
Participatory Grantmaking:

A Tool for Deeper Relationships & Impact in Communities of Practice



Community
Wealth Partners

MAY 2024

The people closest to the issues are closest to the solutions. We at Community Wealth Partners work with nonprofits and foundations to shift power and resources to those who have historically not had a seat at the table. We do this through a variety of approaches.

Participatory grantmaking is one way to shift decision-making power from funders to the communities they serve. In addition to shifting power, participatory grantmaking is a process and tool that can deepen impact, redirect resources, foster new ways of working, make space for experimentation, and bring communities – and communities of practice – together.

In late 2019, our team at Community Wealth Partners was brought on through Share Our Strength to design and facilitate the Healthy Food Community of Practice. Over time, community of practice members deepened their understanding that the closer someone is to an issue, the better positioned they are to decide on and create solutions. Grounded in this belief, the community of practice decided to integrate a participatory grantmaking process into its work. After nearly five years, the community of practice is coming to a close and reflecting on its experience with participatory grantmaking.

Participatory grantmaking can look different from one context to the next, as covered in depth in Candid's guide by Cynthia M. Gibson, [Deciding Together: Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking](#). To add to the growing number of resources on the topic, this article lifts up one example of how a community of practice experimented with participatory grantmaking and what it learned through the process.

Snapshot: Outcomes

We saw clear signs that this work contributed to meaningful change. Read more about early outcomes on page 14.

- **Community-led solutions received resources.** The impact will continue for years.
- **National organizations and community-based organizations built relationships and trust** by partnering together on the grant projects.
- **Nonprofits built capacity to work in new ways.** They experimented and learned new ways of working collaboratively, partnering with communities, and integrating participatory processes into their work.
- **The community of practice strengthened.** It helped create a cohesive group working together toward common goals.

Snapshot: Lessons Learned

We learned a lot about what worked well and what could have been better. Read more about our lessons learned on pages 15-16.

- **Be clear about your intentions.** Before beginning, take time to reflect with your team on why you want to lead a participatory grantmaking process.
- **Engage members in designing and/or approving the process.** It is critical that participants shape and support the process.
- **Clarify your decision-making process upfront.** Get clear on the criteria people will use to make decisions, how people will vote, and what will happen when voting results are unclear.
- **Build in space for real-time learning.** Create learning opportunities between grantees and the broader community of practice.
- **Lean into a trust-based approach.** Minimize the application and reporting requirements.



How & Why the Participatory Grantmaking Began

From the beginning, the Healthy Food Community of Practice was driven by what grantees said they wanted: In response to a desire from grantees to break down silos between their organizations, the Walmart Foundation funded the creation of a community of practice for nonprofits in the food space and brought on facilitation support by Share Our Strength through us – its subsidiary, Community Wealth Partners. The community of practice grew to a group of more than 50 national and regional organizations that gathered with the goal to connect, learn, share resources, and take collective actions in support of local communities as they reimagine and rebuild their food systems to thrive.

When the community of practice launched in early 2020, it had budgeted \$150,000 for an in-person convening (including travel stipends for participants). Then the pandemic spread across the U.S., and we decided not to hold any in-person convenings for the first two years. Instead, we wanted to reallocate the funds to support the community of practice’s goals of deepening relationships, learning, and taking collective action.

Our team had the idea to regrant the funds to efforts that furthered the community of practice’s goals. “We had hoped this would incentivize organizations to come together and work on a project together – moving from relationship building to collaboration,” said Amy Farley, senior director at Community Wealth Partners, who co-facilitated the group in the early days.

The Process

Our team designed the “first draft” of the participatory grantmaking process and brought it to the community of practice’s advisory council for feedback. The advisory council was a group made up of seven to ten rotating community of practice members who applied for the position and served a six-month to a year-long term. With their feedback and approval, we launched the process in May of 2021. Over the course of the community of practice, we led four rounds of participatory grantmaking, making improvements to the process each time.

Criteria for Choosing

A key first step was creating a set of criteria or a decision-making rubric. This would help ground members in their shared purpose and goals in order to make funding decisions that served the collective, rather than each individual organization.

Projects Funded through the Participatory Grantmaking

Plant Chicago and Common Threads collaborated to expand access to locally and sustainably produced food on the southwest side of Chicago by sourcing ingredients, providing market opportunities for local food producers, and conducting outreach and engagement to the local community as well as educational programming.

