



Marin  
Community  
Foundation



## STRATEGIC PLAN

# Community Power Initiative

MCF believes that strong communities benefit when they are home to strong organizations, collaborations and networks that can advance systemic change and grassroots power with the ability to influence policy. MCF's Community Power Initiative honors MCF's history and mission by providing general operating support to a broad array of community-based organizations and collaborations pursuing equity on behalf of every resident in Marin. The funding will continue MCF's proud legacy of responding to the most pressing issues in our community.

Our grantees and partners serve Marin in so many ways. They provide crucial services to those in need. They build social capital and grassroots leadership through their longstanding and holistic commitments to their neighborhoods. They seek to change the systems at the root of inequity. The Community Power Initiative will support these organizations with flexible, unrestricted, and often multi-year general operating support. These grants empower organizations to determine for themselves how our funds can best support their mission with streamlined grant applications and reporting requirements. We trust organizations to make good decisions, as they are the ones closest to the communities they serve and the challenges faced by those communities.

In addition, we believe ensuring organizations are well-funded and flexible will help them to be more adaptable and resilient to whatever challenges come our way. For example, shortly after COVID shut down Marin in March 2020, we saw brave organizations pivot to delivering masks and food, distributing cash aid to those who needed it most, and ensuring children had access to the internet so that they could continue to learn. Flexible funding strengthens our partners' ability to meet the everyday challenges our neighbors face.

The Community Power Initiative will primarily fund organizations that support underserved and underrepresented populations, as these populations are disproportionately harmed by society's failures, face the greatest challenges, and often have the poorest outcomes. We will continue to work County-wide, and we will give special attention to the areas where the concentration of need is greatest. These resilient but often marginalized neighborhoods include the Canal in San Rafael, Marin City, and pockets in West Marin and Novato. These four areas continue to be geographically, socioeconomically, and racially segregated. We nonetheless recognize there are some exceptions and nuances. For example, Indigenous populations and the low-income older adult populations are dispersed around the County and often lack visibility and inclusion.

We will select Community Power Initiative grantees through an open request for proposals available to all organizations serving Marin. To ensure a strong overall ecosystem of nonprofits, there will be separate opportunities for larger and established organizations and those that are smaller and emerging. We are eager to hear from organizations across Marin as to how they would use flexible funding to support Marin communities aligned with the goals described here. More information will be available before the end of 2023.

As a community foundation, we are honored to be able to partner with the Marin nonprofit ecosystem and the Marin residents they serve in this way. We are confident in the power of our community to take much-needed funding and do incredible things with it.