



MINNESOTA COUNCIL  
ON FOUNDATIONS

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **MINNESOTA COUNCIL ON FOUNDATIONS AWARDS \$160,000 TO 12 BIPOC ORGANIZATIONS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WITHIN HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES AS PART OF OUR MAPS MN CAMPAIGN**

**MINNEAPOLIS, MN** – (July 15, 2021) – Today, the Minnesota Council on Foundations (MCF), announces \$160,000 in grants to 12 Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) led organizations. Grants will support community engagement and Communities of Interest (COI) mapping within historically excluded and marginalized communities in the state of Minnesota.

“MCF is engaging in community-focused redistricting as the next step following our deep engagement with the 2020 Census and the Minnesota Census Mobilization Partnership. We remain committed to working with historically undercounted and underrepresented communities to ensure fair representation and to continue to invest in a strong civic engagement infrastructure,” said May Yang, MCF Public Policy Manager.

Redistricting is the process of drawing electoral district boundaries every ten years following the completion of the U.S. Census. Local community mapping is a process that enables communities of interest to identify who they are, where they are geographically located and what their unique or shared interests are. The process allows communities to identify themselves on a map and advocate for why a community would benefit from being represented in the same district. Keeping communities of interest together is an important principle in redistricting. It can be especially helpful to communities that have been traditionally left out of the political process and helps ensure that district lines are drawn to accurately reflect demographic shifts and changes.

Grant recipients will host mapping sessions (hearings, forums, town meetings) within BIPOC communities throughout the summer of 2021, creating community maps and generating community stories and engagement in the redistricting process. These mapping sessions also serve as opportunities for civic engagement, community building and connection, and to surface issues of importance to the community.

Grant recipients include: African Career, Education & Resource, Inc., The ANIKA Foundation, Asian American Organizing Project, CAPI USA, Comunidades Organizado el Poder y La Accion Latina (COPAL), Deaf Equity, Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research, Islamic Civic Society of America, Native American Community Development Institute, Pillsbury United Communities, The Council on American-Islamic Relations and Voices for Racial Justice.

“Redistricting is a crucial part of re-envisioning the future of our communities. Many communities don’t feel represented in public spaces and not all elected officials accurately represent the communities they serve. Mapping enables us to hear stories directly from community members and learn more about their experiences,” said Madeleine Lerner (she/her), Organizing Manager, ACER, Inc.

“We want to make sure the redistricting process does not leave our community behind. We want to make sure the Latinx community is taken into account when districts are redrawn to help get better representation and resources to move from surviving to thriving,” said Marco Hernandez, Public Policy Director, Comunidades Organizado el Poder y La Accion Latina (COPAL).

“The ANIKA Foundation was deeply involved in a grassroots effort to mobilize African Heritage communities statewide around the 2020 Census. Participating in the Community of Interest mapping sessions is an extension of that work. Helping community members understand and navigate these often complex processes empower them to elevate their voices in shaping their communities. Not to mention, the opportunity to connect with community members and learn about the many assets - and shared goals - in our communities, that one may not have otherwise been aware of,” said Anika Robbins, President & CEO, The ANIKA Foundation.

“Community Mapping is important for AAOP with our goal of serving and educating underserved communities about civic engagement. We are excited about teaching Asian youth about drawing lines in their communities to create equal and fair representation. AAOP is excited to continue our community mapping efforts with our youth and young people to create equal and fair representation because we know that this will impact our youth and their future for the next 10 years and beyond,” said Peter Vetsmany, Civic Engagement Organizer, Asian American Organizing Project (AAOP).

“Deaf Equity is engaged within the redistricting process to ensure that the voices of our Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and BIPOC and Queer communities are heard. We hope that by participating in this work we can achieve better resources for our community’s culture and needs. Our culture and language have a rich history in Minnesota. We want to be heard and seen by our legislators as a valid and important part of the communities we live in,” said Migdalia Rogers, Deaf Equity.

To learn more about the impact and work of the Our Maps Campaign and MCF’s commitment to fair representation, visit <https://mcf.org/redistricting-our-maps-mn>.

###

more-

*Redistricting/Our Maps Minnesota Campaign:*

**May Yang**, MCF Public Policy Manager

Email [myang@mcf.org](mailto:myang@mcf.org) or call 612.465.0718

*MCF Public Policy/MN Census Mobilization Partnership:*

**Katina Mortensen**, MCF Director of Public Policy

Email [kmortensen@mcf.org](mailto:kmortensen@mcf.org) or call 612.335.3597

*Media and Press Inquiries:*

**Erin Jordan**, Director of Marketing and Communications

Email [ejordan@mcf.org](mailto:ejordan@mcf.org) or call 612.465.0716

### **About the Our Maps Minnesota Campaign Partnership**

Our Maps MN is a nonpartisan grassroots campaign committed to a community-focused and transparent redistricting process in Minnesota. The campaign is driven by community organizations, grassroots organizations, civic engagement advocates and nonprofits dedicated to putting people first in the redistricting process. <https://mcf.org/redistricting-our-maps-mn>.

### **About the Minnesota Council on Foundations**

MCF exists to collectively advance prosperity and equity in the state of Minnesota. MCF currently connects, mobilizes and strengthens over 150 philanthropic partners within the sector, serving grantmaking organizations for 50 years. Members of MCF include family and independent foundations, community and other public foundations, corporate foundations and giving programs. [www.mcf.org](http://www.mcf.org). #WeAreMCF