



STRATEGIC DIRECTION

OUR VISION.
OUR PEOPLE.
OUR POWER.

ABOUT STATE VOICES

The State Voices Network is a multiracial, multiethnic, and multicultural community of advocates, activists, and organizers committed to building people power to transform the lives of our communities – especially those who experience oppression.

We believe that a healthy democracy is one in which everyone is engaged, represented, listened to, and supported regardless of race, gender, immigration status, sexuality, ability, religion, or class.

State Tables, works with hundreds of grassroots organizations to break down barriers to civic participation and to bring underrepresented and marginalized populations and their issues to the center of public discourse. State Voices Tables connect these groups to one another and to organizations from different sectors, creating multicultural, multi-issue coalitions that can leverage their collective power to transform our democracy.

Many of our partners are grassroots organizations that represent marginalized communities. Our mission commits us to building the strength of leaders and organizations from these communities and giving them an equal voice within our coalitions. In this way, we seek to model the equity we wish to see in our democracy.

OUR VISION.
OUR PEOPLE.
OUR POWER.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

02 WHY DOES STATE VOICES NEED A STRATEGIC DIRECTION?

Our Network, Our People

03 OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION PROCESS

Strategic Direction Process and Key Achievements

The Northstar Committee

The Landscape Assessment

The June National Convening

The September National Convening

04 OUR VISION: THE NEW DIRECTION OF STATE VOICES

Our Theories of Change

Our Power

Our Vision

Our Structure

05 A NEW STATE VOICES

06 APPENDIX

Transforming Your Organization Worksheet

Glossary

Contact



LETTER FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

To my people in the State Voices Network and beyond,

2020 has been a rollercoaster. We're witnessing one of the largest racial uprisings in U.S. history. We have seen Black Lives Matter, police divestment, and true community safety take hold as mainstream ideas and real policy reforms. We have seen hundreds of thousands of people demand justice, protest, and put their bodies in harm's way to achieve what is right. We have seen the best of humanity.

Unfortunately, we are also witnessing the worst of humanity. From the murder and harm inflicted up Black and brown bodies and communities, to our constitutional rights being infringed upon, to a campaign of disinformation undermining our democracy. All while we are reeling from an economic crisis and global pandemic at a scale that most of us have not witnessed in our lifetime.

This moment is calling for a new 2020 vision, a vision for our work over the next decade.

A vision where everyone has what they need to thrive and live in their full dignity. A vision that moves beyond people as capital and where people can take care of themselves and their loved ones. A vision where everyone is truly represented and Black and Brown people have and harness their political power.

During this time, our broken structures and systems are exposed. Everything is being pressure tested, including healthcare, public safety regulations, internet access and bandwidth limitations, and our election systems and overall democracy. The only meaningful response that can build a more resilient society has to involve all people sharing their needs and concerns. This is the 'people infrastructure' that State Voices and our partners have been working to build.

We are practicing living our values every day. Never have I been more proud to lead State Voices. I believe that we will win. I believe in our collective power. I believe in our humanity.

Thank you for the continued confidence you have placed in me by giving me the opportunity to serve this organization I care so deeply about.

In solidarity,

Alexis Anderson-Reed

She/Her/Hers

Chief Executive Officer

State Voices

WHY DOES STATE
VOICES NEED A NEW
DIRECTION?

01

Our work at State Voices must live and breathe our new vision and purpose—to build a true multiracial democracy, grounded in building power for Black people, Indigenous people, and all people of color so that we can all thrive and live in our full dignity. This means moving beyond a narrow scope of civic engagement to one that moves us toward transformation and justice.

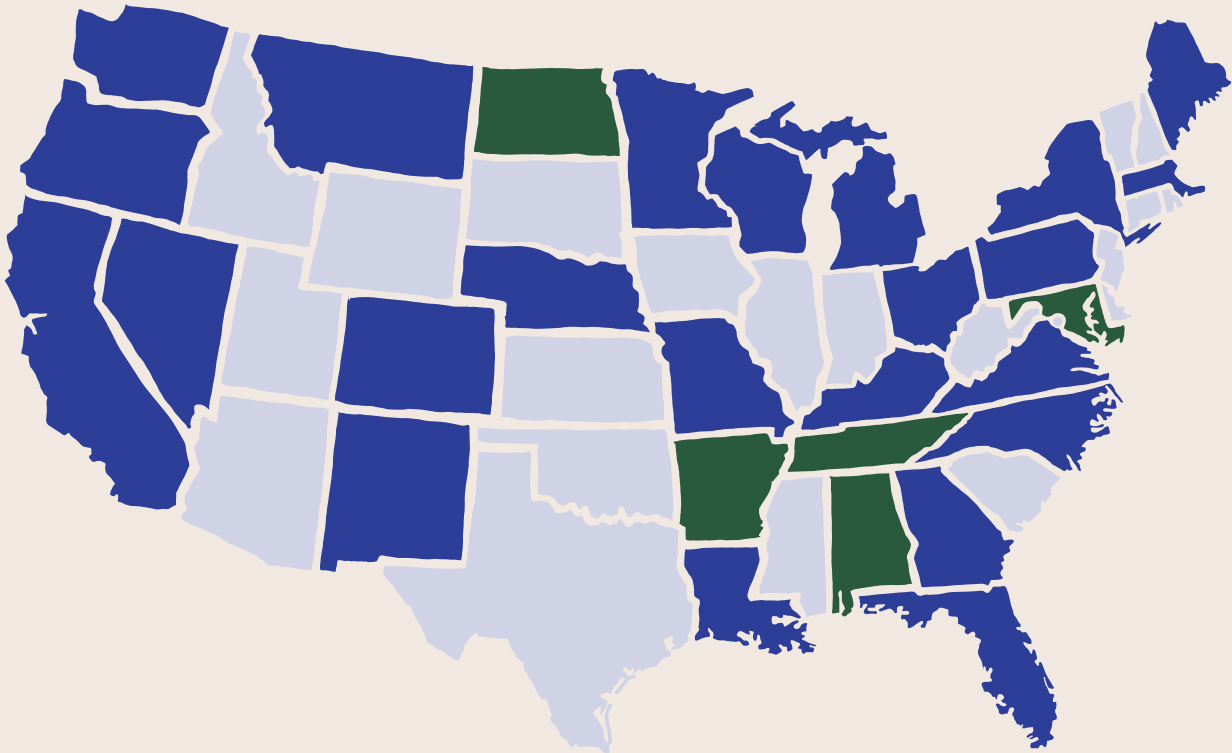
Alexis Anderson-Reed
Chief Executive Office, State Voices

WHY DOES STATE VOICES NEED A NEW DIRECTION?

OUR NETWORK, OUR PEOPLE

U.S. democracy is in need of transformation. When we leverage collective action, we can create a healthy democracy and a world where everyone can thrive and live in our full dignity. In order to fully contribute to the movement for a healthy democracy in this political climate, State Voices knew we needed to reimagine the power of our network.

For nearly 12 years, State Voices Network has worked to be a powerful network of organizations pushing to make a real impact on our democracy. We have done so with 23 State Tables who are dedicated to making a change in their communities.



