

**Uncovering Funding Inequities: Young Racialized Climate Justice Activists' Struggle
within the Realm of Climate Philanthropy**

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Abstract

Global climate philanthropy remains chronically underfunded, with youth only receiving a mere 0.76% out of the global pool of climate funds. Racialized youth, including Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) receive even less than their white counterparts. This report delves into a year-long research project which explores how young racialized climate activists feel about this situation and what can be done about it. Through cellphilm making, that is, films made on cellphilm, 10 young racialized climate justice activists were given the opportunity to share their story, as well as their barriers and solutions on securing funding for their grassroots activism, projects and nonprofit organizations. These films were compiled together like a quilt, and the quilted cellphilm was later shared with 13 environmental funders and to 70 members in the Tkaronto community where there was feedback given and corresponding recommendations developed.

The findings of the study highlighted the disconnect between funder requirements and the lived realities of young racialized climate justice activists who do not have the capacity for financial management and robust governance structures, among other requirements. The study further recognized the desire for funders to want to change their practices and allocate more funding in racialized communities. However, the bureaucratic resistance employees at these organisations might face whether needing to heed to their board, having the inability to participate in multi stakeholder events, and not having diverse staff hinder their progress to make systems change.

Recommendations put forward for funders include funding more nonqualified donees, collecting demographic data on groups funded, creating more board positions for racialized youth, and spending down their endowments. The role of funder networks are essential for funders in moving the needle on these issues, so suggestions for these stakeholders include encouraging funders to support more nonqualified donees, training for funders so that they can change their practices and developing a conference fund for young racialized climate justice activists. This study shows promise in convincing environmental funders across what is currently Canada in making more accessible, inclusive and equitable decisions in the hope of a sustainable and just future.

Foreword

Entering into the environmental field, I always felt like it was not a diverse space. Many of my fellow leaders did not come from an underserved background or had privileges that could get them ahead. Hence, I founded the Green Career Centre where we prepare underrepresented youth for pursuing green careers. Through community research, green career events, and impactful resources, my intention was to make the sustainability sector more welcoming to BIPOC, women and newcomers. However, the ongoing struggle that I faced was lack of stable funding for our initiatives. I knew that I needed to do something to make it easier for other visionaries as my sentiments were echoed by scores of other young, racialized climate justice activists.

Since the beginning of my degree I had several objectives that I wanted to reach, many of which I have been able to achieve through my major research project. With an area of concentration of Business Sustainability & Social Change, I was keen to learn more about how the public, private, and plural sectors interact to invest in climate solutions. Through interviews and scholarly research I have been able to learn more about funder, government, business, youth and community perspectives on climate philanthropy. I was eager to deepen my understanding of climate finance through nonprofits and charities, which I was able to accomplish through my extensive experience collaborating with them on the project.

I also came into this project fascinated by participatory ways of research and activist filmmaking. In order to bridge the communication gap between stakeholders who are often not in the same room as one another, I used cellphilm, films made on cellphones, as a method for young racialized climate justice activists who struggle with obtaining funding, as a means to communicate with funders who have the capital that can help them realize their ambitions. Through community-centred, participatory methods I wanted to produce creative communication mediums for activists, community members and funders so that they can learn more from one another. Ultimately, my goal is to work towards transformative systems change within climate philanthropy to ensure that the space becomes more accessible, diverse, equitable and inclusive.

This report is a culmination of pieces from a year-long research endeavour. It includes a glossary of key definitions that can help all stakeholders learn jargon used to describe concepts within climate philanthropy. It includes the mediums for cellphilm making and communicating barriers and solutions. The project took a deep dive into meeting with funders detailing funders' responses to the concerns of young racialized climate justice activists and

their perceived challenges and strategies. Finally, the project delves into community reception of the initiative, and ways in which the community can coalesce and build solidarity and funding support in the climate crisis. It is my sincere hope that stakeholders will take action in their respective fields on the recommendations set forth within this report and move the needle forward on challenging inequities within the current philanthropic system.

Dedication

I am in awe of all the impactful work that is being done with on-the-ground young racialized climate justice activists in support of a sustainable and just future for all. This research project is dedicated to their tireless efforts, sacrifices and resilience.

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I would like to thank everyone who participated in this research project. Starting with the cellphilm makers and funders/stakeholders who shared their time and expertise, my research supervisor and advisors at York University and other academics and professors who provided valuable resources and readings to enhance this report. Additionally, much gratitude to our partners and funders for both the research and public cellphilm screening event - Lush, Finance Engage Sustain (FES), York University's Academic Excellence Fund, the University of Toronto's Student Environmental Resource Network (UTERN), Regensis, the Green Career Centre (GCC), Bullfrog Energy, and TakingITGlobal's Commit2Act initiative.

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Introduction

The Climate Emergency

Climate change represents the most significant and pressing threat that humanity and the natural environment have ever faced.¹ The earth is experiencing unprecedented warming rates with Canada heating at twice the global average.² This rapid warming inflicts irreversible damage on the environment and all living beings: floods, fires, famines, ocean acidification, loss of biodiversity and ecosystem loss are all continued consequences if we continue on this treacherous path.³ In Canada, we can already feel the impacts of the climate crisis. We can feel the climate crisis in British Columbia with heat waves killing hundreds of vulnerable people.⁴ In Quebec and Ontario, air pollution is omnipresent from forest fires.⁵ In Nova Scotia, the climate crisis floods our homes and begets droughts in Alberta.⁶ Indigenous and other marginalized communities, despite contributing minimally to climate change, bear the brunt of its adverse impacts.⁷ Without comprehensive, collaborative, and unprecedented efforts to mitigate these effects, future generations will inherit a planet that is increasingly hostile and uninhabitable.⁸

¹ “Climate Change ‘Biggest Threat Modern Humans Have Ever Faced’, World-Renowned Naturalist Tells Security Council, Calls for Greater Global Cooperation | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases,” February 23, 2021, <https://press.un.org/en/2021/sc14445.doc.htm>.

² Elizabeth Bush and Donald Lemmen, eds., “Canada’s Changing Climate Report,” *Natural Resources Canada* (Ottawa, Ontario: Government of Canada, 2025), 34. https://natural-resources.canada.ca/sites/www.nrcan.gc.ca/files/energy/Climate-change/pdf/CCCR_FULLREPO_RT-EN-FINAL.pdf.

³ Myles Allen et al., “Summary for Policymakers,” *Global Warming of 1.5°C. an IPCC Special Report on the Impacts of Global Warming of 1.5°C Above Pre-Industrial Levels and Related Global Greenhouse Gas Emission Pathways, in the Context of Strengthening the Global Response to the Threat of Climate Change, Sustainable Development, and Efforts to Eradicate Poverty* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK and New York, NY, USA, 2018), https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2022/06/SPM_version_report_LR.pdf.

⁴ “Heatwaves and Extreme Heat in Canada,” Canadian Climate Institute, May 23, 2024, <https://climateinstitute.ca/reports/extreme-heat-in-canada/#:~:text=The%20B.C.%20heat%20wave%20in,costliest%20disasters%20in%20B.C.%20history>.

⁵ Emily Mae Czachor, “Canadian Wildfire Maps Show Where 2023’s Fires Continue to Burn Across Quebec, Ontario and Other Provinces,” *CBS News*, July 19, 2023, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/map-canadian-wildfires-2023-where-are-the-fires-ontario-quebec/>.

⁶ Julia Levin, “Wildfires, Floods & Heat Waves: Brought to You by Big Oil,” Environmental Defence, May 17, 2024, <https://environmentaldefence.ca/2024/05/17/wildfires-floods-heat-waves-brought-to-you-by-big-oil/>.

⁷ “Indigenous Peoples Disproportionately Impacted by Climate Change, Systematically Targeted for Defending Freedoms, Speakers Tell Permanent Forum | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases,” April 18, 2018, <https://press.un.org/en/2018/hr5389.doc.htm#:~:text=While%20indigenous%20peoples%20historically%20had,t%20o%20cope%20with%20climate%20change>.

⁸ David Wallace-Wells, “The Uninhabitable Earth,” in *Columbia University Press eBooks*, 2018, 17, <https://doi.org/10.7312/asme18999-010>.

Immediate action on climate change is imperative, and the philanthropic sector has a critical role to play.⁹ The climate crisis already exerts profound impacts across all areas of philanthropy, including health, education, social services, human rights, and gender equity.¹⁰ For organizations not primarily focused on climate issues, the pervasive risk posed by climate change necessitates integrating a climate-conscious perspective into their foundational strategies. Regardless of being a funder or not, the climate crisis is an issue that all stakeholders should care about since it will have impacts that transcend themselves, including affecting communities, governments and businesses. The situation will only get worse if we do not collectively put our dollars and decision making where they are needed in order to adapt to and mitigate the crisis.¹¹

Climate Justice Funding Allocation and Distribution

When exploring climate funding allocation and distribution it is important to compare funding across geographies, domains and demographics. In fact, as of 2020 less than 2% of global philanthropic giving was dedicated to climate change mitigation.¹² With youth specifically, according to the Youth Climate Justice Study, only 0.76% of climate philanthropy is invested in youth-led climate activism.¹³ Young people are concerned about what their future will look like, and want to be part of the solution. As put forward by an interviewee who partook in the study, “The bottom line is we can talk about targets, the 1.5 and 2 degrees. But all the leaders making those pledges, I don’t think they will be there delivering them in the year 2050. So if you are talking about sustainable development, you have to engage the young people today who are going to be here in 20 or 30 years time”.¹⁴

Youth are at the forefront of climate work, believe in its value and are pushing their activism forward with a sense of urgency.¹⁵ However, funding for climate justice has not been

⁹ Community Foundations of Canada et al., “Canadian Philanthropic Commitment on Climate Change (CPCCC) Year 1 Report,” December 2023, 5.

https://pfc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/CPCCC-Report-ENGLISH_corrected.pdf.

¹⁰ Community Foundations of Canada et al., “Canadian Philanthropic Commitment on Climate Change (CPCCC) Year 1 Report.” 5.

¹¹ Levin, “Wildfires, Floods & Heat Waves: Brought to You by Big Oil.”

¹² ClimateWorks Foundation, “New Report Finds Still Less Than 2% of Global Philanthropic Giving Was Dedicated to Climate Change Mitigation in 2020 - ClimateWorks Foundation,” October 7, 2021, <https://www.climateworks.org/press-release/new-report-finds-still-less-than-2-of-global-philanthropic-giving-was-dedicated-to-climate-change-mitigation-in-2020/>.

¹³ Admin, “Youth Climate Justice Study,” youthclimateaction.co.uk, n.d., <https://youthclimatejusticestudy.org/>.

¹⁴ Admin, “Youth Climate Justice Study.”

¹⁵ Neha Chollangi, “Climate Change Gets Under 10 Hours of Class Time per Year — These Seven Youth-led Environmental Initiatives Are Taking Action Anyway,” Future of Good, May 4, 2022, <https://futureofgood.co/seven-youth-led-environmental-initiatives/>.

high even in terms of individual giving sitting at only 2% in Canada.¹⁶ The majority of the other funding buckets are as such: 40% of donations are allocated to religious organizations, while 35% of total donations are distributed fairly equally across three sub sectors including health, social services and international organizations.¹⁷ From a major donor perspective, Environment Funders Canada (EFC) is a network of 75+ funders that make grants of at least \$20,000/year on funding for the environment.¹⁸ In 2022, amongst 44 data submissions by their members, \$183,626,078.04 was allocated to fund climate change, conservation, nature education and four other environmental thematic areas.¹⁹ As such, major donor funding for the environment equates to only a mere 4% of philanthropic contributions across the country annually.²⁰

Why Philanthropy and Not Government Policy?

The Government of Canada does have significantly more funding allocated to the environment compared to philanthropy, with the liberal government committing \$1.6 billion allocated to Canada's National Adaptation Strategy to keep communities safe from the climate crisis.²¹ One can argue that more funding can be allocated to climate justice through federal and provincial policy. In an ideal world, it would be easier to just tax the rich and give it to the public good.²² Public assets and the decisions about how those assets are spent would be made by democratically elected people who have expertise in various areas.²³ As put forward by FES in their interview, there is how we wish the world would be, and there is how the world actually is. However, despite attempts to engage with the government, these stakeholders were unable to be reached for this study, despite numerous attempts. Hence, this

¹⁶ David Lasby and Cathy Barr, "The Giving Behaviour of Canadians: Who Gives, How, and Why?," report, ed. Alexandra Gardner et al., trans. Monique Joly, *30 Years of Giving in Canada* (Rideau Hall Foundation and Imagine Canada, 2018), 29, https://www.imaginecanada.ca/sites/default/files/2019-05/30years_report_en.pdf.

¹⁷ David Lasby and Cathy Barr, "The Giving Behaviour of Canadians: Who Gives, How, and Why?," report, ed. Alexandra Gardner et al., trans. Monique Joly, *30 Years of Giving in Canada* (Rideau Hall Foundation and Imagine Canada, 2018), 28, https://www.imaginecanada.ca/sites/default/files/2019-05/30years_report_en.pdf.

¹⁸ Environment Funders Canada, "Become a Member | Environment Funders Canada," June 20, 2024, <https://environmentfunders.ca/membership/become-a-member/>.

¹⁹ Ben McNamee, Allie McHugh, and Hussain Alahmr, "2022 Environmental Grants Data Landscape Snapshot," *Environment Funders Canada*, September 2023, 7, <https://environmentfunders.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/EFC-Data-Report-2-Data-Collection-and-Analysis-Methodology-2.pdf>.

²⁰ Jean-Marc Mangin et al., "2024 Landscape Report" (Philanthropic Foundations of Canada, n.d.), 12, <https://pfc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/2024-Landscape-Report.pdf>.

²¹ Department of Finance Canada, "Chapter 5: Safer, Healthier Communities | Budget 2024," Government of Canada, April 16, 2024, <https://budget.canada.ca/2024/report-rapport/chap5-en.html>.

²² Morris Pearl, Erica Payne, and Patriotic Millionaires, *Tax The Rich!: How Lies, Loopholes, and Lobbyists Make the Rich Even Richer* (The New Press, 2021), 125.

²³ Pearl, Payne, and Millionaires, *Tax The Rich!: How Lies, Loopholes, and Lobbyists Make the Rich Even Richer*, 46.

report will mostly be focused on the role of philanthropic actors - whether private or public foundations, funding intermediaries or businesses with corporate social responsibility (CSR) departments. To lend a perspective on government actions and next steps on climate funding, publicly available commentary and critiques will be utilised to demonstrate potential recommendations.

Growing the Climate Pie

The discussion will also centre on growing the ‘climate pie’, the amount of funding that stakeholders commit to climate justice, in order to garner the much needed and necessary support to tackle the climate crisis. According to FES in their interview, EFC and another private family foundation have conducted a stocktake of the increase in climate philanthropy that is required by 2030, which would mean that the overall amount of environmental philanthropy would need to increase from 4% to 10%. FES has also shared that the amount of climate philanthropy available needs to be proportional relative to the number of youth in what is currently Canada. Since there are 12% of young people relative to the entire population, FES believes that \$70 million needs to be committed to youth-led climate work by 2030.

Lack of Funding Allocated to Climate Justice

From a major donor perspective, approximately 45 foundations support energy and environment activities in Canada.²⁴ However, detailed information on their spending is not publicly accessible.²⁵ Carroll et al., using data from a freedom of information request to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), estimated that the top 100 foundations in Canada spent \$1.377 billion in the 2017 fiscal year.²⁶ A significant finding is the role Canadian foundations have played in garnering popular support for climate inaction by funding “clean growth” environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOS).²⁷ Their research indicates that large foundation donations have favoured the economic and business elite while neglecting

²⁴ Christina E. Hoicka et al., “Misalignment or Exclusion? Investigating Climate and Energy Philanthropy Funding of Diversity,” *Energy Research & Social Science* 106 (December 1, 2023): 2, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2023.103317>.

²⁵ Hoicka et al., “Misalignment or Exclusion? Investigating Climate and Energy Philanthropy Funding of Diversity,” 2.

²⁶ Hoicka et al., “Misalignment or Exclusion? Investigating Climate and Energy Philanthropy Funding of Diversity,” 2.

²⁷ Hoicka et al., “Misalignment or Exclusion? Investigating Climate and Energy Philanthropy Funding of Diversity,” 2.

critical, transformative social justice sectors within the environmental community.²⁸ These sectors include Canadian ENGOs advocating for reconciliation, a just transition for workers and communities, energy democracy, and climate justice.²⁹ More funding needs to be allocated to these transformative ENGOs in order to pave the way for community solutions that will be the most effective for combating climate change.

Flawed Systems and Structures

Current System of Neoliberal Capitalism and Neocolonialism

Prominent scholars have explored how neoliberal capitalism has driven widespread global inequality, affecting various social and environmental dimensions. Defined by its emphasis on privatization, liberalization, and deregulation with a core focus on economist principles, neoliberalism has reinforced individualistic and market-centered values, often to the detriment of marginalized groups.³⁰ Neoliberalism has become a dominant mode of discourse, ingrained in the way many people interpret, live in, and understand the world.³¹ This applies to the world of ‘new philanthropy’, which advances neoliberalism by legitimizing social inequality, contributing to the restructuring of the welfare state (particularly through the outsourcing of social services to charitable organizations), and encouraging a limited notion of citizenship that is exercised through private charity.³²

In other parts of the world, including Africa, neocolonialism still runs rampant, with developed countries trapping poorer nations in a perpetual state of poverty and exploitation.³³ These sentiments can also be felt in the Global North where in charity, everyone except those who need to be helped often decide which poor individuals deserve assistance.³⁴ For example, WE Charity, founded by two Canadian white males, would initiate voluntourism trips to build

²⁸ Hoicka et al., “Misalignment or Exclusion? Investigating Climate and Energy Philanthropy Funding of Diversity,” 2.

²⁹ Hoicka et al., “Misalignment or Exclusion? Investigating Climate and Energy Philanthropy Funding of Diversity,” 4.

³⁰ Jan Aart Scholte, “The Sources of Neoliberal Globalization,” *United Nations Research Institute for Social Development*, October 10, 2005, 7, <https://www.unrisd.org/en/library/publications/the-sources-of-neoliberal-globalization>.

³¹ David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Oxford University Press eBooks, 2005, 3, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780199283262.001.0001>.

³² Mary-Beth Raddon, “Neoliberal Legacies: Planned Giving and the New Philanthropy,” *Studies in Political Economy* 81, no. 1 (March 1, 2008): 28, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19187033.2008.11675072>.

³³ Bekeh Utietiang Ukelina, ed., *Who Owns Africa?: Neocolonialism, Investment, and the New Scramble*, 1st Edition (Leuven University Press, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv2q4b03k>.

³⁴ Dean Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)* (Verso Books, 2020), 21.

wells or repair villages to “free the children”.³⁵ There were claims made from former volunteers that none of the work was meeting the needs of the community, and was in fact, taking away from the developing nations’ economy by robbing locals of employment opportunities.³⁶ To make matters worse, neocolonial methods and the rules that are enforced with these types of projects frequently promote racist and sexist stereotypes.³⁷ These include notions that poor women of colour and immigrant women have too many children, that Black families are dysfunctional, and that Indigenous children are better off separated from their families.³⁸ There is a high degree of white saviourism, where white people feel like they can save others who are in need of their help.³⁹ In the context of climate philanthropy, those who are the most disadvantaged and in need of help, are often looped into a cycle of paternalism where they are reliant on those with power, wealth and privilege, often white people, to break free from the confines of the climate crisis.

Why Do We Have Nonprofits and Charities?

In order to comprehend the reason in which systems are set-up the way they are, it is imperative to understand the underlying history behind nonprofit and charitable structures. The expansion of the nonprofit sector over the past half-century was a response to the threat posed by mass mutual aid movements in the 1960s and '70s.⁴⁰ This shift aimed to demobilize grassroots efforts, legitimizing unjust systems and obscuring the fact that real change comes from large-scale movements rather than small groups of professionals.⁴¹ Today, nonprofits addressing poverty are often run by white elites who promote the idea that only those with advanced degrees can solve social problems. This narrative obscures the true causes of poverty and climate change, which are rooted in greed, systemic racism, colonialism, and other structural issues.⁴² Nonprofits often replicate the same injustices they aim to address, operating like businesses with hierarchical structures that lead to unequal pay, workplace

³⁵ Rebecca Klaassen, “We Really Need to Talk About WE’s White-Saviour Problem,” *HuffPost*, July 15, 2020, https://www.huffpost.com/archive/ca/entry/we-charity-volunteer-white-saviour_ca_5f0e0652c5b648c301f07314

³⁶ Klaassen, “We Really Need to Talk About WE’s White-Saviour Problem.”

³⁷ Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*, 21.

³⁸ Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*, 21.

³⁹ Klaassen, “We Really Need to Talk About WE’s White-Saviour Problem.”

⁴⁰ Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*, 23.

⁴¹ Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*, 23.

⁴² Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*, 23.

harassment, and worker exploitation.⁴³ Despite presenting themselves as solutions to systemic problems, nonprofits often stabilize and legitimize these issues.⁴⁴

The Nonprofit Industrial Complex

In the *Revolution Will Not Be Funded*, Rodriguez uncovers the emergence of the non-profit industrial complex (NPIC) which was created as a way for governments to entrap non-profits into an industry of fear like the prison industrial complex (PIC) where they are subjected to restrictive conditions in order to operate.⁴⁵ The NPIC and the state use non-profits to further capitalist interests by controlling social justice movements, diverting public funds to private foundations, and managing dissent to safeguard capitalism.⁴⁶ They redirect activist efforts into career-focused organizing, and allow corporations to mask exploitative practices through philanthropy.⁴⁷ Additionally, they encourage social movements to emulate capitalist structures instead of challenging them.⁴⁸

In essence, the NPIC creates a social movement that is non-collaborative, narrowly focused and competitive.⁴⁹ By way of example, to maintain funding groups must compete by highlighting only their own successes, regardless of the effectiveness of their strategies.⁵⁰ This competitive environment stifles honest dialogue about both successes and failures.⁵¹ Over time, nonprofits become trapped in repeating the same strategies they have told funders were successful, even if they were not, leading to inflexibility.⁵² As nonprofits prioritize attracting funders over building mass-based movements, they start niche marketing their

⁴³ Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*, 23.

⁴⁴ Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*, 24.

⁴⁵ Incite! Women Of Color Against Violence, ed., *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex* (Duke University Press Books, 2017), 8.

⁴⁶ Incite! Women Of Color Against Violence, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, 3.

⁴⁷ Incite! Women Of Color Against Violence, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, 3.

⁴⁸ Incite! Women Of Color Against Violence, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, 3.

⁴⁹ Incite! Women Of Color Against Violence, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, 10.

⁵⁰ Incite! Women Of Color Against Violence, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, 10.

⁵¹ Incite! Women Of Color Against Violence, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, 10.

⁵² Incite! Women Of Color Against Violence, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, 10.

organizations' work, focusing on specific issues or strategies.⁵³ This approach fragments the movement, making it harder to achieve broad-based social and environmental change.⁵⁴

The Professionalisation of Nongovernmental Organizations

Challenges persist, including with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), which act as nonprofits but are removed from the government, allowing for greater freedom on their large scale, often international work.⁵⁵ Over the past 30 years, the professionalization of NGOs has concentrated power within organizations by emphasizing paid staff roles, often staffed by individuals trained in technical and managerial skills from Western-based programs.⁵⁶ This shift has led to a managerial approach that prioritizes organizational governance over radical activism, often sidelining grassroots movement leaders.⁵⁷ Professional staff increasingly represent NGOs in public and policy spaces, potentially detaching the organizations from their activist roots and limiting broader social movements.⁵⁸ This trend reflects a broader colonial influence, as Western models and assumptions dominate NGO practices, undermining local knowledge and traditional practices.⁵⁹ Funding from Northern-based NGOs and governments further pressures local organizations to adopt these managerial practices, often prioritizing administrative compliance over genuine grassroots mobilization.⁶⁰ Consequently, the professionalization of dissent risks devaluing experiential knowledge from social struggles, fragmenting oppositional movements, and reinforcing neoliberal and colonial structures, rather than overthrowing them.⁶¹

Movement for Nonprofits and Charities to Operate like Businesses

From another perspective on how nonprofits and charities can do better within the confines of capitalism, Dan Pallotta of *Uncharitable*, contends that we should be moving away from the Puritan nonprofit ideology that disregards self-interest, advertising, and having

⁵³ Incite! Women Of Color Against Violence, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, 10.

⁵⁴ Incite! Women Of Color Against Violence, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, 11.

⁵⁵ David Weedmark, "NGOs Vs. Nonprofits," Small Business - Chron.com, October 17, 2018, <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/ngos-vs-nonprofits-65685.html>.

⁵⁶ Aziz Choudry and Dip Kapoor, *NGOization: Complicity, Contradictions and Prospects* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013), 14.

⁵⁷ Choudry and Kapoor, *NGOization: Complicity, Contradictions and Prospects*, 15.

⁵⁸ Choudry and Kapoor, *NGOization: Complicity, Contradictions and Prospects*, 15.

⁵⁹ Choudry and Kapoor, *NGOization: Complicity, Contradictions and Prospects*, 16.

⁶⁰ Choudry and Kapoor, *NGOization: Complicity, Contradictions and Prospects*, 17.

⁶¹ Choudry and Kapoor, *NGOization: Complicity, Contradictions and Prospects*, 17.

all funds allocated exclusively to those in need.⁶² Instead, he argues that the nonprofit world should recognize the true value of its employees by paying them salaries for what they are worth, and allocate advertising costs to get more people interested in donating to the cause.⁶³ Pallotta's belief is that the funding pie will grow and hence create more impact.⁶⁴ Pallotta maintains that the way in which nonprofits should operate are like businesses, and in order to do that nonprofits need to attract the best talent, garner sufficient interest from people who can donate, which is how they will be more adequately prepared to fulfil their mission.⁶⁵ When nonprofits are stuck paying poverty line wages, just struggling to get by, they will not bring the results that will allow more impact to be made.⁶⁶ However, if an executive is paid in proportion to what they are expected to deliver then more impact can be made.⁶⁷ For example, he shared the case of a former President of a nonprofit charitable organization being paid \$360,000 a year with a performance bonus of \$150,000, but she was able to increase revenues of the organization from half a billion dollars to one and a half billion dollars.⁶⁸

Nonprofits and Charities Set-Up to Only Benefit the Wealthy

Evidently, due to the way in which charities are set-up they are increasingly privatized and outsourced to the large nonprofit sector, which benefits wealthy individuals more than the poor.⁶⁹ Elite donors control funding, dictating which projects receive support.⁷⁰ In fact, the top 1% of donors direct 70% of donations.⁷¹ The nonprofit system also serves as a tax shelter for the wealthy, allowing them to avoid taxes by donating to charitable foundations.⁷² Christine E. Ahn critiques this system, arguing that foundations, intended to address capitalism's flaws, actually fail to support programs for the poor or marginalized or promote social change.⁷³ These foundations often support projects that align with the interests and lives of their predominantly white boards and executives, such as elite cultural institutions.⁷⁴

⁶² Dan Pallotta, *Uncharitable: How Restraints on Nonprofits Undermine Their Potential* (Tufts University Press, 2008), 125.

⁶³ Pallotta, *Uncharitable: How Restraints on Nonprofits Undermine Their Potential*, 126.

⁶⁴ *UnCharitable (US Version)* (Roco Films, 2023), <https://video.alexanderstreet.com/watch/uncharitable-us-version>.

⁶⁵ Pallotta, *Uncharitable: How Restraints on Nonprofits Undermine Their Potential*, 126.

⁶⁶ *UnCharitable (US Version)*.

⁶⁷ *UnCharitable (US Version)*.

⁶⁸ *UnCharitable (US Version)*.

⁶⁹ Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*, 23.

⁷⁰ Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*, 23.

⁷¹ Rebecca Darwent, "How to Fund Real Change in Your Community," February 2023, https://www.ted.com/talks/rebecca_darwent_how_to_fund_real_change_in_your_community?subtitle=en.

⁷² Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*, 23.

⁷³ Incite! Women Of Color Against Violence, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, 9.

⁷⁴ Darwent, "How to Fund Real Change in Your Community."

By giving away only a small percentage of their wealth annually, these foundations maintain tax benefits and social prestige while directing funds to their preferred causes and depriving the public of rightful funds while returning only a fraction of lost tax revenue.⁷⁵ Ahn also highlights that these funds often originate from profits generated through labour exploitation, with corporations using foundations to offer "relief" to workers harmed by their own practices.⁷⁶ Instead of viewing foundations as a source of funding we should appreciate, Ahn proposes that we see them as entities that need to be held accountable, similar to how we would demand accountability from corporations or the government for the public's benefit.⁷⁷

Addressing the Elephant in the Room

Given that in Canada we do live within a capitalist economy, and grassroots groups are at the forefront of change, the above arguments are quite incongruous. Palotta is of the opinion of mastering the capitalist system and creating more of an impact through charities by way of high executive compensation.⁷⁸ Yet Rodriguez and Gilmore reject this point of view by explicating the reasons why racialized youth are suffering from the climate crisis due to capitalism and colonialism being at the root of injustices.⁷⁹ Given the disbalances between these points of view it is immensely challenging to derive solutions given the dichotomy in the world that we live in.

In my perspective, charities and nonprofits very well could operate like businesses and create more impact. However, they would be doing so at the expense of being able to challenge the capitalist system and lingering colonialism. As well they would not have unbridled freedom in how they tackle the challenges that come their way. Community and grassroots efforts would be undermined with the intention to satisfy funders at the downfall of meeting community needs. The private and plural sectors might not have all the solutions, and the government, through regulatory bodies such as the CRA, might be able to provide support for where these sectors fall short.

A Primer on the CRA's Role in Climate Philanthropy

⁷⁵ Incite! Women Of Color Against Violence, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, 9.

⁷⁶ Incite! Women Of Color Against Violence, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, 9.

⁷⁷ Incite! Women Of Color Against Violence, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, 9.

⁷⁸ *UnCharitable (US Version)*.

⁷⁹ Incite! Women Of Color Against Violence, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, 25–39.

The CRA establishes regulations and guidelines that charities must adhere to in order to maintain their status. While designed to ensure accountability, these regulations often pose challenges for young activists and smaller organizations.⁸⁰ Most grassroots and nonprofit organizations that organize youth and racialized-led climate justice activism are not registered charities since they often cannot handle the administrative and financial burden of all that is required by securing and maintaining this status.⁸¹ As a result, many of these groups and organizations partner with a registered charity, often an intermediary with connections to funders, to secure funding. Hence, the role of registered charities and intermediaries has been essential in enabling youth and racialized-led grassroots groups and organizations without charitable status (which are labelled as ‘non qualified donees’) access the funding that they so desperately need.

Challenge with Non Qualified Donee Status

Non Qualified Donees (NQDs) have many difficulties securing funding, since legally, many foundations were only permitted to issue funding to Qualified Donees. This legal requirement is set forth within a foundation’s charitable objects, which outline their purposes and activities.⁸² Most foundations automatically include in their charitable objects that they can only fund Qualified Donees, or have a very narrow scope of charitable purposes or activities, excluding NQDs automatically from applying to their funding opportunities.⁸³ Funders would need to go through a lengthy and costly legal process to revise and remove this wording and specify they can fund NQDs.⁸⁴ In 2022, there were changes set to take place with the *Income Tax Act*, so funding could become more inclusive and accessible to NQDs. The CRA shared draft guidelines to help charities understand their interpretation of the changes to the *Income Tax Act* which would make it easier for charities to work with NQDs.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ Gabe Oatley, “CRA Guidance on Non-qualified Donees a ‘Good First Draft’ but Leaders Are Pushing for Several Big Changes Before Government Finalizes Policy | Future of Good,” Future of Good, January 10, 2023, <https://futureofgood.co/cra-guidance-on-non-qualified-donees/>.

⁸¹ Neha Chollangi, “Explainer: Non-qualified Donees and the Push to Fund Them Anyway,” Future of Good, November 3, 2021, <https://futureofgood.co/explainer-non-qualified-donees/>.

⁸² Canada Revenue Agency, “Registered Charities Making Grants to Non-qualified Donees,” Canada.ca, December 19, 2023, <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/charities-giving/charities/policies-guidance/charities-making-grants-non-qualified-donees.html#toc12>.

⁸³ Sara Krynitzki, “PFC Policy Analysis: Final Guidelines on New Rules for Granting to Nonqualified Donees,” Philanthropic Foundations Canada, January 31, 2024, <https://pfc.ca/policy-advisory-pfc-analysis-of-final-guidelines-on-new-rules-for-granting-to-nonqualified-donees/#:~:text=In%202022%2C%20the%20Canada%20Revenue,but%20do%20not%20have%20registered>.

⁸⁴ Gabe Oatley, “New Toolkit Aims to Debunk Idea That Funding Non-qualified Donees Is Riskier | Future of Good,” Future of Good, June 5, 2024, <https://futureofgood.co/new-toolkit-aims-to-debunk-idea-that-funding-non-qualified-donees-is-riskier/>.

⁸⁵ Canada Revenue Agency, “Registered Charities Making Grants to Non-Qualified Donees.”

The CRA then engaged with stakeholders to collect feedback on the guidance they issued which was later finalized in December 2023.

Philanthropic Foundations of Canada noted how the guidance issued by the CRA only set forth non-compulsory recommendations and is not necessarily the law.⁸⁶ As part of the guidance, the CRA put together a risk assessment tool, so that funders would understand which ranges of funding are low to high risk to issue out to NQDs. Hence, even though the CRA's risk assessment tool outlined that medium risk grants range from \$5000 to \$50000, funders do not have to follow that recommendation.⁸⁷ Instead, funders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the concept of trust based philanthropy which supports long-term and higher value grants for NQDs.⁸⁸

Furthermore, the existing 'direction and control' system that is written in the guidance, explains how charities must retain control over activities that NQDs perform on its behalf in order to receive funding. This part of the guidance was criticized for being patronizing, giving funders excessive control over NQDs' operations and intellectual property.⁸⁹ Furthermore, there is also the concern regarding directed giving, where the *Income Tax Act* specifies that a donor cannot request that a donation they are making is given to a specific NQD, otherwise the charity that receives the donation can lose its charitable registration.⁹⁰ This is problematic since it makes it appear that partnerships between charities and NQDs are not legitimate.⁹¹

Spending Down Endowments

There is also the concern that foundations are not spending down their endowment, and funds are not issued fast enough to meet the pressing needs of addressing the climate crisis.⁹² The Ivey Foundation has taken a step in making this possible, penning an open letter sharing the news that the foundation would wind up their \$100 million by the end of

⁸⁶ Krynitzki, "PFC Policy Analysis: Final Guidelines on New Rules for Granting to Nonqualified Donees."

⁸⁷ Canada Revenue Agency, "Registered Charities Making Grants to Non-Qualified Donees."

⁸⁸ Krynitzki, "PFC Policy Analysis: Final Guidelines on New Rules for Granting to Nonqualified Donees."

⁸⁹ Gabe Oatley, "'Major Victory' or Disappointment? Mixed Reviews on Whether New CRA Guidance Will Spur More Granting to Non-qualified Donees | Future of Good," Future of Good, January 18, 2024, <https://futureofgood.co/major-victory-or-disappointment-mixed-reviews-on-whether-new-cra-guidance-will-spur-more-granting-to-non-qualified-donees/>.

