

JULY 2017



FUNDING THE FOODSHED:

An Assessment of Funding Levels,
Priorities, and Opportunities
in the Chesapeake Region

Presented to Washington Regional Food Funders

INTRODUCTION

Efforts to strengthen the Chesapeake foodshed have made great strides in recent years, and there is sustained momentum among funders, advocates, and others to solve the region's most persistent challenges. Yet, given the large size and population of the region, and the scale of food system needs, funders must now capitalize on that momentum to support the organizations and programs that have been instrumental in bolstering the regional food system. To do so, philanthropic support for food systems must be more organized and must be deployed strategically to fill gaps across the issues and geographies most in need. Moreover, while philanthropy has played a central role in building and supporting the regional food system, philanthropic support alone is insufficient to solve these challenges. Given philanthropy's role as a bridge between the private, public, and voluntary sectors, funders should use their influence to create a platform to coordinate disparate funding streams from philanthropy, government, and corporate sources to more comprehensively address regional food system challenges.

To foster a thriving, equitable regional food system that produces sustainable and nutritious food for all, funders should:



1. Develop a compelling narrative about the urgent and systemic challenges facing the regional food system.



2. Strengthen the capacity for regional funder coordination across the entire foodshed to ensure existing funding is maximized to meet regional needs.



3. Build bridges with funders from outside the regional food funding community to fill critical funding gaps in the foodshed.



4. Look beyond philanthropy by leveraging funding from investors, government, and corporate sources.

ASSESSMENT GOALS & METHODOLOGY

This report synthesizes findings from a survey and interviews that Arabella Advisors conducted with funders who support a range of food system initiatives in the Chesapeake region. The goal of this analysis, conducted on behalf of Washington Regional Food Funders (WRFF), with support from the Town Creek Foundation, was to understand the state of philanthropic food funding in the region and uncover trends, gaps, and actionable opportunities for funders.

This analysis builds on an earlier Arabella report, *Good Food for All*, which assessed the landscape of food system initiatives in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and identified the most crucial gaps and challenges to help funders align on shared action priorities. *Good Food for All* focused on three overarching strategies: promoting social equity and food access, advancing environmental sustainability, and scaling the regional food economy. This report explores the degree to which funders are directing resources toward those three priorities—it examines who is funding what, and why.

THE THREE STRATEGIES:



Promoting social equity and food access

An equitable food system provides access to nutritious food for all residents, regardless of their race, background, or socioeconomic status, and fair prices and wages for producers and food system workers. An equitable food system also promotes health equity, since racial inequities in food access drive significant disparities in health outcomes.



Advancing environmental sustainability

An environmentally sustainable food system supports healthy communities, land, and waterways. We learned from the *Good Food for All* assessment that the most significant regional environmental threat posed by the current food system is water pollution.



Scaling the regional food economy

A thriving regional food system is one that supplies a large portion of the food consumed in the region, provides expanding and profitable markets for producers, creates good jobs, and contributes to the broader health of the regional economy.

Specifically, our analysis focused on the level and distribution of philanthropic food funding in the region, the current priorities of leading food funders in the region, and the priorities of “aligned” funders who focus on sectors that are interconnected with the food system, such as health and conservation.

We began our analysis by surveying regional food funders. We invited 38 funders to take the survey and received responses from 23—a 60 percent response rate. Survey respondents included family, institutional, community, and corporate foundations, as well as one donor-advised fund and one public charity. Respondents are located throughout the Chesapeake foodshed and have various-sized food funding portfolios: from under \$25,000 per year to over \$1 million.

We then conducted 16 interviews with six regional food funders; three national food funders; four aligned funders in the health, economic development, water, and conservation sectors; and three food-focused grantee organizations. The aligned funders focus primarily on other issues and sectors, but they support food-related programs due to overlap with their focus area. For instance, we found that many conservation funders in the region are interested in agriculture due to the significant agricultural pollution in the Chesapeake watershed. We include a full list of our survey respondents and interviewees in Appendix A.

We also researched the needs in the region, the existence of other funders interested in food funding that are not in the WRFF network, and other sources of food system capital, such as government funding. In Appendix B, we catalogue a comprehensive list of federal, state, and local government funding for food programs.

REGIONAL FUNDING PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES

Food system interventions in the Chesapeake foodshed remain significantly under-resourced.

