Almost a half century after the Civil War and 30 years after Reconstruction; at the height of a brutal campaign of racial terror and lynching and the precipice of the Great Migration, with Jim Crow firmly entrenched in practice, policy and law, a number of organizations and leaders courageously rose up against structural oppression and discrimination.

**Grants Made:**
- NAACP
- New York Urban League

From the end of the Civil War to the early 1900s, the number of historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) expanded dramatically. By the 1920s, there were approximately 77 HBCUs with an enrollment of 14,000 students. During this era, HBCUs became a center of protests and activism decrying inequality, pushing back against the overwhelmingly white leadership in these institutions, and calling for Black faculty, administrators, and professors in the classroom, among several other issues.

**Grants Made:**
- Fisk University
- Howard University

In August 1943, a white police officer shot a Black veteran, Robert Brandy, after he intervened in a woman’s arrest. While this incident served as the catalyst to days of rioting, root causes included police brutality, segregation, lack of economic opportunities, and the maltreatment of Black soldiers returning from war. The Harlem Riots of 1943 resulted in six deaths, over a thousand arrested and injured, and an estimated $5 million in property damage. Six thousand police officers, military policemen, and air raid wardens were deployed to patrol Harlem in the following days. Spurred by concerns about race relations, Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia formed the Mayor’s Committee on Unity in 1944, which today is the Commission on Human Rights.

**Grants Made:**
- Mayor’s Committee on Unity of New York City
- City Wide Citizens Committee on Harlem
- New York Urban League
- United Negro Fund
The decades-long Civil Rights Movement to dismantle Jim Crow and secure legal rights and dignity for African-Americans and other minorities has been described by John Lewis as a struggle for the “soul of America,” with bold activism and organizing that constitute what Martin Luther King Jr. framed as the “whirlwinds of revolt...to shake the foundations of our nation”.

**Grants Made:**
- Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
- NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund
- National Council of Negro Women
- Law Students Civil Rights Research Council
- Legal Aid Society
- National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students
- National Puerto Rican Forum
- National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing
- United Negro College Fund
- Morehouse College
- Tougaloo College
- Rural Advancement Fund of the National Sharecroppers Fund
- Southern Regional Council
- Southern Students Organizing Committee
- ASPIRA of New York

Federal retrenchment, cuts to social programs, and economic stagnation paired with redlining, exclusionary zoning, and segregation devastated minority neighborhoods. The city’s financial crisis in the mid-70s only served to exacerbate these dynamics. These conditions fostered a renewed focus on urban revitalization and the emergence of community development corporations (CDCs) to build economic and social infrastructure of low-income communities.

**Grants Made:**
- Southside United HDFC – Los Sures
- South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation
- Banana Kelly
- Flatbush Development Corporation
- Association for Neighborhood Housing Development
- Pratt Center for Community Development

Inspired by civil rights and legal activism and seeded by prominent progressive funders, several defense funds formed to represent the interests of a range of communities in the late 60s and early 70s.

**Grants Made:**
- Native American Legal Defense and Education Fund
- Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund
- Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund
- Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights
- Civil Liberties Defense Fund of the New York Civil Liberties Union
- NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund
- Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund
- NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund
1980s The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 profoundly impacted the demographics of immigration. As new immigrants began to settle in subsequent years, nonprofits stepped up to address the needs of these emerging communities. By 1980, the city’s immigrant population grew to 1.6 million—with European-born people comprising the largest group, over 20 percent from Latin America, and 17 percent from the Caribbean. By 1990, the city’s immigrant population surpassed 2 million, with Latin America as the largest area of origin.

Grants Made:
- Center for Immigrant Rights
- El Puente
- Haitian Household Education Program
- Haitian Centers Council
- Asian Americans for Equality
- New York Asian Women’s Center
- Institute for Puerto Rican Policy
- American Friends Service

1990s Promising to “end welfare as we know it,” President Bill Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act into law in 1996, which the New York Times described at the time as a “sweeping reversal of Federal policy…[the] President ended six decades of guaranteed help to the nation’s poorest children”. As the law significantly restricted eligibility for support for low-income families and in essence, slashed the safety net, a number of organizations, which featured the work and leadership of women, people of color, and those in poverty, came together to advocate for enhanced social supports and economic vitality.

Grants Made:
- Community Voices Heard
- ACORN
- Families United for Racial and Economic Equality
- Good Old Lower East Side
- Welfare Rights Initiative
- Action for Community Empowerment
- New York Jobs with Justice
- National Employment Law Project
- Make the Road New York
- New Economy Project
As momentum for criminal justice reform has mounted, the movement has been transformed and invigorated by the experience and leadership of formerly incarcerated people and those who have been impacted by the racially-biased system. New York City advocates, in particular, have had an enormous impact on national trends, and their work has led to the historic commitment to close Rikers Island and a sizable reduction in the city and state correctional population in the past two decades.

**2010s**

Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, and the commencement of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities in the U.S. have encountered an onslaught of discrimination and Islamophobia defined by toxic media discourse, bigoted political rhetoric, increased law enforcement surveillance and profiling, and hate violence. Several advocacy and legal groups confront this backlash, and advocate for the rights of these groups.

**Grants Made:**
- Communities United for Police Reform
- Common Justice
- College and Community Fellowship
- Release Aging People in Prisons
- How Our Lives Link Altogether!
- FIERCE
- JustLeadershipUSA
- VOCAL–NY
- Coalition for Parole Restoration
- Correctional Association
- Rights for Imprisoned People with Psychiatric Disabilities
- Community Connections for Youth

Some measure of the Foundation’s orientation toward this situation is indicated by a series of grants made to organizations endeavoring not to alleviate the distress of the Negro, but to remedy the causes of this distress. It is obvious that no simple cure all exists, and the Foundation has not looked for overnight, spectacular results. Yet, in the course of the last 38 years – the Foundation made its first contribution in this field in 1912 – much has been accomplished.

The Negro, of course, is not alone as an object of discrimination. Many other minority groups... have felt the sting of prejudice. And while many immediate steps can and have overcome specific evils resulting from bigotry and much has been accomplished in promoting tolerance, a great deal remains to be done in furthering the concept – a subtle but distinct one – of acceptance.”

New York Foundation, 40th Anniversary Report