



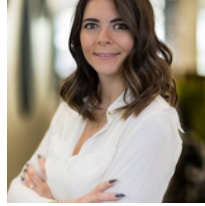
2024 ANNUAL REPORT



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Dear CUE Community,

Reflecting on 2024, I am deeply grateful for CUE's journey. We saw the reimagining of power with the development of the co-governance steering committee and the inception of a formal evaluative process for CUE's programmatic work. This year, we've strengthened the leadership of racial equity advocates through our Fellowship program, amplified diverse voices through stakeholder engagement, and leveraged community power to build pathways for change in Chicago.

2024 also saw the unfortunate outcome of the Presidential election. An election that we knew would have consequential impacts on democracy as a whole, Chicagoans, and the work of CUE. Because of this, we remain steadfast in our commitment to advancing equity. It is our charge to stand with and for the most impacted communities in our city. As we navigate transitions, your partnership reminds us that equity work is collective and transformative. Your unwavering support and belief in our mission will continue to drive this progress. Together, we are shaping CUE's next chapter and a more equitable future.

Thank you for standing with us, championing change, and shaping a future that works for all Chicagoans.

In community,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CWilliams', written over a light blue grid background.

Candace Williams

She/Her/Hers

Interim Executive Director

Chicago United for Equity

Acknowledge history. Shift power. Build accountability.

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Our Learning Community

CUE's learning community is anchored by our year-long Fellowship, a transformative program that cultivates a network of leaders dedicated to advancing racial justice across Chicago. Through a rigorous curriculum, Fellows engage in critical frameworks such as Racial Equity Impact Assessments, Addressing Civic Trauma, Power-Mapping, and the Four Levels of Racism. This immersive experience equips participants with the skills and knowledge to drive policy reform, systems change, and civic engagement.



These milestones mark another year of progress toward a more just and equitable Chicago. We look forward to continuing this work with our Fellows, partners, and community in 2025 and beyond.

- **Welcomed Our Sixth Cohort:** Expanding our network to 200 Fellows since 2018, strengthening a growing movement of racial equity leaders across Chicago.
- **Deepened Organizational Partnerships:** Strengthened engagement with sponsoring organizations, increasing the opportunity for adoption of Fellows' racial equity projects and recommendations.
- **Elevated Alumni Impact:** Expanded opportunities for alums' collaborative leadership, including mentorship and coaching of current Fellows, further embedding racial justice work in civic and institutional spaces.

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Civic Impact Projects



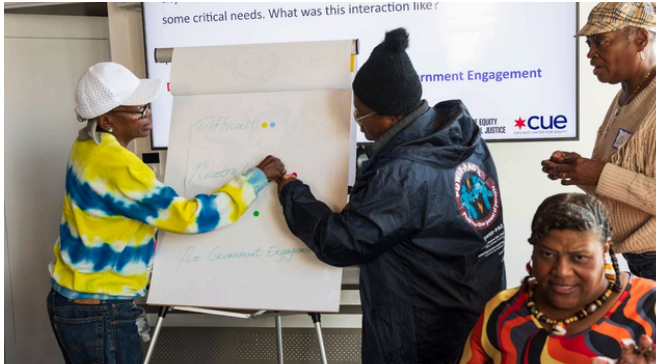
Our Civic Impact Projects are designed to foster public accountability and drive systemic transformation within civic institutions that disproportionately impact Black and Latinx/e communities. These initiatives center community leadership in shaping equitable policies and practices by bringing together:

- Community members
- City officials
- Local organizations and institutions
- CUE Fellows

In 2024, our work on collaborative governance (Co-Governance) yielded the launch of the Co-Governance Steering Committee and community conversations. Our goal is to ensure that Chicago's civic systems are responsive, inclusive, and just for all residents. Our hope is that our approach is a model for cities across the nation looking to enhance their own co-governance processes.

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Civic Impact Projects



- **Launched Co-Governance Steering Committee:** In partnership with the Mayor's Office of Equity and Racial Justice (OERJ), we selected the Co-Governance Steering Committee, which consists of nine diverse, cross-sector, community-connected individuals who designed and facilitated community conversations to create a shared definition as well as the supporting values and principles through community conversations and reflection.
- **Hosted Community Conversations:** In partnership with the Co-Governance Steering Committee Members and OERJ, hosted 18 community conversations, engaging more than 200 community participants, led five focus group conversations with local government departments, and interviewed three national partners.
- **Defining Co-Governance:** Data from the various conversations is currently being reviewed and analyzed to develop a draft definition and framework, which will be published for public comment in February 2025. Additionally, 2025 will bring the second annual citywide convening to share the definition and principles of co-governance for Chicago. We'll also identify the first pilot models of co-governance implementation.

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Expanding Civic Imagination



Our work on expanding civic imagination amplifies our network’s vision and values through innovative programming, impactful projects, and thought leadership. We believe that transforming civic systems starts with bold ideas, collective vision, and community-driven solutions. Our goal is to inspire and mobilize communities, policymakers, advocates, and co-conspirators to reimagine and create a more equitable future for Chicago.

