

The Four Freedoms Fund, housed at NEO Philanthropy, was established in 2003 by a group of funders to support immigrant rights organizations at state and local levels. Over 18 years, the collaborative has channeled over \$170 million, leading to significant improvements in immigrants' lives, including the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and pro-immigrant actions by President Joseph R. Biden in 2021. The report aims to encourage more funders to join this grassroots-led, nationwide movement for dignity, opportunity, and equal rights. The Fund was named after President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's 1941 Four Freedoms speech (freedom of speech, worship, from want, and from fear), and images inspired by Norman Rockwell's depictions, recently recreated to reflect 21st-century U.S. diversity, are featured throughout the report.

Strategic Priorities: To promote systemic reform and full integration of immigrants, the Four Freedoms Fund has adopted several strategic priorities, detailed with perspectives from donors, grantees, and staff.

Building State and Local Movement Infrastructure: The Fund supports a mixed grantee portfolio of state and local organizations across 30 states, forming an infrastructure that protects, promotes, and defends the self-determination, rights, and opportunities of immigrant communities. Stephanie Teatro, former co-executive director of the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC), noted the Fund's crucial role in successfully standing up against anti-immigrant policies and building a more welcoming and inclusive Tennessee.

Combating Immigration Enforcement and Criminalization of Immigrants: Through its Response to Harsh Enforcement Initiative, the Fund supports a national network of nonprofits working to reduce detentions and deportations while advocating for humane treatment in the detention system. Andrea Black, former executive director of Detention Watch Network, highlighted the Fund's willingness to engage deeply in the controversial area of enforcement policy, which other funders often avoided.

Civic Participation: The Fund aims to increase voting rates and vote share among immigrants. An independent analysis in 2019 found that through grantees' work, turnout among low-propensity voters increased from 36% in 2016 to 44% in the 2018 midterm elections. Becky Belcore, co-director of the National Korean American Service and Education Consortium (NAKASEC), praised the Fund as a key supporter for mobilizing communities to stand up for their interests and vote.

Capacity Building: Targeted support is provided for strategic planning, communications, policy advocacy, and leadership transitions, fostering a pipeline of immigrant leaders through training, volunteer recruitment, and other activities. Jonathan Jayes-Green, cofounder of the UndocuBlack Network, credited the Fund with connecting him to training and coaching that enabled him to become a leader during a turbulent time.

Rapid Response: In 2017, the Fund created a Rapid Response Fund to provide immediate support to organizations struggling against unprecedented attacks on immigrant communities post-2016 election. Andrea Guerrero, executive director of Alliance San Diego, emphasized the Fund's quick response, providing rapid-response funding to reach many thousands of people during crisis situations at the border.

Strategic Communications: The Capacity Building Initiative regularly offers communications and messaging training and supports sharing public opinion research across the immigrant rights community. María Rodríguez, executive director of the Florida Immigrant Coalition, stated that capacity-building support from the Fund has significantly helped advocates work across different issues and geographies, equipping them to make a powerful case for change.

The Four Freedoms Fund is supporting a foundational movement for change, providing a unique network for funders to collaborate and learn from peers. This collaboration adds significant value to their work, beyond what individual funders could achieve. Family separation, mass deportations, and high levels of fear and stress plague immigrant communities. Contentious discussions in Washington, D.C., and across the country on immigration enforcement, paths to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, and related issues persist. Immigration is one of the most hotly debated topics in the United States today. Despite overwhelming public support for change, federal lawmakers have struggled to reform the broken U.S. immigration system for two decades. In the absence of federal action, immigrant-led organizations and networks at state and local levels have stepped into the leadership void. Nonprofits and their leaders, staff, and volunteers nationwide have been dauntless in advancing common-sense, humane immigration solutions. Through collective effort, this grassroots movement has made significant progress, including expanded access to driver's licenses, higher education, good jobs, and new protections from detention and deportation. More broadly, they have partnered with other advocates to achieve lasting gains on issues from voting rights to worker protections to environmental justice. This has been accomplished while actively countering proposals and policies that threaten opportunities and rights for immigrants, communities of color, and other marginalized populations.

