

PACE Strategic Plan

Through 2025



PACE's strategic direction continues our strong tradition of cultivating fellowship and learning, and deepens it by facilitating collaborations that make our learning an active, participatory, and actionable process—both for our members and for the field of philanthropy.

VISION - *How we hope the world looks as a result of our work*

Americans are informed and empowered to contribute to the health and vibrancy of the country's democracy and civic life.

MISSION - *What we do to realize that vision*

PACE is a philanthropic laboratory for funders seeking to maximize their individual and collective impact on democracy and civic life in America. The PACE community achieves this through learning, experimenting, collaborating, and modeling vibrant civic space.

PRINCIPLES - *The beliefs and values that animate how we work towards our mission*

PACE cares about the results of our work, and we place equal priority on the process and spirit we employ to achieve them. To that end, the following is our statement of core principles:

The Power of the Collective: The PACE community believes we can do more together than individual members can do alone.

Experimentation: The PACE community has an ethos of creativity, curiosity, and iteration; as a result, it actively experiments together— seeking to counter philanthropy's tendency to get mired in habits and antiquated models of what works— and to embrace philanthropy's unique ability to take risks.

Learning Outside of the Bubble: We seek to transcend our “customary audiences” and to learn from perspectives that are different from ours, as staying within one's bubble significantly hinders learning, experimentation, and ultimately, the power of the community to advance civic philanthropy.

Responsible Philanthropy: We know philanthropy can easily get wrapped up in its own power and reinforce the systemic inequities it is trying to address. PACE actively recognizes and strives to address the power imbalances that exist in philanthropy, particularly through our relationships with non-funding institutions.

Voice and Representation: We believe a diversity of expertise, perspectives, and lived experiences is critical to enriching conversations, sparking innovation, and addressing the most critical challenges in civic engagement and democracy.

We believe these are important tenets of what it means to embrace a “laboratory” orientation and posture of continuous learning; they are also components that advance a culture and commitment to [racial equity](#).

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES - *Where we aim to make an impact*

To increase and deepen **relationships** within and beyond the traditional democracy and civic philanthropy community

To enhance and evolve philanthropic **practice**, influenced by research, learning and experiments

To bolster **knowledge** of landscape, grantmaking practices, and experiments in civic philanthropy

To increase **collaborations** within and beyond the PACE network aimed at creatively addressing gaps in civic philanthropy

VEHICLES - *How we achieve that impact*



In Community: It's not just what we learn, but who we learn it with. PACE actively cultivates relationships among diverse funders through in-person and virtual forums, such as member meetings, briefings, and community curation. PACE intentionally supports the implementation of learnings, as well as curates space to explore and plan for the future of American democracy.



By Learning Out Loud: From writing about take-aways and recommendations resulting from our learning to highlighting what individual members are learning through their grantmaking and programming, PACE actively, consistently, and iteratively talks about what we are learning in a public fashion. These efforts aim to offer insights and provocations for anyone who has an interest in civic engagement and democracy in the United States.



Through Learning Labs: In specialized topic areas (such as civic learning), PACE provides deep support via Learning Labs, which provide a dedicated space for community development and learning on a specific or nuanced issue, which may lead to a collective experiment.



Collective Experiments: PACE seeds and coordinates initiatives that pool funds or galvanize other collective efforts, and publicly shares learnings from these experiments. These Collective Experiments are initiatives members commit to in order to advance the practice and/or impact of civic philanthropy.

AUDIENCE - *Where we focus our energy in order to have that impact*

Democracy and Civic Engagement Funders: PACE engages funders in community, learning, and experimentation in a broad range of topics related to supporting democracy and strengthening civic life. This includes funders who have an articulated mission/strategy to support civic life, as well as those who may be issue-funders or have other missions but understand that a healthy and functioning democracy is necessary to ensure success. This audience primarily includes our membership network, but we also engage other funders with interest in the topics.

The “Civic Field”: While PACE primarily focuses on philanthropy, it understands that its work may also be useful for the broader civic field, including funders that are not currently active in our membership network, as well as nonprofits, journalists, researchers, and other leaders. Where appropriate, PACE orients its work to seed conversations, learning, and action among anyone who has an interest in civic engagement and democracy in the United States.

For questions about this new strategic direction and to become involved with PACE, email our Executive Director, Kristen Cambell at Kristen@PACEfunders.org.