

2020 - al presente

PUERTO RICO LOCAL STRATEGY

2025



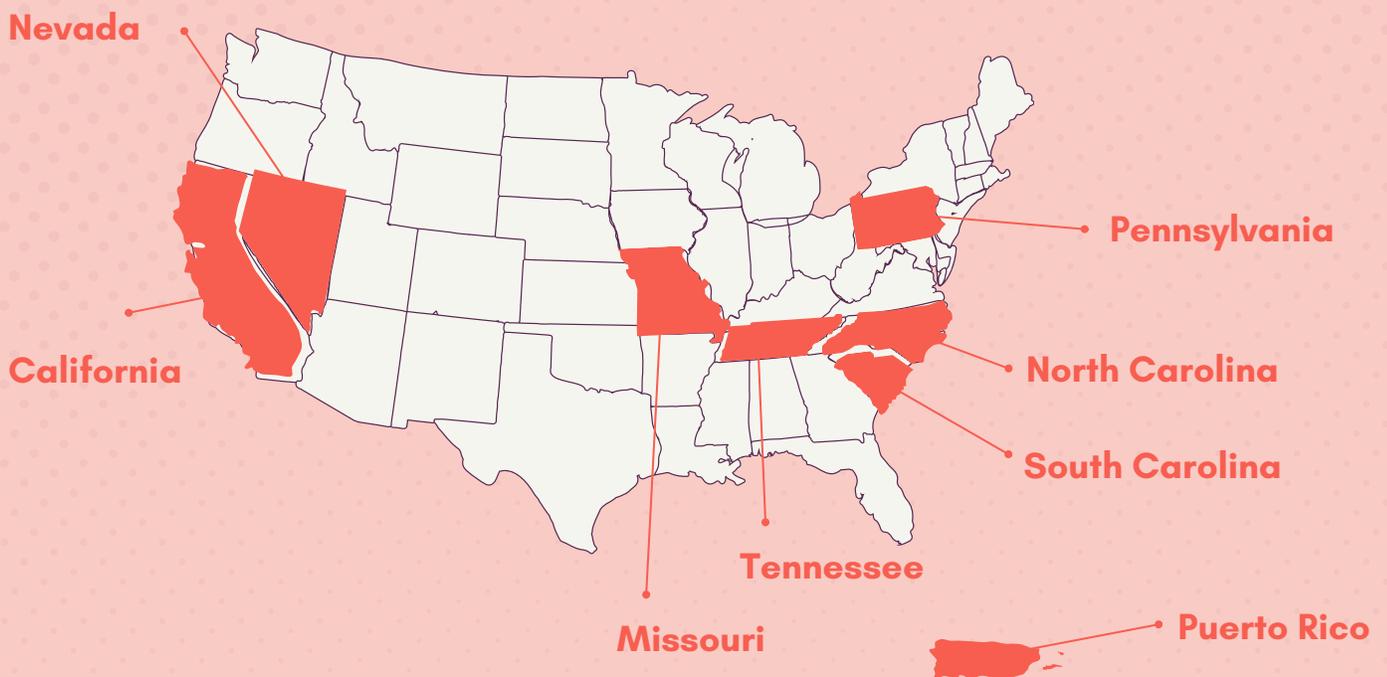
AMPLIFY FUND

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

PUERTO RICO

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

25 interviews

In Puerto Rico, we interviewed 25 leaders from our grantee organizations, other movement organizations, and value-aligned, local foundations. 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, two of which were grantees. Those advisors came together on July 23, 2025 to make decisions on what Amplify Fund should focus on in Puerto Rico for the next five years and provided written feedback on the final strategy. Those decisions, along with important local context, can be found on the next few pages.



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Local Context

PUERTO RICO

Situated within the Caribbean, Puerto Rico is vulnerable to hurricanes, which have increased in intensity and frequency due to burning of fossil fuels, industrial agriculture, and deforestation. In 2017, in just two weeks, Hurricanes Irma and Maria hit the island, destroying 90% of the energy grid, with catastrophic consequences. This collapse, coupled with government negligence, severely affected the wastewater systems, transportation, communications, and water supply. Since then, Puerto Rico has been in a permanent crisis and “disaster capitalists” have arrived, profiting off the compounding catastrophes. Puerto Rico’s colonial status exacerbated the inequitable recovery. →

First colonized by Spain, then the United States, Puerto Rico has resisted over 500 years of imperial rule. A series of U.S. Supreme Court decisions beginning in 1901 defined Puerto Rico as a territory “belonging to the United States, but not a part of the United States...” This decision gave the U.S. government broad power over the island, with its residents lacking full political representation and sovereignty, which still holds today. The creation of the unelected “Financial Oversight and Management Board” in 2016 to oversee Puerto Rico’s bankruptcy and debt restructuring is the most recent example. ↓