A Critical Force: In addition to their shared goal of building power and advancing immigrant rights, many of these immigrant-led grassroots organizations are supported by the Four Freedoms Fund, a national donor collaborative created in 2003 by Carnegie Corporation of New York and other foundations. Its aim is the full integration of immigrants into U.S. democracy. In its 18 years, the Fund, housed at NEO Philanthropy, has become a critical force for building a strong infrastructure of local, state-based, and regional organizations. It empowers, protects, and defends immigrant communities while advancing a broader vision of inclusion and equal rights for all. The Fund has become a model for diverse funders to come together to learn, share strategies and ideas, and pool their resources for greater impact. Mayra Peters-Quintero, senior program officer at the Ford Foundation, emphasized, “Four Freedoms is such an essential part of the movement at this point that I can’t imagine we could have made the gains we’ve made without it.” The Ford Foundation was a founding member alongside Carnegie Corporation of New York. Peters-Quintero added that the Fund’s role as an intermediary is a “game changer for philanthropy” as individual funders cannot keep up with ground-level happenings.

Origin Story: The Four Freedoms Fund was launched in 2003 by five national foundations, each with years of individual work on immigration issues: Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, Open Society Institute (now Open Society Foundations), Mertz Gilmore Foundation, and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation (now Knight Foundation). Their goal was to pool funds and develop a joint strategy to support immigrant advocacy at state and local levels, while building grassroots pressure for broader federal reforms. Geri Mannion, director of the Strengthening U.S. Democracy program at Carnegie Corporation, stated, “It was a way to be more responsive and strategic and, most importantly, to get more bang for the buck,” highlighting the need to respond quickly and efficiently to a challenging and changing political environment.

A Challenging Time for Pro-Immigrant Policy: The funders convened at a difficult time for immigrant communities following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, which fueled anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant sentiment. Arab-American immigrants faced detention and questioning, nonimmigrant foreigners had new reporting requirements, and hate crimes against immigrants spiked. Cecilia Muñoz, a senior leader at the National Council of La Raza in 2001, noted, “September 11 changed everything... It made the hill we needed to climb much higher, adding a whole new dimension on national security to the debate and increasing the government’s ability to persecute particular people using immigration law.”

A Focus on Grassroots Efforts: The Four Freedoms Fund began with \$2.8 million in grants, including \$1 million from Carnegie Corporation. From the outset, funders aimed to advance pro-immigrant local and state policies and build grassroots pressure for federal reform. They focused collective grantmaking on states and regions with significant immigrant populations, supporting groups to build capacity for policy change, communicate immigrants’ contributions, form coalitions, and engage immigrants in civic life. Taryn Higashi, executive director of Unbound Philanthropy and former Ford Foundation program officer, explained that local and state work was critical for creating welcoming climates and building momentum for national action. For their work, Higashi and Mannion received the 2009 Scrivner Award for Creative Grantmaking from the Council on Foundations.

Evolution: Over the past 18 years, the Fund evolved in membership, staffing, and strategies, maintaining its focus on supporting immigrant-led groups. The immigrant rights movement experienced highs (like DACA) and lows (intrusive anti-immigrant state policies, post-2016 federal attacks). Following the 2016 elections, the movement responded to relentless attacks, including family separations and mass deportations. The Fund stepped up, making long-term strategic investments. In 2020, with 16 donors, it distributed \$16.4 million in 214 grants to 144 organizations across 30 states, D.C., and national support groups. The staff is highly respected for its expertise. Housed at NEO Philanthropy, the Fund provides a venue for diverse funders to collaborate. Tim Parritt, program officer with Oak Foundation, noted that sitting at the table allows collaboration and maximizes investment impact, benefiting from experienced staff expertise. Current donors include Carnegie Corporation, Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, Ford Foundation, Grove Foundation, Heising-Simons Foundation, JPB Foundation, Kresge Foundation, Luminate, Oak Foundation, Open Society Foundations, Solidarity Giving, Schusterman Family Philanthropies, Unbound Philanthropy, Wallace H. Coulter Foundation, Wellspring Philanthropic Fund, and other benefactors. Frank Sharry, head of America’s Voice, called the Fund an “essential purpose,” acting as a “broker that has connected philanthropy to the important work that’s happening on the ground on these issues, and it’s led the way in building the spine of a grassroots-led movement for change.” Immigrants account for 13.7% of the United States population and come from diverse countries globally, including Mexico, China, India, the Philippines, and El Salvador. While public attention often focuses on specific

