

Consulting Powers

Megan Powers

Megan Powers (she/her) is a strategy consultant with more than two decades of experience in nonprofits, consulting, philanthropy, the public sector, and community-based efforts. Through facilitation, planning, collaboration, & conflict transformation, Megan is passionate about helping groups work together to create conditions for equitable and sustainable change.

My Background

At the heart of my work are people and systems.

I've devoted my career to supporting people to advance issues that they care about. I have done this as an organizer, a volunteer manager and trainer, a convener and capacity builder, a strategic planner and project manager, a grantmaker, and a process / project facilitator. I'm trained in the Art of Hosting, and I have graduate training in conflict resolution and mediation.

About half of my career has been spent on domestic (USA) projects—especially at local levels—and half on global initiatives, primarily with People of the Global Majority. I've held roles at the McKnight Foundation, Grassroots Solutions, Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy, the Advocates for Human Rights, and others. Currently, I'm a part-time Executive Director for a small family trust, and I live with my partner, two kids, and a dog in St. Paul.

Many initiatives that I've been involved with over the years have engaged leaders from different sectors, roles, and lived experiences to **figure out a way forward together without leaving the community behind.**

Values & Approach

Working in relationship with others for gender, economic, & racial justice.

I believe in an equitable and sustainable future that recognizes the needs of communities and our precious planet, so I seek out partners who work towards that vision. Relationships, care, and compassion (to oneself and to others) are important to me. I work to better understand power dynamics and try to identify my role in helping to name, acknowledge, shift, and sometimes disrupt them. I value multiple ways of knowing and multiple roles and perspectives in the social movement ecosystem.

In my consulting practice, I aim to be responsive, accountable, and rooted in relationships. I prefer projects where I can take the time to listen and learn first, customizing work with each client and leaving space for the partnership and work to evolve. I'm cognizant that this singular moment of global instability and resiliency shapes all our professional and personal lives.

Consulting Offerings

My superpower is navigating between vision, strategy, implementation, and reflection/adaptation.

Facilitation & Consensus-Building

- Meeting & workshop facilitation: I have experience facilitating face-to-face and virtual communities of practice to exchange learning and knowledge and build collective capacity for collaboration. I also enjoy facilitating staff retreats and planning sessions, as well as sessions and workshops that help groups (such as coalitions, cross-sector groups, funder alliances, associations, and others) navigate change and build consensus to enable collective work.
- Process facilitation: While leaders often seek out connections and synergies, barriers of lack of time and bandwidth can get in the way. I can help by helping networks crystallize and capture what they aim to do together, helping translate vision and ideas into action, and enabling group accountability and forward momentum. This takes different forms, including developing group principles, capturing insights and key questions that surface, identifying action items, and building in time for reflection, learning, and adaptation.

Program & Project Management

- Program development: When the kernel of an idea or new organizational stage is unfolding, it takes time to identify the critical who, want, where, when, and how. What do we do, how will we know we're succeeding, who will we need to involve, and what tools might help get the work done? I help groups identify and shape these pieces of the puzzle. An example of this type of work is developing a new grantmaking program, pooled fund, or public outreach campaign.
- Project management: This is work that I love. It's about effectively tracking multiple moving parts of a project, coordinating with others on various aspects, and seeing the project through to achieve milestones and outcomes. This work can also include coaching people newer to project management, exploring useful tools, or serving in an interim project management role.

Community & Stakeholder Engagement

- This can include ecosystem mapping or stakeholder analysis, or developing methods and strategies for involving community members more deeply in the work of your organization.

Strategic Planning & Strategic Advising

- Strategic planning: Oftentimes, groups jump from an ambitious theory of change or broad vision to tactical tasks. The middle layer—the strategy and priorities—can get short shrift. I enjoy working with clients to determine what types and levels of planning are most useful to their organization, embarking on a planning process with their partners, staff or stakeholders. This should include how to assess progress and make meaning of what you're learning.
- Strategic advising: Sometimes, having a sounding board can help leaders track and adapt to changing circumstances in a program, organization, and surrounding environment. I don't have all the answers, but can listen and help you trust your inner voice and wrestle through conflict.

Example Projects & Clients

- [Collaborative Crop Research Program](#): Model of sustained support to three geographic communities of practice in Africa and Latin America. Provided grantmaking strategy, convenings, capacity building, process facilitation, participatory evaluation practices, and technical assistance. Co-authored a peer-reviewed journal article capturing successes and lessons.
- [Detroit Future City](#): Comprehensive citywide visioning and planning process. Contributed community engagement strategy and implementation support over four years.
- [SCILLS Program](#): Digital transformation initiative in six countries of the Global Majority. Provided program development, project management, grantmaking strategy, and convenings.
- [Prosper Lincoln](#): Shared, future-focused community agenda to lift the city of Lincoln, Nebraska higher. Co-facilitated consensus-building and shared priorities among a cross-sector group of leaders and co-designed a community engagement strategy.
- [National Gender & Equity Campaign](#): Collective effort to leverage and mobilize philanthropic and community resources for efforts in AAPI communities. Contributed capacity building, grantmaking, convening, fundraising, curriculum and toolkits.
- Design and help groups make meaning of **assessments and statewide / regional learning tours**. Past clients include PFund Foundation, Headwaters Foundation for Justice, Northwest Area Foundation, Kresge Foundation, others.
- **Facilitate** staff retreats and planning sessions. Past clients include Asian Women United, ACLU of Minnesota, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, Missouri Health Coalition, CCRP Leadership Team, others.

Subject Matter Expertise

- ✓ 20 years of experience in “people strategy”: public outreach, stakeholder analysis, awareness-building, cross-sector collaboration, and community engagement
- ✓ 15 years in community and economic development initiatives
- ✓ 15 years in racial equity, gender justice, and inclusion
- ✓ 7 years in food systems, sustainable agriculture, permaculture, the climate-food-health nexus, and agroecology
- ✓ 10 years in international development and global human rights
- ✓ 11 years in grantmaking, grantee support, and facilitating learning communities
- ✓ 8 years of academic training and practice in conflict resolution and conflict transformation
- ✓ 6 years in consulting

Fee Structure

Depending on the nature of the work, I can work with clients to construct a fee structure that is hourly, by deliverable, or on retainer.

Reach Out

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Client references available upon request.

Consulting Powers website currently under development.