

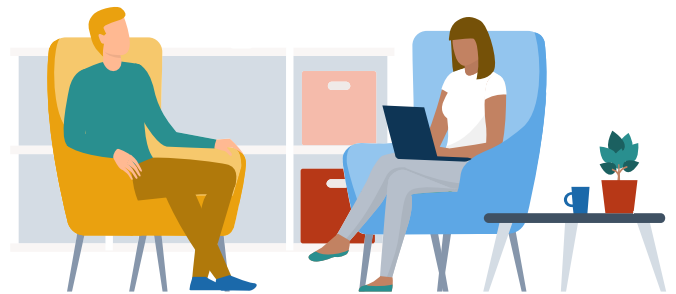
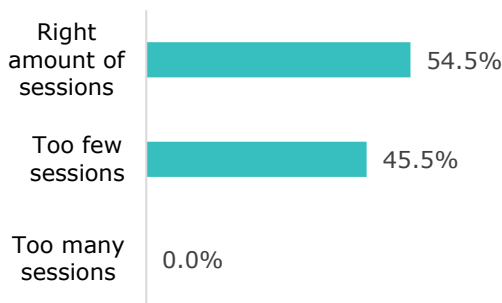
Over the past year, Together Toward Equity Fellows have engaged in sessions that are designed to bolster leadership growth and strengthen their networks and connections to each other. This memo summarizes Fellows' experience to date and represents their perceptions and reflections on the Phase 3: Dynamic Leadership section of the Fellowship.

11
Fellows

**participated in
the Phase 3
Evaluation**

Coaches Supported Fellows

Over half of Fellows (54.5%) agreed that they had just the right amount of sessions with their coach.



Most fellows reported positive experiences with their coaches. Specifically, Fellows appreciated coaches who cultivated an intentional space to reflect on both personal and professional goals, strengths and areas of growth. Fellows benefitted from coaches who were able to establish a safe space based on respect, shared values and relatable lived experiences.

"I think my coaching sessions were very supportive of my growth as a leader because they allowed me to ask myself hard questions and embrace discomfort. It was also quite challenging, as I realized for the first time that discussing challenges and deeply understanding my leadership requires significant internal work. While it wasn't easy for me, I appreciate it because I've become a much better leader as a result."

-2024 Fellow

Fellows became more confident leaders. Coaches helped build Fellows' leadership skills through confidence building, knowledge sharing, boundary setting, mindfulness and compassion. Through their coaches' support and guidance, many Fellows were able to overcome experiences of "imposter syndrome" and redefine what it means for them to be a leader.

"Through guided reflection and feedback, I feel more confident in my critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This has led me to do more informed and confident decision-making."

-2024 Fellow

Coaching helped promote and deepen Fellows' health equity journey. Fellows who were coached through reflective sessions felt renewed passion for health equity and alignment between their personal and professional values. Fellows also expressed motivation to apply these learnings in their communities.

"Deepening and achieving health equity begins with personal transformation and self-awareness."

-2024 Fellow

A CBO Leader recognized the positive impact of coaching on their organization's Fellow:

"Putting [self-care] above the work is hard for her, like it is for many achievement-driven, especially women in our society. There was this perfect meld of her being able to make space and be herself and the right kind of coach...helped offload a lot of stress for me because I have a very large team and can't always be there for her when I'd like to be. I knew that she had that external support. We're very, very grateful and even hoping that there'll be coaching potential opportunities in the future just because of the foundation they've built together."



Fellows Engaged in Policy and Advocacy to Achieve Health Equity

As a result of the Fellowship, 100% of Fellows agreed or strongly agreed...

they have a better understanding of Policy Systems and Environmental Improvement, and its connection and importance to Health Equity

they have a better understanding of their role as a leader as it relates to Policy and how that impacts the work they do

they have a better understanding of how to leverage their network and how to use network mapping to support their organization's Policy and Advocacy work

they understand how Policy and Advocacy work can be embedded in their leadership and/or Fellowship project