⁹⁰ Krynitzki, "PFC Policy Analysis: Final Guidelines on New Rules for Granting to Nonqualified Donees."

⁹¹ Krynitzki, "PFC Policy Analysis: Final Guidelines on New Rules for Granting to Nonqualified Donees."

⁹² Gabe Oatley, "Ivey Foundation to 'Spend Down' \$100M Endowment Focusing on Economy-based Climate Solutions. Decision Offers Big Opportunity, but Also Risk of 'Drowning Out' Other Approaches. | Future of Good," Future of Good, December 2, 2022, <https://futureofgood.co/ivey-foundation-spends-down-100m/>.

December 2027.⁹³ Notably there still existed issues in this scheme, as the foundation would have a strong focus on issuing these funds to existing grantees, leaving little to no room for newer grassroots groups to secure funding from them.⁹⁴ Additionally, they would only allocate this funding to the Economy and Environment program which pushes forward financial and technological approaches to climate change as opposed to grassroots and community organizing.⁹⁵

Increasing Disbursement Quota and Board Diversity

Luckily, in 2022 the federal government increased the disbursement quota for foundations with assets over \$1 million from 3.5% to 5%, requiring these foundations to grant a higher percentage of their assets beyond the \$1 million mark.⁹⁶ This change aims to enable foundations to allocate more funds to organizations in need. Imagine Canada has recommended increasing this quota to 7%⁹⁷, while the Justice Fund advocates for a more radical 10%.⁹⁸ Donor-advised funds (DAFs) also present a loophole, allowing funders to bypass disbursement regulations, necessitating CRA action to gather more data and inform future tax policies.⁹⁹ In order to make the sector more equitable and inclusive of progressive ideologies, there has been a call to increase board diversity. Despite a 2019 recommendation from the Special Senate Committee, the CRA's T3010 and T1044 forms still do not collect such data.¹⁰⁰ The CRA states that implementing this would require an amendment to the

⁹³ Rosamond Ivey and Bruce Lourie, "A Letter to Our Friends and Partners on the Decision to Wind up the Ivey Foundation and Distribute Its Full Endowment by 2027," Ivey Foundation, November 29, 2022, [https://www.ivey.org/documents/WindUp_OpenLetter_Final%20PDF%20\(2\).pdf](https://www.ivey.org/documents/WindUp_OpenLetter_Final%20PDF%20(2).pdf).

⁹⁴ Oatley, "Ivey Foundation to 'Spend Down' \$100M Endowment Focusing on Economy-Based Climate Solutions. Decision Offers Big Opportunity, but Also Risk of 'Drowning Out' Other Approaches. | Future of Good."

⁹⁵ Oatley, "Ivey Foundation to 'Spend Down' \$100M Endowment Focusing on Economy-Based Climate Solutions. Decision Offers Big Opportunity, but Also Risk of 'Drowning Out' Other Approaches. | Future of Good."

⁹⁶ "Policy Priority: A Scaled Disbursement Quota to Increase Funds Available to Communities | Imagine Canada," n.d., <https://www.imaginecanada.ca/en/policy-priority/disbursement-quota>.

⁹⁷ "Imagine Canada's Position on an Increase to the Disbursement Quota | Imagine Canada," Imagine Canada, March 16, 2021, <https://www.imaginecanada.ca/en/360/imagine-canada-position-increase-disbursement-quota>.

⁹⁸ Gabe Oatley, "Tired of 'Siloed' Conversations, Justice Fund Protest Brings Disbursement Quota Advocacy to the Street," Future of Good, November 4, 2021, <https://futureofgood.co/justice-fund-protest/>.

⁹⁹ Gabe Oatley, "Interview: CRA's Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good," Future of Good, March 22, 2023, <https://futureofgood.co/interview-cras-director-general-of-charities-says-non-qualified-donee-policy-a-key-priority-and-donor-advised-fund-data-changes-coming-this-fall/>.

¹⁰⁰ Oatley, "Interview: CRA's Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good."

Income Tax Act, as current provisions do not mandate collecting information on board diversity for compliance or public transparency.¹⁰¹

Why Fund Racialized Youth?

The Importance of Youth Movements

Young people are often portrayed as the primary advocates for climate change awareness, bearing the immense responsibility of educating the world and solving the problems almost miraculously.¹⁰² This expectation is not only unrealistic but also unjust. The excessive burden placed on this generation has resulted in feelings of anger, frustration, sadness, and anxiety.¹⁰³ Panic attacks related to wildfires, shock at the destruction caused by Arctic storms, and disillusionment over damage to plants and wildlife have contributed to a rise in depression among young people.¹⁰⁴ Consequently, youth-led climate justice activism has surged rapidly. Just thirteen months after Greta Thunberg's initial solo protest at the Swedish Parliament in August 2018, over 7 million young people were participating in climate protests across more than 140 countries.¹⁰⁵ “It was young people who moved climate change to the front of the global agenda,” said Simon Stiel, UNFCCC Executive Secretary, just before the COP27 climate summit in Egypt.¹⁰⁶ His comments coincided with hundreds of young activists gathering in Sharm el-Sheikh to demand faster climate action and a fairer world. Although the COVID-19 pandemic slowed down street protests, the movement has continued to evolve, bringing to light the need for urgent climate action and the need of an intersectional and justice-focused approach.¹⁰⁷

Racialized Youth Being the Hardest Hit by the Climate Crisis

Funding young racialized climate justice activists in particular is critical since they are disproportionately impacted by the climate crisis, facing greater environmental racism compared to their non-racialized peers. To illustrate, the former Africville community in

¹⁰¹ Oatley, “Interview: CRA’s Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good.”

¹⁰² Linda Goldman, *Climate Change and Youth* (New York: Routledge, 2022), 13, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003051770>.

¹⁰³ Goldman, *Climate Change and Youth*, 13.

¹⁰⁴ Goldman, *Climate Change and Youth*, 13.

¹⁰⁵ Jon Cracknell et al., “The Case for Funding Youth-led Climate Initiatives,” ClimateWorks Foundation, February 17, 2023, <https://www.climateworks.org/blog/the-case-for-funding-youth-led-climate-initiatives/>.

¹⁰⁶ Cracknell et al., “The Case for Funding Youth-Led Climate Initiatives.”

¹⁰⁷ Cracknell et al., “The Case for Funding Youth-Led Climate Initiatives.”

Nova Scotia created harm for Black residents by placing various social and environmental contaminants in its path.¹⁰⁸ These include a fertilizer plant, a slaughterhouse, a tar factory, a stone and coal crushing plant, a cotton factory, a prison, two infectious disease hospitals, three railway track systems, and an open dump.¹⁰⁹ Environmental racism can also be felt in Indigenous communities such as in British Columbia where the Wet'suwet'en Nation protested the Coastal GasLink pipeline project.¹¹⁰ The pipeline would cut through their territory and transport liquified natural gas (LNG) which would pollute water, air and soil and harm humans as well as local species.¹¹¹

These racialized activists have a bigger stake in addressing the problem, as they are often on the front lines, directly experiencing and combating the adverse effects of climate change in their communities. Autumn Peltier, an Anishinaabekwe Indigenous rights and clean water activist somberly told Prime Minister Justin Trudeau that she was “very unhappy” with the poor choices he had made.¹¹² She was referencing the federal government's backing of multiple pipeline projects, including its approval of the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain expansion project.¹¹³ Peltier revealed how her aunt passed away pursuing clean water activism, and in her own words proclaimed “I’m honestly afraid that I might do the same. Indigenous people are living in third-world conditions in a first-world country.”¹¹⁴

Racialized Youth Are Familiar with Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Conventional Western approaches to tackling climate change have fallen short, with Carbon, Capture, Utilization and Storage (CCUS) technologies expensive and inefficient to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.¹¹⁵ Traditional ecological knowledge has been championed

¹⁰⁸ Ingrid Waldron, “Pipelines and Protests: Legacies of Struggle and Resistance in the Fight Against Environmental Racism in Canada,” *The Brown Journal of World Affairs* 28, no. 2 (2027): 6, <https://web-p-ebsochost-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=0&sid=0688f24f-f8b0-45a2-af25-96ff0cd6da1f%40redis>.

¹⁰⁹ Waldron, “Pipelines and Protests: Legacies of Struggle and Resistance in the Fight Against Environmental Racism in Canada,” 6.

¹¹⁰ Waldron, “Pipelines and Protests: Legacies of Struggle and Resistance in the Fight Against Environmental Racism in Canada,” 6.

¹¹¹ Stand.earth, “Coastal GasLink: A Dangerous Project That Blatantly Violates Indigenous Rights - Stand.earth,” STAND.earth, March 22, 2022, <https://stand.earth/resources/coastal-gaslink-dangerous-project-violates-indigenous-rights/>.

¹¹² Jennifer Ferreira, “Indigenous Activist Uses Traditional Knowledge in a Modern World to Inspire Climate Action,” CTV News, July 4, 2023, <https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/indigenous-activist-uses-traditional-knowledge-in-a-modern-world-to-inspire-climate-action-1.6466252>.

¹¹³ Ferreira, “Indigenous Activist Uses Traditional Knowledge in a Modern World to Inspire Climate Action.”

¹¹⁴ Ferreira, “Indigenous Activist Uses Traditional Knowledge in a Modern World to Inspire Climate Action.”

¹¹⁵ Laura Cameron, Angela Carter, and Katrin Sievert, “Why the Cost of Carbon Capture and Storage Remains Persistently High,” International Institute for Sustainable Development, September 7, 2023, <https://www.iisd.org/articles/deep-dive/why-carbon-capture-storage-cost-remains-high>.

by BIPOC since time immemorial with a differing worldview of the natural world compared to Western approaches. Robin Wall Kimmerer brings to light the contrast from an Indigenous philosophical perspective: “A landscape of streams and lakes, mountains and rich valleys, shared by thousands of species of plants and animals, is understood through the lens of the western materialist worldview as a wealth of ecosystem services or natural resources. In contrast, through the lens of traditional Indigenous philosophy the living world is understood, not as a collection of exploitable resources, but as a set of relationships and responsibilities.”¹¹⁶ This traditional perspective can also be emulated throughout India and Africa by traditional farmers understanding the medicinal and insecticidal properties of trees to limit warming and maintain ecological biodiversity.¹¹⁷ This traditional ecological knowledge has been vital for finding existing solutions that are healthier for the planet and its species.

Current Funding Support for Racialized Youth

Wealthy individuals and foundations have been stepping in to fill the gap by increasing their philanthropic contributions to environmentally-oriented organizations and initiatives.¹¹⁸ As economic inequity continues to concentrate wealth and power among a privileged few, the influence of billionaires and wealthy corporate interests in shaping climate, energy, and environmental policy and action has been growing.¹¹⁹ Despite the desire of historically marginalized communities to have a greater role in creating a just and equitable low-carbon energy transition, conventional engagement and funding processes often hinder broader participation.¹²⁰ Common barriers for BIPOC groups gaining access to capital include inequitable access to connections to the philanthropic community, bias that can impede building rapport, inability to secure support due to unfamiliar and culturally insensitive approaches, and difficulty sustaining relationships as a result of white-centric views to a funder’s strategic priorities.¹²¹

¹¹⁶ Robin Wall Kimmerer, “Mishkos Kenomagwen, the Lessons of Grass: Restoring Reciprocity With the Good Green Earth,” in *Cambridge University Press eBooks*, 2018, 27, <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108552998.004>.

¹¹⁷ Julian Inglis, *Traditional ecological knowledge: concepts and cases* (Canada: International Development Research Centre, 1993), 58.

¹¹⁸ Hoicka et al., “Misalignment or Exclusion? Investigating Climate and Energy Philanthropy Funding of Diversity,” 1.

¹¹⁹ Hoicka et al., “Misalignment or Exclusion? Investigating Climate and Energy Philanthropy Funding of Diversity,” 1.

¹²⁰ Hoicka et al., “Misalignment or Exclusion? Investigating Climate and Energy Philanthropy Funding of Diversity,” 2.

¹²¹ Cheryl Dorsey et al., “Overcoming the Racial Bias in Philanthropic Funding,” *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, May 4, 2020, https://ssir.org/articles/entry/overcoming_the_racial_bias_in_philanthropic_funding.

Racialized Youth Do Not Receive the Funding They Need

A study was conducted by C.E. Hoicka et al., investigating which non-profit organizations working on a low-carbon energy transition receive funding - weather diversity-led or conventionally-led. Diversity led signalling they were led by equity seeking communities and conventionally-led indicating they were not led by these equity-seeking groups.¹²² This study demonstrates that diversity-led organizations are often three times less likely to receive funding from an environmental philanthropic foundation than a conventionally-led organization.¹²³ Among the diversity-led organizations, including those led by youth, Indigenous Peoples, racialized individuals, immigrants, low-income groups, people with disabilities, and Northern and coastal communities, many did not receive any funding.¹²⁴ About half of the Indigenous-led organizations received philanthropic funding, while many other diversity-led organizations received none.¹²⁵ Notably, no organizations led by racialized or low-income individuals were found to receive philanthropic support.¹²⁶

Other reports can also corroborate chronic underfunding from the public and private sectors, with Black charities receiving only seven cents for every \$100 donated to massive charities in the country.¹²⁷ A report put together by the Network for the Advancement of Black Communities in collaboration with Carleton University's Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership program examines issues and their effects on Black-led organizations. Their research from 2017 and 2018 revealed that the Canadian philanthropic sector has failed to truly understand the needs of Black communities across the country.¹²⁸ Their research also highlights how Black people face continuous barriers and challenges as a result of racism and discrimination trickling down into other facets of life including employment, financial

¹²² Hoicka et al., "Misalignment or Exclusion? Investigating Climate and Energy Philanthropy Funding of Diversity," 3.

¹²³ Hoicka et al., "Misalignment or Exclusion? Investigating Climate and Energy Philanthropy Funding of Diversity," 4.

¹²⁴ Hoicka et al., "Misalignment or Exclusion? Investigating Climate and Energy Philanthropy Funding of Diversity," 4.

¹²⁵ Hoicka et al., "Misalignment or Exclusion? Investigating Climate and Energy Philanthropy Funding of Diversity," 4.

¹²⁶ Hoicka et al., "Misalignment or Exclusion? Investigating Climate and Energy Philanthropy Funding of Diversity," 4.

¹²⁷ Gabe Oatley and Shannon VanRaes, "A \$200 Million 'Gamechanger' Endowment Is on the Line; Black-led, Black-focused Organizations Can Now Apply," Future of Good, October 5, 2030, <https://futureofgood.co/black-led-endowment-fund-canada/>.

¹²⁸ Rachel Pereira et al., "Unfunded: Black Communities Overlooked by Canadian Philanthropy," *Network for the Advancement of Black Communities and Carleton University's Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership Program*, 2021, 3, <https://www.forblackcommunities.org/assets/docs/Unfunded-Report.pdf>. *Program*, 2021, 18, <https://www.forblackcommunities.org/assets/docs/Unfunded-Report.pdf>. *Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership Program*, 2021, 3, <https://www.forblackcommunities.org/assets/docs/Unfunded-Report.pdf>.

security, food security, education and criminal justice.¹²⁹ On the other side with Indigenous communities, Indigenous charities and qualified donees receive only \$1 for every \$178 given to non-Indigenous organizations.¹³⁰ Indigenous scholar Edgar Villanueva, outlines there are seven steps to healing from this system which includes grieving, apologizing, listening, relating, representing, investing and repairing.¹³¹

Challenge Retaining Control of Wealth Amongst the BIPOC Community

Evidently, BIPOC-led organizations face significant challenges in securing sustainable funding, despite some progress in general operating support from funders.¹³² A prime example is the Foundation for Black Communities (FFBC) in Canada, which called for endowment support to address systemic underfunding of Black communities.¹³³ Only a few funders have transferred endowment funds, illustrating a broader reluctance in philanthropy to cede control and build lasting wealth in BIPOC communities.¹³⁴ This hesitation perpetuates existing racial disparities in asset accumulation, mirroring broader economic inequities.¹³⁵ To address this, a shift from a charity mindset to an asset-building approach is essential, emphasizing the transfer of control and resources to BIPOC leaders and organizations.¹³⁶

Building Capacity for Racialized Youth

Without adequate funding to build the capacity of racialized youth, there is the risk of stifling their potential to lead and drive change in their communities, leaving them ultimately ill equipped to tackle the escalating climate crisis. Racialized youth are incredible drivers of raising awareness on climate change and equity. However, they need funding to support their initiatives. The Possibilists Study surveyed 1656 young changemakers across the world, and out of the marginalized groups who responded, 70% of them lack personal financial

¹²⁹ Pereira et al., “Unfunded: Black Communities Overlooked by Canadian Philanthropy,” 6.

¹³⁰ Sharon Redsky et al., “Canadian Charities Giving to Indigenous Charities and Qualified Donees - 2018,” *Canadian Charity Law*, May 31, 2021, <https://www.canadiancharitylaw.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Canadian-charities-giving-to-Indigenous-Charities-and-Qualified-Donees-2018.pdf>.

¹³¹ Edgar Villanueva, *Decolonizing Wealth: Indigenous Wisdom to Heal Divides and Restore Balance* (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2018), 10.

¹³² Grace Azenabor et al., “BIPOC Organizations and the Hamster Wheel of Philanthropy,” *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, April 20, 23AD, https://ssir.org/articles/entry/bipoc_organizations_and_the_hamster_wheel_of_philanthropy.

¹³³ Azenabor et al., “BIPOC Organizations and the Hamster Wheel of Philanthropy.”

¹³⁴ Azenabor et al., “BIPOC Organizations and the Hamster Wheel of Philanthropy.”

¹³⁵ Azenabor et al., “BIPOC Organizations and the Hamster Wheel of Philanthropy.”

¹³⁶ Azenabor et al., “BIPOC Organizations and the Hamster Wheel of Philanthropy.”

stability.¹³⁷ Empowering these young leaders is essential in order to meet their various needs including collaborating with other organizations, ensuring the quality of their services and programs, as well as accessing networks and connections.¹³⁸

Research Questions and Approach

To fill in the gaps, I wanted to speak with multiple stakeholders to understand their perspectives on climate philanthropy. As for young racialized climate justice activists, I was keen to understand how they fund their work, the barriers they encounter, the consequences of these barriers, and what would help them run their work more effectively. For funders, such as CSR departments and foundations, I sought to prompt reflection on their practices, questioning why their funding processes are inaccessible and why they prefer to fund established organizations with substantial documentation. I aimed to find realistic ways for CSR departments and foundations to bridge the gap between their bureaucratic funding schemes and the needs of racialized climate justice activists and smaller organizations. Regarding policy change, I intended to engage with integral bodies like the CRA to address long-standing barriers preventing NQDs from receiving funding from qualified donees and to explore how federal agencies can be more inclusive in supporting grassroots initiatives without an excessive focus on risk.

Methodology

Community Arts Based and Participatory Research Methods

Cellphilm Making Workshop Series

Utilizing film making as a participatory and arts based research method has been a successful strategy for engaging policy makers when striving for social change. An example includes the 26 films made by residents of Fogo Island when they were slated to be relocated by the Government of Canada as a result of their perceived widespread poverty.¹³⁹ Fogo residents' shared their films with policy makers to examine the roots of the problem - declining fishing populations¹⁴⁰ - and propose solutions by convincing them not to be

¹³⁷ The Possibilists, "The Possibilists Report 2023 - the Impact and Challenges of Young Changemakers," June 2023, <https://thepossibilists.org/2023-study/>.

¹³⁸ The Possibilists, "The Possibilists Report 2023 - the Impact and Challenges of Young Changemakers."

¹³⁹ Mark Terry, *The Geo-Doc: Geomedia, Documentary Film, and Social Change*, 1st ed. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 73.

¹⁴⁰ "Introduction to Fogo Island," 1968, https://www.nfb.ca/film/introduction_to_fogo_island/.

relocated, and instead provide assistance and encouragement with establishing a fishing co-operative.¹⁴¹ There are many other important examples of how participatory and visual methods have been catalysts for change. With the prevalence of mobile technologies, cellphilm making emerges as an accessible and omnipresent tool. The cellphilm research method can be described through the following equation: "Cellphones + Films (+ Intention) = Cellphilms".¹⁴² Widespread access to this nearly ubiquitous technology means that anyone with a phone in their palm can now make and share a film.

Cellphilms are often community centric, and they work to encourage dialogue and take action on pressing issues targeting a population.¹⁴³ The cellphone video camera has also served as a useful tool to marginalized communities, such as documenting human rights abuses like the murder of George Floyd.¹⁴⁴ Cellphilm making struck me as an accessible way in which young racialized climate justice activists could communicate their struggles, and in essence bridge the disconnect between activists and funders who are rarely in the same room together. The storytelling aspect of cellphilm making, where young racialized climate justice activists could share their positionality, how the climate crisis impacts them and their community, ongoing barriers that they face and solutions for funders to take action seemed like it would resonate more than conventional talk-based strategies (such as interviews or focus groups).

In order to get in touch with young, racialized climate justice activists to participate in the research study, I put out a call on social media in collaboration with FES - the Youth Harbour, Regenesis and the Green Career Centre - organizations well known for their youth-led work at the intersections of equity and the environment. I also tagged and shared the call with other youth-led environmental and social justice organizations across the country and locally in Tkaronto. The call included the following information about the cellphilm project: "Research participants will have the opportunity to create a cellphilm (short film on a cellphone) to highlight their experience, share their struggles and offer suggestions to shape the environmental philanthropy landscape in what is currently Canada." Inducements of \$250 per participant were offered in exchange for their time attending 5 virtual one and a half hour long cellphilm making workshop sessions that took place once a

¹⁴¹ Terry, *The Geo-Doc: Geomedia, Documentary Film, and Social Change*, 74.

¹⁴² Sarah Flicker and Katie MacEntee, *Cellphilm as a Participatory Visual Method*, 2023, 3, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003093817>.

¹⁴³ Flicker and MacEntee, *Cellphilm as a Participatory Visual Method*, 5.

¹⁴⁴ Flicker and MacEntee, *Cellphilm as a Participatory Visual Method*, 22.

week during the month of November. The final screening took place the first week of December.

Criteria to get accepted to participate involved being aged 18-30, residing in what is currently Canada, identifying as a climate justice activist, the person or organization/grassroots group that they represent has struggled to get funding over the past year, and demonstrating a genuine interest in participating. In total, 10 participants were selected including myself - dually acting as a participant and facilitator. We were also grateful for the in-kind support of Regeneration offering an experienced video editor to help us with facilitating the last two sessions where we received assistance with editing and the first screening.

The program began with the session titled 'Prompting & Conceptualizing'. The participants got to break the ice with one another, learn again about informed consent, and were made aware about an internal accessibility fund. This fund was set-up to help those who would not be able to participate unless they had certain needs met including child care, phone rental, video editing apps and anything else that would prohibit them from participating due to inaccessibility. I guided the participants through community guidelines and also gave them the opportunity to collectively contribute. Then, we went into the history of cellphilm making and examples that would be useful to contextualize what a cellphilm is. We ended off the session with a prompting and conceptualizing activity where participants were asked to fill out a Miro Board with questions and then to jump into a discussion about the topics.

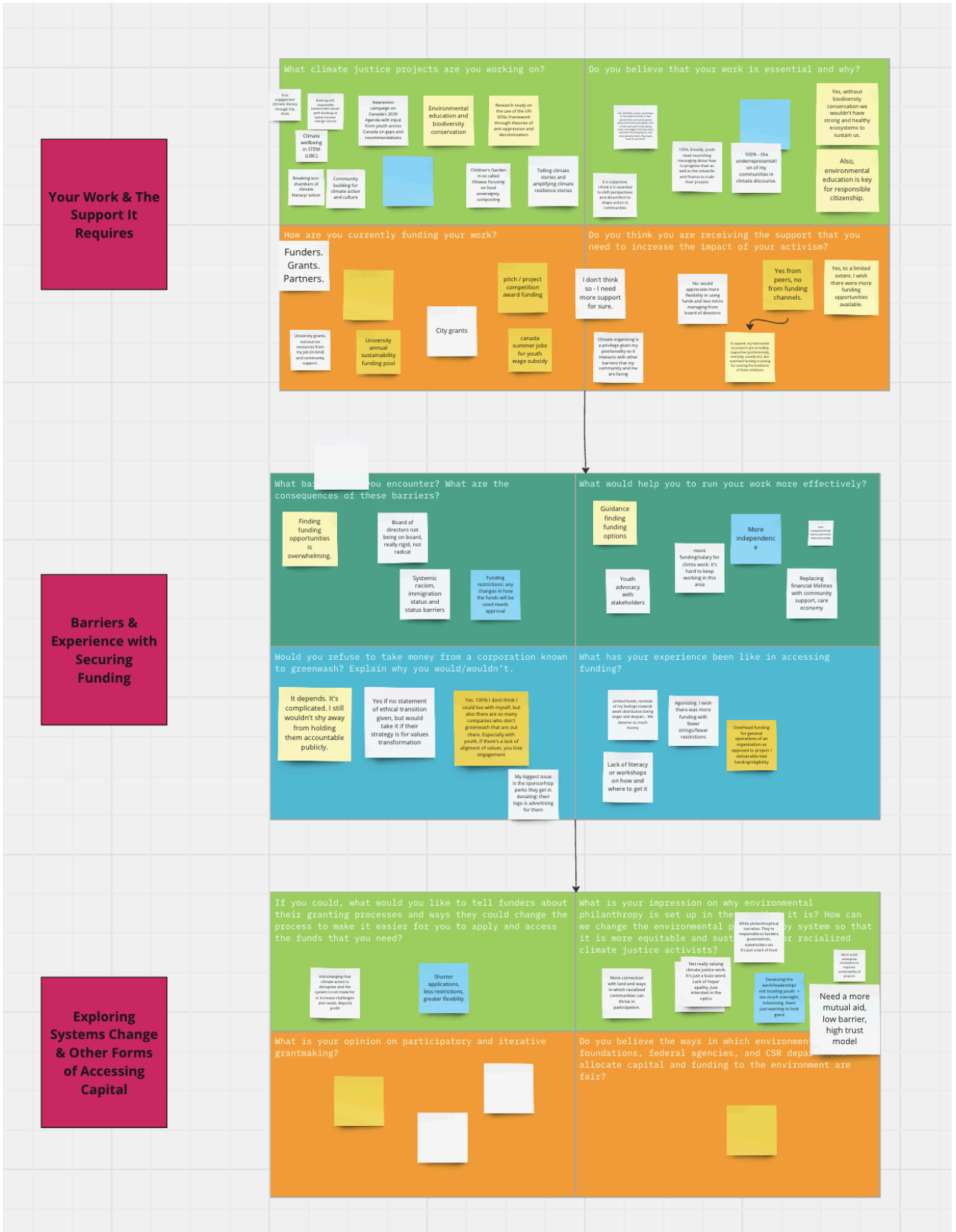


Figure 1.0. Miro board in the first cellphilm workshop session where participants responded to questions pertaining to their work and the support it requires, barriers and experiences with

securing funding, exploring systems change and other forms of accessing capital. (Screenshot by Lauren Castelino).

After the first session, I took the liberty to put together a more comprehensive document that went into greater detail on the pain points of young racialized climate justice activists (see **Appendix 3**). A more concise version of this document was later shared with funders and stakeholders (see **Appendix 4**). In the second week, the group learned more about ‘Ethics & Storyboarding’. In this session, we went over how to protect participants’ privacy and confidentiality on film if desired. I also shared best practices for avoiding risks and the rights of the storyteller. We then went into detail on some of the previous examples of cellphilms that were shared in the first session, and had a discussion on the main messages of the cellphilms, measuring success, audio and visual tricks, and how audio tricks, location or genre choices would advance the message. At the midpoint of the session, we received the document (see **Appendix 3**), and each participant had to pick two problems and two solutions that they were going to address in their cellphilm. This ensured that there was less duplication in what was shared and more areas would get covered and hence be more effectively brought up to the funders. Questions were shared to help the participants guide their creation of the cellphilm (see **Appendix 5**) and were redirected to Miro to make their own storyboard.

The third week’s session ‘Filming & Editing’ was the shortest session with the gathering only taking place for 30 minutes, leaving the participants with an hour to work on their cellphilms after the session or on their own time. This session touched upon best practices for cellphilming, specific requirements to ensure that it would be easy to quilt, essentially compile together, along with editing and non-editing techniques. Participants were asked to submit their cellphilm to a Google Drive folder by a set deadline so that we could begin the participatory editing process. The second last week that encapsulated ‘Quilting & Collective Editing’ had the entire session just reviewing the cellphilms and ways in which the group wanted to present them.

The final session involved watching the screening of the cellphilm and reflecting on common themes, similarities and differences to other cellphilms, and what our collective action would bring to funders. To wrap up the series, I shared with the group the plan for dissemination which included meeting one-on-one with funders to ask them about their perspectives on the quilted cellphilm as well as the public screening and my final report. For more information regarding the cellphilm workshop sessions, you can view the slides in **Appendix 5**. The link to watch the cellphilm is made available in **Appendix 12**.

Interviews with Environmental Funders

The second part of my research involved meeting with various environmental funders within the climate philanthropy space to share with them the quilted cellphilm as well as the concise version of the barriers and solutions document that was developed (see **Appendix 4**). With my efforts and in collaboration with FES, roughly 50 funders were contacted via email and LinkedIn, 16 filled out the expression of interest form and 13 were interviewed. In order to be eligible to participate, funders needed to reside in what is currently Canada, and identify as an environmental funder issuing a minimum of \$20,000/year in grants to benefit the environment in what is currently Canada. Interviews were conducted at the convenience of the environmental funder, taking on average 30 minutes to one hour in February and March. For greater accessibility, two funders filled out their responses over email.

Funders were asked a series of questions to make sense of their response to the recommendations put forward by the young racialized climate justice activists and what they realistically could foresee changing within the scope of their work and within the philanthropic sector (see **Appendix 8** for the full list of questions). The interview was semi-structured allowing for the funders to ask their own questions to which I responded and provided more context and commentary. To abide by the principles of research ethics and maintain privacy of the environmental funders interviewed, they had the option of sharing their name, using a pseudonym, or remaining completely anonymous.



Figure 1.1 - Lauren meeting with Erika Edwards, Global Charity Pot Manager of Lush, to interview for her research. (Screenshot by Lauren Castelino).

Public Screening

In order for the quilted cellphilm to make waves within the community, a public screening was hosted at Innis Town Hall in Toronto on March 23, 2024 from 6:30 PM - 9:30 PM. Research consent was asked in the registration so participants would know what to expect for the event. Environmental funders, local climate justice activists, allies and anyone interested in attending were open to registering for the event. In total there were 70 attendees, with the event featuring the quilted cellphilm, a panel discussion and networking reception (see **Appendix 12** for recording of the entire screening event). Immediately following the screening, participants were given time to complete a feedback form to assess the reception of the quilted cellphilm (see **Appendix 13** for in-depth collection of feedback). With a red carpet to take photos, free goodies sponsored by Lush, catering by the Animal Liberation Kitchen, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages by the University of Toronto's Campus Beverages Service, reusable services by the company Muuse, giveaways from TakingITGlobal's Commit2Act program, and renewable energy powering our event by Bullfrog Energy, the night was sustainable and unforgettable.

Some memorable quotes from the panelists include:

“I do feel like a lot of the time, I don't see the amplifying of grassroots movements and grassroots leaders with philanthropy. I think that it's good to recognize and I think some more people are doing more in the climate movement to recognize frontline workers and on the ground people.” - Atreyu Lewis, Founder and Project Lead, Rising from our Roots

“The challenge we have in the philanthropic sector is no one is really pressuring, like students aren't taking signs and posting up in front of the offices of philanthropic foundations across the country, they're just sort of out of sight, out of mind. On the flip side, funders are really sensitive. These are folks who care about their own professional reputations. And I do think that we would see their funding priorities change if they were under more pressure.” - Gabe Oatley, Philanthropy Reporter, Future of Good



Figure 1.2. Myself as the Principal Researcher, Lauren Castelino speaking on panel with three panelists. (Photo by Isatu Barrie).

Further Dissemination Activities

Even though the public screening and interviews with funders has concluded, the next steps include putting together a brief report and sharing the findings on LinkedIn and via email. The report's style will be crucial to funders taking action and changing their funding practices to be more equitable and accessible. I also wanted the brief report to help young racialized climate justice activists learn about how they could catalyze their community to raise capital as opposed to relying on conventional philanthropy. Hence, the report is relatively short, allowing for greater readability given the limited staff capacity of many environmental funders and the lack of time and resources of young racialized climate justice activists. Findings will be shared via email with all stakeholders who participated in the study, and ten graphics with highlights from the study will be shared on my personal LinkedIn page. Given my previous experience with community based research, having open dialogues about the outcomes has been helpful in reaching more people and pushing for change. If people are interested in the full findings, I will send them the full report. However, I do not want it to be made publicly available as I have high hopes of having it published in an academic journal.

Limitations

Cellphilm Making Workshop Series

Due to the limited amount of funding received and as a result, the finite number of participants who were able to participate, the sample size was quite small. Despite efforts to increase geographic diversity of the participants, the scope of my network constrained me from finding participants located outside Ontario and British Columbia. Since the participants were not fully representative of what is currently Canada, there might have been gaps in what the cellphilm could have shown across the country. It is also salient to acknowledge that on the registration form, participants did not specify if they had more than one province of residence. However, during the sessions it was revealed that two participants were located in more than one province at the time due to school, work and life commitments in different parts of the country.

Recognizing the struggles that the BIPOC community and low-income folks face, there was a participant who could not participate fully in the cellphilm workshop sessions and initially rescinded their acceptance to participate. This was largely due to the length of the sessions and the amount of time it would take away from making other forms of income that are more sustainable. Understanding the critical importance of equity and accessibility in participating in these projects, this participant was still invited to submit a cellphilm for the honorarium amount of \$250, and was excused from participating in the weekly sessions to tend to making income elsewhere. Although the participant was provided with Youtube videos that gave a quicker explanation of cellphilm making and had a brief conversation with myself, the participant's final work was notably made in a different style than that of the others who had more of an advantage actively participating in the weekly sessions.

Interviews with Funders

There were several limitations to conducting this study, including the fact that only a small fraction of the funders invited to participate agreed to be interviewed. In fact, only five that participated were part of the EFC Network, making it only representative of about 6.76% of their network.¹⁴⁵ There was also a disbalance between the amount of foundations interviewed as opposed to larger corporations with CSR departments, as they were difficult to get a hold of. I also found it to be the case that government funders were not willing or open to being interviewed. The response I typically received when I reached out was that the

¹⁴⁵ McNamee, McHugh, and Alahmr, "2022 Environmental Grants Data Landscape Snapshot."

person did not have the authority to be interviewed, or did not receive the appropriate permission to be interviewed.

Due to time limitations, I was unable to ask all of my questions that I had prepared for each funder. So, I could sometimes only ask a handful of questions that were relevant on the basis of time. If funders were willing to stay a bit longer I could ask them all of the questions, but usually the 30 minute time allocation was not enough so I would chat overtime asking them the questions, with my longest interview being an hour and twenty one minutes long. Additionally, I could also not interview all funders that young racialized climate justice activists necessarily had experience receiving funding from. In fact, many I interviewed were not very well known youth environmental funders as they fund intermediaries so they are not the hand that is typically being taken from directly.

