

## **FORM Circle: Families Organizing to Resource Black Liberation Movements**

### *Solidarity Circle Description*

#### **Description:**

The FORM Collective (Families Organizing to Resource Movements) was a volunteer-led project that arose in response to the 2020 uprisings. Over the last three years, FORM worked to organize wealthy families and family foundations to move resources to the Movement for Black Lives (M4BL). FORM recently moved under the organizational umbrella of the Solidaire Network, teaming up with Solidaire staff to create The Families Organizing Resources for Movements for Black Liberation Circle. This circle will build off the history/track record of FORM in organizing donors to make bold and long-term commitments to resourcing Black liberation movements. It will be a space for past FORM-members to get re-grounded in their commitments to fund Black-led organizing AND a space for new members interested in building a deeper community with a group of donor organizers who are serious about resourcing Black liberation.

This circle will speak to some of the unique challenges and dynamics that come alongside family organizing; participants will have the space to process those dynamics and build skills to address those challenges, both within their own families and as peer leaders who can organize and help others in their network to do the same. This circle will support participants' long-term organizing goals while simultaneously mobilizing wealthy families and foundations for long-term commitments to [M4BL](#) and the [Black Pooled Liberation Fund](#).

We will assemble a group of 6-10 past/present FORM members & 6-10 new folks interested in joining the circle. Our hope is that this will be a multi-generational space, and participants are welcome to sign-up with a family member.

#### **Who is this for? People who:**

- Are existing FORM-members AND/OR Solidaire members wanting to get re-grounded in their organizing to fund Black-led organizing
- Are of different organizing skills levels, but here and ready to do some organizing for black liberation
- Are concerned about the retrenchment in funding going towards Black liberation after the surge that happened in 2021
- Already supporting Black liberation and want to get their families and/or family foundations involved
- Are interested in building deeper community with a group of donor organizers who are serious about resourcing Black liberation
- Are seeking allies to support you organizing your family when you have not been able to
- Want to unpack the complications and challenges of family organizing and decision making

## **What is the format?**

This circle will meet monthly, and participants will be paired with one other member for the duration of the series to meet between sessions for peer support. We will start off by grounding ourselves in the history and current context of Black liberation movements, and philanthropy's relationship to those movements. After that, sessions will address the benefits and challenges of organizing families to resource Black liberation using a variety of methods, including: sharing success stories, storytelling, visioning your wildest family organizing dreams, mapping your family structure, roleplaying tough conversations, and building out somatic exercises for support during challenging moments.

## **Overview of Possible Sessions:**

1. *Introductions - Why us? Why Now?*
2. *Understanding the Moment & Mandate - Philanthropic Retrenchment & Why It's Crucial to Deepen Fundraising for Black Liberation Movements*
3. *Understanding the Ecosystem of Black Liberation Movements & Backlash & Repression of Black Liberation Movements - w/ reps from M4BL and Solidaire's Black Liberation Pooled Fund*
4. *Skillshare - Developing An Organizing & Fundraising Plan to Resource Black Led Movements*
5. *Family Power Mapping & Role-Playing Difficult Conversations*
  - a. *Peer Coaching and Support - FORM Style*
6. *Beyond the Monolith - Engaging with Nuances of Class Identity*

## **Timeline:**

Sessions will start mid to late January, and be 2-hour sessions once a month for 6 months.

Sessions will tentatively be scheduled for Tuesdays, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. EST (3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. PT) on the following dates.

- Session 1: Tuesday, January 23rd.
- Session 2: Tuesday, February 20th.
- Session 3: Tuesday, March 19th.
- Session 4: Tuesday, April 16th.
- Session 5: Tuesday, May 21st.
- Session 6: Tuesday, June 18th.

*Participants are expected to sign up for the full slate of sessions (though it's okay if you have to miss 1 session), as we're using a cohort model and want to build consistency with each other.*

## Facilitator Bio's:

### Nigel Charles

Nigel (he/him) is a donor organizer on the Solidaire team, supporting members as a donor organizer. Nigel brings to this work a cross-class analysis of philanthropy, grantmaking, and community organizing developed through 10 years of community engagement in Philadelphia. Before coming to Solidaire he was the Director of Donor Organizing for Bread & Roses Community Fund, a funder of grassroots organizing for racial, social, and economic justice in the Philadelphia region. In this role he supported multiracial, cross-class, and intergenerational groups of community members through the Giving Project program, a process of community building, political education, grassroots fundraising, and participatory grantmaking.



Nigel is a first-generation afro-caribbean with a deep love for Philadelphia, his native city. Held and motivated by a familial legacy of resistance and community he is drawn to organizing spaces that honor and celebrate black lives. You can often find him photographing marches, protests, and actions by movement organizations as a way of capturing and preserving our collective story of resistance.

### Meg O'Hara

Meg found her way to donor organizing as she sought to better understand ways to leverage her class privilege for social change while navigating challenging cross-class dynamics within her family. Over time, that journey turned into a deeper understanding of philanthropy and its relationship to justice-oriented movement spaces, and a passion for changing that relationship, particularly when it came to funding Black liberation movements. She brings to this circle an understanding of how family organizing can be isolating and hard, and re-open old wounds, but how a community of values-aligned people can turn that difficulty into action, change and healing.



Meg's professional background is in education, and in her spare time, Meg has been a part of FORM's Leadership Team, meeting monthly with members and providing peer support for those working to organize their families to support M4BL & other Black liberation movement spaces. When not working or organizing, you can find her reading a fantasy or science fiction book that imagines a better and different future for all of us.

## **Grant Sunderland**

Grant (he/him) is a movement funder, donor organizer, and musician born and raised in Kansas City. His introduction to radical politics came from his involvement in the local punk scene at age 14. Through DIY shows in basements and warehouses, Grant began building friendships with activists from different backgrounds and reading zines on capitalism and policing. Upon moving to Chicago to attend art school, Grant's passion for Black liberation deepened, fueled by the visionary Black culture he encountered through Chicago house music.



Despite his long interest in movements, it wasn't until much later that he got involved and began grappling with his relationship to them as a white inheritor of wealth. In 2018, he joined his family's foundation, driven by a commitment to transformative change. Recognizing a need for inclusivity and community input, Grant worked to redirect funds and decision-making to communities facing systemic racism and oppression. He currently lives in Los Angeles where enjoys hiking, producing music, and spending time with his wife, Katie.