Those shared goals had been clearly defined: deepen relationships, learn, and take collective action in support of local communities as they reimagine and rebuild their food systems to thrive. In addition, we heard relevant pain points and desires from members:

- Members had great ideas, but they struggled to make time, get buy-in from their organization's leaders, or get funding to implement those ideas. If they secured funding for their ideas through the community of practice, it would go a long way in getting buy-in from their leaders and time in their workday to implement the ideas.
- The earliest iteration of the community of practice was made up mostly of large nonprofits that were a level removed from the communities they aimed to serve. (Later iterations included more community leaders and community-based organizations.) Members wanted to shift more power and resources to communities facing systemic barriers to healthy food (i.e., the people they serve), yet many didn't have deep relationships with community members nor experience working as partners with those communities. If the funding required – and provided sufficient guidance and support to – grantees to partner with community stakeholders, it could 1) help members pilot new ways of working with community partners, and 2) redirect resources directly to community-based organizations.

The participatory grantmaking process would not only be about *what* people did with the money, but *how* they did it. Our team at Community Wealth Partners and the advisory council settled on the following criteria. Each grant must:

- Allocate at least 50% of the funding to the communities closest to the issues the project addresses. This could be through partnering and splitting funds with a community-based organization; compensating community members for participating in interviews, focus groups, or as thought partners; compensating people who informed their thinking; or compensating groups doing important work related to their project.
- Concentrate power in communities facing systemic barriers to healthy food access and consumption.
- Accelerate the community of practice's goal.
- Foster deep and inclusive ways of partnering and collaborating.

The following template is the criteria grant applicants used to apply for funding. Community of practice members also used this template to review and rate proposals.

Requirement: At least 50% of funding goes to the communities most directly impacted (e.g., communities that have faced systemic barriers to healthy food access and consumption including Black, Indigenous, Latinx/e, elderly, and rural communities)				
Criterion	1 (Least Weighted)	2	3	4 (Most Weighted)
Concentrates power in communities facing systemic barriers to healthy food access and consumption	Consults the communities most directly impacted (e.g., interviews, surveys, focus groups to get input on ideas)	Involves the communities most directly impacted (e.g., space for community assets to drive the work)	Shifts power to communities most directly impacted (e.g, communities are making decisions about the work)	Work is owned and driven by the communities most directly impacted (e.g, the work was started and is driven by the community)
Concentrates funding in communities facing systemic barriers to healthy food access and consumption	50-60% of funding is directed toward communities most directly impacted	61-75% of funding is directed toward communities most directly impacted	76-99% of funding is directed toward communities most directly impacted	100% of funding is directed toward communities most directly impacted
Accelerates the community of practice's goal (see below) Goal: BIPOC communities have equitable access and consume nutritious food — doing this will also address barriers faced by other marginalized communities	Anticipated outputs & outcomes are important, but do not help make progress towards the community of practice's goal	Anticipated outputs & outcomes help the community of practice make marginal progress towards its goal	Anticipated outputs & outcomes help the community of practice make some progress towards its goal	Anticipated outputs & outcomes will help make significant progress towards achieving the goal
Fosters deep and inclusive ways of partnering and collaborating	Work will be implemented by a single organization in a siloed way	Implementing the work requires some knowledge exchange among organizations	Implementing the work requires collaboration and coordination among organizations	Work requires new ways of sharing power and resources among partner organizations

Applying for Funding

Applications were only accepted from members of the community of practice, though members were required to partner with others, like a community-based organization or a peer member of the community of practice, to submit a proposal. It was important that our team ensured the application process was minimally burdensome (i.e., straightforward and with no more requirements than were needed to make informed decisions). This aligns with efforts across the field – including from [Center for Effective Philanthropy](#), [PEAK](#), and the [Trust-Based Philanthropy Project](#) – calling on funders to only ask for information they'll use and minimize the process so nonprofits can instead focus their time on community impact.

Applicants were asked to submit a two to three-page typed document with responses to questions about who would be involved, how much funding they were requesting, what outcomes they sought, and what the funding would go toward. A couple of times, we also hosted office hours to answer questions and help applicants prepare for the process.

“It was the easiest response to a grant process that I’ve ever seen,” said Randy Feliciano, a community of practice member who applied for and received a grant twice while at the National Council on Aging.

Applications were uploaded to a Google Drive folder and made available to all community of practice members. Members were then invited to submit questions about each proposal in advance of the vote, in time for applicants to provide a response before the voting process.

