



2025

ANNUAL REPORT

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www.blackfundersnetwork.org

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Future
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Dear Black Funders Network Community,

As we reflect on the past year and the five years that brought us here, we are deeply proud of what we have built together. The Black Funders Network of the Bay Area (BFN) has continued to deepen its role as an intentional and dynamic space for Black leaders in philanthropy to connect, grow, and lead with purpose. Rooted in legacy and propelled by a shared commitment to community impact, our work is shaped by members through collective learning, strategic collaboration, and an unwavering focus on effectiveness and equity. It is sustained by the relationships we nurture, the clarity of vision we hold together, and the trust that allows us to imagine more.

Over the past year, we launched new programs, expanded our reach, and strengthened our community through moments of celebration, reflection, and bold ideation. These efforts reflect both the maturity of the network and the energy of what is emerging. Our members, partners, and allies continue to shape the field of philanthropy by centering lived experience, building power, and advancing impact that is both strategic and deeply rooted in community.

This 2025 Annual Report offers a look at how BFN has evolved since 2020, highlighting our growth, membership demographics, and program engagement, while also previewing the strategic framework guiding our direction for 2026 and beyond. Together, these insights affirm where we have been, illuminate where we are now, and invite our community to help shape the next chapter of impact.

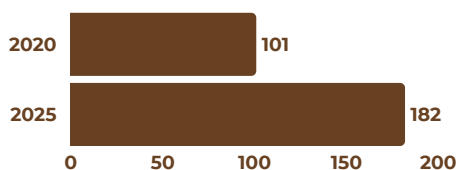
With Gratitude and Partnership,

Paula Ambrose and Byron Johnson
BFN Co-Chairs

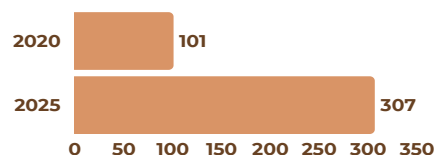
Chantel Walker
BFN Managing Director

BFN's Reach and Influence Continues to Grow THEN (2020) vs NOW (2025)

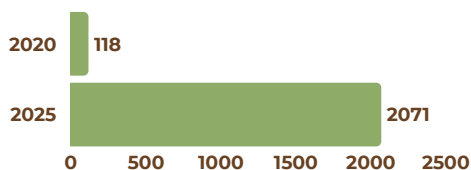
Total Number of Members



Total Number of Engaged Funders



LinkedIn Community of Followers



When I moved to the Bay Area almost four years ago, I was new to the philanthropic space and eager to connect with fellow Black professionals.

Over the past few years, BFN has been instrumental in shaping my vision for my philanthropic future in the region. Thank you, BFN, for playing such a valuable role in my professional journey.

- Kathleen Badejo

William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

Strategic Framework



Create a network that is innovative and connects professionals in the Nine-County Bay Area Region and Greater Bay Area.



Cultivate a space for Black funders to show up authentically that is inclusive of the African Diasporic experience.



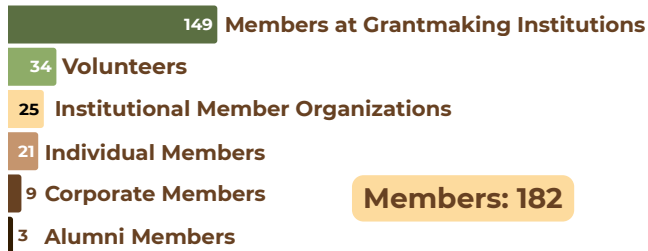
Support the pipeline for Black leadership in philanthropy by provide resources and strategic convenings to support new and experienced Black-identified grantmaking professionals.



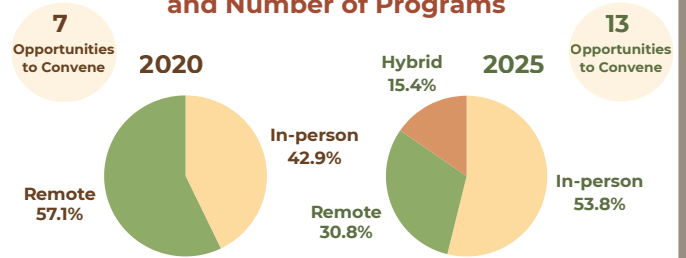
Uplift the case for investments in Black-led social change, and align funders to strategize ways to meet the need.

