
Assessing Philanthropic Support for Latines in the Chicago Area

UIC Great Cities Institute

prepared for Nuestro Futuro, an initiative of
The Chicago Community Trust



Acknowledgments

Nuestro Futuro, an initiative of The Chicago Community Trust, commissioned this study. We are grateful for the collaboration and guidance from Alberto Morales, Doris Salomón, Jennifer Axelrod, Carrie Goodale, Christine Munteanu, and Karin Prangley.

This report was developed by Katherine Faydash, with research support from Thea Crum. We are grateful for guidance and contributions from UIC Great Cities Institute's director, Dr. Teresa Córdova, as well as GCI colleagues Matt Wilson and Timothy Imeokparia.

This study could not exist without the leaders in Chicago and Cook County philanthropy and nonprofits who generously shared their time, knowledge, expertise, and personal experiences with the researchers on this project. We are grateful for the contributions of every one of them.

UIC Great Cities Institute
Teresa Córdova, PhD, director
College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs
University of Illinois Chicago
412 S. Peoria Street, Suite 400
Chicago, Illinois 60607-7067
gcities@uic.edu / greatcities.uic.edu



Contents

From Nuestro Futuro	4
Executive Summary	6
Landscape Overview	7
Latine Funding Landscape	17
Priority Issue Areas	22
Funding Characteristics	33
Hearing from the Experts	40
Analysis & Steps Forward	46
Notes & Appendixes	51

NOTE: This report recognizes that Chicago-area residents who are from or who have heritage, roots, and family from across Mexico, Central America, South America, Puerto Rico, and elsewhere in the Caribbean do not form a monolithic community or share a singular identity. Their diverse identities are vital threads in the fabric and character of the city and suburbs. This report uses the term Latine to be maximally inclusive of all those individuals with cultural or linguistic ties to Spanish-speaking regions and those influenced by Spanish colonization of the Americas. It also uses the term Latine to stand in for the US Census election “Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin.

Dear Friends,

The Chicago area's Latine community makes up a vital part of the social and economic fabric of our region. Yet data shows that only 16% of Latine households in the Chicago region are considered financially healthy, defined as the ability to manage current needs, respond to unexpected expenses, and plan for the future. Representing more than a quarter of Cook County's population, it is vital to understand our community's diverse needs, challenges, and opportunities to build a stronger Chicago region where all can thrive.

Nuestro Futuro (NF) was founded as an affinity fund of The Chicago Community Trust to help address the gap in philanthropic giving to Latine communities. Since 2003, NF has distributed nearly \$4.5 million in grant funding to more than 75 Latine-led and/or Latine-serving organizations in the Chicago region.

NF grants frequently serve as a stepping stone for emerging grassroots organizations, enabling them to secure support from more prominent philanthropies. Many of these organizations—including Mano a Mano Family Resource Center, Partners for Our Communities, and PODER Learning Center to name just a few—have grown to become essential service providers in their communities.

This report shows that Latine organizations in Cook County received just 1.9% of total philanthropic funding distributed between 2003 and 2022. While this is likely an undercount of actual giving due to data limitations, including misrecordings or uncategorized data, there is clearly more work to do to ensure that we are meeting the evolving needs of Cook County's fastest growing population.

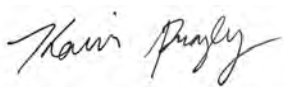
Previously, we lacked a baseline to contextualize philanthropic giving to meet our community's needs. Now that we have it, our call to action is amplified by the rapidly growing population of Latines in our region.

Developing a clearer understanding of the landscape of philanthropic funding to Latine-led and serving organizations will help the community in its efforts to pursue additional resources. While we certainly can't accomplish this alone, Nuestro Futuro is committed to increasing our endowment to \$10 million to ensure that we can serve as a permanent resource for the community and continue to grow our own support for organizations working to improve the quality of life for Latines, which will, in turn, strengthen our entire region.

We are deeply grateful to the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Great Cities Institute for their partnership in this effort, to The Chicago Community Trust for its funding support, and to the 42 philanthropy and nonprofit leaders who contributed their insights and expertise to this report.

Thank you for being on this journey with us.

Karin Prangle



Alberto Morales



NUESTRO FUTURO
AN INITIATIVE of



THE CHICAGO
COMMUNITY TRUST®
EQUITY • OPPORTUNITY • PROSPERITY

Executive Summary

Latine-led and Latine-serving organizations play a critical role in addressing the needs of one of Cook County's fastest-growing populations.

This report, **Assessing Philanthropic Funding Support for Latines in the Chicago Area**, provides a comprehensive overview of the philanthropic funding landscape for Cook County's Latine organizations in priority issue areas. Latines account for 26% of Cook County's population.

This analysis was commissioned by Nuestro Futuro, an initiative of The Chicago Community Trust, and conducted by UIC Great Cities Institute (GCI). The report provides a brief profile of the county's Latine population, explores philanthropic support over time to Latine organizations and populations, and analyzes support in five particular issue areas: economic development, education, health equity, housing, and immigration and language access.

This report's findings explore philanthropic support for Latine-led and Latine-serving organizations compared to Latine population size in Cook County.

Key Findings

Disparity in Philanthropic Support

From 2003 to 2022, Latine organizations in Cook County received only 1.9% of total available philanthropic support, a proportion that did not significantly increase over time. Although the total dollar amount of funding has grown, Latine-led and Latine-serving organizations have not received an equitable share in terms of Latine population size.

Increased Support to Specific Issue Areas

Despite the overall low percentage of funding to Latine organizations, three priority issue areas received more than 1.9% of total available funding in that area: economic development (4.7%), housing (4.3%), and immigration and language access (35.5%), have seen support increase above 1.9%. However, education (1.9%) and health equity (1.9%) continue to be underfunded.

Economic Development Gains

Funding for economic development initiatives directed toward Latine organizations grew significantly, especially between 2013 and 2022. This likely reflects increased recognition of the importance of supporting development in historically underserved communities.

What is a Latine-led and Latine-serving organization in this study?

- *Has an executive director (or equivalent title) who identifies as Latine*
- *Has 51% or more of staff and/or board members who identify as Latine*
- *Serves a Latine population, as indicated in IRS data or by identifying as such in interviews and focus groups*

Throughout this report, we also refer to these as "Latine organizations."

Executive Summary

Suburban Growth and Housing Needs

The suburban Latine population is growing quickly, yet there is still much room to fund housing initiatives. Addressing this gap is essential for ensuring that Latines have access to affordable housing and other vital resources.

Health Equity and Mental Health

Health equity remains a challenge for Latine communities. Although there was some increase in funding for health-related initiatives, the support is fragmented, and there are significant gaps in mental health services and access. Addressing these disparities requires a more cohesive and comprehensive funding strategy.

Immigration Underfunded

Immigration and language access, while receiving increased attention (Latine organizations received 35.5% of all immigration and language access funding), are still underfunded relative to demand, especially given the recent influx of new immigrants to the region. This issue is particularly pressing as long-term residents navigate complex immigration systems along with new arrivals.

Intersectionality and Holistic Approaches

Many Latine-led organizations operate across multiple issue areas, reflecting the interconnected nature of community needs. However, funders' defined program categories can hinder organizations' ability to secure comprehensive support, highlighting the need for more flexible and intersectional funding approaches.

Challenges in Philanthropy

Interviews and focus groups with philanthropic and nonprofit leaders reveal ongoing challenges in the philanthropic sector, including a lack

of recognizing the diversity of Latine communities, a tendency toward reactive rather than proactive funding, a difficult environment in the face of recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions, and the need for more Latine representation in decision-making roles in philanthropy.

Funding Opportunities

The report identifies strategic opportunities for increased funding in three key areas: mental health services and access, immigration, and housing. Addressing these needs requires a commitment to proactive, sustained, and flexible funding strategies that prioritize equity and community-led solutions.

Recommendations

The report concludes with a series of recommendations to guide philanthropy toward more effectively supporting Latine communities and populations. Key among the recommendations is the need for philanthropy to adopt a more proactive, intersectional funding approach.

This includes advocating for improved data quality to better understand community and organizational needs and to ensure those are met through targeted, equitable funding strategies.

Additionally, increasing the representation of Latine voices in philanthropic leadership will ensure that decision-making processes are informed by the lived experiences and insights of the communities philanthropy aims to serve. By taking these steps, philanthropy can better align its investments with the diverse and evolving needs of Latine communities in Cook County, ultimately fostering greater equity and impact.

Landscape Overview

The Latine Presence

Latine individuals and communities have long called Chicago and its suburbs home: the first Latine immigrants arrived before 1900. Today, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, Cook County has more than 1.4 million Latine residents, accounting for 26% of the population.¹ Latines are the State of Illinois's fastest-growing population, having increased by nearly 700,000 people from 2000 to 2020.²

Mexicans and Mexican Americans account for the vast majority of Cook County's Latine population and about 74% of Latines in the City of Chicago. This is followed by Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and people from South American, Central American, and other Caribbean nations. Overall, the Latine presence in Chicago fosters economic vitality, enhances diversity, and shapes the city's identity. It will continue to do so as the Latine population grows in Cook County.

Latine communities significantly contribute to Cook County's economy, political life, culture, and social fabric. Across the region, Latine communities are a driving force in the economy, from small business ownership and the powerhouse of 26th Street and other corridors to critical roles in manufacturing and service industries. These activities generate billions of dollars in economic activity annually: the State of Illinois's Latine annual gross domestic product is more than \$100 billion.³

Latines in Cook County have long been pivotal to advocacy and activism through political representation and service, community organizing, education, environment, and more.

Latine cultural contributions are visible and celebrated in vibrant arts and music festivals, culinary traditions, sports leagues, performances, and artistic productions across the city and suburbs. They are found in Humboldt Park's Paseo Boricua, the North Side's Colombian Fest, murals in Pilsen and Elgin, and more.

And they are seen and heard in the muchísimos vendedores, tiendas, puestos, mercados, murales, procesiones, altares, fiestas, banderas, desfiles de orgullo, acentos nacionales y regionales y más that help some streets across Cook County feel like home. These are just some examples; there are many more.

While thriving in many ways, some Latines and Latine households and communities still face socioeconomic challenges, encounter political and social disinvestment in institutions meant to serve, have difficulties accessing resources, experience discrimination, and deal with other barriers to thriving.

To address this, philanthropy must recognize the entire Latine population. City neighborhoods like Humboldt Park, Back of the Yards, and East Side and suburbs like Cicero and Melrose Park proudly display Latine heritage. But the area's Latine population has also shifted from 2017 to 2022, moving into Chicago neighborhoods like Austin and West Englewood that have not historically been Latine, and farther into the southwestern and northwestern suburbs.⁴

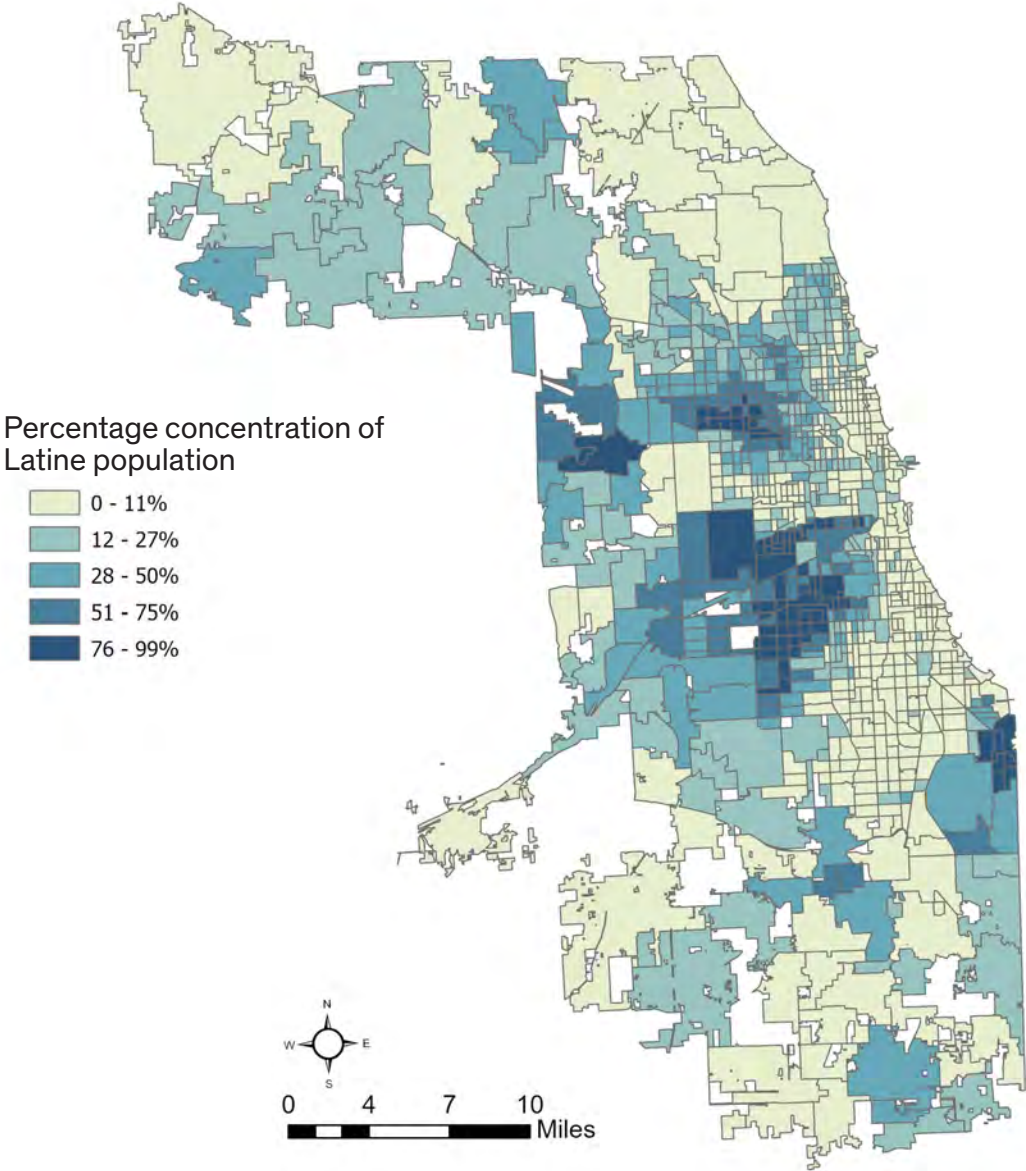
In fact, the Latine population is growing faster across the suburbs than in the city, and Mexicans specifically now account for more than 50% of the population in 15 Chicago neighborhoods.⁵ It is essential that the Latine population in these locations is also recognized and that researchers, policymakers, and advocates do not limit their view of the region's "Latine areas" to the most obvious ones.