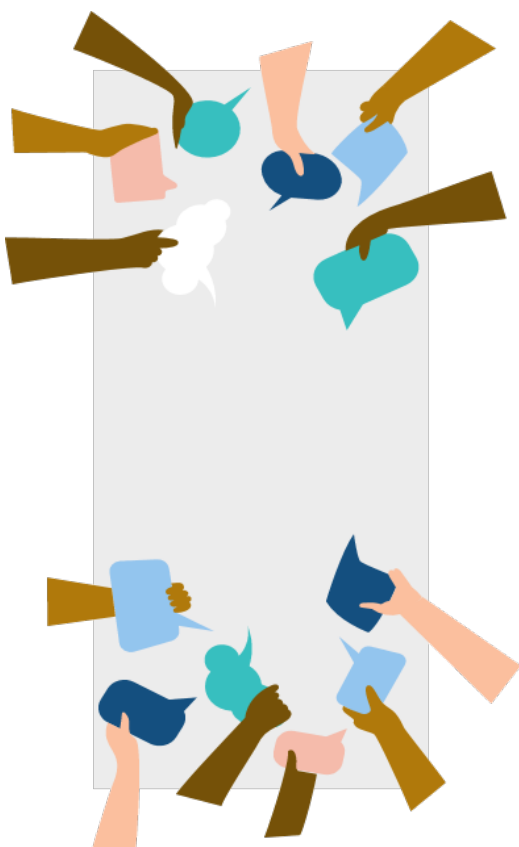
Fellows highly valued the learnings and actionable takeaways from Policy and Advocacy resources. While Fellows had a range of experiences with the relevance of policy and advocacy in their work, most reported a deeper understanding as a result of this session. Fellows' key learnings include education and storytelling components, hearing from other Fellows and guest speakers, utilizing shareable resources, and learning how to leverage networks and key stakeholders.

"I think revisiting storytelling and recognizing its significant role in advocacy has greatly impacted my work. I've integrated more storytelling techniques into my interactions with youth and community members because I realized there is so much our community has to share through their lived experience."

Fellows who applied their learnings in their day-to-day work have already seen increased collaboration and communication with community leaders around health equity. Fellows reported feeling more confident in their advocacy skills, and shared examples of ways they've utilized their skills to advance health equity, including community and stakeholder engagement.

"Policy and Advocacy are important aspects of all programs offered at the organization where I worked so I had a good understanding but have been able to leverage what I learned in the fellowship to continue to craft and advocate for more DEI in spaces where it has not been practiced as much as it may be mentioned or aspired to."

"Finding creative ways to bridge grassroots efforts and systemic change. Grassroots efforts often involve amplifying the voices of the community, especially those who are underserved or marginalized. Policy and advocacy discussions equip me with tools and language to articulate the community's needs in a way that resonates with policymakers and other influential stakeholders."



Fellows Emphasized Funder Networks and Organizational Sustainability

90.9% of Fellows agreed or strongly agreed that they have a better understanding of their organization's Funder network.

100% of Fellows agreed or strongly agreed that they have a better understanding of how to leverage their network and support their organization in sustaining funds.

90.9% of Fellows agreed or strongly agreed that they have been able to think through various financial needs to support the mission and vision of their organization.

100% of Fellows agreed or strongly agreed they have a better understanding of the importance of developing Funder relationships for funding and advocating for better funding practices.

90.9% of Fellows agreed or strongly agreed that they understand the importance of seeking federal funding in connection to their organization's mission and vision.

100% of Fellows agreed or strongly agreed that they have a better understanding of best practices for grant prospecting and grant writing that are specific to their organization's needs.



A CBO Leader explained how their organization's Fellow has become more intentional with organizational practices:

"The fellow has been more intentional about how their work impacts system changes... I think ultimately that has definitely benefited our organization and is building more partnerships outside of our traditional partners..."

Fellows Used Trauma Informed Management

Fellows gained a deeper understanding of how to contextualize and apply trauma-informed trainings for their work. Fellows reported feeling more confident as leaders and better equipped to navigate team-building in a strengths-based and trauma-informed way. Trauma-informed reflections included intentionally considering language, culture, inclusivity, empathy, and communication. Some Fellows also noted that additional support in this area could be helpful as they apply these skills and foster safe workspaces.



