

# Seattle Foundation

## Communities of Opportunity

King County, WA

### Challenge

In King County, where people live, how much they make, and the color of their skin are major predictors of life experiences and the chances of living well and thriving. Life expectancy ranges from 74 years in the lowest 10 percent of census tracts to 87 years in the highest 10 percent, while smoking ranges from 5 to 20 percent and the incidence of frequent mental distress ranges from 4 to 14 percent.

### Innovation

Communities of Opportunity was designed to maximize positive impact by engaging many cross-sector partners to support strategies that were co-designed with community leaders and to focus public and private resources on neighborhoods experiencing underinvestment. Starting with King County's initial investment of \$500,000 and Seattle Foundation's initial annual investment of \$500,000 per year for 5 years, the investments have grown to approximately \$7.5 million per year from public and private sources.

In 2013, the Seattle Foundation was laying the groundwork for a new neighborhood partnerships initiative addressing economic and racial inequities through place-based work and systemic change. At the same time, King County government was working with community partners to develop a Health and Human Services Transformation Plan to improve health and well-being in communities with the greatest need. King County and the Seattle Foundation came together to incubate a new public-private approach under an umbrella plan called Communities of Opportunity to address inequities in health, social, racial, and economic outcomes. From this groundbreaking alliance, the Seattle Foundation and King County worked together to create a framework for engaging other cross-sector partners, intermediaries and investors in a collective impact approach. The effort focuses on place-based solutions and policy/system change solutions in partnership with affected communities, so that community partners have key roles in shaping and owning solutions.

### Public Sector Partners

Public Health Seattle and King County and the King County Department of Community and Human Services

### Other Partners

Place-based lead organizations: Global to Local, HomeSight, and White Center Community Development Association, together with their respective local partners

