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Surdna Foundation Celebrates Centennial Year with \$4.5 Million Commitment to Equitable Community Development

The Amplify Fund: Elevating community voices in decision-making

New York – Today, the Surdna Foundation announced a new, \$4.5 million investment in equitable community development led by community members. Surdna’s catalytic contribution to the Amplify Fund will seed a multimillion-dollar pooled fund to put neighborhood development in the hands of the residents of those communities.

The Fund, an initiative of the Neighborhood Funders Group (NFG), is focused on bolstering the ongoing efforts of residents in historically marginalized communities (low-wealth communities and communities of color) to make decisions about the policies, developments and public investments that impact their lives.

“As we celebrate Surdna’s centennial year, we’re renewing our commitment to our mission through smart and inclusive community and economic development,” said Phillip Henderson, president of the Surdna Foundation. “The Amplify Fund is a tremendous way to honor the work of the past 100 years while looking toward building and strengthening the field of community-engaged development to create sustainable communities for the future.”

To seed the pooled fund, Surdna is partnering with the Ford Foundation and the Open Society Foundations. The collaborative effort will help scale and advance the practice of community engaged development, and formalize a set of best practices to disseminate in the field. Funders in California, organized initially by the California Endowment, have developed a sister fund called Fund for an Inclusive California, that will support work aligned with The Amplify Fund in the state of California.

The Fund will invest in up to 10 cities over the next five years, focusing on supporting citywide and regional coalitions, networks and campaigns led by members of low-wealth communities and communities of color which are engaging, advocating and organizing for equitable development. In addition to financial support, the Fund will offer communication, evaluation and technical support to grantee organizations. The Fund aims to generate a collaborative network that connects local, regional and national efforts to share strategies, best practices and knowledge to ensure a lasting, widespread practice of democratized development.

The seed funders of the Amplify Fund invite other national funders to join this critical effort. Foundations or donors that join the Fund in 2018 may have the opportunity to sit on the national steering committee, help select sites, guide strategy decisions, and determine structure and grantmaking practice. For more information about how to join the Amplify Fund please contact the Fund’s director, Amy Morris, at amy@nfg.org

More information about the Surdna Foundation’s contribution to the Amplify Fund can be found at <http://www.surdna.org/centennial/>.

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About the Surdna Foundation

Established in 1917, the Surdna Foundation is one of the nation's oldest and largest family foundations. The Surdna Foundation seeks to foster just and sustainable communities in the United States—communities guided by principles of social justice and distinguished by healthy environments, strong local economies and thriving cultures.

About the Ford Foundation

The Ford Foundation is an independent, nonprofit grant-making organization. For more than 80 years it has worked with courageous people on the frontlines of social change worldwide, guided by its mission to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, promote international cooperation, and advance human achievement. With headquarters in New York, the foundation has offices in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

About the Open Society Foundations

The Open Society Foundations work to build vibrant and tolerant societies whose governments are accountable and open to the participation of all people.

About the Neighborhood Funders Group

Neighborhood Funders Group (NFG) is a membership association of grantmaking institutions. NFG's mission is to build the capacity of philanthropy to advance social justice and community change. NFG organizes the field, develops leaders, and cultivates thought leadership among its national base of members and encourages the support of policies and practices that advance economic, racial, and social justice.