"The importance of self-awareness, care, healing, and authenticity in leadership to foster team building in ways that encourage vulnerability, healing, and compassion among teammates."

"I think I've always approached my community with a trauma-informed lens, but what has changed is how I apply this perspective to my team as a leader. Leading with this mindset has definitely improved my communication and problem-solving techniques. It has also allowed me to build trust and strengthen relationships, providing better support overall. Shedding light in how lived trauma also impacts our leadership!"

Fellows Used Trauma Informed Management (continued)

100%

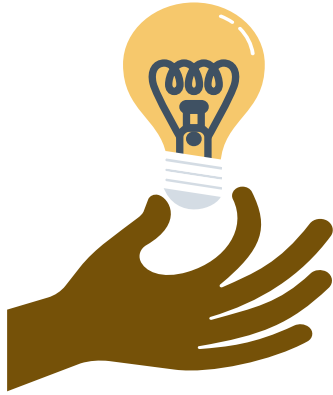
of Fellows learned how to lead and supervise through a Trauma-Informed Lens.

100%

of Fellows have a better understanding of how a leader can implement a culture of community care within an organization.

100%

of Fellows have a better understanding of the impact that Trauma-Informed supervision has on trust building in a team environment.



A CBO Leader highlighted the improvement to community work with trauma-informed training:

"I think having that trauma-informed care information and knowledge and skills, I think that was something that was really critical in [her] interaction with not only her team of other youth ambassadors but also the youth community members that were being served through this program because they were oftentimes dealing with their own traumas, they came from refugee backgrounds, so many of them experienced a lot of difficult things."

Fellows Strengthened Their Knowledge in Operations and Finance

As a result of the Fellowship, 100% of Fellows agreed or strongly agreed...

they have a better understanding of how Operations and Financial Health impact a Community-Based Organization

they understand the role of a leader in supporting the Operations and Financial Health of an organization

they have a better understanding of the administrative work that goes into running a Community-Based Organization

they understand the delicate balancing a leader must do between program work and operations

Fellows shared gaining leadership capacity and learning the importance of finance and operations management.

Fellows learned about the importance of including budgets, obtaining buy-in from leadership, and assessing staff capacity as components of their projects. Some Fellows noted this as an area for their continued growth given their limited experience in operations and finance and appreciated the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of financial management and operational efficiency. Some Fellows noted a better understanding of how an organization's operations directly impacts the community served.

"The operations and finance session exposed me to an area of leadership where I feel that health equity plays a major role. How an organization is funded and operated directly affects the population being served so this peaked a new interest for me within my leadership development."

"[I] gained clarity on how crucial capacity building is for the long-term sustainability of my projects. Building organizational capacity means ensuring that your team has the skills, infrastructure, and financial resources to continue your initiatives beyond initial funding cycles. Reinforced the importance of having strong operational systems in place to track budgets, allocate resources wisely, and maintain financial health."



A CBO Leader recognized the Fellowship's impact on Operations and Finance:

"In terms of her work with the city, she's taken on a bigger leadership in that area, which ultimately will bring in additional funding...I think a lot of that mentorship is due to the Fellowship. Not just thinking in terms of advocacy or organizing, but how do we really take our work to the next level? That's been a mindset shift that I've noticed in her, and I do think it's going to get even better. She took this Fellowship to heart. It was super impactful for her."

Engaging in Community Driven Data Approaches Helped Advance Health Equity

As a result of the Fellowship, 100% of Fellows agreed or strongly agreed...

- they have a better understanding of what Community Driven Data is
- they have a better understanding of the importance and connection of Community Driven Data and Health Equity
- they understand how to use tools to advance Community Driven Data in a way that also supports the work of their organization

Fellows identified several ways in which they apply key learnings from the Community Driven Data session to their current work. Examples include conducting listening sessions after trainings, including community members during project planning, disaggregating data with community input, facilitating feedback from the community to inform strategies, and building transparency and trust amongst community members. Fellows also highlighted the importance of centering community driven data in their advocacy at both the funder and policy levels to better serve the community.