- **Embarked on Research Study:** In partnership with Dr. Tiffany Ford, University of Illinois Chicago School of Public Health, we launched an ethnographic research study exploring the impact of the work of CUE Fellows across Cook County, specifically related to disrupting, breaking down, and building power. Dr. Ford has interviewed nearly 20 CUE Fellows thus far, with additional interviews in 2025, to support the analysis and review of the research study. Additionally, these interviews support our efforts to collect stories from our network and continue building our Storybank.

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Expanding Civic Imagination

- **Launched Comprehensive Communications Strategy:** The newly formed Communications and Narrative Strategy Team implemented a comprehensive communications strategy, including launching an Instagram handle (follow us @CUEChicago), a monthly newsletter, a Fellows-only newsletter, and cohesive branding efforts. Our goal is to enhance engagement across our network and generate awareness beyond our community, supporting our efforts in building the collective power needed to make our mission a reality.
- **Published the 2023 Fellows Equity Playbook:** The Equity Projects of the 2023 Fellows were compiled and published in the 2023 Fellows Equity Playbook, which provides an overview of the various sectors and issue areas of the Fellows' work. Their projects provide a blueprint for ways to implement Racial Equity Impact Assessments, develop frameworks to ensure equitable distribution of resources, and create pathways for meaningful community engagement.



2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Strategic Plan Highlights

In 2024, CUE continued to implement our Strategic Plan, designed to deepen our impact and advance racial equity across Chicago. Our approach is grounded in five key pillars, each reinforcing our North Star: Transforming Chicagoans' Relationship to Power.

Transforming Chicagoans' Relationship to Power: Our North Star, focusing on increasing community engagement, civic education, and co-governance to shift power dynamics in Chicago.

- In 2024, we engaged our network through community-wide conversations and Fellows-only sessions to assess our strategic activities and refine our approach to Transforming Chicagoans' Relationship to Power, focusing on:
 - Increasing belief in civic engagement.
 - Equipping residents with insights into local systems.
 - Leveraging civic knowledge to hold institutions accountable to BIPOC communities.

Expanding Our Capacity and Nurturing Our Well-Being: Strengthening CUE's internal operations, staff, and board to sustain our work and well-being. We've:

- Worked on our staff evaluation process
- Enhanced our board and staff relationships



2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Strategic Plan Highlights

Telling Our Story to Grow Our Impact: Elevating the CUE network's work by sharing models and tools for social change that have a broader influence beyond CUE. We've:

- Hired a communications manager to support our ongoing communications efforts
- Our partnership with Dr. Tiffany Ford will yield data we can utilize to continue telling our story and impact as an organization as well as the stories of our Fellows.
- Participated in a national co-governance roundtable and presented on addressing civic trauma at the Facing Race 2024 Conference in St. Louis.

Redesigning and Supporting Chicago's Civic Institutions for Public Accountability:

Reimagining institutions across government, philanthropy, research, and media to ensure greater accountability and equity. We've:

- Begun planning a collaborative initiative that will bring together community advocates, policy influencers, and experts from our community to build actionable equity agendas for pivotal civic institutions, specifically government, philanthropy, research, and media. The Civic Strategy Tables will provide a platform for critical discussions, where members will work together to address inequities and establish best practices for more equitable and accountable civic institutions. Each table will include individuals with firsthand experience in these sectors and those who have been hurt or harmed by them, ensuring a balanced and inclusive approach.

FINANCES



Chicago United for Equity remains transparent and accountable in its financial management. We have efficiently allocated 73 percent of our overall budget to our programs and initiatives, ensuring maximum impact in advancing our mission.

Revenue

Total 2024 Revenue	\$823,078
Grant Revenue	89%
Earned Revenue	9%
Individual Donors	2%

These numbers do not equal 100% as there is a 1% of revenue that is gathered in interest.

General Operating and Multi-Year Grants

Generating Operating	96%
Multi-Year Grants	84%

Thank You!

We extend our deepest gratitude to our supporters, donors, partners, volunteers, and the Chicago community for their unwavering support. Your commitment has been instrumental in driving our mission forward.

Institutional Funders

- Albert Pick, Jr. Fund
- Field Foundation of Illinois
- John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
- JP Morgan Chase Foundation
- Julian Grace Foundation
- Paul M. Angell Family Foundation
- Polk Bros. Foundation
- Square One Foundation
- The Chicago Community Trust
- Tides Foundation
- Walder Foundation
- Woods Fund Chicago

LET'S MAKE EQUITY A REALITY



As we reflect on the progress we've made in 2024, one thing is clear: real change happens when communities lead the way. At Chicago United for Equity, we are committed to co-governance, collective action, and dismantling inequitable systems—but we can't do it alone.

Now more than ever, we need bold voices, dedicated partners, and an engaged community to continue shaping a Chicago where every policy and decision reflects the wisdom and leadership of those most impacted.

Here's how you can take action:

- **Stay informed**—follow our work and share our vision.
- **Get involved**—join our initiatives and community discussions.
- **Support our mission**—donate or partner with us to sustain this critical work.

Together, we can build a city where equity isn't just an ideal—it's a reality. Join us today.

In Solidarity,

Chicago United for Equity Team