groups, the U.S. immigrant diversity spans from Kurds in Nashville to Somalis in Minneapolis, Haitians in Miami to Bangladeshis in Queens, among many others. The Four Freedoms Fund aims to engage with all these groups, as demonstrated by its 2020 grantmaking. Nearly \$17 million was distributed to grantees nationwide, with approximately \$2 million involving rapid-response grants. 2020 Grantmaking at a Glance: The Fund issued 216 grants to 144 grantees in 30 states plus Washington D.C., totaling \$16,587,800. Additionally, 46 grantees received 47 rapid response grants amounting to \$2,314,000. Grantee categories included 90 multiethnic groups, 15 Asian and Pacific Islander-focused groups, 25 Latinx-focused groups, and 9 Black-immigrant groups. A full list of supported organizations is available at www.neophilanthropy.org/collaborative-funds/four-freedoms-fund/grantees. Sources for these figures include the Four Freedoms Fund (March 30, 2021) and Pew Research Center tabulations of the 2018 American Community Survey. While primarily focused on supporting grantees to amplify state and local impact, Four Freedoms Fund grantees nationwide have also played key roles in advancing and protecting pro-immigrant federal policies. Anita Khashu, director of the Four Freedoms Fund, believes funders recognized early on that federal change necessitates grassroots groups educating home communities and policymakers, building power and vote share for new Americans. National legislative efforts for comprehensive immigration reform providing a path to citizenship have repeatedly failed. However, grantees have achieved significant gains. United We Dream, with Fund support, built a diverse movement of young immigrants that convinced the Obama administration to approve the DACA program in 2012, protecting over 800,000 undocumented youth and enabling their educational and career advancement. Cristina Jiménez, former executive director of United We Dream, asserted, “It’s clear to me that the Four Freedoms Fund and its funders share our belief that the key to building power and creating change is that the people closest to the pain are closest to the solutions,” highlighting that directly impacted individuals lead their organization to undeniable results. Since 2012, United We Dream and other grantees defended DACA from attacks and supported young people with applications. They also mobilized for other pro-immigrant federal policy reforms, such as supporting the #DefundHate campaign in 2017 to reduce funding for U.S. Department of Homeland Security enforcement, shifting the conversation from maintaining to reducing spending. Many groups successfully challenged adding a citizenship question to the 2020 U.S. Census, viewing it as an attempt to reduce immigrant participation. Geri Mannion of Carnegie Corporation reiterated, “These groups have shown that supporting and strengthening local and state voices is how you build more power and more pressure for reform at all levels. It may not happen overnight, but we need to keep supporting these groups to make the case for change.” Since its founding, the Four Freedoms Fund has channeled over \$170 million to build and support a robust network of local, state, and national organizations. Through general operating support, capacity building, rapid-response grants, and other aid, the Fund has been a powerful force in building a nationwide movement for immigrant communities, grounded in compassion, respect, and the belief that the U.S. benefits from immigrants' active participation in the economy and local communities. The Fund focuses on several strategic priorities for systemic reform and immigrant integration, including building state and local movement infrastructure, combating immigration enforcement and criminalization of immigrants, civic participation, capacity building, rapid response, and strategic communications. Stephanie Teatro, former co-executive director of the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC), affirmed the Fund's role as a core funder, enabling TIRRC's growth and success against anti-immigrant policies in Tennessee, fostering a more welcoming and inclusive environment. Since its inception, the Four Freedoms Fund's grant-making strategy focused on strengthening state and local groups, recognizing their essential role in driving pro-immigrant reforms at all levels. The Fund currently supports nearly 100 organizations across the country, forming a network of diverse state and local organizations that protect, promote, and defend the self-determination, rights, and opportunities of immigrant communities in 30 states. Grantees include groups like the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC), a statewide pro-immigrant network with over 50 member organizations representing diverse populations, from Latinos to Kurdish refugees and Somalis. Anita Khashu, director of the Four Freedoms Fund, emphasized long-term, flexible funding to strengthen this network, ensuring they are ready to step up to challenges and opportunities. The Fund supports a rich variety of communities, including through its LGBT Initiative for LGBTQ+ immigrants, who face higher risks of detention and deportation due to increased law enforcement contact. Additionally, the Fund is a key supporter of organizations led by and working for Black immigrants (e.g., UndocuBlack Network, African Communities Together), as well as groups focused on young

