

2026

THE HEALING TRUST'S EQUITY JOURNEY

Our Equity Framework





The Healing Trust

Framework for Racial Equity & Health Equity

Preamble:

The Healing Trust is committed to racial equity and health equity as foundational principles that guide our philanthropic mission. Our understanding of equity is grounded in our longstanding commitment to improving and providing quality health care and access to health care for all people in our communities, and in our recognition that race has historically shaped—and continues to shape—access to opportunity, resources, health care, and positive health outcomes. Equity, as we define it, reflects neither favoritism nor preferential treatment. Rather, it reflects our commitment to fairness, accessibility, and the removal of barriers, including racial and structural barriers, that prevent individuals and communities from achieving optimal health and wellbeing.

In furtherance of our mission¹—“to support and partner with communities to advance racial equity and eliminate health disparities through advocacy and strategic investments” — we define equity through the following interconnected principles:

[1] Because our mission expressly includes racial equity, The Healing Trust may consider race as one evidence-based lens for understanding and addressing health disparities, alongside geography, income, disability, language, immigration status, insurance status, and other circumstances that affect health. No single characteristic, including race, is used as a proxy for individual worth or as a stand-alone entitlement to funding; rather, these factors help identify where inequities exist, the barriers that contribute to them, and which community-led strategies are most likely to improve health and wellbeing. Our grantmaking remains grounded in mission alignment, documented community need, organizational capacity, anticipated impact, and compliance with applicable law.

We define **equity** through the following interconnected principles:

Equity in Opportunity

Equity in opportunity means ensuring that all individuals and communities have a fair and meaningful chance to improve their health and wellbeing, regardless of race, ethnicity, geography, socioeconomic status, or other circumstances that may limit access to resources. The Healing Trust pursues this principle by funding organizations that address immediate community needs and work toward the root causes of inequity. We recognize that racial discrimination, historical disinvestment, and other structural barriers have produced unequal access to opportunity, shaping quality of life and overall community wellbeing. Our commitment is to reduce those barriers and expand pathways to health and wellness for underserved populations, ensuring that opportunity is genuinely available to all.

Equity in Access

Equity in access means working to ensure that all people can obtain the health care services, programs, and supports they need, when and where they need them. Our founding purpose emphasized “improving and providing quality health care and access to health care for the general public,” and this principle remains at the core of our grantmaking. We recognize that barriers to access—whether geographic, financial, informational, cultural, linguistic, racial, or systemic—disproportionately affect under-resourced communities, people who are underinsured or uninsured, and people who are disenfranchised. Our grantmaking and programming are designed to fund organizations that reduce these barriers and promote meaningful accessibility, ensuring that no community is left without the resources necessary to achieve health and wholeness.

Equity in Resources

Equity in resources means strategically deploying philanthropic investments to ensure that communities with the greatest needs receive the support required to build capacity, develop infrastructure, and sustain programs that promote health and wellbeing. The Healing Trust recognizes that communities may face resource gaps due to historical underinvestment, systemic racism, geographic isolation, economic exclusion, and other structural factors. Our resource allocation decisions are guided by credible data on health outcomes and community needs, including data that may reveal racial, ethnic, geographic, economic, disability-related, linguistic, or other disparities. We seek to ensure that disenfranchised communities have the ability to access the resources they need to thrive, consistent with our theory of change, which envisions communities having “the resources they need to make independent choices and be free from systemic constraints.”

Equity in Eliminating Racial and Other Health Disparities

Equity in eliminating health disparities means directing our advocacy and strategic investments toward reducing measurable differences in health outcomes across communities, including racial and ethnic disparities. Health disparities refer to preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health that are experienced by socially disadvantaged populations. Our commitment is rooted in data-driven analysis identifying where disparities exist and how they affect communities. The Healing Trust works to reduce or eliminate racial and other health disparities by funding organizations that serve under-resourced communities and by supporting long-term solutions that address both symptoms and the systems that perpetuate poor health outcomes.

Equity in Data Collection

Equity in data collection means gathering, analyzing, and utilizing credible, comprehensive data to inform our grantmaking and programmatic decisions in a manner that is transparent and objective. Consistent with our approach to data-driven philanthropy, The Healing Trust collaborates with research partners to examine health outcome data and identify communities experiencing the greatest health challenges. Where reliable and appropriate, data may include race, ethnicity, geography, income, insurance status, disability, age, gender, language, and other factors relevant to health outcomes, considered in combination with community context and program-specific information. Data collection allows us to pinpoint areas of need, evaluate the impact of our investments, and ensure that resources are allocated based on demonstrated community health needs rather than assumptions, stereotypes, quotas, or demographic preferences.