These progressive parties belong to a long history of activism in Puerto Rico, including the 1934 island-wide sugar cane workers’ strike and the expulsion of the U.S. Navy from the island of Vieques in 2001. The 2010-11 student strikes at the University of Puerto Rico forged generations of activists; moreover, the growing feminist movement has generated public policy changes on gender-based violence in 2021. These movements need continued funding. Join Amplify Fund in providing support to the following issues lifted up by our Puerto Rico local strategy advisors. ■

Puerto Rico’s relationship with the U.S dominates local politics. The two major parties, Partido Nuevo Progresista (PNP) and the Partido Popular Democratico (PPD), occupy a lot of space in the debate between statehood and maintaining the island’s current status, however, there’s growing disillusionment with these two. In 2024, the Movimiento Victoria Ciudadana (MVC) running on an anti-colonial platform and the Partido Independentista Puertorriqueño (PIP) campaigning for Puerto Rican independence, together received the largest share of votes by left-wing parties ever in a Puerto Rican election. ←

Grantmaking Priorities

Displacement

Displacement operates on multiple levels: climate disasters, housing speculation, changes in land use and development, and intentional abandonment. The result has been mass migration out of Puerto Rico. Local advisors recommended Amplify Fund support organizations using a “right to remain” framework while trying to repeal laws that provide tax incentives to foreign investors, promote communal farms, advocate for affordable housing, and engage communities in development decisions.

Local Economic Development

The Puerto Rican economic model relies on U.S.- or foreign-owned industries that exploit local labor. These industries like sugar cane production, petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals, and biotechnology receive tax incentives and directly contribute to economic dependence, precarious employment, and inequality. Local advisors recommended Amplify Fund support organizations promoting and planning for an “endogenous solidarity economy,” mutual aid, and worker’s rights.

Climate and Energy Crises

Following hurricanes and other disasters, average Puerto Ricans were denied humanitarian aid and a dignified recovery, including staggering delays in repairs for houses, hospitals, farms, roads, and the electrical grid, which specifically caused significant loss of life and is in even worse condition today. Local advisors recommended Amplify Fund support organizations focusing on vulnerable coastal and mountainous communities, advocating for ecological mitigation strategies, providing mutual aid on renewable energy sources, and challenging fossil fuel use and energy privatization.

Land
Justice

Austerity Measures

The externally imposed Financial Oversight Board, established in response to astronomical debt created by global investment banks, has cut funding to essential services on the island, including education, housing, healthcare, and energy. Local advisors recommended Amplify Fund support organizations attempting to abolish the Fiscal Oversight Board, restructuring the debt with community input, protecting human rights, and shining a light on the role of local government in privatizing services.

Economic
Justice

Grantmaking Priorities

Polycrisis and Mental Health

After Hurricanes Irma and Maria, there were increases in depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, and substance abuse especially amongst youth. All of which were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and austerity measures making mental health services difficult to access. Local advisors recommended Amplify Fund support organizations focused on accessible community-based mental health services, spaces for collective healing, and mutual aid to lessen the impact of the growing climate crisis.

Policing and Criminalization

Young people of African descent are more than twice as likely to be killed or injured at the hands of the police in Puerto Rico, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have targeted Dominican and other Afro-descendent immigrants in Puerto Rico. Other groups, such as houseless people and people speaking out against austerity and government corruption, have also been harassed and/or incarcerated. Local advisors recommended Amplify Fund support organizations prioritizing community safety, alternatives to police, defunding the police, and abolition of the carceral system.

Holistic Wellbeing



Grantmaking Priorities

Poverty and the State

In Puerto Rico, poverty is framed as an individual failing rather than systemic inequality, a holdover from conservative discourses of the 1980s. Rather than treating basic needs as a right, they are portrayed as “services” and those accessing them are questioned and surveilled. The result is powerlessness and community fragmentation. Local advisors recommended Amplify Fund support organizations dismantling narratives of individual blame, promoting narratives of rights and dignity, and providing services through solidarity economies or mutual aid.

Gender-Based and Anti-Black Violence

Interpersonal violence against women and LGBTQ+ people, and violence within Black communities, is rooted in deep structural issues that need State-level responses. But when the local administration declared a state of emergency for gender violence in 2021, little was actually done. Local advisors recommended Amplify Fund support organizations promoting sexual and reproductive rights, protecting LGBTQ+ communities, monitoring gender-based and anti-Black violence, and implementing gender-based and anti-racist curricula and training.

Human Dignity



Capacity Building

PUERTO RICO

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. **Fundraising** training, networking with funders, grants specifically for fundraising capacity, and resources to create alternatives to philanthropic dollars.
2. **Administrative support** in the form of reliable external providers with compliance, finance, accounting, IT, and operations expertise, and technical assistance on developing data management systems.
3. **Organizing training** and peer-to-peer mentorship for organizers.
4. **Coalition building** by providing spaces for gathering, funds specific to coalition work, and shared communication and narrative strategies.
5. **Research** grants and identification of values-aligned experts.

As long as Amplify Fund continues to meet its fundraising goals, we will provide no-strings-attached, general operating grants to organizations in Puerto Rico 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 Puerto Rican 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 Puerto Rico, please contact amplify@nfg.org