**Climate Emergency: Funders Insight Meeting**

24 November 2021, 10am – 11am

**Overview of London Funders’ insight meetings**

To ensure that our members are informed about how current events, demographic trends and policy decisions affect the lives of the communities we serve, London Funders is going to host monthly member-exclusive insight meetings.

The purpose of these meetings will be to provide a space where members can access reports, intelligence, and data on cross-cutting topics that are affecting Londoners right now. We’re intending for these meetings to be a reactive space, where funders can get together in response to issues as they arise - whether it’s the Afghan crisis, the climate emergency or things happening more locally where funders can make use of insights, intelligence, and data to respond.

From January onwards, we’ll be hosting insight meetings at the last Wednesday of every month. Topics will be announced at the beginning of every month via Funder Five and on our website.

**Climate emergency – insight meetings for funders**

On the 24th November, we were delighted to be joined by **Kate Hand, Head of Climate Change at London Councils** and **Jeana Malhi, Systems Change organiser with UK Youth Climate Coalition and Local Councils Officer, Hope for the Future**. The meeting was chaired by **Sufina Ahmad, Director of John Ellerman Foundation.**

**Summary of the meeting**

**The role of councils in tackling the climate crisis**

Kate Hand told attendees about the critical role councils have in tackling climate change. Not only do they have the planning and transport powers to design green policies, but they also play a role in working with communities and people heavily impacted by climate change. London Councils have been lobbying government for retrofits and fiscal support to tackle climate change. In addition to this, London Councils have been helping councils to develop emissions accounting – there is currently no government-led standard for how emissions should be counted or what should be included but these are critical questions for transparency. Kate also told attendees that London Councils’ polling shows that Londoners are concerned about climate change and they want councils to do more but are not entirely sure what that would look like. It’s therefore a need to raise awareness about what councils are doing in response to climate change.

**What happened at COP26?**

Kate Hand explained that we saw major pledges from the nations who attended COP26 - including a commitment to cut 30% of methane emissions by 2030 and UK companies forced to show how they’ll reach net zero by 2023. The Glasgow Climate Pact also recognised the role local government and multilevel action play in tackling climate change.

However, not enough was achieved. This was echoed by Jeana Malhi, organiser with the UK Climate Youth Coalition, who explained that this COP leaves us with a global warming temperature of 2.5 degrees, despite widespread calls for keeping it at 1.5 degrees.

But as Kate told funders, the commitments made at COP26 will be important in holding the government accountable to tackle the climate crisis. Jeana also highlighted the critical role that grassroots movements have played (and will continue to play) in putting the climate crisis on the top of the agenda and making 1.5 degrees a criteria for success in tackling it.

**What is the role of funders in tackling the climate crisis?**

Both Kate and Jeana were asked what actions and priorities funders should have in tackling climate change. It’s clear that the climate crisis is not just an environmental issue – it’ll impact other areas funders work to tackle, from strengthening local communities to promoting social justice. Further, when world leaders are not acting with the urgency required to tackle the crisis, mass mobilisation will play a huge part in putting pressure on politicians. However, grassroots movements have traditionally been underfunded – Jeana recommended that funders think about the resilience of long-term movement building and how they can better support and engage with grassroot movements, who may not have the traditional expertise or capacity to do fundraising. Many grassroots movements do not necessarily have the core structures of established charities but there are steps funders can take to support them in getting funding, including offering video applications, building relationships with movements and understanding the impacts they are trying to make to achieve lasting social change.

“*The acts of those who are enraged will go down in history as a force for change, which is bigger than just focusing on individual types of political action*” Jeana Malhi, Systems Change organiser with UK Youth Climate Coalition and Local Councils Officer, Hope for the Future

Sufina Ahmad, Director of the John Ellerman Foundation, who chaired the insight meeting, encouraged funders in the room to take an intersectional approach, embedding climate priorities across grants programmes. This was echoed by Jeana who highlighted that the climate crisis is a human rights crisis and the need to connect the different struggles communities face to achieve climate justice. Grace Perry, Projects, Data and Operations Manager at London Funders talked funders through the data London Funders had collected prior to the meeting. It’s hard to find data outside of what data the Environmental Funders Network are collecting – there are still a lot of issues with transparency around data and a lot of funders are not necessarily categorising climate related funding as that. That means there could be more funding going to this area than what the data is telling us. Grace recommended funders share their data on 360Giving, engage with the Environmental Funders Network and consider signing up the [Funder Commitment Climate Change](https://fundercommitmentclimatechange.org/).