



Housing and Homelessness Programme

# Programme strategy (2021-2022)

Ensuring access to secure  
and stable homes for all

## **Ensuring access to secure and stable homes for all**

A safe and secure home is fundamental to a fairer society. This is about creating opportunities and building strong communities where everyone can thrive and live dignified lives.

Far too many people are under constant pressure of losing their homes. The structural causes of homelessness include economic inequality and unemployment, discrimination and racism, and the lack of affordable housing. All too often housing is seen as a commodity, and as such a significant power imbalance persists for people experiencing homelessness and with the greatest housing need.

Homelessness is preventable. Genuinely affordable and suitable housing must be within reach for everyone. This is why the Housing and Homelessness Programme supports projects that work to challenge and resolve the systemic causes of homelessness in the UK and the US. We fund not-for-profit organisations that are ambitious in their strategies to address structural inequalities – from testing new approaches to scaling up what works.

### **Grant-making strategy (2021-2022)**

Our 2021 grant-making priorities form the basis on which we will develop our new five year grant-making strategy. We have a particular interest in supporting projects that are focused on housing and racial equity, the impact of Covid-19 on housing opportunity and inequality, and strengthening the voices of people with lived experience. We seek to fund initiatives rooted in a deep understanding of the experiences of people facing homelessness; proposed solutions should be those identified by the people closest to the problem.

### **Outcomes: working towards long-term change**

Through our grant-making, we want to achieve long-lasting systemic change. We support efforts that:

- Build a strong civil society that includes organisations and groups led by people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity and are equipped to advocate for substantial changes in practice and policy.
- Strengthen advocacy, grassroots action, and campaigning through better access to knowledge, data, and legal systems.
- Ensure equitable access to secure homes through an intersectional approach, where racism and poverty are challenged, and opportunities exist for everyone with housing need.

### **2021 priority grant-making themes**

Our funding addresses three themes: renter rights; supply and access to affordable homes; and reduction in homelessness:

#### **Renter rights**

We support organisations that:

- help renters on low income to access decent homes at genuinely affordable rent levels;
- promote fairer tenancy agreements and end unfair evictions; and
- uncover and challenge discrimination in housing.

#### **Supply and access to affordable homes**

We support organisations working to increase the supply of and access to affordable homes that:

- campaign to improve the supply of affordable homes;
- support different models of community ownership that benefit people with the greatest housing need; and
- empower communities to advocate for more homes that meet housing need.

### **Reduction in homelessness**

We support organisations working to reduce homelessness that:

- improve joined-up policy and service provisions;
- develop stronger advocacy and campaigning on hidden homelessness; and
- improve equitable access to supported housing and suitable longer-term housing options.

### **Our grant-making principles**

Systemic change requires long-term commitment, so our grants are mainly multi-year, and our funding relationships can stretch beyond five years. Therefore, we work towards strong grantee partnerships, where learning between ourselves and our partners is shared. Our funding is primarily by invitation only, and we engage with projects that are rooted in social justice, tackle structural inequalities and/or take a rights-based approach. We take time to listen to organisations to understand how their work fits with our strategy, before we ask for a written proposal. Please note that we do not provide capital funding.

When we invite organisations to apply for a grant, we seek clarity on the issue to be addressed, who will benefit, why the work is needed, and the extent to which the work is informed by lived experience.

We will also ask the potential partners to explain how they will use the funding and how they know that their approaches are effective and will have an impact. We will look for evidence that:

- people with lived experience have been engaged in the development of the proposed model; and
- the groups who will benefit are those who are the most disadvantaged and are living in/or at risk of living in poverty.

We encourage potential partners to remain in contact with us during the development of the grant application. We want to hear from people who will be involved in the delivery of a project and best to identify measurable outcomes. In addition, we want to understand what has not worked well in the past and what has been learned as a result.

### **Our mission**

Oak Foundation commits its resources to address issues of global, social, and environmental concern, particularly those that have a major impact on the lives of the disadvantaged. With offices in Europe, India and North America, we make grants to organisations in approximately 40 countries worldwide.

### **Our Programmes**

Environment, Housing and Homelessness, International Human Rights, Issues Affecting Women, Learning Differences, Prevent Child Sexual Abuse, Special Interest, Brazil, India, Oak Foundation Denmark, Zimbabwe

### **Contact Us**

#### **Oak Philanthropy Ltd**

58, Avenue Louis Casai  
1216 Cointrin, Geneva  
+41 22 318 86 40

[info@oakfnd.org](mailto:info@oakfnd.org)

[oakfnd.org](http://oakfnd.org)

### **Check us out on social media**

Through our social media channels, we amplify the voices of our grantee partners and support the work of our programmes. We want to inspire hope and possibility.

