IMPACT REPORT: 2023
IN 2023, Root Cause completed 18 projects with 26 partners.

**OUR PROJECTS**

18 Projects

26 Partners

**PARTNERSHIPS**

As a testament to the close relationships we develop and the value we provide, 50% of our projects were with repeat partners and 50% with new partners.

**BREAKDOWN OF PROJECT FOCUS AREAS**

- **39%** Education & youth development
- **28%** Strategy, design & implementation and facilitation/convening projects
- **22%** Continuous learning & improvement projects
- **11%** Economic mobility
- **11%** Health & well-being

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2023 IMPACT REPORT
COLLECTIVE ACTION

VANGUARD CHARITABLE FOUNDATION In 2023, Root Cause hosted Principle, Process, Practice: Strengthening a Collective Action Backbone Learning Series. This virtual learning series included three interactive 90-minute workshops, with participants engaged in practice and dialogue with backbone teams, Root Cause collective action practitioners, and peers. 200+ collective action backbone practitioners, capacity builders, and funders—including nonprofits, foundations, schools, businesses, healthcare institutions, philanthropists, and government agencies—from across the U.S. and internationally participated in the learning series, with 100% positive feedback.

STAR INITIATIVE IN CAMBRIDGE AND SOMERVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2023 brought to a close a five-year partnership with the Biogen Foundation. In 2017, Root Cause worked with the Biogen Foundation to design and launch a new philanthropic initiative in its headquarters community of Cambridge and Somerville, Massachusetts. Root Cause served as the backbone organization for STAR (Science, Teacher support, Access & Readiness), a 5-year, $12M STEM ecosystem building initiative that advances educational equity for students in grades 6-14 who have been historically underrepresented in STEM, including students of color, economically disadvantaged students, and English language learners. Over the past five years, STAR has served over 4000 students and 600 educators in 15 schools. 87% of STAR 9th graders from low-income households passed all STEM courses (vs. 78% of non-STAR peers) and 49% of STAR high school students from low-income households chose honors science courses (vs. 39% of non-STAR peers).
CONTINUOUS LEARNING & IMPROVEMENT

STATE STREET FOUNDATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND GRANTEE CAPACITY BUILDING
Over the past three years, Root Cause provided capacity building support, coaching, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities to strengthen the work and impact of State Street Foundation’s nonprofit grantees. With State Street’s partnership, Root Cause provided tools and resources, delivered 17 workshops and webinars, and provided over 630 1:1 coaching hours to 24 nonprofit organizations in Boston and throughout the United States. In Years 2 and 3, 100% of participants were able to use coaching time to focus on making improvements in an area that is important to them and/or their team, made valuable connections to fellow cohort members, and said that workshops were valuable, responsive to their organization’s needs, and a positive learning environment.

EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES
The HOPE (Health Outcomes from Positive Experiences) National Resource Center, an initiative of the Center for Community-Engaged Medicine at Tufts Medical Center, has developed a unique research-based framework for building family strengths and resiliency for training service providers to integrate the four HOPE Building Blocks into their work. Since 2022, Root Cause has worked on evaluating HOPE’s recently-created cohort-based training and technical assistance program to determine whether and how participating in this program led to positive practice changes among direct service providers. We are concluding the first year of evaluation and will continue to explore the impact of this model in 2024.

“...Our team at Root Cause was a tremendous source of support and thought partnership in a time of greatest need. Our partners have moved from a place of surviving to thriving, thanks in large part to our initiatives with Root Cause. Root Cause is the expert in the nonprofit sector and a trusted voice for all our partners.”

Whitney Kimmel, Vice President, Corporate Citizenship, State Street Foundation
THE HOPE INITIATIVE AT BUNKER HILL COMMUNITY COLLEGE (BHCC) The HOPE Initiative is a program designed to examine and eliminate the social, institutional, and academic barriers that often prevent males of color from achieving their full potential at BHCC and beyond. This asset-based, student-centered initiative is run by a group of faculty, staff, and students at BHCC. In 2022, HOPE embarked on an abridged strategic planning process with Root Cause to build upon its work and impact to date. Together, we determined the optimal measures of success for its program, ensured alignment of outcomes and activities with staff capacity and BHCC’s priorities and programs, and developed a menu of options to pursue to ensure HOPE’s long-term financial sustainability.
ROOT CAUSE was founded in Greater Boston in 2004. We are committed to, and have a deep understanding of, the communities, institutions, and social issues affecting Massachusetts and its various regions.

IN 2023, 56% of our projects were based in Massachusetts, 28% were national in scope, and the remaining 17% came from other U.S. states.

Our society siloes systems. Root Cause understands how systems connect. They help clients see it, as well.
The Root Cause team and model are sophisticated AND grounded AND influenced by those closest to the work... this approach offers a chance for sustainable change.

The Root Cause Team is in the snow globe with us. They help us figure out where to start, and how to move forward.

How Root Cause operates is VERY different from traditional consultants. There’s a sense of partnership, of shared values and culture.