

## Local Impact Investing Cohort

### What is it?

A **Local Investing Cohort** brings together a group of foundations – ideally 9 to 12 – to explore the opportunities (and challenges) associated with local impact investing. The cohort process is designed to help place-focused foundations intentionally explore, develop and begin to execute a local investing strategy that **meets their unique goals**. Foundations participating in a cohort often start from different places and, as a result, have much to learn and to share with each other.



### What value does it provide?

Place-focused foundations participating in a cohort will better understand how local investing fits into the broader field of impact investing. Participating foundations will make real progress on developing local impact investing policies and identifying the right starting point and partners in their community or region. They will learn from other foundations doing local investing, both in the cohort and across the field, so that they can get started more quickly and hopefully avoid some of the pitfalls that others have experienced. As foundations move toward implementing a local investing strategy, they can use their **cohort peers as a sounding board** for ideas and a source of inspiration and support.

### When is a Local Impact Investing Cohort the right solution?

This cohort process is most appropriate for place-focused foundations that have made a commitment to local investing and have at least some board support for this direction. Cohort immersions will focus on the nuts and bolts of local investing and will be most valuable for foundations that can commit the time of at least one staff member and one board champion. Foundations also need to commit to four 2-day immersions over a 12 month period (May, Oct, February, May).

### How has it been used most effectively?

Regional and national associations of philanthropy may want to sponsor a Local Impact Investing Cohort as a way to **help members make greater progress** on developing and acting upon an impact investing strategy. LOCUS, in partnership with the Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group, facilitated an 18-month Rural Economic Development Philanthropy Innovators Network designed to help nine foundations take a greater and more strategic role in support of community and economic development in their regions. A range of funders, including each participating foundation, provided the financial support to implement the cohort process.

### How can I learn more about LOCUS?

To learn more about LOCUS' solutions and tools, please contact **Sydney England** at [sydney@locusimpactinvesting.org](mailto:sydney@locusimpactinvesting.org) or at 804.793.0985.