immigrants, women immigrants, and other marginalized populations. In the early 2000s, immigration enforcement became a major flashpoint, with increasing arrests, detentions, and deportations. Post-2016, the impacts of criminalization and increased enforcement intensified, leading to family separations, mistreatment in abhorrent conditions, and deportations to violent countries, fostering pervasive fear. Immigrants avoided reporting crimes, and parents were reluctant to send children to school. Andrea Black, former executive director of Detention Watch Network (2005-2013), noted philanthropy's initial reluctance to support controversial enforcement work. The Four Freedoms Fund became an early 'lifeline,' engaging deeply to understand community impacts and advocate for saner policies. Since the early 2000s, the Fund's support evolved into a network of partnerships. Through its Response to Harsh Enforcement Initiative, the Fund backs a national network of nonprofits reducing detentions/deportations and advocating humane treatment. Starting 2013, the Fund strongly supported #Not1More, a multifaceted campaign led by the National Day Laborer Organizing Network against rising deportations. Rini Chakraborty, senior director of programs with the Four Freedoms Fund, highlighted grantees' vital role in fighting detention locally, stating, "Immigration is a federal issue, but the battle lines are always at the local level." In May 2017, in response to Texas's SB 4 racial profiling law, the Fund launched a sub-fund, raising over \$2 million for local organizing, business lobbying, research on SB 4's costs, and building a statewide movement. Texas Fund grantees notably achieved local policies reducing profiling and criminalization, such as San Marcos becoming a 'cite-and-release' city and Austin adopting 'Freedom City' policies. Post-2016 election, grantees secured statewide/local laws limiting police roles in federal deportation and convinced governors to veto anti-immigrant bills. In 2019, the Fund created a new fund dedicated to ending child detention, supporting national and local advocacy to reduce youth detention, improve custody conditions, and protect young asylum seekers' due process rights. Carnegie Corporation of New York, a cofounder, supports immigrant civic participation, with its president Vartan Gregorian emphasizing immigrants' role in democracy. The Fund aims to boost voting rates and vote share among immigrant families, especially Latinos and Asians. A 2019 analysis showed grantees increased low-propensity voter turnout from 36% in 2016 to 44% in 2018 midterms. Tom Wong (UC San Diego) affirmed the Fund's critical role in targeting infrequent voters, leading to voting increases among immigrant and voters of color in 2018 and 2020. Funders believe increased immigrant civic participation is vital for advancing pro-immigrant policies and ensuring representative government bodies. Henry Der, who oversaw the Fund's support for civic participation, described the focus on building grantee capacity for nonpartisan voter engagement, mobilizing new American voters and their eligible children; from 2008-2020, the Fund helped grantees reach 13.3 million voters through canvassing and phone calls. In Arizona, One Arizona, a coalition of 23 organizations formed post-SB 1070, registered 190,000 voters in 2018, including many young Latinos, and advanced immigrant-friendly local policies. Shirree Teng and Tom Wong's 2016 evaluation highlighted that SB 1070 underscored the importance of civic engagement and One Arizona's transformative role. In 2020, the Civic Participation Initiative supported 33 grantees in 24 states for nonpartisan campaigns, aiming to contact 3.9 million voters. The Fund provided technical assistance for voter engagement, digital tools, and volunteer recruitment, and organized educational webinars. Beyond voting, grantees train immigrants for community/public leadership; e.g., Arkansas United partnered with Black-led groups to create the New Majority Network in 2018, developing civic leaders. Naturalization campaigns are another focus, assisting thousands with citizenship applications; e.g., Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada boosted applications by 53% (2015-2016) with 306 volunteers and 62 pro-bono lawyers. From its start, largely spurred by the Ford Foundation, the Fund prioritized building a robust field of immigrant rights groups through focused investments in training, technical assistance, executive coaching, and other supports. Recognizing the dire financial situation of many groups, the Fund initially supported them with in-depth aid from the Nonprofit Finance Fund to strengthen financial health. This evolved to include strategic planning, communications, policy advocacy, and leadership transitions. The Capacity Building Initiative offers monthly calls, training webinars, peer-learning seminars/retreats, and connections to consulting/coaching. Jonathan Jayes-Green (cofounder, UndocuBlack Network) credited the Fund with vital training and coaching that enabled his leadership development, stating, "It was the Four Freedoms Fund that connected me to trainings and coaching that made it possible for me to get through that turbulent time and become a leader." Henry Der underscored the commitment to supporting directly impacted individuals into leadership positions. Grantees like United We Dream develop grassroots leaders through training platforms. During the COVID-19 crisis in 2020, Nebraska Appleseed trained over 500 meatpacking workers

