Field Foundation

Community Investments | Frequently Asked Questions

Q1: What is the Community Investments portfolio?

The Community Investments portfolio is the Field Foundation's newest grantmaking portfolio. It is an evolution of our social justice work and reflects our deepened commitment to resident-led organizations serving Chicago's South and West Sides. Through this portfolio, we will invest strategically in organizations working to strengthen community power and drive lasting change at the neighborhood level.

Q2: Why is the Field Foundation launching the Community Investments portfolio now?

Over the past year, we've been designing this portfolio as a next step in our social justice work – moving toward a more intentional, strategic, and sustained approach to investing in what makes communities thrive.

Q3: Does this mean the Field Foundation is no longer funding social justice work?

Not at all. Community Investments is an evolution of our social justice work, not a departure from it. We remain committed to organizing, civic advocacy, and resident-led change on the South and West Sides. During a four-year pilot of this portfolio, our funding will support a small number of partners with the aim of building deeper, sustained relationships.

Q4: What is the Field Foundation's inaugural Community Investments grant?

As we launch our Community Investments portfolio, we are making an inaugural $1 million grant – the largest in Field Foundation history – to the Resident Association of Greater Englewood (R.A.G.E.). This grant will help advance R.A.G.E.'s mission to restore Englewood by mobilizing residents and creating community-led solutions.

Q5: Who is R.A.G.E.?

R.A.G.E. is a resident-led neighborhood association founded in 2010 by thirteen Englewood neighbors. For 15 years, R.A.G.E. has organized across economic justice, homeownership, youth development, and community space development, with residents leading at every level – proving that when residents lead, communities thrive.

Q6: What kind of work is R.A.G.E. doing?

- **Buy the Block.** R.A.G.E established this online program to convert long-term residents into first-time homeowners. The program is supporting its 16th cohort of residents and currently has 600 potential buyers.

- **The Re-Up at 59 & Racine.** R.A.G.E. bought a long-vacant building, formerly Leon's BBQ, from the Chicago Land Bank for $35,000. It secured a $2.5 million grant from the city's Neighborhood Opportunity Fund to help redevelop the site to host retail spaces, local restaurants and a community gathering place. R.A.G.E. will also move its headquarters to "The Re-Up."

- **The Regenerator**. R.A.G.E. is collaborating with Teamwork Englewood, Inner City Muslim Action Network (IMAN), and E.G. Woode on a $33 million project to transform the vacant Woods Elementary School into environmentally sustainable and affordable housing with a job training facility for formerly incarcerated people.

Q7: How can organizations apply for Community Investments funding?

We do not have an open call for Community Investments grant applications. We are using an invitation-based and relationship-driven process. During the four-year pilot of this portfolio, our funding will support a small number of partners – reflecting our commitment to building deeper, sustained relationships.

Q8: Where is the Community Investments work focused?

Our Community Investments portfolio is focused on Chicago's South and West Sides, where the Field Foundation has prioritized its grantmaking for the past 10 years – guided by an ongoing analysis of quality-of-life factors indicating areas of greatest need. Resident-led organizations are doing extraordinary work to drive transformational change in South and West Side neighborhoods.

Q9: Will the Field Foundation expand its investment beyond R.A.G.E. and Englewood?

Our goal is to expand our Community Investments portfolio to more communities in the future – R.A.G.E. is just the beginning of this story.

Q10: How is this different from a typical grant?

Through Community Investments, we're moving from being a funder to being a strategic partner – bringing dollars, knowledge, relationships, and political capital to the table, not just financial support. It's a conscious departure from transactional grantmaking: we're not simply funding programs; we're investing in communities to create lasting power and transformational change.