

**RESOLUTION
of the
ARLINGTON COUNTY BOARD**

**SUPPORTING A TRANSITION TO A RACIAL-EQUITY BASED COMPETITIVE
PROCESS FOR COUNTY BOARD-AWARDED COMMUNITY AND HUMAN
SERVICES FUNDING**

WHEREAS, the Arlington County Board has historically awarded certain discretionary funding to human and community services providers in the annual operating budget in an ad hoc manner, resulting in a lack of clear information and path for those providers and organizations to submit proposals.

WHEREAS, the County Board in its FY2020 Budget directed to the County Manager to “develop a submission tool and methodology to evaluate non-profits with service contracts with the County to evaluate requests they make for more or supplemental funding for substantially the same scope of work, and for a separate evaluation of non-profits that request funding from the Board for scopes of work not currently supported by public funds,” and the Department of Human Services began consulting and collaborating with nonprofits in 2019 and 2020 to develop insights and recommendations to respond to that guidance.

WHEREAS, the disruption of COVID and the adoption of the County’s Equity Resolution led to a pause and redirection from County Board members. Specifically, the lack of transparency and competition in the award of nonprofit funding raised by BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) leaders in the County echoed objections and concerns with “The Arlington Way” emphasized throughout Arlington’s Dialogues on Race and Equity in late 2020.

WHEREAS, this input demonstrated that the County Board and County government needed to reform nonprofit funding decisions through an equity lens and not just a process reform lens.

WHEREAS, the County Board convened leaders with deep relationships in Arlington’s BIPOC communities throughout 2022, facilitated by the United Way of the National Capital Area and supported by the national organization E Pluribus UNUM Fund and national subject matter experts, and through these conversations, in partnership with Realizing Arlington’s Commitment to Equity (RACE) team, community leaders developed [recommendations and principles for a process for making more equitable nonprofit funding decisions in the areas of community and human services.](#)

WHEREAS, the recommendations and principles were presented to the County Board in December 2022 and introduced to service providers and the broader Arlington community in January 2023;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Arlington County Board endorses a transition to a competitive process, led by the Office of the County Manager, for awarding human and community services funding that reflects its goals of racial equity, beginning with a Notice of Funding Available and a review process in FY2024, and with County Board awards taking effect in FY2025.

BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, that this process will formally apply to Board-awarded discretionary human and community services grants only at this time, and will not affect existing competitive award processes, such as the Community Development program or the Arts Grants program, nor existing award processes for state and federal funds – although lessons from the implementation of this equity-based funding process and recent efforts to center equity in other grant programs should inform one another over time.

BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, that the competitive process shall implement the community-developed principles for a more equitable nonprofit funding, including:

- Establishing competitive NOFAs that are structured, transparent, accessible, and offer technical support throughout the process
- Inviting community – especially BIPOC communities – to define needs and solutions, and centering resident voice and lived experience in evaluating applications and grant performance (such as in the scoring of applications and participation in reviews of programs awarded).
- Welcoming multi-domain and root cause-oriented projects and services
- Creating mechanisms for greater transparency, flexibility, and feedback to applicant and awardee organizations
- Balancing a system of structured accountability and reporting with supportive oversight.

Adopted the 21st day of February, 2023.