It is also worth mentioning that academic institutions and other intermediary organizations of which young racialized climate justice activists typically are more in touch with, were not included in the study due to capacity limitations. Furthermore, many funders went beyond the EFC Network as they were not foundations, and were not part of similar networks. It is also important to note that some of the funders that were categorized as environmental funders, fund other types of organizations and work other than solely in the environmental field, and hence did not perceive themselves to own the label of 'environmental funder' as a result.

Public Screening

Due to limited time, resources and capacity, there were only 70 attendees (including the organizing team) that participated in the public screening. The public screening was also limited to my locality in Toronto given my network and reach. While attempts were made to reach more environmental funders and have them attend the event, having the event on a Saturday evening prevented them from attending. I suspect that more young racialized climate justice activists and allies were able to show up because the event was seen as a fun weekend networking activity. However, environment funders who work a 9-5 during the week would typically not want to attend a work event on the weekend when they have other familial obligations. This was the perception I felt when I invited the environment funders I interviewed to the event.

Perspectives

Young Racialized Climate Justice Activists

Demographics

In total, 10 self-identifying young racialized climate activists participated. All youth who participated were between the ages of 18-30, most were visible minorities with one Black, one Indigenous and three newcomers. Three people were part of the LGBTQ+ community and four identified as having a physical or mental health-related disability. 8 participants were from what is currently Ontario, meanwhile two were from what is present day British Columbia. 40% of the participants were applying to mid-sized grants (\$5,000 - \$20,000), meanwhile, 20% were applying to micro-grants (\$500 - \$5,000), large grants (\$25,000 - \$50,000), and multi-year unrestricted funding (\$50,000 - \$350,000+) respectively. See **Appendix 2** for in-depth demographic information.

Barriers and Solutions Feedback

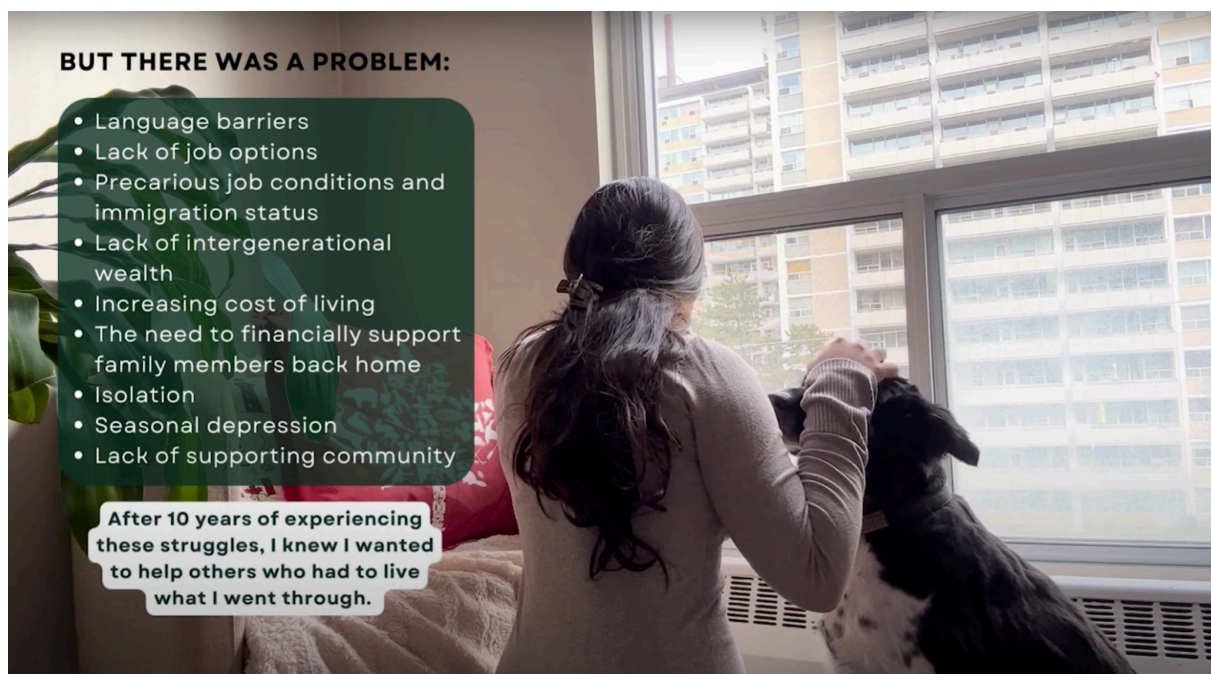
Racialized climate justice activists face a multitude of barriers in obtaining funding, significantly hindering their efforts and impact. Below are some of the barriers and corresponding solutions that were shared by the 10 activists who participated in the research project:



Two young men speaking about a problem in their community at Pitch It Green's Sustainability Pitch Competition in 2019.

Figure 2.0. Screenshot from Lauren's cellphilm. (Footage provided by Lauren).

In my cellphilm, I brought together video clips of my involvement in the climate movement, and added a voice over to narrate my initiatives and struggles. I specifically made a point to share my perspective on the short-term nature of grants: "Grant funds are often issued on a per project basis, often only lasting six months to a year or at most 2 to 3 years. There are often strict categories as to how much of the budget can be spent on salaries and honorariums. Sometimes there are limitations to only spending a certain percentage in one area... A solution to this would be to have unrestricted long-term multi-year funding."



Melina's list of problems that she experienced as a newcomer to Canada.

Figure 2.1. Excerpt from Melina's cellphilm. (Footage provided by Melina).

Melina's cellphilm, using visuals, messaging animations and despondent music, showcases her climate activism journey as an immigrant woman from Venezuela who came alone to Canada at just 17 years old. She spoke broken English and did not have the emotional support when she arrived. As a result, she experienced several barriers as pictured above. Compared to myself, she experienced more systemic barriers from the perspective of a newcomer, since I was born in Canada. One of the solutions she proposed was to search for conferences and events that welcome racialized activists and connect them with funders which many of her other fellow cellphilm makers agreed with.



Nika's parents eat a meal with her after she moves back home, taking on debt to fuel her climate activism.

Figure 2.2. An excerpt from Nika's cellphilm. (Footage provided by Nika).

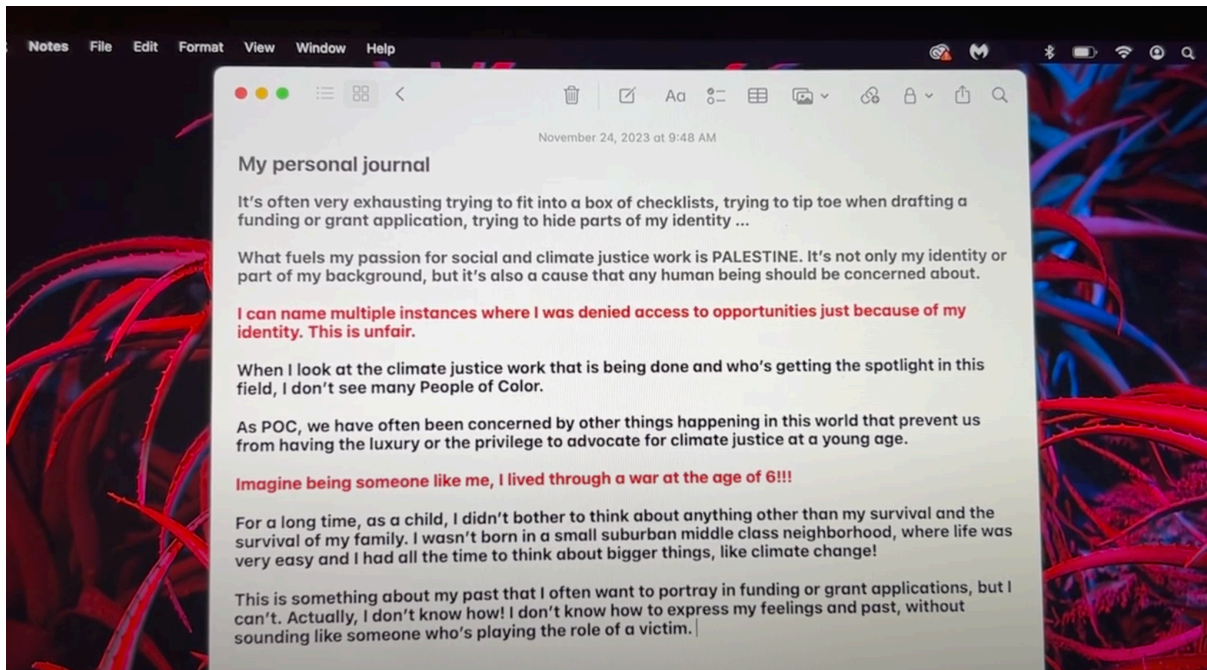
Nika comes from a different backstory - as a dual Iranian and Canadian citizen she makes waves in the plant-based food justice movement. Similar to other climate justice activists participating she revealed, "I've moved back with my parents now to reduce costs and be able to do my climate work full time, but I am taking on debt to maintain my activism. Many activists like myself are taking on multiple jobs due to being low-income, unable to participate in the climate work without having sufficient means to provide for ourselves. We're often low income due to multiple systemic barriers. One option is to allow grant applications to pay ourselves for our work at a living wage and limit us to \$50-\$500 honorariums or gift cards. Another solution is to connect us with affordable housing and living solutions that allow us to pursue this work full time." José similarly outlined the increased cost of living due to the food insecurity and housing crises that makes it a challenge to even survive as a climate justice activist.



Cheyenne Sundance speaking about the barriers in matching funding for her work.

Figure 2.3. A glimpse of Cheyenne’s cellphilm. (Footage provided by Cheyenne).

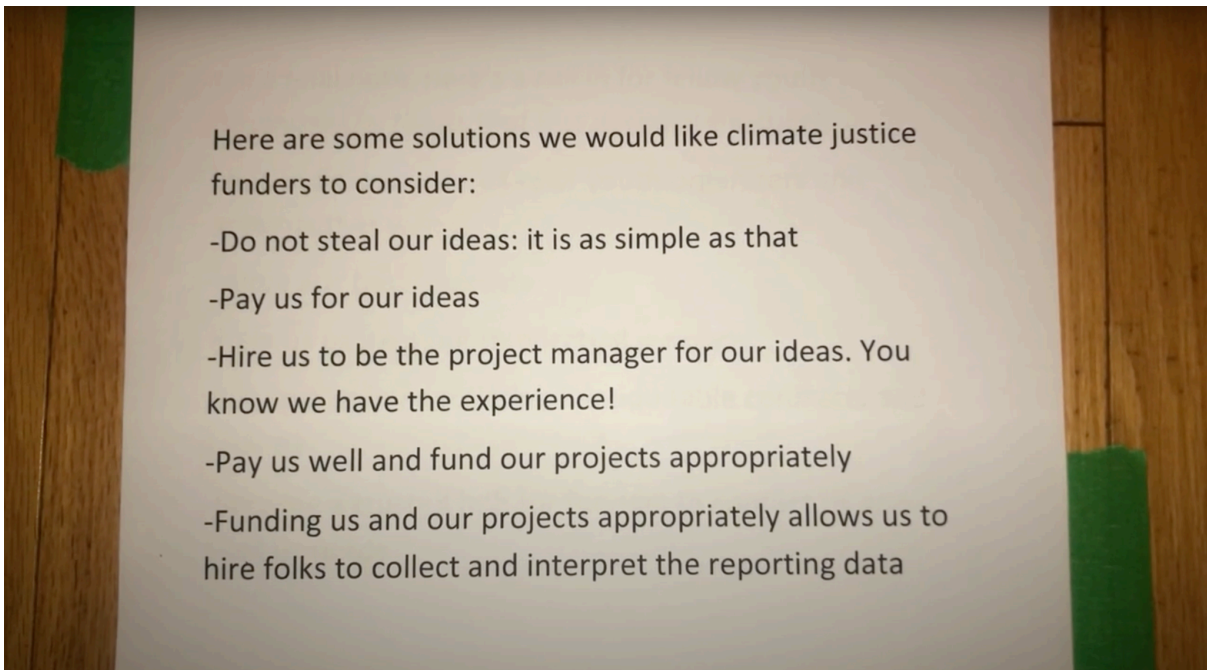
Cheyenne, a farmer with Sundance Harvest with experience writing multi-year grants shares, “Another reason I have struggled sometimes with grant writing and obtaining funding is because of the matching it requires. Some grants require matching... you can provide 40% of the funds and the grant provides 60%... currently... I’m writing a grant for \$200,000 but it’s at 30% matching... How is a small nonprofit going to actually get that money up front to then be eligible?... I believe there needs to be options for youth to apply for large funding and not have to do grant matching.” This related a lot to what I expressed in my cellphilm, with the challenge of getting access to more sizeable grants, and seeing that they are mostly project-based, and if us activists do want to take it a step further there are inaccessible matching contributions.



Salma's personal journal in accordance with her childhood struggles going through war and challenges with her Palestinian identity setting her back from opportunities.

Figure 2.4. A screen capture of Salma's cellphilm. (Footage provided by Salma).

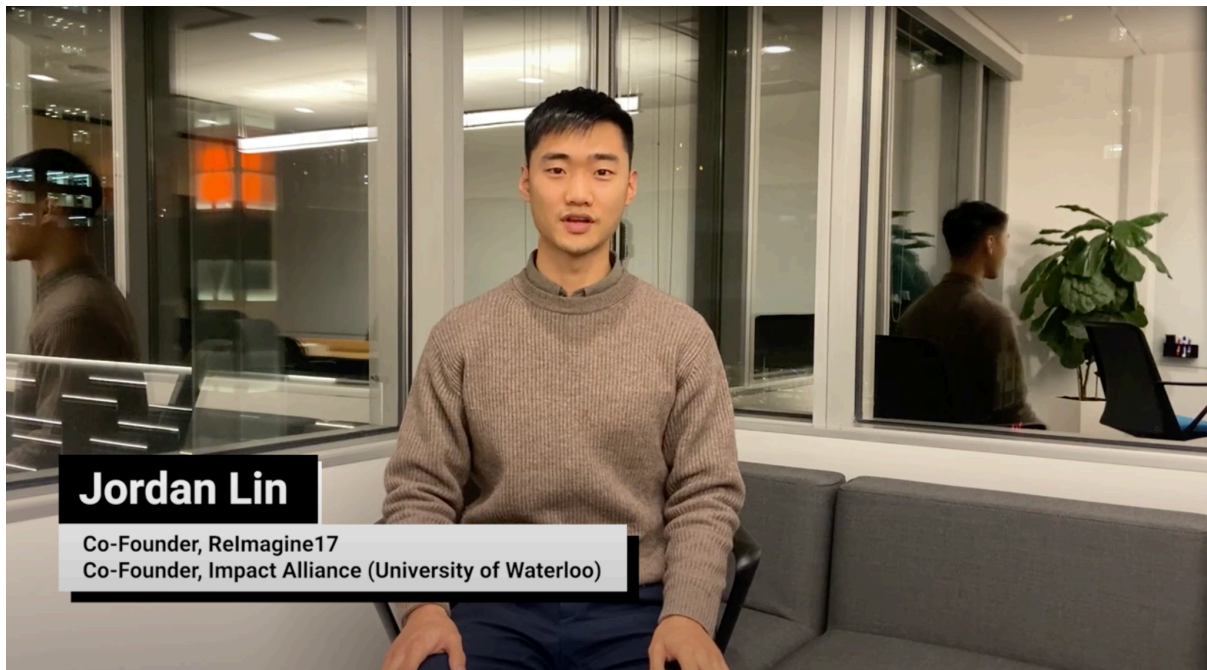
Against an instrumental melancholic violin backdrop, Salma bravely types out her story as a Palestinian activist in a journalistic art form. She unravels her tragic struggle of living through war at the age of 6. Throughout her climate activism journey, she has had the fear of being denied access to opportunities due to her Palestinian identity, and does not know how to express herself without appearing like she is playing the role of a victim. She points out the struggles of other POC and millions of Palestinians around the world fighting for the right to their Indigenous land. Salma's perspective was quite unique, given the other activists in the cellphilm did not have to hide their identity when applying for grants.



A paper plastered on the ground highlighting some top points Natasha wants to see in funders changing their practices for racialized youth.

Figure 2.5. A snapshot of Natasha's cellphilm. (Footage provided by Natasha).

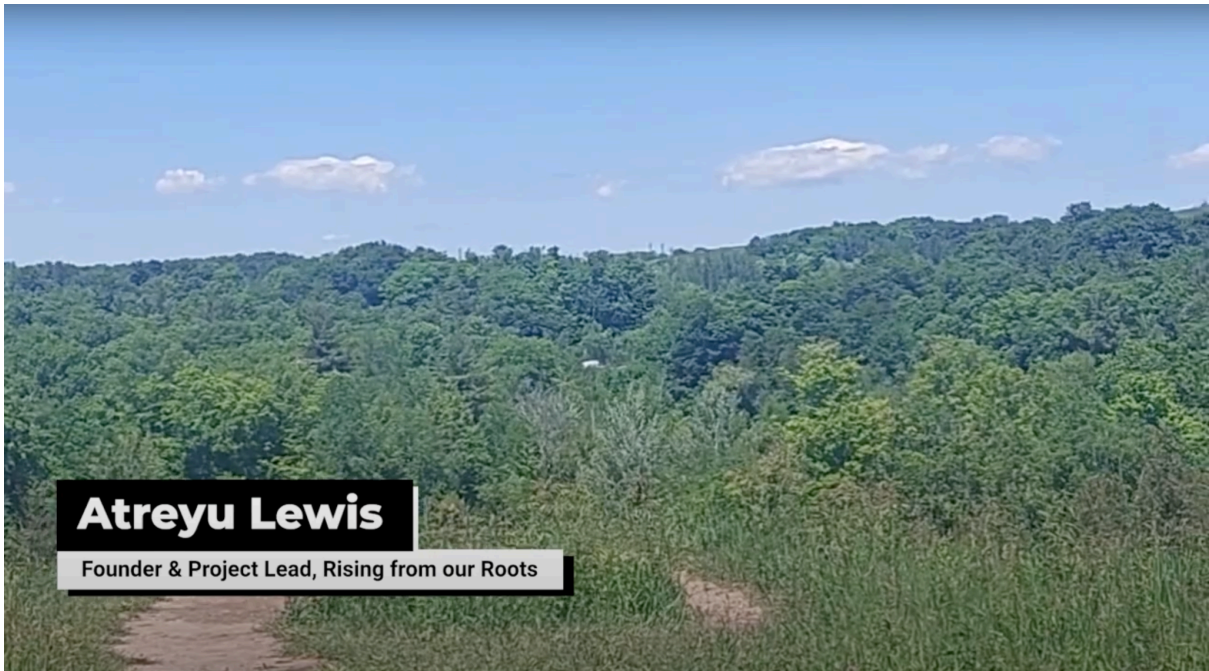
Natasha is a trans and racialized climate justice activist who is the child of refugees. Narrated through a typed black and white storybook, they point out the challenges that they face with funders stealing ideas, and excessive reporting requirements that take more capacity and resources than youth organizers have. Above, they outline solutions for funders to value ideas and receive sufficient compensation for hiring people, managing the project and fulfilling reporting obligations. They also suggest starting up a collective co-operative that will best serve our interests. Some of these suggestions including the collective co-operative idea echo Jordan's perspective as he had experience co-founding the nonprofit ReImagine17 only to close down the organization as a result of lack of stable funding.



Jordan speaking in his workplace about his experience closing down an organisation he founded due to lack of funding.

Figure 2.6. A sneak peek into Jordan’s cellphilm. (Footage provided by Jordan).

Jordan, is a climate activist who is a strong proponent of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and greatly values student networks in driving local change. Recording the cellphilm from his workplace, he highlights the difficulties of seeking funding from an intermediary. He posits, “What this looks like is a funding body providing a pool of funding to an intermediary that distributes that to different youth groups or youth leaders. However, these youth groups are unable to foster a relationship with the funder directly, because they are coordinating with the intermediary. They also have to experience longer lead times of communication because three bodies are communicating rather than just two.” He challenges the inefficacy of intermediaries pointing out, “Oftentimes funding is also taken from the pool available for an intermediary and doesn’t allow the greatest extent of capital to be distributed to those initiatives. I would recommend these funders to look for youth cooperatives that represent interests and know about the initiatives that are truly making impact on the ground as well as reaching out to any of these bodies directly by simply communicating with the organizations in the space, and through that creating a greater impact.”



Atreyu brings the viewer through a nature walk in Rouge Park.

Figure 2.7. Atreyu's cellphilm. (Footage provided by Atreyu).

Atreyu is an Indigenous Punjabi activist who grew up in Toronto but had a deep understanding of Anishinaabe tradition and culture. They guide the viewer through a nature walk in Rouge Park and illustrate their story with a voice over. In their own words, "My most recent engagement with climate justice action was in a webinar run by Indigenous Climate Action discussing false solutions to climate change and how we can think differently. One of the speakers, Thomas Joseph, spoke of how false solutions frame climate change as a subject that can only be discussed as long as it conducts business as usual... rather than address what's the root of the source of the cause of climate change." Atreyu's cellphilm is rather distinct, as it went into case studies on false solutions and narratives of the climate crisis as opposed to solely struggles and solutions to granting compared to all the other cellphilms.



Bashar speaks from his room about the barriers that racialized youth face in the climate philanthropy space.

Figure 2.8. A captured clip from Bashar’s cellphilm. (Footage provided by Bashar).

Bashar is a climate justice activist from Bangladesh. His cellphilm, recorded in a room on Zoom, articulately calls out contradictions in funder expectations. In his cellphilm, he intelligently uses similes to compare unrealistic funding standards to activists’ lived realities: “Starting a project isn’t just about having a great idea. It’s about navigating a sea of requirements that can feel overwhelming. Imagine being on welfare and trying to figure out how to purchase insurance or go through background checks for your project. It’s like facing a wall that keeps getting higher and higher. And what about the need to be an alumni of certain programs to even apply for funding? It’s like being excluded for not knowing about a race that started without you.” Bashar firmly believes that funding agencies should be empowering people who have great ideas, but limited resources. Many activists like Melina, Salma and I likewise spoke to these constraints in our own cellphilms.



José speaks in front of a crowd as part of his climate activism.

Figure 2.9. A screenshot from José’s cellfilm. (Footage provided by José).

José is a Climate Justice and Community Organizer and as an international student brings his phone through the journey of what his weeks usually look like. Between attending protests, speaking at events, and going to school José exposes the rampant troubles he faces in his community in Vancouver: “As we try to make a living wage or afford cities that have so much housing and food insecurity we need to take a step back and think about how the work that we do connects with really having liveable communities and with that we need to have time to show up in solidarity... What we need for climate projects is more transparency for what funders are looking for and guaranteed funding based on the delivery of projects.” Similar to Melina, José uncovers the challenges of newcomers and solutions that would work best for the community he serves.

Throughout the cellfilm making process, the young racialized climate justice activists who participated evidently had a lot to say on their experiences navigating the climate philanthropy landscape. They initially began with a detailed document 8 pages long with a list of 20 barriers and 20 corresponding solutions to their funding struggles (see **Appendix 3**). The document listed personal examples that the activists had in their activism and funding journey, and was quite an overwhelming read when pieced together. In order to effectively share these findings with funders for the funder meetings, a less harsh, condensed, easy-to-read version was developed (see **Appendix 4**).

Funders

Demographics

There were 13 funders that were interviewed, with more than half of them not identifying as part of an undeserved group (see **Appendix 7** for detailed breakdown of demographic data). These funders were from different parts of the country, whether British Columbia, Ontario, Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, and Nova Scotia. 46.16% hailed from private foundations, meanwhile 23.08% identified as funding intermediaries, 15.38% public foundations and 15.38% a socially responsible company. Funders were asked how much funding they committed to climate justice each year, with an estimate on how much funding they committed to climate justice over the last year. Funding amounts were the highest for Private Foundation E and Private Foundation B and the lowest with Intermediary B and Intermediary C. As for the percentage of funding to youth climate justice relative to their entire funding portfolio, there was a mix in some funders committing 100% to the work, meanwhile four were below 25%.

Commitments to racialized climate justice were fairly mixed, with funders either committing very little, half of their portfolio or 100% towards racialized groups. There was a great deal of nuance in answering this question, as funders were not so sure how to discern who is considered ‘racialized’. One private foundation assumed that if there was a racialized person who exhibited leadership through an Executive Director role, that they would be considered a racialized group. Meanwhile, a few others only considered a group racialized if the entire group identified as being from the BIPOC community. There was a clear gap amongst all funders that they did not have the data to back if this data was specifically for groups that were either led by racialized folks or serving racialized folks (the same applied with the question of if groups are youth-led or youth-serving). Particularly with funders who would disburse funding to intermediaries, they would not have control over which groups would redistribute the funds. Funders should work with racialized youth to understand what it means to be led by or to serve racialized youth so that their data can remain consistent. Note that a few funders were unable to comment on these questions due to not having the data available, or did not address this question in the interview.

Impression of the Cellphilm & Doing Enough to Fund Young Racialized Activists

The cellphilm was well-received by funders, particularly for its storytelling aspect. It contrasted the ideal world with the current state of affairs, prompting funders to reflect on how they could help bridge this gap. One funder highlighted the need to increase climate philanthropy from the current \$50 million to ensure it grows from 4% to 10% by 2030, aligning with the demographic of young people nationwide. From the perspective of an intermediary experienced in fundraising and working with funders, there is a concern about how these stories might be received. Funders, especially those new to the space, often ask "So what?" It was brought to light that they might interpret the message as simply young people asking for money. Hence, it is crucial to be strategic in presenting these stories, providing context and framing to ensure funders see beyond the immediate ask and understand the broader importance and impact of racialized climate justice work.

Despite the positive impression of the cellphilm, none of the funders felt they were fully meeting the recommendations for supporting racialized climate activists. While 53.85% felt they were somewhat meeting the needs, 23.08% admitted they were not doing enough, and another 23.08% could not respond. An employee at Private Foundation D highlighted the lack of urgency and action among funders, attributing it to their privileged positions and a focus on their ego and legacy over immediate impact. This detachment from the climate crisis, coupled with a desire for long-term recognition, hampers the swift allocation of resources necessary for the change required for a world in a climate crisis.

Responses to Barriers & Solutions Document

The funders, when presented with the quilted cellphilm (see **Appendix 6**) and the Barriers & Solutions Document (Short Version) (see **Appendix 4**), had some very insightful answers to the barriers and why it has been so challenging advocating for change. One significant challenge is the complexity of grant applications. A program director from Private Foundation F expressed willingness to accept previous proposals tailored to federal government programs to ease the application process. However, there is concern that the extensive requirements of federal proposals might set a high bar, influencing other funders and potentially leading to less favourable practices. Conversely, some foundations, like Private Foundation A and TAF, are advocating for standardized application forms and cross-sharing of accepted proposals to simplify the process for applicants.

In-person engagement presents another challenge, particularly for foundations operating broadly across Canada. A representative from Private Foundation E highlighted the

difficulty in deciding which local areas to focus on for consultations, given their wide-ranging operations. To address this, some funders are considering more flexible approaches, such as starting with a letter of interest (LOI) to avoid wasting applicants' time on lengthy proposals. Additionally, foundations like Private Foundation F and Private Foundation B are open to changing their methods based on feedback from grantees to make the application process more accessible.

Lack of connections to funders is another barrier for racialized groups. To mitigate this, some intermediaries, like Intermediary C, are hiring diverse staff from racialized communities. A grants manager at Private Foundation D emphasized the need for advocacy groups to help racialized groups gain the attention of funders. The Director of Strategy and Grants at TAF supports the idea of sponsoring racialized activists to attend conferences, providing exposure and networking opportunities.

Systemic racism and discrimination also pose significant obstacles. Representatives from various foundations acknowledge the struggles of young racialized individuals, including tokenism and the need for fair compensation. Some funders, like McConnell Foundation, are committed to recognizing the lived experiences of youth as valuable and encouraging young staff to highlight their achievements. Additionally, foundations are discussing how to shift leadership to younger, more diverse voices, and addressing board composition to ensure fair representation and decision-making.

Time constraints in grant writing and excessive reporting requirements further hinder the efforts of young activists. Intermediaries like FES recognize the significant time investment needed to build relationships with funders and the high cost of grant writing services. Some foundations are addressing this by offering grant writing support and simplifying reporting requirements, such as using existing reports submitted to other funders. Foundations like Private Foundation A prefer oral progress discussions and mutual accountability to minimize the administrative burden on grantees.

Finally, the issue of equitable access to funding remains critical. Some foundations are committed to long-term operational funding and unrestricted funding to support sustained efforts. However, concerns about demonstrating impact and the fear of unrestricted funding being perceived as free money persist. To balance this, foundations are exploring flexible reporting methods and engaging in trust-based philanthropy. Community foundations, like the Foundation of Greater Montreal, are particularly focused on being responsive to local needs and fostering trust-based relationships with grantees.

Funders Responses to Accessibility Concerns of Racialized Climate Justice Activists

Foundations face significant challenges in effectively reaching and supporting racialized climate justice activists. Many recognize that they are not experts in the areas they aim to support and have been consulting with advisors, partners, and grantees who have more on-the-ground experience. Despite making progress, there is a consensus that there is still much work to be done to improve their impact. One common issue is the lack of visibility and clarity around foundation names and missions, which can confuse potential applicants and limit engagement. Private Foundation B emphasizes the importance of involving communities, particularly Indigenous ones, in the decision-making processes for solutions like the just transition. They acknowledge that more outreach and engagement are needed to make these processes more inclusive and effective. However, there are barriers, such as limited budgets and resources, which prevent extensive advertising and outreach efforts to racialized youth activists. As a result, many foundations rely on intermediary organizations with existing networks to bridge these gaps, although this is not always the preferred model.

Small foundation teams, often consisting of volunteers or minimal paid staff, face difficulties in meeting and engaging with the communities they aim to serve. This limitation impacts their ability to run specific programs tailored to diverse youth groups. Intermediaries like Intermediary B, acknowledge these constraints and recognize the need for additional resources to explore and implement targeted programs. There is also a push to simplify application processes and support grantees through teams that can help quantify impact, honorariums for completing applications, and ongoing efforts to make the funding process more accessible.

TAF and Lush are taking steps to improve accessibility by engaging external committees and reviewing their language and processes for cultural sensitivity. Lush, in particular, has engaged Indigenous-led organizations to provide feedback and ensure their communications are inclusive. Despite these efforts, there is an ongoing challenge in balancing direct funding with the use of intermediaries, especially in communities with historical mistrust of corporate entities. The lack of diversity in climate philanthropy is a significant concern, with funding often going to large organizations with high capacity, leaving smaller, grassroots organizations underfunded. The Foundation of Greater Montreal highlights this issue, noting the homogeneity of attendees at large multistakeholder events and the exclusion of frontline staff from important discussions. They have simplified their

Funders have many reasons why they decide to fund a climate project, and so a detailed breakdown of their criteria was put together in a table, and key words representing each criterion were selected (see **Appendix 10**). These words were in turn inputted into an online word art generator Wordart.com. The generator allowed for customization in shape, font, word layout and style with words that were the most frequent would be the most predominantly displayed. Through the word art, it is highly apparent that environmental funders are keen to support marginalized communities. Out of the communities represented the most Indigenous, Black, People of Colour and youth were the most predominant. Alongside these funding priorities, there is the presence of criteria that does not align with the practices of funding these youth-led marginalized communities. As uncovered in the quilted cellphilm, strong financial management systems, good governance, and experienced teams are not always possible for these communities. Indeed several of the racialized youth in the cellphilm were able to acquire experience, nevertheless they continue to be up against systems which prevent them from staying in the climate justice space long enough. Lack of affordable housing and intergenerational wealth coupled with discriminatory hiring practices set racialized groups back from pursuing climate work (see **Appendix 3** for more context). Therefore, there is a clear disconnect between what funders want to fund and the communities they want to serve who do not have access to what they are asking for.

Reflections to Guide Decision Making

Funders are tasked with the daunting challenge of only picking a handful, sometimes even just a few organizations to fund. With limited funding and resources, it can also feel risky to give funding to new groups that have not established a relationship and who have little to no experience with managing grants. Sometimes there is the perception that funders might lose their money to a group that commits fraud. It is crucial for funders to introspectively reflect on the following questions as they go about their funding journey: ‘Who are we funding? Why are we funding these groups? How are we tracking the impact of these groups? How are we measuring success?’ By reflecting on these questions, it will be easier to identify patterns, and identify where there are gaps to fill, especially if funders are noticing that they have a tendency to not reach nor fund racialized youth.

Barriers for Achieving Systems Change

Table 3.1. Table Outlining Barriers for Achieving Systems Change (Table by Lauren Castelino).

Private Foundation	Intermediaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Insufficient Funding: Climate philanthropy receives only a tiny fraction of global philanthropic funds, with a significant portion directed to institutions like hospitals and universities for tax benefits. ● Barriers in Philanthropy: Structural and psychological challenges hinder adequate funding for climate justice, emphasizing the need for urgent systemic changes. ● Data Deficiency: Lack of comprehensive data on environmental and climate funding in Canada complicates understanding the scale of the problem. ● Need for Adaptation: Philanthropic foundations were designed for outdated problems and have not adapted to address the climate crisis, which requires intergenerational wealth and power transfer. ● Political Aversion: Environmental activism is often political, deterring funders and board members from engaging deeply. ● Evolving Practices: Philanthropy must evolve to adopt unrestricted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resource Mismanagement: There is a staggering amount of unused funds in philanthropy while the world faces a crisis, treating the effort as an accounting exercise rather than a cultural and spiritual revolution. ● Cultural Shift Needed: There's an urgent need to shift from valuing endowment performance over human lives, drawing a parallel with trivial concerns (e.g., Kim Kardashian losing an earring vs. people dying). ● Philanthropy Dynamics: The philanthropic sector is perceived as a safe retirement haven for activists due to its benefits and stability. It remains dominated by white individuals, lacking racial and youth representation. ● Decision-Making: Many philanthropic decisions are controlled by boards, often excluding diverse voices, perpetuating a system where racialized groups and young people are underrepresented. ● Racialized Leadership: Priority

<p>long-term funding and engage leadership in meaningful ways, despite capacity limitations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Need for Capacity: While foundations aim to minimize overhead, this often results in a lack of capacity to implement solutions, highlighting the need for structural change. 	<p>should be given to racialized youth in leadership roles to create inclusive spaces and address significant barriers highlighted in research.</p>
<p>Socially Responsible Companies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Outdated Models: Traditional colonial models of philanthropy need to be replaced with participatory grant-making and trust-based relationships, emphasizing grassroots funding and systemic change. ● Digital Visibility: Funding is often distributed to organizations with a strong digital presence. ● Expanding Awareness: Expanding awareness of impactful organizations is crucial for effective philanthropy. 	<p>Public Foundations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Need for Systemic Change: All philanthropy, especially climate philanthropy, must undergo systemic change to bring forth inclusivity and responsiveness to community needs. ● Momentum for Change: There is potential for quicker change in climate philanthropy compared to other sectors. ● Dependence on Philanthropy: A more equitable society would reduce the need for philanthropy. Systemic inequities and environmental crises are perpetuated by vested interests in decision-making. ● Funding Accessibility: Philanthropy must become more accessible and less demanding, balancing trust with accountability.