on rights/safety. Julien Ross, who oversees the Fund's capacity-building support, highlighted efforts for young movement leaders and grantee wellness/resilience through the Wellness Fund (launched 2018), offering mini-grants and healing coaches for trauma, grief, stress, and burnout. The Fund also organized webinars on digital organizing, fundraising, tax-deductible donations, and workplace harassment. Becky Belcore (NAKASEC) confirmed the value of financial forecasting training during COVID-19, which was crucial for maintaining organizational stability and effectiveness. In 2017, the Fund launched the Rapid Response Fund to provide immediate support to grantees confronting unprecedented attacks on immigrant communities post-2016 election, offering quick financial infusions for urgent needs. Andrea Guerrero (Alliance San Diego) highlighted the Fund's crucial support during crises, such as the 30-day window for DACA renewals in 2017, where rapid-response funding helped reach thousands of recipients. She recalled, "Working at the border, we are facing crisis situations all the time. The Four Freedoms Fund staff knew we could move quickly, and they gave us rapid-response funding to reach many thousands of people." Other grantees used this support for know-your-rights outreach in targeted communities, legal support for deportation defense, and aid for families facing separation and detention. Anita Khashu emphasized the fund's importance in a volatile environment, enabling groups to quickly respond to crisis situations, stating, "It's such a volatile situation, and the changes happen so rapidly that you have to jump in overnight sometimes to make sure these groups have what they need to stay on top of what's really a crisis environment." Rapid-response funds also strengthened grantees' ability to seize opportune moments for pro-immigrant action. For example, in 2019, advocates in 10 states used these funds to secure new laws improving access to higher education for immigrant students (in-state tuition is now available in 20 states, covering over three-fourths of U.S. immigrants) and enhanced access to driver's licenses in five states (covering over half of U.S. immigrants). Over recent years, immigration debates exposed deep societal fault lines, with anti-immigrant, anti-refugee, and anti-Muslim sentiment escalating post-2016, prompting pro-immigrant groups to rethink communications. Key questions included how to counter negative rhetoric while highlighting immigrants' economic and community contributions. From the outset, the Fund recognized the need for targeted communications support. Robert Bray, who directed the Strategic Communications Initiative from 2007, cited a May 2008 convening of communications staff from national, regional, and state immigrant rights groups as a seminal moment for coordinated, effective messaging, focusing on storytelling, training, and networking. The Fund's support expanded to include additional training, webinars, toolkits, and sponsoring polling data/analyses on public attitudes and messaging. In 2012, it supported over 300 staff/volunteers in the Southeast in SPIN Academy training to strengthen anti-immigrant attack countermeasures, with additional regional trainings. Bray stated the main result was improved coordination and alignment, with communications becoming a core activity alongside advocacy and litigation. Francisco Heredia, former director of One Arizona and now a Mesa city council member, affirmed the Fund's support for polling, training, messaging, and Spanish-language media reinforced Latino voter engagement. The Welcoming America campaign, also backed by the Fund and Carnegie Corporation, helps communities become more welcoming. More recently, the Fund expanded research/training for effective communication, establishing the Narrative Research Lab at The Opportunity Agenda, which hosts monthly calls to share opinion research and discuss strategy. Bobby Clark, former VP of programs and communications at the Gill Foundation, noted the collaborative's focus on unifying groups around tested messaging. In 2019, the Technology and Media Initiative, launched with Luminate, supports projects using technology/digital media to advance immigrant rights. During COVID-19, rapid-response communications helped grantees provide safety and health information to constituents. Backstory: Arizona gained international attention for its anti-immigrant sentiment, including former Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio's harsh tactics, Proposition 200 (requiring citizenship proof for voting/benefits), and the 2010 SB 1070 law, which allowed police to detain suspected undocumented individuals. This made Arizona a hotbed of anti-immigrant policymaking. Four Freedoms Fund Investments: Following SB 1070, the Fund provided critical seed funding for the formation of One Arizona, a coalition of organizations advancing immigrant rights. Support focused on capacity building for nonpartisan civic engagement through data skills, youth-led organizing, and year-round voter outreach, emphasizing low-propensity Latino voters and young people. Results: One Arizona grew to over 23 organizations, building civic engagement and democratic participation, registering 190,000 voters in 2018. A 2016 evaluation showed notable increases in voter turnout among Latino voters from 2010-2015. One Arizona's members made 1 million voter contacts and engaged 126,000 unique voters, and boosted Latino