Over 800 Partners

State Table Emerging State

- California
Colorado
Florida
Georgia
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maine
Massachusetts
Michigan
Minnesota
Missouri
Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
New Mexico
New York
North Carolina
Ohio
Oregon
Pennsylvania
Virginia
Washington
Wisconsin
- Engage San Diego
Colorado Civic Engagement Roundtable
Florida 501(c)(3) Civic Engagement Table
ProGeorgia
Kentucky Civic Engagement Table
The Power Coalition for Equity and Justice
Maine Voices Network
Massachusetts Voter Table
Michigan Voices
Minnesota Voice
Missouri Organizing and Voter Engagement Collaborative
Montana Voices
Nebraska Civic Engagement Table
Silver State Voices
New Mexico Civic Engagement Table
New York Civic Engagement Table
Blueprint NC
Ohio Voice
Oregon Voice
Pennsylvania Voice
Virginia Civic Engagement Table
Win/Win Network
Wisconsin Voices

With the leadership transition of Alexis Anderson-Reed as the Chief Executive Officer, the board, State Tables, and staff recognized that State Voices needed to engage differently in order to realize our mission of an inclusive democracy. Our leadership wanted to ensure that grassroots organizing is at the center of our power-building model, solidify a multi-racial

coalition, and build a stronger network and expand access to those who need it. Alexis and the State Table Directors turned to Dancing Hearts Consulting for support with a nine-month process to identify our “North Star”, and define our strategic direction into 2022. The Strategic Direction, led by a committee of State Voices staff, state leaders, and Board members guided the organization towards our change model. The Strategic Direction process focused on answering five core ideas:

OUR VISION

Envision a “North Star” through the development of a theory of change and a shared long-term vision.

OUR PEOPLE

Redefine how we talk about the communities we serve and how we create the conditions to build their power.

OUR STRUCTURE

Reimagine the internal structure of the Network to achieve our goals of multiracial power building in states through an electoral lens.

OUR POWER

Develop a shared “power building” analysis across the network and create milestones to strengthen state political power through 2022.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

Create a statement which reflects the components and processes needed to create social change.

OUR STRATEGIC
DIRECTION PROCESS

02

STRATEGIC DIRECTION PROCESS AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The Strategic Direction process has five central process components:

01.

THE NORTH STAR COMMITTEE

Leaders are tasked with implementing the process and igniting excitement among the network.



02.

THE LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

Captured the stakeholders perspective on State Voices role in the civic engagement landscape

03.

THE JUNE NATIONAL STATE VOICES CONVENING

Brought together the State Voices ecosystem (staff, board, table directors, state program, and data staff) to build unity and discuss our vision and core constituencies they want to represent.



04.

THE SEPTEMBER NATIONAL STATE VOICES CONVENING

Brought together the State Voices ecosystem to discuss their power building strategy and the shifts in structure needed to move forward.



05.

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Documentation of the key findings throughout the process and a report to articulate the best practices and shifts.



THE NORTH STAR COMMITTEE THE NORTH STAR

A symbol of inspiration and hope, The North Star is the anchor of the northern sky. It is a landmark, or sky marker, that helps those who follow it determine direction as it glows brightly to guide and lead toward a purposeful destination. It also has a symbolic meaning, for the North Star depicts a beacon of inspiration and hope to many. It means different things to individuals, populations of people, and cultures. From the star of Bethlehem to the Underground Railroad, the North star represents the constant journey towards freedom and liberation.*

* <http://theweeklyphallenger.com/the-north-star-a-symbol-of-inspiration-and-hope/>

WHO IS THE NORTH STAR COMMITTEE?

The North Star Committee is a group of leaders from the State Voices Staff, Network, and the Board of Directors who were tasked with the analysis, synthesis, and facilitation of the Strategic Direction process from April to September 2019. The Committee worked with Strategic Direction Coaches, Esperanza Tervalon-Garrett and Carmen Berkley from Dancing Hearts Consulting to create the vision, people, structure, and power analysis for State Voices through curated coalition building and data analysis.

Their work included:

Co-designing Strategic Direction meetings and conferences with the network and stakeholders from June - September 2019

Interviewing and facilitating focus groups with stakeholders and the dissemination of the partner survey

Participation in rigorous planning meetings from April - September 2019 to plan, analyze and deliver a new Strategic Direction for State Voices using a collective buy-in model

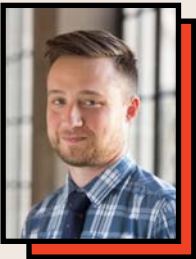
Synthesizing the findings and serving as ambassadors of the information to the states

NORTH STAR COMMITTEE MEMBERS INCLUDE:

STATE DIRECTORS/ BOARD MEMBERS



Tamieka Atkins
*Executive Director,
ProGeorgia, SV Board
of Directors*



Zack Burgin
*Executive Director,
Nebraska Civic
Engagement Table*



Alissa Haslam
*Executive Director,
WinWin Network*



Beth Huang
*Director, Massachusetts
Voter Table, SV Board
of Directors*



Michaela Brown
*Executive Assistant,
State Voices*



Jordan Deloach
*Communications
Director, State Voices*



Lariena Matthews
*Chief Operating Officer,
State Voices*

STATE VOICES STAFF



**Alexis
Anderson-Reed**
Executive Director/ CEO



Mishara Davis
*Senior Manager,
Strategic Partnerships*



Angela Tombazzi
*Director of Data &
Technology*



Steven Montoya
*Sr. Director of State
Capacity Building
Department*



**Esperanza Tervalon-
Garrett**
*Chief Executive Officer,
Dancing Hearts Consulting*

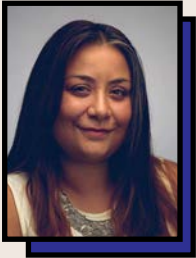


Carmen Berkley
*Chief Strategy Officer,
Dancing Hearts Consulting*

STATE TABLE STAFF LEADERS



Rafael Reyes
*Data & Targeting Manager,
New Mexico Civic
Engagement Table*



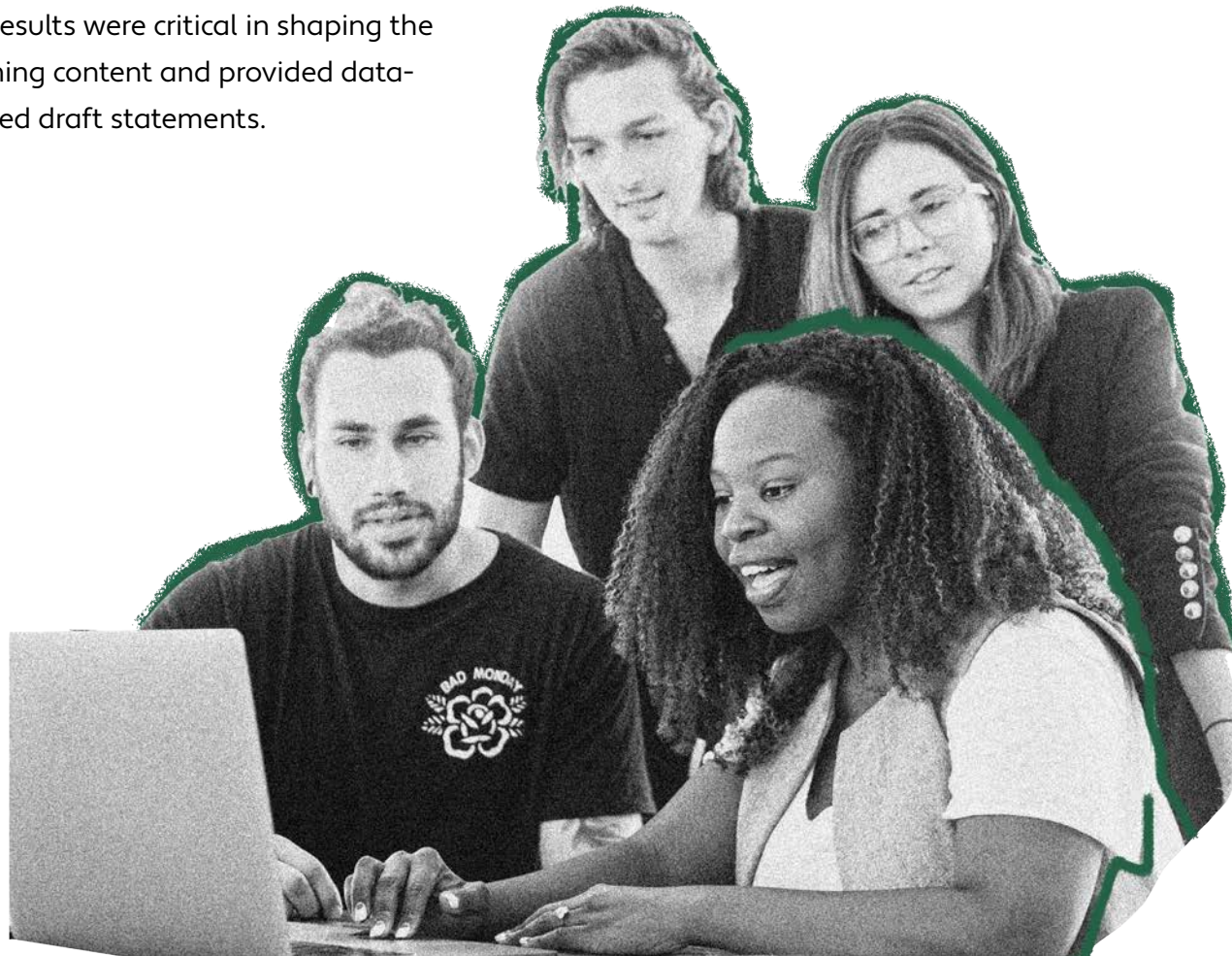
Jasmine Rivera
*Program Director,
Pennsylvania Voice*

