

Raise the Bar

Moving From Harmful to Liberatory Funding Practices with Palestine as Your Compass

Communications Brief

Funders do more than just move resources; they also exert public influence, shape narratives, and implicitly or explicitly contribute to manufacturing communications norms across the philanthropic sector.

In times of rising authoritarianism and fascist consolidation in the U.S., Israel, and across multiple countries and regions, even progressive funders tend to speak out less, temper their language, or avoid overt expressions of solidarity with or support for communities that face state repression, including Palestinians. And yet, we know that combating authoritarianism and advancing liberation requires bold, vocal, shared resistance and solidarity, including from those who control power and resources.

Adopting liberatory funder practices in this time and throughout history means speaking out despite tactics designed to silence and intimidate, creating opportunities to flank and platform movement leaders, communicating openly and regularly with grantee partners, and ensuring that public messaging is reflective of movement priorities and leaves no one behind. For Palestine, this means integrating and amplifying Palestinian voices and perspectives from Palestine and across the diaspora, and including calls for Palestinian liberation in any wider calls to advance human rights and social justice. On the opposite end of the spectrum, harmful practices generally center on self-censorship, censorship of grantee partners, failing to include Palestine in wider calls for justice and liberation, and advancing or privileging Zionist or other harmful narratives in internal or external communications.

Content

- 1. Making public solidarity statements..... 2
- 2. Identifying misinformation and challenging disinformation 3
- 3. Managing internal and external communications..... 4



1. Making public solidarity statements

LIBERATORY			HARMFUL
Making public statements of Palestine solidarity that echo movements and connect Palestinian liberation to struggles for justice and liberation worldwide	<i>How to get there</i>	<i>What's holding you back</i>	Questioning, condemning, or policing public statements of Palestinian solidarity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Centering resilience and solidarity, rather than charity and aid, in public statements of solidarity with the Palestinian struggle, with an emphasis on mutual empowerment, justice, sovereignty, and dignity. <input type="checkbox"/> Highlighting the links between Palestinian liberation and other liberation, human rights, and social justice movements around the world and throughout history. <input type="checkbox"/> Prioritizing the perspectives, expertise, and leadership of Palestinian organizations in your messaging wherever relevant. <input type="checkbox"/> Following the lead of Palestinian partners on when, whether, and how to speak out. <input type="checkbox"/> Holding your messaging accountable to your values, grantmaking, and operational practices and vice versa, including soliciting and integrating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Elicit grantee partners' feedback or suggestions on your communications materials and strategies.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Seek guidance from Palestinian-led organizations when crafting statements about Palestine or Palestinians.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Even if you aren't prepared to make Palestine solidarity-specific statements, de-exceptionalize Palestine by including it in messaging on interconnected justice issues (e.g., gender, climate, human rights, etc.)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Evaluate the degree to which your messaging aligns with your organization's values, including whether or not you apply different standards to different kinds of public communication.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Assess peer organizations' messaging to ensure that your public statements reinforce a</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Inconsistent policies and practices on public communications that are not rooted in your organization's values and that fail to incorporate grantee partner perspectives.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>A conscious or unconscious practice of valuing the comfort of your funders/donors more than the importance of your solidarity with grantee partners when it comes to making public statements.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>A culture of policing or instrumentalizing grantee partner speech (e.g., tokenizing Palestinian voices in messaging and conferences, inviting Palestinians to join a panel but telling them what they can or cannot say).</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>A desire to present Palestinians as "perfect victims" or apolitical recipients of aid without acknowledging the political</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Condemning violence perpetrated by Palestinians without acknowledging power dynamics or holding Israel accountable for genocide, occupation, apartheid, violence, or international law violations. <input type="checkbox"/> Exceptionalizing Palestine by remaining silent (or making "both sides" statements) while speaking out about other interconnected issues and struggles. <input type="checkbox"/> Pressuring grantee partners and peers to remove public statements of solidarity with Palestinian liberation. <input type="checkbox"/> Selectively policing grantee partner speech relating to Palestine; encouraging other funders to do the same. <input type="checkbox"/> Censoring or prohibiting staff members' personal public communications (i.e. social media posts) that express solidarity with



Raise the Bar

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<p>feedback from grantee partners about your messaging.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Publicly acknowledging past practices or behaviors that may have undermined Palestinian solidarity work. <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinating with partner organizations and peers to understand how they are developing their statements and identifying opportunities for collective action. 	<p><i>unified narrative aligned with Palestinian solidarity and a shared vision of liberation.</i></p>	<p><i>causes of their conditions.</i></p>	<p>the Palestinian struggle.</p>
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2. Identifying misinformation and challenging disinformation (for clarity on the difference between these two terms, see [this resource](#))

LIBERATORY			HARMFUL
<p>Actively challenging disinformation, propaganda, and smear campaigns directed at your grantee partners or at Palestinian groups</p>	<p><i>How to get there</i></p>	<p><i>What's holding you back</i></p>	<p>Amplifying misinformation and/or developing disinformation campaigns</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Affirming that supporting Palestinian liberation and funding Palestinian organizations is not, and has never been, antisemitic. <input type="checkbox"/> Standing with Palestinian colleagues when their verbal or written communications spark discomfort among peers and partners. <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborating with peer funders, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Allocate dedicated time and resources to ongoing political education for staff, leadership, and boards on Palestinian solidarity and social justice work, including how to identify misinformation and challenge disinformation.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Prepare a response plan for potential public accusations of antisemitism, (F4P recommends these resources, which place fighting antisemitism within a</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>A tendency to use neutral or depoliticized language or to ignore root causes if/when pushing back against disinformation and misinformation.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Fear of being accused of antisemitism (see this letter for a counterargument from Jewish donors and others working in philanthropy).</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Characterizing criticism of Israel as antisemitic. <input type="checkbox"/> Describing the genocide as a “war” or a “conflict” without acknowledging the long-term structural injustices of the occupation. <input type="checkbox"/> Issuing statements with “both sides” messaging or publishing opposing perspectives as a



Raise the Bar

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civil society organizations, and media watchdog groups to coordinate responses to disinformation campaigns targeting Palestinian groups and solidarity movements.