Decision Making

The community of practice gathered virtually a few times a year. This was when the participatory grantmaking process came to life. During one of these convenings each year, the group would learn more about each proposal and vote. Each organization had one vote, regardless of how many staff representatives were members of the community of practice.

Each applicant was invited to speak for five minutes about their proposal at the convening. This allowed community of practice members to hear directly from those who would be doing the work, including directly impacted community members who are rarely in conversation with the people deciding whether they'll receive funding. It also gave participants an opportunity to hear about each proposal, since not everyone read the proposals in advance.

Projects Funded through the Participatory Grantmaking

Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition, in partnership with Más Fresco initiative, supported the Spanish translation and adaptation of validated food insecurity needs assessment tools.

“Applying for grants can be static, sending a proposal into the ether and hoping someone reads it and likes it,” said Kassie Hinrichsen, a community of practice member who received a grant through Common Threads. “It was cool to receive feedback from the community of practice, to have a name and a face to speak to.”

At the same time, this approach gave a greater advantage to compelling speakers and could be intimidating, particularly for community partners who joined the call without knowing others in the community of practice.

Then participants were sent to Zoom breakout rooms to discuss proposals. In the first year, they were grouped with other members of their organization in order to align on a decision and submit a vote. In later years, participants were instead sent to one of four randomized breakout rooms facilitated by a Community Wealth Partners staff member. Each breakout group discussed how they would make a decision, rather than what they would vote for. They were prompted with questions like, “What is important to you as you think about the impact we want to have from these grants? What will you be looking for as you vet proposals? What elements of collaboration and community engagement feel important to you?” This helped re-ground the group in its shared values and goals before they made a decision. Because the applicants were community of practice members, applicants were asked not to advocate on behalf of their grant during breakout group discussions. Then, organizations were given 24 hours to submit a vote – a timeline that some participants suggested be extended to a week.

To vote, organizations filled out a two-question survey. The questions were:

- You have [insert amount of funding] and [insert number of proposals received]. State whether you will fund or not fund a proposal. [List each proposal next to the “yes/no” checkboxes. Choices should not exceed the total amount of funding available.]
- There’s unlimited funds! Please rank your proposals based on priority. [List each proposal in ranking format.]

Our team proactively communicated that if the voting results were split or unclear, the advisory council would make the final decision. This wasn’t needed the first two years; the first year there was a tie-breaker vote with the full community of practice, but generally, the voting data was straightforward.

Projects Funded through the Participatory Grantmaking

National Council on Aging, Benefits Enrollment Center, and Rio Arriba County Department of Health and Human Services reintroduced Indigenous foods into the diets of Tribal elders in Santa Clara Pueblo, NM, and connected them with other sources of food assistance. National Council on Aging also partnered with the Native American Disability Law Center Benefits Enrollment Center to later expand the effort to the Kykotsmovi Village of the Hopi Nation.

Then, in 2023, the voting results were complicated. We had received nine proposals, which was more than in previous years. After voting took place, the applicant with the most votes withdrew their proposal for unrelated personal reasons. We met with the advisory council, and the group analyzed the data alongside a suggestion for how they might move forward. The group agreed to use a consent-based decision-making framework, inspired by [one developed by Circle Forward](#). This approach didn't require full consensus on the decision; instead, it required that no one have any significant objections to the decision. This allowed for a more nuanced decision-making process that keeps the work moving forward. After two meetings, the group made a decision. We announced the grantees and shared transparently how the decision was made with the full community of practice.

As our team reflected on the voting process, we discussed how helpful it would have been to develop a more clear decision-making structure and back-up plans early on. "If I could go back, I would have done a lot more research upfront about how others have done it and put more thought into the voting process," said Amy Farley.

For many community of practice members, this was the first time they had seen or been part of a participatory grantmaking process. It changed the power dynamic to have peers make the decision, rather than a funder. "There wasn't someone from an ivory tower voting on it," said Randy Feliciano. "It was a group of peers, which allowed us to showcase what we were thinking before voting, so our peers could say, 'oh yeah that's interesting' and give feedback. It also opened the door for 'subjects' [or the people intended to benefit from the work] like [my community partner] Lyle to come in and be part of the grant process. It brought in a community voice. I wish more grantors did that kind of thing."

"There wasn't someone from an ivory tower voting on it. It was a group of peers, which allowed us to showcase what we were thinking before voting, so our peers could say, 'Oh yeah that's interesting' and give feedback. It also opened the door for 'subjects' [or the people intended to benefit from the work] like [my community partner] Lyle to come in and be part of the grant process. It brought in a community voice. I wish more grantors did that kind of thing."