2025 at a Glance

Membership Overview



Increased Program Flexibility and Number of Programs

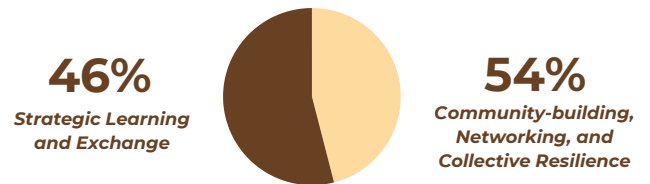


Individuals and Sectors Engaged with BFN



Individuals Engaged: 877+

Time Spent Together



Member Input

Why Members Value BFN



BFN's Core Values Highlighted by Members



Core Programs

Pearls of Wisdom: Black Women in Philanthropy

We uplift the lived experiences of Black women and encourage intergenerational discussion about timely topics impacting the philanthropic sector, facilitating a space for healing, community learning, professional development, strategy sharing.

Current and Rising Leadership in Philanthropy

We create platforms for members to present, lead, and share their expertise, shaping sector dialogue and ensuring Black talent advances into positions of greater influence.

Deeply Rooted and Strong: Celebrating Black Philanthropy

We provide historical context about Black philanthropy and provide a space for impactful and influential leaders in the sector to share what they've learned, building on community-led solutions and traditional acts of service.

Professional Development for Grantmaking Staff

We offer intentional learning sessions, facilitation that strengthen individual leadership and drive institutional adoption of equitable practices.

Connection Circles

We facilitate focused spaces for members and allies to share grantmaking success stories, opportunities for alignment, and establish powerful strategic relationships for collective action and support.

2025 Program Highlights

January

Trailblazers: A Black Philanthropy Panel

Insights on Driving Resources to Support Black-led Social Change Infrastructure

Key Insight: Impact is not just about the capital moved, but the proximity and trust built within the community to make those investments viable.

March

Pearls of Wisdom: Black Women Advancing Racial Equity in Philanthropy

Learnings and approaches to cultivate and amplify collective power: meeting the moment to support equity work while centering joy, resilience, and internal well-being

Key Insight: Spaces like BFN are critical to providing the communal space where joy and resilience are cultivated as strategic assets, ensuring that we meet growing needs with aligned power.

September

Deeply Rooted and Strong: Celebrating the History of Black Philanthropy

Honoring roots in mutual aid as a foundational practice

Key Insight: "Giving back" is an act of liberation that has always been a practice in our community. There are deep ties between traditional mutual aid practices and modern philanthropic leadership.

October

Grantmaking Success: Sharing Our Cross-Sector Strategies and Insights

Sharing successful examples of cross-sector collaboration benefiting Black communities locally and statewide

Key Insight: Collaborative cross-sector work breaks down institutional silos, and can be a strong strategy to accelerate collective impact.

Fifth Anniversary Celebration

We honored the founders, sustainers, and allies who built the foundation upon which BFN now stands.



BFN Founders Award Recipients | Awardees Left to Right: Raquiba LaBrie, Steve Barton, James W. Head, Cedric Brown, Ruth Williams, and Paula Ambrose.

Honoring individuals who supported the Black Funders Network of the Bay Area's foundational development.



BFN Fifth Anniversary Award Recipients | Awardees Left to Right: Kathleen Badejo (on behalf of William and Flora Hewlett Foundation), Retha Robinson, James Head, Michelle Myles Chambers, and La Roux Pendleton

Legacy Award: James W. Head and Retha Robinson
Honoring Longstanding Contributions to Philanthropy

Sustainer Award: Michelle Myles Chambers
Honoring Administrative and Operational Staff at All Levels of Leadership

Rising Leader Award: La Roux Pendleton
Recognizing a leader making meaningful contributions to support Black communities

Ally Award: The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
Recognizing Grantmaking Institutions with Significant Positive Impact



Black Funders Network of the Bay Area provides a profound opportunity for Black professionals in philanthropy to connect, collaborate, and exchange innovative strategies. I find deep satisfaction in helping to strengthen this network, which ultimately amplifies our collective wisdom and impact throughout the Bay Area.

- Dakarai Aarons
BFN Board Member