turnout in 2020. Francisco Heredia, city council member in Mesa, Arizona, and former director of One Arizona, stated, “The Four Freedoms Fund was one of the first funders to believe in the work that needed to be done in Arizona, creating a core infrastructure that would help change how we operated as groups and how we worked to create political change.”

Backstory: Colorado faced severe anti-immigrant state legislation in the early 2000s. Measures included HB 1023 (2006), denying public benefits to undocumented immigrants, and SB 90 (2006), requiring police to report suspected undocumented individuals—the nation's first 'show-me-your-papers' law and a precursor to Arizona's SB 1070. Anti-immigrant firebrand Tom Tancredo, a longtime member of Congress, further drew attention to immigration issues.

Four Freedoms Fund Investments: Starting in 2006-2007, the Fund invested in pro-immigrant organizing and advocacy in Colorado, supporting the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition (CIRC) to build statewide organizing capacity. A key priority was building new partnerships with police, leading to community police academies where immigrants learned about the criminal justice system and built trust. CIRC deeply invested in civic engagement and immigrant voter turnout, becoming a critical partner in the Colorado Civic Engagement Roundtable, which includes groups working on environmental issues, reproductive justice, and other topics.

Results: Colorado has seen a remarkable turnaround in immigration. A surge in immigrant, Latino, and Asian American and Pacific Islander voter turnout in 2012 elected a largely pro-immigrant state legislature. In December 2013, SB 90 was repealed. Also in 2013, a law granting driver's licenses to all residents (regardless of immigration status) was adopted, supported by police and agriculture. Undocumented students became eligible for in-state tuition in 2019. Julien Ross, former executive director of CIRC, noted, “We were able to build partnerships with unlikely allies to make the case that Colorado is stronger, safer, and more successful to the extent that we include immigrants.”

Backstory: Tennessee experienced rapid immigrant population growth in the early 21st century, initially adopting welcoming policies like allowing undocumented residents driver's licenses. However, after 9/11, anti-immigrant sentiment grew, leading to over 60 anti-immigrant bills in the legislature between 2008 and 2012, fueled by talk radio and conservative movements.

Four Freedoms Fund Investments: The Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC) has been an anchor grantee for over a decade, receiving general operating support and technical assistance. Stephanie Teatro, former co-executive director of TIRRC, stated this long-term support was crucial for TIRRC becoming a powerful statewide coalition, noting, “We would not be as strong today if not for the long-term general operating support that Four Freedoms Fund provided to us.”

