

# Thank you for Joining us!

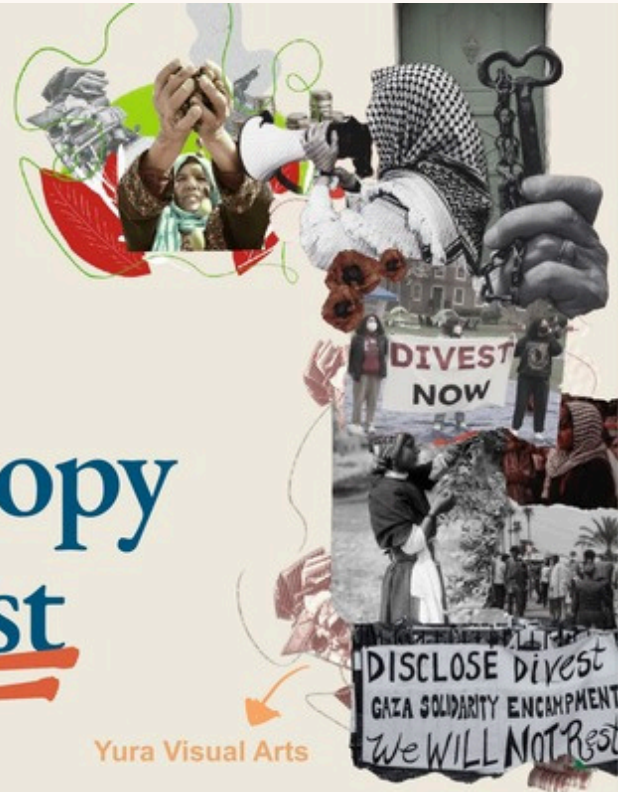


Intro Session  
May 12<sup>th</sup> 14:00 UTC  
In-depth Session  
May 18<sup>th</sup> 14:00 UTC

**EDGE**  
FUNDERS ALLIANCE  
ENGAGED DONORS FOR GLOBAL EQUITY

**FUNDING  
FREEDOM**

## Teach-in: How Philanthropy Can Divest



## Key Lessons from the Series

May 2026



**EDGE**  
Funders Alliance  
Engaged Donors for Global Equity

THE CONVERSATIONS ACCOMPANYING THE DIVESTMENT TOOLKIT DEVELOPED BY FUNDING FREEDOM AND MEMBERS OF THEIR FUNDER COHORT 2024-2025 BROUGHT TOGETHER EDGE MEMBERS TO EXPLORE HOW INSTITUTIONS CAN ALIGN THEIR FINANCIAL PRACTICES WITH THEIR POLITICAL COMMITMENTS.

THE DISCUSSIONS HIGHLIGHTED THAT DIVESTMENT IS NOT SIMPLY A FINANCIAL OR TECHNICAL PROCESS. IT IS ALSO AN INSTITUTIONAL AND ORGANIZING PROCESS THAT RAISES DEEPER QUESTIONS ABOUT POWER, TRANSPARENCY, FIDUCIARY RESPONSIBILITY, AND PHILANTHROPY'S RELATIONSHIP TO SYSTEMS OF HARM.

SOME OF THE KEY IDEAS THAT EMERGED ARE CAPTURED BELOW.

EXPLORE  
TOOLKIT



# 1. Philanthropy Cannot Separate Grantmaking from Wealth Management

**Philanthropy often treats grantmaking as the site of ethics while investments are framed as technical, neutral, or outside institutional mission.** The sessions challenged this divide directly, emphasizing that portfolios actively shape economies and systems of power and therefore must be understood as political.

The conversations pushed participants to think beyond the traditional distinction between “the 5%” of grantmaking and “the 95%” of institutional wealth. Aligning institutional values requires examining both.

## Explore in the Toolkit:

- Economics of Genocide
- Case for Divestment
- How to Understand Your Portfolio and Advocate for Changes?
- The Foundation: Understanding the Skeletal Structure of Your Portfolio

## Related Resources:

- [Little Sis](#)
- [Funding Freedom reports](#)
- [Transformative Investment Principles by Resource Generation](#)

## 2. Disclosure Is Often the First Organizing Demand

Lack of financial transparency is often structural rather than accidental. Financial governance is frequently concentrated among trustees, investment committees, or external advisors, making meaningful participation difficult for staff and stakeholders.

**Disclosure emerged as both a practical and political demand.**

Without access to investment information, institutions cannot meaningfully assess accountability or alignment. Participants also reflected on how “disclose and divest” demands emerging from student encampments helped shift broader conversations around institutional responsibility and financial transparency.