- Randy Feliciano, formerly with National Council on Aging

Projects Funded through the Participatory Grantmaking

Breath of My Heart Birthplace and the NM Food Depot partnered with local farmers and growers to increase food access with low-income families of color and encourage Indigenous foods as a vital part of postpartum wellness to Indigenous clients and families in need of extra support.

Ongoing Support & Learning

Our team regularly sought feedback on the process itself. After each voting process, our team gathered verbal feedback during the convening, written feedback from a form distributed across the community of practice, and informal feedback when we met with members. This led to several changes, including an extension of the grant from six months (which was a requirement created in the first year because of the need to spend funds by a certain date) to 10 months.

As for learning from the grants, because of our commitment to limiting the burden of typical grantmaking processes, grantees were not required to go through an extensive reporting process. All that was asked was that they share their work on a 30-minute call with one of our team members near the end of their grant cycle and a high-level financial summary. Many grantees shared that they appreciated talking to a “real human” as opposed to spending hours articulating the impact of their work in a written report that went into a black hole. Yet one of the consequences was that this limited the interactions between grantees and the broader community of practice.

The group did make a few attempts to create a stronger through-line between grantees and the community of practice more broadly. For example, grantees were invited to share about their work at a few virtual convenings. Also, the community of practice organized an in-person convening at the Santa Ana Pueblo in New Mexico – the site of one of the grantees, where participants could see firsthand the impact of a grant.

Case Study: A Relationship-Driven Approach to Building Food Sovereignty in Santa Clara Pueblo



Photo by Omar Lopez on Unsplash

This story is rooted in relationships. “When I met Lyle, I thought, ‘He looks like a best friend I would have had in high school,’” said Randy Feliciano, who was an associate director at the National Center on Aging at the time. “We just hit it off immediately.” Randy and Lyle Lomayma (who was a program lead and tribal liaison at the Rio Arriba Benefits Enrollment Center in northern New Mexico) met through another dear friend and colleague, Clarissa Duran.

For a few years, the two deepened their friendship. Then, when Randy joined the Healthy Food Community of Practice and learned of the grant, he approached Lyle with an idea.

Lyle, who is an enrolled member of the Santa Clara Pueblo as well as the Hopi Nation, had expanded Randy’s understanding of the need for food sovereignty for the native Tewa peoples of the Santa Clara Pueblo. The community had been disconnected from traditional ways of eating as a result of systemic barriers that led to the high cost of healthy, traditional ingredients. A grant could go a long way in fostering the community’s capacity to cultivate and consume their traditional foods. Lyle and Randy wanted this to benefit the whole community but especially the community elders.

Together, they designed a \$100,000 grant proposal with several elements:

- **Provide locally sourced, non-GMO, organic, and culturally relevant foods.** Primarily, this meant purchasing a tractor, manual farming equipment, and seeds; hiring a farm worker; recruiting and training volunteers from the community; and providing tractor service to one of the pueblo’s farms as well as for individuals who wanted crops in their backyard. The Santa Clara Department of Agriculture also used the resources to grow produce in a community garden and greenhouse. When the crops were harvested, they would be delivered to elders’ homes.

- **Provide access to key federal and state benefits to improve health and financial wellness.**

When the team delivered food, they used that opportunity to talk with elders, screen them for government benefits, and enroll them in benefits.

The community of practice voted to award the grant to them in 2021.

The two made a good team. “We need people like [Randy] who are culturally competent and me, who people [in the tribe] can trust,” Lyle said. In working together, it was critical that Randy stay humble, follow the community’s norms such as meeting first with the tribal governors, and defer to their knowledge, expertise, and preferences.

“Historically, there’s a trust issue [in Native communities] for very good reasons,” Randy said. “The fact that I approached Lyle in a humble and curious way to say, I have an idea, this may work or not, you tell me if this is something your [Santa Clara Pueblo] community needs and we’ll work on it together.’ That’s very different from, ‘I work for this organization, we have this idea and resources to help you.’ And I took time to get to know Lyle with no strings attached. In any friendship, that takes you places if the person knows you care about them and not just the task in front of you.”

Ultimately, the crops yielded white and blue corn, green chiles, squash, cucumbers, pumpkins, beans, and a variety of local fruits native to the Tewa. The local senior center even made a salsa out of the crops. They served more than 500 tribal elders and enrolled nearly 300 in benefits.