The current philanthropic system, particularly in climate philanthropy, faces significant challenges that hinder its effectiveness in addressing urgent global crises. The above Table 3.1 addresses some of these concerns across varying funder types. Despite holding substantial financial resources, there is a reluctance to disburse funds promptly, treating the necessary systemic changes as mere accounting exercises. This mentality fails to recognize the broader cultural, societal, and spiritual shifts needed to uphold human dignity, prioritizing tax benefits over meaningful impact. The philanthropic sector often prioritizes endowment performance, even as critical issues like climate change and social justice go underfunded. This is exacerbated by the sector's lack of diversity, both in racial representation and youth involvement, perpetuating a cycle where decisions are made by a homogeneous group.

Networks within philanthropy remain insular, overburdened with learning equity practices and managing vast numbers of applications, while family foundations maintain tight control over decision-making. Additionally, the small percentage of global philanthropic funds directed towards climate change is astonishingly inadequate, with risk aversion and a desire for donor recognition further skewing funding towards larger, more established institutions over grassroots efforts. The structural and psychological barriers within philanthropy, such as a lack of incentives for greater disbursements and an outdated colonial model, demand a significant shift towards more inclusive and trust-based practices. The need for systemic change is evident across multiple foundations, highlighting the urgency for climate philanthropy to step up, adapt, and effectively support the innovative, intersectional work necessary for addressing the climate crisis and fostering long-term, equitable solutions.

Avoiding Duplicated Efforts in Grantmaking

Funders collaborate extensively through networks like the EFC where they meet monthly to coordinate efforts. A notable practice is joint funding and reporting, which allows funders to collectively address the needs of various organizations. This collaboration helps ensure that when a foundation cannot meet an organization's full funding needs, other funders can step in to fill the gap. Funders like McConnell and Private Foundation B highlight the collaborative nature of these networks, emphasizing how alignment in funding can support diverse organizations, including youth-led and racialized groups, thus making the grantmaking process more efficient and impactful.

However, challenges persist, particularly concerning the "first mover advantage" and the balance between supporting long-term partners and bringing in new organizations. Some foundations impose limits on the number of times they will fund an organization, which can be seen as both beneficial and problematic. This approach can open opportunities for new organizations but also risks punishing long-standing partners. Private Foundation D discusses the complexity of maintaining a fair and unbiased selection process, noting that both open calls for proposals and targeted outreach are coupled with inherent biases. They stress the need for more flexible funding and increased endowment access to address these challenges effectively.

A more integrated approach to grantmaking is advocated by some funders, such as those involved in Low Carbon Cities Canada (LC3) like TAF, who call for breaking down silos and standardizing application and reporting processes. Despite differing philosophies, such as the Foundation of Greater Montreal's commitment to trust-based philanthropy versus more selective processes, there is a consensus on the need for more funders with intentional approaches to climate justice. The landscape is evolving, requiring funders to continually educate themselves and adapt to emerging needs and voices. Funders like Private Foundation F emphasize the importance of diverse relationships and collaborations outside of formal networks to advance their work in climate justice.

Communities

Demographics

Most folks who attended the cellphilm screening event were youth, next were allies and a small amount were considered environmental funders and professionals. More than half identified as women and POC. There was also a fair amount of LGBTQ2S+, neurodiverse, newcomer, and Black attendees (see **Appendix 11** for in-depth demographic break-down).

Reception

The quilted cellphilm was very well received by the attendees. On a scale from 1 to 10, on how effective viewers felt like the cellphilm was in outlining the struggles of racialized climate justice activists in obtaining funding for their grassroots activism, projects and non-profit organizations, the overall response was a 9.2/10. As for the perception on how effective the call of action was to funders to change their practices to be more accessible,

equitable and inclusive of young racialized climate justice activists, respondents gave the quilted cellphilm a 8/10. The overall rating of the quilted cellphilm was a remarkable 8.4/10. 88.4% of viewers expressed that they would be interested in sharing the quilted cellphilm with those in their network.

The feedback highlights that the cellphilm was effective in engaging storytelling, delivering concise messaging about the issues and solutions in climate philanthropy, and covering diverse lived experiences. However, areas for improvement include the need for better accessibility features like subtitles and captions, enhanced filming quality, clearer audio, and more cohesive storytelling. Respondents also suggested including a more thorough call to action for funders, consistent formatting, and providing more specific examples and solutions to reduce barriers in grant giving. Overall, the cellphilm was praised for its impactful storytelling and the diverse perspectives it presented, despite some technical and structural critiques. To view the cellphilm screening event that took place see **Appendix 12** for more information. For greater detail, the in-depth cellphilm screening feedback responses can be viewed in **Appendix 13**.

Recommendations and Resources

Before delving into the recommendations, it is necessary to acknowledge the inherent flaws regarding the concept of philanthropy. While the section below will tend to gravitate towards highlighting reforms, the assumption is that philanthropy as a whole will for the most part continue under the reign of a system that has been built on capitalism and colonialism. As Indigenous *Decolonizing Wealth* scholar Edgar Villanueva puts it: “Philanthropy is the savior mentality in institutional form, which instead of helping—its ostentatiously proclaimed intent—actually further divides and destabilizes society.” Despite these struggles there is a silver lining.¹⁴⁶ Those of us who have been marginalized possess the most effective solutions for healing, advancement, and peace due to our unique perspectives and resilience.¹⁴⁷ By reclaiming our fair share of resources and returning to decision-making spaces, we can get started with our healing processes.¹⁴⁸ We can develop new methods for distributing and accessing funds, thereby restoring balance by directing financial support to the areas most in need.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Villanueva, *Decolonizing Wealth: Indigenous Wisdom to Heal Divides and Restore Balance*, 6.

¹⁴⁷ Villanueva, *Decolonizing Wealth: Indigenous Wisdom to Heal Divides and Restore Balance*, 6.

¹⁴⁸ Villanueva, *Decolonizing Wealth: Indigenous Wisdom to Heal Divides and Restore Balance*, 7.

¹⁴⁹ Villanueva, *Decolonizing Wealth: Indigenous Wisdom to Heal Divides and Restore Balance*, 7.

Young Racialized Climate Justice Activists

Collaborating vs. Starting Something New

Many young people starting out in their career naturally want to start something new. This may be because they want to enhance their resume or valorize their skillset. Canada has over 170,000 charitable and nonprofit organizations¹⁵⁰ with 80,000 being registered charities, meaning that there is not much need most of the time to start something new.¹⁵¹ Gabe Oatley, speaking on the panel at the cellphilm screening, shared how the experience that a young person can get working with an existing organization can be just as valuable, and the work can be even more powerful due to the amount of horsepower behind it (see **Appendix 12**). There exists various online mapping tools of existing organizations to collaborate with, including Young Diplomats of Canada's Youth Organizations Database¹⁵², Climate Justice-Just Transition Donor Collaborative Climate Justice Map¹⁵³ and Shake Up the Establishment's Map the System of Climate Action Groups¹⁵⁴.

All that being said, there are emerging groups that bring innovative and diverse perspectives to the table. Starting a new group or organization is sometimes a requirement in order to bring attention to an issue that no one is speaking about. For example, Climate Cardinals is a relatively new organization that emerged to bring attention to the inaccessibility of climate information for those who do not speak English¹⁵⁵. It is no easy feat to be a climate justice activist battling between innovation and collaboration. Balance, I believe, is key so that there are not duplicated efforts created, while emerging groups that are needed and necessary are still able to come to fruition.

Lean in On Mentorship

As put forward by FES in their interview, mentors have a great deal of experience to share with young racialized climate justice activists. Mentors can help steer a young person in a direction on the basis of past learnings and successes in obtaining funding. They are a

¹⁵⁰ "Sector Impact | Imagine Canada," n.d., <https://sectorsource.ca/research-and-impact/sector-impact>.

¹⁵¹ Canada Revenue Agency, "Charitable Work and Ethnocultural Groups – Information on Registering as a Charity," Canada.ca, December 21, 2022, <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/charities-giving/charities/policies-guidance/charitable-work-ethnocultural-groups-information-on-registering-a-charity.html>.

¹⁵² "Youth Organization Database," Young Diplomats of Canada, 2021, <https://database.youngdiplomats.ca/>.

¹⁵³ "CJ-JT Wiki," Climate Justice Map, March 2024, https://climatejusticemap.org/index.php/Main_Page.

¹⁵⁴ "Collaborate With Other Organizations," Shake up the Establishment, June 2, 2022, <https://www.shakeuptheestab.org/mapthesystem>.

¹⁵⁵ "Climate Cardinals," Climate Cardinals, July 26, 2024, <https://www.climatecardinals.org/>.

resource that is often given voluntarily, and mentors are keen to give back to their community. Mentors can also be there in assisting with the grant writing process and navigating the unknown territory of bureaucracy. Whether giving an extra set of eyes to review an application or assisting with writing, mentors are a valuable resource to leverage.

Find Your Unique Value Proposition

Funders are tasked with making difficult decisions, and often want to fund projects that are the most transformative. Young, racialized climate justice activists need to think about how their project is unique and essential. They should ask themselves: “Why should funders fund me over everyone else? How is the problem being solved as a result of this work?”. Answering these questions will allow these activists to identify what the problem is, how they are solving it and how they are providing value for the communities that they represent and serve.

Mount Pressure on Funders

In the cellphilm screening, Oatley also mentioned how the University of Toronto finally agreed to divest their endowment of fossil fuels, and the reason was because of the pressure that they felt from the student body (see **Appendix 12**). Likewise funders have a reputation they need to hold up - if they feel the pressure from young, racialized climate justice activists or feel their reputation is on the line, they might feel more inclined to change their practices. Oatley pointed out examples such as letter writing campaigns, putting up signs outside of foundations’ offices, open letters, or flooding the inboxes of funders (see **Appendix 12**).

Find Funders that are Aligned

Funders are overwhelmed with the great volume of people and organizations that want to get in front of them for funding. Hence, it is critical to understand funders’ strategies and what they are trying to accomplish with their limited pot of philanthropic dollars. Young racialized climate justice activists need to find ways in which they are aligned with funders as each funder has their own criteria or strategic areas in which they are aiming to fund. Activists should find the funders that are most aligned with the type of project or organization they have. Sometimes this might unfortunately mean that young racialized climate justice activists might very well have to do more homework - and give into the bureaucracy that is involved in order to get the funds that they so desperately need.

Governments

Engage More Racialized Youth

The government has the most amount of funding out of any stakeholder, including private philanthropy invested in climate work. Since 2015, the Government of Canada has committed to \$160 billion with the intention of building Canada's clean economy whilst reducing emissions, and allocating other resources to conservation and environmental protection.¹⁵⁶ To become more accessible to racialized youth, they can engage in paid consultations on how they would best be funded. These consultations can go beyond youth councils such as the Prime Minister's Youth Council, Environment and Climate Change Canada Youth Council or Natural Resources Canada Youth Council, which only allow select youth to share their perspectives. Alternatively, they can engage in discussions with more youth instead of an exclusive group, and allocate a budget for those who have accessibility needs (such as requiring internet access for online meetings, transportation and accommodations covered for in-person meetings, compensation for their time, etc.). In this way, youth who would not have the time or opportunity to commit to joining a council can still meaningfully share their perspectives.

Increase the Disbursement Quota

In 2022, the federal government raised the disbursement quota from 3.5% to 5% for foundations with assets exceeding \$1 million.¹⁵⁷ This change requires these foundations to grant a higher percentage of their assets, not allocated for charitable activities, beyond the \$1 million mark.¹⁵⁸ Increasing this disbursement will allow for more foundations to wind down on their assets, and give out more money to organizations that need it the most. Recommendations have been put forward by Imagine Canada to increase the disbursement quota to 7%.¹⁵⁹ Meanwhile, groups such as the Justice Fund, advocating for more radical change have advocated for 10%.¹⁶⁰

Change Wording on CRA Risk Assessment Tool

¹⁵⁶ Department of Finance Canada, "Chapter 5: Safer, Healthier Communities | Budget 2024."

¹⁵⁷ Gabe Oatley, "Disbursement Quota Hike to 5 per Cent Given Royal Assent, Now Law | Future of Good," Future of Good, December 21, 2022, <https://futureofgood.co/disbursement-quota-hike-to-5-per-cent-given-royal-assent-now-law/>.

¹⁵⁸ Oatley, "Disbursement Quota Hike to 5 per Cent Given Royal Assent, Now Law | Future of Good."

¹⁵⁹ "Imagine Canada's Position on an Increase to the Disbursement Quota | Imagine Canada."

¹⁶⁰ Oatley, "Tired of 'Siloed' Conversations, Justice Fund Protest Brings Disbursement Quota Advocacy to the Street."

Despite calls from the charitable sector, the new guidelines for giving grants to non-qualified donees still seem overly cautious such as through the CRA's risk assessment tool.¹⁶¹ This tool suggests that any grant over \$5,000 to a NQD is medium or high-risk. Since most foundation grants are substantially larger than this, almost all grants would be considered high-risk from the start. The guidelines also recommend assessing risk based on grant duration. Grants lasting less than two years are considered low-risk, while those exceeding five years are deemed high-risk. This approach goes against the idea of trust-based philanthropy, which favours long-term grants for NQDs to help them become sustainable.¹⁶² More importantly, these risk factors will affect how foundations approach NQDs as the CRA suggests stricter accountability measures for higher-risk grants.¹⁶³ For example, a high-risk grant might require an “extensive review” of the NQD before approval, while a low-risk grant might only require a “limited review”.¹⁶⁴

Abolish 'Direction and Control', Especially When Not Needed

Although there are changes made by law in 2022 with the CRA guidance, direction and control continues to be patronizing and paternalistic.¹⁶⁵ Under this system, the funder has an upper hand, with them being able to determine when a non-qualified donees' work will start, how it should be executed, and what can be purchased using the funder's money.¹⁶⁶ The funder also consequently owns any intellectual property of the work produced.¹⁶⁷ Direction and control should be abolished, especially when it is not considered needed or necessary by the grantee, and thus giving the grantee more freedom and control of their work.

Crack Down on Donor Advised Funds

Donor advised funds (DAF) are charitable accounts held within foundations that operate like a private foundation but are not subject to the same regulations such as the CRA's

¹⁶¹ Oatley, “‘Major Victory’ or Disappointment? Mixed Reviews on Whether New CRA Guidance Will Spur More Granting to Non-Qualified Donees | Future of Good.”

¹⁶² Oatley, “‘Major Victory’ or Disappointment? Mixed Reviews on Whether New CRA Guidance Will Spur More Granting to Non-Qualified Donees | Future of Good.”

¹⁶³ Oatley, “‘Major Victory’ or Disappointment? Mixed Reviews on Whether New CRA Guidance Will Spur More Granting to Non-Qualified Donees | Future of Good.”

¹⁶⁴ Oatley, “‘Major Victory’ or Disappointment? Mixed Reviews on Whether New CRA Guidance Will Spur More Granting to Non-Qualified Donees | Future of Good.”

¹⁶⁵ Oatley, “‘Major Victory’ or Disappointment? Mixed Reviews on Whether New CRA Guidance Will Spur More Granting to Non-Qualified Donees | Future of Good.”

¹⁶⁶ Oatley, “‘Major Victory’ or Disappointment? Mixed Reviews on Whether New CRA Guidance Will Spur More Granting to Non-Qualified Donees | Future of Good.”

¹⁶⁷ Oatley, “‘Major Victory’ or Disappointment? Mixed Reviews on Whether New CRA Guidance Will Spur More Granting to Non-Qualified Donees | Future of Good.”

disbursement quota.¹⁶⁸ This is a measure that funders can use to circumvent this regulation, so the CRA needs to take action to learn more about the use of DAF's, including more information through the T3010 to inform future tax policy recommendations for the future.¹⁶⁹

Collect More Data on Board Diversity

For several years, professionals within the charitable sector have advocated for the collection of data on the diversity of board compositions. Responding to these calls, the Special Senate Committee on the Charitable Sector issued a recommendation in June 2019. This recommendation urged the CRA to amend the T3010 and T1044 forms (the filing forms for federally incorporated non-profit organizations) to include a section on board diversity.¹⁷⁰

Despite the recommendation being issued three years ago, the T3010 and T1044 forms currently do not collect data on board diversity.¹⁷¹ A statement from the CRA clarified that this issue falls outside their direct purview. However, the statement acknowledged ongoing efforts within the Senate. Specifically, it mentioned Senator Ratna Omidvar's motion in May 2022, which called upon the government to implement the Special Senate Committee's recommendation.¹⁷² The statement further implied that collecting such data would necessitate an amendment to the *Income Tax Act*, which has not yet been implemented.¹⁷³

The CRA has outlined a two-fold purpose for the T3010 form: public transparency (providing information on the charitable sector to Canadians) and compliance (gathering information necessary to ensure charities comply with the *Income Tax Act*).¹⁷⁴ The statement emphasized that the *Income Tax Act* currently lacks provisions related to collecting data on the diversity of directors within charities and non-profit organizations.¹⁷⁵ It concluded by

¹⁶⁸ Oatley, "Interview: CRA's Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good."

¹⁶⁹ Oatley, "Interview: CRA's Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good."

¹⁷⁰ Oatley, "Interview: CRA's Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good."

¹⁷¹ Oatley, "Interview: CRA's Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good."

¹⁷² Oatley, "Interview: CRA's Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good."

¹⁷³ Oatley, "Interview: CRA's Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good."

¹⁷⁴ Oatley, "Interview: CRA's Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good."

¹⁷⁵ Oatley, "Interview: CRA's Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good."

stating that, from a compliance standpoint, such data is not essential for the CRA's current operations.¹⁷⁶

Embed Diversity within Federal Advisory Groups

In 2019, the federal government created the Advisory Committee on the Charitable Sector (ACCS), a permanent committee made up of top charity lawyers, executives, accountants, and other professionals.¹⁷⁷ Its purpose is to provide the Minister of National Revenue and the CRA with input on issues affecting the sector. The ACCS has received attention given concerns about its lack of racial and experiential diversity. The CRA also consults with the Technical Issues Working Group (TIWG) which consists of the similar type of professionals as ACCS. Established in 2004, the TIWG meets twice a year, with members serving two-year terms.¹⁷⁸ The current Director General of the CRA, Sharmila Khare, shares that it's their go-to group for consulting a policy document. Hence, due to the influence that these groups have, they should work to become more racially and experientially diverse as to meaningfully include voices that often get left behind.¹⁷⁹

Funders

Reflecting on what was shared in the barriers and solutions documents (see **Appendix 3** and **Appendix 4**) as well as the Funder Responses to the Barriers & Solutions Document (see **Appendix 9**) it made it easier to come up with solutions. These solutions are more realistic and attainable as opposed to a handful of solutions (not all) by the activists that are a far off dream and require us to live in an entirely different economic system. Keeping this in mind, below are some proposed next steps for funders, and corresponding resources that they can consult to ensure that can have support in implementing these changes:

Fund More Non Qualified Donees

Despite amendments being passed and enshrined in Bill C-19, the *Budget Implementation Act*, funders need to take actionable steps to take advantage of this new

¹⁷⁶ Oatley, "Interview: CRA's Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good."

¹⁷⁷ Oatley, "Interview: CRA's Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good."

¹⁷⁸ Oatley, "Interview: CRA's Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good."

¹⁷⁹ Oatley, "Interview: CRA's Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good."

change in the law.¹⁸⁰ Funders whose charitable objects, statements in their CRA filings, do not allow them to fund NQDs, need to update them so that they are able to issue funding to NQDs. Despite it costing a few thousand in legal fees and taking time, funders are then able to redirect hundreds of thousands or millions of dollars towards worthwhile initiatives.¹⁸¹ There is the suggestion to convince other funders to make this change as well, so it does not take 10 years (which is the typical timeframe that funders would make this change).¹⁸² Funders might worry about taking on the risks associated with a grantee's actions. However, under new CRA regulations, if funders adhere to an established due diligence process, they can fulfill their obligations and potentially avoid taking on extra risk, depending on the specific circumstances.¹⁸³ A toolkit developed by the McConnell, Inspirit, Laidlaw, and Lucie and André Chagnon foundations, brings forward a case for funding NQDs and the reasons to take the leap and invest in them.¹⁸⁴ The latter half of their resource includes a step-by-step guide on how to work with NQDs including accountability tools, contract examples, and bringing boards on board.¹⁸⁵

Collect Data on Demographics of Groups Funded

In the interviews, it was apparent that 15.38% of funders did not have any data collected to know if they were targeting racialized communities, or they did not reach out to their intermediaries to inquire about collecting data on this information either. There were also funders interviewed who were not too sure about their numbers as they did not differentiate between the groups that were led by racialized communities and those that serve racialized communities, and gave ranges as opposed to exact values. To strengthen support for marginalized groups, it is recommended that funders implement data collection methods so that they are aware of which groups they are reaching, and conversely, which groups they are unable to target. By understanding where they are falling short, they would know where they need to improve and put strategies in place to ensure they are meeting their goals for targeting underrepresented groups. Another option would be to consult with funders within

¹⁸⁰ Philanthropic Foundations Canada, “2022 Annual Report,” 2022, 7, <https://pfc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/PFC-Annual-Report-2022-2.pdf>.

¹⁸¹ Oatley, “New Toolkit Aims to Debunk Idea That Funding Non-Qualified Donees Is Riskier | Future of Good.”

¹⁸² Oatley, “‘Major Victory’ or Disappointment? Mixed Reviews on Whether New CRA Guidance Will Spur More Granting to Non-Qualified Donees | Future of Good.”

¹⁸³ “A Toolkit for Working With Non-qualified Donees,” McConnell Foundation, May 16, 2024, <https://www.mcconnellfoundation.ca/report/a-toolkit-for-working-with-non-qualified-donees/>.

¹⁸⁴ “A Toolkit for Working With Non-Qualified Donees.”

¹⁸⁵ “A Toolkit for Working With Non-Qualified Donees.”

existing funder networks such as EFC or LC3 to gain access to a shared data collection tool so that funders are collectively on track for adequately serving more marginalized groups.

Create More Board Positions for Racialized Youth

Throughout the interviews, it was immediately apparent through all conversations with the exception of two intermediaries and two companies, that the board has the final decision making power. There were also concerns shared how there are no or insufficient numbers of racialized youth who sit on boards of foundations. Public calls should be made so that racialized youth who are more connected to the reality of the climate crisis can have a voice on key decisions. Racialized youth climate justice activists are experts in their own right in knowing what is happening on-the-ground in their community with regards to the climate crisis. They also would drive urgency, and according to an interview with the Community Partnerships Advisor at the Foundation of Greater Montreal, the board would become less bureaucratic and corporate. Another point of contention is that it is not sufficient to solely have racialized youth on boards in a tokenistic manner. Rather, racialized youth should have a voice at board meetings and decision making power in being able to vote on which projects receive funding.

Spend Down Endowments

Private foundations pose the pertinent question “To exist in perpetuity or not?”. Given the urgency of the climate crisis, there is not enough time to just exist, and hoard billions of dollars that have the potential to mitigate and adapt to the climate crisis.¹⁸⁶ According to the UN Climate Chief, we only have two years left to save the world.¹⁸⁷ There are many resources available including the Philanthropist Journal Report Spending Pathways for Foundations.¹⁸⁸ The case for spending down includes increasing funds for a cause, which would make a bigger difference; being more driven towards a mission rather than organizational survival; and the ability to provide less-restricted funding to granting partners.¹⁸⁹ For foundations who for whatever reason are unable to consider spending down,

¹⁸⁶ Ivey and Lourie, “A Letter to Our Friends and Partners on the Decision to Wind up the Ivey Foundation and Distribute Its Full Endowment by 2027.”

¹⁸⁷ Seth Borenstein and Jamey Keaten, “UN Climate Chief Presses for Faster Action, Says Humans Have 2 Years Left ‘to Save the World,’” CTV News, April 10, 2024, <https://www.ctvnews.ca/climate-and-environment/un-climate-chief-presses-for-faster-action-says-humans-have-2-years-left-to-save-the-world-1.6841199>.

¹⁸⁸ The Philanthropist Journal, “Spending Pathways for Foundations,” *The Philanthropist Journal*, November 2023, <https://thephilanthropist.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/240403-Definity-Spending-Pathways.pdf>.

¹⁸⁹ The Philanthropist Journal, “Spending Pathways for Foundations,” 5.

there are always other alternatives such as capital transfers to BIPOC foundations; prioritizing impact over growing an endowment; and impact investing to see that the 95% they do need to invest is put into social and environmentally oriented portfolios.

Embed Participatory and Iterative Grantmaking Practices

It is essential to meaningfully involve the communities most impacted by the climate crisis by shifting power dynamics and garnering their trust and support with decision making on funding. The resource titled “Deciding Together Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking”¹⁹⁰ and “Participatory Grantmakers Resource Database”¹⁹¹ can be helpful for funders who are unaware of how to pursue participatory grantmaking practices, want to learn what the core elements are, and what the benefits are with embedding it into their grant making.¹⁹² It also delves into the mechanics and lays out examples of other foundations who are pursuing this work as well as their evaluation strategies to determine if this approach works for them.¹⁹³ For funders that are concerned about tokenism, this guide distinguishes between approaches that are truly participatory and those that are extractive and harmful.¹⁹⁴ One executive at Private Foundation E expressed how they would not be aware of community needs, particularly surrounding contracts until they refused to sign as a result of wording that could particularly take away their intellectual property and ownership rights. Hence, the participatory approach is crucial for funders in ensuring that communities are comfortable with agreements that they are signing, and it is essential that funders update their contracts and processes to align with community needs.

There were concerns from Private Foundation D that the participatory process could gatekeep (with those on the committee having a lot of power in making decisions) or another from Intermediary B that it could become a popularity contest (convincing others on the committee to vote for groups like their own). There are mechanisms in place from existing

¹⁹⁰ Cynthia Gibson, “Deciding Together: Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking,” 2018, https://learningforfunders.candid.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/12/DecidingTogether_Final_20181002.pdf.

¹⁹¹ “Participatory Grantmaking Resources Database,” Notion, n.d., <https://pgmresources.notion.site/9784e7c92d7a4268b4b71f49b17ac263?v=7b356c26e3ca4d6a82b59aaca5491a2d>.

¹⁹² Cynthia Gibson and Jen Bokoff, “Deciding Together Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking,” Candid Learning for Funders, October 2, 2018, https://learningforfunders.candid.org/content/guides/deciding-together/?_gl=1*17n10pm*_gcl_au*NjIwMDU4Mjc4LjE3MTgyMjIyNTM.*_ga*Njg1MTIyMjUxLjE3MTgyMjIyNTM.*_ga_5W8PXYYGBX*MTcxOTc2ND EwNC4zLjEuMTcxOTc2NDcwNC42MC4wLjA.#highlights.

¹⁹³ Gibson, “Deciding Together: Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking,” 37–45.

¹⁹⁴ Gibson, “Deciding Together: Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking,” 57.

fundors who maintain participatory ways of grant making such as developing a conflict of interest policy, keeping committee members with a conflict of interest in a different room so they cannot vote on their own application or removing a committee member if they did not disclose a conflict of interest. Experiences from fundors who have engaged in participatory processes have been well received, and in the pursuit of diverse approaches and collective intelligence see it as being worth it.

Iterative grantmaking is an approach to distributing funds, where fundors recognize that all eligible ideas are meant to be funded. However, due to limited funding available, not all applications will be accepted, rather they will be placed on hold until funding opens up again. This is also recommended in any case extra funding becomes available, and rejected grantees get another chance at funding by being put on a waitlist. Iterative grantmaking also involves fundors and grantees learning from their previous applications so that they can submit and review applications that are more aligned with both parties' expectations. In response to this, some suggestions to help fundors adhere to iterative approaches are asking rejected grantees to reapply through a LOI to save time. On the intermediary side of iterative grant making where they connect young racialized folks to funding for leadership opportunities, it might be the first time of an applicant putting together a project, and so giving them that 'first yes' and leadership opportunity is really important to their growth and development.

Some fundors have expressed that it is challenging to get their boards on board with implementing participatory or iterative approaches to their grant making by working with existing staff internally. They could also hire a consultant that has lived experiences of the marginalized community the funder is hoping to serve and is keen to work on participatory grantmaking. Alternatively, they outsource a third party to conduct this work on their behalf, although they should keep in mind the caveat of the stronger disconnect between having the fundors so far removed again from the problems they are aiming to solve.

Fund More Middle Stage Organizations

It was apparent that throughout the interview process, fundors either focused too much on funding innovative projects, or alternatively would continue to fund the established organizations that they for several decades have been funding. Indeed fundors can certainly continue to fund emerging and established organizations. However, therein lies a gap where middle stage organizations remain chronically underfunded as they are not new and flashy enough to be considered, and not established enough to have the financial statements or

organizational capacity, thus competing for scraps and barely getting by. There was a suggestion put forward by a youth-led intermediary organization to establish an accelerator that could package networking, mentorship, education, and crucially, funding. The hope is that this would give more youth the tools that they would need to hopefully make their organization more established. Through funder networks, they should work together to discuss how they can distribute where they are allocating their funding to, so that this group in the middle receives the support that they need.

Bring Funders, their Fifth Generations and their Executives Into Communities Impacted by the Climate Crisis

In one interview, an employee of Private Foundation D revealed how there is a lack of urgency and action from funders due to privilege. The employee went on to share that the family members of the family foundation are not personally impacted by the climate crisis as it is only something they see in the news, and are rather detached from. A representative from the Foundation of Greater Montreal also shared how boards are the ones making decisions on executive compensation, paying staff exorbitant wages making them further detached from reality. In order for funders to care about the climate crisis, they unfortunately need to witness it firsthand or be impacted by it personally. One suggestion is to visit communities impacted by the climate crisis, and to witness climate catastrophe and devastation. Funders can bring executives on their team, as well as the ‘fifth generation’, as put forward by Private Foundation D, who will likely be the next in line to run the foundation and decide where the foundation is headed in terms of priorities, strategy and if they want to exist in perpetuity.

It is unfortunate that this is what it will take for funders to care, but the interviews with funders demonstrated how funders often would only fund causes that they care about or are personally connected to. This would also allow them to expand the communities that they can reach, as for even major unrestricted grants, it is reported that funders fund people who they know and are comfortable working with. Visiting these communities would allow them to establish new relationships with groups who would otherwise not be able to reach them.

Lend More Support to Grantees at a Disadvantage

Two employees, one from Private Foundation D and the other from Private Foundation E, shared how they operate as a small team. One shared how she works as a one person team as the sole full time staff member with only occasional part time administrative support. However, the help is not enough to be able to take on the capacity of helping

grantees whether with navigating the application process, grant writing check-ins or reporting.¹⁹⁵ The most ideal solution would be to hire more diverse staff, and get the buy-in from the board that this is needed in order to attract LOIs from marginalized backgrounds. Funders need to recognize that if they do not change their practices, then unfortunately they will only be able to attract prospective grantees who have the privilege of being able to go through a complex application process, frequent check-ins and an arduous set of reporting requirements.

These two employees are also aware of other funders, particularly community foundations who are only volunteer-driven. Hiring new staff is not a feasible goal for them as they are publicly funded. However, establishing committees composed of diverse representation, with honorariums offered to community members of need (since not everyone can afford to participate without compensation) could be another solution. Alternatively, if funders have difficulty convincing their board of embedding this practice into their work, they can outsource the support to an agency. Although it might be more costly, they can more directly impact communities who are out of reach and would not be able to apply without the additional support. Another idea that is currently in the works at FES is developing a roster of volunteers who are willing to help prospective grantees with their application. The sentiment is that many young people are keen to learn grant writing skills, and there also exist many established professionals who are willing and interested in lending their time and expertise.

Communicate with Other Funders on Strategies via a Funder Network

Standardizing application processes and collecting previously submitted reports to other funders can be seen as practices to implement so make the application and reporting processes more efficient for grantees. There was a concern from Private Foundation F that there might be the lowest common denominator, where one funder would expect to hear more whereas another would expect to hear less. It is so important for funders to convene and discuss where that balance is on what they expect so that there is not seemingly a standard that funders are above or below. For example, if one funder wants their grant application or process to be the standard, but they are asking a lot fewer questions, or conversely, too many then it might cause other funders who have differing opinions on how applications should be formatted would fear that across the entire funder network detrimental practices would be set and there is nowhere out of it.

¹⁹⁵ Mangin et al., “2024 Landscape Report,” 13.

Another collective area of collaboration that funders could work on is implementing policies to ensure that grantees are paying young racialized climate justice activists a living wage. There evidently is a concern that many of the other funders that youth and racialized-led organizations work with do not approve funding for a living wage, rather just minimum wage, honorariums or gift cards (see **Appendix 3** and **Appendix 6** for concerns on precarious work in the climate movement). So, if giving young, racialized climate justice activists a living wage is a key accessibility piece to participate in making change, they should top off other contributions and find other collaborative ways through a funder network to embed within the funding the ability to ensure liveable wages.

Balance Between Pooled Funds and Local, Place-Based Funding

Intermediaries with pooled funds are useful, since they can give access to funding for communities who do not have connections to funders. They also have other benefits including shared co-working space, branding support, resources for leadership development, and the ability to be a fiscal sponsor if groups want to receive administrative support obtaining more funding that requires qualified donee status.¹⁹⁶ The risks to not funding intermediaries would mean a risk to racialized youth groups not getting any access at all to funding. However, the concern of gatekeeping remains, as there is the potential for them to give access to some groups more connections and resources over another.

Commit to Unrestricted Funding

The Program Director, Climate at the McConnell Foundation shared how they are skeptical about unrestricted funding, given it could be perceived as giving out free money without any work. Qualifying impact for climate justice, through qualitative metrics such as a theory of change is important to them in order to receive funds. However, a study in the *Foundation Review*, displayed preliminary evidence with how unrestricted funding was associated with the ability of an organization to have much more flexibility and agility, more stable infrastructure along with a heightened ability to achieve their mission and strategic goals they set.¹⁹⁷ According to Imagine Canada, several funders have had the tendency to shy away from unrestricted funding due to its perception of administrative and overhead costs

¹⁹⁶ “The Youth Harbour: Youth-for-Youth Climate Support System,” The Youth Harbour, June 20, 2024, <https://www.theyouthharbour.org/>.

¹⁹⁷ Olivier Hunnik, Arjen De Wit, and Pamala Wiepking, “(in)Equality Through Unrestricted Grantmaking: Examining Trust and Power in the Collaboration Between the Dutch Charity Lotteries and Their Grantees,” *The Foundation Review* 13, no. 2 (June 1, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.9707/1944-5660.1563>.

being regarded as entirely separate from the projects that nonprofits were implementing and hence less worthy of receiving funding.¹⁹⁸ Unrestricted funding is on a continuum, with restrictive project-based funding on one end and an unrestricted asset transfer on the other (see **Figure 4.0**).

THE UNRESTRICTED FUNDING CONTINUUM: MOVING FROM RESTRICTED TO UNRESTRICTED FUNDING



Figure 4.0. Unrestricted Funding Continuum (Image by Ayer and Anderson, “Trust & Impact: Funders’ Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada.”)