There are relatively few funders supporting the regional food system—and they are relatively small—given the vast size of the region and its significant needs, including food insecurity, agricultural pollution in the region's watershed, and an inequitable food system for producers, workers, and consumers. In the region's two urban areas, poverty rates are well over the national average of 13.5 percent: in Baltimore City, nearly 25 percent of residents live in poverty, while in Washington, DC, nearly 20 percent do.¹ Food insecurity rates are also over 10 percent for all six states in the Chesapeake region.² And, while organic food sales have increased across all food categories, including fresh fruits and vegetables, organic price premiums continue to remain high.³ Furthermore, agricultural pollution remains a major issue in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. For instance, experts estimate that enforcing maximum pollution levels in the watershed would cost agricultural producers \$3.6 billion over a 14-year period ending in 2025.⁴ Despite these significant needs, the majority of funders we surveyed (19 of 23) provide less than \$1 million annually in funding for food system efforts across the six-state region. The most common annual food portfolio size for respondents is \$51,000 to \$100,000.

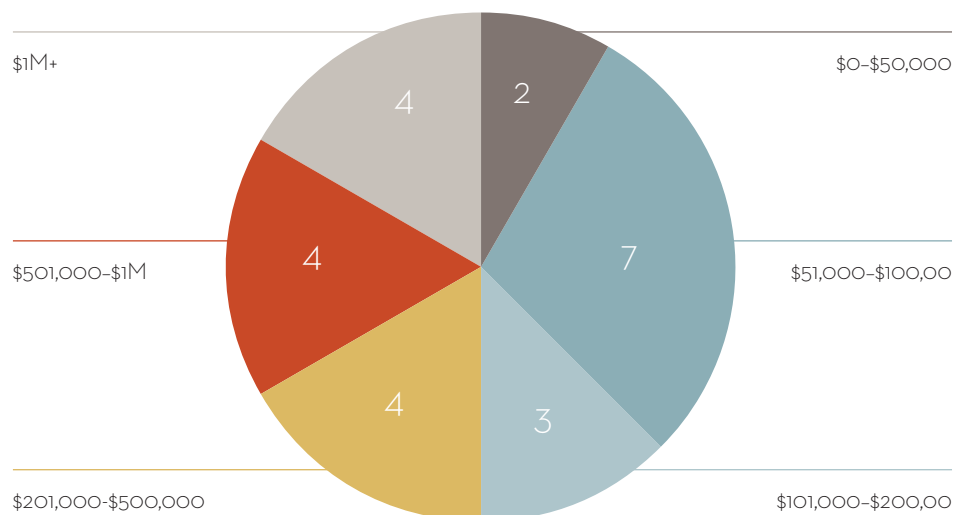
¹ United States Census Bureau. QuickFacts: Poverty and Health Estimates Interactive Map. 2010-2016. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/map/US/IPE120215>

² Feeding America. Map the Meal Gap Project. 2015. <http://map.feedingamerica.org/>

³ United States Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service. Organic Market Overview. 2017. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/natural-resources-environment/organic-agriculture/organic-market-overview/>

⁴ Environmental Science and Technology. Policy Analysis: Agricultural Costs of the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load. 2014. <http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/es502696t?journalCode=esthag>

Figure 1. What size annual food funding portfolios do regional funders have?



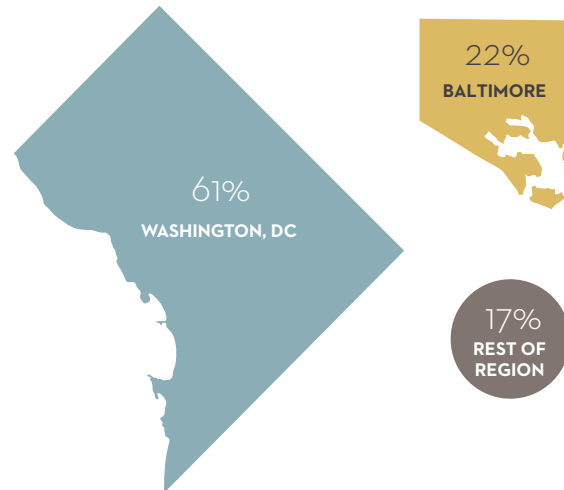
And, regardless of portfolio size, food grants make up 25 percent or less of total funding for most funders we surveyed. This data point substantiates the line we heard from the majority of survey respondents and interviewees: “I fund food issues, but I am not a food funder.” Most funders come to food system funding from other sectors, and food-related funding makes up only a small portion of their portfolio. While this presents a challenge for aligning on broad food system priorities, it provides an opportunity for building bridges with other sectors that overlap with food system funding.

