

Theory of Change  
IMPACT Program  
2016

The Greater New Orleans Foundation develops its theory of change for the IMPACT grants program through careful review of data and information from each field of interest, feedback from grantees, and insights from community partners and current concerns. In each case, we consider what would be the most strategic and impactful use of our limited dollars. We welcome your input. We are open to changing our strategy if the community believes another avenue is best.

**Arts and Culture**

**What we fund:**

GNOF supports organizations that help preserve and grow Greater New Orleans' unique, rich cultural heritage. Priority is given to work that aims to:

1. Improve the quality of life and economic opportunities for indigenous culture bearers, artists, and performers.
2. Advocate to preserve existing public support for the arts.

GNOF believes this avenue will have the greatest impact on the indigenous artists and culture bearers who make New Orleans a wonderful place to live. We believe our limited funding can have the strongest impact by supporting organizations that make it easier and more profitable for our region's artists and performers to do their jobs. Although our region's arts and culture sector has experienced growth in recent years, many of the artists and culture bearers whose work drives economic growth for our region live in poverty. GNOF supports organizations that increase an artist's ability to earn a sustainable living from their art or connect artists to services that will build their ability to profit from their work. In addition, the arts and culture sector has suffered severe cuts in state funding since 2005. We believe public support of the arts and culture sector is vital to our community's health. In light of Louisiana's budget crisis, advocacy to prevent further cuts is critical to sustain and grow the sector.

All arts and culture organizations are invited to participate in GNOF's Organizational Effectiveness (OE) initiative. Technical assistance, training sessions, and other organizational capacity building help are available through OE.

**What we don't fund:**

Unfortunately, we are not able to support arts education programs or general operations of mainstream anchor arts organizations through our IMPACT program. We are grateful to the many GNOF donors and private foundations that fund these organizations and initiatives directly. GNOF believes that supporting organizations and programs that focus on helping artists sustain their lives through their work is the best way for us to support our artistic community. Additionally, we believe that supporting organizations and programs that advocate for public support for the arts is critical for the health of the arts and culture sector.

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**Education**

**What we fund:**

GNOF supports organizations that ensure all young people enrolled in public K-12 schools receive a rigorous, high quality education that prepares them for post-secondary education and entering the workforce. GNOF also supports organizations that advocate for adult literacy. Priority will be given to work that aims to:

1. Support the equitable and transparent return of Louisiana Recovery School District (RSD) schools to local control and/or advocate at the local and state levels for equitable policies regarding special education, school discipline, and diverse educational options that meet the needs of underserved students.
2. Increase college matriculation, graduation, or post-secondary training and completion by encouraging students to explore options and supporting them through the enrollment process and beyond.

In light of the mandatory return of RSD schools to the Orleans Parish School Board, GNOF believes that supporting initiatives that take into account the voices of all stakeholders is crucial. Therefore, we will shift our resources to support the equitable and transparent return of RSD schools to local control from work that aims to advance education reform through strong school leadership and the implementation of rigorous teaching and learning. In addition, we support organizations that fill education system service gaps and help our students by advocating for them and supporting their path to post-secondary education. GNOF also supports organizations that advocate for services to increase literacy among adults.

All educational organizations are invited to participate in GNOF's Organizational Effectiveness (OE) initiative. Technical assistance, training sessions, and other organizational capacity building help are available through OE.

**What we don't fund:**

We are not able to provide direct support to K-12 schools through our IMPACT program. While we realize there is a great need for support for support to local schools, GNOF has limited funding for this work. We also are unable to fund early childhood or pre-K programs. GNOF also is unable to fund higher education. We are grateful to the donors and foundations that support higher education in Louisiana.

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**Health**

**What we fund:**

GNOF supports organizations that increase low-income, disabled, and older adult individuals' access to healthcare services.

Priority is given to work that aims to:

1. Help increase Medicaid/LACHIP, Medicare, or Affordable Care Act Marketplace enrollment for low-income, disabled, and older adult individuals in Louisiana from 83 percent to 96 percent, comparable with leading states in the country.
2. Advocate for equal access to quality primary care, behavioral health, and preventive healthcare for all.
3. Use health education and outreach to increase health literacy, health awareness, and individual use of healthcare services in order to impact a measurable decline in health disparities.