Equity in Positive Health Outcomes

Equity in positive health outcomes means working toward a future in which all individuals and communities have a genuine opportunity to achieve optimal physical, mental, and social wellbeing. The Healing Trust measures its success not by inputs alone but by the demonstrable improvement in health outcomes within the communities we fund, including progress toward narrowing racial and ethnic health disparities. We invest in organizations that are actively working to reduce or eliminate health disparities and improve the overall health status of their communities. Our commitment is to foster an environment where positive health outcomes are achievable for everyone, recognizing that health is a human right and that equitable, comprehensive, and affordable health coverage should be accessible to all.

Equity in Representation Reflective of the Communities Served by Grantee Partners

Equity in representation means encouraging grantee partners to build organizations—including boards, staff, and leadership—that authentically reflect and understand the communities they serve. Representation in this context refers to the presence of individuals with lived experience, cultural competency, local knowledge, and deep connection to the populations being served. This may include representation across a variety of characteristics, such as race, ethnicity, culture, language, background, experience, education level, income level, health need, and geographic tie. We believe that organizations are most effective when those designing and delivering services understand the communities they serve. We value grantee partners that demonstrate genuine community connection and responsiveness, which enhances the quality and relevance of their programs.

Equity in Eliminating Social Determinants of Health

Equity in eliminating social determinants of health means addressing the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age that affect health outcomes. Social determinants of health include factors such as access to education, economic stability, neighborhood and physical environment, food security, housing, community and social context, and the effects of discrimination and systemic racism. The Healing Trust recognizes that clinical health care alone cannot eliminate racial or other health disparities; rather, we must also address the social determinants that shape health outcomes across the life course. Our strategic priorities—Resilient Families, Thriving Communities, and Strengthening Democracy—reflect this holistic understanding. By investing in organizations that address social determinants of health, we aim to create conditions that enable all people to achieve their full health potential, regardless of their circumstances.

Equity in Community Voice

Equity in community voice means valuing the expertise, knowledge, and perspectives of local communities and prioritizing solutions that emerge from within them. The Healing Trust believes that the individuals and families most affected by racial and other health disparities possess critical insight into both the challenges they face and the solutions most likely to succeed. Our grantmaking approach is informed by participatory processes that engage residents in decision-making about how philanthropic resources are allocated within their own neighborhoods. We invest in organizations that lift up community voice, foster civic engagement, and empower residents—including residents affected by racial, economic, geographic, disability-related, linguistic, or other barriers to health—to shape the health and wellbeing of their communities.

Equity in Partnership

Equity in partnership means cultivating trusting, transparent, and mutually respectful relationships with our grantee partners. The Healing Trust embraces a trust-based philanthropy model that recognizes nonprofit organizations as experts in their fields and in the communities they serve. We seek to reduce unnecessary administrative burdens, provide flexible and unrestricted operating support, and engage in honest dialogue with our partners, including about how race, power, and lived experience shape health outcomes and organizational effectiveness. Our partnerships are grounded in shared values, shared learning, and a shared commitment to the health and wholeness of all communities.

Equity in Intergenerational Stewardship

Equity in intergenerational stewardship means practicing responsible management of philanthropic resources for the benefit of generations to come. The Healing Trust recognizes that its assets do not belong to any single generation; rather, they represent a lasting commitment to the health and welfare of the communities we serve. We manage our investments prudently and deploy our resources strategically to advance racial equity, reduce health disparities, and sustain mission-aligned impact over time. This long-term perspective guides both our investment philosophy and our grantmaking priorities.



CONCLUSION

This definition of equity reflects The Healing Trust's authentic, mission-driven commitment to advancing racial equity, improving health, and eliminating health disparities in the communities we fund. Our approach is grounded in fairness, data-driven decision-making, community voice, and a recognition that systemic barriers—including racial and other structural barriers—can prevent individuals and communities from achieving optimal health. These principles are designed to ensure that our philanthropic investments are inclusive, accessible, effective, legally appropriate, and aligned with documented health needs across all communities, consistent with our founding purpose and our ongoing commitment to the health and general welfare of the public.