Increasing Philanthropic Investment in Coalitions

January 27, 2026



Today’s agenda

- Welcome + Brief introductions
- Case study
- Working lunch: Key findings from the report
- Small groups to generate ideas for action
- Come back together and see where there is energy to collaborate









Why we're here







A note about funder/ community co-creation…

Quick (!) introductions

- Name
- Pronouns
- Organization
- **One of the following**, in 2 sentences or less:
  - A **2025 accomplishment** you are proud of
  - A **current** you are involved in that you are excited about
  - Something you are **hoping to take away** from today's conversation

Questions to consider today

Funders:

- How can coalitions advance your mission and funding strategy?
- Which of the 5 roles do you tend to lean into most?
- Where is there opportunity to try on other roles?

Coalitions:

Think of your most productive and impactful funder relationships. What makes them more fruitful than others?

Case Study: California Workplace Outreach Program

California Coalition for Worker Power long-term agenda

In 50 years, every worker in California will belong to an organization through which we can improve our workplaces and communities

Strategies to get there:

- Build capacity to organize at scale
- Pass & implement policies that build power for workers
- Align our movement

CALIFORNIA COALITION FOR WORKER POWER

California Workplace Outreach Program (CWOP)

Trusted-messenger partnership between CA labor agencies and 89 unions, worker centers, and community organizations

Culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach to workers at high risk of labor violations plus:

- Leadership development
- Capacity building for organizations
- Support for addressing violations

Launched in 2021 as COVID mitigation (COVID Workplace Outreach Program)

CCWP wins

- Expansion of program scope to include wage & hour, health & safety, paid leave & unemployment
- Won $93 million in funding (2022-2025)
- Shaped program scope to promote capacity-building and preserve grantee flexibility, two-year contracts.

Vehicle for alignment: CCWP regularly engages CWOP grantees to align on programmatic goals, campaign together, & build capacity for worker organizing

CWOP in the Bay

- ★ CWOP delivers over $2.6 million each year to 11 Bay Area organizations
- ★ In a 1 year period, CWOP allowed Bay Area organizations to reach over 71,000 workers and hold meaningful conversations about workplace rights

CALIFORNIA COALITION FOR WORKER POWER

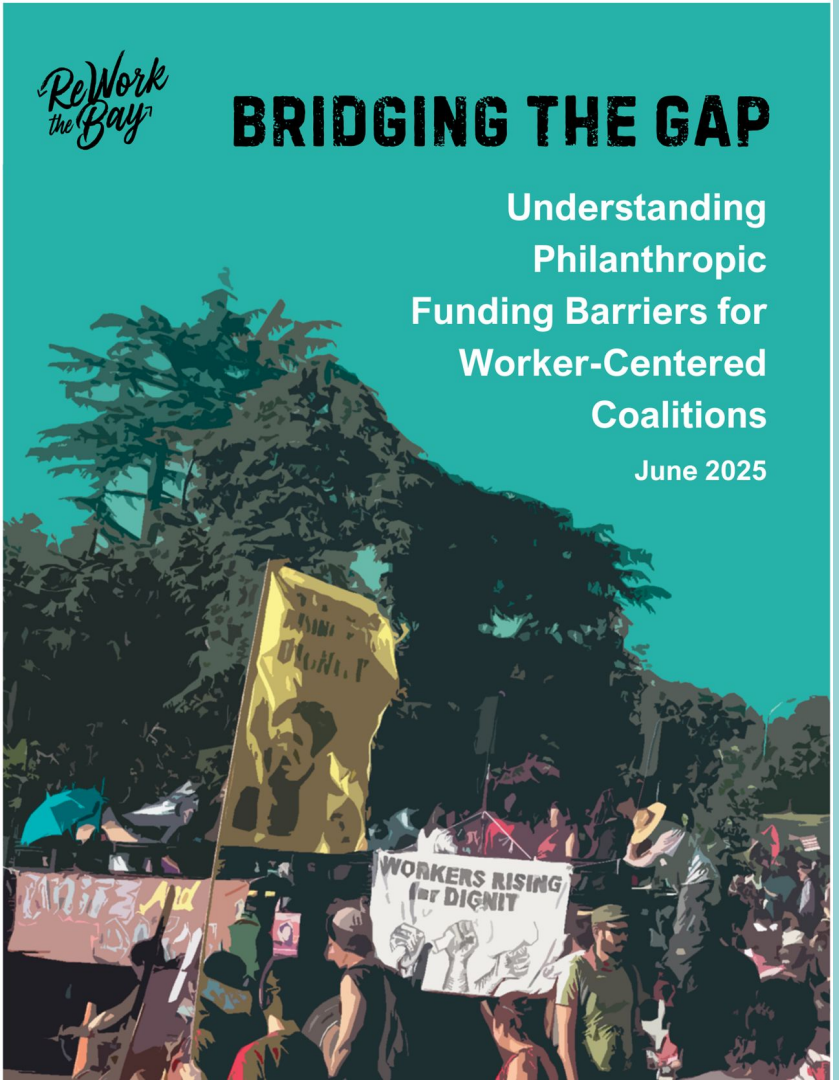
Lunch





1. Take bio break
2. Grab a box lunch
3. Come back and listen while you eat.





Key report findings

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Background

- Research commissioned by ReWork the Bay in early 2025

- 2 key research questions
  - What are the key factors that discourage philanthropic organizations from funding worker-centered coalitions in the Bay Area?
  - What are the key challenges coalitions face in coordinating efforts and sustaining long-term collaborations?

- Key insights and recommendations distilled from:
  - 11 in-depth interviews with Bay Area funders and coalitions
  - Literature review

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Seed & Sustain Internal Infrastructure of Coalitions

Challenge: *Funders tend to fund outcomes and campaigns, not the infrastructure that makes those outcomes possible.*

- Fund individual member orgs and coalitions
- Invest in backbone infrastructure
  - Staff
  - Convening capacity
- Fund coalitions at all stages
  - Planning grants
  - Strategic planning support
  - Rapid-response or emergency funding

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Invest in the Philanthropy Ecosystem that Supports Movement Building Efforts

Challenge: *Coalitions operate in ecosystems, but funding rarely does*

- Participate in ecosystem-focused pooled funds
  - Provide allied investments beyond individual grants

- Grow the ecosystem
  - Broker connections among funders
  - Raise funds for grantees
  - Regrant through trusted intermediaries
  - Influence peers toward trust-based approaches

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Trust the Leadership of Coalitions

Challenge: *Funders seek systemic change but often fund in ways that prevent it*

- Use seed grants as an entry point
- Make flexible, multi-year general operating support the norm
- Simplify reporting requirements
- Trust coalition leaders to deploy resources

Learning to Action

Breakout group instructions:

- Group number
- Worksheets
- Report out



What can we do together?

