



Hill-Snowdon Foundation Commits an Additional \$4.5 million dollars to Protect and Build a Fair and Just Society

The Hill-Snowdon Foundation (HSF) is proud to announce its [Protect, Block and Build Initiative \(PBB\)](#) – a new four-year, \$4.5 million dollar philanthropic initiative developed in response to the severe threats posed by the current administration’s dismantling of hard-fought progressive policies, practices, and infrastructure. The PBB Initiative seeks to help protect our partners from the direct consequences of the administration’s policies and practices; join with philanthropic allies to stand in solidarity with targeted communities; and support progressive movements to assess and develop new strategies to defend vulnerable communities, safeguard democracy, and secure a better future. The Hill-Snowdon Foundation board is maintaining our current grantmaking commitments while tapping into our endowment to generate the additional resources for the PBB Initiative. Consequently, our payout will increase to fifteen percent (15%) payout over the next four years – an unprecedented increase in our grants budget in response to an unprecedented moment in our country.

After several months of dismay and despair in the face of an authoritarian capture of American political, social, and economic life, growing pockets of civil society, including philanthropy, are finding its footing and pushing back with purpose and power. Much of the current efforts understandably focus on protecting and defending targeted and vulnerable communities. However, there is also a critical need to develop and test out proactive strategies to build the power necessary to fight back and win.

HSF’s Protect, Block, and Build Initiative recognizes the dual nature of the current struggle and provides resources to defend targeted communities, while simultaneously providing resources to lay the foundation for proactive strategy development, experimentation, and alliance building. This approach was developed by relying on the insights of our grassroots partners and other leaders in the field. Specifically, the Protect, Block, and Build Initiative focuses on the following priorities:

PROTECT: *Protect front-line non-profits organizations and leaders, as well as the residents of the District of Columbia from the impacts of the administration’s attacks on civic and civil society.*

- Provide immediate financial support to **current HSF grassroots partners** who are experiencing acute cash shortfalls and may be in danger of closing due to recent philanthropic cuts.
- Provide support for **digital and physical security, legal assistance**, etc., as needed by our current partners.
- Provide funding to support local organizing efforts to push back against congressional and the administration’s efforts to exert control over the governance of the **District of Columbia**, which is uniquely vulnerable to efforts to subvert its self-governance, given its designation as a District that is controlled ultimately by Congress. The recent takeover of the DC Police Department and mobilization of the National Guard by the administration is an egregious example of the dire need to protect the District of Columbia’s right to home rule and protect the largely Black residents of the District from further encroachments on their lives and rights.

BLOCK: *Support and defend communities who are being targeted by the administration's policies and actions through solidarity grantmaking.*

Authoritarian regimes grow and maintain their power by sowing division between and within communities. Consequently, [transformative solidarity](#) is the fundamental strength needed to effectively fight authoritarianism. In the context of philanthropic practice, this includes extending beyond our portfolios to support a range of constituencies and issues necessary to defend the targeted and ultimately advance an agenda for change.

In partnership with the Butler Family Fund, the Hill-Snowdon Foundation is launching the [Solidarity is Our Strength Fund \(SOS Fund\)](#) - a fund of [JustFund.us](#). The SOS Fund hopes to foster solidarity as an essential power and practice to push back against the current administration's destructive policies. The SOS Fund will support a constellation of pooled funds that are supporting a diverse set of targeted communities and issues, including migrants, LGBTQ+ communities, especially trans youth, Black communities, low-wage workers, reproductive rights, and climate justice. We are actively recruiting philanthropic partners to practice philanthropic solidarity and support the array of communities represented by the SOS Fund.

[**Learn more about the SOS Fund on Just Fund**](#)

BUILD: *Support opportunities for progressive movements to assess and develop new strategies to defend vulnerable communities and secure a better future.*

While there are myriad reasons why the country is where it is today, it is clear that progressive movements need to reassess their analysis and approaches and develop new strategies and capacities that can effectively meet these unprecedented times. Progressive movements are preparing to seize this time to build expanded and stronger multi-racial, multi-issue, cross-class strategies and coalitions and build their collective power for the long term. In the context of America's particular history of white supremacy, hetero-patriarchy, and racial capitalism, it is essential that this movement is rooted in and in deep solidarity with Black-led organizations and movements for freedom and liberation. Philanthropy can play a critical role by funding this strategy development and coalition building at a scale that is commensurate with the need.

The BUILD aspect of the PBB Initiative will identify and support networks, coalitions, and other multi-organizational efforts to bring together a multi-racial and multi-sectoral, cross-section of organizations to develop and experiment with innovative strategies to protect vulnerable communities, block and mitigate harmful policies and practices, and build the power to foster a multi-racial democracy for all.

While we are announcing the Protect, Block, and Build Initiative at this time, we have been making grants utilizing this framework since March 2025 and have already committed most of the \$1.5 million designated for 2025. We make this announcement now in an effort to build community and strategic alignment with other philanthropic allies who are and willing to stand up in defense of a multi-racial democracy and civil society. These are some of the most difficult times that we have faced, and we need to stand with targeted communities, stand together, and stand tall in support of our values, missions and the fair and just society that we all deserve.

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