Results: Working with a range of partners, TIRRC actively fought 'show-me-your-papers' policies and other anti-immigrant measures. They were critical in fostering local policies and programs that welcome immigrants and led the 'Welcoming Tennessee' communications campaign to restore civility. When 97 immigrants were arrested in a 2018 meat processing plant raid, TIRRC ensured access to legal services and support, and shared its response with other states facing similar threats. Stephanie Teatro highlighted, “With Four Freedoms Fund support, we were able to develop the advocacy capacity we needed to beat back the worst anti-immigrant bills while building local coalitions to change hearts and minds in communities across the state.”

Backstory: In May 2017, Texas passed SB 4, an extreme 'show-me-your-papers' racial profiling law (similar to Arizona's SB 1070), requiring police to question immigration status and cooperate with ICE detainer requests, with fines for non-compliance. It also punished local officials adopting sanctuary policies that limited local cooperation with federal immigration authorities.

Four Freedoms Fund Investments: In fall 2017, the Fund launched a special sub-fund to support pro-immigrant groups responding to SB 4. The Texas Fund pooled donor resources for local organizing against law enforcement interactions with immigrants and people of color. Priorities included organizing business leaders to lobby lawmakers, researching SB 4's economic/human costs, and building a statewide immigrant movement. The Fund also supported 'know-your-rights' trainings, deportation defense, and hotlines.

Results: Across Texas, grantees achieved local policies protecting immigrants from criminalization/overpolicing. In Houston, Harris County funded immigration defense rather than increasing prosecutors. In Bexar County, a pre-court program was developed allowing noncitizens to avoid arrest. The Texas Fund strengthened statewide collaboration, allowing advocates to successfully challenge anti-immigrant legislation in the 2019 session, protect in-state tuition for undocumented immigrants, and lay groundwork for SB 4's eventual repeal. Pamela Young, lead organizer for United Fort Worth, noted, “It's thanks to Four Freedoms Fund that we were able to move from an all-volunteer organization to having three part-time staff members working on issues of immigration, criminal justice, and civic empowerment. This year, we prevailed on the city to adopt a participatory budgeting process that led to

a transfer of funding from militarizing our local police force to supporting community programs that disrupt violence.” In addition to financial commitment, Four Freedoms Fund donor members review grant materials, make grant decisions, and attend meetings. Funders also occasionally participate in site visits. Subcommittees are formed for specific issues like immigration enforcement or communications. A steering committee includes representatives from contributing foundations. While NEO Philanthropy holds legal and fiduciary responsibility for expenditures, donors set the Fund's overall direction and strategy, with expert staff implementing it and identifying grantees. The Fund operates on a shared belief in the power of collaboration among funders, between funders and staff, and between staff and grantees. Participating funders consistently report that their involvement amplifies their immigrant rights grantmaking impact. Darren Sandow, former executive director of the Hagedorn Foundation, cited pooled resources for greater impact and the learning experience of collaborating with fellow funders and the Fund’s expert staff as key benefits. He noted, “Four Freedoms is really intentional about making sure funders are connecting with and learning from experts at all levels on these issues, including the leaders who are working on the ground in their communities. And we learn so much from each other too. Those relationships you form at a table like this end up adding more value to your work than you ever imagined.” Rebecca Carson, former chief of staff for U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and now Director of Inclusive Democracy Programs at the Four Freedoms Fund, recognized the value of funder collaboration on immigration, stating the Fund helps funders “make our dollars do more.” She described the Fund as a place for funders to learn from peers and experts, collaborate with groups doing ground-level work, and catalyze impact beyond what individual funders could achieve. Moving forward, the Fund will continue to facilitate collaboration among funders and movement leaders to plan next steps in the U.S. immigration journey. This journey took a positive turn with President Biden’s early actions, such as ending border wall construction and repealing the ban on travel from predominantly Muslim countries. This journey will be shaped and led by Four Freedoms Fund grantees like the Florida Immigrant Coalition. María Rodríguez, executive director of the Florida Immigrant Coalition, emphasized the need for ongoing, focused, flexible support for their “David-and-Goliath” campaigns to build a larger ‘we’ in their state. She concluded, “Our movement has achieved so much for our communities, but there is so much more to do.”