhoods. Through the initiative we also seek to improve our ability, and that of the philanthropic sector, to become more aware of and responsive to emergent strategies from the field in the future. We believe that by providing immediate sizable support, we will acknowledge the tremendous work that continues to take place in our communities and celebrate the impact of Black-led cultural institutions, intermediaries, and neighborhood anchors on the financial, managerial, and artistic health of our region. We also believe that the leaders of these critical cultural organizations will find respite, rejuvenation and opportunities for increased creativity and innovation as a result of the monetary and general support received from the initiative.

Proclaim and Promote the Black Cultural Sector

The Endowments will utilize this grantmaking program to celebrate the work and accomplishments of Black-led organizations throughout Pittsburgh and the region. The awards are meant to recognize the perseverance of the Cultural Treasures and amplify their authority, excellence and ability to uphold the beauty and reflect the necessity of autonomy and independence. Using data-driven asset mapping and community voices, the Endowments will publish the findings drawn from the exploration of Black Cultural Treasures through digital and print publications.

Data Driven: From the Field First

Utilizing quantitative and qualitative information, the Endowments will work alongside a steering committee and community stakeholders to explore and document how deeply the work of cultural treasures impacts the overall vitality of the communities within which they exist, and who are those most deeply affected by their work. This data will be

gathered through a series of community conversations and stakeholder focus groups that began in December 2020, as well as through community input from interviews, surveys and an online platform launching in mid-2021 to solicit nominations of Pittsburgh's Black cultural treasures. Through the online platform, the program will engage in an asset-mapping project that will broadly describe Pittsburgh's Black cultural resources and map them in real time.

While only a select number of Black-led cultural organizations will be recipients of monetary awards, community members and cultural workers are encouraged to use the online nomination form to help identify and map all Black-led cultural assets. By doing this, our communities will directly contribute to the conversation, "What defines a Cultural Treasure?" This input will also help us to marry the definition held within the Black community with that developed within philanthropic institutions. Together we will identify and underscore the unique characteristics of Black cultural organizations that make them invaluable to life in our city and region.