



Reimagining Capacity Building

Iowa Council of Foundations

Thursday, October 27, 2022
10:00 am - 2:30 pm CDT



GEO Speakers



Nichole Hoeflich

She/her/hers

Director of Programs



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She/her/hers

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Iowa Storytellers



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Chief Community Impact Officer
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Effective Practices

Stronger Nonprofits

Thriving Communities



Accessibility & Resources Check-In



Agenda Flow

learning arc

- Joining & Welcome
- Defining capacity building
- Introducing the role of culture, systems & power
- Exploring principles
- Sharing approaches in practice
- Integrating learning
- Closing & check- out

outcomes

- Explore the why and how of centering racial equity in capacity building
- Understand how white dominant culture and patterns of systemic racism show up in traditional capacity building programs
- Deepen your understanding of how racial equity and justice can intersect
- Learn about Midwest funder strategies to adapt capacity building strategies
- Reflect on your role in supporting equitable outcomes in Iowa through your grantmaking



Reimagining Capacity Building:

Navigating Culture, Systems & Power

Resources & Relationships

This publication builds on work from 2016 with a new literature review and 43 field interviews.

Formats:

- Full publication
- Executive Summary
- A Guide for Trustees

Peer learning spaces:

- ICoF convenings and programs
- Learning series
- Communities of practice



Group Learning Agreements

- Prioritize joy & community building
- Cultivate openness
- Listen to hear
- Freedom to speak in first draft
- Assume best intent, attend to impact
- Say the thing, be direct
- Offering constructive feedback as a form of trust
- Compassionate accountability



Pair Share Activity

- **Reflect:**
 - What do you think of when you think of capacity building? Write or draw something to capture it.
- **Prompt:**
 - Turn to a partner to share your reflection
 - Discuss what way does your organization involve capacity building with grantees and community
- **Chart at your table:**
 - One hope and/or one question you hold about today's session



Redefining Capacity Building

“Process of building and strengthening the **systems**, structures, **cultures**, skills, resources and **power** that organizations need to serve their communities”



Historical Legacy of Racism and Colonialism

Pioneers of US philanthropy were known as “robber barons”, white men who accumulated wealth by **extracting labor** and **resources** from Black, Indigenous and immigrant communities.

The persistent gaps in wealth, income and opportunity that **exist today**, divided starkly along racial lines, trace their origins to this history.

Power

- The ability to decide who will access the resources; the capacity to direct or influence the behavior of others, oneself, and/or the course of events
- Example: Foundation BOD hires the CEO. 95% of foundation board chairs are white.

Privilege

- Unearned or earned access to resources only readily available to some people as a result of their advantaged group membership
- Example: Leaders report strong social networks & mentors to helped land executive roles. 90% foundation CEOs are white.

Oppression

- A system that maintains advantage and disadvantage based on social group memberships and operates, intentionally and unintentionally, on individual, institutional and cultural levels
- Example: Black workers earn 76 cents for every dollar white workers in the U.S.

**Racial Equity =
Both an Outcome & a Process**



Culture

A close-up photograph of several interlocking metal gears. The gears are made of a dark, polished metal, likely steel, and show signs of wear and lubrication. The lighting creates strong highlights and shadows, emphasizing the texture and the mechanical nature of the components. The word "Systems" is overlaid in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font, centered on the right side of the image.