Regional food funding is siloed by issue and geographically concentrated.

Few funders are approaching food-related issues throughout the Chesapeake as a system, or thinking holistically about interconnected challenges within the foodshed. A majority of funders are focused on only one issue within the food system, and most are focused on one city or state rather than multiple areas or the six-state region as a whole. Only five of the surveyed funders are supporting “regional networks and strategies,” and all of those are based in Washington, DC.

Funding is also concentrated in major metropolitan areas, leaving a considerable gap in rural communities and agricultural centers throughout the region. The combined 83 percent of funding that is focused on the region’s two largest metropolitan areas—61 percent in Washington, DC and 22 percent in Baltimore, Maryland—reveals a dearth in funding for the region’s rural areas among survey respondents. Furthermore, several important food issues are receiving funding only in these cities, such as school meal programs and other initiatives designed to improve the nutritional content of school foods, promote land accessibility, and support food policy councils. Over half of survey respondents fund urban initiatives, including urban food distribution and urban agriculture.

Figure 2. Within the Chesapeake region, where is food funding concentrated?



Most aligned funders in the economic development, health, and environmental sectors who fund food issues have a place-based and issue-specific strategy. For example: The Agua Fund's grant programs address water and conservation issues in the Shenandoah Valley only. The New York State Health Foundation funds preventative health programs in specific counties within the state, while CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield funds preventative health programs in the DC metro area only. The Appalachia Funders Network funds economic development in Appalachia, which overlaps with small areas of the Chesapeake region.

Funders that invest heavily in one issue and in one place are able to have a substantial impact in their issue or geography of choice. However, for funders to realize the vision of a sustainable, equitable, and nutritious food system, they must work on a systems level and take into account the needs across the entire Chesapeake foodshed.

Funding in the region is primarily focused on food access and social equity.

Food funders are dedicating a larger portion of their food-related grant portfolios to programs that address food access and social equity than to the other two strategies combined (scaling the regional food economy and advancing environmental sustainability). Survey respondents report focusing 60 percent of their collective food funding on social equity and food access, compared to only 17 percent on scaling the regional economy and 23 percent on environmental sustainability.

The top four most commonly funded programs in the Chesapeake region all address food access: food banks and other emergency food assistance programs (17 funders); supplemental food assistance programs, including benefit enrollment efforts, benefit incentive programs, and other efforts to increase access to national food assistance (12 funders); urban food distribution initiatives (11 funders); and farm-to-school and school garden initiatives (11 funders). The vast majority of survey respondents (17) are funding food banks, and these funders work in all six states in the region. As shown in figure 3, food access programs benefit from a high number of funders providing resources. This widespread attention provides these organizations with stability even as funders sunset or shift focus.

Philanthropic funding for food access is particularly concentrated in the DC metropolitan area. Of the 13 surveyed funders giving over 50 percent of their food funding portfolio to support food access, 11 are focused on the DC metropolitan area. Five surveyed funders dedicate 100 percent of their food funding portfolio entirely to food access, and all but one focus on the DC metropolitan area.

When asked about their priorities for the next three years, funders of all portfolio sizes report prioritizing access and equity issues. Large funders with food funding portfolios over \$1 million ranked equity for producers, consumers, and workers as their number-one priority. Funders with food portfolios larger than \$500,000 all report prioritizing elevating the voices of disenfranchised communities in their grant making. This large allocation of resources for equity issues, coupled with the attention from large, influential funders, signals potential for real progress on this issue in the short term.

And yet despite funders' strong work to alleviate inequity and expand food access, there is not enough philanthropic capital available to sufficiently address the pervasive food insecurity and institutionalized inequality in the regional food system. According to the US Department of Agriculture, rates of food insecurity in the region are as high as 15 percent in West Virginia and 12.4 percent in Pennsylvania.

Due to the inability of existing philanthropic capital to completely address food access and social equity, funders should not pull from existing food access resources to address sustainability and regional food system infrastructure. Rather, in order to align funding streams to properly address the entire food system, funders should attract outside resources for sustainability and regional food system infrastructure.

Figure 3. How many funders are devoting resources to each type of regional food system program?

