

Economic Justice:
High Cost of Living

NEVADA LOCAL STRATEGY

2025



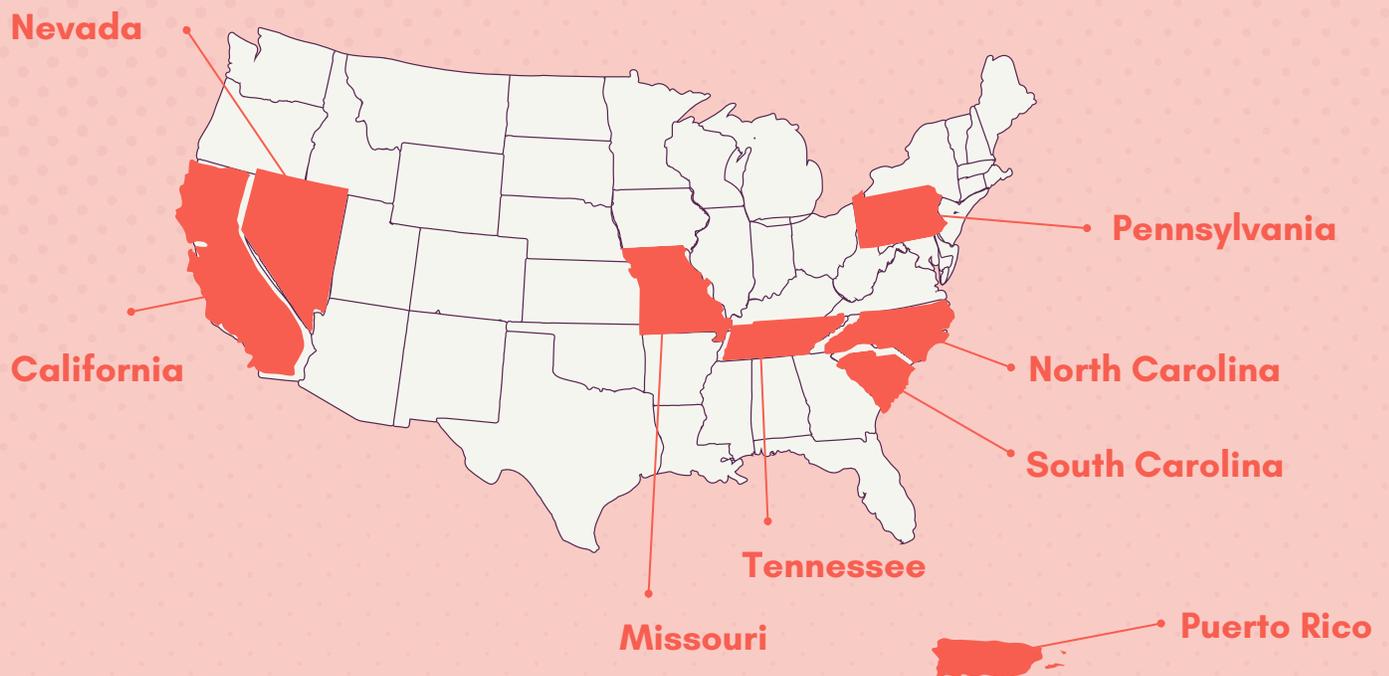
AMPLIFY FUND

NEIGHBORHOOD FUNDERS GROUP

Amplify Fund is a place-based pooled fund that supports historically marginalized communities in maintaining and building decision-making power.

We do this by funding community organizing groups working on land justice, economic justice, holistic wellbeing, and human dignity issues.

Each of our funding places has a unique historic, economic, political, and social context, so our grantmaking strategy is tailored to each place.



Local Strategy Design

In 2025, after committing to extend Amplify Fund 10 years beyond the original 4-year lifespan, we decided to update our local grantmaking strategies.

18
interviews

In Nevada, we interviewed 18 leaders from our grantee organizations, other movement organizations, and value-aligned, local organizations. We asked about the most pressing challenges in the region, progressive solutions to those problems, the ecosystem of organizations and leaders working on those solutions, and capacities needed to achieve those solutions.

7
advisors

With that data, we identified seven local strategy advisors, three of which were grantees. Those advisors came together in Las Vegas on September 23, 2025 to make decisions on what Amplify Fund should focus on for the next five years, and later provided written feedback on the final strategy. Those decisions, along with important context, can be found on the next few pages.



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Local Context

Nevada's natural beauty – its desert and mountain landscape – shares the stage with an accelerating climate crisis. Reno and Las Vegas are two of the fastest warming cities in the country. In 2024, there were 527 heat-related deaths in the state. Increasing temperatures are paired with drought and water shortages, as snowfall and runoff are far below normal levels. These crises are man-made and ongoing. Nevada is also home to a tech and data center construction boom, plus a nearly 200-year-long reliance on mining that threatens further environmental harm. →

Alongside mining and construction, Nevada's major industry is tourism and hospitality. Casinos have been central to Nevada's economy since gambling was legalized in the 1930s. The industry has both led to substantial workforce power through the Culinary Workers Union and enormous wealth for its owners. These two forces are often in tension. The Culinary Workers Union organized a health fund, provided unemployment and rental assistance, and ran a free food program that helped their members weather economic downturns, including the 2008 Recession, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, and the drop in foreign tourism created, in part, by the political environment of 2025. Meanwhile, casino owners – including the Adelson family (Las Vegas Sands), Steve Wynn (Wynn Resorts), Phil Ruffin (Treasure Island, Trump International Las Vegas), and New York hedge fund manager John Paulson (MGM Resorts, Caesars, and Boyd Gaming) – have amassed tremendous wealth. These elites hold significant political sway, regularly donating to ultraconservative local and national causes. ↓