- Internal protocols are in place to quickly respond to disinformation directed at Palestinian grantee partners and peers.
- Providing funding and support for Palestinian independent journalism, documentation projects, and narrative change initiatives that challenge disinformation and connect it to a broader understanding of how disinformation reinforces systemic injustices.

larger commitment to collective liberation).

- Equip staff with shared language, messaging frameworks, and fact-checking practices to avoid spreading misinformation.*
- Participate in and coordinate with funder collaboratives and networks that share resources, trainings, and coordinated messaging strategies to address misinformation and drive coordinated action to challenge disinformation.*

- Lack of internal political education and limited staff capacity to identify and challenge misinformation and disinformation.*
- Fear of taking public accountability for misinformation you may have spread; a tendency to quietly remove language or statements instead of owning harm.*
- Limited to no coordination with peer funders and civil society organizations in the face of coordinated disinformation campaigns.*

strategy for protecting your organization.

- Characterizing Palestinians as a monolith.
- Spreading misinformation or disinformation about the perils and legality of moving money into Gaza (or Palestine more broadly) and/or characterizing support for Palestinian-led work as tantamount to supporting terrorism.
- Publicly accusing grantee partners or movement groups that support Palestinian liberation or express solidarity with Palestine of spreading antisemitism or advocating violence.
- Remaining silent when disinformation targets Palestinian groups or grantee partners.
- Basing decisions to defund or distance from grantee partners in solidarity with Palestine on disinformation campaigns, or treating such campaigns as legitimate sources of information on grantee partners' work.
- Collaborating with and supporting organizations, networks, and media that spread disinformation about Palestine and Palestinian solidarity work.



3. Managing internal and external communications

LIBERATORY			HARMFUL
<p>Actively contributing to the development of communications strategies and infrastructure that advances collective liberation across philanthropic networks and spaces</p>	<p><i>How to get there</i></p>	<p><i>What's holding you back</i></p>	<p>Using your power as a funder to silence, deplatform, or police liberatory Palestinian voices and block funding to liberatory Palestinian work</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Working with grantee partners and other partners to shift narratives and coordinate strategies that strengthen collective impact. <input type="checkbox"/> Funding long-term narrative work and collective narrative infrastructure, including independent Palestinian and solidarity journalists, platforms, and other media (art, film, photography, writing, etc.) work. <input type="checkbox"/> Reinforcing and centering Palestinian solidarity as part of broader social justice and human rights work. <input type="checkbox"/> Maintaining a list of politically aligned emergency/crisis communications specialists, firms, and partners to support you and your grantees' capacity to respond to emerging narratives, dynamic political conditions, and explicit attacks. <input type="checkbox"/> Strong internal processes to enable rapid communications alignment with partners during crises. <input type="checkbox"/> Inviting grantee feedback and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assess the potential power of collective, movement-aligned communications strategies, as an alternative to individual institutional messaging. <input type="checkbox"/> Interrogate how Palestinian liberation shows up (or why it does not appear) in an organization's stated commitments to human rights, social justice, or anticolonialism. <input type="checkbox"/> Deepen your understanding of how bad faith claims of antisemitism are being weaponized as a silencing tactic, and consider whose comfort is being centered by institutional practices that prohibit particular conversations. <input type="checkbox"/> Consult with values-aligned facilitators or other resource people who can help hold space for staff conversations, conflicts, and questions on the institution's commitment to Palestinian liberation. <input type="checkbox"/> Build internal capacity to distinguish between safety, comfort, harm, and abuse, backed up by clear definitions and related 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of opening space for staff to have internal conversations about Palestinian liberation without interrogation of the negative consequences of silencing or censoring staff. <input type="checkbox"/> Cumbersome internal risk assessment and approval processes around public communications that compromise collective efforts. <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of being accused of fostering a culture of antisemitism. <input type="checkbox"/> A culture of institutional individualism that places the institution's safety, comfort, and survival above all else. <input type="checkbox"/> A culture of conflict avoidance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Blocking or censoring Palestinian and solidarity voices at webinars, events, panels, conferences, or other public or private forums. <input type="checkbox"/> Platforming Palestinians whose views align with your views while ignoring, silencing, or condemning other voices. <input type="checkbox"/> Prohibiting and/or sanctioning internal conversations about Palestinian liberation, and discouraging or prohibiting staff from attending events or participating in wider philanthropic conversations on the topic.



Raise the Bar

A Tool to Move From Harmful to Liberatory Funding Practices with Palestine as Your Compass

leadership when making narrative or messaging decisions that affect their communities or movements.

- Encouraging internal learning and dialogue about media bias, anti-Palestinian racism, censorship, and narrative suppression.

policies and practices. Build similar organizational muscles around embracing generative conflict and conflict transformation as part of your organizational culture (see [this resource](#) and [this resource](#), for example).

- Build relationships with peer funders, movement partners, and communications practitioners that can share narrative insights, messaging frameworks, and response strategies.*
- Support or participate in networked communications models that connect local, national, and international narratives and amplify grassroots voices.*