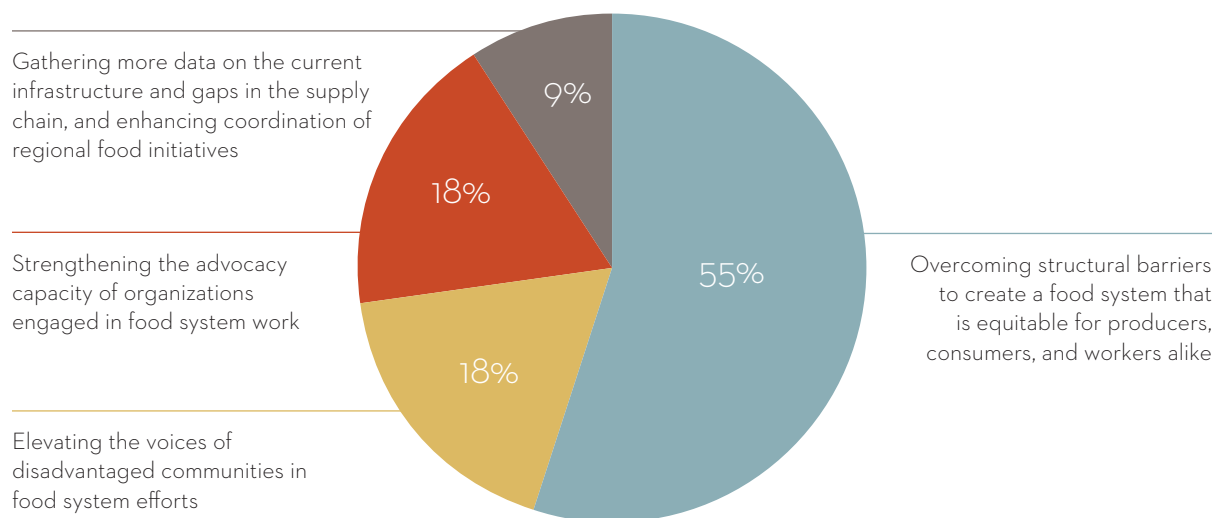


There is a critical funding gap for programs that aim to scale a thriving regional food system.

There is a large gap between the resources needed to support a regional supply chain and produce local food at scale and the funding currently available to such activities. According to the survey results, regional funders focus only 17 percent of their collective food funding on scaling the regional economy, including supply chain and local food production infrastructure. Specifically, six surveyed funders fund supply chain infrastructure, and four fund supply-side institutional procurement programs in public institutions, schools, and hospitals. According to survey and interview data, no funder is investing in supply chain infrastructure in Baltimore, signaling a void in a key urban market.

Philanthropic dollars and other sources of capital from outside the regional funding community are the main drivers of sustainable food production in the Chesapeake, creating an opportunity to more closely coordinate with these funders. Three national funders are funding efforts to gather more data on the current infrastructure and gaps in the regional supply chain, as well as coordinating regional food initiatives. Several national and aligned funders are funding supply-side programs such as accessible food retail, food hubs, agricultural conservation programs, and large-scale food aggregation and distribution. The presence of outside funders investing in the region's food supply chain provides the opportunity for regional food funders to engage with these partners to better fill funding gaps without pulling existing regional food funding from other areas.

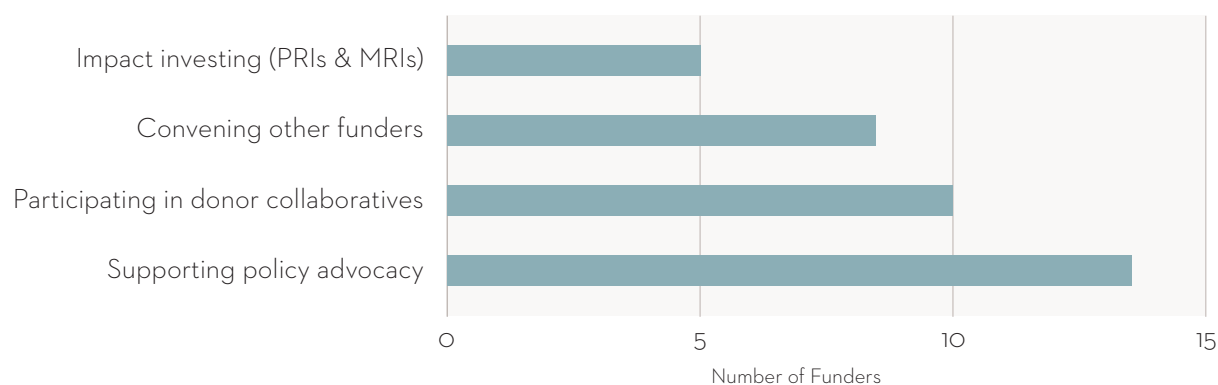
Figure 4. What strategies are food funders most likely to fund in the next three years?