CONSULTANTS

THE LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

To collect a snapshot of State Voices from partners, allies, and funders, we conducted a Landscape Assessment survey that allowed us to analyze five distinct stakeholders: State Tables, staff, board, funders, and partners. The State Table results were critical in shaping the convening content and provided data-informed draft statements.

This assessment provided a space for important stakeholders to participate in the Strategic Direction process. Specifically, we were looking to solicit an honest snapshot of stakeholders' impression of State Voices' reputation under Alexis' new leadership, potential opportunities and pitfalls in the sector, and input that stakeholders might not say face to face. The survey was available to the board, staff, partners, and funders from June - July 2019, and State Table leadership from June - August 2019.



SUMMARY

54 Stakeholders completed the Landscape Assessment and were aligned around centering Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) to advance democracy – specifically in the Black and Latinx community.

There was also a mandate for State Voices to bring a relationship-building orientation to all of its stakeholder engagements in order to repair the harm and distrust brought on by former leadership. While data and tools, convening, and power building are the most requested roles for State Voices, we learned that the organization needs to interrogate and innovate around data and tools. Furthermore, to meet the immediate needs of the moment the team needs to sharpen “service provision” to states and those accessing data and tools.

The hiring of Alexis is cited as a key reason for turning around the organization and expanding opportunities for collaboration and alignment by at least one person in every stakeholder group. These Landscape Assessment findings were used to inform the National Convening agendas and next steps.

We learned that the organization needs to interrogate and innovate around data and tools.

KEY FINDINGS

STATE TABLES

21/21

STATE TABLES COMPLETED THE LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT.*

22%

OF TABLES HAVE BEEN A PART OF STATE VOICES FOR 10+ YEARS.

18.5%

OF TABLES HAVE BEEN CONNECTED TO THE NETWORK FOR 3-5 YEARS.

*

THE NETWORK HAS GROWN OVER THE LAST DECADE, BUT IT REMAINS A NETWORK WITH BOTH NEW AND OLD TABLES.

01.

STATE VOICES BEST ROLE

State Tables overwhelmingly noted that State Voices’ best role in the civic engagement ecosystem is in convening, data, tools, and moving money to the field. Additionally, State Tables communicated that the network brings GOTV campaign expertise, 501(c)(3) collaboration specialists, and campaigns that advance democracy to the sector.

02.

NEW LEADERSHIP

The State Tables saw the greatest opportunity for State Voices in centering women of color leadership and expanding racial equity at the heart of its work. Moreover, they named that convening progressive forces to align strategies and increase the impact of civic engagement work was critical for building state-based power. Finally, State Tables named rebuilding trust in the network as central to creating a new anchor for civic engagement and State Voices.

03.

FOCUSING ON MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS

State Tables were deeply aligned around the importance of centering Black, Latinx, low-income, Asian Pacific Islander, and immigrant communities in their coalition work. In fact, 95% of the network named Black people as central to building power in their states. State Tables also stated that they are working in service of their own coalitions. This articulation helps State Voices name it is a national affiliated coalition of coalition organizations. 81% of State Tables view their work as power building, civic engagement, and integrated voter engagement. The landscape assessment shows that States are working in similar ways, centering similar communities, and thinking about building power.

*KY did not join the network until 2020, and or did not have a table director at the time so was not included

STATE TABLES INSIGHTS AND REFLECTIONS

The States Table analysis about the direction of the network fell into two camps.

TRANSFORMATIONAL
ENGAGEMENT

Respondents overwhelmingly shared the desire to move towards transformational engagement by:

Lifting up the state civic engagement leadership

Developing innovative data tools that change the game

Building a national policy agenda

Coordinating national network campaigns

TRANSACTIONAL
INNOVATIONS

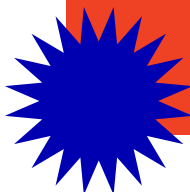
Respondents also recognized the need for transactional innovations through:

Strong data and tools trainings

Peer to peer learning

Census and redistricting support

Supporting states to raise their profiles and resources



CENTERING RACIAL AND GENDER EQUITY AND JUSTICE MUST BE FRONT AND CENTER AS THE NETWORK MOVES FORWARD TOGETHER.

State Tables want to see State Voices coordinate on-going national and regional convenings where State Tables can share, learn, and coordinate with each other. Deepening relationships was lifted up as a critical on-going priority for the network with the understanding that shifting the culture of State Voices requires time. State Tables want to address the data staffing structure and agreements within State Voices. The Tables also believe that centering racial and gender equity must be front and center as the network moves forward together.

State Tables also see a partnership with State Voices that lifts up state-based models for national partners and funders to learn from, work in strategic thought-partnership with State Voices staff to develop strategy, programs and campaigns, and resourcing shared development staffing to increase capacity and money to the states.

THE MEANINGFUL EMPHASIS ON EQUITY
IS A BREATH OF FRESH AIR AND HAS REAL
POTENTIAL TO SHIFT THE WORK HAPPENING
IN SOME STATES AND THE NATIONAL
NARRATIVE ABOUT THE NETWORK.



STAFF TABLE REFLECTIONS

“Centering powerbuilding in planning process and focus on racial equity and be a river in the progressive movement & national funders”

“You guys are doing an amazing job and I'm excited about the future.”

“State Voices provides access to VAN/Catalyst, two aging tools that are becoming less relevant/ viable and we appear to have no larger plan for what our technology future looks like or what the value proposition will be.”

“What we can improve: doing away with metaphors that are the “vanilla” way of describing our work (New American Majority, invisible glue), unapologetically naming the communities that we center, more consistent support for tables that are not battleground states, telling State Table stories more frequently and with a shared narrative beyond the annual report.”

“Field efforts are a major part of our work, so we feel that State Voices could benefit from facilitating connections and encouraging the development of field programs.”

“The bottom line is that we want to be in service to power building and changing representation in our state and prioritizing the vehicles that will do that either through structural democracy reforms, issue based work, political organizing, and culture change that centers racial justice in all of our work.”

STATE VOICES STAFF INSIGHT
AND REFLECTIONS

Fifteen staff members who have worked for State Voices for more than six-months were asked to complete a survey. The staff’s core values driving the work were: a thriving democracy (100%), supporting collaboration (100%), and expanding equity (93.3%). Staff indicated that in order to work in service of states, staff needed more internal coordination and collaboration (46.7%), building healthy relationships with State Table staff (20.0%), and expanding staff and board capacity to do the work (13.3%). Staff responses were aligned on what State

Voices is doing well. Like other stakeholders, the Staff named convening, data tools, and building capacity in the states.