GNOF believes that supporting organizations that increase an individual's access to healthcare is the best way to help the most people benefit from health services. We have learned from our grantee partners that a systemic approach to increasing access to care must include enrollment, advocacy, and health promotion in order to reach all people. GNOF has limited dollars to support organizations directly serving healthcare needs. We are grateful to the donors and foundations that support organizations providing direct and immediate healthcare to individuals. However, we believe that we can best serve our community by supporting organizations that increase enrollment in healthcare programs. Further, we support organizations that advocate for equal access to healthcare for all and organizations that use health education to increase an individual's access to healthcare.

All health organizations are invited to participate in GNOF's Organizational Effectiveness (OE) initiative. Technical assistance, training sessions, and other organizational capacity building help are available through OE.

**What we don't fund:**

Unfortunately, we are not able to support general operations for organizations that directly administer healthcare services to individuals. Outside funding exists for direct healthcare provision. GNOF's limited dollars will be used to support the programmatic work that makes it possible for people to access healthcare and health education services.

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**Social Services**

**What we fund:**

GNOF supports organizations that form and promote strategic partnerships to meet the needs of low-income individuals and families and help them move towards self-sufficiency. Priority will be given to work that aims to:

1. Provide high quality and well-coordinated social services related to crisis management and treatment; intake assessment and screening; early intervention; and job skills training, career planning, job retention, and career advancement.
2. Improve communication, coordination, and collaboration between social service organizations so that individuals and families can be provided with comprehensive, wrap-around services through strong referral networks and shared practices.

GNOF believes that the best way to support individuals and families in need is to provide comprehensive, wrap-around services. Individuals and families in crisis face multiple barriers. Research and best practices have demonstrated that comprehensive and holistic services are most effective to move families to self-sufficiency. We believe that supporting organizations that form, promote, or operate through strategic partnerships is the best way that we can bolster the social service infrastructure, avoid fragmented service delivery, and build a strong referral network.

All social service organizations are invited to participate in GNOF's Organizational Effectiveness (OE) initiative. Technical assistance, training sessions, and other organizational capacity building help are available through OE.

**What we don't fund:**

In line with our strategy, IMPACT funding will not support organizations that offer stand-alone services that are not coordinated with other organizations. We are grateful to the donors and foundations that support direct services. However, we have limited resources for that work. Further, stand-alone and uncoordinated services only partially support the complex needs of individuals and families.

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**Youth Development**

**What we fund:**

GNOF supports organizations that ensure youth have access to high-quality programs that extend learning beyond the classroom and build connections to caring adults, education, and employment. Priority is given to work that aims to:

1. Provide youth workers with the education, tools, and professional development opportunities that will help improve their knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the areas of social-emotional learning, trauma-informed care, mentoring, job readiness, academic support, and leadership development.
2. Increase the advocacy capacity of youth serving organizations on issues such as juvenile justice reform, workforce training, appropriate educational options, and transition supports for opportunity youth—individuals between the ages of 16 and 24 who are not connected to education or employment.

GNOF believes that supporting professional development for youth workers is an important lever to advance the youth development field. Our nonprofit partners have expressed that professional development is a significant challenge impacting the quality of their work. We are grateful to the donors and foundations that support organizations providing direct services. GNOF believes that supporting the people who dedicate their professional lives to youth development and advocacy is the most strategic way to support youth in the region with our limited dollars.

All youth development organizations are invited to participate in GNOF's Organizational Effectiveness (OE) initiative. Technical assistance, training sessions, and other organizational capacity building help are available through OE.

**What we don't fund:**

Unfortunately, we are not able to meet the incredible demand for operating support for organizations directly serving youth through our IMPACT program. Currently, nonprofit organizations have limited capacity to hire, train, and retain high quality professional staff members. This directly impacts the quality of services our youth receive. Our strategy, based on feedback from direct service organizations, is to support youth workers and advocates so they may do their jobs better, and, in turn, better serve our youth.