Food policy advocacy is a top priority for funders across all sectors and geographies.

Supporting policy advocacy is the most common grant-making strategy among regional food funders, and it presents a strong opportunity for collaboration across the foodshed. Over half of survey participants report using policy advocacy to meet their food system goals. These funders represent each sub-region within the foodshed. For example, two-thirds of survey respondents (16) support either policy advocacy organizations or food policy councils. Food policy grantees include CommonHealth ACTION, National Family Farm Coalition, Food & Water Watch, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, American Heart Association, and Share Our Strength.

Figure 5. What strategies are food funders using?



Support for policy advocacy is particularly strong among the largest regional food funders. All four funders with food portfolios over \$1 million support food policy advocacy, and all but one of the 13 funders that support policy advocacy have a food portfolio over \$100,000. Policy advocacy is also prioritized among aligned funders, and is happening on the federal, state, and local levels. With such broad funder support, there is a promising opportunity for funders to collaborate to achieve systemic policy change that can positively impact regional food issues across the entire Chesapeake region.

Policy advocacy investments and capacity building span environmental sustainability, health, equity and access, and agriculture issues in the regional food system. Examples include reducing sugar consumption, promoting GMO labeling, fighting food insecurity, securing assistance for early childhood centers, expanding EBT/SNAP access, removing barriers to equitable food production, expanding urban farms, and reducing food waste. Since many funders use advocacy to address a wide range of issues, there is great potential for funders to find likeminded peers with whom to pool funding to launch coordinated advocacy campaigns.

Given the changing political environment, advocacy will continue to be a significant need going forward, and powerful political opposition is the number-one challenge cited by regional food funders. Building advocacy capacity in grantees is a future priority for many regional food funders (15), who cited it as a top-three challenge to address over the next three years. However, with threats to public funding sources, more regional food funders should seek to match government grants for their grantees. One aligned funder reported maximizing its grant-making impact by providing matches to USDA grants for land access support. This tool is a powerful way to leverage outside capital.

In our interviews, we heard from many funders that are reconsidering their advocacy strategy due to the changing political climate and shifts in Congress and the White House. This crossroads presents an opportunity for funders to work together to develop a regional policy strategy that addresses threats to critical federal health, conservation, and agriculture programs.

There is significant opportunity to engage a broader and more diverse group of funders in the region.

Aligned funders in the economic development, health, environmental sustainability, and social justice sectors all identified food as either a root cause of the issues they address, a potential solution, or both. The core program areas of these sectors—including water conservation, environmental sustainability, economic development, and health—have significant overlap with the food system and thereby offer potential for collaboration, whether to align funding to maximize impact or to plug gaps in regional food funding streams. Specific trends within each of these aligned sectors also emerged.

“We will always do food system work because of its connection to health outcomes, such as chronic disease.”

Health

Because diet is a main driver of overall health, funders who focus on health understand that considering food intake as a core component of preventative health is crucial to lowering diet-related negative health outcomes, such as obesity or chronic disease. As one health funder told us, “We will always do food system work because of its connection to health outcomes, such as chronic disease.” Of all aligned funders, health funders expressed the most interest in increased food funding connectivity and collaboration in the region.

For example, Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States and CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield are both health funders that fund food programs such as food banks, urban farming, urban food distribution, and nutrition education to address obesity. As both work to identify and fund various social determinants of health in their DC and Maryland service areas, healthy food access is a perennial issue.

Another potential health partner is the France-Merrick Foundation, a multi-issue funder that funds food as part of its health and human services portfolio, mostly through capital funding and one-time, two-year grants. It funded a program that conducts environmental experiments on fish and donates the surplus fish stock to feed the homeless population in Baltimore, thus connecting wildlife conservation with food access.