We cannot lose sight of shifts in where Latines are residing and contributing across the region and must look forward in order to be able to see continuing or potential emerging challenges to Latine communities. In this, it will also be essential for non-Latines to begin from a place of recognizing the multitude of diversities and experiences found among Latines in Cook County, which has profound implications for resource distribution, service provision, and more in Cook County.

Map 1. Where the Latine population lives in Cook County

The Latine population is spread across Cook County. Darker shades show higher concentrations, which are primarily located on the southwest and northwest sides of Chicago and extend into nearby suburban areas in Cook County. The map shows significant Latine population clusters, reflecting where cultural, linguistic, and social networks are likely to be strongest.

In areas with less concentrated Latine population, philanthropic efforts can still focus on building relationships with nonprofits active in those areas.

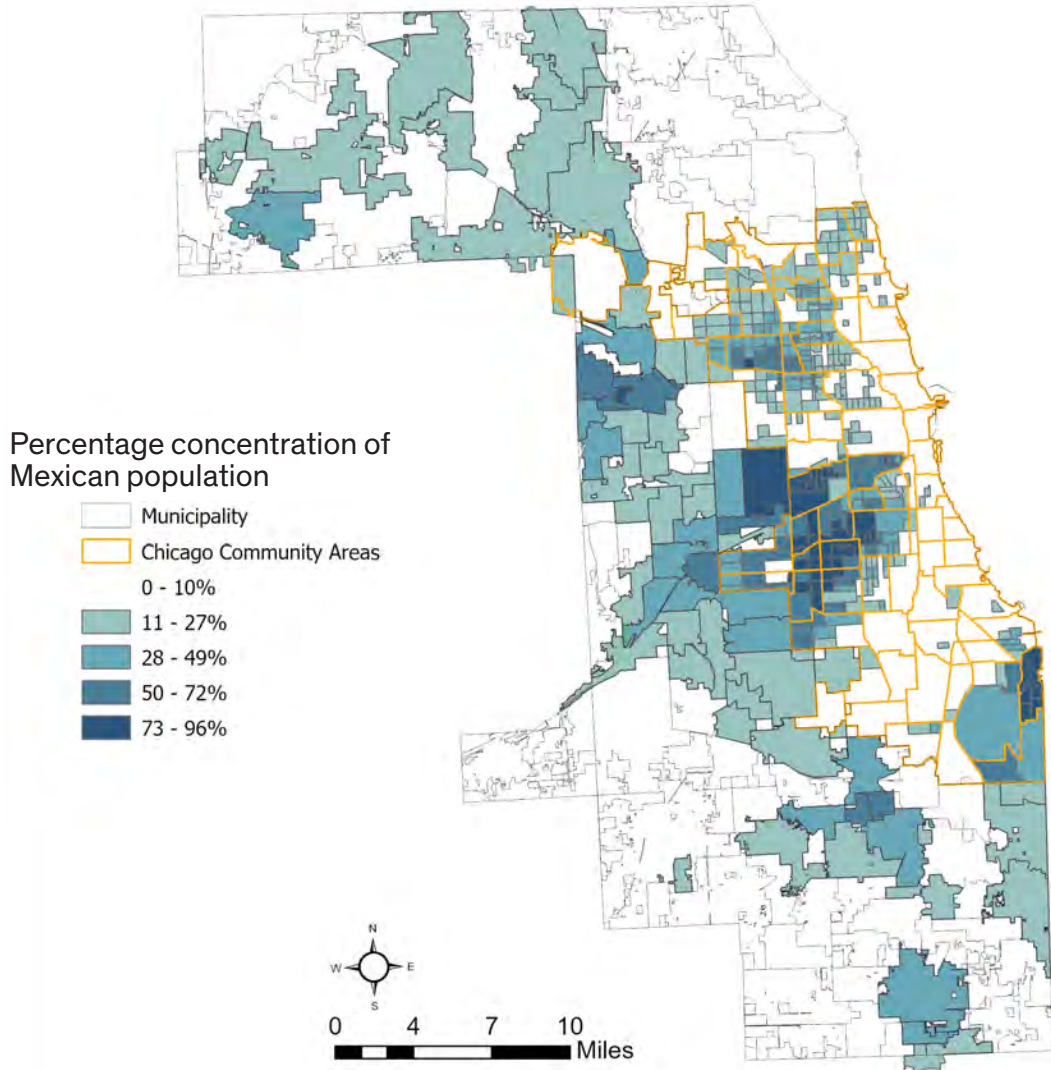


Map created by Great Cities Institute.
Source: 2018–2022 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates.

Map 2. Percentage of the Mexican population in Cook County

Mexicans and Mexican Americans are the majority Latine population in Cook County, and account for about 74% of the City of Chicago's Latine population. Mexican culture is evident in the prominence of small businesses, culturally significant place names, and much more across the region.

Mexicans have made substantial contributions, shaping the city's cultural, economic, and political landscape. They have enriched Chicago's cultural fabric through vibrant traditions, arts, and festivals, such as the annual Grito and Mexican Independence Day Parade and Día de Muertos altars in Pilsen. Economically, Mexicans have played crucial roles in industries including manufacturing and service sectors, contributing to the city's economic growth and diversification. Politically, their activism has led to increased representation and advocacy for Latine rights, exemplified by community leaders and the election of Mexican American leaders to local and state offices.



Map created by Great Cities Institute.
Source: 2018–2022 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates.

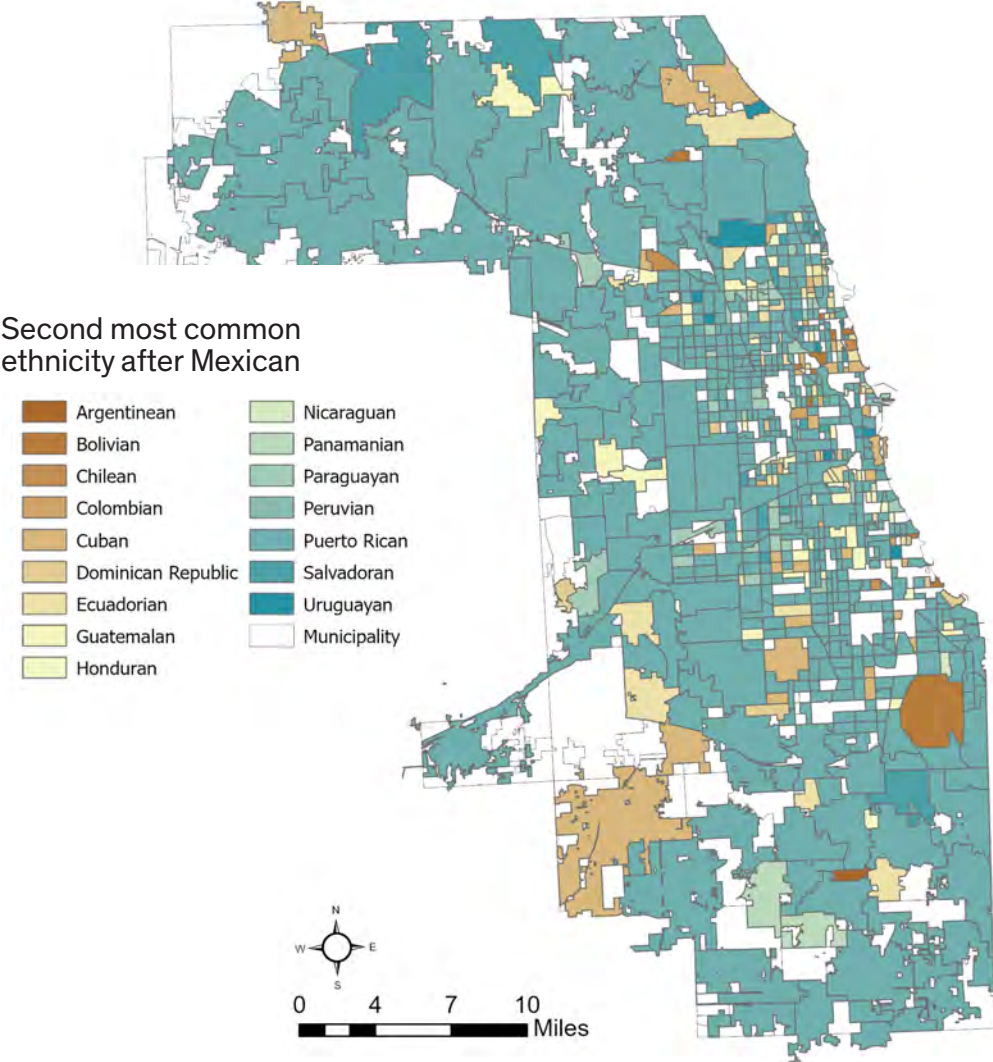
Map 3. Diversity of Latine population's national origin in Cook County

There is no one monolithic Latine community. Recognizing Latine diversity respects individual identities and cultures, improves cultural understanding, tailors policies to distinct needs, promotes equity, offers economic and market insights, and supports cultural competency in all fields.

Puerto Ricans are the second most common Latine ethnicity in Cook County. Many other Latine ethnicities are also represented.

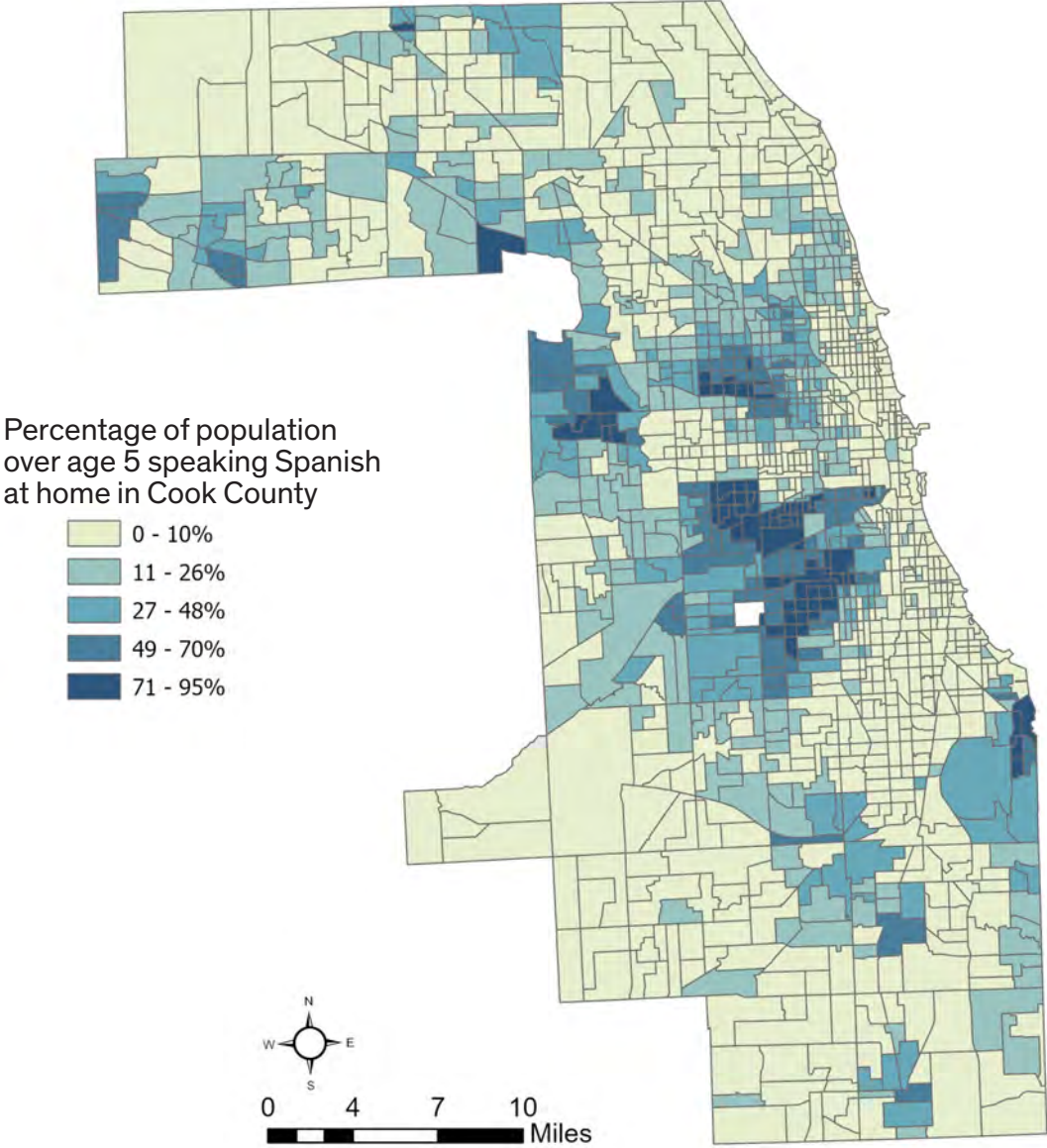
These Latine populations have made significant contributions to Chicago's cultural, economic, and political landscape.