“The community knows what’s best for the community,” Lyle said. “Even if we’re a mile or 10 miles away from someplace that [a method] works, it won’t work the same. You have to have someone in the community who knows how the water runs.”

“It wasn’t just an effort to bring food to people or enroll people in benefits, but an effort to honor the cultures there and bring them familiar foods they could congregate around that were not sugary and unhealthy, but instead, their own foods, their own recipes, giving them the resources so they could multiply,” Randy said.

Today, they’re still using the equipment to support nearly 100 tribal members in farming. Lyle and Randy later received another grant from the community of practice to do a similar project with the Hopi Nation.

Case Study: Building the Organizational Capacity to Work with Community-Based Organizations on Healthy, Culturally Relevant Recipes



For some time, community of practice member Common Threads had been trying to figure out how to make some changes. The nonprofit provides cooking and nutrition education, and it wanted to center communities more in its work. “We were thinking about how to leverage the knowledge of communities we’re already serving, showcase chefs in different neighborhoods, make recipes local to a neighborhood, and change our methodology around how we create menus,” said Kassie Hinrichsen, the associate director of programs. “The concept of Health and Heritage was born out of the desire to create hyper-local recipes based on the communities we serve.”

Common Threads reached out to a couple of community-based organizations in the Bronzeville and Englewood neighborhoods in Chicago. Together, they applied for and received a \$12,000 grant from the community of practice to host three Health and Heritage lunch events. The idea was that they would work with local chefs to develop a healthy, culturally relevant menu for each event. Then they would host three open events with a DJ, balloons, music, and fun activities in which community members could sample the dish and receive a food box with the ingredients and recipe to make it at home. After each event, a handful of participants were compensated to participate in a follow-up call with Common Threads to share feedback.

“This award allowed us to be more reflective than others, as we had the opportunity to gather community feedback on the recipes,” Kassie said. “The community feedback conversations were really insightful and allowed us to improve upon each event, as well as make changes to the recipes that were created to be more reflective of the community.”

The project required a lot of preparation and collaboration with the community partners. One of them, Oakwood Shores, had been a partner since 2019 while another, Imagine Englewood If..., was a new partner. The experience helped them learn about each other and how to work well together.

“The organizations we worked with provided a wealth of knowledge,” Kassie said. “Imagine Englewood If... had such a big pull in the community, in terms of recruiting people. We wouldn’t have been able to do this without their connections in the community.”

Ultimately, all three events engaged about 150 community members. The experience strengthened Common Threads’ relationships with the community partners as well as its capacity to support more community-centered, community-driven work.



Outcomes

Evaluating outcomes required us to challenge traditional notions of what success looks like and how to measure it. Over four years, there were clear indicators that the participatory grantmaking process has seeded and created myriad positive outcomes.

- **Good work was funded:** \$500,000 was given out through 11 grants, involving dozens of organizations in carrying out the work. The impact of each grant varied – some projects invested in equipment that will continue to support communities for years; others built capacity in communities and partner nonprofits; others developed resources to shift the food justice space overall. “Local solutions can innovatively and creatively drive systems change,” said Kaylyn Williams, a Community Wealth Partners consultant who facilitated the community of practice.
- **Relationships and trust were built.** Community of practice members built and deepened relationships with one another through the process, and some of them did so by applying for grants together. Members who received grants also built relationships with community partners (community members and community-based organizations). Many of these relationships – and the impact made possible through them – will continue long after the community of practice winds down.
- **Nonprofits built the capacity to work in new ways.** Some grantees worked closely with community partners in ways they never had before and built the capacity to continue this work. Others worked collaboratively across organizational lines in new ways. Some community of practice members began experimenting with participatory processes, informed by this work.
- **The community of practice strengthened.** The experience of making decisions together and collectively supporting the work of peers served as glue, creating a cohesive group working together toward common goals. Rather than view the community of practice as a professional development opportunity, members began seeing it as a potential catalyst for change. “This felt like collective action,” said Carolina Ramirez, senior consultant at Community Wealth Partners, who co-facilitated the community of practice. “There was a lot of energy in being there to vote. Community Wealth Partners didn’t hold the outcome; instead, we provided folks the opportunity to collectively fund and support a thing.”

“The participatory grantmaking experience feels like we are putting some of our principles to practice, which I find invaluable.”
– Anonymous community of practice member

“I participated in [the participatory grantmaking]. I had never done anything like that [before]. That was a great experience for me from a professional learning perspective and expanded how I understood funding and community funding can work.”
– Anonymous community of practice member

Lessons Learned

Our team learned a lot through the process. Here are some lessons we learned from other grantmakers or communities of practice.