Water Quality

The food system has a major impact on water quality and conservation, especially as it relates to fishing stock threats and drinking water pollution from commercial poultry operations and nutrient runoff. These issues affect small waterways that feed into the Chesapeake Bay, harming its ecosystem and threatening the entire region’s environmental sustainability. According to one water quality funder, “Agriculture is a key component of our holistic focus on protecting the watershed.”

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Regional funders are advancing innovative programs to address some of the most urgent water quality issues. For example, one funder supports water pollution reduction through manure management and stream fencing efforts to establish more sustainable agriculture in the region. Beyond water conservation, this funder has also found a way to simultaneously address food access and supply-side infrastructure by connecting urban food banks to rural produce auctions that supply leftovers to the food banks.

“Food and sustainable agriculture are promising drivers of economic development. They have immediate impact on jobs and land ownership.”

Economic Development

The food system is a key component of the economy in every town in America, and so is central to economic development. Funders see food system growth as one solution to economic transition for the rural poor and disenfranchised communities. One economic development funder explained, “Food and sustainable agriculture are promising drivers of economic development. They have immediate impact on jobs and land ownership.”

We spoke with an economic development funder interested in the intersection of health, food access, and economic development as it relates to sustainable agriculture. This funder addresses inequity as it relates to the current disparity in funding in parts of the rural South, and funds a “food prescription” program that allows poor communities to obtain vouchers from doctors to use at farmers’ markets.

Environmental Sustainability

Funders focused on conservation and sustainability are particularly well-organized compared to other funding sectors in the region, and are ripe for engagement given the large sustainability funding gap. One funder in this sector told us, “We are interested in partnering with food funders on soil health and land conservation.”

“We are interested in partnering with food funders on soil health and land conservation.”

Sustainability funders also had the most specific, actionable goals for their food work by 2020. For example, one environment funder focuses on “nutrient hotspots” in the Chesapeake watershed and views sustainable agriculture as an important alternative for farmers engaged in the industrial agricultural economy. It has funded efforts to improve soil health and reduce sediment pollution in the region, has partnered with funders to match USDA grants, and is interested in land trust conservation funding with other partners.

National Funders

In addition to regional funders working in other sectors, there are several national funders investing in regional food system strategies in the Chesapeake. One large sustainability funder funds gaps in food aggregation and distribution through innovative food hubs in the region. Since these hubs are new, the foundation is working carefully on mechanisms for evaluation, and has created a racial equity toolkit to support food hubs led by communities of color. Another national funder has shifted its food system focus in recent years from healthy food access to building supply chain infrastructure and strengthening local food economies. Its core tactics are collecting food system data, providing technical assistance, and challenging the funder-grantee power dynamic through food grantee collaborations.

Individual Donors

There is great wealth in the Chesapeake region, so there is significant potential to engage individual donor networks, a relatively untapped donor segment in the regional food system. Compared with institutions, individuals have flexible pools of capital, are less risk-averse, are more willing to serve as angel investors, lack institutional bias, and do not need to align giving with overall institutional grant-making strategies. Many individual donors only fund their favorite organizations, and many others are interested in promoting a good food system but are not engaged in philanthropy. Individual donors can increase their impact by engaging in regional food philanthropy coordination efforts; funding systemically and at a significant scale; and leveraging their voices, dollars, and investments to attract more resources to the regional food system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations highlight actionable opportunities for funders to address the gaps and capitalize on momentum within the regional food system in order to increase social equity, sustainability, food security, nutrition, and regional sourcing.



1. Develop a compelling narrative about the urgent and systemic challenges facing the regional food system.

The first step to attract funding to address the regional food system holistically is communicating a vision of success to other funders—both regional and national, food-focused and non-food-focused. Providing resources for the creation and distribution of such a message will be crucial to fostering collaboration and holistic thinking throughout the foodshed. The narrative would outline actionable goals for the future and indicators to track and report progress, and it would elevate needs and tailor messages in a way that resonates with the most critical individuals, groups, and funders within philanthropy and other funding sources in the region. While funders from aligned sectors may not buy into the entire food system vision, regional food funders can point them to the specific way in which their focus plugs into the system. The time is right to undertake this work due to the uncertainty of the current political environment and threats to government funding streams, which create a sense of urgency to drive forward an aligned agenda. Regional funders can use this strategy to help drive collaborative projects related to health outcomes, policy advocacy, land access, and sustainable production practices.



2. Strengthen the capacity for regional food funder coordination across the entire foodshed to ensure existing funding is maximized to meet regional needs.