In 2022, Cook County (and especially Chicago) saw a significant influx of immigrant arrivals from Venezuela, further diversifying the local Latine community. Those arrivals are not represented on this map.



Map created by Great Cities Institute.
 Source: 2018–2022 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates.

Map 4. Percentage of population over age 5 speaking Spanish at home in Cook County



Latines use Spanish at home to communicate essentials, but also as a powerful marker of cultural identity and community cohesion. For many Latine families, speaking Spanish at home preserves cultural heritage and maintains a strong connection to their roots, even when some or all family members are fluent in English. This choice is a deliberate expression of identity and pride, reinforcing generational ties and strengthening community bonds.

Understanding the significance of Spanish spoken at home, especially among bilingual families, is crucial for tailoring services and outreach efforts to be more inclusive and effective. Policymakers and community leaders can create initiatives that resonate more deeply with Latine communities by ensuring that efforts not only address the needs of the Latine population but also honor their culture and history, fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment across generations.

Map created by Great Cities Institute.
Source: 2018–2022 5-Year American Community Survey Estimates.

The Latine Nonprofit and Philanthropic Landscape

Latine culture is known for displaying a strong sense of community and solidarity, or *familismo*, which is deeply rooted in values of mutual support and collective well-being and helps individuals navigate challenges and leverage social capital.⁶

In addition to the hyperlocal support network, human service organizations work to address priority issue areas and alleviate need in Latine communities. A robust network of nonprofits and other community associations address specific needs with locally appropriate solutions. In 2022 alone, 6,500 organizations received grant funding in Cook County, 119 of which were Latine serving.⁷

Local nonprofits have worked to earn the trust of community members, which best positions them to effectively mobilize resources and engage residents. They typically fill gaps unserved by larger providers, offering vital services and programming directly to the populations they serve. Community nonprofits also preserve and celebrate cultural heritage, promote the arts, and create venues for leadership development, educational advancement, and community advocacy.

The philanthropy sector plays a crucial role in resolving and alleviating community challenges by supporting a broad variety of initiatives, especially in underserved or disinvested communities. Philanthropic

efforts target systemic issues—poverty, racial equity, lack of access to resources—enabling local organizations to implement innovative solutions and create sustainable impacts. Philanthropy also promotes cultural enrichment and community cohesion by funding arts, cultural institutions, and public spaces, enhancing quality of life and contributing to a flourishing region.

For philanthropy, though, there is currently a lack of information on whether funding effectively addresses the specific needs of Latine communities. According to Hispanics in Philanthropy, which works to increase funding for Latine issues, few detailed reports shed light on how funding is allocated to Latines and the distinct demographic groups of the Latine community. That gap can limit funders' ability to understand the distribution or impact of their contributions, leading to potential mismatches between funding priorities and the actual needs of diverse Latine communities.⁸

The fast-growing Latine population together with that knowledge gap signal an urgency to provide data and research shedding light on the needs, interests, and goals of Latine communities and organizations. Without that, there is the risk of underfunding the Latine population. According to the Urban Institute, “Many in the philanthropic sector have acknowledged that the Latinx community is a driving economic, political, and cultural force in America. But significant population increases and growth in philanthropic giving have not yet translated into more charitable investments for the Latinx community.”⁹

This Landscape Scan

This UIC Great Cities Institute (GCI) research project, *Assessing Philanthropic Funding Support for Latine-Led and/or Latine-Serving Organizations Landscape Scan and Analysis*, was commissioned by *Nuestro Futuro*, an initiative of The Chicago Community Trust.

This report provides an in-depth picture of philanthropic engagement with Latine communities in the Chicago region.

Landscape scans offer a detailed view of the current environment, highlighting available support and existing gaps. By mapping resources, trends, and needs, they lay the groundwork for strategic decisions, reveal opportunities for collaboration and innovation, and help direct resources to issue areas and geographies where they can achieve the greatest impact. **We hope this report achieves that and supports Nuestro Futuro and others interested and engaged in Chicago philanthropy to continue advocating for Latine needs and interests.**

Six goals drove this research:

- Identifying philanthropic support for Latine organizations and issues,
- Evaluating funding levels across priority issue areas,
- Identifying funding trends over time,
- Gathering feedback from philanthropic and community leaders on funding needs and opportunities, and

- Documenting the successes and challenges the sector faces in funding Latine-led and Latine-serving organizations.

Our analysis focused on the priority areas of education, economic development, housing, immigration and language access, and health equity.

We used a mixed-methods approach to carry out the research, combining quantitative data from sources such as the US Census Bureau, Form 990s from the Internal Revenue Service available via Candid, and data from some philanthropic entities with qualitative insights from interviews and focus groups (for more detail, see the appendix at the end of this report).

This dual approach ensured a robust understanding of the funding landscape, helping us illuminate potential gaps and opportunities while validating quantitative findings with community experiences.

This report is the culmination of that research, highlighting funding patterns, trends, and priorities for the Latine population in Cook County.

The remainder of this report provides context on the landscape of Latine communities in Cook County, including demographics and diversity. It explores funding support in specific priority areas, highlighting potential gaps and opportunities as informed by the expertise of philanthropic and nonprofit and community leaders.

We hope the data and findings here can continue to support advocacy and help leverage resources to serve Cook County's various Latine communities.

The Latine Funding Landscape

Funding to Latine Organizations

What is a "Latine led and serving" organization in this study?
An organization has any one of the following:

- Has an executive director (or equivalent title) who identifies as Latine
- Has 51% or more of staff and/or board members who identify as Latine
- Serves a Latine population, as indicated in IRS data or by identifying as such in interviews and focus groups

What percentage of all philanthropic support in Cook County is going to Latine-led and Latine-serving organizations?

From 2003 through 2022, philanthropy awarded a total of more than \$26 billion to organizations in Cook County.

About \$501 million of that was awarded to Latine organizations, for total of 1.9% of all funds being awarded to Latine organizations.

That percentage did not change substantially over later periods: It remained at 1.9% for 2013–2022, and slightly increased to 2.1% for the period 2018–2022.

Despite the overall low percentage of funding to Latine organizations as a share of the Latine population in Cook County (26%), three priority issue areas received more than 1.9% of total available philanthropic funding: economic development (4.7%), housing (4.3%), and immigration and language access (35.5%). However, education (1.9%) and health equity (1.9%) continue to be underfunded.

1.9%

2003–2022

Percentage of TOTAL philanthropic support (\$26 billion to 16,592 organizations) from 2003 to 2022 to 432 Latine organizations (\$501 million)

Percentage Funding to Latine Organizations in Priority Issue Areas, 2013–2022

4.7%	1.9%	1.9%	4.3%	35.5%
% support to economic development, or \$122.7 million (to 98 grantees) of \$2.6 billion total	% support to education, or \$147.6 million (to 102 grantees) of \$8.2 billion total	% support to health equity, or \$87.4 million (to 129 grantees) of \$4.4 billion total	% support to housing, or \$25.0 million (to 26 grantees) of \$588.2 million total	% support to immigration and language access, or \$34.1 million (to 24 grantees) of \$96.1 million total

We looked at the percentage of total funding Latine organizations received each year from 2003 through 2022 to assess trends and consider external impacts on funding.

Percentages ranged widely, with **an average of 2.0%** of total philanthropic funding going to Latine organizations. Differences in percentage funding from year to year reflect the economic environment generally and major events such as the 2007–2009 Great Recession and COVID-19. The peaks and valleys suggest that philanthropic giving may be more reactive than proactive to crises and their social ramifications.

Other explanations for the variability may include:

- Different funding priorities, such as shifting focus areas and strategies or leadership changes.
- Variability in funding sources or fluctuating donor engagement.

- Economic and political factors generally at the national and local levels, such as the 2013 Chicago Public Schools closures or the 2015–2017 statewide budget impasse.
- Evolving prioritizations of social issues, which may redirect funding that had previously benefited Latine issues and communities.
- Increased competition for the dollars available from more nonprofits—of the nearly 6,500 organizations in 2022 registered in Cook County, 119 were identified in the data as Latine led or serving.
- Philanthropic outreach and nonprofit organizations’ capacity, so more established organizations are likely to find it easier to secure funding.

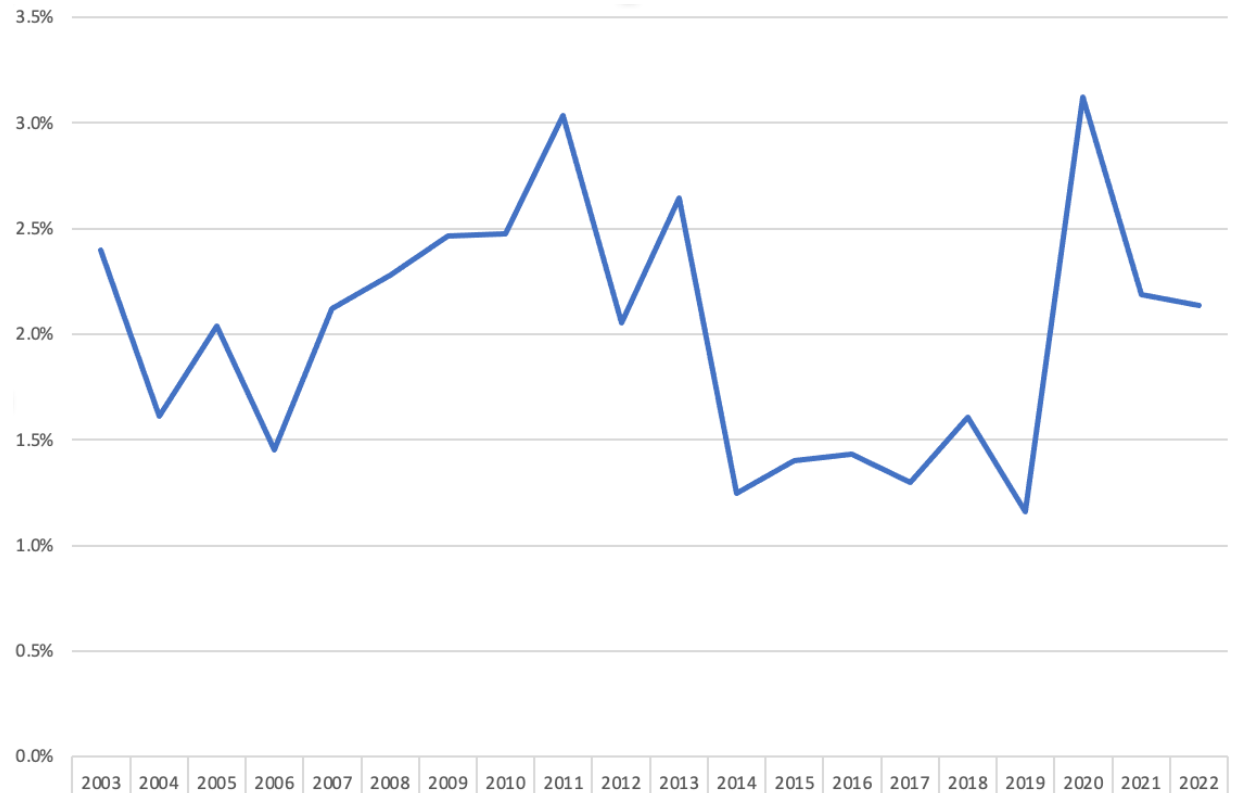


Figure 1. Percentage of available funding to Latine organizations in Cook County

Tabulated and compiled by Great Cities Institute.
Source: 2003–2022 IRS Form 990 data, via Candid.

What is the dollar amount of funding?

We looked at total philanthropy dollars to organizations in Cook County. From 2003 to 2022, the dollar amount that philanthropy granted in Cook County grew by 1,046%, from \$291 million to over \$3.3 billion in 2022. With that, dollar amounts granted to Latine organizations increased by 921%.

This increase reflects economic growth over time from increased wealth and investment returns, more available philanthropy dollars from trends toward strategic philanthropy among high-net-worth individuals, tax policy changes incentivizing charitable contributions, and public awareness of issues.

The year 2014 was the first year philanthropy granted more than \$1 billion to Cook County organizations—of which Latine organizations received almost \$13 million. After 2014, the total number of dollars granted increased every year but one.

