Laying the Foundation for Higher Dividends

Throughout our nation’s history, cities have served as the epicenters and vanguards of social and economic change in the United States. We strongly believe that America’s urban centers have potential to be accelerators of opportunity for people with low incomes, providing residents with access to jobs, education, housing, human-serving systems, city services and quality public spaces.

We are also of the belief that our investment approach — working with local partners and Kresge counterparts with disciplines different from our own — only propels us closer to promoting positive change for cities and the people who live in them.

Kresge’s American Cities Practice is committed to supporting positive transformation in our cities and we center our grantmaking around achieving this vision.

One can see this ethos at work in the achievements we made in 2017:

- Deepening Kresge’s multiteam engagements and investments in Memphis, including initiating a grantmaking application portal process for projects that yielded a dozen grant recommendations from four Kresge program teams;
- Threading together climate change activities of multiple foundations in New Orleans, an effort closely coordinated with Kresge’s Environment Program;
- Stewarding the second year of the Reimagining the Civic Commons project in Detroit, Chicago, Philadelphia, Akron and Memphis, which is a $40 million national initiative that seeks to reinvent public spaces in those cities. Kresge’s Arts & Culture and Detroit program teams also contribute to this work;
- Strengthening our ties to Kresge’s Detroit Program in the recognition that our practice is grounded in our Detroit experiences and that the Detroit team is increasingly drawn into larger national conversations structured by us; and
- Crystalizing the objectives, partnership structure and workplan of the second iteration of our Drawing on Detroit platform. The project pulls together the Brookings Institution’s Metropolitan Policy Program, the Urban Institute, Living Cities and Kresge into a multiyear process that will connect municipal leaders, philanthropy and national policy organizations in local and regional conversations designed to identify the tools of greatest value in promoting inclusive economic growth. This initiative builds on our earlier efforts to share the lessons we have learned from Detroit with cities across the country.

In its inaugural year in 2016, the American Cities Practice cohered around a cross-team, cross-discipline mode of working. This past year we saw that foundational work pays higher dividends as evidenced by the high-impact community development and practice work of our grantee partners.
### 2017 American Cities Practice Grants

Expanding opportunity by promoting effective and inclusive community development practice in American cities.

**Grants:** 23  
**Total Committed:** $5,197,126

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>City, State</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>BLDG Memphis</td>
<td>Memphis, Tenn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Brookings Institution</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
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<td>Community Foundation of Greater Memphis</td>
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<td>Community Foundation of Greater Memphis*</td>
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<td>Forward Communities</td>
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<td>Foundation for Louisiana</td>
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<td>Greater Milwaukee Committee</td>
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<td>Historic Broad Avenue Arts Association</td>
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<td>In Our Backyards, Inc.</td>
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<td>Innovate Memphis</td>
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<td>Knowledge Quest*</td>
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<td>National Civil Rights Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Riverfront Development Corp.</td>
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<td>$175,000</td>
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**Innovate Memphis**

Innovate Memphis is part of the larger, national Reimagining the Civic Commons — a three-year, $40 million multifunder initiative to revitalize public assets in Memphis as well as Akron, Chicago, Detroit and Philadelphia. Reimagining the Civic Commons is the first comprehensive demonstration to prove that a connected set of civic assets can connect people of all backgrounds and yield increased and more equitably shared prosperity for cities and neighborhoods.

**Foundation for Louisiana**

The Claiborne Corridor Cultural Innovation District is an inclusive revitalization project designed to promote economic and social opportunity for low-income New Orleans residents living in adjacent neighborhoods.
Riverfront Development Corp.
Memphis, Tenn.
$85,000

U3 Advisors, Inc.
$111,111

University of Detroit Mercy
Detroit, Mich.
$39,715

Urban Institute
Washington, D.C.
$1,000,000

Urban Institute
Washington, D.C.
$60,000

Wisconsin Council on Children and Families
Madison, Wis.
$150,000

The Works, Inc.
Memphis, Tenn.
$72,000

*Denotes cross-team grant

Urban Institute
Analyzing more than three decades of data, the Urban Institute examined the relationship between economic health, economic inclusion and racial inclusion in America’s largest cities — creating a robust report, an interactive tool and a set of case studies that examine how U.S. cities can overcome economic distress in a manner that provides opportunity for all residents.