¹⁹⁸ Steven Ayer and Paul Anderson, “Trust & Impact: Funders’ Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada,” *Imagine Canada* (Imagine Canada, May 2022), 5, https://imaginecanada.ca/sites/default/files/2022-05/Trust-&-Impact-Funders-Perspectives-on-Unrestricted-Funding-report_0.pdf.

Through Imagine Canada’s research on unrestricted funding, they have put together a very useful chart that outlines the restrictive and exclusive practices that funders need to move away from, and the unrestrictive and inclusive practices that they can strive for (see **Figure 4.1.**). Funders are encouraged to read the full research study titled “Trust & Impact: Funders’ Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada” to get inspired about what other funders are committing to, and move closer towards trust-based philanthropy.¹⁹⁹ Trust-based philanthropy acknowledges the inherent power imbalance between funders and grantees.²⁰⁰ This approach aims to shift power to community members who are best positioned to drive change.²⁰¹ Instead of imposing their own priorities and ideas, trust-based funders approach their work with humility, ready to listen and learn. They understand that meaningful change takes time and cannot be rushed.²⁰² Rather than hoarding resources, they allocate funds to those who need them most. These funders are also open to experimenting with new methods, recognizing that not every initiative will succeed.²⁰³

¹⁹⁹ Ayer and Anderson, “Trust & Impact: Funders’ Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada,” 5.

²⁰⁰ Ayer and Anderson, “Trust & Impact: Funders’ Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada,” 25.

²⁰¹ Ayer and Anderson, “Trust & Impact: Funders’ Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada,” 25.

²⁰² Ayer and Anderson, “Trust & Impact: Funders’ Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada,” 25.

²⁰³ Ayer and Anderson, “Trust & Impact: Funders’ Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada,” 25.

SUMMARY OF THEMES FROM THE RESEARCH





Theme	FROM restrictive and exclusive practices	TO unrestricted and inclusive practices
Theme #1. Strengthening organizations 		
Reducing funding restrictions	Funding has designated purposes , is project-based , and does not cover general operating costs	Funding is flexible and can be used where best needed
Multi-year funding	One-year projects , with no guarantee of renewal	Long-term grants that allow for planning and work on systemic change
Building capacity	Funders support projects or programs , not the core of the organization	Creating resilient organizations is a core goal of any funding relationship
Theme #2. Equitable and accessible funding 		
Equity, anti-racism, and justice	The racial composition of the leadership and populations served are not part of funding decisions	Ensuring equitable access to funding for organizations led by and serving Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour, and other equity-seeking groups
Funding nonprofits and grassroots groups	Only funding registered charities	Also funding nonprofits and grassroots groups that are best placed to achieve impact
Applications and reporting	Complex applications and reporting requirements that meet the need of funders, but also create barriers	Simplified applications and reporting requirements that reduce the burden on grantees and make the process more accessible
Theme #3. Sharing Power 		
Participatory grantmaking	All decisions are made internally by staff and the board	Decisions are made or influenced by community members
Evolving governance	Board members are made up solely of those closest to the organization , often fundholders, philanthropists, and family members	Board members include people with lived experiences of the problems that are trying to be solved
Empowering assets	Each funder uses its own funds as they see fit, and funds are often dispersed slowly	Assets are invested for purpose, used quickly, and may be transferred to organizations better equipped to use them
Theme #4. Amplifying change 		
Funding systemic change	Funders will not fund systems change because the goals are too long term	Funders provide funding for systems change and recognize the importance of this work to achieve greater impact
Encouraging advocacy	Funders will not fund advocacy and do not use their influence to shape public policy	Funders actively encourage grantees to advocate, while also lending their voice and power to advocate for policies that reduce inequalities
Funding collaboratively	Funders work alone and fund projects based on their own interests	Funders work collaboratively and challenge one another to give more unrestricted gifts

Figure 4.2. Themes on Unrestricted Funding (Image by Ayer and Anderson, “Trust & Impact: Funders’ Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada.”)

Funder Networks

Promote Ways in Which Funders Can Fund Non-Qualified Donees

Foundations should not wait for government guidance on working with non-traditional charities. While some experts believe the government should actively encourage these partnerships, the CRA sees its role as providing administrative guidance to follow a new legislative framework, not promoting specific policies.²⁰⁴ The head of the

²⁰⁴ Oatley, “Interview: CRA’s Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good.”

Charities Directorate at the CRA suggests that industry organizations, like those representing foundations and charities, are better suited to spread the word about the new regulations. This means groups such as Philanthropic Foundations Canada, Community Foundations of Canada (CFC), and EFC, and charity and non-profit associations like Imagine Canada, Ontario Nonprofit Network, Alberta Nonprofit network and many more will likely play a key role in educating foundations about collaborating with NQDs.²⁰⁵

Work With Existing Service Providers to Train Funders to Change their Funding Practices

Funder networks play a vital role in bringing together funders to collaborate, and discuss any important trends or topics that might be relevant to them. They also serve as a bridge between service providers and funders. To name a few funder networks, they include The Circle of Philanthropy for Aboriginal Peoples, EFC, CFC and Philanthropic Foundations of Canada. Collectively, they have the power to start important conversations for funders, and help them learn how to work together across their network. These groups organize a variety of gatherings including annual conferences and retreats to make these connection points. A suggestion would be to use these convenings to discuss essential changes that need to be made in the grantmaking world including participatory and iterative grantmaking as well as trust based philanthropy.

Develop a Conference Fund and Program for Racialized Activists

A representative from TAF shared an idea to sponsor more racialized activists in the room such as receiving free travel, accommodation and participation in the annual Environment Funders Conference. Allowing them to meaningfully participate and develop their leadership through a formalized program could also be helpful. This would allow young, racialized activists to learn more about how environmental funders operate, and organically share with funders the work that they do through speaking on panels or participating in networking sessions. It is understandable that environment funders might not want to be bombarded with funding proposals at an event typically exclusively made for environment funders. However, it can be the catalyst for giving them more exposure and profile to the type of funders they want to get connected to. A grants manager at Private Foundation D maintains that there should be an advocacy group that allows racialized groups to get racialized groups the funding attention they need to pursue their climate justice activism, and this would be a start to achieving this goal.

²⁰⁵ Oatley, “Interview: CRA’s Director General of Charities Says Non-Qualified Donee Policy a Key Priority and Donor Advised Fund Data Changes Coming This Fall | Future of Good.”

Businesses

Capital Markets

Climate philanthropy has historically always been regarded as seeking the funding of a foundation or corporation in order to make an investment in an organization or grassroots organization. There are other opportunities that exist, which can be seen in other countries such as the United States where \$65 trillion dollars exists in capital markets compared to just a mere \$400 billion sitting in philanthropy. This market presents an immense opportunity to be invested into the climate. According to the Executive Director of FES, “It’s clear to me now that while philanthropy has its place, it alone cannot address the vast financial needs of our world. We must reimagine our systems with justice and equity at the forefront.”²⁰⁶

Relationship Building Over Competition

Build relationships with groups that businesses are keen to fund start by asking what the organization needs and making space for meaningful dialogue.²⁰⁷ Empathy and trust are also crucial elements in relationship building.²⁰⁸ Instead of a ‘Hunger Games’ of competing for scraps of funding, business funders are encouraged to consult communities and ask for their input on how they would like to be funded, and introspectively need to think about their motivation apart from what is in it for them and their customers.²⁰⁹

Paying It Forward with Unrestricted Gifts

A good recommendation for funders is to have their previous grantees give recommendations on what other groups can be funded. As an example, Lush has a very useful strategy expanding their impact into communities that they would not have been able to reach before. Giving past grantees the ability to make referrals for unrestricted gifts to like minded grassroots, activist organisations allows them to receive funds that they would have otherwise not have been able to access.

Global Pooled Funds

²⁰⁶ Kat Cadungog, “New York Climate Week Blog 3: Climate Finance, Philanthropy, and a Lot of Jargon - the Youth Harbour,” The Youth Harbour, October 23, 2023, <https://www.theyouthharbour.org/new-york-climate-week-blog-3-climate-finance-philanthropy-and-a-lot-of-jargon/>.

²⁰⁷ Shannon VanRaes, “‘Hunger Games’ Have No Place in Indigenous Fundraising,” Future of Good, November 9, 2023, <https://futureofgood.co/hunger-games-have-no-place-in-indigenous-fundraising/>.

²⁰⁸ VanRaes, “‘Hunger Games’ Have No Place in Indigenous Fundraising.”

²⁰⁹ VanRaes, “‘Hunger Games’ Have No Place in Indigenous Fundraising.”

Several companies who are reliant on sales in order to determine their philanthropic contributions, are unable to make the commitment to issue multi-year grants due to revenue uncertainty. Lush’s strategy of global pooled funds allows them to issue multi-year grants due to the volume of funds from around the world being committed. Furthermore, it allows them to impact countries in the Global South that are disproportionately impacted by the climate crisis which is crucial.

Fill in Gaps from Other Sectors

Through stakeholder engagement, the private sector should be aware of what the gaps are in other sectors to learn how to fill those gaps. Businesses should distribute more unrestricted funding, given how with other types of funders such as intermediaries and foundations, this is not always permitted. For example, Lush is funding work that can be seen as lobbyist work that other charities cannot fund as it is considered partisan (which charities are prohibited from funding according to the CRA).

Build Accountability through Employee Resource Groups

For many corporations, it is difficult to make any case other than the business case that would satisfy the bottom line. We are at a point in time, where we need to think beyond the profit, and prioritize people and the planet. Corporations need to see humanity and witness the devastation in the world, and think beyond the greed that lines the pockets of top executives. Employee resources groups are one way in which corporations can bring together their people to get them engaged in discussion on solving social and environmental challenges, and build accountability mechanisms including volunteering for youth and racialized-led climate programs which can in turn grow into a funding commitment.

As put forward by the State of Corporate Purpose Report, “CSR teams, in particular, have found powerful allies in these employee-led groups who care deeply about advancing opportunities and outcomes for the communities they represent. More CSR teams are collaborating with ERGs to enhance awareness, engagement and impact. These partnerships aim to add authenticity to critical cultural moments and crisis responses, and to influence impact strategies, funding and decision-making.”²¹⁰ Guides such as the Employee Resource

²¹⁰ “The State of Corporate Purpose 2024,” Benevity Impact Labs, April 25, 2024, <https://benevity.com/state-of-corporate-purpose-2024>.

Group Toolkit²¹¹ developed by the Canadian Centre on Diversity and Inclusion can be helpful for starting the process of forming an ERG.

Communities

Mutual Aid

The way in which charities have been established, has been set up to benefit the elite the most.²¹² Mutual aid projects, in contrast, are designed inversely to the charity model and how it looks like in the nonprofit sector.²¹³ Mutual aid projects are beneficial since they mobilize more people rather than just a few experts; do not use eligibility criteria to cut out marginalized groups; are integrated into our lives rather than a preferred charitable goal; help conduct a joint awareness on the root causes of the issue and connect people to social movements that respond to these causes.²¹⁴ Mutual aid groups collectively fundraise as opposed to an elite funder, and the group has more autonomy over what the funding can be used for and what they believe is most effective.²¹⁵ An example of a mutual aid project is coming together to collect funds through GoFundMe on disaster relief efforts such as the flooding that took place in British Columbia in 2021.²¹⁶ Communities are recommended to continue their mutual aid efforts as a way of rapidly mobilizing capital to address the climate crisis. This will enable the community to start small, and if more effort is needed for their initiative they can slowly grow.

Collective Giving

Collective giving is a practice that has lived on in racialized communities since the 1700s. The practice of “box hand” (in Guyana), “susu” (in Nigeria), “tontines” (in Mali and Senegal), “toti” (Haiti), and “partner” (Jamaica) is derived from African traditions. Across other places there are slight variations, “potlatches” (Haida Nation), “tandas” (Mexico), and “tontine” (Cambodia).²¹⁷ Box hand, for example, is where a family or community comes

²¹¹ Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, “Employee Resource Groups: Toolkit for creating and sustaining effective ERGs,” *Toolkit for Creating and Sustaining Effective ERGs*, October 2023, <https://ccdi.ca/media/4177/ccdi-toolkit-employee-resource-groups-a-toolkit-for-creating-and-sustaining-effective-ergs.pdf>.

²¹² Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*, 26.

²¹³ Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*, 26.

²¹⁴ Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*, 26.

²¹⁵ Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*, 69.

²¹⁶ Stand.earth, “Mutual Aid for Those Affected by B.C. Floods,” November 19, 2021, <https://stand.earth/insights/mutual-aid-for-those-affected-by-b-c-floods/>.

²¹⁷ Darwent, “How to Fund Real Change in Your Community.”

together and each person contributes a small amount of money.²¹⁸ Then, each month one person is given the entire pot of money with a different person getting the full amount each round. Overall, each person gets the full pot of money at least twice a year.²¹⁹

This practice has been helpful when saving up for tuition, household items, or even making a down payment on a home. It has also been helpful in understanding community needs, so if someone needs to get their hand earlier, they can be accommodated.²²⁰ This tradition has also come to be due to systemic discrimination that these groups have experienced such as Black people being two times as likely to be rejected from mortgages and loans than the rest of the population.²²¹ Black philanthropy is based on a concept called “Ubuntu” which is an African philosophy widely interpreted as humanity towards others.²²² They also have a saying, “I am because you are” or “I am because we are” which highlights how we are all interconnected, and what effects one community member impacts on all of them.²²³

Using this philosophy, there are two funding shifts that need to take place, including who is making decisions (racialized groups) and how those decisions are being made (through the collective).²²⁴ Not one Black person can make decisions on behalf of an entire community, and therefore in the creation of the Foundation for Black Communities (FBC), local Black experts were the ones making decisions since they would know their communities, partners and field best.²²⁵ When the FBC released their youth wellness granting program, anyone connected to the project whether a program manager, participant or volunteer were invited to be on the grant review panel to review each application and share feedback. In this sense, the collective is being involved in making the funding decision.²²⁶

Similarly, climate justice funding should be conducted in the same way, with on the ground climate justice activists who are most impacted by the climate crisis being involved in where funding is being allocated. The CLIMA Fund is an organization that is committed to this practice, where they use networks of activist advisors to inform their granting decisions.²²⁷ At the CLIMA Fund, they are flexible with their funding, have minimized

²¹⁸ Darwent, “How to Fund Real Change in Your Community.”

²¹⁹ Darwent, “How to Fund Real Change in Your Community.”

²²⁰ Darwent, “How to Fund Real Change in Your Community.”

²²¹ Darwent, “How to Fund Real Change in Your Community.”

²²² Darwent, “How to Fund Real Change in Your Community.”

²²³ Darwent, “How to Fund Real Change in Your Community.”

²²⁴ Darwent, “How to Fund Real Change in Your Community.”

²²⁵ Darwent, “How to Fund Real Change in Your Community.”

²²⁶ Darwent, “How to Fund Real Change in Your Community.”

²²⁷ “Frequently Asked Questions – CLIMA Fund,” n.d., [https://climasolutions.org/frequently-asked-questions/..](https://climasolutions.org/frequently-asked-questions/)

reporting requirements, and are prompt to respond to grantees' needs and requests.²²⁸ They embed feedback structures so that their work is guided by grantees who are on the front lines experiencing the worst impacts of climate change.²²⁹

Intergenerational Support - Legacy Giving

Legacy giving has been a common practice amongst charities, where they extend an invitation to the ageing population to make a clause in their will, to donate part or all of their assets to the charity once they pass away.²³⁰ Although climate justice has seemingly been regarded as a youth-led endeavour, legacy giving presents an opportunity to cultivate intergenerational support to leave the world in a better place. There have been many different types of legacy giving espoused including endowments, but they have historically been limited in the amount of funding they can distribute each year, and there are often only a small group of people who have decision making power on where these funds are allocated (often the board and not on the ground members).²³¹ However, the legacy giving that is the most impactful, is when the legacy gift, taken in the form of cash, property, or specific gifts are reinvested directly into a community where the community members decide how to spend the funds or sell the assets on the basis of their needs.²³² In the context of climate justice, community members most impacted by the climate crisis would be the ones making the case on where funds are allocated.

Conclusion

Comparable Findings in Similar Studies

The findings that have been assessed in this research project have been quite similar to previous studies conducted on the intersections of youth, climate justice and funding. According to research conducted by the Youth Climate Justice Study, among the challenges, youth are feeling burnt out and cannot sustain themselves. There is also the need for leadership development to support the next cohort of leaders, ensuring they have sufficient

²²⁸ "Frequently Asked Questions – CLIMA Fund."

²²⁹ "Frequently Asked Questions – CLIMA Fund."

²³⁰ "What Is Legacy Giving and How to Get Started With It," Bonterra, December 12, 2022, <https://www.bonterratech.com/blog/what-is-legacy-giving#:~:text=Bequests>.

²³¹ "What Is Legacy Giving and How to Get Started With It."

²³² Brittany Foster, "What Is Legacy Giving and How Does It Help Charities?," Canadian Women's Foundation, March 22, 2018, <https://canadianwomen.org/blog/what-is-legacy-giving-and-how-does-it-help-charities/#:~:text=Legacy%20giving%20is%20when%20you,or%20an%20item%20of%20value>.

security, as they are chronically under-resourced.²³³ The youth who participated had significant feedback to funders which included championing multi-year funding, responsiveness and flexibility, respect and trust - being treated as equals, co-creating progress metrics, low administrative burden, support for movement infrastructure for collaboration and alignment, security - physical and in other forms.²³⁴ These findings reinforce the barriers and solutions mentioned by the participants in their cellphilms, and funders should take action to address these points.

Current Progress on Joint Commitments to Climate Philanthropy

In order to grow the climate funding ‘pie’, there is a joint initiative amongst Philanthropy Foundations of Canada, CFC, EFC, and the Circle on Philanthropy called the Canadian Philanthropic Commitment on Climate Change (CPCCC). This is a call to action on all funders in Canada to act on climate change, regardless of their other respective mission statements. According to CPCCC’s first year reflection on this joint commitment, there were many challenges that organizations faced when it came to implementation. Namely, 33% of respondents indicated that they lacked staff capacity to fully meet the criteria of the pledge. They also reported that 20% of respondents had difficulty receiving buy-in from key stakeholders.²³⁵ Furthermore, other additional challenges include having a difficult time focusing on climate amid competing priorities (17%), having limited resources to dedicate to the commitment (10%) and making links between climate and other priority areas (10%).²³⁶

In order to overcome these difficulties, recommendations included putting together more up-to-date resources, establishing peer-to-peer learning opportunities, benchmarking their progress and working towards sector wide goals.²³⁷ With all of these challenges from funders considered, it is important to build capacity in the sector to be able to address the barriers and solutions outlined. Some of the recommendations set forth in this paper remain a first step. However, there is much needed collaboration required through funder networks in order to push for the change that is needed.

²³³ Admin, “Why Youth, Why Now,” Youth Climate Justice Study, n.d., <https://youthclimatejusticestudy.org/why-youth-why-now-2/>.

²³⁴ Admin, “Why Youth, Why Now.”

²³⁵ Community Foundations of Canada et al., “Canadian Philanthropic Commitment on Climate Change (CPCCC) Year 1 Report,” 27.

²³⁶ Community Foundations of Canada et al., “Canadian Philanthropic Commitment on Climate Change (CPCCC) Year 1 Report,” 27.

²³⁷ Community Foundations of Canada et al., “Canadian Philanthropic Commitment on Climate Change (CPCCC) Year 1 Report,” 28.

Challenges of Writing Recommendations

Given the current system of capitalism and long lasting impacts colonialism that lives on, it was immensely challenging to put together recommendations that are truly transformational. In my eyes and in an ideal world, businesses would not exist in the way that they do, pursuing profit over people and planet. As I learned in my Management Practices for Sustainability course, there are 5 strategies for sustainability - denial, defense, isolated, embedded and transformational.²³⁸ Many businesses lie within the denial and defense stages only contributing to philanthropy instead of addressing the root challenges. This is where many foundations and businesses find themselves in as they do not address the root of the problem, rather throw money at the problem that is often caused by their own (in) actions.

Then of course, there is the isolated strategy, where sustainability is one of a company's core pillars through a product or a brand. An example of this is with Private Foundation B, where they have ESG offering but it is not fully part of their overall strategy. When sustainability is a core positioning point of a company, they are considered embedded. This is where I thought Lush would be classified as considering that they do integrate sustainability into their decision making and do work together with activists. However, all of those who were interviewed were not doing any work that was shaping societal behaviour so that philanthropy as we know it could be changed entirely. For example, by shifting power through an asset transfer, where communities can fully be in control of where funds are allocated.

Final Reflections

Despite the setbacks that young racialized climate justice activists face in their pursuit of shaking up the system, and creating a more sustainable and just future, I hope that this report can contribute to a movement for change. Encapsulating barriers and solutions, recommendations and resources through storytelling and creative visuals this project serves as a building block upon previous studies and work conducted. While this project will certainly not overthrow deeply entrenched capitalist and colonial systems that are at the core of the problem, there are definitely actionable next steps to shape the climate philanthropy sector as a whole. Activists, funders, community members and other relevant stakeholders should join forces to heed these solutions to work towards a more socially just and climate

²³⁸ Mike Valente, "5 Business Strategies for Sustainability," Organizing for Sustainability, 2018, <https://www.organizingforsustainability.com/resources>.

resilient world. To quote Maya Angelou, “Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.”²³⁹

²³⁹ “A Quote by Maya Angelou,” n.d., <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/7273813-do-the-best-you-can-until-you-know-better-then>.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Glossary

Charitable Organization: A charitable organization, established as a corporation, trust, or under a constitution, is exclusively dedicated to charitable purposes and predominantly conducts its own charitable activities.²⁴⁰ With over half of its directors, trustees, or officials maintaining arm's length relationships, it receives funding from a diverse range of external donors.²⁴¹

Climate Justice: Climate justice is the recognition that climate change is not just an environmental issue, but also a matter of injustice.²⁴² It involves powerful individuals or groups causing harm to marginalized communities through their actions with marginalized communities being the least responsible for the problem.²⁴³ This concept emphasizes addressing the root causes of climate change and its disproportionate impact on vulnerable populations, such as BIPOC and low-income communities.²⁴⁴

Community Foundation: Community foundations are organizations dedicated to fostering impactful philanthropy within a specific geographic area.²⁴⁵ Through the establishment of funds by local donors, community foundations create endowments to support ongoing grantmaking, utilizing the capital gains from investments.²⁴⁶ In addition to providing grants, community foundations play a pivotal role in identifying and addressing the evolving

²⁴⁰ Canada Revenue Agency, “Types of Registered Charities (Designations),” Government of Canada, June 3, 2016,

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/charities-giving/charities/registering-charitable-qualified-don-ee-status/apply-become-registered-charity/establishing/types-registered-charities-designations.html>.

²⁴¹ Canada Revenue Agency, “Types of Registered Charities (Designations).”

²⁴² Aileen Wanjiku Fry, “Climate Justice,” *Amnesty International Canada*, May 27, 2024, <https://amnesty.ca/what-we-do/climate-justice/>.

²⁴³ “What Is Climate Justice?,” University of California Center for Climate Justice, July 16, 2022, <https://centerclimatejustice.universityofcalifornia.edu/what-is-climate-justice/>.

²⁴⁴ “What Is Climate Justice?”

²⁴⁵ “What Is a Community Foundation?,” Oakville Community Foundation, September 25, 2023, <https://www.theocf.org/what-is-a-community-foundation/>.

²⁴⁶ “What Is a Community Foundation?”

challenges and needs of the community, serving as repositories of research, funds, and information to ensure long-term adaptability and effectiveness.²⁴⁷

Donor Advised Funds: A Donor Advised Fund (DAF) is a registered charity that maintains separate funds for donors.²⁴⁸ When donors contribute to a DAF, they receive an official donation receipt and can then suggest which registered charities should receive donations from the fund.²⁴⁹ Initially popular with community foundations, DAFs are now also being utilized by other charities and financial institutions.²⁵⁰

Endowment Fund: An endowment fund is a fund with limitations as only the interest it generates can be utilized, not the initial amount that serves as its foundation.²⁵¹ The principal sum remains untouched, safeguarding the fund's value, while the earnings from investments can be used for charitable purposes, funding grants to nonprofits.²⁵² Consequently, an endowment fund can be sustained indefinitely, enabling donors to contribute to their chosen causes in perpetuity.²⁵³

ESG: ESG, which stands for environmental, social, and governance, comprises the fundamental areas that companies are required to report on.²⁵⁴ These pillars encapsulate the non-financial risks and opportunities associated with a company's operations, aiming to provide an understanding of its overall impact beyond solely financial metrics.²⁵⁵

Family Foundation: A private family foundation represents a specific category of private foundation established and financially supported by a family, typically managed by family members who engage in its charitable activities.²⁵⁶ Its duration is determined by the family's

²⁴⁷ “What Is a Community Foundation?”

²⁴⁸ Canadian Charity Law, “Donor Advised Funds (DAFs) in Canada,” October 27, 2022, <https://www.canadiancharitylaw.ca/courses/donor-advised-funds-dafs-in-canada/>.

²⁴⁹ Canadian Charity Law, “Donor Advised Funds (DAFs) in Canada.”

²⁵⁰ Canadian Charity Law, “Donor Advised Funds (DAFs) in Canada.”

²⁵¹ “How Endowments Work & Their Advantages,” Calgary Foundation, November 9, 2023, <https://calgaryfoundation.org/donors/power-of-endowments/>.

²⁵² “How Endowments Work & Their Advantages.”

²⁵³ “How Endowments Work & Their Advantages.”

²⁵⁴ “#1 What Is ESG?,” Deloitte United Kingdom, March 2, 2022,

<https://www2.deloitte.com/ce/en/pages/global-business-services/articles/esg-explained-1-what-is-esg.html>.

²⁵⁵ “#1 What Is ESG?”

²⁵⁶ “What Is a Private Family Foundation?,” Fidelity Charitable, n.d.,

<https://www.fidelitycharitable.org/guidance/philanthropy/private-family-foundation.html#:~:text=A%20private%20family%20foundation%20is,participate%20in%20its%20charitable%20grantmaking>.

philanthropic goals, allowing for adjustments as the family evolves in structure and charitable interests.²⁵⁷

Fiscal Sponsorship: Fiscal sponsorship is essentially when a charitable organization allows other groups or projects to operate under its tax-exempt status through a fee-based contractual relationship.²⁵⁸ In addition, they also might provide support through a shared administrative platform that varies per fiscal sponsor but could include shared services such as managing payroll, employee benefits, office space, so these other groups can focus on running their programs.²⁵⁹ This arrangement is typically used by those conducting work who prefer not to establish their own charitable organization with the CRA.²⁶⁰ Charities take a 5%-15% cut from any funding that is received through the fiscal sponsorship, which also helps facilitate the administration of managing the fiscal sponsorship.²⁶¹

Funder: An institution that gives money for philanthropic purposes. Examples include foundations, governments, and corporations.²⁶²

Intermediary: Intermediaries are organizations with a mission to efficiently connect donors—whether individuals, foundations, or corporations—with individuals and organizations.²⁶³

Iterative Grantmaking: Iterative grantmaking is an approach to distributing funds, where funders recognize that all eligible ideas are meant to be funded. However, due to limited funding available, not all applications will be accepted, rather they will be placed on hold until funding opens up again. Iterative grantmaking also involves funders and grantees learning from their previous applications so that they can submit and review applications that are more aligned with both parties' expectations.

²⁵⁷ "What Is a Private Family Foundation?"

²⁵⁸ Propel Nonprofits, "A Board's Guide to Fiscal Sponsorship," Propel, April 1, 2024, <https://propelnonprofits.org/resources/a-boards-guide-to-fiscal-sponsorship/>.

²⁵⁹ Wikipedia contributors, "Fiscal Sponsorship," Wikipedia, October 26, 2023, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiscal_sponsorship#cite_note-TCI-1.

²⁶⁰ Propel Nonprofits, "A Board's Guide to Fiscal Sponsorship."

²⁶¹ Propel Nonprofits, "A Board's Guide to Fiscal Sponsorship."

²⁶² Ayer and Anderson, "Trust & Impact: Funders' Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada."

²⁶³ Giving Compass, "Intermediaries Can Address Nonprofit Obstacles," March 27, 2020, <https://givingcompass.org/article/intermediaries-overcome-nonprofit-obstacles#:~:text=Intermediaries%20are%20a%20hot%20topic,and%20individuals%20delivering%20charitable%20services.>

Non Qualified Donee: Although the CRA maintains a comprehensive list of qualified donees encompassing diverse organizations, grassroots groups frequently lack the resources and expertise required to comply with the CRA's registration standards for charitable status.²⁶⁴ Consequently, these groups are often unable to meet the eligibility criteria, hindering their ability to secure qualified donee status.²⁶⁵ A major reason behind this is lack of staff capacity and funding to maintain what is required of having charitable status.²⁶⁶

Participatory Grantmaking: Participatory grantmaking is a transformative approach within philanthropy that prioritizes the involvement of communities affected by social issues in the decision-making process regarding funding allocation.²⁶⁷ While traditional philanthropic models often centralize power with foundation staff and donors, participatory grantmaking shifts this power dynamic, recognizing the expertise and agency of those directly impacted by the issues being addressed.²⁶⁸

Private Foundation: A private foundation can either conduct its own charitable activities or issue funds to qualified donees, typically other registered charities.²⁶⁹ It must be formed as either a corporation or a trust, not as an unincorporated association.²⁷⁰ A registered charity is classified as a private foundation if at least 50% of its directors or trustees are connected to each other.²⁷¹ Additionally, it is often the case that more than 50% of the foundation's capital comes from a person or group of related individuals who are also involved with the foundation.²⁷²

Public Foundation: A public foundation, established as a corporation or trust, operates exclusively for charitable purposes and typically allocates over 50% of its annual income to other qualified donees, primarily registered charities, while potentially engaging in some

²⁶⁴ Chollangi, “Explainer: Non-Qualified Donees and the Push to Fund Them Anyway.”

²⁶⁵ Chollangi, “Explainer: Non-Qualified Donees and the Push to Fund Them Anyway.”

²⁶⁶ Chollangi, “Explainer: Non-Qualified Donees and the Push to Fund Them Anyway.”

²⁶⁷ Gibson, “Deciding Together: Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking,” 7–8.

²⁶⁸ Gibson, “Deciding Together: Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking,” 7–8.

²⁶⁹ Mark Blumberg, “What Is a Canadian Private Foundation?,” Canadian Charity Law, January 30, 2010, https://www.canadiancharitylaw.ca/faq/what_is_a_canadian_private_foundation/.

²⁷⁰ Blumberg, “What Is a Canadian Private Foundation?”

²⁷¹ Blumberg, “What Is a Canadian Private Foundation?”.

²⁷² Blumberg, “What Is a Canadian Private Foundation?”

direct charitable activities.²⁷³ With over half of its directors, trustees, or officials maintaining arm's length relationships, it receives funding from diverse arms length donors.²⁷⁴

Qualified Donee: an organization that can receive donations from registered charities such as foundations and can issue tax receipts for any donations it receives.²⁷⁵ These are the types of organizations that would be classified under the category of a qualified donee, according to the CRA: “charities, canadian amateur athletic associations, registered journalism organizations, foreign charities that have received a gift from Her Majesty in right of Canada, low-cost housing corporations for the aged, municipal or public bodies performing a function of government in Canada, municipalities, and universities outside Canada.”²⁷⁶ Obtaining qualified donee status with the CRA necessitates a registered charitable organization to maintain two ongoing obligations.²⁷⁷ First, the organization must uphold meticulous record-keeping practices, ensuring the availability of financial documents upon CRA request.²⁷⁸ Second, all official donation receipts issued must adhere to the stipulations outlined within the *Income Tax Act*.²⁷⁹

Racialized: Racialized was defined as the funding being distributed to Black, Indigenous and People of Colour, or those who are non-Caucasian in race.

Socially Responsible Company: A socially responsible company is one that acknowledges its responsibility to the society in which it operates, as outlined in the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).²⁸⁰ These firms are structured to enable actions that positively influence the world, often expressed through various initiatives aligned with organizational objectives.²⁸¹ Many companies communicate their CSR efforts to both external and internal stakeholders through dedicated reports.²⁸² Guided by the triple bottom line principle, these

²⁷³ Canada Revenue Agency, “Types of Registered Charities (Designations).”

²⁷⁴ Canada Revenue Agency, “Types of Registered Charities (Designations).”

²⁷⁵ Chollangi, “Explainer: Non-Qualified Donees and the Push to Fund Them Anyway.”

²⁷⁶ Chollangi, “Explainer: Non-Qualified Donees and the Push to Fund Them Anyway.”

²⁷⁷ Chollangi, “Explainer: Non-Qualified Donees and the Push to Fund Them Anyway.”

²⁷⁸ Chollangi, “Explainer: Non-Qualified Donees and the Push to Fund Them Anyway.”

²⁷⁹ Chollangi, “Explainer: Non-Qualified Donees and the Push to Fund Them Anyway.”

²⁸⁰ Tim Stobierski, “What Is Corporate Social Responsibility? 4 Types,” Harvard Business School Online, April 8, 2021, <https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/types-of-corporate-social-responsibility>.

²⁸¹ Stobierski, “What Is Corporate Social Responsibility? 4 Types.”

²⁸² Stobierski, “What Is Corporate Social Responsibility? 4 Types.”

organizations prioritize measuring their social and environmental impact alongside profitability, by the "three P's": profit, people, and planet.²⁸³

Trust based philanthropy: Trust-based philanthropy operates from the acknowledgement that there is an inherent power imbalance between funders and grantees.²⁸⁴ Trust-based philanthropy seeks to redistribute power to community members who are best placed to drive change.²⁸⁵ Instead of coming in with their own priorities and ideas, funders who adopt a trust-based approach are humble and ready to listen to learn.²⁸⁶ These funders recognize that change takes time and cannot be achieved overnight, but rather than hoard resources, they put the funds into the hands of those who need them the most.²⁸⁷ These funders also show a willingness to try new things, while understanding that not everything will work.²⁸⁸ Trust-based philanthropy is most well-known for its six practices, one of which includes giving multi-year unrestricted funding.²⁸⁹

Unrestricted funding: Funding that is given to charities without any strings attached, meaning the charities can use the money according to their mission.²⁹⁰

Youth: People aged 15-30 years old. For the purposes of this study and to ensure informed consent only youth 18+ were able to participate.

Appendix 2: Demographic Data of Young Racialized Climate Justice Activists

Figure 5.0. Underrepresented Demographics of Cellphilm Makers

²⁸³ Stobierski, "What Is Corporate Social Responsibility? 4 Types."

²⁸⁴ Ayer and Anderson, "Trust & Impact: Funders' Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada," 25.

²⁸⁵ Ayer and Anderson, "Trust & Impact: Funders' Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada," 25.

²⁸⁶ Ayer and Anderson, "Trust & Impact: Funders' Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada," 25.

²⁸⁷ Ayer and Anderson, "Trust & Impact: Funders' Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada," 25.

²⁸⁸ Ayer and Anderson, "Trust & Impact: Funders' Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada," 25.

²⁸⁹ Ayer and Anderson, "Trust & Impact: Funders' Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada," 25.