It is clear that all organizations are receiving increased support, but the disparate nature of that support remains. In most years since 2014, more dollars have gone to Latine organizations, but while receiving

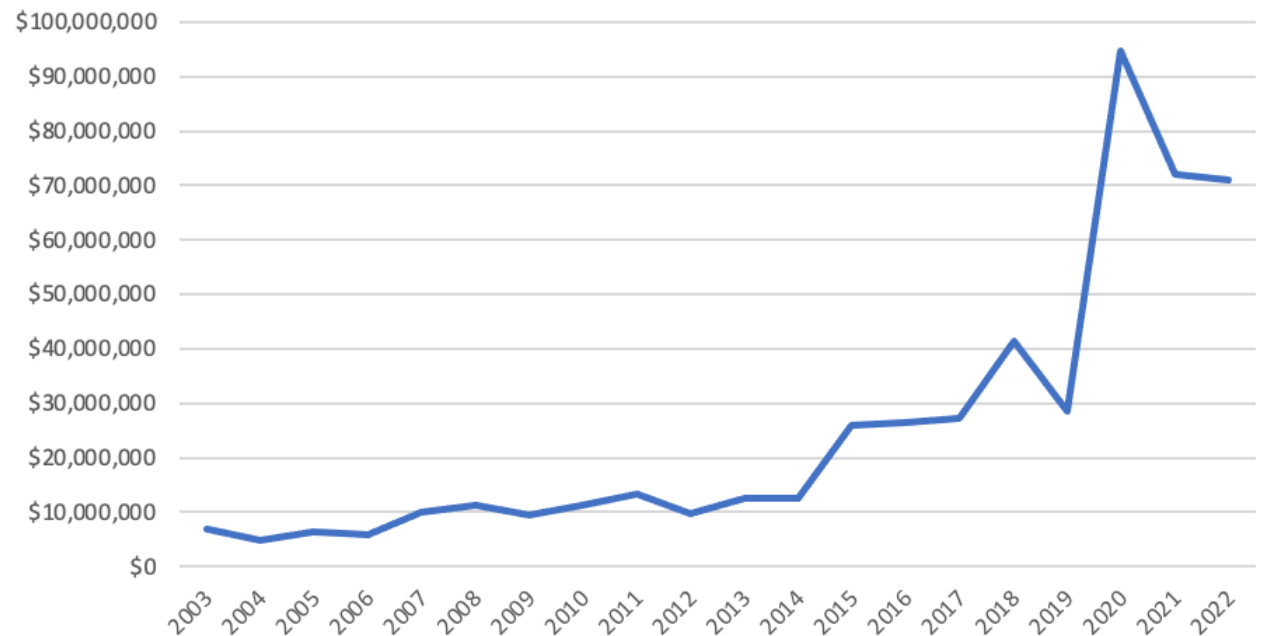
year-over-year increased support, they still receive less than 2% of total funds granted in most years.

Moreover, that year-over-year growth is inconsistent, providing evidence for the idea that philanthropy may be more reactive than proactive. For example, in the wake of COVID-19, funding increased by 231% but then fell by 24% in 2021.

921%

Percentage increase in philanthropic dollars from 2003 to 2022 to Latine organizations in Cook County, where the share of total philanthropic funding to Latine organizations has remained at about 2% over the same period

Figure 2. Increase in philanthropy dollars to Latine organizations in Cook County, 2003–2022



Tabulated and compiled by Great Cities Institute. Source: 2003–2022 IRS Form 990 data, via Candid.

Priority Issue Areas

Economic Development

Education

Health Equity

Housing

Immigration & Language Access

The analysis in this section shows that, while Latine organizations have received low philanthropic support from 2003 to 2022 in Cook County overall, in more recent periods, from 2013–2017 and 2018–2022, they have received a greater share of available funding in particular issue areas, such as economic development, housing, and immigration and language access, and not others, such as education and health equity.

NOTE: The data in this section are from Form 990s filed with the IRS, which contain self-reported data by funders and grant recipients.

Issue Area: Economic Development

Sixty-six Latine organizations received support from 2013 to 2022, three of which were located in the suburbs.

The data show a dramatic increase in funding for economic development, from \$505,000 to more than \$11 million between 2013 and 2022, likely reflecting a shift toward large-scale initiatives.

Funding for community improvement, job creation, and workforce development nearly tripled. In 2018–2022, urban renewal emerged with over \$4 million in funding, and community organizing also saw a significant increase.

Together, this suggests a concerted effort to address long-standing disparities and to ensure that development efforts are inclusive and responsive to community need. This concentrated funding may also reflect philanthropy’s shift over time to advancing equity in disinvested geographies.

Across all our philanthropy interviews, we heard that while funders did not have a specific Latine focus, all were focused on equity and the region’s disinvested communities, particularly in historically disinvested areas on Chicago’s South and West Sides. As a result, paraphrasing one interviewee: In Chicago, “South and West Sides” is the same as “Black and Brown.”

Three interviewees also mentioned the need for flexibility, including for capital investments and commercial real estate development.

From 2003 to 2022, Latine organizations received \$147.5 million of \$3.1 billion granted for economic development in Cook County, for a total of 4.74%. For 2013 to 2022, the share was slightly lower, at 4.69%, or \$122.7 million of \$2.6 billion.

This may indicate slightly less support for Latine-specific communities; however, Latine organizations in this category received much more support than Latine organizations in aggregate across all issue areas (1.9%).

4.7%

% Latine organizations received from 2013 to 2022 for economic development, or \$122.7 million of \$2.6 billion total

10 Most Funded Latine Subareas in Economic Development, 2013–2017

1. Employment	\$4,611,112
2. Community improvement	\$2,126,249
3. Job creation & workforce development	\$1,916,150
4. Community & economic development	\$1,826,188
5. Job training	\$735,090
6. Labor rights	\$528,431
7. Economic development	\$505,000
8. Microfinance	\$494,416
9. Job counseling	\$398,950
10. Community organizing	\$380,656

10 Most Funded Latine Subareas in Economic Development, 2018–2022

1. Economic development	\$11,364,988
2. Community improvement	\$6,101,755
3. Job creation & workforce development	\$5,769,623
4. Urban renewal	\$4,635,335
5. Community & economic development	\$2,866,138
6. Community organizing	\$1,363,220
7. Job counseling	\$749,402
8. Employment	\$662,300
9. Labor rights	\$334,039
10. Microfinance	\$282,361

Top 10 Funded Latine Organizations in Economic Development

1. Resurrection Project
2. Institute for Latino Progress
3. Enlace Chicago
4. Central States SER Jobs for Progress
5. Puerto Rican Cultural Center
6. Little Village Environmental Justice Organization
7. Southwest Organizing Project
8. Austin Coming Together
9. Chicago Community Foundation
10. Mujeres Latinas en Acción

Tabulated and compiled by Great Cities Institute.
Source: 2013–2022 IRS Form 990 data, via Candid.

Issue Area: Education

Funding support to education shows individual schools and school systems as well as community providers with diversified programming. **Support for Cristo Rey Jesuit High School increased by more than 355% between the two periods.** This may signal increased recognition of the school's model of providing opportunities in underserved communities, particularly its well-known Corporate Work Study Program.

The issue area data show that funding for elementary and secondary education received sustained support. **Early childhood education saw the greatest increase, up 221% across the periods.** While early childhood education has long been recognized as important, the percentage growth likely reflects an increase in evidence-based research in the later period,¹⁰ efforts to close racial/ethnic disparities, and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

From 2003 to 2022, Latine organizations received \$188.5 million of \$9.7 billion granted for education in Cook County, for a total of 1.93%. For 2013 to 2022, the share was slightly lower, at 1.84%, or \$147.6 million of \$8.2 billion. **This slight decrease in the share of educational funding going to Latine organizations over time could be the result of shifts toward funding non-Latine-specific subareas, such as STEM or technology or increasing competition for funding.**

It could also be the result of historical disinvestment, which makes it harder for Latine actors in the education space to build capacity to secure greater funding over time or become known to philanthropic networks.

It may also be that funders determine that large school districts receive adequate funding from other sources.

The education category received approximately equal support to Latine organizations in aggregate across all issue areas (1.9%) in all periods, from 2003 to 2022 and from 2013 to 2022. **By dollar amounts, it is the top funded issue area by far, at \$8 billion between 2013 and 2022.**

1.9%

percentage Latine organizations received from
2013 to 2022 for education,
or **\$147.6 million of \$8.2 billion total**

10 Most Funded Latine Education Subareas, 2013–2017

1.	Elementary & secondary education	\$8,845,503
2.	Education	\$7,960,843
3.	Higher education	\$4,050,899
4.	Educational management	\$2,139,086
5.	Early childhood education	\$1,995,000
6.	Graduate & professional education	\$1,779,933
7.	Social sciences	\$1,401,171
8.	Arts education	\$991,852
9.	College preparation	\$952,791
10.	Ethnic studies	\$885,000

10 Most Funded Latine Education Subareas, 2018–2022

1.	Elementary & secondary education	\$9,134,838
2.	Education	\$7,183,050
3.	Early childhood education	\$6,395,256
4.	Higher education	\$6,370,416
5.	Latino & Hispanic studies	\$5,950,000
6.	Vocational post-secondary education	\$2,844,916
7.	Secondary education	\$2,364,553
8.	Safety education	\$2,350,480
9.	Charter school education	\$1,779,098
10.	College preparation	\$1,560,700

Top 10 Funded Latine Organizations in Education

1.	Casa Central
2.	Cristo Rey Jesuit High School
3.	University of Illinois at Chicago
4.	Hope Chicago
5.	Psi Chi: The International Honor Society in Psychology
6.	Metropolitan Family Services
7.	Board of Trustees of Community College District #508
8.	Latin School of Chicago ¹¹
9.	Resurrection Project
10.	El Hogar del Nino

Tabulated and compiled by Great Cities Institute.
Source: 2013–2022 IRS Form 990 data, via Candid.

Issue Area: Health Equity

The dataset for health equity included 49 IRS categories, more than any other category, which may suggest that funding in this category is more fragmented than others (for example, there were only 6 or 7 issue areas within immigration).

Support to Sinai Health System stands out for more than tripling from 2013 to 2022, likely reflecting its central role in addressing health disparities.

Meanwhile, **community organizations like Enlace Chicago and Mujeres Latinas en Acción have also seen more support, which could indicate a shift in their diversified services toward health and more localized, community-level efforts.**

In 2013–2017, as mentioned earlier, UIC and Northwestern both received large research grants for diabetes and other medical research.

Looking at the top issue areas funded in the 2013–2017 and 2018–2022 periods reveals a **notable shift toward funding more comprehensive, community-based health-care initiatives, suggesting more emphasis on accessibility and preventive care.** There is also a noticeable move away from funding

specific illnesses, suggesting a broader strategy to improve overall health outcomes or perhaps the sun setting of particular research programs or trials.

Funding for HIV/AIDS appeared in the 2018–2022 period, likely reflecting a renewed focus on HIV/AIDS as a result of federal public health initiatives and renewed public health campaigns with advances in HIV prevention.

Mental health also emerged in the 2018–2022 period. There is substantial evidence of a national mental health crisis in the United States, with higher rates of mental illness, aftereffects of COVID-19, and disparities in accessing mental health care, especially for Black and Latine populations, who are dying by suicide earlier than other racial/ethnic

groups.¹² **It may be that mental health is also addressed by some providers in other areas, such as community health care or health generally; however, the roughly \$994,000 allocated to mental health is not likely enough to fill community need, so there is opportunity to increase funding given the scale of the issue.**

From 2003 to 2022, Latine organizations received \$125.5 million of \$6.0 billion granted for health equity in Cook County, for a total of 2.1%. For 2013 to 2022, the share decreased slightly to \$87.4 million of \$4.4 billion, or 1.9%. It may be that funders are prioritizing broad initiatives not tailored to any one population. Given the size of the Latine population in Cook County, it will be important to ensure that health equity funding is distributed equitably.

1.9%
percentage Latine organizations received from
2013 to 2022 for health equity, or
\$87.4 million of \$4.4 billion total

10 Most Funded Latine Health Equity Subareas, 2013–2017

1.	Health Insurance	\$4,859,499
2.	Endocrine, Nutritional, Metabolic Disease	\$4,352,799
3.	Health	\$3,900,573
4.	Community Health Care	\$3,667,948
5.	Diseases & Conditions	\$2,985,936
6.	Eye Diseases	\$2,524,681
7.	Diabetes	\$2,469,836
8.	Organ & Tissue Banks	\$1,491,264
9.	Health Care Access	\$1,146,750
10.	Health Care Clinics	\$662,500

10 Most Funded Latine Health Equity Subareas, 2018–2022

1.	Community Health Care	\$11,766,797
2.	Health	\$6,953,479
3.	Health Care Clinics	\$2,897,537
4.	Health Care Access	\$2,616,409
5.	Children’s Hospital Care	\$1,928,500
6.	Diseases & Conditions	\$1,900,953
7.	Organ & Tissue Banks	\$1,340,565
8.	HIV/AIDS	\$1,166,295
9.	Mental Health Care	\$994,250
10.	Cancers	\$977,103

Top 10 Funded Latine Organizations in Health Equity

1.	Sinai Health System
2.	Esperanza Health Centers
3.	University of Illinois at Chicago
4.	Northwestern University
5.	Mujeres Latinas en Acción
6.	Humboldt Park Health
7.	Northwestern University, Chicago Campus
8.	Enlace Chicago
9.	Community Health Partnership of Illinois
10.	University of Illinois

Tabulated and compiled by Great Cities Institute.
Source: 2013–2022 IRS Form 990 data, via Candid.

Issue Area: Housing

Our dataset shows that 19 Latine organizations received funding for housing-related support from 2013 to 2022.

Only one of those organizations was located in the suburbs, PASO West Suburban Action Project in Melrose Park. **While several others provide support across the county, given the fast-growing suburban Latine population, there is much room to support housing in the suburbs.**

We looked at funding to specific issue areas within housing to determine trends over time. **The data show substantial increases in direct housing development funding and a dropoff in support for related housing services, such as financial counseling or foreclosure prevention.** That shift might be attributable to several factors:

- Economic recovery in the years after the 2008 housing crisis, with a shift from financial counseling to address housing affordability and homelessness.
- Gentrification and its resultant displacement, which increase the need for affordable housing and may drive investment in development and housing for the homeless.

- Efforts from housing advocates and community organizers reaching funders and leading to support for housing solutions.

From 2003 to 2022, Latine organizations received \$31.2 million of \$1.1 billion granted for housing in Cook County, for a total of 2.8%. For 2013 to 2022, the share was higher, at 4.3%, or \$25.0 million of \$588.2 million. **That increase may indicate progress over time, but still represents a small share of available resources. It may be that Latine organizations have been underfunded over time relative to population size and need.**

In interviews, we also heard about the importance of recognizing that Latine households may be more likely to be intergenerational or that Latines experiencing homelessness are more likely to be undercounted.¹³

This category received more support than Latine organizations in aggregate across all issue areas (1.9%).