With regional funders working within issue and geographic siloes, there is a need for a highly coordinated effort to advance the regional food system to ensure that existing funding is maximized to meet the region's needs. Regional coordination would enable funders to identify critical needs, collectively leverage research and analysis, pool funds and attract new donors, and expand their reach across the foodshed. Funders can build on the frameworks of existing donor networks that collaborate in specific parts of the region, such as WRFF, the Association of Baltimore Area Grantmakers (ABAG), and Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers (WRAG), to create a regional framework for collaboration. Coordinating funders can elevate opportunities for funder collaboration in areas where there is strong cross-cutting interest, including policy advocacy, equity in

grant making, and food access. For instance, given the significant support for food policy councils in the region, funders could build a collaborative to share best practices and cultivate relationships.



3. Build bridges with funders from outside the regional food funding community to fill critical funding gaps in the foodshed.

Regional food funders can work with aligned funders from other sectors to begin to address critical funding gaps, such as in conservation, rural food access, sustainable regional production, supply chain infrastructure, and land accessibility. One way to accomplish this is by targeting existing networks of funders and engaging membership that overlaps with a specific food system priority. Over half of surveyed funders already participate in donor collaboratives and/or convene other funders themselves, demonstrating that there is potential to build more connective tissue between other funder networks, as well as an opportunity to pool or align grant-making dollars. For instance, food funders could work with the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network (CBFN) to fill regional agricultural conservation gaps, or with ABAG to raise awareness of the need for supply chain funding in Baltimore.



4. Look beyond philanthropy by leveraging funding from investors, government, and corporate sources.

The most engaged food system funders have a critical role to play in mobilizing and coordinating resources—including those outside of institutional philanthropy—to better meet the region's needs. Individual donors, government leaders, industry representatives, and investors are all putting resources into our food system, though their inputs are disparate and far from the scale that is needed to support sustained solutions. Existing food system funders should launch a resource mobilization effort across the entire six-state Chesapeake region to convene stakeholders outside philanthropy to understand their top priorities, engage disparate capital providers in a holistic understanding of the needs and opportunities, and play a coordinating role so participants feel connected to regional progress. This effort should create a marketplace of ideas, capital opportunities, and partnerships. And, funders should treat the effort like a capital campaign by committing to a measurable set of outcomes. Funders should engage the region's many nonprofit and food business leaders, who can lend their voices and credibility to the work, as well as double down on their own efforts to mobilize resources.

CONCLUSION

This report and recommendations can serve as a guide for the Town Creek Foundation, Washington Regional Food Funders, and others as they seek to better coordinate funding for regional food system priorities in the Chesapeake. There is a clear opportunity for funders to create a more equitable, sustainable food system that meets the needs of everyone by building a shared vision, collaborating more effectively to fill gaps, engaging funders from overlapping sectors, and using their influence to mobilize disparate funding streams. By taking a holistic approach to regional food funding, philanthropy can profoundly strengthen the communities that make up the Chesapeake foodshed—not just by expanding food access and boosting sustainability, but by improving public health, advancing conservation goals, and driving economic development.

APPENDIX A: Research Informants

INDIVIDUAL	ORGANIZATION
Cecily Kihn	Agua Fund
Lora Smith	Appalachia Funders Network
Leila Otis	Bainum Family Foundation
Holly Freishtat	Baltimore Office of Sustainability
Margaret White	Brandywine Health Foundation
Pat Stuntz	Campbell Foundation
Amy Owen	Community Foundation for Loudoun and Northern Fauquier Counties
Benton Murphy	Community Foundation for the National Capital Region
Ria Pugeda	Consumer Health Foundation
Laura Ford	Corina Higginson Trust
Lauren Shweder Biel	DC Greens
Kelly Lynch	Diane & Norman Bernstein Family Foundation
Kathleen Stress & Heather Hudson	Food Bank of Central New York
Amy Gross	France-Merrick Foundation
Scott Cullen	GRACE Communications Foundation
Matt Barron	Heinz Endowments
Nikki Highsmith Vernick	Horizon Foundation
Celeste James	Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States
Amy Owsley	Keith V. Kiernan Foundation
Stacey Barbas	Kresge Foundation
Kara Blankner	Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation
Nupur Chaudhury & Bronwyn Starr	New York State Health Foundation
Tricia Rodgers	Northern Virginia Health Foundation
Susie Lee	Potomac Health Foundation
Carolynn Brunette & Jamie Baxter	Prince Charitable Trusts
Kellie Terry	Surdna Foundation
Meredith Lathbury Girard & Megan Milliken	Town Creek Foundation
Chris Kieran	William Penn Foundation

Note: Four funders requested anonymity and are not included on this list.