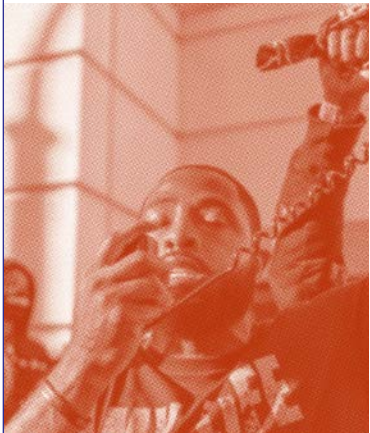
Staff were not aligned on the places that State Voices can improve and cited numerous strategies including: sharpening strategic lens, expanding equity practice on staff and in the states, to internal processes (like intra-organizational coordination), decision making, data-tools efficacy, building a new organizational narrative, metrics-based strategies, and national coalition-building.

STAFF REFLECTIONS

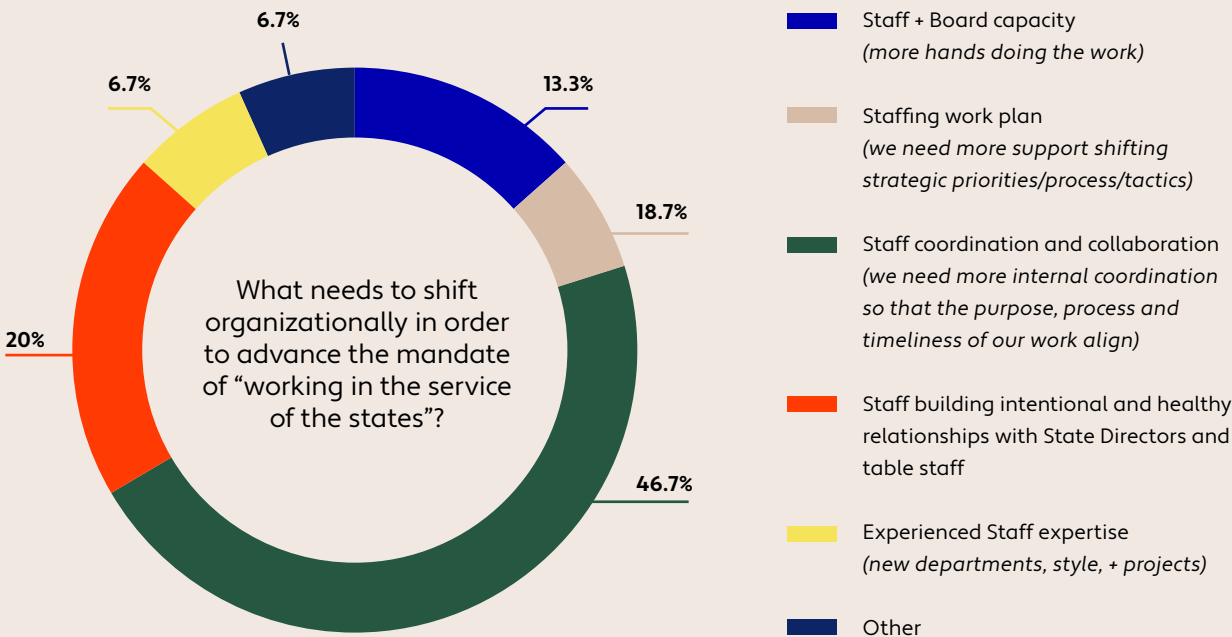
“It would be terrific to have more staff representation from specific ethnic and identity groups, namely South Asians, Muslims, Latinx, Native/indigenous people, and transgender people.”

“National Staff needs to learn to be more like frontline organizers - to emphasize the relationships which are quintessential to our shared efforts.”

“The staff needs immediate, and ongoing training in the areas of racial equity, gender equity, class analysis, facilitation, relationship and staff management, mediation, adult learning, and conflict resolution.”



“It may also be useful to normalize ongoing, regular conversations and evaluations about how the staff are doing in serving the states.”



STATE VOICES BOARD INSIGHT
AND REFLECTIONS

The State Voices Board of Directors participated in a focus-group style process to develop a cohesive and aligned response. Similar to other stakeholders, the Board believes that the core values of State Voices are rooted in the belief in the power to own democracy, power sharing, accountability, fostering deep partnerships,

and integrating racial equity into our work in a meaningful way.

The Board expressed opportunities and desires to claim State Voices lanes and uplift states through policy advocacy, powerbuilding, developing a racial equity lens for the entire movement, utilizing the expertise of state leaders, and training new people and organizations on civic engagement, and collective impact.



The Board spoke to the desire to improve State
Voices in the following areas:

- 01. Advance the data and tools arm of State Voices through the development of new tools with State Voices ascending as a national leader in the data ecosystem
- 02. State Voices should value Tables as colleagues, partners, and peers and respect their leadership and address problems
- 03. Educating funders on the long-term organizing and racial equity model as a strategy to win elections
- 04. Coordination of collective fundraising between national and State Tables
- 05. Utilizing policy and powerbuilding to widen our 'lane' and potential to have impact and build new partnerships
- 06. Expanding appropriately so that it adds value to the movement

STATE VOICES PARTNER INSIGHTS
AND REFLECTIONS

Ten of the 25 national organizational partners solicited completed the survey. 90% of respondents said their work is driven by a commitment to “a thriving democracy,” while 80% marked “expanding equity” and “thriving communities”. 90% of respondents identified that Black and Latinx communities must be centered in order to exercise responsive democracy.

Partner organization profiles range from civic engagement programming, issue advocacy, voter registration, and research. 100% of respondents support some kind of civic engagement work on the ground.

Partner organizations see the value in State Voices providing data-tools, strengthening State Tables and mobilizing voters. They also name convening and state coordination as the best role for State Voices in the larger national ecosystem. Finally, partners echoed other stakeholders’ call for State Voices to combat the biggest threats by innovating data tools, expanding racial equity work, and building more power through c3 and c4 strategy. Partner organizations indicated the relationships are positive, but could be deeper, more strategic and aligned in the states.



PARTNER REFLECTIONS

“There is and has been a shift happening to a more values centered, people of color led, status quo bucking, culture shifting way of doing the work and SV can help bridge that gap in the c3 space (and how it intersects with c4 work).”

“Consistent leadership in each state is always a challenge. The biggest threats are (A) not having a c4 space (AV and other information c4 Tables) and (B) not having very clear state and regional projects that are fundable outside of National funders.”