4.3%

percentage Latine organizations received from 2013 to 2022 for housing, or **\$25.0 million of \$588.2 million total**

8 Most Funded Latine Housing Subareas, 2013–2017*

1.	Housing Development	\$3,590,822
2.	Financial Counseling	\$433,100
3.	Financial Services	\$383,110
4.	Home Ownership	\$270,000
5.	Housing Services	\$155,750
6.	Foreclosure Prevention	\$60,250
7.	Housing for the Homeless	\$42,000
8.	Supportive Housing	\$40,000

*There are only eight subareas funded between 2013 and 2017.

6 Most Funded Latine Housing Subareas, 2018–2022*

1.	Housing Development	\$7,566,685
2.	Housing Services	\$496,014
3.	Financial Counseling	\$468,435
4.	Housing for the Homeless	\$257,514
5.	Financial Services	\$84,652
6.	Home Ownership	\$65,000

*There are only six subareas funded between 2018 and 2022.

Top 10 Funded Latine Organizations in Housing

1.	Hispanic Housing Development Corp.
2.	Spanish Coalition for Housing
3.	Latin United Community Housing Assn (LUCHA)
4.	Resurrection Project
5.	Erie Neighborhood House
6.	Mujeres Latinas en Acción
7.	Northwest Side Housing Center
8.	Logan Square Neighborhood Association
9.	Latino Policy Forum
10.	Brighton Park Neighborhood Council

Tabulated and compiled by Great Cities Institute.
Source: 2013–2022 IRS Form 990 data, via Candid.

Issue Area: Immigration & Language Access

For immigration and language access we included immigration services and rights, special population support (refugee and asylum), ESL acquisition, and constituent journalism, as IRS descriptions indicated support for the latter was related to bilingual news communications.

Brighton Park Neighborhood Council and Institute for Latino Progress saw substantial increases in funding from 2013 to 2022, suggesting expansion of programs and increased attention from funders. Other organizations received less support over time, suggesting underfunding or a lack of recognition of their services.

This issue area had the fewest related categories in IRS data for analysis, and the overall funding amounts are much lower than other priority areas.

Those low numbers, challenges to the safety net from the new arrivals starting in 2022, and competitive pressures between new arrivals and longtime area residents,¹⁴ including Latines, mean that there is a lot of room to provide more support in this area.

The data do show a substantial increase in funding support for immigrants' rights, which increased 259% between 2013–2017 and 2018–2022.

From 2003 to 2022, Latine organizations received \$43.2 million of \$118.3 million granted for immigration and language access in Cook County, for a total of 36.5%. For 2013 to 2022, the share declined to 35.5%, or \$34.1 million of \$96.1 million.

That decline suggests that as funding decreases, Latines are receiving an even smaller overall share. **This may signal an issue with allocation of resources to immigration overall, possibly related to the crisis of the new arrivals since 2022.**

We heard in interviews about the great need for immigration services and legal access generally, as well as specifically for longtime residents and also new arrivals.

Some focus group participants shared the importance of recognizing the diversity of Latine immigrants and their experiences, so that some groups are not assumed to be able to provide for others with an equal cultural footing.

35.5%

percentage Latine organizations received from 2013 to 2022 for immigration and language access, or **\$34.1 million of \$96.1 million total**

7 Most Funded Latine Immigration & Language Access Subareas, 2013–2017*

1.	Immigrants' Rights	\$3,106,519
2.	Immigrant Services	\$1,738,041
3.	ESL & Second Language Acquisition	\$493,135
4.	Constituency Journalism	\$251,382
5.	Immigration Law	\$80,000
6.	Special Population Support	\$35,000
7.	Immigration & Naturalization	\$10,000

6 Most Funded Latine Immigration & Language Access Subareas, 2018–2022*

1.	Immigrants' Rights	\$11,169,865
2.	Immigrant Services	\$2,057,942
3.	Special Population Support	\$1,608,602
4.	ESL & Second Language Acquisition	\$236,889
5.	Constituency Journalism	\$137,753
6.	Immigration Law	\$25,000

Top 10 Funded Latine Organizations in Immigration & Language Access

1.	Brighton Park Neighborhood Council
2.	Institute for Latino Progress
3.	Latino Union
4.	PODER
5.	Casa Central
6.	Chicago Public Media
7.	La Casa Norte
8.	Latinos Progresando
9.	Centro de Trabajadores Unidos
10.	Puerto Rican Cultural Center

*There are only seven subareas funded between 2013 and 2017.

*There are only six subareas funded between 2018 and 2022.

Tabulated and compiled by Great Cities Institute.
Source: 2013–2022 IRS Form 990 data, via Candid.

Funding Characteristics

How and where are funds allocated?

To get a fuller picture of the grantmaking landscape, we looked at numbers of grantmakers, grants, and recipients in each of 5 years, comparing support for Latine organizations in Chicago and the suburbs.

Table 1 suggests the following:

- Numbers of grantmakers and grants to Latines increased slightly over time, suggesting that philanthropy has become more interested in funding Chicago Latine organizations or that organizations are becoming better known, especially during COVID-19.
- Support to Latine recipients fluctuated, dropping off in the city and suburban Cook County by 2022. Lower numbers in the suburbs might signal underfunding of organizations or that they are much less known to funders than city counterparts.
- The number of Latine grant recipients in the suburbs and Chicago was relatively stable across the period, which might indicate that the same organizations receive funding year after year; that could signal stable yet not necessarily expanding support.

While there has been some growth in grantmakers and recipients in Latine-specific funding, especially in Chicago, there is still a significant opportunity to fund Latine organizations and issue areas as a proportion of the broader funding landscape, especially in the suburbs.

Table 1. Grantmaking landscape in Chicago and Suburban Cook

	Chicago					
	Full Landscape			Latine		
	Grantmakers	Grants	Recipients	Grantmakers	Grants	Recipients
2018	6,523	31,190	4,199	260	568	89
2019	6,605	28,947	4,064	236	457	66
2020	6,580	30,224	4,173	265	574	105
2021	6,114	31,523	4,218	260	577	108
2022	6,535	30,229	4,174	299	602	94

	Cook Suburban					
	Full Landscape			Latine		
	Grantmakers	Grants	Recipients	Grantmakers	Grants	Recipients
2018	1,507	11,454	2,366	45	173	16
2019	1,461	10,704	2,373	39	126	17
2020	1,534	11,448	2,282	46	184	29
2021	1,688	11,709	2,429	36	167	26
2022	1,520	10,744	2,315	38	166	25

Tabulated and compiled by Great Cities Institute. Source: 2018–2022 IRS Form 990 data, via Candid.

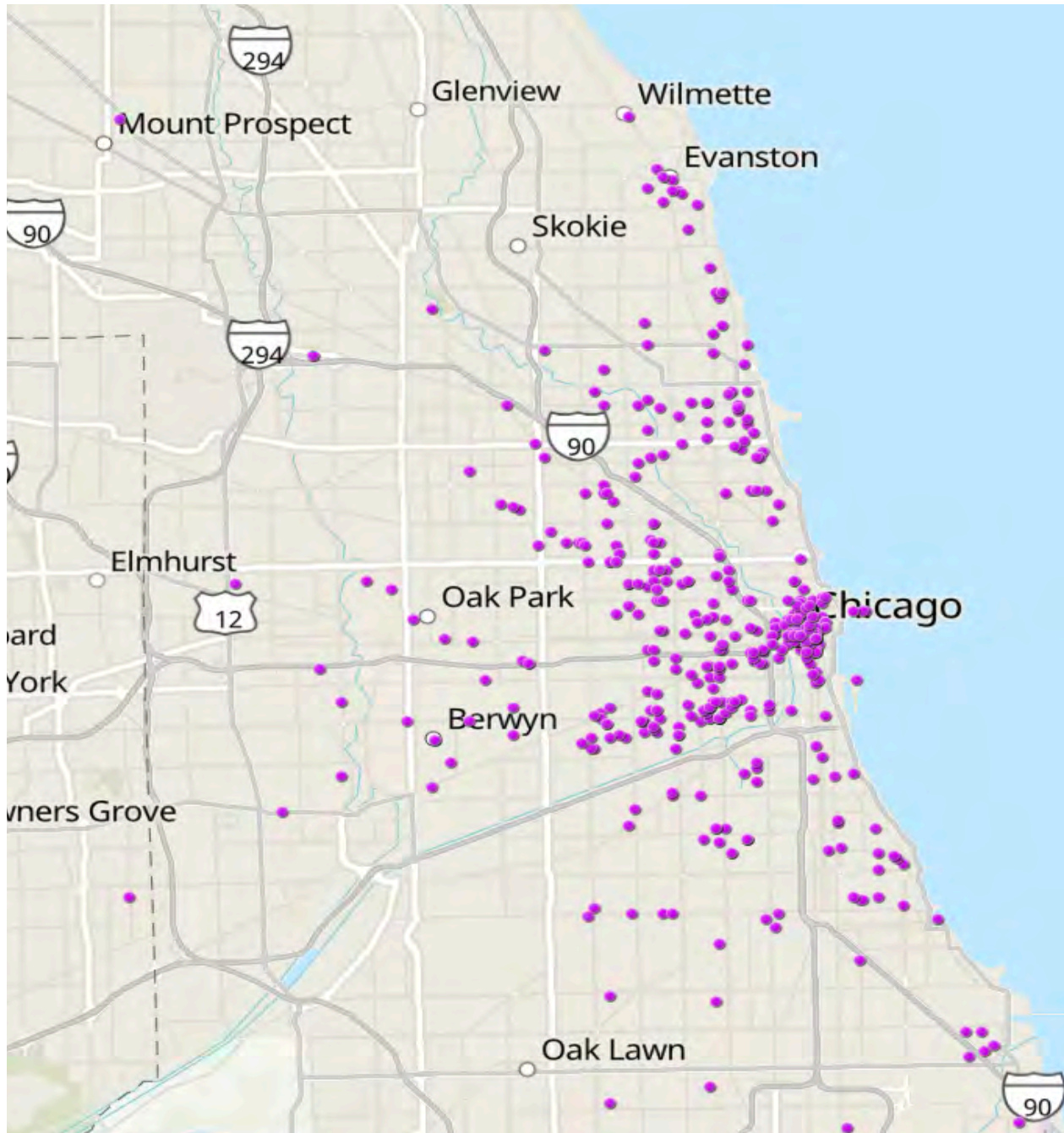


Image created by Great Cities Institute.

Source: 2018–2022 IRS Form 990 data, via Candid, and Great Cities research.

Where is philanthropy investing in Latine populations?

We looked at where philanthropy is investing by geography and issue area. First, we mapped all organizations in Cook County that appeared in Form 990s as having received philanthropic support for Latine populations from 2018 to 2022 and also had an identifiable street address.

It is important to note that these 468 organizations are either Latine led and serving *or* may be organizations like cultural institutions and service providers that serve large swaths of Chicago, Cook County, and the region and also provide Latine-specific programming or initiatives, such as the Art Institute of Chicago and Metropolitan Family Services. Some of the 468 organizations may have closed since 2022 or changed their address.¹⁵

Map 5. Image of funded Latine Organizations across Cook County

In which areas do Latine organizations receive the most funding?

We looked at all funding data to determine which general issue areas are the ones in which Latine organizations receive the most philanthropy support. All five priority issues identified for this project rank among the top funded areas that philanthropy is supporting.

We also looked at funding by year to determine funding intensity and detect any shifts. In Figure 3, on the next page, funding issues are stacked atop each other; thicker areas receive more funding than thinner ones. If a given area thickens over time, that indicates increased support for an issue, and vice versa.

The data from 2018 to 2022 clearly show philanthropy's response to COVID-19. It is widely known the pandemic created an increased demand for services by stressing the health-care and nonprofit systems, and it also shed new light on precarity and need in communities, but also on their assets and social capital.¹⁶ This is also reflected in the figure in the thickness of areas of support for human services, as well as increasing support for early childhood and K–12 education.

Funding notably tapered after the pandemic's peak, but housing development and non-school education (such as adult education, bilingual or arts education, vocational education, and worker safety education) have received the least support. Since 2021, both areas have seen only modest increases—but these areas can be critical to Latine populations. For example, non-school education programs provide economic empowerment and workforce integration by helping bridge language barriers, enhancing job prospects, enabling access to better-paying jobs, and ensuring labor rights and safety.