### Explore in the Toolkit:

- How to Understand Your Portfolio and Advocate for Changes?
- Putting the Issue on the Table
- What Does Progress Look Like?

### Related Resources:

- [AFSC / Investigate](#)
- [BDS Corporate Complicity Criteria](#)
- [ProPublica Nonprofit Explorer](#)
- [Don't Buy Into Occupation Reports](#)
- [Weapon Free Funds](#)
- [As You Sow Invest Your Values tools](#)

### 3. Divestment Requires Organizing, Not Just Financial Expertise

Financial systems are often presented as too technical or inaccessible, creating forms of gatekeeping that discourage broader participation. **Rather than treating finance as a specialized domain reserved for experts, the sessions emphasized collective political learning and organizing.**

**The conversations explored stakeholder mapping, identifying allies, building institutional bases, and preparing for resistance.** Many philanthropic workers already possess organizing skills from movement work, but may not yet think about applying those skills internally within philanthropic institutions.

Participants were also encouraged to think of the toolkit as part of a broader ecosystem of movement organizations, researchers, financial justice practitioners, shareholder advocates, and divestment campaigns developing tools, target lists, research support, and reinvestment frameworks.

#### Explore in the Toolkit:

- Organizing in Philanthropy
- Building Your Base
- Stakeholder Mapping
- Countering Common Challenges/Questions
- Glossaries

#### Related Resources:

- [Funders for Palestine](#)
- [BDS Movement resources](#)
- [EDGE Global Engagement Labs](#)

## 4. Fiduciary Duty and “Risk” Must Be Reframed

The conversations challenged the idea that “risk” and “return” are neutral financial concepts. Institutions routinely prioritize maximizing financial returns while ignoring ethical compromise, political complicity, and long-term social harm.

Practical questions emerged around whether divestment must happen immediately or gradually, how institutions respond to financial advisors, and whether justice-aligned alternatives are financially viable. It was agreed that **fiduciary frameworks are historically constructed and can be challenged and reshaped.**

### Explore in the Toolkit:

- Divestment, Skilling Up and Translating Finance
- Establishing Your Action Plan: Divestment and Shareholder Advocacy
- New Thinking on Investment

### Related Resources:

- [Investor Advocates for Social Justice](#)
- [Racial Justice Investing Coalition](#)
- [Tracker for Anti-ESG Bills](#)
- [SIPRI Arms Industry Database](#)

## 5. Intermediaries Face Unique Challenges & Possibilities

The conversations surfaced especially important questions for intermediaries, pooled funds, and regranteeing institutions navigating relationships with larger philanthropic donors.

While intermediaries may not directly control invested capital, participants reflected on their responsibility to movements and communities harmed by the systems philanthropy may be financially supporting. **The sessions explored how intermediaries can shift philanthropic norms by organizing collectively rather than approaching donor institutions in isolation.**

Participants discussed the importance of building collective expectations around transparency, accountability, and wealth alignment, particularly among institutions working with shared funders.

### Explore in the Toolkit:

- Choosing Your Campaign
- What Does Progress Look Like?
- Your Role

### Related Resources:

- [Movement Finance Forum](#)
- [Good Ancestor Movement](#)

## 6. Divestment Must Be Paired With Reinvestment

The long-term goal is not simply withdrawal from harmful systems, but **movement toward regenerative and movement-aligned alternatives.**

The conversations touched on reinvestment, solidarity economies, community-controlled finance, and the need to imagine forms of financial stewardship rooted in justice and accountability.

### Examples highlighted:

- Arch Community Fund Investment Philosophy
- Hidden Leaf Journey to a Regenerative Economy Framework
- Kataly Investment Strategy
- Divesting From Wall Street, Investing in Community
- Thirteen Reasons Wealth Holders Should Invest in the Solidarity Economy

### Explore in the Toolkit:

- New Thinking on Investment
- Transformative Investment Principles
- Successful Examples
- Values-Aligned Reinvestment Vehicles

### Related Resources:

- [TRANSFORMATIVE INVESTMENT PRINCIPLES \(TIPS\)](#)
- [Resonance Framework](#)
- [Just Transition Framework](#)
- [Center for Economic Democracy](#)

# Gratitude, Collaboration, and Continued Engagement

Thank you to Soheir and Rebecca from Funding Freedom and to everyone who has joined!

To ask any questions on the content and its implementation, email:

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To join the EDGE network, email:

- Sara: [sara@edgefunders.org](mailto:sara@edgefunders.org)

[Funding Freedom Website](#)



**To continue learning, check out the newest toolkit:**

[“Raise the Bar Philanthropy: Moving From Harmful to Liberatory Funding Practices with Palestine as Your Compass”](#)

