

CROSS-RACIAL HEALING AND SOLIDARITY IN A WHITE SUPREMACIST WORLD

Request for Proposal

March 25, 2021



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About Us

The **Nellie Mae Education Foundation** is committed to using our power and privilege as a philanthropic institution to advance racial equity in public education. We are committed to championing efforts to prioritize community goals that challenge racial inequities and advance excellent, student-centered public education for all New England youth. We are proud to have been part of efforts over the last ten years to advance personalized, student-centered approaches to learning across the New England region. We learned that for student-centered practices to flourish, the structural racial inequities present in our education system needed to be addressed. We are focusing our grantmaking strategically on addressing structural racism and white supremacy in our education system, so that all youth have access to an excellent and equitable public education.

Introduction

“We’re going to fight racism not with racism, but we’re going to fight with solidarity.” -Fred Hampton

Since the Nellie Mae Education Foundation released the [Racism is a Virus, Too Rapid Response Fund](#) in March of 2020, over 500,000 people in the United States have died from COVID-19. The virus has disproportionately impacted the Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities. While Asian American racism did not start with COVID-19, the spread of the virus has prompted the rise of anti-Asian racism and xenophobia through the U.S., “taking the forms of vandalism, student bullying, online hate speech, and more recently, violent attacks against elders. This type of ‘othering’ divides communities by dehumanizing groups of people when anxiety is manipulated and misdirected to place blame in the time of crisis” (Smithsonian APA Center). According to [Stop AAPI Hate](#), during the pandemic over 2,500 incidents of Anti-Asian discrimination were reported in a three-month period, and 1 in 7 of these attacks were directed against young people under the age of 20 years old. Across the country, Asian American families are choosing not to send their children back to school for in-person learning, out of fear that their children will be subjected to anti-Asian racism.

Central to the Foundation's focus of advancing racial equity in public education is our commitment to ensuring all young people and families feel safe in schools and communities across New England as school buildings continue to reopen. When young people experience belonging and emotional safety by feeling that their perspectives, needs, and full identities are seen and embraced, they can focus on learning and thrive academically (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Nonprofit organizations and other groups that are anchored within their communities also have important roles in ensuring that AAPI youth and families are safe, supported, and able to exercise their voices and power. This commitment is also guided by the Foundation's values - support community driven change and put youth at the forefront. The Foundation aims to build upon this history of cross-racial solidarity, collective liberation, and community care by offering funding that will amplify existing efforts and provide new opportunities for youth to build cross-racial solidarity through collective learning of each other's histories. We believe the spread of collective learning, support, and solidarity has the power to dismantle white supremacist ideology that pits racial groups against each other. We acknowledge that White people have the responsibility to do this work and carry the burden of white supremacy; however, this RFP centers the need for solidarity between Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).

There is a history of cross-racial solidarity between AAPIs and other communities of color. While past histories of cross-racial solidarity have not always been amplified by the media and in textbooks, they have existed and continue to exist. For example, in 1969, Black people showed up in solidarity for AAPI communities in the United States and abroad by protesting America's occupation of Vietnam and the dehumanization and mistreatment of AAPI peoples during the Vietnam War.

Today, communities of color continue to respond with a sense of urgency for cross-racial solidarity when combating the Anti-Asian violence that has been exacerbated and exposed during the COVID-19 pandemic. In San Francisco's Bay Area, Black and Latinx peoples have been [helping to escort AAPI senior citizens who might not feel safe](#). Their mission is two-fold: to be in solidarity with AAPI communities who have been directly impacted by a wrongful perceived connection to the COVID-19 virus and educate others in their racial groups about how white supremacy wedges them against each other. In New York City, other communities of color have organized, led, and participated in [rallies that unite Black, Latinx and Asian communities against anti-Asian hate](#) and offered mutual aid support to AAPI communities.

Similarly, AAPI communities have a deep-rooted history of being in solidarity with other communities of color – something that is often left unspoken. There is a vast history of AAPI peoples supporting Black communities in the United States including during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. Activists like Yuri Kochiyama, Grace Lee Boggs, Richard Aoki, and Larry Itliong were constant advocates for Black and Brown liberation and worked closely alongside Black and Brown people.