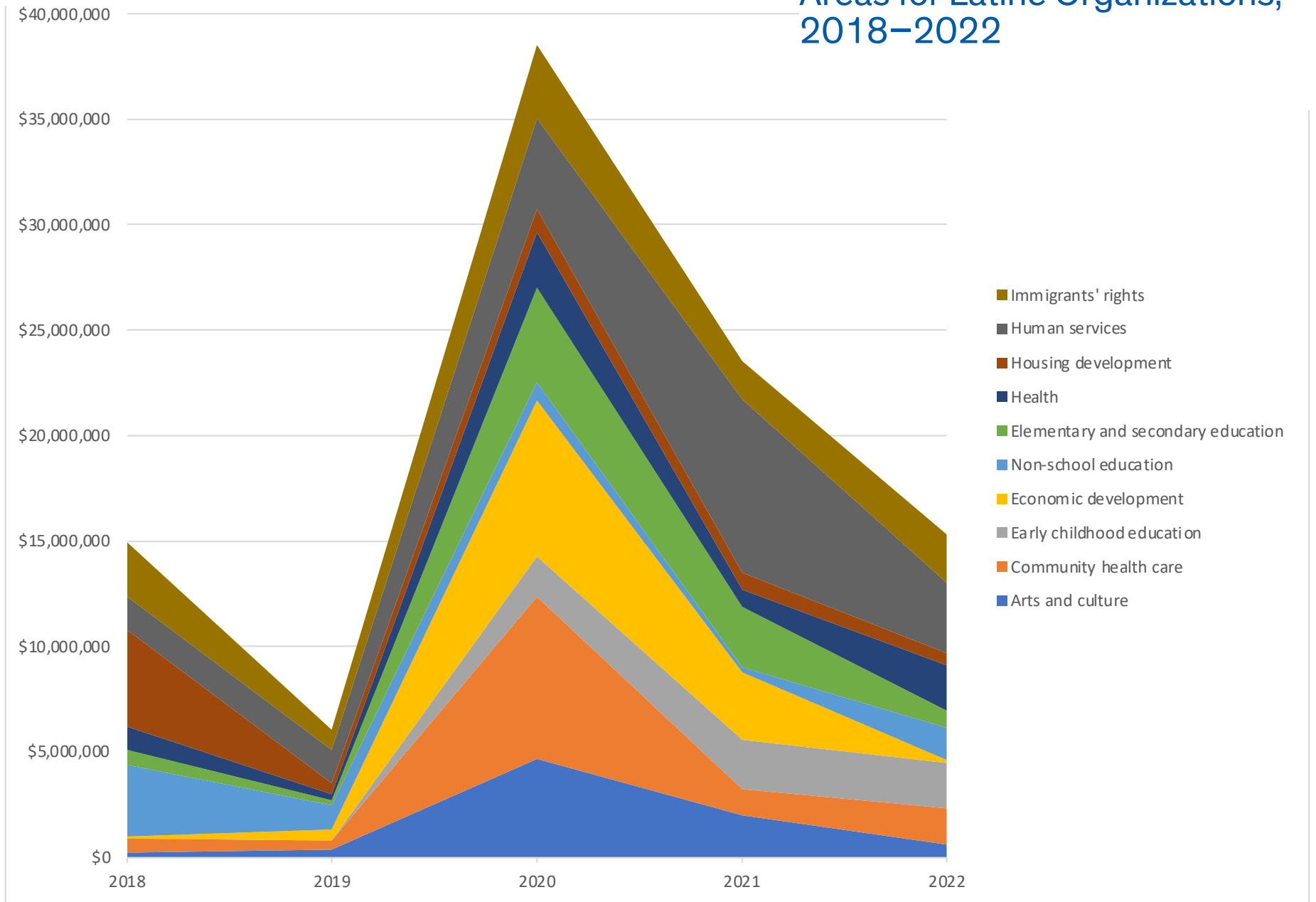
With respect to housing, the national housing shortage also has affected the entire Chicago metropolitan area.¹⁷ Challenges include decreasing supply of affordable housing, increasing homeownership costs, and aging homeowners.¹⁸

In addition, according to the study *Latinos in the Suburbs*, the fastest Latine population growth in the Chicago area is occurring in places where rental housing is less affordable, which might exacerbate economic challenges for Latine households.¹⁹

10 Most Funded Issue Areas to Latine Organizations, 2018–2022

1. Human services	\$19,029,336
2. Community health care	\$11,766,797
3. Economic development	\$11,364,988
4. Immigrants' rights	\$11,169,865
5. Elementary & secondary education	\$9,134,838
6. Arts and culture	\$7,810,190
7. Housing development	\$7,566,685
8. Education	\$7,183,050
9. Health	\$6,953,479
10. Early childhood education	\$6,395,256

Figure 3. Most Funded Issue Areas for Latine Organizations, 2018–2022



Tabulated and compiled by Great Cities Institute.
Source: 2018–2022 IRS Form 990 data, via Candid.

Which Latine organizations are the most funded?

We looked at general funding trends to determine which organizations have been most funded over time. This gives us insight into which organizations are reflected in the most funded issue areas generally, and it identifies the larger entities in the landscape. These larger players are most likely to have broad reach to Latine populations and to be supporting and/or collaborating with other local organizations.

It is essential to note that, even if certain organizations are “top funded” in this analysis, that does not mean they do not require support. The fact that they have secured significant funding often reflects an established presence and ability to navigate the philanthropic landscape, not that their needs are necessarily fully met.

The complexities and diverse need in Latine communities will require sustained and even increased funding to ensure that organizations can continue to be effective.

The role of philanthropy must be considered when considering these trends, too: who is funded and when can be influenced by philanthropy’s shifting focus areas, leadership

changes, or the visibility of specific causes at different times.

For the organizations that received the most cumulative funding from 2003 to 2022, all 10 are well known and respected in Chicago, specifically for their contributions and support to the Latine community and their roles in addressing community need.²⁰

The data show that grants cover many broad categories: health care, education, community development, and social services stand out. Some organizations clearly focus on one area, such as art or education. Several, though, take a diversified approach, receiving funding to provide a range of services at once: education, health, human services, women’s services, and so on.

In interviews and focus groups, leaders shared that issues are multifaceted. Focus group participants especially pointed out that there is often a misalignment or overlap between funded program areas and actual needs of individuals and communities. As a result, many work across multiple areas at once rather than within any one issue area.

We also looked at the top funded organizations in two 5-year periods to assess trends and changes:

Rise in New Leaders

The data show a rise in new leaders across the two 5-year periods, with Resurrection Project, Mujeres Latinas en Acción, and Cristo Rey Jesuit High School entering the top 10.

Consistent Funding of Anchor Institutions

The data also shows some consistency, as with Sinai Health System, one of the area’s largest private health care safety nets, and Casa Central, the largest Latine social services agency in the Midwest. In 2013–2017, the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) and Northwestern University appeared, both major educational anchors in Cook County. The majority of support to both institutions was for medical research benefiting Latine populations, particularly diabetes and breast cancer.²¹

Increasing Arts & Culture Support

The data also indicate increasing support for arts and culture via the National Museum of Mexican Art and for Latine community development, as with organizations like Brighton Park Neighborhood Council, Enlace Chicago, and the Hispanic Housing Development Corporation, which may reflect a growing awareness from philanthropy of the need for culturally relevant services and support.

10 Most Funded Latine Organizations, 2013–2017

1.	University of Illinois at Chicago	\$13,754,529
2.	Esperanza Health Centers	\$7,540,349
3.	Sinai Health System	\$5,852,348
4.	Institute for Latino Progress	\$5,628,380
5.	Casa Central	\$5,448,977
6.	Enlace Chicago	\$4,228,354
7.	Northwestern University	\$4,170,621
8.	Psi Chi: International Honor Society in Psychology	\$3,760,684
9.	Brighton Park Neighborhood Council	\$3,661,839
10.	Board of Trustees of Community College District #508	\$3,616,804

10 Most Funded Latine Organizations, 2018–2022

1.	Resurrection Project	\$19,918,246
2.	Sinai Health System	\$16,379,458
3.	Brighton Park Neighborhood Council	\$11,382,850
4.	Hope Chicago	\$11,058,723
5.	Cristo Rey Jesuit High School	\$10,505,184
6.	Casa Central	\$10,465,189
7.	Hispanic Housing Development Corp.	\$10,330,067
8.	National Museum of Mexican Art	\$9,035,374
9.	Enlace Chicago	\$7,904,788
10.	Mujeres Latinas en Acción	\$6,493,161

10 Most Funded Latine Organizations All Time, 2003–2022

1.	Sinai Health System	\$25,303,520
2.	Resurrection Project	\$21,408,246
3.	University of Illinois at Chicago	\$20,545,043
4.	National Museum of Mexican Art	\$18,974,519
5.	Casa Central	\$18,713,165
6.	Cristo Rey Jesuit High School	\$16,988,402
7.	Brighton Park Neighborhood Council	\$15,653,689
8.	Institute for Latino Progress	\$15,498,174
9.	Enlace Chicago	\$14,930,844
10.	Esperanza Health Centers	\$13,678,988

Tabulated and compiled by Great Cities Institute.
Source: 2003–2022 IRS Form 990 data, via Candid.

Hearing from the Experts

The Panel of Experts: Interviews and Focus Groups

We conducted the following interviews and focus groups to build on quantitative data findings and enrich our datasets:

- 20 individual interviews with Chicago-area philanthropy leaders
- 1 collective interview with Chicago Latines in Philanthropy members and leaders
- 5 focus groups with nonprofit leaders in Chicago and suburbs

Interviews

A Better Chicago
The Chicago Community Trust
Chicago Latinos in Philanthropy (collective interview)
Community Memorial Foundation
Conant Family Foundation
Grand Victoria Foundation
Irving Harris Foundation
Joyce Foundation
JP Morgan Chase
Knight Family Foundation
Lawyers Trust Fund of Illinois
Lloyd Fry Foundation
Lohengrin Foundation
MacArthur Foundation
McCormick Foundation
Michael Reese Health Trust
Polk Brothers Foundation
RRF Foundation for Aging
Schreiber Philanthropy
VNA Foundation

Focus Groups

Alianza Americas
Alma Chicago (Association of Latinos/as/xs Motivating Action)
Alternatives Inc.
Association House of Chicago
Brighton Park Neighborhood Council
Centro Sanar
City Colleges of Chicago Foundation
COFI (Community Organizing and Family Issues)
Corazón Community Services
Enlace Chicago
Erie House
Farmworker and Landscaper Advocacy Project
Foundation of Little Village
Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Instituto del Progreso Latino
La Raza Chicago
Latino Policy Forum
Latinos Progresando
LSNA Palenque
Metropolitan Family Services
Mujeres Latinas en Accion
Resurrection Project

Interviews: Identifying Needs

We asked interviewees about needs or challenges they perceived in their own organizations or that would benefit grant recipients. We coded responses into 15 categories, presented here in order of frequency of mention:

- Funders' internal processes or operations
 - Continued work to address equity and disparities
 - Latine representation in philanthropy and in nonprofit leadership
 - Structural and/or systems change
 - Tendency toward territorialism and a lack of a unified front among nonprofits due to funding competition
 - Limitations in funders' defined program areas
 - Funders' focus on metrics as equivalent to success
 - Grantees' limited access to funders, funding collaboratives, and other networks
 - Need to continue increasing capacity in organizations
 - Funders' reactivity or "crisis mode"
- Improved processes on listening and understanding community input
 - Increased attention to suburbs
 - Legal environment in the wake of Supreme Court's affirmative action decision
 - Need for champions of particular issues or nonprofits to bring attention to them
 - Overcoming historical disinvestment

By far, interviewees indicated that limitations in philanthropy and the philanthropy sector are challenges to be overcome. For example, several interviewees mentioned that philanthropy staff or boards may not have a full or accurate understanding of how a particular issue area affects a community. Others mentioned challenges in how to explicitly fund Latines, as well as limitations in funder operations and expectations.

The data suggest a need to prioritize resources and efforts to improve funder understanding and continue focusing on equity-related issues and disparities.

The insights we culled from interviews on the following page shed additional light on the Latine funding landscape.

Interviews: Findings

Population Most in Need

Black and Brown Chicagoans, immigrants and new arrivals, young people, those in need of mental health services, particularly given cultural stigma for some Latines in accessing services, were identified as populations most in need.

No Population-Specific Strategy

No interviewee reported a Latine-specific funding strategy. Instead, all reported focusing on specific issues and populations most affected by those issues. In Cook County, Latine communities are among the most affected. Interviewees reported that Latines were served by their issue focus or by place-based strategies. Some reported specific funding support for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) organizations. Several interviewees mentioned the complexity of a population-based funding strategy in the wake of the June 2023 Supreme Court decision ending affirmative action in universities.²²

Flexibility

Community needs emerge and evolve quickly, which requires organizations have flexibility from funders so they can address those needs. Some interviewees reported moving toward continued (and additional) flexible, multiyear funding and working to reduce metrics and reporting requirements for organizations. Some also shared a need to expand funder collaboratives, increase funders' awareness of smaller or newer nonprofits and their access to funders, and build on emergent post-COVID-19 models, including rapid response funding.

Intersectionality

Funders' often have specific program areas, but organizations work across multiple areas intersectionally because of community and nonprofit characteristics. Some interviewees recognized that their defined program areas or internal support for expanding program areas can result in ineligibility for funding by not allowing organizations to define programming broadly.

Making Change

Funder operations and boards can be risk-averse and reactive rather than proactive. More Latine representation is needed in philanthropic and nonprofit leadership. Funders' understandings of ecosystems of community and need must evolve through education and community input. For some interviewees, funders must be grounded in community experiences to address issues effectively. In addition, policy impact analysis and research on Latine diversity is needed to best address complex needs. For some interviewees, expanding grantmaking dollars and access to other funding sources will foster collaboration and coalition building and reduce reactive funding strategies that pit communities against each other.

Capacity Building

The greatest need interviewees recognized for all organizations is capacity building, including internal operations, strategic planning, financial management, board development, and data infrastructure, among others. More capacity can translate to greater access to funders, networks, and donors. Interviewees also recognized that organizations face high staff turnover, leadership and staff burnout, and low pay.

Focus groups: Identifying Needs

Focus groups identified immigrant rights and services, mental health services, and policy and advocacy as funding opportunities: each is a community need and also requires additional funding support (as was noted in interviews.)

Focus group discussions touched on systemic issues, including the critical role of support to address urgent needs, such as mental health, substance abuse, and workforce development, and the misalignment of funding categories with individuals' holistic needs.

Participants voiced a need for general operating funds and more equitable and inclusive funding strategies, and discussed challenges smaller organizations face with trust-based philanthropy.