"As we explored new programming to be implemented [in our community], utilizing a community driven [approach] allowed us to get feedback and buy in from the community and inform strategies to ensure long term success and positive change."



"It seems for almost two years I have been actively working with community-driven data, however without knowledge of the terminology itself; that term, for me, has been a more recent development in usage. In retrospect, it is the type of advocacy I have been doing all my life. Now, with partners from the community soliciting our help to engage the community in their efforts to transform an underserved neighborhood, it has taken me to a whole different level."

A CBO Leader shared that the Fellowship has had an impact on how communities have been served by their organization's Fellow:

"I think in general, she has been a quiet leader, as they call it, so she's really been able to push and influence fellow staff and team members towards working really, really, hard and being dedicated to serving their communities. She worked tirelessly around the clock to really make sure the community was getting access to all these different services and having their needs met. That was something that people were very inspired by and influenced by. I think that definitely contributes to the culture of excellent service to the community."

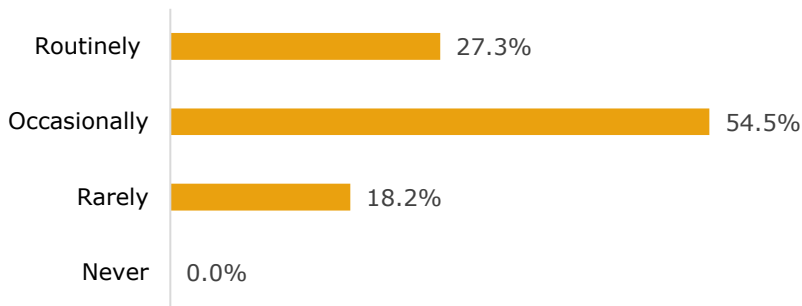


General Reflections and Recommendations

100%

of Fellows said the reflection questions in the post-virtual session emails were helpful.

81.8% of Fellows have made use of the reflection questions within their coaching sessions occasionally or routinely.



100%

of Fellows agreed or strongly agreed that the Fellowship has allowed them to deeply process and better understand themselves, their identity, and how their self-perception and awareness influences their leadership.

90.9%

of Fellows agreed or strongly agreed that they have been able to use the supplemental project outline to support their leadership development.

90.9%

of Fellows agreed or strongly agreed that they have been able to use their Google folder to help their leadership journey.

Fellows expressed satisfaction and gratitude for being part of the Together Toward Equity Fellowship. Fellows reported that their experience with the Fellowship has supported their career advancement through their newfound self-awareness, confidence, and skills. Fellows overall feel better equipped to identify opportunities and navigate professional advancement. Two Fellows have received promotions within their organization.

"Through networking and engaging with the diverse experiences of the Fellowship team, I've gained more clarity with a stronger sense of direction and purpose in my career growth. Very grateful for this life-changing opportunity!"

Fellows advise future participants to embrace opened-mindedness, opportunities for growth, and relationship building.

"My advice to individuals considering joining the next cohort is to foster connections with fellow participants, mentors, and guest speakers. Strong relationships enhance collaboration, provide support, and create opportunities for collective impact beyond the Fellowship. Use this leadership to regularly reflect on your own biases, assumptions, and motivations. Understanding your own identity and how it shapes your perspective will strengthen your leadership and advocacy for health equity."

Fellows suggested the following actionable recommendations:

- Provide more than 10 sessions with their coach
- Organize more structured networking events or smaller group discussion to deepen connections among Fellows
- Create an alumni network for Fellows to continue collaborating and learning after the program
- Incorporate a mentorship program where Fellows can connect with experienced leaders from their field
- Allow Fellows access to program materials and resources after completing the program, to support their continued learning and dissemination of knowledge

CBO leaders highly regard the Fellowship and are eagerly waiting for future iterations of the Fellowship to recommend it to more of their staff:

"I get chills because the partner portal conversation was so back and forth about what was going to be her project. She really used her resources, mentors in the agency to talk through it and to see how it's benefiting our agency."

"Overall, [the Fellowship] went really well and it's something that we benefited from as an organization. We hope to continue to participate in and we have some of our staff, as I mentioned, who are interested in."