Systems

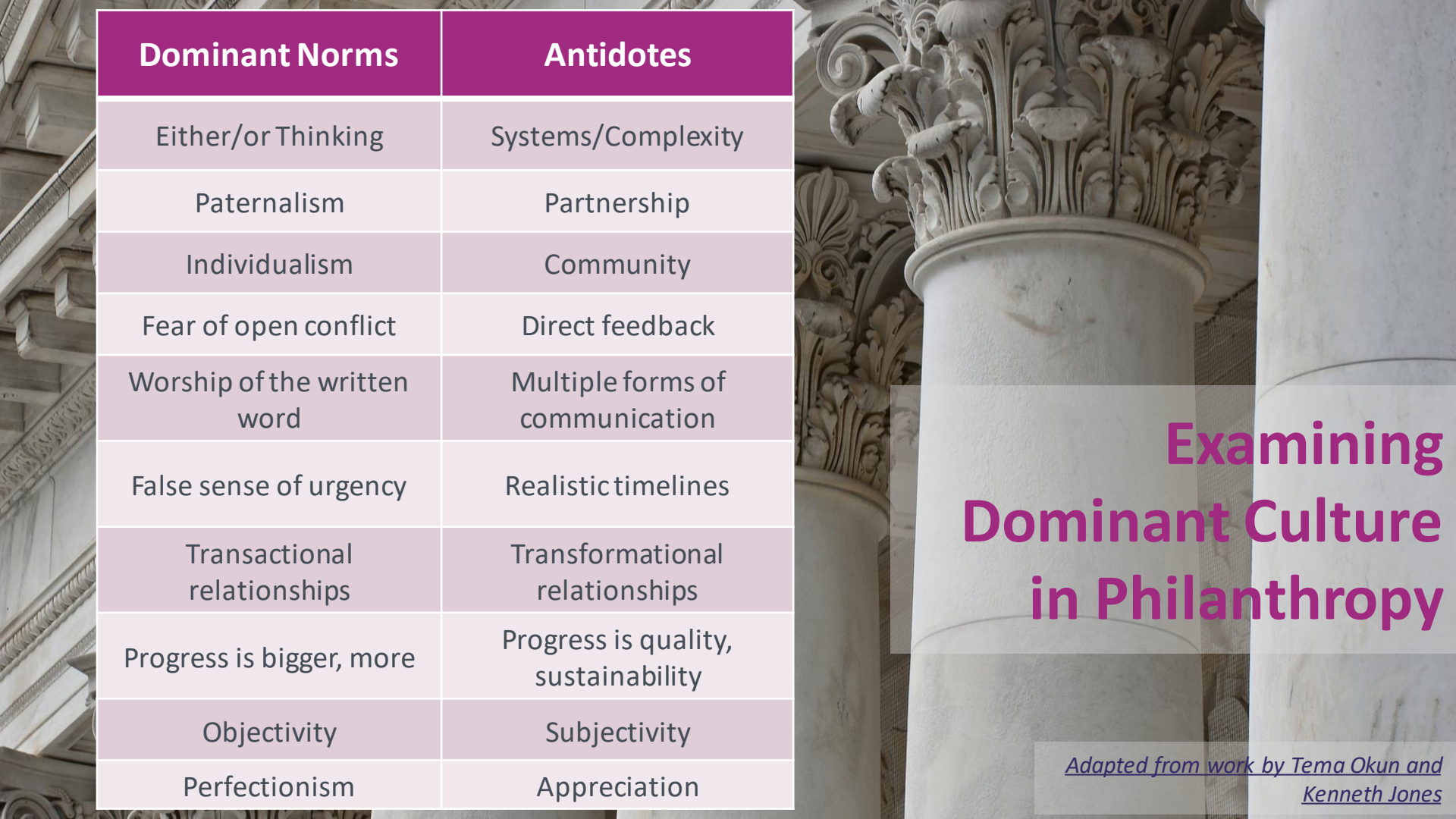


Power

Power

Trust





Dominant Norms	Antidotes
Either/or Thinking	Systems/Complexity
Paternalism	Partnership
Individualism	Community
Fear of open conflict	Direct feedback
Worship of the written word	Multiple forms of communication
False sense of urgency	Realistic timelines
Transactional relationships	Transformational relationships
Progress is bigger, more	Progress is quality, sustainability
Objectivity	Subjectivity
Perfectionism	Appreciation

Examining Dominant Culture in Philanthropy

*Adapted from work by Tema Okun and
Kenneth Jones*



Principles of Equitable Capacity Building

Understand and account for *context*

Provide *continuous* support

Incorporate *collective* approaches

Lead with *mission and values*

Nurture *trust-based relationships*

Integrate a *systems perspective*

Understand and Account for Context

- **Organizational Context**
- **Relevance of Content**
- **Flexibility**





Provide Continuous Support

- **Long-term Commitments**
- **Multiyear General Operating Support**

Incorporate Collective Approaches

- **Shared Leadership**
- **Co-create and Customize Solutions**
- **Peer Learning Cohorts**





Lead with Mission and Values

- Alignment between Values and Practice
- Focus on Impact



Nurture Trust-Based Relationships

- Building Authentic, Not Extractive, Relationships
- Relationships Rooted in Partnership



Integrate a Systems Perspective

- Invest in the Social Sector Ecosystem
- Consider how Structural Policies and Practices Could Contribute to Racial Inequities



Activity

Bright Spots & Stuck Points



Activity & Gallery Walk

Addressing Inequity in Practice

- Access
- Assessment
- Design & Implementation
- Outcomes



Access

- Create a more open and inclusive process for identifying prospective grantees
- Conduct portfolio reviews to benchmark equity indicators
- Simplify application procedures and streamline selection criteria



- Rather than assessing readiness, look for priorities, timing and fit
- Get multiple perspectives on the organization
- Be open to organizational capacities that do not fit into predetermined categories
- Use an assets-based approach

Assessment



Iowa Stories & Reflection



Design & Implementation

- Consider cultural, linguistic and organizational context
- Co-design initiatives with grantee partners
- Support peer learning models
- Integrate issues of race and equity throughout an intervention
- Move toward a transformational and liberatory approach to capacity building




Outcomes

- Analyze race and race equity in evaluation and learning efforts
- Focus on learning, not just outcomes



Iowa Stories & Reflection



**3 minute
individual
reflection**



**10 minute
table
discussion**

Celebrate: Where do you see these practices showing up in your work already?


Examine: Which principles or practices feel difficult to apply in your organization or role? Why?

Explore: Which principles or practices are you most curious and will prioritize?

Commit: What's one step to start?



Group Discussion

A serene landscape featuring a calm body of water, likely a lake or a wide river, which perfectly reflects the surrounding dense forest. The trees are tall and slender, with their green foliage creating a vibrant reflection on the water's surface. The sky is a soft, hazy blue, suggesting a peaceful morning or late afternoon. The overall atmosphere is tranquil and inviting.

Please provide feedback on
today's session and let's
stay connected!

Closing,
Questions, and Survey

Thank you!

Please reach us at:

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