Community issues highlighted the growing need for housing, mental health, and immigration resources; the importance of coalition building and advocacy; and complex needs of immigrant communities that require culturally sensitive and holistic support.

The insights from focus groups on the following page shed light on the Latine funding landscape.

Focus groups: Findings

System Level

Philanthropy and Policy Advocacy

Philanthropy can advocate for policy changes addressing social issues such as poverty, labor disparities, and fair compensation.

Trusting partnerships and an understanding of community needs are crucial for effective philanthropy.

Stopgap Services

Inefficiencies in government funds reaching populations is a concern; philanthropy serves as a stopgap.

Funders can provide more advocacy and support for nonprofits in the face of government shortcomings.

Sizable Need

There is an urgent need for increased support, particularly for organizations focused on mental health, substance abuse, and workforce development.

Upfront, flexible funding can help nonprofits carry out their mission.

Organization Level

Funding

General operating funds and flexible, long-term funds are essential for nonprofits to be able to respond to emergencies and maintain flexibility.

Trust-based philanthropy poses challenges for smaller organizations without preexisting relationships with funders.

Latine organizations (and some noted especially Latine-serving LGBTQ+ organizations) need access to multiyear funding.

Financial delays in state reimbursements strain relationships and impact collaboration.

Capacity Building and Leadership Development

Nonprofit organizations struggle with leadership development due to financial constraints, low wages, and labor market challenges.

Leaders need flexibility for themselves and staff for sabbaticals and wellness support to prevent burnout.

Organizations want to be able to increase staff pay to retain talent.

Community Level

Shifting, Complex Need

Needs vary widely given Latine diversity and varied experiences and geographies. Also, funding categories can be misaligned with individuals' holistic needs, highlighting the need for an intersectional approach.

Current Funding Levels

Current resources and priorities are unable to address housing, mental health, and immigration issues and growing need.

Advocates should cohere around messaging to address these issues.

Legal Services & Immigrant Support

Legal services for immigrants need to be culturally sensitive and accessible, addressing interconnected issues like mental health and health care.

Holistic approaches are required to meet the complex needs of immigrant communities.

Community Building and Social Impact

Coalition building and breaking down geographic barriers are important for effective community development.

Learning from other communities' experiences nationally can help address local challenges.

Analysis & Steps Forward

Challenges & Opportunities

This section brings together all findings from our qualitative and quantitative research to offer an overview of the challenges and opportunities facing Latine communities in Chicago. By synthesizing the data from multiple sources, we hope to present actionable insights and recommendations that can guide philanthropy in its critical role of advocating for and supporting Latine organizations.

We hope these ideas will serve as valuable tools for funders as they work to foster equity, empowerment, and sustainable growth across Cook County's diverse Latine populations.

Overview

Latine organizations are not funded on a scale reflective of their population size in the county. This may not necessarily be due to lack of interest or awareness, but because the philanthropic sector has a broad, diverse mandate that goes beyond addressing specific community need. Philanthropy supports an array of initiatives, including major arts organizations, general medical research, educational institutions, and other high-profile causes that serve broad or universal populations. That scope means that funds are distributed widely. As a result,

targeted funding for Latine organizations—despite their being best positioned to address Latine needs—can become diluted or by other priorities. It may be that some Latines are directly or indirectly served by broader mandates.

However, without a more singular focus on equity or community-specific funding, organizations directly serving Latine populations may struggle to secure consistent, significant support needed to address the complex challenges they face.

In recent years, funding trends for Latine communities have shown both promise (economic development, housing, immigration and language access) and decline (health, education). There has been an increased equity focus, in recognition of the importance of supporting organizations that serve diverse Latine identities, communities,

and populations. This shift may be partially driven by a post-2022 push for inclusivity and the recognition of systemic disparities that have historically underfunded these communities.

However, even where funding dollars have increased over time, that the allocation is not always proportionate to the needs or the size of the Latine population. Many Latine-focused organizations still receive a relatively small portion of available philanthropic dollars, often competing for limited resources.

While philanthropy may not adopt a strategy of explicitly supporting a specific population, including Latines, Latine organizations and populations will continue to benefit from a focus on equity, place-based initiatives, and support for disinvested communities and struggling populations.

1.9%

percentage Latine organizations received of total philanthropy dollars from 2003 to 2022

3 Strategic Opportunities to Serve All Latines

These funding opportunities are reflected in our quantitative and qualitative datasets.

Mental Health Services & Access

Mental health services and access for Latine communities have been identified as an emerging need, particularly in light of cultural stigma surrounding accessing mental health and the increased stressors related to economic and public health crises like COVID-19.

There is a significant opportunity for funders to address mental health service and access disparities within Latine populations by supporting culturally competent mental health programs, and to help nonprofits ensure their staff can access wellness benefits.

Immigrant Rights & Services

The need to protect immigrant rights and provide services has grown, especially with the increase in immigrant arrivals to the city and suburbs. It is equally important to recognize and support the many people who have lived here for years, even decades, and are in need of immigration services.

There are funding opportunities to support legal services and access to immigration and naturalization for all longtime residents, and language access programs and advocacy and services for immigrant communities, which are critical for their integration and well-being.

Housing Development

With the growing Latine population in suburban areas, there is a pressing need to address housing affordability and access. This is especially the case because access to housing determines access to so many other services and amenities.

Funding opportunities exist in developing affordable housing, preventing displacement due to gentrification, and supporting homeownership programs and housing affordability tailored to Latine communities.

Potential Steps Forward

Advocate for Proactive Philanthropy

Encourage philanthropic organizations to adopt more proactive funding strategies that are proactive and address ongoing needs rather than reactive.

Promote the importance of sustained support for Latine organizations to ensure their stability and growth.

Engage Philanthropic Leadership

Engage philanthropic leaders, and especially boards, in discussions about the importance of equitable funding practices.

Encourage diversity and inclusion within philanthropic leadership to better reflect and understand the needs of Latine communities.

Stay the Course

Community needs evolve over time. Regularly assessing and adjusting funding strategies to meet those needs is critical, but so is recognizing that philanthropy's changing focus areas may reduce support for some populations in favor of others.

Adopt an intersectional lens for defining funded program areas, so that Latine organizations working in multiple areas have increased access or eligibility.

Advocate for Better and More Reliable Data

Push for improved data collection and reporting practices to ensure accurate and comprehensive tracking of philanthropic funding to Latine organizations.

Work with philanthropy, researchers, and data analysts to develop standardized methods for categorizing and reporting funding.

Ensure transparency in data sharing to allow for better analysis and understanding of funding trends and impacts on Latine communities.

Invest in policy impact analysis and research on better understanding the diversity of the Latine community and the complexity of strengths and needs.

There is room for philanthropic organizations to increase their accessibility, such as by providing easily available contact information or grant information online.

Monitor and Report Funding Trends

Continuously monitor funding trends to identify gaps and opportunities for advocacy.

Publish regular reports on the state of funding to Latine organizations to keep the issue in the public eye and hold philanthropies accountable.

Provide Flexible Funding Types

Allocate general operating funds to nonprofits, allowing them the flexibility to build capacity and respond to emergencies and evolving community needs.

Address barriers that smaller organizations face in accessing upfront funding, ensuring more inclusive funding processes.

Strengthen partnerships with nonprofits by learning from COVID-19 experiences to offer ongoing, adaptive support.

Create more flexible, long-term funding mechanisms and ensure fair compensation for nonprofit staff and leaders.

Develop strategies to include smaller organizations in trust-based philanthropy, even if they lack preexisting relationships with funders.

Improve Access to Flexible Funding

Develop infrastructure and support for Latine organizations to improve their access to multiyear funding.

Offer financial solutions, such as credit lines, to help nonprofits manage cash flow issues caused by reimbursement delays.

Increase Support for Critical Areas

Prioritize funding for mental health, housing, and immigration and language access.

Fund and support culturally sensitive and accessible legal services for immigrant communities, with a focus on addressing related mental health and health-care needs.

Increase Awareness and Visibility of Latine Organizations

Help raise community awareness and among philanthropy about the contributions and needs of Latine organizations.

Highlight successful programs and initiatives led by Latine organizations to help them attract more consistent funding.

Help Strengthen Latine Organizations' Capacity and Outreach

Support Latine organizations in building their capacity to secure funding through training and resources.

Improve outreach efforts to connect Latine organizations with potential funders and partners.

Support leadership development programs that address financial constraints and labor market challenges in the nonprofit sector.

Consider that flexible funding and resources allows for leadership and staff sabbaticals and wellness support.

Align with Community Priorities

Coordinate advocacy efforts to ensure messaging and resource allocation are aligned with pressing community issues like housing, mental health, and immigration.

Focus on comprehensive strategies that address the interconnected nature of community challenges.

Foster Community Development

Invest in coalition-building initiatives to bridge gaps between neighborhoods and municipalities and foster greater community development.

Learn from and implement successful strategies from other communities to address local challenges effectively.

Notes & Appendixes

Notes

1. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2018–2022 5-year estimates (tabulated by UIC Great Cities Institute).
2. U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2020 Decennial Censuses (tabulated by UIC Great Cities Institute), via UIC Great Cities Institute, Latino Community in Illinois: Fact Sheet, 2023.
3. Dan Hamilton, Matthew Fienup, David Hayes-Bautista, and Paul Hsu, “2022 Metro Latino GDP Report Chicago-Naperville-Elgin,” California Lutheran University, UCLA Center for the Study of Latino Health and Culture, 2022, via UIC Great Cities Institute, Latino Community in Illinois: Fact Sheet, 2023.
4. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017–2022 5-year estimates of Hispanic or Latino population change by tract (tabulated by UIC Great Cities Institute), accessed via Social Explorer, “Change of Hispanic or Latino from 2017 to 2022.
5. Latino Policy Forum, Metropolitan Planning Council and UIC Great Cities Institute, Latinos in the Suburbs: Challenges and Opportunities, August 2023, p. 8; Juan González, Teresa Córdova, Matthew D. Wilson, Elham Pilegar, David Segovia, and José Miguel Acosta-Córdova, Fuerza Mexicana: The Past, Present, and Power of Mexicans in Chicagoland (Chicago: UIC Great Cities Institute, September 2024), <https://greatcities.uic.edu/2024/09/15/fuerza-mexicana-the-past-present-and-power-of-mexicans-in-chicagoland/>
6. Cecilia Ayón, Flavio F. Marsiglia, and Monica Bermudez-Parsai, “Latino Family Mental Health: Exploring the Role of Discrimination and Familismo,” *Journal of Community Psychology* 38 (2010): 742–756, <https://doi.org/10.1002%2Fjcop.20392>.
7. Calculated by UIC Great Cities Institute from IRS Form 990 data in Candid / Foundation Directory.
8. Hilda Vega, “Funding for Latinx Populations in the U.S.: Insights from the Updated Latinx Funders Dashboard,” Hispanics in Philanthropy, <https://hipfunds.org/updated-latinxfunders-dashboard/>.
9. F. Caceres and K. Hanson, “Four Strategies to Maximize Latinx-Focused Philanthropy and Charitable Efforts,” *Urban Wire: The Blog of the Urban Institute*, October 14, 2019, <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/four-strategies-maximize-latinx-focused-philanthropy-and-charitable-efforts>.
10. Perhaps especially the findings of James Heckman on the returns to early childhood investments. See Mark Peter’s article on Heckman’s study, “Investment in Early Childhood Programs Yields Robust Returns,” *UChicago News*, December 12, 2016, <https://news.uchicago.edu/story/investment-early-childhood-programs-yields-robust-returns>.
11. We confirmed in funders Form 990 data that the Latin School is identified as a Latine-led or Latine-serving institution.
12. “FACT SHEET: President Biden to Announce Strategy to Address Our Mental Health Crisis, as Part of Agenda in His First State of the Union,” White House, March 1, 2022, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/03/01/fact-sheet-president-biden-to-announce-strategy-to-address-our-national-mental-health-crisis-as-part-of-unity-agenda-in-his-first-state-of-the->

union/ (and see prolific sources cited therein); Rita Rubin, “Pandemic Highlights Behavioral Health Disparities,” *JAMA* 323 (2020): <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2020.10318>; Janelle Goodwill and Rachel Baccile, “The Suicide Crisis among Young Black and Latino Chicagoans Demands Action,” *Chicago Sun-Times*, May 14, 2024, <https://chicago.suntimes.com/other-views/2024/05/13/suicide-younger-black-latino-chicagoans-social-work-licensing-mental-health-janelle-goodwill-rachel-baccile> (and study by Janelle Goodwill cited therein).

