



MANY PEOPLE, MANY FAITHS, ONE NATION:

## Why Should Philanthropy Invest in Religious Pluralism?

There is an urgent need for philanthropy to invest in religious pluralism today.

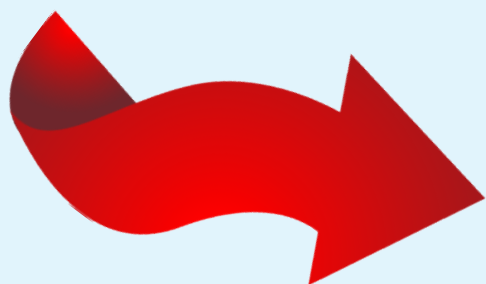
**Violence on the basis of religious identity is increasing at a rapid pace while America is only becoming more religiously diverse and divided.**

However, when religious pluralism is thriving, we can work against this violence and division. The relationships we build across lines of difference have enormous potential to strengthen our social cohesion and democracy.

The right investments from philanthropy **now** can provide necessary and critical programs, research, strategies, and convenings that will shape the way religion and faith communities are positioned to be part of the solution to our current challenges.

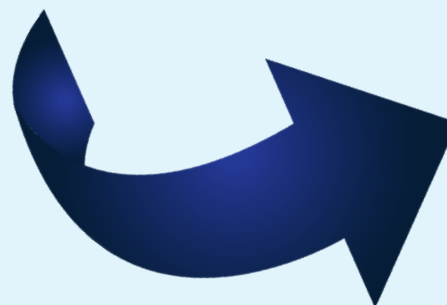
Very few philanthropic institutions have religious pluralism as a stated focus, but many philanthropic institutions care deeply about advancing topics related to and/or reliant on religious pluralism. They simply come at it from different directions.

### ADVANCE



## Religious Pluralism

### LEVERAGE



Some funders aim to support religious communities or religious pluralism itself. In this way, they are investing in work that is **advancing religious pluralism**.

#### EXAMPLES:

- **Intrafaith Cooperation:** Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund supported the Reformation Project to address LGBTQ issues within evangelical communities.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** Through its RISE Together Fund, Proteus Fund supported the Sikh Coalition to promote the inclusion of the Sikh community in American society.

Other funders leverage the social capital inherent in thriving religious communities by working with faith-based organizations to achieve goals related to particular issues. These funders are focused on work that is **leveraging religious pluralism**.

#### EXAMPLES:

- **Post-Incarceration Reentry Programs:** The Catholic Charities of Raleigh supported the Interfaith Prison Ministry for Women to support formerly incarcerated women moving from potential homelessness into permanent housing and stable lives.
- **Community Social Justice Organizing:** Ford Foundation supported Faith in Action Network's FORCE Detroit, an interfaith, grassroots organizing project committed to developing local leaders and advancing justice-oriented solutions to community issues.

No matter which way funders come into religious pluralism, the fact remains that religious groups are often working on major issues and influencing environments philanthropy is also operating. Knowledge and engagement with faith communities—as well as the components that make a thriving religious pluralism—promote more effective grantmaking.