²⁹⁰ Ayer and Anderson, "Trust & Impact: Funders' Perspectives on Unrestricted Funding in Canada," 3.

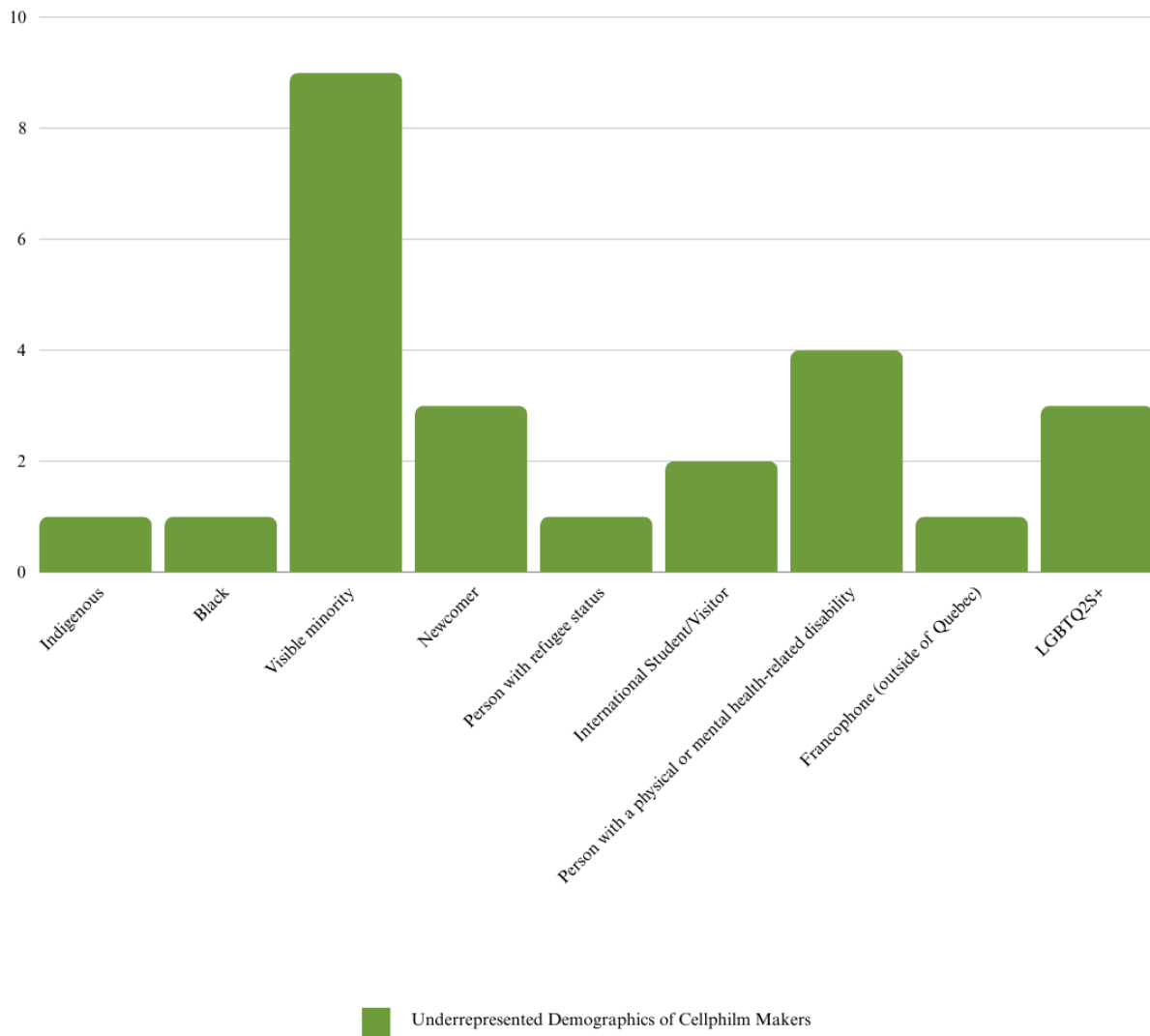


Figure 5.1. Location Demographics of Cellphilm Makers

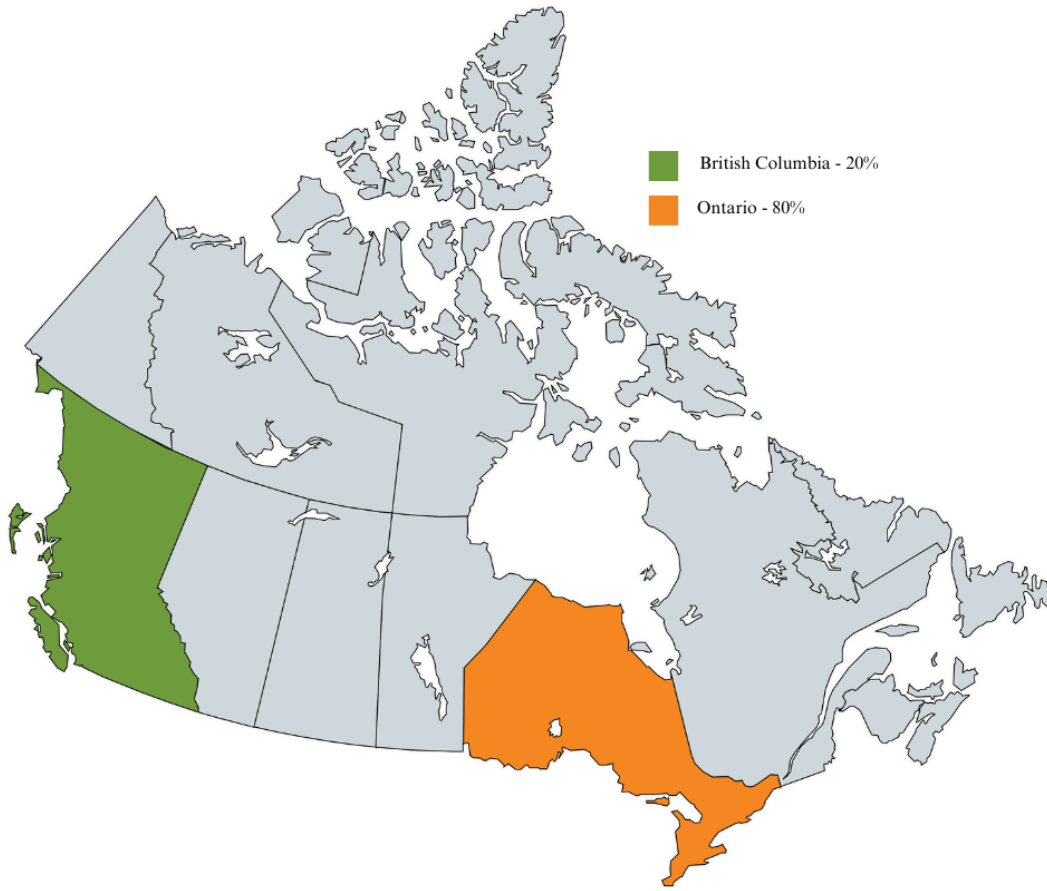
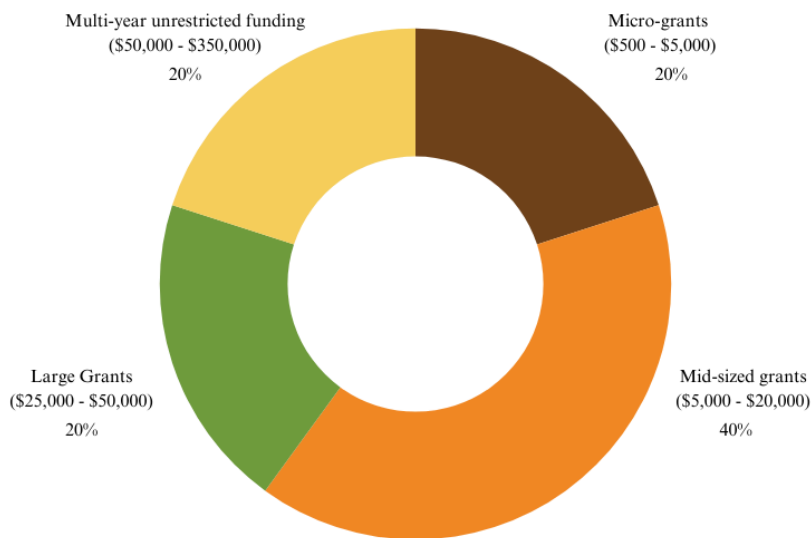


Figure 5.2. Types of Grants Cellphilm Makers Applied to Over Last Year



Appendix 3: Barriers & Solutions Document (Long Version)

	Problems	Solutions
A D D R E S S I N G B A R R I E R S	<p>Grant applications are complex and take too long: They take significant time and resources away from frontline work. Many racialized climate youth groups that are actually committing to getting their work done, don't have the time to dedicate to applying to grants and the burden that comes along with managing them (comes from other systemic barriers such as long commute times due to living in affordable housing neighbourhoods that are far away from everything).</p>	<p>Having eco funders conduct a scan of local and existing orgs to support and meet with them in-person: Funders need to meet in person, ask questions, get a sense of what is trying to be accomplished. Funders can run focus groups with local eco orgs that need access to mentorship and funding. This will ensure that efforts are not duplicated and will provide more equitable access.</p>

<p>Lack of connection to eco funders: Young racialized climate justice activists don't know any rich people since we don't come from the same background (wealthy, old cis-het white men). Funders don't fund new organisations, only organisations in their network that they are comfortable with funding; typically organisations that are white-led/the white person is dealing with them directly. So typically long-established organisations keep getting funding. This stifles innovation. This harms diversity of voices and experiences in the sector (as more established organisations typically are dominated by older, white staff). Sometimes it's hard to get support from people who can't relate to you (whether looks, social/wealth status means you can't engage in the same activities as them, etc. BIPOC, women, newcomers, folks with disabilities, etc. do not spend their days "on the golf course" meaning that they aren't typically in the spaces of old cis-het white men who are schmoozing and getting access to capital. Racialized climate justice activists don't have access to spaces/rooms where funders and politicians are (especially if first generation attending post-secondary or pursuing a professional career). This can also be attributed to not having the time or funding support to go to conferences or other events where funders have a large presence. When we try to approach these eco funders, there's a lot of gatekeeping, or more often than not a tokenistic and paternalistic white saviourism mentality. It's like they want to help us racialized activists, but don't believe that we can run our projects ourselves.</p>	<p>Make accessing eco funders in their spaces equitable and accessible: Hire more diverse staff so that racialized climate justice activists feel like they have someone to relate to when seeking funding. Provide more funding support to fund racialized climate justice activists to attend these conferences, events and ultimately help them make connections. If activists can't fully participate (i.e. attend all days/sessions of the conference) don't penalise them for it (i.e. by rejecting their application entirely/not supporting them when they ask for help later). Attending events where MPs are in the room allow for racialized climate justice activists to build legitimacy of their work and gain support to secure government funding. We deserve to be running our projects and organizations ourselves, and we don't need to be 'saved'.</p>
<p>Not having enough time to dedicate to climate work without further support:</p>	<p>Pay racialized climate justice activists a fair rate/wage/salary so they are able to</p>

<p>Taking on multiple jobs due to being low income. Unable to fully participate in the climate work without having sufficient means to provide for ourselves. We are low income for systemic racial/newcomer issues (i.e. lack of intergenerational wealth, no financial support while pursuing post-secondary and mounting student debt, discrimination/inequity/inequality in the workplace towards racialized folks/women/newcomers/international students in getting jobs). Some of us could only dedicate more time to their climate work if we have the financial/housing support of our parents or are paid a sufficient amount of money/salary to work on climate work full time.</p>	<p>pursue their work: Allow for grant applications to include room for activists to pay themselves a living wage for the work that they do (whether they want to pursue it part-time or full-time). For shorter gigs, allow them to receive compensation that reflects the importance of their work (i.e. don't limit them to \$50-\$500 maximum, or only allow them to receive a gift card instead of cash). Don't exploit youth by expecting them to dedicate several hours of labour and paying them very little (i.e. \$250 for an excessive 5h/week for 8 months).</p> <p>Consider making connections to affordable housing groups/co-operatives: This will ensure that we are not worried about paying for rent, food and dealing with the increased cost of living.</p>
<p>Busy doing school: Whether part time or full time, we can't fully dedicate time to writing grants to fund climate work.</p>	<p>Get in touch with/hire a grant writing/fundraising agency to provide pro bono support to racialized climate justice activists: They can assist with finding opportunities and writing the grants. This will allow us to not be too overburdened while pursuing our studies.</p>
<p>Feeling tokenized and not feeling taken seriously as a young person: Oftentimes this can take the form of not allowing us to have access to the grant funds that we ourselves are securing and needing for it to be managed by another body that is often run by adults; having a general distrust of young people/students managing money. This can also include requiring unnecessary, excessive meetings/check-ins, doing things for the racialized climate justice activists (i.e. contacting IT, paying for an invoice for a vendor, etc.). Furthermore, there are also sentiments of funders not believing/allowing a young person can/to succeed without participating fully in the program (i.e. attending excessive meetings and webinars).</p>	<p>Community consultation in grant program design and implementation: Ask us what we need to feel supported and get funding. If we don't need another meeting/webinar, then don't set it up. Meaningfully engage with us in various means and ways to know how we'd like the grant program to be designed (i.e. paid interviews, focus groups, surveys, etc). Believe in us and don't undermine our work with paternalistic practices (i.e. telling us what to do rather than letting us think and execute our work for ourselves).</p>

C H A N G I N G T H E S Y S T E M	<p>Many groups that do get funded are 'hype-machines': They just create a lot of noise - mostly by spending significant time and resources trying to get other groups and organizations on board with their activities and programs - this approach is most often not successful, as relationship building takes considerable time and is often a more local thing. Even if they get buy-in, program quality and participation is poor.</p>	<p>Don't fund national organizations, grow the movement locally/regionally, and then have a national 'federation' of organizations: Host an annual national conference and provide training and such (ideally, avoid air travel - so host regional hubs and virtually), including training, mentorship, networking, and coordination of larger campaigns.</p>
	<p>Relying on an intermediary to redistribute funding: Reiterates the narrative that youth are incapable of receiving funds themselves and need to be managed by a third party. Makes us reliant on them instead of teaching us how to engage in building relationships with donors and receiving funds directly - it's in some ways like an additional barrier to actually receiving long-term sustainable funding since donors will say they already fund the intermediary and question why it'd be needed/necessary to fund the groups directly.</p>	<p>Fund eco groups directly via a collective co-operative: Directly fund less groups overall with more sustainable and long term funding as opposed to multiple groups with more precarious funding. Don't fund intermediaries. Intermediaries can help access other means of support (i.e. branding, shared space, etc.) but they shouldn't be the ones that have full control in where capital is allocated.</p>
	<p>Restrictive, project based funding: grant funds are often issued on a per project basis, often only lasting 6 months-a year or at most for 2-3 years. There are often strict categories as to how much of the budget can be spent on salaries and honorariums. Sometimes there are limitations to only spending a certain percentage in one area (i.e. maximum of 25% of the grant can be spent on capital costs, or no more than 25% of the grant can be allocated to one area).</p>	<p>Unrestricted, long-term/multi year funding: Let young racialized climate justice activists use the funds for what they need. Avoid strict budget categories/allocations and be as flexible as possible. Racialized climate justice activists require funding that covers salaries, admin and overhead. They also need enough funding to allow their organisation to last year over year as opposed to dying once a project ends.</p>
	<p>Excessive reporting requirements: We don't have the time/capacity for MLE and reporting since these grants won't fund staff time for this task. Asking for tons of</p>	<p>Make it easier to report on grants: Get in touch with on a pro bono basis/hire a centralized agency to manage MLE and reporting for racialized climate justice</p>

<p>metrics and engagement (quantitative and qualitative) which are difficult to keep track of while simultaneously needing to ensure that privacy and confidentiality is upheld is very challenging. Grantees are sometimes expected to host funder appreciation events, which requires a lot of additional work outside of managing the project/organization that was funded.</p>	<p>activists' work. Alternatively, allow budgets in applications to have enough funding allocated in the budget to hire someone to manage MLE and reporting. If funders are expecting racialized climate justice activists to manage their own MLE and reporting, then offer to host a meeting, video or alternative way of submitting these requirements. There should be a more equitable division of labour so the funders are involved in MLE and reporting. Templates for tracking impact, metrics and reporting should be shared. If requested by the grantee, software could also help speed up the process (i.e. receipt app so that we just take a photo of receipt and it automatically uploads everything, customer experience software, etc). Additionally, drop ridiculous requirements such as hosting appreciation events - you should be funding the organisations for the right reasons, not as a publicity stunt.</p>
<p>Equality and biased approach: Not considering that racialized climate justice activists might be in different stages of their journey. Some might need more help than others. If help/accommodations is requested, it is denied for the sake of it “not being fair to other applicants”. Viewing folks negatively based on being unemployed, not being in school, and institutional affiliation (i.e. MSW, BSW, PhD, etc.); there is a bias with applications.</p>	<p>Equity and unbiased approach: Not treating all applicants as equal, and recognizing that some, especially racialized activists might need more help than others. Accommodations include having more time to submit an application, submitting the application over a call/video, etc. Allowing the funder to arrange virtual/in-person meetings might also make it easier to see if the applicant and their project/organisation is a good fit as well as getting a feel for their needs and struggles. Taking training to minimise bias.</p>
<p>Excessive requirements to get started on the project: For example, poor people on welfare not having the knowledge of knowing and how to go about needing to purchase insurance, go through background checks, etc. Sometimes also</p>	<p>Having the funding agency manage requirements: Set-up a call and dedicate part of the budget to helping them understand how to get this done and working with them to make any purchases they can't afford (i.e. insurance,</p>

<p>needing to be an alumni of a program in order to apply to begin with can pose a barrier (why should we be punished if we weren't aware of the program's existence earlier/were dealing with struggles in the past that hindered our participation in those programs?). We'd also say that funders in our experience won't fund the same idea twice, which really hinders projects from learning and growing in the next iteration. This has typically been the case with microgrants. We've also noticed that there's a strong focus on growth when looking at the project's impact. They want to see that you're expanding and reaching even more participants, or developing a new program. When really we notice that some organizations like the ones I'm part of just need the capacity to run what they're currently doing, and starting something new is just not feasible.</p>	<p>background checks, etc.). Fund projects more than once, and don't force them to make new programs for no reason; allow them to scale their impact in a way that works for them.</p>
<p>Intellectual property theft: academic institutions/charities give away funding to eco groups/organisations/a project but in exchange of receiving funding they need to give up in part or in full their intellectual property rights/ownership of the work they develop with the funds. They can then use this for their own greenwashing initiatives.</p>	<p>Giving youth intellectual property and ownership of their work: Simple as that. Don't take credit for work that isn't yours just to justify your existence. Youth have the power to have ownership of their own work. Funders are unjustified in taking this right away from youth who would be completing the majority of the work with very little benefits received other than funding from the funders in delivering their work.</p>
<p>Long contracts with jargon/short contracts that are unclear: We find that we are either hit with lengthy contracts that we don't understand, or shorter contracts with not enough information on the terms and conditions which causes confusion and thus the result of arbitrary rules set by the funder. We can understand the importance of agreements, but in fact historically many underserved groups including Indigenous communities were tricked into signing</p>	<p>Shorter contracts that are easier to understand: We suggest a more trust based and reciprocal way of creating shared understandings such as through verbal agreements if they are requested, or a very short (1-2 page long) MOU if funders absolutely require to have proof of agreements in writing. Allow for a support person/interpreter to be there if the contract</p>

<p>papers to give up their rights without their knowledge. They did not know they were giving up their rights due to the jargon used and the onerous length of the contracts that were often written in a language that they could not understand.</p>	<p>is not drawn up in their native language. Allow for calls to review the contract so the terms and conditions are clear.</p>
<p>No/unspecific feedback given on grant applications: We need to know what specifically we did wrong so we can improve our application for the next time.</p>	<p>Give sufficient feedback on grant application: The feedback can include administrative reasons (i.e not having the organization’s legal name matching the doing business as (DBA) name, office address not being the same as the one listed) or financial reasons (i.e. not providing quotes for amounts over \$10k, other applicants had a more comprehensive budget). Having this clarity can help the team be more prepared for the next round of applications.</p>
<p>Delays in getting access to funding due to bureaucratic processes like application itself, application deadline, constant approvals, and working on their own timelines: Deadlines that do not work for racialized climate justice activists, they are only open a few times a year. With larger grants only open every 3-4 years. We always need to go by their deadlines and are rushed to get it done which doesn’t respect our health and wellbeing. The way in which funding is distributed can sometimes be problematic - it is issued via a reimbursement process. Oftentimes, racialized climate justice activists don’t have the money to begin with to be able to handle paying for expenses out of pocket. We can’t be waiting so long to access the funding we so desperately needed. Needing approvals for edits to the budget.</p>	<p>Offering more trust and flexibility: Grant applications should be shorter and have rolling deadlines. This would allow for more racialized climate justice activists to be able to apply for funding when they need it. The number of grant cycles should also increase so that we are not waiting for several years to get funded. Funding should be distributed upfront and then reported on to reduce barriers, especially if there is uncertainty that costs will be reimbursed if there are strict rules. If there are budgetary changes, we shouldn’t need to notify the funder for each edit, and they should get back to us in a timely manner to know we were approved and to give us our funding in time so we don't experience delays to the start date of our work (if it is project based).</p>
<p>Requires needing to match funding: Big foundations often require funding to be matched, using a 60/40 model. The issue is, how can we get money if we have no money or are only given microgrants?</p>	<p>Don’t require matching funding: Funders need to take the leap and give larger amounts of money to these groups without the expectation that they will be able to match funding. They won’t be able to get ahead without that initial investment.</p>
<p>Strict organizational requirements: Requires the organization to be a qualified</p>	<p>Remove organizational requirements: Fund more non-qualified donees and</p>

<p>donee or have a fiscal sponsor with audited financial statements of the last two years. Audited financial statements are very expensive, with it costing \$5,000 - \$15,000 alone each year on the low end.</p>	<p>remove the need to have a fiscal sponsor. Understand the financial barriers of having audited financial statements and take out this requirement.</p>
<p>No guarantee of funding: racialized climate justice activists are constantly trying to find out what funders will fund instead of focusing on supporting our immediate needs.</p>	<p>Transparency and iterative funding models: Funder becoming more transparent with what they are looking to fund - share rubric on how applicants will be assessed. Include a guarantee of funding the work as long as the stars align, it's just a matter of when.</p>
<p>Ideological differences: Board of directors not being on board with funding us since they perceive us to be too radical (i.e. park meals). Pro-Palestinian work, land defense, mutual aid work isn't funded/orgs are dropped/kicked out of rooms/unable to get access to spaces.</p>	<p>Put aside ideological differences: Fund the work regardless of political thought/stance. Being more open to new and radical ideas (i.e. park meals).</p>
<p>Unable to compromise values: racialized climate justice activists do not feel right about taking money from oil and gas/other polluters. Feels like it's free advertising where we are condoning their harmful practices. Would not be afraid to hold them accountable publicly.</p>	<p>Intermediary takes the blame to avoid backlash: Have an intermediary take the funds so that the racialized climate justice activists are removed from the bad press and don't feel like they are greenwashing.</p>

Appendix 4: Barriers & Solutions Document (Short Version)

BARRIERS & SOLUTIONS FOR FUNDING THE WORK OF YOUNG RACIALIZED CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTIVISTS

SHAPING CLIMATE PHILANTHROPY

AUTHORED BY: LAUREN CASTELINO

FUNDED BY:



PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 2024

BARRIERS

SOLUTIONS

<p>Complex Grant Applications: Grant applications are time-consuming and resource-intensive, diverting energy away from frontline activism.</p>	<p>In-Person Engagement: Eco funders should conduct local scans and meet with activists in-person to build relationships and understand their needs.</p>
<p>Lack of Connection to Funders: Lack of connections with eco-funding networks, especially those that are white-led; limited access to events and spaces where funders convene.</p>	<p>Equitable Access: Hire diverse staff; provide funding support for activists to attend conferences and events where funders and policymakers are present.</p>
<p>Systemic Racism and Discrimination: Limits access to funding for activists from racialized and marginalized backgrounds and results in them not being able to get ahead.</p>	<p>Fair Compensation: Pay activists fair wages for their work and provide financial support for basic needs including housing and food security.</p>
<p>Time Constraints: Balancing multiple jobs and educational commitments leaves little time for fundraising for climate activism.</p>	<p>Grant Writing Support: Hire or offer pro bono grant writing assistance to alleviate the burden on activists juggling so much alone.</p>
<p>Tokenization: Youth activists feel tokenized and undervalued in funding processes, leading to a lack of trust and support.</p>	<p>Community Consultation: Involve activists in grant program design and implementation to ensure inclusivity and relevance.</p>



BARRIERS

SOLUTIONS

<p>Funding 'Hype Machines': Generating hype through extensive efforts to garner support from other organizations, yet this approach often proves unsuccessful.</p>	<p>Regional Support Networks: Prioritize local and regional movements as well as a national 'federation' of organizations to foster grassroots impact.</p>
<p>Relying on an Intermediary to Redistribute Funding: Reinforces the perception of youth incapacity, hindering their ability to build direct donor relationships.</p>	<p>Fund Eco Groups Directly via a Collective Co-operative: Opt for direct funding of fewer groups with sustainable, long-term support.</p>
<p>Restrictive, Project Based Funding: Grant funds are typically allocated as a short-term projects with strict budgetary constraints.</p>	<p>Unrestricted, Long-Term Funding: Provide multi-year, unrestricted funding to support sustained activism efforts including salaries, admin and overhead.</p>
<p>Excessive Reporting Requirements: Reporting demands are burdensome and time-consuming, detracting from core activism efforts.</p>	<p>Simplified Reporting: Streamline reporting requirements and provide financial and in-kind support for Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation.</p>
<p>Equality and Biased Approaches: Some funders exhibit bias against racialized activists, refusing to provide accommodations, denying them equitable support.</p>	<p>Equity and Unbiased Approach: Implement equity-focused evaluation practices, offer accommodations for diverse applicants, and provide training to minimize bias.</p>



BARRIERS

SOLUTIONS

<p>Excessive Requirements: Poor access to necessary resources and inability to meet eligibility criteria delay project implementation. Not funding a project more than once.</p>	<p>Provide Administrative Support: Assist activists with initial project costs to facilitate timely implementation. Fund projects more than once scaling impact in a way that works for them.</p>
<p>Intellectual Property Theft: Youth activists risk losing ownership of their work due to intellectual property/ownership clauses in funding agreements.</p>	<p>Ownership Rights: Respect activists' intellectual property and grant them ownership of their work.</p>
<p>Unclear Contracts: Lengthy and jargon-filled or short and unclear contracts create confusion, reinforce colonialism, and cause conflict.</p>	<p>Clear Contracts: Ensure contracts are concise, understandable, and accessible, with options for verbal agreements.</p>
<p>No or Unspecific Feedback: Insufficient feedback on grant applications inhibits learning and improvement.</p>	<p>Sufficient Feedback: Offer comprehensive feedback on grant applications to support learning and improvement.</p>
<p>Bureaucratic Delays: Slow approval processes and rigid timelines impede timely access to funding. A barrier for activists who cannot afford to cover expenses out of pocket.</p>	<p>Flexible and Trust Based Funding: Implement rolling deadlines, flexibility with budgetary changes and upfront funding to reduce bureaucratic delays and financial precarity.</p>

BARRIERS

SOLUTIONS

<p>Matching Funding Requirements: Expectations to match funding pose challenges for cash-strapped activists who do not have access to other forms of investment.</p>	<p>No Matching Requirements: Remove matching funding requirements and make an investment in racialized climate justice activists to make their work go further.</p>
<p>Organizational Requirements: Strict organizational criteria such as being a qualified donee or having a fiscal sponsor with audited financial statements limit access to funding.</p>	<p>Organizational Flexibility: Relax strict organizational criteria to accommodate non qualified donees and remove the need to have a fiscal sponsor.</p>
<p>No Guarantee of Funding: Activists face uncertainty and instability in securing ongoing financial support.</p>	<p>Transparent and Iterative Funding Models: Provide clear criteria and assurances of ongoing funding to build trust and stability.</p>
<p>Ideological Differences: Some funders hesitate to support radical or politically charged initiatives.</p>	<p>Inclusive Ideologies: Fund initiatives regardless of political affiliation and embrace diverse perspectives.</p>
<p>Compromising Values: Activists struggle with accepting funding from industries they oppose.</p>	<p>Using An Intermediary to Accept the Funds: Use intermediary to handle funds, shielding activists from greenwashing and negative publicity.</p>

Appendix 5: Cellphilm Workshop Series Slides



Appendix 6: Quilted Cellphilm



Appendix 7: Funder Demographics

Figure 6.0. Underrepresented Demographics of Funders Interviewed

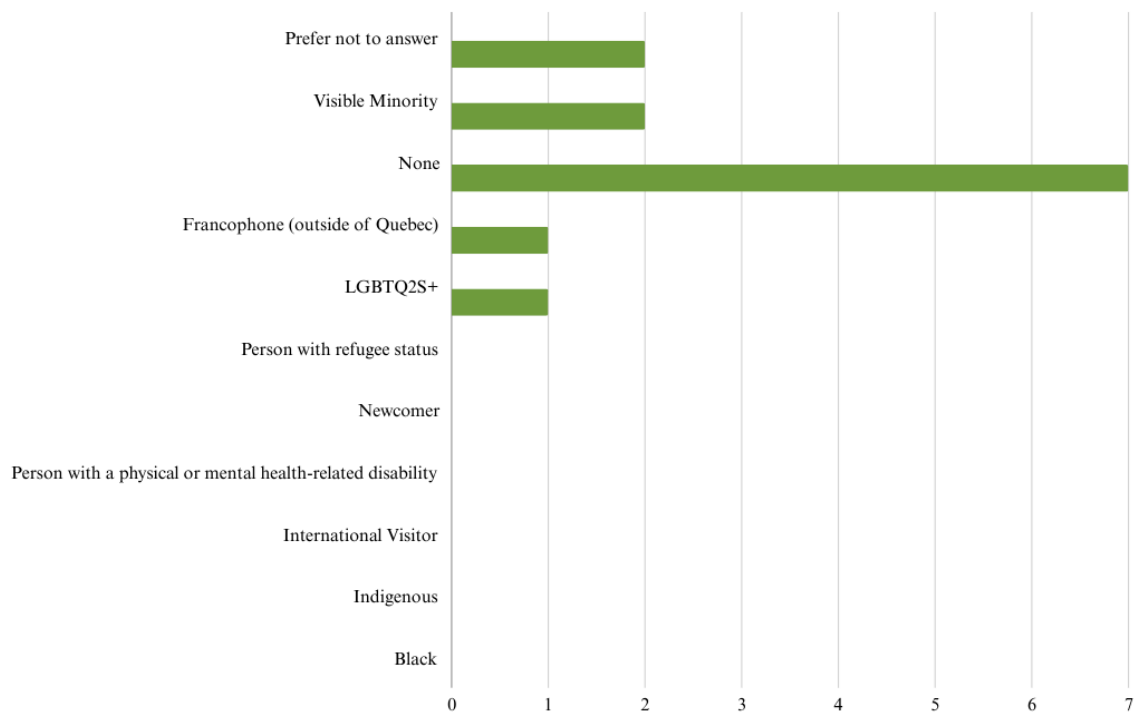


Figure 6.1. Location Demographics of Funders Interviewed

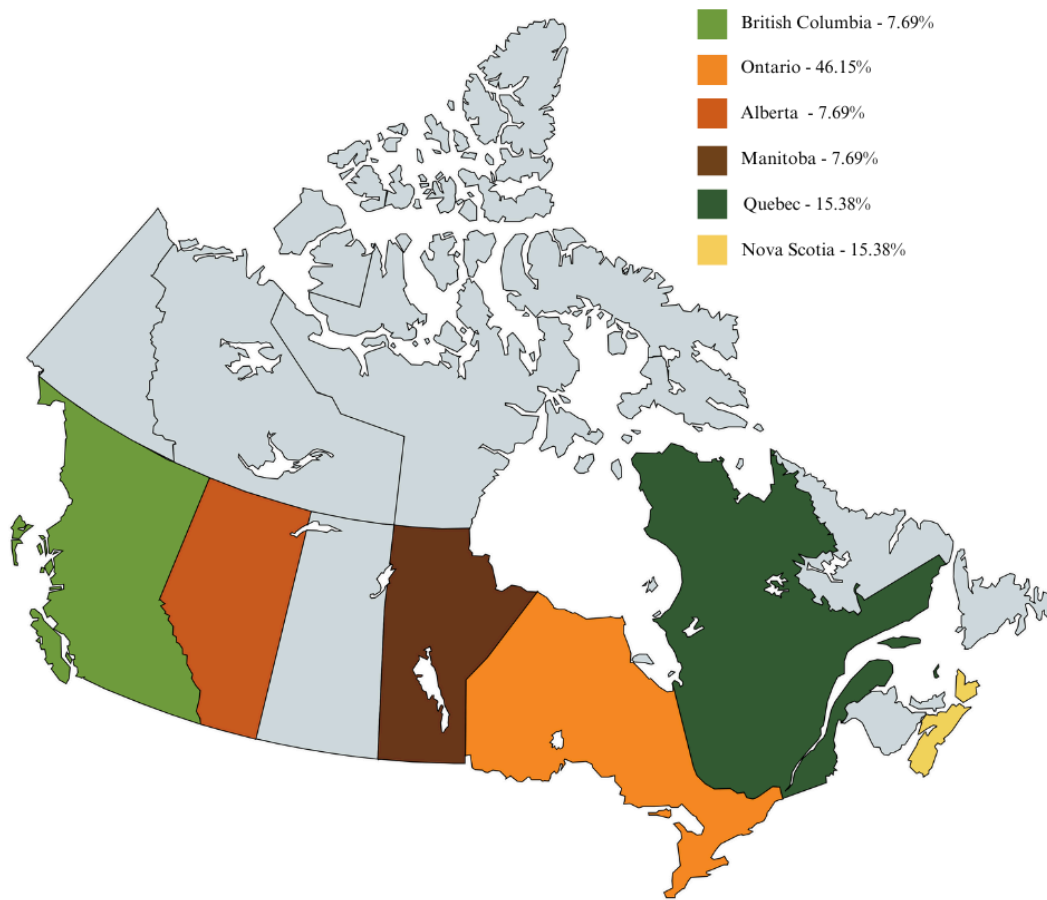


Figure 6.2. Type of Funder Interviewed

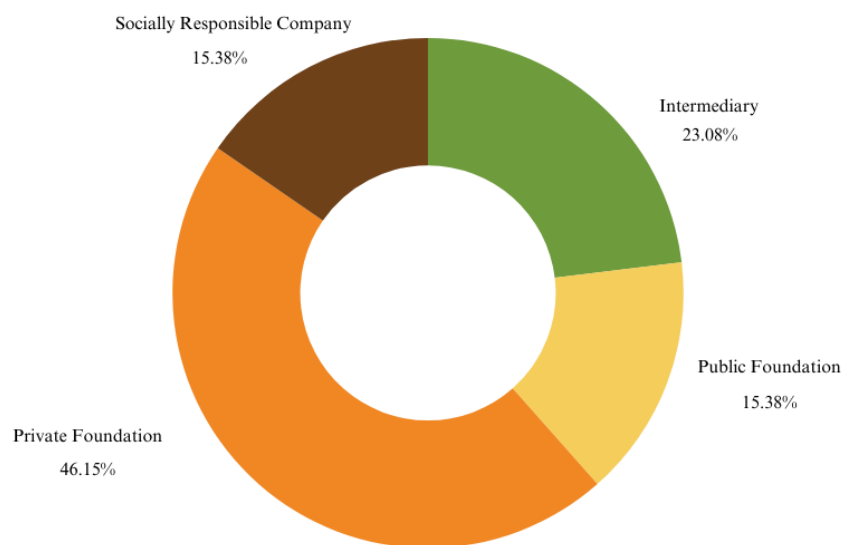
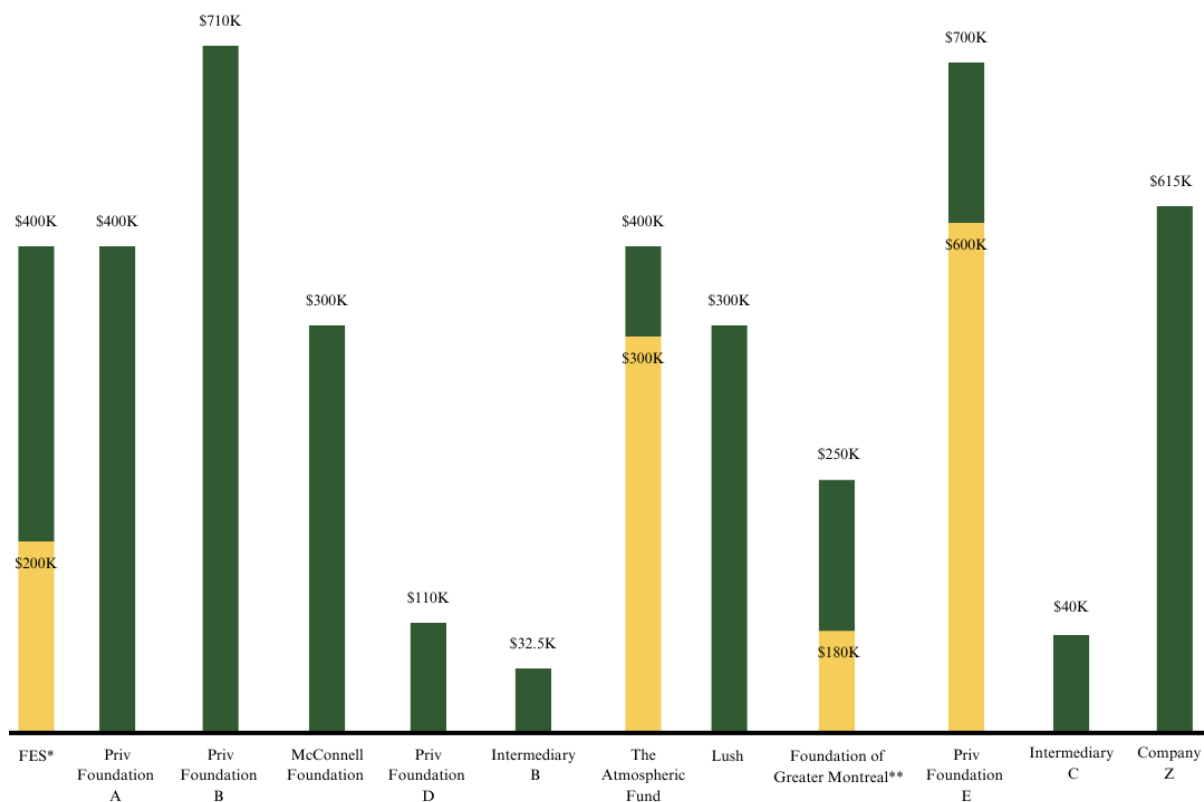


