



Chicago Future Fund

Bringing equity and opportunity to Chicago's most vulnerable community members.

About EAT

Equity and Transformation's unique strategy to mobilize the informal workforce consists of research, community organizing, advocacy, and policy development.

Founded by post-incarcerated Black people in 2018, Equity and Transformation strives to uplift the voices and power of the vast disenfranchised and excluded Black workforce in Chicago. Our mission is to build social and economic equity for Black Chicagoans engaged in the informal economy: the diversified set of economic activities, enterprises, jobs, and workers not protected by the state. We build comprehensive campaigns to increase safety, alleviate economic violence, and dismantle anti-Black racism in Chicago's Black communities.

The Problem

The city of Chicago experienced 775 homicides in the year 2020. Over 90% of the homicides were caused by gunshots, and roughly 75% of all victims are Black. It's no coincidence that the majority of violent crimes take place in Chicago's most economically disadvantaged and most segregated Black neighborhoods, such as West Garfield Park. West Garfield Park has a per capita income of \$11,739, approximately 70% less than Chicago's average per capita income of \$38,105.

Our justice system should always be centered around rehabilitation. Unfortunately, this isn't the case. Prisons are not designed to reintegrate through education and employment, and those incarcerated often lack the resources and income to support themselves post-release. 43% of formerly incarcerated people return to prison within three years, and 76% return within five years, costing taxpayers over \$150,000 per individual each time.

Our Solution

Our research study presents an innovative solution to economic inequality and recidivism by providing a guaranteed income of 500 USD per month for 18 months for 30 previously incarcerated individuals in West Garfield Park. There will be no work requirements or restrictions on how the money can be spent. We only ask participants to provide regular self-reported updates on the variables we're tracking.

To keep the selection process fair and maintain scientific integrity, we will randomly select 30 individuals from the pool of eligible applicants to receive the guaranteed income. These individuals will be asked to complete short surveys every month, as well as a few interviews throughout the program.

We recognize that guaranteed income is not a universal remedy for centuries of oppression, criminalization, and neglect. \$500 a month won't solve the pervasiveness of systemic racism. However, we believe a guaranteed income can humanize poverty, reduce recidivism, and ultimately build a stronger and safer community in Garfield Park.

Timeline

- Initiate fundraising. November 1, 2020
- Open application survey. September 5, 2021
- Inform selected recipients. October 8, 2021
- Launch orientation session. October 22, 2021
- Open baseline survey. November 1, 2021
- Begin disbursement. November 15, 2021
- End disbursement. May 15, 2023
- Last observation point. November 1, 2023
- Release evaluation report. May 1, 2024

Eligibility Criteria

We want to guarantee the financial resources are going to those most in need. In order to qualify for the Chicago Future Fund, all applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be 18-35 years old
- Live in West Garfield Park
- Be formerly convicted or incarcerated
- Make less than \$12,000 per year

What We're Tracking

Every month, participants will be required to participate in data collection surveys. Our researchers will analyze the effects of guaranteed income on the following reported variables:

- **Recidivism:** arrests, charges, imprisonment
- **Income volatility:** household income, employment
- **Physical functioning:** food security, housing, health
- **Psychological wellbeing:** depression, anxiety

FAQs

Why not put restrictions on the income?

Unconditional cash meets people's most urgent needs, which isn't always limited to food, housing, and health security. Removing all restrictions mitigates unprecedented costs and provides a safety net amid life's chaotic events. We want to ensure that our recipients can use the money whenever and however they need it.

How can anyone live off \$500/month?

A guaranteed income of \$500/month isn't going to make anyone rich, but it will provide a lifeline to someone on the verge of drowning. \$500/month allows folks to focus on their families, careers, and overall wellbeing without having to worry about unexpected expenses.

How will we see the results?

We will provide regular updates on the participants and how the money is being allocated throughout the program. Every other observation point, we will release a newsletter to our donors showcasing individual stories and updated findings from our research team.

Funding Goals

Your financial support would go directly into the hands of those who need it most.



Founding Team



Richard Wallace

Founder & CEO

Richard Wallace is a Chicago native and dually an organizer and artist in the fight to end anti-Black racism and economic violence. He has led numerous campaigns ranging from public health initiatives to policy reform efforts to build power and equity for Black and marginalized Chicagoans.

Richard is a graduate of Roosevelt University, where he received their prestigious Matthew Freeman Social Justice Award and where he founded Roosevelt University's student chapter of the Stop Mass Incarceration Network. He has received many honors throughout his young career, most recently by Atlantic Philanthropies, who inducted him into the Atlantic Fellows for Racial Equity, their inaugural cohort of Atlantic Fellows (2018-2019).

r.wallace@eatchicago.org



Rachel Pyon

Program Manager

Rachel Pyon is a strong research professional with a passion for redefining safety and building equitable solutions in the city of Chicago. She has a demonstrated background in the civic & organization industry with experiences in research, policy analysis, legislation, and campaigning.

Rachel has recently received her Master of Public Policy from the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy. She also holds her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a concentration in Diversity Studies from the University of Illinois in Urbana Champaign.

r.pyon@eatchicago.org