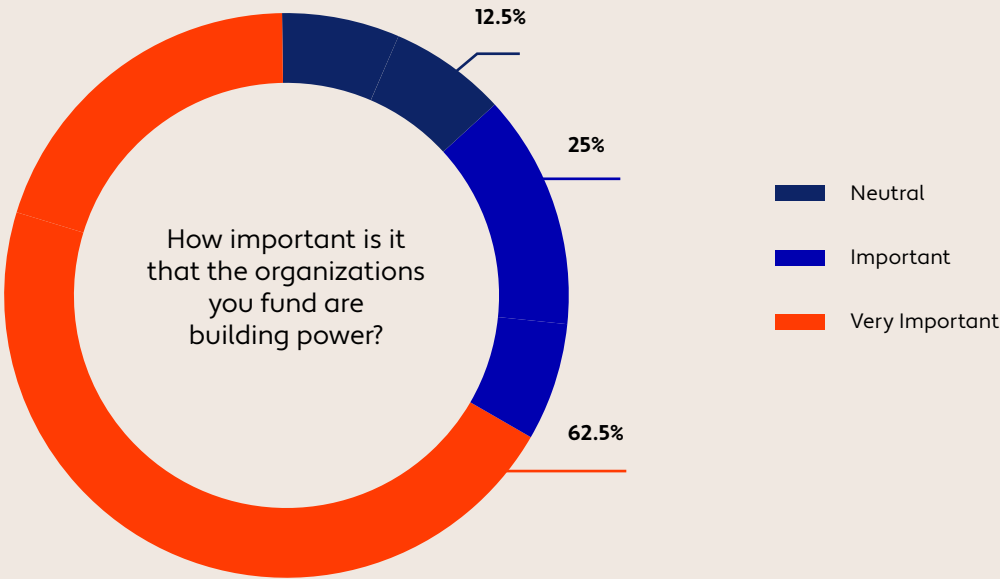
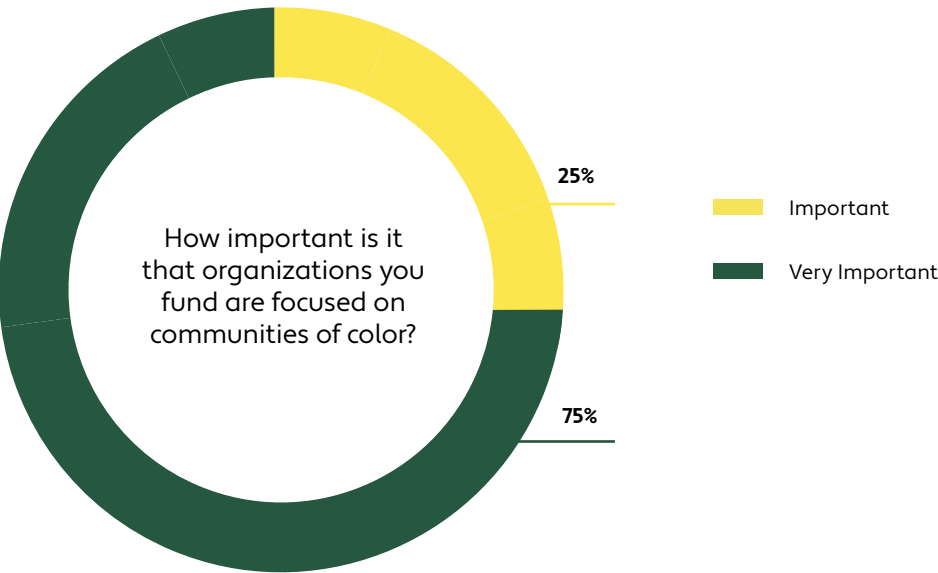
“Hiring Alexis was so key. She is bold, visionary, understands the importance of equity and inclusion, gets the larger ecosystem, and trusted across the movement. I have seen so much change already with SV over the years, especially making sure that leadership and the tables reflect the people we are fighting for.”

STATE VOICES FUNDER INSIGHTS
AND REFLECTIONS

Eight of the 15 funders who received the survey completed it. Seventy-five percent of respondents are current State Voices funders and of those, 90% have been funding the organization for 10 or more years. Funders overwhelmingly centered Black, Latinx, and Asian Pacific Islander communities as central to their funding strategies. 100% of respondents said “a thriving democracy” was a core value that drives their work, with “advancing justice” and “creating social change” reflecting 87.5% of respondents' core values.

When asked why respondents do or don’t fund State Voices, the responses resonated around State Voices’ as “infrastructure” and the backbone of “civic engagement”. One funder offered that the challenge in funding State Voices is that the civic engagement sector is more competitive, and c3 only strategies silo, rather than expand strategic alignment for funders aiming to build vibrant ecosystems for change.

Funders believe that the best role for State Voices falls into three core categories: data and tools, convening, and building power. While data and tools was mentioned as a critical role for State Voices’ by 62.5% of



respondents, there was also a call for the data and tools to evolve to build the “21st century organizing skills” needed to build power. Continuing to serve as a convener for partners in states was identified as a core opportunity and key role for State Voices. This assessment is tied into ensuring the states are resourced and convening partner organizations working in service of people of color, have increased capacity , skills building, data and tech. Finally, one funder lifted up that as a national organization, State Voices’ work needs to add up to power building on a larger scale.

The gaps in the field were about gaps that State Voices’ has not been able to play. Specifically, strategic and holistic State-based table plans for the state, digital tools and programming that build beyond election day, and building power that can be leveraged in service of long-term policy flights.

FUNDER REFLECTIONS

“I worry that States Voices is seen as technicians and basic service providers but not seen as thought leaders on policy and innovative approaches to building power.”

“You’re already addressing the biggest one: clarifying vision and role.”

“More outreach to their donors to let us know what’s going on; lifting up more of its successes.”



“Alexis is the leader we need, but we don’t really deserve her; no one deserves to get so much from anyone—much less someone as amazing and talented as Alexis.”

100% OF RESPONDENTS SAID
“A THRIVING DEMOCRACY” WAS A
CORE VALUE THAT DRIVES THEIR WORK.



THE JUNE NATIONAL CONVENING

The June National Convening brought together over 100 Network members (State Table directors, data managers, and some program staff) from 21 states to Durham, North Carolina. This marked the first Network-wide convening in over 3 years.

The June National Convening focused on building relationships and unity between States and national staff. The convening content focused on soliciting input from States on “Our People” and “Our Vision”.

We also identified that the process was as important as the outcomes. In order for this process to be fruitful, we needed to bring on a body of advisors and validators who could buy-into the process and help move it among other state leaders. Additionally, we created a space where people could build relationships, have safe but difficult conversations, and charter new paths together.



Over 3 days, the network:

Built values-based relationships among and across network directors, data managers, program staff, national staff, and the Board.

Explored how State Voices can build power for equity and justice.

Identified and named who our work needs to center in order to build a multi-racial democracy.

Developed a shared understanding of power and how State Voices building power in service of the States was inspired by power-building models that are transforming civic engagement.

KEY FINDINGS

The network dove deep in their ideas and definitions of power. After much discussion around power building, the network concluded that State Voices power-building model is centered in three core civic areas:

- ENGAGEMENT
- REPRESENTATION
- ACCESS

The network concluded that our power is at work when...

Ideas translate into action

The agenda is the governing agenda and voting is a tactic not the solution

We have the conditions and ability to know that whatever direction we take, we will thrive

Power is respect

Decision-makers and funders are focused on the people’s agenda as well as the work on the ground

Power is accountable to communities

Our narratives are at work

The network expressed and identified a number of areas to advance over time in order to build a more powerful civic engagement movement, which included internal and external recommendations:

External Recommendations

- Creation of a State Voices 501c4
- Leverage the power of ballot initiatives for longer term victories
- Empowering those directly impacted by the issues by using political education and training to build their skills
- Demonstrate the successful transition of individual power to collective & institutional power
- Evolution of tools and data that work for our movement, and discover new tools outside of the VAN
- Use the collective network to move federal policy priorities/shared campaigns
- Increase press engagement

Internal Recommendations

- Consistency in staff retention, and the creation of organizing capacity so that valuable talent isn’t lost when they can’t be funded beyond a cycle
- Redefining metrics to include more issues organizing
- Developing subject matter expertise on issue based work for sharing information amongst states
- Aligned network campaigning, vision and narrative
- Successfully holding the space of uniformity at the national level with respect of the autonomy
- Develop a system to measure State Voices impact analysis
- Bridging relationships between Tables and funders
- Expansion of funding sources to individual donors

THE JUNE NATIONAL CONVENING



Several participants at the convening, June 2019



Jha Mai Milindez and Katherine Malet (The Poetry Project), June 2019



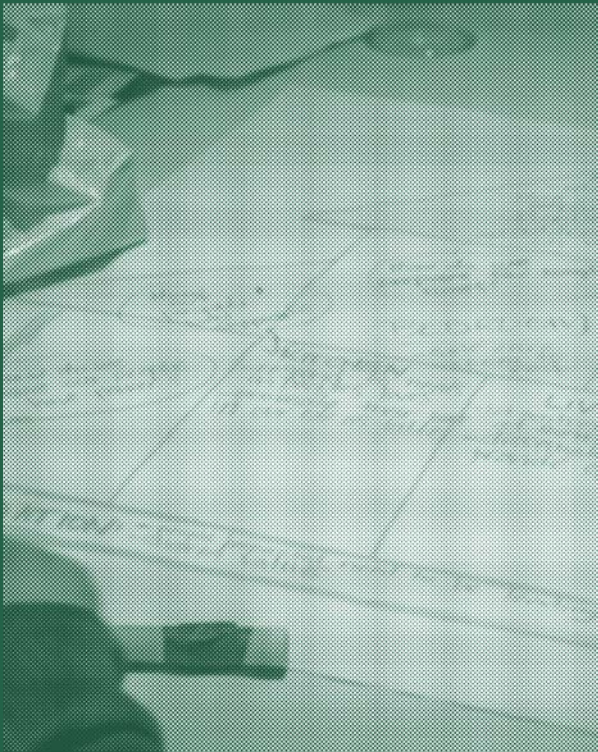
Beth Huang (Mass Voter Engagement Table, State Voices Board of Directors), June 2019