13. Chicago Coalition to End Homelessness and UChicago Urban Labs, Supporting Chicagoans’ Basic Needs through Mutual Aid, <https://chicagohomeless.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/EFMAFReport.pdf>.
14. Rob Paral, “Building a Plane While It’s Flying: Illinois Confronts a New Era of Forced Migration,” *DePaul Migration Collective*, April 2024, p. 62, [https://law.depaul.edu/academics/centers-institutes-initiatives/depaul-migration-collaborative/projects/Documents/RP_Final%20Report%20\(Updated%203_31\).pdf](https://law.depaul.edu/academics/centers-institutes-initiatives/depaul-migration-collaborative/projects/Documents/RP_Final%20Report%20(Updated%203_31).pdf).
15. We could not locate 26 organizations: they have shuttered since 2022, only a PO box is available, a street address is not publicly available, or they have an online-only presence.
16. Lisette M. Piedra et al., “Latinos and the Pandemic: Results from the National Social Life, Health, and Aging Project—COVID-19 Study,” *Journal of Applied Gerontology* 41 (2022): 1465–1472, <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F07334648211066920>; Anne Schneider, “Impact on Health Systems from COVID-19 and the Role of Social Determinants of Health,” *Family Practice Management* 31 (2024): 23–26, <https://www.aafp.org/pubs/fpm/issues/2024/0300/covid19-health-disparities.html>; Eunice Alsapan, “Addressing the Needs of Latino Communities and the Role of ‘Promotores de Salud,’ 3 Years into the COVID-19 Pandemic,” *Latino Voices*, WTTW (Chicago), March 25, 2023, <https://news.wttw.com/2023/03/25/addressing-needs-latino-communities-and-role-promotores-de-salud-3-years-covid-19>.
17. “The Problem,” National Low Income Housing Coalition, <https://nlihc.org/explore-issues/why-we-care/problem>.
18. “Key Housing Challenges in the City of Chicago,” Institute for Housing Studies at DePaul University, June 21, 2023, <https://www.housingstudies.org/blog/key-housing-challenges-city-chicago/>.
19. Latino Policy Forum, Metropolitan Planning Council and UIC Great Cities Institute, *Latinos in the Suburbs: Challenges and Opportunities*, August 2023, p. 24.
20. Since 2010, UIC has been a federally designated “minority-serving institution,” and since 2016, a “Hispanic-serving institution.” UIC Office of the Chancellor, “Minority-Serving Institution Status,” <https://chancellor.uic.edu/minority-serving-institution-status/>.
21. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Latine adults are 70% more likely than non-Latine adults to be diagnosed with diabetes and twice as likely to be hospitalized for end-stage kidney disease. “Diabetes and Hispanic Americans,” Office of Minority Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, <https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/diabetes-and-hispanic-americans>, from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Summary Health Statistics, National Health Interview Survey: 2018,” table A-4a.
22. Julian Mark and Taylor Telford, “Appeals Court Blocks Fearless Fund from Awarding Grants to Black Women,” *Washington Post* June 3, 2024.

Appendix A

Leveraging Past GCI Research

Leveraging the findings from GCI's past research on Latines in Chicago and surrounding counties helps lay the foundation for our understanding of a Latine population profile and grounds our analysis in a deeper understanding of historical context. Previous studies by GCI and its partners offer insights into demographic trends, economic roles, and systemic challenges that Latine populations face in Illinois. By revisiting these insights, we can let them shed light on persistent issues and emerging trends affecting Latine communities.



Latino Neighborhoods Report

The Latine population in Chicago has grown significantly, which presents opportunities and challenges for policymakers, researchers, and others.

Latines generally have lower educational attainment and income than white and Black populations.

The Latine workforce is heavily concentrated in manufacturing and service industries.

12 Latine neighborhoods in Chicago had higher rates of residents without health insurance than the citywide average.



Latinos in the Suburbs: Challenges and Opportunities

The suburban Latine population is growing, which presents challenges and opportunities for policymakers and community development efforts.

Suburban Latines have difficulties accessing services such as education, health care, and housing as a result of geographic and systemic barriers.

Employment opportunities in the suburbs for Latines are often in lower-paying jobs, which can contribute to income disparities.

There is a need for greater community engagement and representation of Latines in suburban areas to address their specific needs and challenges.



Illinois Immigrant Impact Task Force Report

Illinois has a significant immigrant population, with 1.8 million immigrants making up 14% of the state’s population. Immigrants play a critical role in the state’s economy.

Illinois has developed a robust infrastructure to support immigrants, including health care, legal services, and educational support. However, there are still gaps to address.

Various state laws and policies are in place to protect immigrant rights, including limiting cooperation with US Immigration and Customs Enforcement and providing access to state services regardless of immigration status.

Further improvements in service provision are needed, especially in areas that have seen recent increases in immigrant populations, and especially with culturally and linguistically accessible services.

Appendix B

Data and Methodology

Data Source

GCI set out to explore philanthropies' investments in Latine-led and Latine-serving organizations in Chicago and the Cook County suburbs. To do so, we examined 2003–2022 IRS Form 990 data (2002 is the last year for which complete data are available). All funding data come from either the Foundation Directory (Candid) dashboard (derived from IRS Form 990s) or downloaded funder Form 990 data in Candid, an information service that specializes in data on nonprofits.

Form 990s are required of most tax-exempt organizations. Aside from being the most reliable data source on all types of nonprofits, they can also offer valuable insights into financial health, program effectiveness, executive compensation, revenue sources, and governance. We used data on grantmakers, grant recipients, grant dollars, year authorized, primary subject area (issue area), and grant description throughout this study.

For Latine organizations' share of total philanthropic funding generally and in individual priority issues, we relied on the Foundation Directory (Candid) dashboard data and on the category "people of Latin American descent" to indicate whether a grantor or grantee organization funded or served Latine populations. For top-funded organizations overall and within priority issue areas, we used Form 990 data from funders. Because of this there may be some slight

discrepancies in the datasets used—for example, funders may report data slightly differently than the organizations they fund do—as further explained in the limitations that follow.

Other limitations of using Form 990s include the following. Often, the data is often not timely: organizations might have extended filing dates, or forms might not be available until more than a year after filing. **Data is self-reported**, so organizations (or their accounting methods) may have differences in how they classify or categorize information, or they may not accurately or consistently report descriptive data on forms. Form 990s focus solely on financials, not qualitative aspects like program quality, geographic footprint, or effectiveness of services. Additionally, Form 990s tend to list one address for an organization—that can be OK in cases of philanthropies that grant funds or single-site community nonprofits, but it makes it difficult to see the work especially of those organizations that operate from a downtown address and serve multiple populations across the region. Finally, the philanthropic sector lacks a coordinated infrastructure to use Form 990 data consistently.

As a result, while the findings are directionally accurate and funding to the community does not meet current need, there is likely an undercount of actual giving due to these limitations, including misrecordings or uncategorized data. Even so, Form 990 data is still the most reliable, providing a relatively standardized and transparent view of financial health and operations.

Time Periods

Throughout this research, to analyze trends in funding specific Latine organizations and priority issue areas, we looked at the full universe of data available from 2003 to 2022 in the Foundation Directory dashboard. We also looked at the funder Form 990s for the periods 2013–2017 and 2018–2022 to identify trends in funding for Latine organizations, specifically highlighting whether funding has grown, decreased, or remained stable over time.

By examining the longer period (2003–2022), we establish a historical baseline that captures overarching trends and patterns, while the shorter, more recent periods (2013–2017 and 2018–2022) provide insight into current and emerging trends. This approach enables us to see recent funding in historical context, highlighting any significant shifts that may impact Latines and Latine organizations. It also offers a clear perspective on how funding has evolved, helping us identify any changes in funding allocation.

Calculating Percentage Funds to Latines in Specific Issue Areas

We also dug into each of this project's five priority issue areas: economic development, education, health equity, housing, and immigration and language access.

To calculate percentage funding for each one, we used Form 990 data to determine which grants were reported as serving "populations of Latin American descent."

To analyze each priority issue area, we selected related relevant categories in the IRS data from Candid to "build" the issue area and create a comprehensive picture of the landscape for each. For example, for education, we combined 32 categories related to education, including early childhood, STEM education, tutoring, adult literacy, and more.

Again, a limitation in using IRS data is related to data reporting and consistency: it may be that support for a particular issue is classified as general support or categorized under different issue areas (e.g., housing as human services), or it may be that grants intended for intersectional work are classified in an organization's primary focus area rather than more specific program areas.

From our dataset of all grants for the 2013–2017 and 2018–2022 periods, we analyzed dollars granted, number of grants, and number of grantmakers for each given issue area.

Looking at specific priority issue areas by period lets us focus on more relevant insights, capturing emergent trends. We can also compare those to the baseline established over a longer time horizon.

Analyzing Trends

To determine top funded subareas within each priority issue area, as well as top funded organizations, we downloaded all funding data from Candid for 2013 to 2002 available as of May 2024.

The analysis shows that, while Latine organizations have received low philanthropic support from 2003 to 2022 in Cook County overall, in more recent periods, from 2013–2017 and 2018–2022, they have received a greater share of available funding in particular issue areas, such as economic development, housing, and immigration and language access, and not others, such as education and health equity.

Qualitative Data

We conducted 20 interviews and 5 focus groups to build on quantitative data findings and enrich our datasets.

All interview and focus group conversations were recorded and transcribed. They were then uploaded to Dedoose, for qualitative coding and analysis.

Interviews

We interviewed 20 philanthropy leaders, 82% of whom identify as Latine. This representation is crucial for informing our analysis of the communities and need in this study.

Of the funding organizations interviewed, 5 limited grantmaking to the City of Chicago, and the remaining 15 funded beyond Chicago as well. Also, 5 of the 20 funders had offices outside of downtown Chicago.

In our interviews with philanthropy leaders, we asked whether they had Latine-specific (or population-specific) funding strategies, about their funding focus and how the types of financial support they provide, the geography they serve, any needs or specific populations

in need that we should know about, and finally, about the challenges and what should change in order to increase funding to Latine populations and to the issues that most impact them.

Focus Groups

We held five focus groups with a total of 22 participants who were nonprofit leaders of Latine-led and/or Latine-serving nonprofits. Focus group participants were first asked to complete a poll on community need and population served. Participants responded to questions on greatest community need and greatest funding need to get at nuance in whether some issues are receiving adequate funding support and to identify emerging areas of support.

Following the poll, focus group participants engaged in open-ended discussion about the challenges faced in their communities and organizations, as well as opportunities for funding.

Assessing Philanthropic Support for Latines in the Chicago Area

UIC Great Cities Institute

prepared for Nuestro Futuro, an initiative of
The Chicago Community Trust

developed by Katherine Faydash, with research support from Thea Crum



**Great Cities
Institute**

University of Illinois Chicago

Executive Summary

Latine-led and Latine-serving organizations play a critical role in addressing the needs of one of Cook County's fastest-growing populations.

This report, **Assessing Philanthropic Funding Support for Latines in the Chicago Area**, provides a comprehensive overview of the philanthropic funding landscape for Cook County's Latine organizations in priority issue areas. Latines account for 26% of Cook County's population.

This analysis was commissioned by Nuestro Futuro, an initiative of The Chicago Community Trust, and conducted by UIC Great Cities Institute (GCI). The report provides a brief profile of the county's Latine population, explores philanthropic support over time to Latine organizations and populations, and analyzes support in five particular issue areas: economic development, education, health equity, housing, and immigration and language access.

This report's findings explore philanthropic support for Latine-led and Latine-serving organizations compared to Latine population size in Cook County.

Key Findings

Disparity in Philanthropic Support

From 2003 to 2022, Latine organizations in Cook County received only 1.9% of total available philanthropic support, a proportion that did not significantly increase over time. Although the total dollar amount of funding has grown, Latine-led and Latine-serving organizations have not received an equitable share in terms of Latine population size.

Increased Support to Specific Issue Areas

Despite the overall low percentage of funding to Latine organizations, three priority issue areas received more than 1.9% of total available funding in that area: economic development (4.7%), housing (4.3%), and immigration and language access (35.5%), have seen support increase above 1.9%. However, education (1.9%) and health equity (1.9%) continue to be underfunded.

Economic Development Gains

Funding for economic development initiatives directed toward Latine organizations grew significantly, especially between 2013 and 2022. This likely reflects increased recognition of the importance of supporting development in historically underserved communities.

What is a Latine-led and Latine-serving organization?

- *Has an executive director (or equivalent title) who identifies as Latine*
- *Has 51% or more of staff and/or board members who identify as Latine*
- *Serves a Latine population, as indicated in IRS data or by identifying as such in interviews and focus groups*

Throughout this report, we also refer to these as "Latine organizations."

Executive Summary

Suburban Growth and Housing Needs

The suburban Latine population is growing quickly, yet there is still much room to fund housing initiatives. Addressing this gap is essential for ensuring that Latines have access to affordable housing and other vital resources.

Health Equity and Mental Health

Health equity remains a challenge for Latine communities. Although there was some increase in funding for health-related initiatives, the support is fragmented, and there are significant gaps in mental health services and access. Addressing these disparities requires a more cohesive and comprehensive funding strategy.

Immigration Underfunded

Immigration and language access, while receiving increased attention (Latine organizations received 35.5% of all immigration and language access funding), are still underfunded relative to demand, especially given the recent influx of new immigrants to the region. This issue is particularly pressing as long-term residents navigate complex immigration systems along with new arrivals.

Intersectionality and Holistic Approaches

Many Latine-led organizations operate across multiple issue areas, reflecting the interconnected nature of community needs. However, funders' defined program categories can hinder organizations' ability to secure comprehensive support, highlighting the need for more flexible and intersectional funding approaches.

Challenges in Philanthropy

Interviews and focus groups with philanthropic and nonprofit leaders reveal ongoing challenges in the philanthropic sector, including a lack

of recognizing the diversity of Latine communities, a tendency toward reactive rather than proactive funding, a difficult environment in the face of recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions, and the need for more Latine representation in decision-making roles in philanthropy.

Funding Opportunities

The report identifies strategic opportunities for increased funding in three key areas: mental health services and access, immigration, and housing. Addressing these needs requires a commitment to proactive, sustained, and flexible funding strategies that prioritize equity and community-led solutions.

Recommendations

The report concludes with a series of recommendations to guide philanthropy toward more effectively supporting Latine communities and populations. Key among the recommendations is the need for philanthropy to adopt a more proactive, intersectional funding approach.

This includes advocating for improved data quality to better understand community and organizational needs and to ensure those are met through targeted, equitable funding strategies.

Additionally, increasing the representation of Latine voices in philanthropic leadership will ensure that decision-making processes are informed by the lived experiences and insights of the communities philanthropy aims to serve. By taking these steps, philanthropy can better align its investments with the diverse and evolving needs of Latine communities in Cook County, ultimately fostering greater equity and impact.