CONCLUSION

Federal and state budgets are more than just mechanisms for appropriations or even an expression of our collective values, they are also a means to build power or to sustain the status quo. For too long, the flow of federal funds to states has produced and enshrined anti-Black racism in the most critical components of our nation's social infrastructure—the health care, access to food and housing, and public education that our communities deserve. Past and ongoing efforts to cut taxes for wealthy corporations, while also slashing federal grants and the requirements attached to them has resulted directly in highly racialized patterns of access to and the quality of federally funded programs across states.

This resource provides a primer on federal grants to the states, the role of state legislatures in managing these funds, and a blueprint for a new approach where public budgets reflect a vision for the future where all of us can thrive. Using a values-based framework, this publication provides examples of how state legislators can build a new process to fund our future alongside community members and partners.

With an influx of federal funding to the states, now more than ever, state lawmakers can use their power to coordinate and share information about federal grants, shape budget and policy decisions, and provide oversight to ensure that federal funds empower communities and bring about lasting positive change. This begins by building a shared understanding that "government for the people" is only truly possible when the communities most impacted are full partners at every stage of managing federal funds.