Tiffany Dena Lotfin (NAACP), June 2019



Jha Mai Milindez (The Poetry Project), June 2019



Activity worksheet, June 2019

THE SEPTEMBER NATIONAL CONVENING

Building on the inertia of the first successful convening, the North Star Committee dove into the landscape assessment to fully understand how the network perceived

State Voices, and provided guidance for how we wanted to move forward. From July - August 2019, the North Star Committee strategized with the State Voices Table Directors to complete the Landscape Assessment – our goal was to both have 100% completion of the survey, but to also have multiple touches with table directors to ensure their voices felt adequately heard throughout the process. In order to build an agenda for the September National Convening, the North Star Committee strategized with table staff, data managers, table directors and State Voices staff to ensure that our Strategic Direction objectives were met at the September Convening.



While we identified additional trainings, workshops, and theories for the conference, we chose to focus on our core areas around vision, structure, people, theory of change and power to fulfill our commitment to the path forward.

The Culture Committee also met, and provided guidance and actionable items to be integrated into the September Convening including a praxis around partnership, racial equity and dismantling white supremacy. This charge led to the integration of a “Dismantling White Supremacy” portion of the conference.

If the first conference was an awakening, the second conference was a breakthrough. The work of the North Star Committee positioned us to have real conversations needed to complete the statements and delve deeper into the structure. The body asserted that State Voices is not a network

IF THE FIRST CONFERENCE
WAS AN AWAKENING,
THE SECOND CONFERENCE
WAS A BREAKTHROUGH.

of organizations, but an affiliated coalition of state organizations who are ready to build power together through organizing, data and tools, that centers BIPOC communities as the driving force to advance civic engagement efforts in the states. They also expressed a strong desire to give the National State Voices departments an opportunity to build new relationships with the states.

KEY FINDINGS

We expanded our attendance to nearly 150 state directors, program staff and data managers from the 21 network states. We dove into an expanded vision around civic engagement that centers marginalized communities and dreamed what the future of our coalition, field, data, and communications work could look like if we operated as one network, with aligned regional and national strategies. Our September Convening encouraged the network to go one step further.

Together we:

Revisited the collective vision, for State Voices, and worked together to agree on the theory of change, and our people in order to speak as one network.

Analyzed the landscape assessment feedback from our core stakeholders, and gained a clear understanding of the communities we engage based on the data. We were also led in a workshop by Erin Byrd, Director of the Partnership Fund, on how to shift our work to support the needs

of the states through centering racial equity, and exploring how dismantling white supremacy culture in our work can help us achieve our goals.

Through the facilitation of the The North Star Committee and staff, we found agreement around the network structure. Our biggest breakthrough was defining ourselves as an affiliated body of organizations and expanded beyond a loosely affiliated network model. This remarkable shift strengthened our alignment.

We grew together and sharpened our analysis around race equity and what it means for power building. The leadership took a strong stance to ensure that we will unapologetically work as a multi-racial alliance which centers the needs of the people most impacted in our states adding that we are willing to part with state and national partners who are unaligned with our values based strategy.

We attempted to dive deeper into the structure and how State Voices can work together through defining the core and unique capacities each State Table should possess in order to advance our work.

We defined a core capacity as the foundational area of work a State Table advances in order to support table partners, staff and people on the ground.

Core capacities are fundamental to the mission and role of a State Table. We defined a unique capacity as a special area of work a State Table advances in order to support table partners, staff and people on the ground. This work can be short or long term and supports larger strategies for emerging needs.

CORE CAPACITY

The foundational area of work a State Table advances in order to support table partners, staff and people on the ground.

UNIQUE CAPACITY

A special area of work a State Table advances in order to support table partners, staff and people on the ground. This work can be short or long term and supports larger strategies for emerging needs.

While there are a wide range of traditional civic engagement, leadership development and collaborative organizing strategies that Tables are moving, it is clear that State Voices and affiliated Tables continue to be committed to access, engagement and representation. These foundational pillars continue to guide strategy for State Voices, State Tables, partners and staff.

Moreover, we were able to prove that we can build a stronger, racially diverse State Voices – we walked out of the conference with a sense that the journey to transform how we work together will take time, but with the renewed spirit needed to make change.

THE SEPTEMBER NATIONAL CONVENING



Lariena Matthews (State Voices) and Erin Dale Byrd (The Partnership, Partnership Action Funds, and State Voices Board of Directors), September 2019



Rebozo Flamenco, September 2019



Michaela Brown and child (State Voices), September 2019



LaTonya Wallace (Virginia Civic Engagement Table), September 2019



Jordan DeLoach (State Voices), Christina Griffin-Jones (Engage San Diego), and Cara Romanik (State Voices), September 2019



Carmen Berkley (Dancing Hearts Consulting) and convening participants, September 2019

OUR VISION: THE
NEW DIRECTION OF
STATE VOICES

03

OUR POWER: THE NEW DIRECTION OF STATE VOICES

After hundreds of responses, interviews, surveys, and two conferences, the Strategic Direction process addressed the problems the State Voices Network needed to resolve to build lasting power for the hundreds of partners in the network.

We explored three foundational pillars needed to ensure our success, and we also developed key statements about our theories of change, our power, our vision, our structure, and our people.



The success of State Voices impacting our democracy hinges on three foundational pillars:

ACCESS

The State Voices Network is at the center of ensuring multi-racial, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural communities are able to participate in our democracy without barriers, and expand voting rights through access to the ballot, automatic voter registration and election and voter protection protection.

ENGAGEMENT

The State Voices Network will implement an integrated voter engagement model of voter registration, education, GOTV, issue advocacy and issue organizing campaigns in order to fully engage communities 365 days a year.

REPRESENTATION

The State Voices Network believes that representation from the state house to the White House matters, and our presence and our power are intertwined. Since communities are more powerful when they participate, the network will work to support campaigns such as census, redistricting and getting big money out of politics to level the playing field and secure equity.

After nearly six months of gatherings, conference calls, 1:1's and negotiations, The North Star Committee recommends the following statements to be at the center of the change model for State Voices and advance the strategic direction.