Figure 6.3. Amount of Funding Each Funder Allocated to Climate Justice Each Year



Priv Foundation F*** = undefined

Amount of Funding Allocated to Climate Justice Each Year

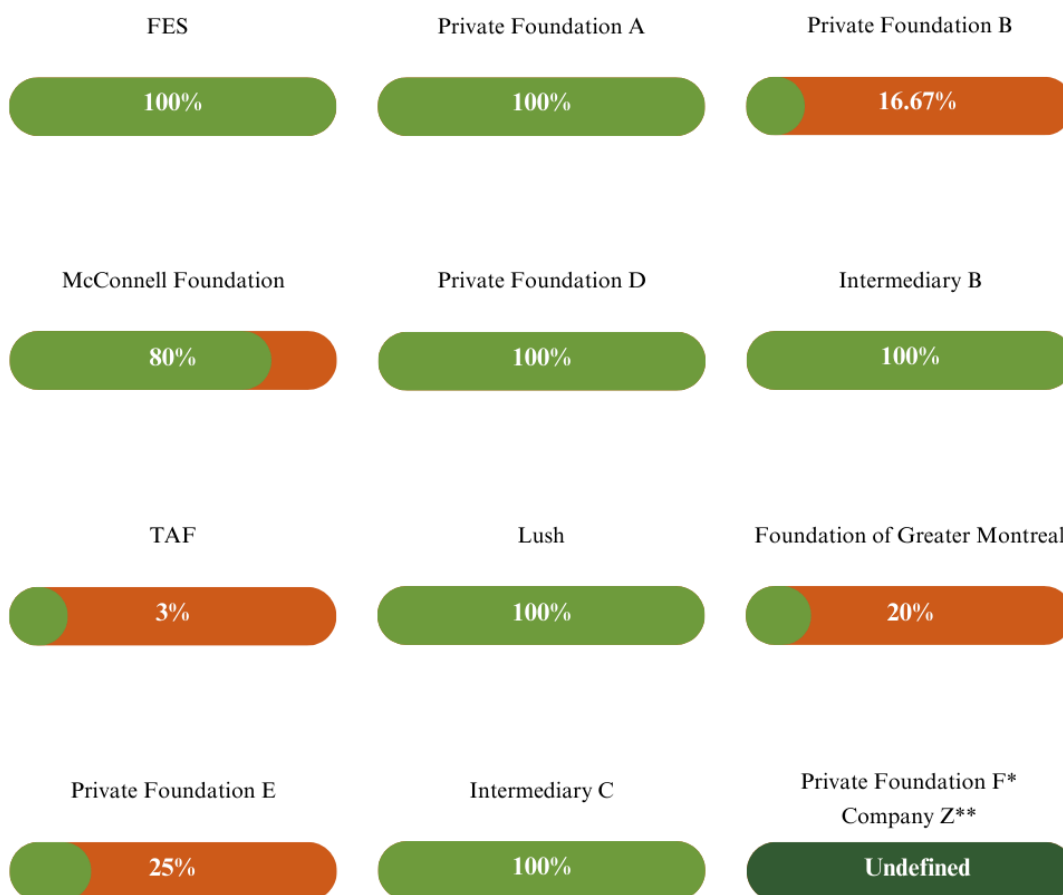
*Started off at \$200k in the first year and then \$400k in the next year and then \$400k for the next year, \$1.02 million in 70 initiatives over 2.5 years.

**Around \$185k last year and \$180-\$250k/year depending on if it's a good or bad year.

***Don't see themselves as a climate justice funder as they fund increasingly in the conservation space - biodiversity, livelihood and climate and prioritize Indigenous-led conservation.

Note: Many foundations issue out multi-year funding, however, this data was taken into account for one calendar year only to make the data easily comparable to other foundations.

Figure 6.4. % of Funding Funders Allocated to Youth Climate Justice Each Year

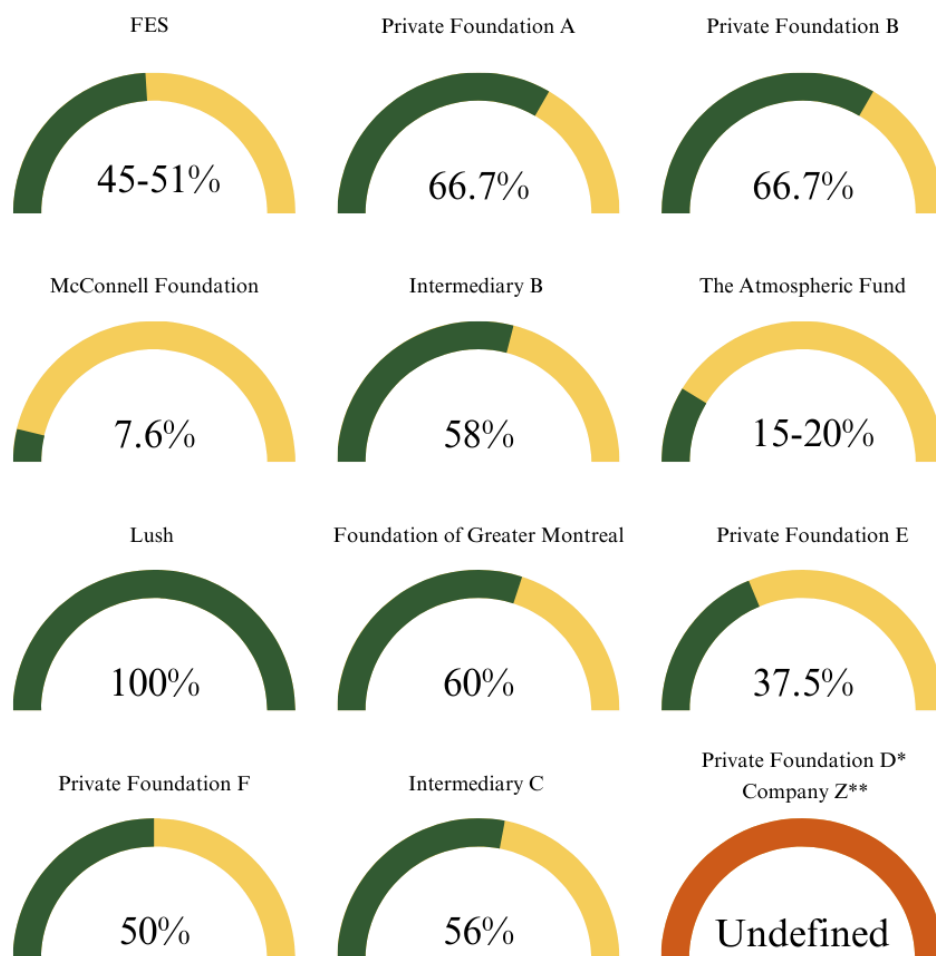


*Don't see themselves as a climate justice funder, don't use that language to define their funding so uncomfortable answering this question. They believe there is youth leadership in the work that is being funded, but don't track metrics on the youth side.

**Did not have any data collected on this metric.

Note: It was difficult to distinguish between youth-led and youth-serving so these were bunched together as both or either. Many interviewees also did not have access to or track this data.

Figure 6.5. % of Funding Funders Allocated to Racialized Climate Justice Each Year



*Do not know the exact % that represent the BIPOC community.

**Did not address this question although asked.

Note: Funders didn't have control over who would be funded after funding is distributed as it was up to the intermediaries who they would fund thereafter.

Note: Estimates came from recent work conducted over the past year.

Appendix 8: Funder Interview Questions

Foundations & Intermediaries

1. How much funding do you allocate to climate justice each year? -
2. Out of the climate justice projects you fund, how many youth and how many racialized folks are funded?
3. After watching the quilted cellphilm, do you feel like your organization is doing enough to fund racialized climate justice activists in the ways that they need to be funded right now?
4. How do you avoid duplicated efforts in your grant making?
5. Do you believe that your environmental funding programs are accessible to racialized climate justice activists? Explain your reasoning - about why or why not.
6. Why do you seek to fund only established organisations that can attain charitable status and afford audited financial statements?
7. What is the rationale/criteria behind some of your major funding decisions?
8. Have you ever considered participatory/iterative approaches to grantmaking?
9. What are your preconceived notions of the barriers that racialized climate justice activists face when accessing capital? Do you agree with what's outlined on the barriers document?
10. Do you believe that the system needs to change? What needs to be changed and what is preventing this systems change?
11. Do you feel like there are limits set on what you can fund by higher powers that would prevent you from changing the foundations practices?
12. What is a realistic way in which foundations can bridge the gap between their bureaucratic funding schemes and the racialized climate justice activists/smaller organisations that require funding?

Companies

1. How much funding do you allocate to climate justice each year (rough estimate if you don't have the exact number)?
2. Out of the climate justice projects you fund, how many youth (15-30) and how many racialized folks (BIPOC) are funded in %?
3. After watching the quilted cellphilm, do you feel like your foundation is doing enough to fund racialized climate justice activists in the ways that they need to be funded right now? Any comments on the concerns addressed in the film?
4. Do you believe that your environmental funding programs are accessible to racialized climate justice activists? i.e. having shorter application processes, and clear criteria of what it is you're looking for, etc.? Explain your reasoning - about why or why not.

5. What is the rationale/criteria behind some of your major funding decisions?
6. Would you say that you seek to fund only established organisations- qualified donees - that can attain charitable status and afford audited financial statements? Also, funding organizations that you already have a pre-existing relationship with?
7. Why are your funding processes so inaccessible by requiring substantial documentation and measures (i.e. charitable status and audited financial statements)?
8. Do you choose what to fund on the basis of impact, marketing, vulnerable communities, etc.?
9. Have you ever considered participatory/iterative approaches to grantmaking?
10. What are your preconceived notions of the barriers that racialized climate justice activists face when accessing capital? Do you agree with what's outlined on the barriers document?
11. Do you believe that the climate philanthropy system needs to change? What needs to be changed and what is preventing this systems change?
12. What is a realistic way in which CSR departments/foundations can bridge the gap between their 'bureaucratic' funding schemes and the racialized climate justice activists/smaller organisations that require funding?

Appendix 9: Funder Responses to Barriers & Solutions Document

- Complex Grant Applications vs. In-Person Engagement

A program director from Private Foundation F indicates that they would accept previous grant proposals, even if tailored to federal government funding programs: “ If an organization or First Nations, you know, reached out to [us] about funding, and they've already received funding in a lot of cases from Environment and Climate Change Canada which have these wildly long proposals and that is this for the same work, we would accept that existing proposal that's already been created. But then again, in the case of the bid a lot of the Environment Program work where there's significant recent federal funding that largely ends up driving the proposal because the federal government will require certain and often more specific content data than a typical family foundation or private foundation would. And so that ends up being like it's not we can't drive the federal government towards a funding process. However, I would say some of the stuff that's given me the shivers in the past, is this, the risk of 'the lowest common denominator' [where] the funder that requires the most content ends up setting a bar in a way where it would be way more or the it sets it up so that other funders who would expect a lot less or require less. So it's a collaboration for sure in the spirit of that I totally agree with and I think could have lots of potential, but with those caveats of like, let's not let it be heavily driven by bad practices. We can see it that way, which tends to exist more in certain sectors as opposed to others.”

One private foundation works so broadly so they don't know there to go for in-person engagement: “The reality is there are going to be a lot of foundations like ours who work across Canada, in local communities, but are really more set up right now to respond to what

we're hearing, as opposed to going out and meeting because right now I couldn't even slice it like I wouldn't know how to slice which local area should we be going and doing consultations in just because we're working so broadly.”

Four funders - Private Foundation A, McConnell Foundation, Private Foundation E and The Atmospheric Fund - are leaning towards standardized application forms, accepting previous applications in different formats and cross-sharing across their networks so that it's easier for organizations who have already applied to similar funders to apply:

“the movement towards standardized application forms that like you can actually have funders commit to using similar questions so that it's actually a lot easier. Or... I'm seeing this more in my work with Environment Funders Canada, there's something called Project Clearinghouse where if there's a project of funders really passionate about they can share it. So I think that there's a lot to be done about having funders do more of the work. Like connecting projects, they're supporting other funders the challenge with that is obviously who's on offenders radar and who isn't. But I'd say there's kind of informally a decent group of funders in the climate space who are, you know, sharing projects trying to simplify it for folks... People make it out to be in the sector just to like, like, be cool to receive information in a different template. So it's like send me that proposal you already had to write for the federal government and I'll read that, right?”

A representative from Private Foundation F shared how they have the first stage starting with a letter of interest (LOI) as to not waste a prospective partner's (they call their grantees 'partners' to be less paternalistic) time: “So we would have public calls and those are often kind of staged LOI so people don't have to write lengthier applications. They can start with you know, a two page LOI just to look at fit with a program.”

Two private foundation funders, Private Foundation F and Private Foundation B, were open to changing their ways, and collecting feedback from their partners (Foundation B calls their grantees partners) so it would be more accessible: “This is the strategy we've aligned on to test for the next couple of years. The culture of the organization is one of experimentation and learning and so if something's not working, then we'll change it. But it's more like this is just the strategy we've aligned on right now to see what works, what doesn't work, what the learnings are. But feedback keeps coming in. [If] that isn't the strategy where we can have the biggest impact, then we'll change it. We're here for them for whatever they need if they want to bounce ideas off of us. So we have formal checkpoints, kickoff calls, mid year check ins. But we're also very available and then they all know that. So we're always seeking feedback, we also do an annual survey, to, to our grantees, partners, to give us some feedback. And that's all done through a third party. So it's anonymous for us, we don't know the names of the people in the organization by the feedback. So that's another way of just gathering. If they are less comfortable sharing something virtually or in person to our faces, then they can share it in this survey.”

- Lack of Connections to Funders vs. Equitable Access

One intermediary has committed to hiring diverse staff: “The majority of our Program Staff (including full-time management positions) were from racialized communities and once we started having program alumni, majority of Grants Admin staff were alumni of the program. All of our Fellowship Support Coordinators were also program Alumni.”

A grants manager at Private Foundation D maintains that there should be an advocacy group that allows racialized groups to get the funding attention they need to pursue their climate justice activism: “It's like so many millions of small bodies that have to connect with a lot of other small bodies, what are the chances that we can connect? Especially in a country like Canada, which is huge; mainly for different parts of the country? I think you do need some kind of a coach, like an eco organization or something that would showcase organizations.”

The Director of Strategy and Grants from the Atmospheric Fund agreed with the idea of bringing young racialized climate justice activists to attend conferences, especially the annual Environmental Funders Conference (EFC): “I wonder if there could be a fund to help to sponsor the participation of racialized activist leaders in the annual EFC Conference. So [it would cover] travel accommodations and participation, which would give more exposure and profile to the funders that they're trying to get connected [to].”

- Systemic Racism and Discrimination vs. Fair Compensation

The representative of a private foundation shared how she personally values and recognizes the contributions of young people: “I mean, there are things that are, you know, that I've learned just the struggle of young racialized people who are just arrived in this country trying to, you know, make a living, earn an income, further their own career and work on this sort of mission driven and purpose driven thing. Climate justice as is, you know, I think we forget what a personal struggle it can be. I think your video is very compelling. And it's important to be reminded of that. The tokenism is something I'm really aware of, and very sensitive to. Whenever I'm at conferences, I always try to give space to any youth speakers. If I'm on a panel or give my spot to a youth person. And I always encourage young staff at our foundations there and organization to name their achievements, like I often feel they're too humble. As for people, they will list their degrees or their educational experience. I think the lived experience of youth is to me just as valuable as any degree, but it needs to be identified and spoken of, and being out there. And I think that's very difficult for young people to do in certain spaces, right?”

One intermediary, when provided context on funding for BLM during the murder of George Floyd expressed his disappointment of it taking so long to give racialized youth access unless major unfortunate incidents occur: “It's unfortunate it took this long, and it's unfortunate that it took these horrific things to shift the needle, right? Like it shouldn't have taken that. That is a reality. I think, you know, I see the needle moving, if that makes any sense. I see the needle moving in the right direction. And I do that and I see a level of optimism and I even the higher of me, for example, or and there were specific conversations

that the board had around you know what? We had an older, incredibly inspiring Caucasian woman as our executive director for some time, just one most amazing mentor that I've ever had. But then she explicitly talks about, you know, how do we shift it to a new generation of young people, you know, people who look different than who looked like the people we want to serve. And so there were like, explicit conversations there. And I know... our board is, you know, mostly older, mostly Caucasian still right now, but there's been explicit recognition of that from their side and they're talking about, you know, how do we phase ourselves out and like bringing in, you know, more youth racialized voices into our kinds of our spaces?"

One public foundation employee recognized how boards are making a lot of the decisions including executive compensation which in turn leads to their team being detached from reality: "So why is nobody speaking about the issue, who's on the boards, how the boards get recruited? Why do people say that some of the nonprofits are detached from reality? Why are they recruiting people who are detached from reality? So... I've seen, like now, very few foundations, for instance, doing public calls for candidates for their boards. I'm like, hey, you know, if anybody can apply so maybe you can get like a wider pool of candidates maybe you can finally get some activists and maybe then you can get like a balanced board that has to does understand the financial aspects and whatever and legal aspect, but also other folks who speak up for causes so there are things that we have to there are things that we can do like in our operations and day to day. And again, I mean, still centring relationships and centring like other ways of knowing and being in what we do others do cooperate ways of knowing and being. But there are also, you know, there is something to be said about democracy. You know, changing the way we govern that."

One private foundation representative believes that other funders should be influenced to establish policies to pay people, and to pay them according to a living wage: "So while they're not working [it] might be interesting to find where they're examples of funders who are very explicit that like, we will we will fund a minimum of whatever the living wages in the community you're working in. And so I think that getting those kinds of policies out there and getting other funders to, like, call out for practice is a good because it's just a harder lift, I think for groups. You know, like I have big feelings about not paying [for] peoples' time."

- Time Constraints vs. Grant Writing Support

One intermediary recognizes the amount of time that it takes to impress funders and build relationships with them. They also know from experience many youth want to learn grant writing skills, and that grant writing services can be very expensive and take away from the pool of funding being allocated: "[What] we're we're exploring right now is like a mentorship type of way. So we're developing a roster of like 100 mentors. And we're not going to call the mentors [as] it's too high touch. But like people that can provide rapid support for things. For example, we have like a whole list of program directors that would like to sit on this roster and help young people review their grants before they submit them. So like, connecting you with somebody that is in a grant writing space. And they like a lot of these people that work for these foundations and have like, extra time, they'll like, take

30 minutes, have a meeting with you, and then review your grant and then give 15 minutes of feedback. So leaning into that.”

One funder recognizes barriers that underserved communities experience when grant writing: “Grant writing is a skill and communities who are not as familiar with grant writing may not be able to articulate the impact of their project.”

- Tokenization vs. Community Consultation

The Foundation of Greater Montreal doesn’t want to look extractive and lead any groups on if they truly can’t commit to funding them: “You know, when you're speaking about community focus groups. I think that's absolutely awesome. But I think that again, we should be very mindful not to waste people's time and resources in organizing focus groups for the sake of focus groups. Like if you organize community consultations, as a funder, you are accountable for what you do with that. You're accountable in front of people whose ideas and expertise you've benefited from. So what's next, you know, why do you organize those hours? Why do you organize those consultations? Why do you reach out to the box because, you know, and I'm always very, very mindful that I'm lucky, you know, people are already so overburdened than me, try to make the you know, I'm like, okay, so what do I come up with? Like, if I just come to benefit from your knowledge? That's not right. I'm very intentional about saying: Guys right now, I'm participating because I think we need to have these conversations and I want to listen to you, but I have nothing to offer right now. And so you have to understand that but I'm there and I think we need to further that relationship. So people can opt out. Right? People can say, well, you know, if there is no money, there is no talk.”

The Foundation of Greater Montreal recognizes the importance of relationship building with the people funders are trying to serve: “You know, looking into your relationship, the relationship you have with the organization, the relationship you have with the movement, with people in this movement is more important than anything else.”

An employee at Private Foundation F shared how they engage with advisory committees to get feedback on funding applications to inform their program design and evolution: “A typical review process for us across the foundation we we would usually have what are called advisory committees that are made up of of a mix of different leaders within kind of the broader sectors or areas in which we're funding. And those leaders would often be involved in reviewing proposals alongside staff looking at kind of the strengths and the weaknesses and the opportunities for the proposed work, and then we talk a bit more kind of at a meta level, you know, if a typical round, let's say 20 applications come through, we'll talk with that same committee around you know, what are we seeing across this work? You know, what are some themes or trends or flags that we should be looking, thinking about? How does that impact our own kind of program work? Again, another way to kind of feed into our program design and evolution. So those advisory committees have been really helpful for us

over the years there in terms of just broadening again, the intelligence and the insight and experience.”

FES learned a lot about participatory grantmaking through different iterations, which allowed them to meaningfully involve young people into their decision making process: “[The committee] really helped inform a lot of the decision making. But because there's so much conflict of interest at the very beginning, at FES, we made it very clear that they wouldn't make any final decisions on who gets money. And that's how we're structured. So we would just discuss the app. So we would look at the applications, we would present the ones that were kind of on the table, we would allow them to discuss things like pros and cons, we would rank them but ultimately, like FES staff makes a final decision when it came to funding. And that was to avoid any things around like conflict of interest. But now we've refined it. So actually, now that this process is up on the new steering committee, you're actually gonna have a lot more safety, because we've gone through like, well [it] isn't really participatory, if young people actually aren't making the final decision. Like that's broken down. So we're like, okay, fair enough. So we really need to, like hone in our conflict of interest policy. So until we were able to do that, and we weren't able to do that, because we really want to be like. Hey, well there needs to be like, no room for somebody to think that there's a conflict of interest at FES. So we had to refine that first before changing the model.”

Annie Bérubé Program Director, Climate from the McConnell Foundation shared that she would rather have the foundation outsource the participatory, trust-based and iterative elements to a third party but does not think that it would be easy to convince the board to take this approach: “Well, they they consider themselves as accountable for the granting decisions and the funding like that is why they exist, right. But when we do capital transfer and major grant transfer for others to manage our funds, and we're completely at arm's length, so that to me, is a better model, because, you know, it takes away that barrier.”

A Manager of Grants and Strategy at Private Foundation D expressed how when speaking with her team there is much interest in participatory grantmaking and learning from other foundations, despite the board being reluctant: “I just have practical questions like, how do you choose the people who are in the panel, you know, how does it not become another gatekeeping institution? Those organizations, if they're doing the selection, that means they can't apply for their own organization, which means that it kind of disadvantages them?... How would they work in a fair way? How do you have it not being tokenizing? How do you not have it be like one person [representing one] community that they will just really, you know, they wouldn't feel right?... Do you have a different panel for different issues or different communities?”

Shitangshu Roy, a leader of an organization that organizes climate challenges for youth, shared how they are very intentional about pairing mentors and judges to projects that come from communities youth are aiming to serve with their project: “If we have an Indigenous judge, and then.. we have a project recently that was looking at Missing and

Murdered Indigenous Women, right. So that was actually led by an Indigenous judge and ... was especially important for us to ensure that there's an Indigenous perspective.”

The Director of Strategy and Grants from the Atmospheric Fund shared how they have a community of volunteers made up of diverse skills and perspectives that review the grant applications, and the board makes the final call on what gets funded: “And then our board makes the final decisions, which we don't have a say over ... our board that's chosen by the City of Toronto. But I would say generally, the board defers quite heavily to the grants committee. So if the grants committee is [making a] funding recommendation, it's almost always approved by the board.”

Lush has a mix of both staff (staff can also nominate organizations) and external reviewers who are previous grantees working in the space or are impacted themselves by the issues to make funding decisions: “Back after the murder of George Floyd in 2020, we allocated \$250,000 for BLM grant making so we had 10 Black staff across North America look at different projects and bring forth organizations that they would like to receive money from this pot. So that was a six week process, which was really amazing to just engage more people in the decision making and of course, you know, having Black staff make those decisions was super important to us.”

Lush also has a process where previous grantees can pay-it-forward to another organization, especially those who would not know about their Charity Pot funding program: “So when we fund an organization, and this is not like for every single grant, but a few times a year we will say okay, like you've recently received funding to us, we would like for you to pay it forward. And we would like for you to have \$10,000 to provide to another organization that you believe is doing really good work and in that issue area. So that's been really amazing in terms of being able to shift that power of decision making, and it's also introduced us to some really amazing work that we may not have learned about otherwise... As long as they fit our, you know, major guidelines that is unrestricted funding. And if the organization wants the group to know that they are basically receiving this money through them we definitely can share that, and if they want it to be anonymous, then we just may keep that to ourselves and just let them know that we want to give them that money for the work that they're doing. They don't have to put an application in or anything, it's just a gift.”

The Community Partnerships Advisor at the Foundation of Greater Montreal, Vira Kovalova, is explicit that organizations who are applying for funding, participate in the grant making process. They understand that there are risks involved, but put measures in place to mitigate those risks: “We do make people sign and declare their conflicts of interest. And make people sign an ethical code. And we do try to be very mindful of the emotional component of it and let people not participate in the conversations that they don't want to participate in. For instance, for their organizations' application, people step out of the room, and so, so there are things like that. It's an imperfect process, but we have asked our members of our committees, whether they felt that was crossing the line, whether they felt that there was too much conflict of interest, whether it was fair or not to invite folks who are

doing the work to participate in those committees. And in the end, you know, everybody recognizes that it's outside of their comfort zone, and that there are potential risks, but everybody told us that they felt that the expertise that people contribute, the diversity of approaches, the insights that they contribute to the collective intelligence is just worth it.”

- Funding Hype Machines vs. Regional Support Networks

Two private foundation funders were not too familiar with what hype machines were.

A spokesperson for a private foundation noticed how there are already regional support networks that exist within Indigenous communities: “So one of the really amazing success stories I've seen lately is in The Guardian Space Indigenous Guardians Programs. So Indigenous Leadership Initiative has been a huge champion for Indigenous Guardians Programs over the last several years. And guardians programs are often you know, in a nation specific guardians team are working as the eyes and the ears on the ground in terms of land stewards. And, and that's very much like that localized homeland specific experience as a guardian team, but having allies and national voice and supporter and kind of an enabler of the you know, what guardians might be experiencing at a local level or regional level across the country for help, help kind of scale that up at the same time as the support is going kind of both ways.”

One public foundation recognizes that community foundations are locally run which allows for some of the work of these regional networks to happen.

An employee at a private foundation believes that pooled funding is more effective than regional networks: “The pooled fund is getting more money out the door overall. But the cooperative and kind of geographic network type of model, like to me I kind of thought, oh, kind of like a nonprofit network. That's just a really interesting idea.”

- Relying on an Intermediary to Redistribute Funding vs. Funding Eco Groups Directly Via a Collective Co-operative

One private foundation believes that there is more impact with funding intermediaries: “It's definitely easier. If there is someone else who has those connections already? And who's an expert in [climate justice work]? Yeah, it saves us time, for sure.”

One private foundation understands the gatekeeping that intermediaries pose, but not funding them can mean risking smaller organizations without connections from getting any funding at all: “I mean, personally, I think FES is great... I think something like this is really, really helpful. Because they can also be kind of like advocates. And, you know, I know, there's risks that come with that, there might be some gatekeeping. There might be some risk, but it's, I would say it's done maybe better than nothing and better than organizations kind of burning off, because they never managed to make the connection.”

One intermediary expresses the importance of intermediaries in serving as fiscal sponsors for youth organizations: “In many cases, we partnered with organizations as the fiscal partner to accept funds on behalf of the youth for various reasons.”

Annie Bérubé from the McConnell Foundation believes that it would be easier for racialized youth to receive funding from an intermediary: “I think it would be more impactful and probably more efficient for racialized youth, if more funding was pulled together and centralized in one place, as opposed to racialized youth having to fundraise through every single government grant or funding program.”

- Restrictive, Project Based Funding vs. Unrestricted, Long Term Funding

One private foundation is committed to long-term operational funding for larger, more established organizations and then a fellowship program with a smaller amount of funding one time to pilot an idea and get more funders interested in investing in young environmental leaders: “I would say that one concern was this issue of short term funding, and recommending that funders do more like multi year and less restrictive funding, and that is what we have been doing for several years now. And we've, like, transitioned ourselves to doing that as a kind of standard approach. So we do three year unrestricted operational funding. And I think what we understand is that a lot of these efforts, you know, run on people power, and you got to pay for those people to definitely work decent lives and to be able [to] unlock them to be able to do their work.”

A representative from a private foundation shares how they funded non-qualified donees for three years well before the CRA’s regulation changed, however, they are skeptical about unrestricted funding since it could be perceived as free money with no work: “I think maybe the issue of unrestricted funding is probably the one where I'm, I don't know what the solution to that is, because I don't think it serves anybody if no individual or organization is able to demonstrate impact, right? You have to be able to demonstrate this is the impact I'm gonna have with this funding and, and as an organization that doesn't serve you well, if you're not able to qualify that impact or describe it. Right? So I think there's a lot of I think the word unrestricted funding scares a lot of funders. I think this, you know what I mean, because it implies free money with no deliverables. And that is not what it is. I think we need to think about flexibility in demonstrating impact or like, I don't know what the right word for it is. But I think unrestricted. There's a lot of misconception and fear around that concept.”

An individual from a private foundation sees the need to qualify impact via having qualitative and quantitative metrics, although it is not necessarily required: “Quantitative metrics include wellbeing of staff, staff retention... Yeah, I know some foundations require KPIs [which] are more quantitative. But if you're in the space of climate justice and movement building, I think those are not the appropriate metrics for that work. If you don't have quantitative [metrics] then you have a theory of change.”

One public funder can see that they engage in trust based philanthropy already since they are place-based and it is what the community has been requesting: “I've seen a lot of examples of community foundations working with trust based philanthropy it's not like an official model of community foundations or anything but I've seen a lot of them do a lot of examples of foundations doing that. So I would say we're probably, you know, by virtue of being community foundations, we're probably more prone to it also, because we're playing days right. So you kind of explore your, your community around you and you build on that.”

An employee at a private foundation revealed how they are open to funding nonqualified donees, especially with the CRA's change in the law, however their board of directors only wanted to focus on funding organizations that have been around for at least two years: “There's like some flexibility in that. But yeah, a limit, I would say is that we don't we look for like some kind of experience of some kind of proof of concept, if I can say so. So that will be a limit... we're not like an early stage funder, for sure.”

An executive director of a youth serving intermediary shares how they fund emerging ideas through innovation challenges with funding and those who are more established can sit on the judging panel or engage in mentorship: “ So I think in that sense, yeah, like we are very open to that. We have also what are competition[s] and our hackathons or ideathon to climate change. The biggest challenge like that's like beginner seeds of ideas, and oftentimes people come in, most people come in without any idea at all. And then they develop the ideas over the course of, you know, the 48-72 hours. And then we've also got our summer competition where... there's like less than \$5,000 in funding so there's an explicit mandate for us to find less established things and the fact that you're established you, you wouldn't be able to apply to us rather, we would recruit you as a mentor and judge that oftentimes is what happens.”

An employee at a private foundation is aware that the rules are now changing with the CRA to grant to nonqualified donees, so they will be able to fund non-profits: “Well any any foundation right now can do it. They have to then look at their charitable objects and [see if they] need an amendment there. Because sometimes the charitable objects unfortunately specifically mentioned, we only grant to qualified donees. So then you have to do an official letter to the CRA and all those things. And then you have to look at your own policies internally. But that's just changing words. Those are all processes that can be updated. And so that's changeable. So we're in that process. And yeah, I look forward to supporting them regardless of the type of organization. [I hope to see] what is the work that needs to happen and [witness] what is the work that's being done.”