APPENDIX B: Government Funding for DC-Area Food Programs

SOCIAL EQUITY & FOOD ACCESS

Federal

US Department of Agriculture

[Food and Nutrition Service](#) – Funding to promote and support nutrition programs

[Farm to School Grants Program](#)

[Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program](#)

[Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children](#)

[Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#)

[WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program](#)

US Department of the Treasury

[Community Development Financial Institutions \(CDFI\) Fund](#) – Funding and technical assistance to CDFIs that invest in businesses that provide healthy food options

US Department of Health & Human Services

[Office of Community Services](#)

[Community Economic Development grant program](#) – Funding for community development corporations that support projects that finance grocery stores, farmers' markets, and other sources of fresh, nutritious food

State

Virginia

[Virginia Department of Health](#)

[The Maternal and Child Health Services Title V Block Grant](#)

Maryland

[Maryland Department of Health](#)

[The Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant](#)

Local

[DC Department of Health](#)

[Healthy Food Access Initiatives](#)

[Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant](#)

[DC Department of Human Services](#) – Awards funding for managing DC shelters to [the Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness \(TCP\)](#), which contracts with vendors for food services

DC Department of Small and Local Business Development

Healthy Food Retail Program - Funding for corner stores seeking to sell fresh produce and healthy foods, farmers' markets, and other small retailers such as fruit and vegetable vendors

DC Office on Aging

Grocery Plus/Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) - DCOA must release an RFP for the program, which is currently run by Capital Area Food Bank

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Federal

US Department of Agriculture

Forest Service - Funding for agro-forestry and environmental stewardship

Urban and Community Forestry Program

Natural Resources Conservation Service - Funding to maintain and improve existing conservation systems and help producers adopt additional conservation activities

Conservation Stewardship Program

Conservation Technical Assistance

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program

National Institute of Food and Agriculture - Funding for collaboration with scientists, policymakers, experts, and educators to solve food, agriculture, natural resources, and human science issues

Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education

State

Maryland

Maryland Department of Agriculture

Cover Crop Program

Manure Transport & Matching Service

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Maryland Energy Administration

Agriculture Energy Efficiency Program

Virginia

Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation

Virginia Land Conservation Foundation - Grants for farmland conservation

REGIONAL FOOD ECONOMY

Federal

US Department of Agriculture

[Agricultural Marketing Service](#) – Funding for product marketing and intermediary supply chain activities

[Farmers Market Promotion Program](#)

[Local Food Promotion Program](#)

[Organic Certification Cost Share Programs](#)

[Specialty Crop Block Grant Program](#)

[Specialty Crop Multi-State Program](#)

[Farm Service Agency](#) – Loans and assistance programs to establish, improve, expand, transition, and strengthen farms and ranches

[Farm Loan Programs](#)

[Farm Storage Facility Loan Program](#)

[Microloans](#)

[Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program](#)

[National Institute of Food and Agriculture](#) – Funding for collaboration with scientists, policymakers, experts, and educators to solve food, agriculture, natural resources, and human science issues

[Agriculture and Food Research Initiative - Agriculture Economics and Rural Communities](#)

[Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program](#)

[Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program](#)

[Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive \(FINI\) Program](#)

[Small Business Innovation Research Program](#)

[Risk Management Agency](#) – Funding for protecting agricultural assets and managing long-term risk

[Risk Management Education Partnerships Program](#)

[Whole-Farm Revenue Protection Pilot Program](#)

[Rural Development](#) – Loans, grants, and loan guarantees to support community services or improve supply chain activities

[Business & Industry Loan Guarantees](#)

[Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program](#)

[Rural Business Development Grants](#)

[Rural Cooperative Development Grant Program](#)

[Rural Energy for America Program](#)

[Value Added Producer Grants](#)

US Economic Development Administration

Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (OIE)

Regional Innovation Strategies Program - Funding for capacity-building activities in regions across the nation (e.g., local food systems)

State

Maryland

Rural Maryland Council

Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund

Virginia

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development (AFID) Fund

Local

DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education

School Garden Grant

Farm Field Trip Grant