THEORIES OF CHANGE

The State Voices Affiliated Network believes that building a reflective, responsive and accountable democracy requires investing in and strategically aligning state, regional and local work. We are committed to intersectional power-building strategies that ensure:

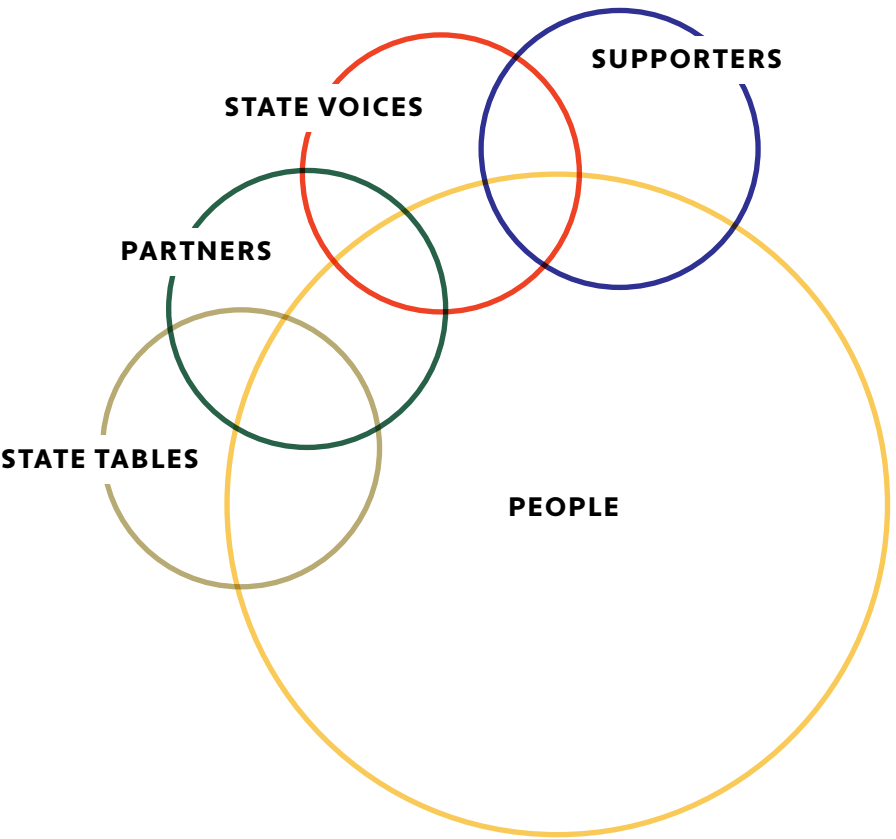
Grassroots organizing is thriving;

Leaders receive training and opportunities to lead;

Civic participation includes individual and collective strategies to make change; and Cross-movement coalition-building to fight back against institutions contesting for power.

We believe campaigns must include strategies that center racial and gender justice, and we will expand the capacity, skills, and the impact of campaigns in a transformative way. We safeguard infrastructure on the ground by supporting campaign planning, strategic alignment around state-wide power-building plans, and bringing an intersectional, data-informed approach to our full network.

The State Voices Affiliated Network believes that building a reflective, responsive and accountable democracy requires investing in and strategically aligning state, regional and local work.



SUPPORTERS

We partner with supporters to invest in the tools and capabilities of our affiliates to maximize our impact on the ground.

STATE VOICES

The State Voices Affiliated Network is committed to a transformative democracy that creates a free and just society. Together, we build power through convening, sharing resources, leveraging data infrastructure and incubating innovative campaigns.

STATE TABLES

The State Tables believe that building an accountable democracy requires investing in strategic alignment of state and local work through collaboration, capacity building, convening, resources and data and tools.

PARTNERS

Organizations committed to building power that transforms the lives of our communities. Partners join or “sit at” State Tables.

PEOPLE

Our people are multi-racial, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural. Centering the leadership and votes of Black, Indigenous, People of Color, women and young people is the path to power and a thriving democracy. We are pro-TLGBQIA+, pro-immigrant justice and pro-disability justice. We center incarcerated people, low income, underemployed, and working-class people across the country in cities, suburbs, and rural communities.

WE ARE UNITED UNDER OUR SHARED VISION
FOR A MORE JUST AND EQUITABLE COUNTRY
WHERE EVERYONE CAN THRIVE AND LIVE IN
THEIR FULL DIGNITY.

OUR VISION

State Voices is the national affiliation of State Tables building political power with mult-racial, multiethnic and multicultural communities. We envision a reflective, responsive and accountable democracy that centers and values advocates, activists and organizers to transform the lives of our communities – especially those who experience oppression.

and young people are free, and able to live in their full dignity. In this world, our people have affordable housing, economic stability and the resources they need to live. We dream of a world where we are all represented and connected, which centers joy and leading with love.

We envision a nation of powerful state-based coalitions that transform the political landscape by anchoring racial and gender justice as a strategy to build power and win. We believe we can create this free, liberated world together.

We fight for a world where Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), women

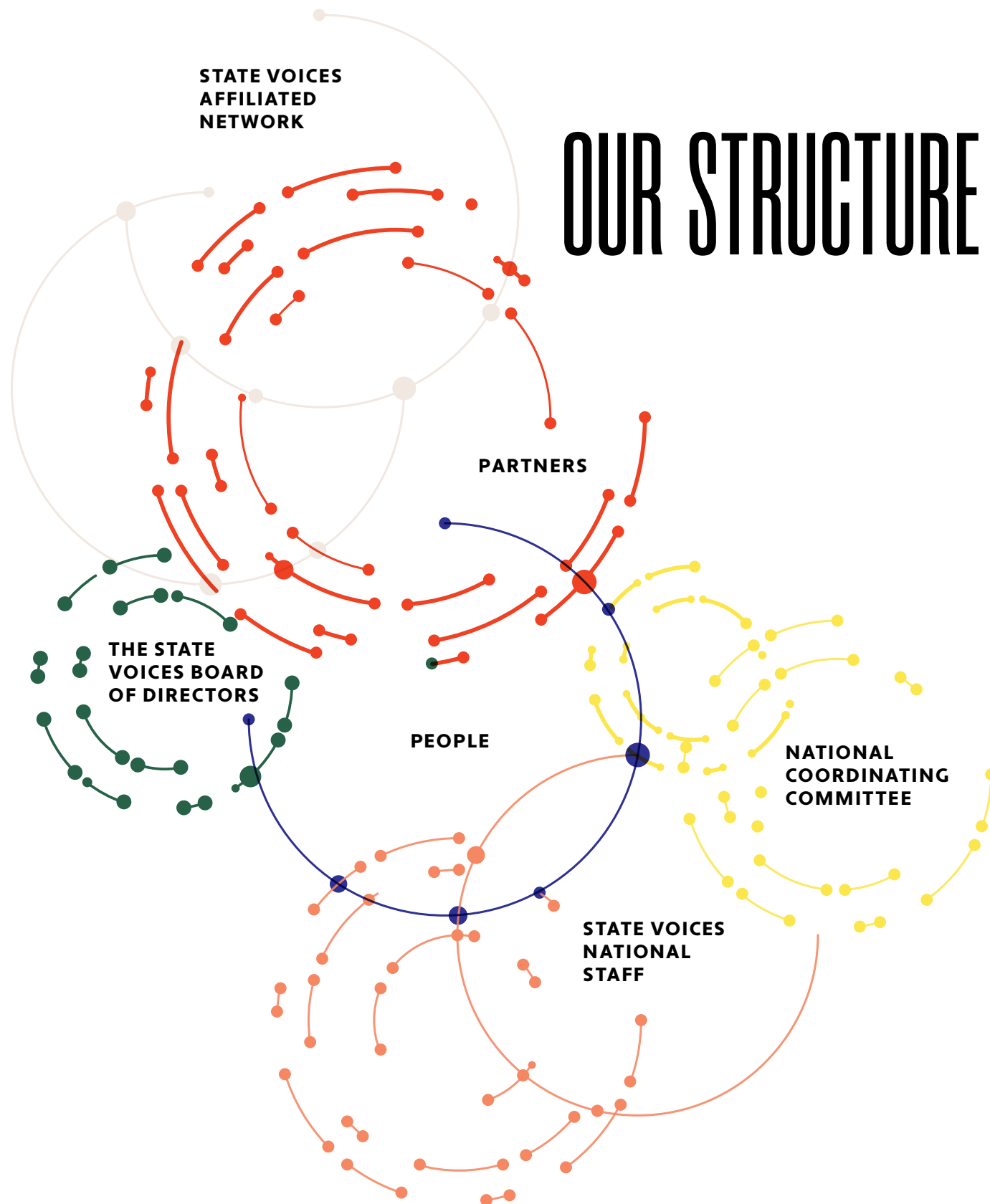
OUR POWER

Our affiliated network is committed to building people power that transforms our democracy to create a free and just society for all. Our power is rooted in our commitment to centering the experiences of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), women and young people as the winning path to well resourced and thriving communities. Together we will organize on

the ground to build capacity, leverage data infrastructure, and incubate innovative, people powered campaigns that support communities, win at the ballot box, and transform our state houses. We are united under our shared vision for a more just and equitable country where everyone can thrive and live in their full dignity.