More recently in 2020 after the murders of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd by police officers, AAPI peoples across the country and world remained in solidarity with Black communities due to continued outrage over police brutality and demanded policy change. [ASIANS 4 BLACK LIVES](#) signs, actions, and sentiments continue to be in profound allyship and solidarity with Black people.

"So, transform yourself first... Because you are young and have dreams and want to do something meaningful, that in itself, makes you our future and our hope. Keep expanding your horizon, decolonize your mind, and cross borders." - Yuri Kochiyama

Funding Opportunity

The Foundation will provide urgent support to organizations looking to continue relationships or begin new relationships of cross-racial solidarity. The Foundation seeks to support organizations engaging in activities including, but not limited to:

- Courageous conversations across racial groups
- Affinity spaces
- Healing spaces
- Communications and storytelling
- Planning for virtual and/or in-person socially distanced rallies
- Town Halls
- Content creation and dissemination—to support youth/adult learning and healing
- Development of a proposal for transformative justice

Criteria and Eligibility

- Grant request must respond to a time-sensitive, unanticipated event or urgent challenge or need in communities. This grant is not intended to support ongoing programs and projects.
- For this rapid response opportunity, we are seeking a joint application from two youth-serving non-profit community-based organizations, one of which must be directly serving AAPI youth.
- The Foundation is especially interested in projects that promote cross-racial solidarity of AAPI youth and other Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) youth during these challenging times.
- Request must include stipends for youth participants.
- Nonprofits and Community-Based Organizations working in and with communities of color serving youth on transforming barriers to racial equity in public education.
- Schools, districts, and institutions of higher education are not eligible to apply for this RFP.
- The project takes place within New England (MA, RI, NH, VT, ME, or CT).
- The Foundation supports and funds education organizations that are classified as public charities. Organizations must have 501(c)(3) and 509(a)(1) or 509(a)(2) tax status and conduct education activities or be fiscally sponsored by an education organization with 501(c)(3) tax status and 509(a)(1) or 509(a)(2). The Foundation cannot provide grants to 501(c)(3) organizations with a 509(a)(3) status.
- Request amount should not exceed \$20,000.
- The project must be completed within six months of receiving a rapid response grant.

- Organizations may apply for a rapid response grant at any time but can only receive one rapid response grant within a 12-month period. Organizations that received either an Educators for Black Lives or Prioritizing Mental Wellness Amidst Virtual Learning Rapid Response grant are not eligible.

Funding Priorities

Organizations with budgets under \$500,000 who have previously and historically been unable to access and benefit from philanthropic dollars are **strongly** encouraged to apply, although we also welcome proposals from organizations with budgets that exceed \$500,000.

Rapid response funding will not support the following requests:

- Requests from individuals or religious groups
- Capital campaigns
- Scholarships or fellowship programs
- Debt reduction or cash reserves
- Building construction or renovation
- Long-term operating or programmatic support

Rapid Response Fund Application

One organization should act as the lead and submit the joint proposal following the directions below. Please respond to the questions below in the online portal and submit the budget as an attachment.

Application Questions:

- Briefly describe the relationship between the organizations applying for the grant opportunity. Is this a new or existing relationship?
- Which racial and ethnic groups does each organization primarily serve?
- How have your organizations and youth been impacted by and/or addressed Anti-Asian violence during the pandemic?
- Describe the project. What would funding be used for?

Instructions to the Portal

Applications will be accepted using our [online application portal](#). Sign up for an account if you are a new user. Once you are logged in, navigate to the “Grants Opportunities” tab and select the “Rapid Response Fund-Cross-Racial Healing and Solidarity” opportunity to start your application.

Funding Timeline

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. The deadline for proposals is May 6, 2021 at 5:00 EST or until the limited pool of resources is exhausted. Please check [our website](#) to make sure funds are still available. The Foundation aims to review proposals, and if selected, disburse funds within three weeks of receiving the proposal.

If you need assistance or have questions about your eligibility, please contact Ellen Wang at ewang@nmefoundation.org or Alexis Harewood at aharewood@nmefoundation.org. If you need technical assistance with the application portal, please contact Stephanie Cheney at scheney@nmefoundation.org.