Demographically, Nevada has rich racial diversity. The state is home to approximately 3.25 million people, over half of which are Latine (over 25%), Black (just under 10%), Asian (nearly 10% and growing), Native (2%), and other people of color. Nevada also houses one of the largest undocumented populations per capita in the country. Tragically, racialized violence, like the burning of Chinatown in 1908, segregation, especially in Southern Nevada, and violence against immigrants still characterizes the local context, but cross-racial solidarity efforts are essential and underway. Join Amplify Fund in providing support to the following issues lifted up by our Nevada local strategy advisors. ■

Electoral politics are central here.

With a biennial legislature, special sessions, and Nevada's "swing state" reputation, even progressive philanthropy tends to invest disproportionately during election years, and primarily for civic engagement and get out the vote efforts. But significant challenges exist with just working on electoral campaigns, including: 1) a large geography which makes it hard to travel to rural areas, 2) a distant state capitol in Carson City, 3) a transient population, and 4) poor data on Native communities.

Grantmaking Priorities

Commodification of Housing

Nevada is among a few states identified as “very risk prone” for an influx of private equity in multiple economic sectors, especially housing. To mitigate increased housing costs driven by corporations like Greystar and RealPage, local advisors recommend Amplify Fund support organizations seeking limits on the corporate purchase of homes, addressing over-development, and advancing an anti-supply narrative.

Cost of Living

While all states are experiencing rising costs, Nevada is particularly burdened by groceries and gas prices relative to income, and this challenge is even more pronounced in the rural areas of the state. Local advisors recommended Amplify Fund support organizations working toward accountability for price gouging and a public campaign to name bad actors making profit off this practice, stronger consumer protections, publicly funded grocery stores, and lower sales tax.

Affordable Housing

Recent research shows that Nevada ranks second highest among cost-burdened renters, and fifth in the country for most excessively cost-burdened homeowners. Local advisors recommend Amplify Fund support organizations fighting for more affordable housing, eviction protections, tenant rights, and rent stabilization, toward the broader goal of social housing.

Land
Justice

Wages

The minimum wage in Nevada is \$12 per hour, but even union members making \$30 per hour find it difficult to afford housing, food, and childcare. Local advisors recommended Amplify Fund support organizations trying to raise the minimum wage, narrowing the CEO-to-worker pay ratio, and ending right-to-work in Nevada.

Economic
Justice



Grantmaking Priorities

NEVADA

Holistic
Wellbeing

Access to Mental Healthcare

Nevada's image and culture are heavily shaped by addictive activities like gambling, drinking, and partying. That, coupled with stigma in accessing mental health services and few culturally competent mental health providers, has had devastating consequences on Latinx and Native communities, youth, and unhoused populations. Local advisors recommended Amplify Fund support organizations working on a state healthcare option, increasing state revenue to fund more healthcare providers, clinics, and hospitals, and implementing strategies to attract and retain quality healthcare professionals, especially in rural areas.

Attacks on Immigrants

Widespread raids on immigrants in 2025 have escalated the lack of safety, security, and dignity felt by both documented and undocumented immigrant communities. Local advisors recommended Amplify Fund support organizations working to protect immigrants through amnesty, labeling them a protected class, and protecting due process. Amplify Fund should also support accountability of law enforcement agents by banning collaboration between local police and immigration enforcement and the deployment of the National Guard for immigration purposes.

Human
Dignity

Environmental Impacts on Health

Rising temperatures, extreme heat, wildfires, and water scarcity are taking a toll on Nevadans' health while disproportionately harming low-income communities. Local advisors recommended Amplify Fund support organizations working on heat mitigation strategies, community solar, more green spaces and food gardens, free and improved public transit, and water protection.

Criminalization of Homelessness

Nevada's homelessness rate is higher than the national average, and many jurisdictions passed ordinances that criminalize public camping and other activities of unhoused people even before a recent Supreme Court decision. Local advisors recommended Amplify Fund support organizations working to repeal these ordinances and advocating for more housing options and support systems for unhoused people.

Capacity Building

NEVADA

When asked what kinds of technical assistance or capacity building support local organizing groups most need to deepen the impact of their work, local strategy advisors identified the following priority areas:

1. **In-state organizing training**
focused on active listening, base-building, and leadership development, rather than just mobilization or electoral turnout
2. **Management training and support**
for mid-level and senior leaders through a cohort model
3. **Communications capacity**
that is more strongly connected to organizing
4. **Progressive policy research**
in the form of in-state researchers at a state table or a research policy institute to support campaigns

As long as Amplify Fund continues to meet its fundraising goals, we will provide no-strings-attached, general operating grants to organizations in Nevada working on the problems and solutions named by local leaders in this strategy paper. We will also offer capacity building grants related to the priority areas listed above.

We encourage our fellow funders to join our pooled fund, or fund Nevada organizations directly, to support long-term change in the region.

If you have any questions about our local strategy process or would like to further discuss our final grantmaking strategy in Nevada, please contact amplify@nfg.org.