OUR STRUCTURE



The State Voices Board of Directors serves as the governing body of the organization. They are responsible for setting forth a vision for the organization and hold fiduciary and governance responsibilities as mandated by law. The Board is composed of State Voices State Directors, supporters and partners.

The State Voices Affiliated Network is composed of permanent, non-partisan coalitions called “Tables” working year-round to create a reflective, responsive and accountable democracy. We invest in intersectional power-building strategies to align state, regional, and local campaigns and leverage data infrastructure. Our network consists of over 900 partner organizations of which 600 sit at State Tables, and over 300 work with our Tools for All program. We focus on partnering with organizations who center multi-racial, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural communities to coordinate organizing strategy and resources to transform our democracy and the lives of the people we serve.

The National Coordinating Committee is the proposed representative leadership advisory committee within State Voices to ensure that the State Tables have a

structured body to strategize, advise and collaborate with the State Voices staff on the implementation of national priorities, programmatic and partnership work. To ensure alignment between the affiliates, staff and board, we recommend the following composition:

- Three state directors (with at least one state director who currently serves on the State Voices Board of Directors);
- Three data staff;
- Three state program staff; and
- The State Voices Chief Executive Director (to serve as the chair).

The State Voices National Staff is composed of experts in the field of civic engagement, policy, capacity building, organizing, data and technology, partnerships, operations and development to support the work of the State Voices Affiliated Network. The staff work with the states to provide technical assistance, training, tools, convenings, strategic advice, partnerships and resources to State Tables and partners.

A NEW STATE VOICES

04

A NEW STATE VOICES

Since the ratification of our Strategic Direction, our charge to build power is stronger than ever before. We are not the invisible glue anymore. We believe in the power of transformational leadership, and we are unapologetic in our mission to ensure full access, representation and engagement of our communities in the states to protect and uphold a healthy democracy. We are accountable to our people, our tables, our partners and our organizations to ensure that they have the resources, tools, skills and coordination needed to advance our mission.

Our network is stronger than ever – we have expanded to 23 State Tables and witnessed extraordinary leadership transitions in states like Virginia, Minnesota, North Carolina, Colorado, Montana and Kentucky. State Tables are running strong census, and civic engagement campaigns to ensure the democracy of our communities

are protected. Our State Voices staff are innovating with partners to ensure our values and practices stay aligned through data infrastructure, training, gatherings, national coalition building, digital and communications, cross sector policy alignment and the administration of data tools.

While we celebrate our organizational shifts, our priority remains the same – to unify our multiracial and multicultural partners around a common agenda to strengthen our democracy, fortify organizations, and to amplify the voices of underrepresented and marginalized communities. In doing so, we are able to accomplish more together than any one of us would ever be able to accomplish alone. As we continue along this journey towards a more equitable and healthy democracy, we hope to bring our table, donor and progressive movement partners along with us on the journey.

We must all be bold, take risks, and do the work that will get us one step closer to the liberated world we deserve.

Alexis Anderson-Reed
Chief Executive Office, State Voices

WELCOME TO THE NEW STATE VOICES.

- Reflection of Our Values
- One of the Best Places to Work in the Progressive Ecosystem
- Expanded Data & Technology to Meet the Needs of 21st Century Organizing
- New Definition of Civic Engagement that is Grounded in Power Building
- Access, Engagement & Representation
- Centers Racial & Gender Justice
- In-Service to the States
- People-Powered, People-Centered
- Vision for a Multiracial Democracy, That Centers Building Power for BIPOC Communities, so We Can All Thrive & Live in Our Full Dignity
- Black Liberation & Freedom
- Collaboration and Deep & Authentic Partnership
- Life-Long Learning: Shifting & Adapting to Meet the Moment

TRANSFORMING YOUR ORGANIZATION WORKSHEET

Many organizations are considering what it takes to make transformative change happen through a strategic planning process that centers equity, race, gender, sexual identity, and people with disabilities. Before you jump into a strategic planning process, sit with your team and answer a few questions to ignite a thoughtful process towards making meaningful shifts.

WHAT IS OUR VISION?

What is our unique role and value to creating change in our movement? How do we assert ourselves as a strong leader and communicate our value to our constituents, partners and the world writ large? Where do we need to grow? What have we learned?

[illegible]

WHO ARE OUR PEOPLE?

What is the impact we'll make on communities we serve? What communities do we need to grow through strategic partnerships nationally and in state? Where have we seen success? How do we build trust, solidarity and community as a network? Who are the people we serve? How do our people currently talk about us? What needs to shift? What resources do staff need to achieve these goals?

[illegible]

DOES OUR STRUCTURE SERVE OUR CONSTITUENTS?

How does our structure serve our purpose and help us shift power for our communities and/or win?
Have we identified a structure we admire within other organizations? How does the current structure support the work we are achieving? What is not working with the current structure? How do we strengthen our relationship with staff? Are there gaps in the structure we need to address? How do we strengthen the governance and accountability structures?

[illegible]

WHAT TYPE OF POWER ARE WE BUILDING?

What does it mean to “build power”? Are there issue campaigns across organizations we can align with? What does winning in our city/states look like? Where have we seen major success within our organization or others? What should we stop doing? What political landscape changes need to happen in order for us to achieve our goals? What resources do we need? What would it take for us to develop a national/state campaign as a coalition?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

BE HONEST:

How are BIPOC people and communities (Black, Indigenous, Latinx, AAPI and all people of color) currently prioritized and served in your organization?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

[illegible][illegible]

GLOSSARY

BIPOC [bi-pok]

is an acronym which stands for Black, Indigenous, People of Color. By specifically naming Black and Indigenous people we are recognizing that Black and Indigenous people face the worst consequences of systemic white supremacy, classism, and settler colonialism.

Civic Engagement

involves “working to make a difference in the civic life of one’s community and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community through both political and non-political processes.”

State Table

The State Voices network is composed of permanent, state-based nonpartisan coalitions called “Tables” working year-round to create a more accessible, inclusive, and representative democracy. Our Tables are likewise composed of partner organizations– the organizations on the ground serving our communities. Together, these organizations pool resources and work to achieve shared goals that none of them could meet on their own.

National Partner

State Voices partners with numerous organizations to more effectively coordinate our work. Many of these partners work with us in issue areas, like our democracy work, while others participate in our Tools For All program.

Multi-ethnic

is made up of people of various ethnicities.

Multi-cultural

is relating to, reflecting or adapting to diverse cultures.

Landscape Assessment

is the survey and interview process led by the North Star committee. The committee analyzed the data to create the Strategic Direction with the State Voices Network.

GOTV

is an acronym for Get Out the Vote. Get Out the Vote is a tactical activity led by organizations to encourage voters to activate leading up to an election.

501 (c) (3)

To be tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, an organization must be organized and operated exclusively for exempt purposes set forth in section 501(c)(3), and none of its earnings may inure to any private shareholder or individual. State Voices is a 501 (c)(3) organization.

501 (c) (4)

To be tax-exempt as a social welfare organization described in Internal Revenue Code (IRC) section 501(c)(4), an organization must not be organized for profit and must be operated exclusively to promote social welfare.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Our Network

Engage San Diego
Colorado Civic Engagement

Roundtable
Florida 501(c)(3) Civic Engagement Table
Pro Georgia
Kentucky Civic Engagement Table
The Power Coalition for Equity and Justice
Maine Voices Network
Massachusetts Voter Table
Michigan Voices
Minnesota Voice
Missouri Organizing and Voter Engagement Collaborative
Montana Voices
Nebraska Civic Engagement Table
Silver State Voices
New Mexico Civic Engagement Table
New York Civic Engagement Table
Blueprint NC
Ohio Voice
Oregon Voice
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Virginia Civic Engagement Table
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