The Director of Strategy and Grants at a public foundation shares how they are not a charity themselves, and hence can fund any organizational type, although tend to fund more established organizations: “I mean, we're not intentionally favouring them, but I think they tend to do a lot of a lot more of the work that we tend to support like, policy advocacy on key on priority issues for us, enact that kind of stuff technical analysis, we can

call it you know, universities sometimes. So there tends to be a closer fit between the types of projects that they work on and the types of projects that we fund.”

Lush since 2007 has funded both registered charities and unregistered organizations (as well as through fiscal sponsorship) with a tendency to fund activists; they cited how charities typically can’t fund lobbyist activities and they are filling that gap:

“Traditionally [charities and nonprofits] haven't been able to do lobbying against government and doing you're quite restricted when you have charitable status. So for us, we remove that completely.”

For the Foundation of Greater Montreal, they do not ask for audited financial statements since they are aware that not all organizations can produce them and only give out on average grants worth \$30,000: “We do also have experience with working with groups and organizations who don't are not incorporated at all. And yeah, I haven't heard of that. I mean, it's not it's not the majority of our funding. And I don't think that our board would have been comfortable if it was the majority of our funding, but we do have, we do have those, that experience and most of them do have, well, most of them, all of them have a fiscal sponsor, or if they don't, we try to help them find a fiscal sponsor.”

An executive of a private foundation shares how they fund work that is very broad and needs more of a focus on what to fund regardless of an organization’s status. Additionally, they are legally set-up through their charitable objects to only fund qualified donees, so they fund non-qualified donees through funding other charities, and would prefer to keep it that way since they already receive so many applications that they need to turn away: “We already received too many LOIs every month. Like already we say no. Like, I don't think in an ideal world, you shouldn't be saying no to like 80% of the LOIs you receive, because it's so much unnecessary time on the part of the organizations. So we're already in a position where I mean, I'd have to pull the numbers but we say we have to decline so many and that's without broadening who's eligible to apply. So if we suddenly bring in who's eligible to apply and we haven't done the work to specify who we are actually trying to prioritize all it would do right now is potentially double or triple the amount of LOI that’s coming in without increasing our capacity to say, "we don't have more money to say yes, so it'll come.””

A program director at a private foundation states how they fund qualified donees, which includes First Nations governments; this shed light on the various types of qualified donees that exist aside from just registered charities: “You'll see there's charities, the formal charities as I think we're talking about, but then there's a bunch of other qualified donees. Okay, so registered journalism organizations, for instance.”

- Excessive Reporting Requirements vs. Simplified Reporting

Four private foundations and one public funder shared how they are trying to make reporting easier, especially by reusing previous impact reports made to other funders:

“And I would say we have also really tried to think really carefully about any reporting that we do ask for, I mean, we do have what I would say I would describe as like sort of due diligence, that is just the bare minimum of what we need to, like have for auditing purposes. But oh, but on the whole we've really tried to think about the reporting that we asked for, we try to ask for, like, if the organization already has a report, to just use that if they have a report from another funder just use that if they use another template. And then we much prefer to not ask them to do written reports. I mean, some written reporting is like getting asked for but we prefer to do kind of like oral progress discussions. And we also go into all of our kind of grantee relationships with the, like, explicit discussion of mutual accountability and also like that it's a sort of a two way relationship that like we're giving funding, but we're also learning a lot from our grantee. And they're the experts on the ground. And they're like, they're the ones doing the actual work and who are going to tell us like, what's the real deal happening? So we try to go in with that understanding.”

- Equality and Biased Approaches vs. Equity and Unbiased Approaches

A public funder feels like they are making progress on embedding equity within the grant application process and fostering leadership from equity seeking communities by making efforts to hire someone who can inform their equity process: “We want to make sure that all projects consider equity implications at the beginning and try to design equity into their projects. So we recently added a question to our grants application form specifically, encouraging applicants to turn their minds to consider how to promote equitable benefits.”

Flexibility in applying to funding opportunities was highlighted as a way to be more equitable by one executive at an intermediary: “Our grant review process involved supporting applicants facing barriers to have multiple opportunities to apply again. We have had countless examples of youth applicants being given extensive coaching and support to ensure their idea could be approved and that the criteria for our grant making guidelines were not a barrier.”

- Excessive Requirements vs. Provide Administrative Support

Lush admits it is challenging to commit to multi-year grants since their funding allocations are determined by sales: “We can't do 100% committed multi year funding, just [to] be clear. You have a COVID year where we have to shut all of our stores for over three months, our sales are down, we don't have that volume of funding money. So if we had had like, we're going to have multi-year funding for three to five years, and we can't follow through with that because we don't have any funding, that's the challenge.”

An experienced executive of an intermediary funder expressed the limitations and significant reporting requirements that they need to adhere to which makes multi-year unrestricted funding a far off dream: “This would certainly be the dream for any organization and has always been a wish in my books. With that said, my 25+ years of

experience has taught me about the realities of the social impact sector and that there are no such generous donors. Every single project we have ever been granted has come with terms and conditions. As a registered charity there are also serious guidelines and limitations with significant reporting requirements that could jeopardize the ability for the organization to continue if they were not met. Public dollars and donations are under significant scrutiny and compliance is essential to maintain operations. While I would certainly welcome unrestricted, long-term funding, it is simply not a reality and our organization would have gone bankrupt years ago if we did not find a way to meet the extensive, diverse guidelines of different donors. Government funding is also not unlimited as there are always elections and changes in leadership likely lead to changes in policy directions and this influences funding flows.”

- Intellectual Property Theft vs. Ownership Rights

One executive director at an intermediary shared how there are new changes to the CRA making it easier for grantees to gain control over their work: “Regulations recently changed with the CRA where originally charities had to assert direction and control over a project. FES had to embed this into contracts with their grantees. FES also had several meetings with grantees to make them feel more assured that FES wasn’t going to take over their project.”

Two representatives from private foundations expressed their concern about intellectual property theft and one specifically shared how foundations need to update their contracting language so that it is aligned with the values of the community they are serving: “Some of these things are actually global and they're structural. And if we can get a group working on it [we] could just make it more standardized right? To say okay, well what language and grant agreements, you know, intellectual property? Because I also guarantee there's a whole bunch of folks like we don't have grant agreements, so I don't have that problem. But like, there's always the folks who never really read page four for me. Until one other kind of partner is like, “I'm not gonna sign this because of page four”. And you're like, “Oh, okay, cool”. So like, I mean, I'm like, I'll delete that clause and carry forward. Right. So I think sometimes it is just like a machine. People are like “Yeah, but that's just what a lawyer gave me”. So that's what we do, as opposed to really thinking of like, do we need these clauses and what are the unintended consequences and like, is it misaligned with our values right? If we're saying we want to be like a partner or a collaborator, amplify good work like if our agreements are at odds with that, and I do think sometimes, kind of just happening. Yeah, there's values and focus and community engagement work. And then there's the tangible, like, contracting, that language that hasn't been updated in like decades.”

One executive of an intermediary who ran a fellowship program with funding shared how they are inclined to give their grantees the keepers of their own intellectual property: “Our grantees own the rights to their projects. This was set-up as a design principle at the outset of our program[s].”

- Unclear Contracts vs. Clear Contracts

One executive of an intermediary who ran a fellowship program partially funded by the government shared the difficulties in adhering to contracts when their own funders changed their initial contract: “In the [name of program], our own contract was changed from the approval stage and this created unfortunate layers of confusion in our own granting agreements. We appreciate the understanding of our participants when we had to implement this change.”

- No or Unspecified Feedback vs. Sufficient Feedback

A new hire of a private foundation managing their community, environment and health funding portfolios shared their perception that all funders to varying extents provide feedback: “I believe all funders are able to provide some level of feedback”

An executive from a private foundation shared her impression of the board, being unable to change the mission and vision of the foundation, but since she has joined she is attempting to be more accessible: “ It's just like getting to a place of how we want to work with our partners because up until when I joined you couldn't get a call with someone at the foundation to get feedback on your proposal. Now you can. I'm like, I'll talk to any of you, reach out to me and you want to know why you weren't funded. That's my job. Like, I'll tell [them] you know, we'll go through it.”

- Bureaucratic Delays vs. Flexible and Trust Based Funding

Vira Kovalova from the Foundation of Greater Montreal shared how in order to move away from bureaucracy, boards and committees need to represent more diverse groups of people: “I think we often look at the processes that the foundations are implementing, and we forget that this process [there is] just implementation of bylaws and implementation of decision making practices that are practiced [on] the board, and the decision making practices that are practiced [on] the boards are directly stemming from who's on the boards, right. Foundations are inherently corporate, most foundations are very corporate. We have the boards that are consisting of investment bankers and actuaries and those are not risk takers. People who are working for community organizations, leading community organizations, and even fewer activists are on the boards of foundations”

Kovalova also revealed how foundations are looking to get the best return on their investment whether financially through their investments or through conventional institutions that praise them: “ The essential functions of the foundation is investing money [to grow their endowment]... traditionally philanthropy, for a very long time was giving more [or] all of its money to hospitals, museums and universities. Those are [what they would consider] respectable [and] trustworthy institutions. Other than tax benefits, you also get a plaque very often. Or a brand new building on some campus. In [a] nutshell, it's very colonial and we need to change”

Kovalova further sheds light on how trust based philanthropy has been around for some time and none of the grantees she has ever worked with has ever misappropriated funds: “We [can] increase our margin of action by educating our board, by delegating power within foundation and saying not everything has to be approved by the board. That's also where trust based philanthropy comes into [play]. That's an easy thing to show you a board and say, hey, you know what, why don't we try that? Let's see how that works.”

An executive at a private foundation also shared their belief that private philanthropy is much more flexible and less bureaucratic than a government funder or community foundation: “I had a board meeting [recently], and I brought forward some Indigenous land conservation strategies that had a very tight timeline to get some approvals and it wasn't something that was on anyone else's radar so we rapidly organized a series of meet[s] with these groups and [we] approved funding to these four groups, half of which we never connected with, but that's because we have that flexibility.”

This same executive similarly thought it would be essential to bring in the fifth generation of members from the family foundation to get more buy-in for new ideas: “I'm banking on this generation five micro-grant I have going on to like from the bottom up, bring in new insights to our board. It's like nothing like getting a whole bunch of teenagers to describe what they care about, and the groups that really resonate [with them].”

- Matching Funding Requirements vs. No Matching Requirements

A representative of a private foundation expressed their disapproval with matching funding requirements: “Like even in the video, [there was a cellphilm that talked about] the matching funding requirements. We don't do that because that doesn't make sense to me. You definitely like give what's being asked for and give over several years if you can if the project is for several years. So then there's more sustained funding.”

An executive of an intermediary serving youth organizations believes that matching requirements do not well serve youth: “I agree that this places significant burden on applicants (youth and social impact organizations)”

- Organizational Requirements vs. Organizational Flexibility

The executive director of a youth-led intermediary shares how it's difficult to be flexible when the CRA is strict on issuing funding to non qualified donees: “The new rule is that foundations can give money to non-qualified donees but the rigidness of the reporting is much higher when giving funding to non-qualified donees. The CRA is cracking down on all these agreements to ensure that that aspect doesn't get backed up.”

One public foundation and one private foundation shared how audited financial statements is common practice and they are unsure if they can change this practice: “Yeah, that was another thing I noted down from the suggestions like right now our practice

is to ask for audited financial statements. And I would say like the majority of groups have that and it's not an issue, but it really opened my eyes to the fact that some organizations don't have that and it can actually be quite time consuming to put those together. So it got me thinking.”

- No Guarantee of Funding vs. Transparent and Iterative Funding Models

A grants manager at Private Foundation D has engaged in iterative grant making with organizations reapplying through their letter of interest: “We've had the situation where we had like very old applications that were still waiting. And what we found when we finally got back to [them to] keep going, their needs have completely changed.”

Shitangshu Roy on behalf of the organization he leads, shared how important it is to give leadership opportunities and recognition, even if a group of young people don't win the competition. Through an iterative learning process his organization learned to turn away participants who have already won competitions in the past to level the playing field: “The goal of the funding is not to actually launch the project necessarily, but is number one to develop the leader as to say that we're going to give the leader X amount of dollars and let them try something. And if it fails, that's actually a good investment because the failure is going to be a lesson for the leader to develop and grow.”

The Director of Strategy and Grants at the Atmospheric Fund expressed how balance is key to iterative granting processes and principles that work to make funding more accessible and provide more guaranteed long funding that will also support the sustained operations of community groups: “What I'm trying to work through is how can these principles be upheld, while at the same time recognizing that our annual budget is limited. We get far more requests than we could possibly fund. There are often specific decision making timeframes that we're working that we're funding towards like a policy decision making window.”

Vira Kova, with the Foundation of Greater Montreal, revealed how they have contacted previous applicants who weren't funded and shared with them how there leftover funds that they could apply to: “We still don't guarantee funding but we'll just re-submit it and some folks got funded the second time round. So we've been doing that in some instances. It's fun to know that that has a name actually. [We want grantees] to see it as a start of a relationship and we will try to see if we see the funding opportunity that works. If we got a question from another fund [asking for] anyone who's working on this issue or a group with these characteristics? We will always try to pitch for [a group] that we could not fund. So even the organizations that we reject, that don't get funding, we still contact them. [They want to] keep in touch because there might be other instances, other opportunities and we really really want to keep on connecting [them so] we don't really see it as [a] one time shot.”

- Ideological Differences vs. Inclusive Ideologies

Regarding differences in opinion in funding political activities or environmental advocacy that is viewed as inherently political, a representative from Private Foundation D revealed how their board did not want to fund anything that would go against their business interests: “And there's the lawsuits. So that's an example of something that didn't work out, like I presented to the board. They were like, No, we're not gonna fund a lawsuit against the government. Yeah, and you know, that's because then then you go back to the roots into the bigger systemic issues of like, where's the money coming from?, you know, where has the wealth being accumulated from? and, and it's also often problematic, and because even if it's a family foundation, they often have a business too. Like the wealth often comes from a business and they don't want to do things that could impact their business [which] is also like a very big limit[ation].”

- Other: General

A director at a private foundation shared her belief in the perspectives of young racialized climate justice activists: “Those barriers that you've identified, I wouldn't dispute any of those.”

An executive director of a youth serving intermediary shared how they believe foundations are making some steps to funding more racialized youth: “I think I agree with a lot of it. I'm going to try and pull it up here. And yeah, I think it was great. I think things that I would maybe ask you to consider is a racialized youth specifically I think for the better has become a priority for many, many, many funders. And I think that needs to be recognized at some level like if you look at probably most of the foundations in the past, was put plans for climate to look at environmental funders oftentimes very explicitly stated, prioritization that is given to racialized youth. I think that that's something I wish I had individuals think as something that's positive, right. So there's a positive shift there, even”

- Other: Formatting

Representatives from two private foundations drew attention to how the formatting of the barriers and solutions document could have included different buckets that the barriers could've gone in: “What are the barriers in different sectors, like in philanthropy in academia, and government or funding? You know, different kinds of funding, which I think each have their own problems?”

An employee at a private foundation thought how each barrier was not always a direct connection point to one single solution, rather they are connecting points to various other solutions and vice versa: “I mean, one thing I guess the question I had when I looked at the calls, was I was supposed to look at - let me use the first one complex grant applications and in person engagement. Was it like, this is the solution [to] the barrier here? So kind of one feedback point, I would say is some of the solutions [are] also connected to some of the other barriers and vice versa.”

Appendix 10: Criteria Behind Major Funding Decisions

Funder Name	Funding Criteria	Key Words
FES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Young people deciding on what gets funded up until the final decision ● Depends on the funding stream as each fund has a different purpose whether supporting new climate leaders; giving seed or scale level grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youth ● Participatory ● Climate justice ● Black, Indigenous, People of Colour (BIPOC) ● Newcomers ● Equity ● Accessibility ● Relationships ● Canada ● Leaders
Private Foundation A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Looking to provide operational support to more established organizations ● Building up the infrastructure of the sector by encouraging more funders to fund more young environmental leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Established organizations ● Youth environmental leaders
Private Foundation B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Systemic impact ● Deliver on work ● Alignment with foundation's existing strategies ● Projects that centre on BIPOC communities in leading the work and involved in the solution ● Funding research that is going to be transformative and that has never been done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Systems change ● Delivery ● Foundation's strategies ● Diversity, equity and inclusion ● Communities ● Transformative
McConnell Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reconciliation program ● Getting to net zero ● Addressing systemic barriers to get there ● Influence policies and regulations into the zero carbon economy ● Increase diversity of actors and climate action ● Needs to be accountable to a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Indigenous reconciliation ● Climate mitigation ● Systems change ● Sustainable finance ● Diversity, equity and inclusion ● Communities ● Good governance ● Financial management

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> board or advisory group • Ensure that funding is well spent and managed according to funding submitted • Only fund domestically, not internationally • Do not fund partisan work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> capacity • Canada • CRA restrictions
Private Foundation D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pan Canadian except for BC and Ontario, with exceptions for Indigenous communities • Funding projects in Montreal since that's where they are based and the family wants to support that community • If staff have the skills to do the work • If there's an organizational culture that seems healthy • Seeing if they can create change based on what has been done • The quality of the team and board • Financial health of the organization in not being reliant on one funder • Understanding their financial situation • If they look like they can actually achieve the issue they want to tackle • Needs to be led by people from the communities they aim to serve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada except for British Columbia and Ontario • Indigenous communities • Local funding • Team experience • Healthy organisational culture • Outcomes • Good governance • Financial management capacity • Transparency • Relevant • Communities
Intermediary B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially founded out of COVID with many young people demanding the founders for jobs • Can give funding to more people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pitch competition • For everyone • Higher distribution
The Atmospheric Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative and governance, accountabilities we can fund any projects where that has a direct link to climate action such as buildings and transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate action • Buildings • Transportation • Scalable emissions reduction • Highest score • Community benefit

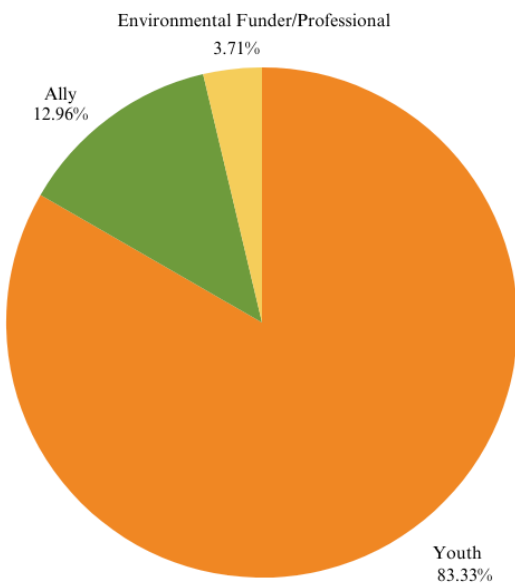
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Scalable emissions reduction potential over the GTHA over a 20 year period (determined by an inventory of carbon in each region each year) ● Score the highest number of points if you can get 2 million tons of carbon or more, and then it's kind of like prorated down based on that ● Asking questions relating to community benefit equity, thinking about positioning the solution for scale, internal capacity, relevant experience of the team to deliver the project ● Systemic change need politically and culturally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Equity ● Team experience ● Systems change
Lush	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Governance of the organization and who make up the board or the leadership ● Prioritize having those voices and folks at the table to help make those decisions and run the organization ● People who are impacted by the issue and looking at diversity ● \$500,000 or less than in annual revenue ● Want to know about the work being done as opposed to asking for metrics ● Don't involve animals for human gain and don't have religious affiliations ● Open to having conversations with grantees to discuss their work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Good governance ● Leadership team ● Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) ● Inclusion ● Community benefit ● Diversity ● Smaller organizations ● Work being done ● Animal protection ● Conversation and connection

Foundation of Greater Montreal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 50% of our funding should go to our organizations serving our historically marginalized communities ● Prioritizing groups led by and serve these populations ● Strong preference to fund organizations that are unloved you are by traditional philanthropy ● Believe in the participatory model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Indigenous, Black, People of Colour (BIPOC), LGBTQ+, Women and Girls, People Living With Disabilities ● Communities ● Unloved ● Participatory
Private Foundation E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our larger grants tend to go to either sometimes it's just like there's oppressiveness on the work and or we've had a long relationship to that work ● Highly prioritize local projects ● Interesting high impact projects ● Doesn't necessarily have the same appeal to other funders ● Beneficial and a good thing to do to get a rapid response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Oppression ● Long relationships ● Local ● Interesting ● High impact ● Unloved ● Beneficial ● Good ● Rapid response
Private Foundation F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relationship-based foundation with a lot of openness and connection to other funders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relationships ● Openness ● Connection
Intermediary C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Criteria from donors set in their application guidelines ● Youth and alumni making decisions for their project ● Funding youth hopes for the future, not their experience level ● Giving youth their 'first yes' ● Marketing programs via community partners to conduct outreach, nominate youth and offer mentorship once projects approved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Donor criteria ● Youth ● Alumni ● Hope for the future ● First yes ● Community partners

Company Z	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Climate impact ● Geographic spread ● Under funding or supported groups / vulnerable communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Climate impact ● Geographic spread ● Unloved ● Supported groups ● Vulnerable communities
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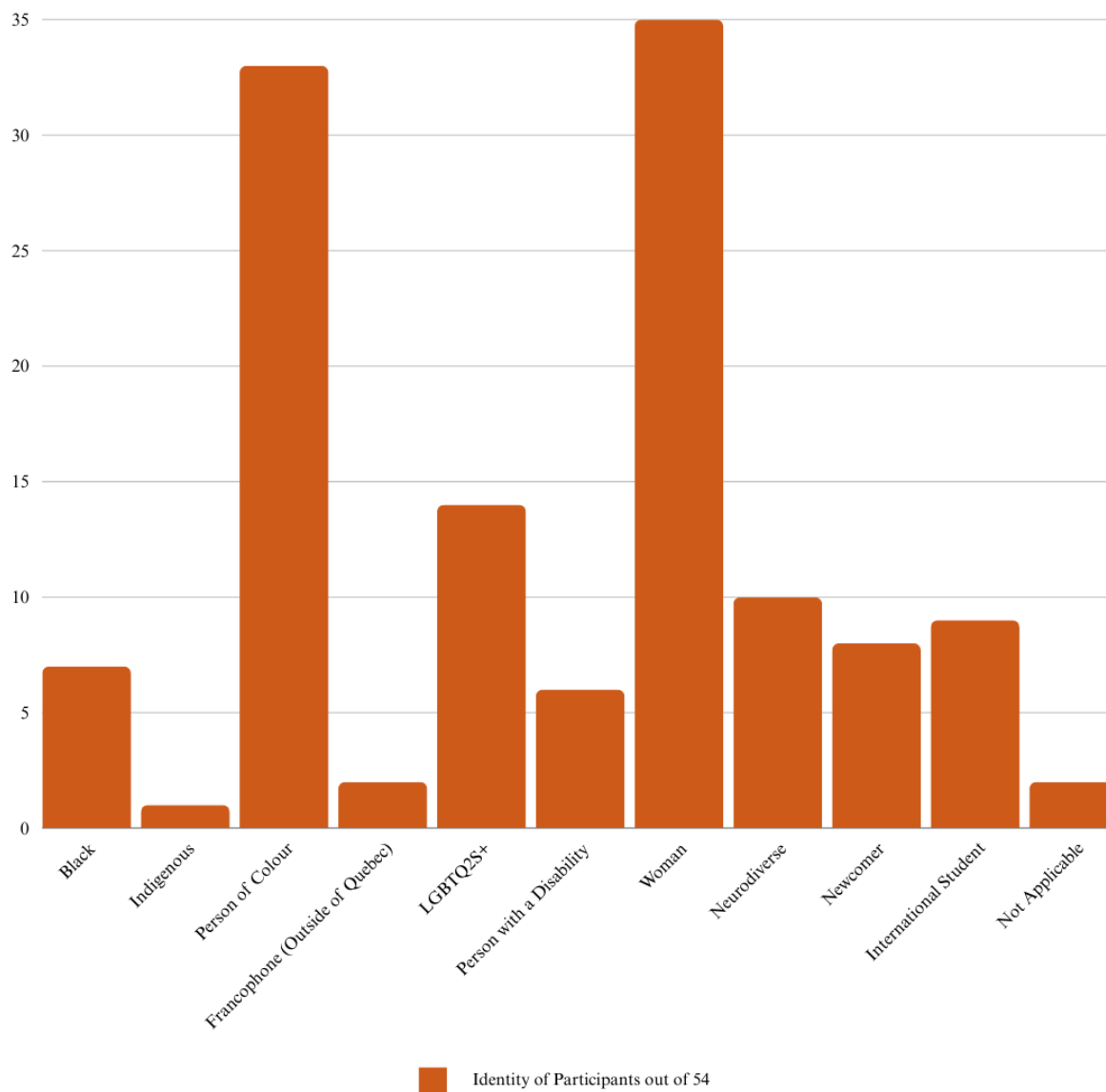
Appendix 11: Community Demographics

Figure 7.0. Type of Attendee at the Cellphilm Screening



Note: This data excludes the demographics of the team that helped organize the event as we did not register to receive tickets to attend.

Figure 7.1. Underrepresented Communities Identified in Attendees at the Cellphilm Screening



Note: This data excludes the demographics of the team that helped organize the event as we did not register to receive tickets to attend.

Appendix 12: Cellphilm Screening



Figure 8.0. Panelists speaking at the cellphilm screening at Innis Town Hall in Toronto.

Appendix 13: Form Responses from Audience Members

On a scale from 1 to 10 how effective do you feel like the cellphilm was in outlining the struggles of racialized climate justice activists in obtaining funds, projects and non-profit organizations?

43 responses

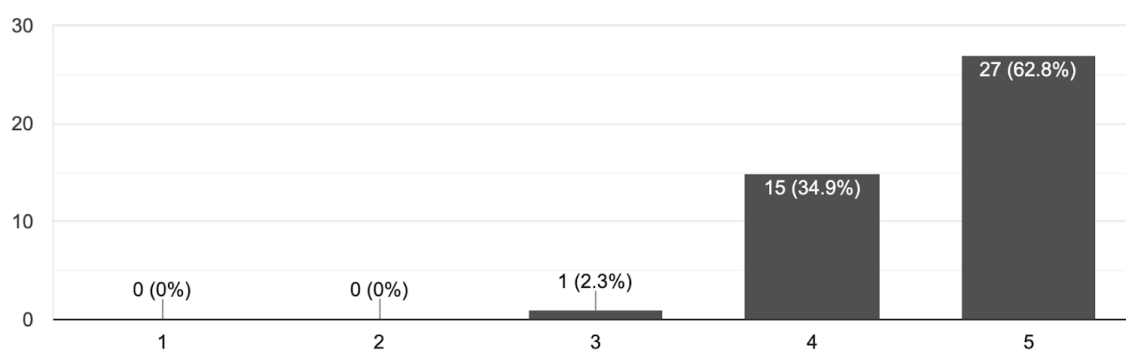


Figure 9.0. Bar chart representing the effectiveness of the cellphilm.

Note: There was an error made regarding the scale only being out of 5 instead of 10, hence responses were multiplied by two in order to be compared on the same scale.

How would you rate the cellphilm overall on a scale from 1 to 10?

43 responses

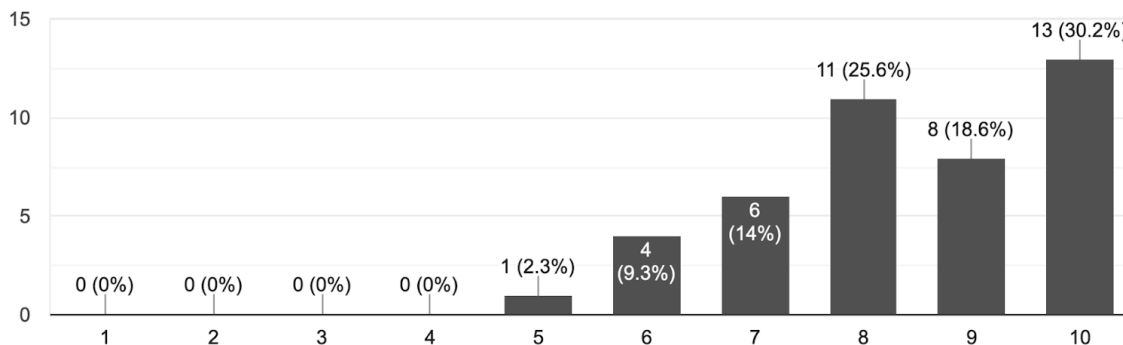


Figure 9.1. Bar chart representing the overall rating of the cellphilm.

Would you share this cellphilm with those in your network?

43 responses

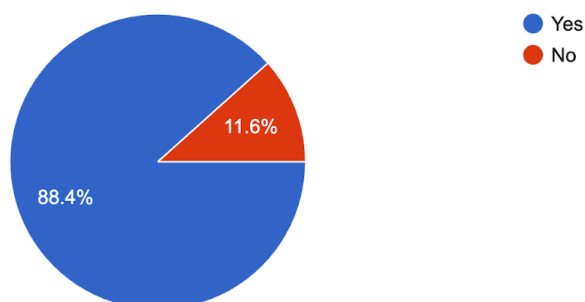


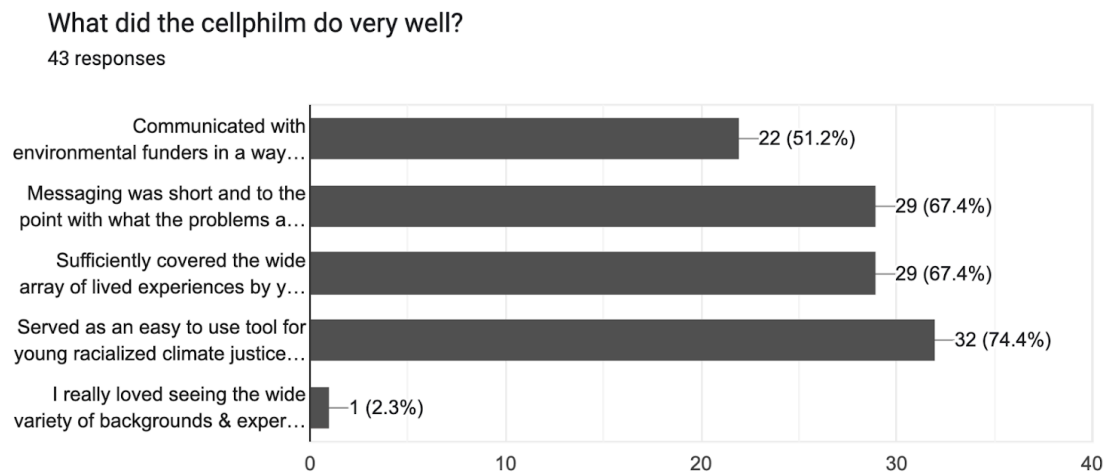
Figure 9.2. Pie chart representing the percentage of attendees who would share the cellphilm with those in their network.

What did the cellphilm do very well?

- “Served as an easy to use tool for young racialized climate justice activists to engage in storytelling” (74.5%)
- “Messaging was short and to the point with what the problems and solutions are in shaping climate philanthropy” (67.4%)
- “Sufficiently covered the wide array of lived experiences by young racialized climate justice activists” (67.4%)
- “Communicated with environmental funders in a way that was easily accessible to them” (51.2%)

- “I really loved seeing the wide variety of backgrounds & experiences among all the participants of the cellphilm - it was really thought provoking to see the diverse ways that young people are taking action & engaging with community organizing” (2.3%)

Figure 9.3. Bar chart representing comments and feedback from attendees on what the cellphilm was able to do well.



How could the quilted cellphilm have been improved?

- “Subtitles for accessibility”
- “Needs captions; some video clips were unstable/jarring”
- “I think it would’ve helped to have a more specific understanding of what organizations can do to reduce barriers to giving grants, ie: a more thorough call to action”
- “Filming quality and film cuts”
- “The sound was too loud at times!”
- “I think it was great! There were a couple parts where the camera was a bit shaky and I noticed during Salma's part the music stopped for a second and looped but overall the message was clearly communicated”
- “A bit more work into turning into a directed CTA would allow it to be more professional so that funders would take it a bit more seriously.”
- “Coach some participants a bit more on how to be clear and outline what their specific point was.”
- “Overall formatting but it makes complete sense as well bcs those are different stories and not everyone has the same means for storytelling”
- “Talk more about climate”
- “- loved the format for storytelling - very strong consistent messaging - key insights repeated effectively - foregrounded impact of racialization”
- “Make a stronger accent on the importance of the youth in sustainability”

- “Communicated to the community outside of the activists themselves how they can aid to change.”
- “Include closed captioning and/or a summary at the very end to include suggestions made”
- “A more consistent throughline of questions. I loved the footage of Palestinian solidarity. Would have liked to see more!”
- “It was great, beautiful edited. There were a couple moments of sideways photos, but that's just being nit-pickey. In terms of being easily accesible to funders, I would include a 1-2 page summary of the activists, their assessment of the challenges and their demands/suggestions”
- “Captions and/or more text to make it easier to follow along with the points being made.”
- “Nothing.”
- “I think the content of the film was really great and informative, however if I had to give constructive criticism I would say that the editing could be better.”
- “I think a bit more cohesion in the storytelling would have been helpful. Some parts felt more like a story while others felt like a presentation. This inconsistency made the film feel a bit fragmented, but otherwise kudos to all the participants for sharing very important insights on their funding challenges!”
- “Loved the different perspectives offered from different individuals. I think 1-2 examples of projects that managed to secure sustainable/long-term funding, and how the project goes generally”
- “I would suggest clearer audio recording as it was slightly challenging to hear certain participants. I would also suggest some more organic and engaging forms of communication rather than reading from text.”
- “Storytelling is largely supported by the quality of the medium which is being used to convey itself therefore audio quality is incredibly essential to improving the digestion of the cellphilm.”
- “There were some claims (like funders stealing ideas) that I would have loved to hear more details about - I think it would also make the film more effective at calling funders to action if the problem was laid out with more specifics! As well, some of the footage gave me motion sickness because of how quickly and blurry the visuals moved.”
- “The panelists detailed the issues of the cellphilm, including but not limited to the vague/ambiguous messages for change. They did a great job of arguing in favor and against some points of the cellphilm and showing how such issues are tackled in an organization setting.”
- “While I recognize that storytelling is deeply personal to each of the participants, I think the film would have been more cohesive if each segment was filmed with a similar structure. I really liked how the earlier sections narrated their experiences with transitioning visuals in a way that I think really resonated with a lot of people, and keeping this structure throughout would help keep this tone. The portions that were more like interview clips disrupted the flow a bit and felt less engaging. I also think that the calls to action should be more focused on how participants think funding

systems and policies should be restructured instead of explaining their ideal experience, which would be more accessible for funders in identifying tangible changes.”

- “More thematic book-ended introduction and conclusion to start and end in a way that ties the project together.”
- “Subtitles for the non-written ones?”