- **Be clear about your intentions.** Before beginning, take time to reflect with your team on why you want to lead a participatory grantmaking process. Once you're clear and aligned on your intentions, communicate them to everyone involved and continue to narrate those intentions throughout the process. "What's your vision of what the grant process will be and feel like? What outcomes are you hoping to see as a result?" Carolina said. "Be mindful and intentional in naming that, because it will help you know how to prioritize. It's ok to not measure the impact of a specific grant. If the outcome you want is collective action, that's ok. Just be explicit about that."
- **Engage members in designing and/or approving the process.** It is critical that community of practice members (i.e., the future grantees) shape and support the process. At the same time, our team at Community Wealth Partners played a big role in designing the process upfront, with feedback and support from the advisory council. To do that, it was important for our team to design it around a set of shared values that the advisory council had aligned on.



Point of Tension

While the goal is to have community of practice members co-design the process, collaborative efforts need someone to play a facilitator or backbone role. And in this situation, the group also needed time and experience to align around the value of participatory processes. So Community Wealth Partners played a heavy role early on.

- **Clarify your decision-making process upfront.** Get clear on the criteria people will use to make decisions – criteria that helps ensure projects are aligned with the purpose – as well as how people will vote and what will happen when voting results are unclear. Then make sure to communicate this clearly and frequently to everyone involved. Sharing it once won't stick. For example, one purpose of our participatory grantmaking process was to contribute to the community of practice's goal of supporting local communities as they reimagine and rebuild their food systems to thrive. We worked to reiterate this and highlight examples of what it looked like. "All the proposals are great, but how do you make the connection to this specific community of practice?" Kaylyn said. "There are ways to make sure that what they end up funding is truly connected to the goals of this community of practice."

- **Build in space for real-time learning.** Proactively create opportunities for grantees to get support from community of practice members while they're implementing the grant, and to share back about their grant after it's complete. "If the goal is partnerships, collaboration, and supporting the capacity of nonprofits, that's how to do that," Carolina said. "Bring folks in, have roundtable conversations with grantees. That can begin to surface greater opportunities for collaboration, gaps, and places where the community of practice can support them." "Looking back, I would have created more conversations with grantees," Amy said. "We were trying hard to make the process a light lift, which is important. But what we might have lost is the opportunity to weave what grantees did back into the community of practice on the back end. The ones we brought back into conversation and learning added value to the community of practice." There's also an opportunity to create space for other funders and grantmakers to learn about the process – whether that's community of practice members who want to bring this back to their organization, or the funders supporting the network.



Point of Tension

As the case studies on pages 10-13 demonstrate, community partnerships can vary from one situation to the next. Some partnerships start with trust-based individual relationships, and the impact can be tremendous. Yet when someone leaves an organization, they may carry their relationships with them. Other partnerships may start with a clear goal in mind. While the impact of that work may be less immediate, organizations may build the institutional capacity that will carry on after individuals leave. Neither approach is right or wrong; they're just different.

- **Lean into a trust-based approach.** Participatory grantmaking is inherently trust-based: you trust a group to make decisions about how to fund their own peers. But there are many trust-based practices you can bring into the process to deepen into that value. For example, you can minimize the application and reporting requirements. "Grantees get time back to focus on the work instead of investing time and resources in a long reporting process," said Simone Swanson, communications and business development manager at Community Wealth Partners.

The participatory grantmaking process is a hallmark and legacy of the Healthy Food Community of Practice. It led to a greater impact in the world as well as in the organizations and individuals that took part. As one anonymous community of practice member said, “I’ve grown a much larger awareness of the need to do work with people and not for them. Do not get into planning until relationships and understanding are built.”

“I’m proud of the way the community of practice came together to make decisions and think collectively outside of their own needs and goals,” Amy said.

Our team at Community Wealth Partners is grateful to all the community of practice members, their community partners, and everyone who was willing to experiment with this process. We’ve seen the promise it holds for grantmakers as well as other communities of practice. The boldness it requires is worth the rewards it reaps.

The Healthy Food Community of Practice was made possible through funding by the Walmart Foundation. The findings, conclusions and recommendations presented in this report are those of Community Wealth Partners alone, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Walmart Foundation.

To learn more about the Health Food Community of Practice visit: healthyfoodcommunity.org

To learn more about Community Wealth Partners visit: communitywealth.com

