



Regional Solutions for Rural and Urban Challenges

Insights #8

Recommendations for Philanthropy

This *Insights* brief is one of a series produced as part of the *Regional Solutions for Rural and Urban Challenges* project led by LOCUS Impact Investing with funding support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The project explores the possibility that regional collaboration and solution-seeking can be an effective way of improving social and economic opportunity and health for all people and places within a region. We asked this question: Under what conditions are regional collaboration and solution-seeking approaches most effective in improving social and economic outcomes? We saw this as a counterpoint to the prevailing narrative of growing divisions between rural and urban populations along economic, social, cultural, and political lines.

To advance and support effective regional collaboration:

1. The Council on Foundations and the National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations, together with other interested parties, should review current regulations and practices to determine what, if any, changes in policy or practice are needed to enable and incent community and regional foundations to support, engage with, and take leadership roles in building effective regional collaboratives and strengthening regional ecosystems.
2. Philanthropic entities with a commitment to regional and rural development, should consider:
 - Making three- to five-year investment commitments in selected regions to support the creation and expansion of regional ecosystems that embrace both rural and urban interests and enhance social and economic opportunity and health for all people and places within a region.
 - Investing in the development and leadership capacity of the people who will be change agents in a region over the long-term. These investments should identify and lift-up promising local leaders, create reliable and sustaining financial resources for those change agents, and connect them so that they can learn from and support each other. Such long-term investments in regional leadership capacity are essential given the long-term nature of regional solutions.
 - Convening public and private sector experts focused on rural and regional development to consider effective models and identify needed legislative or administrative changes that better leverage public sector investments with philanthropic dollars.

Please visit <https://locusimpactinvesting.org/what-we-do/rural-work/regional-solutions/introduction/regional-solutions.html> to see all the materials produced for the *Regional Solutions for Rural and Urban Challenges* project.

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