



Urban Institute

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

A Message from the President

Dear Friends,

In 2018, the Urban Institute celebrated our 50th anniversary and did the work to launch our next 50 years. As Urban stepped into that future, we renewed our commitment to **upward mobility, equity, and shared prosperity**. We pledged to pursue these goals in the manner that Urban has always excelled: by conducting rigorous research with analytic excellence and independence and by **bringing the power of knowledge to help changemakers accelerate their bold solutions**. We also explored how data and research powered by cutting-edge research technologies can be part of finding answers to today's—and tomorrow's—diverse challenges.

In the decades ahead, significant shifts in technology, climate, demographics, and the global economy threaten to exacerbate inequalities and block opportunities for people to thrive. Yet we challenged ourselves to imagine a more optimistic future, where these disruptive forces are harnessed to expand opportunities so all of us can realize our potential to contribute, to be valued, to feel a sense of belonging, and to have a voice. This vision guided Urban as we began our 50th anniversary year by exploring how we could best support those driving change across society.

That initiative, called Urban's [Next50](#), inspired us to ask **what would it take** to achieve quality housing for all, financial well-being, longer and healthier lives, equitable adaption to climate change, high job quality, access to lifelong learning, and an end to racial inequities embedded in society. As the effort unfolded, we were challenged to be more ambitious and enterprising—and to think more strategically about who we partner with as we continue to contribute to the well-being of people and places. The process clarified how we must work in the future.

We did this all by building on our 50-year legacy and continuing to make major contributions across numerous fields. From falling poverty rates among seniors to more durable health care for the poorest among us, this nation is stronger than it was five decades ago thanks to the data and insights Urban has produced. And by leveraging the power of evidence to help decisionmakers make more informed choices, I believe Urban has fundamentally changed this country.

This report provides a glimpse into some of the key ways we made a difference in 2018, through work that promotes the values that define how Urban will live out its mission in the future, our Next50.

We are deeply grateful for your support and partnership along the way.

Warmly,

Sarah Rosen Wartell

2018 Highlights

Over the past year, Urban has contributed to more informed debate and better decisionmaking in communities, capitals, boardrooms, and wherever people are pursuing bold ideas to create a world where everyone has a chance to thrive. Here are highlights of how Urban made a difference in 2018:

ADVANCING UPWARD MOBILITY, EQUITY, AND SHARED PROSPERITY

Increasing mobility from poverty. Urban staffed and managed the [US Partnership on Mobility from Poverty](#), an effort that brought together 24 leaders from philanthropy, the faith community, academia, and the private sector to explore how to dramatically increase mobility from poverty. The partnership helped shape the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's \$158 million commitment to increasing economic mobility and opportunity, and it issued a new framework grounded in a key insight: that mobility entails not only financial success, but power, autonomy, and social belonging. Changemakers in many places are drawing on the partnership's ideas in innovative efforts.

Narrowing the racial homeownership gap. Urban's groundbreaking work on [dramatic declines in black homeownership](#) helped make the [issue](#) an urgent concern in advocacy and policy circles. We issued powerful new findings, showed how a set of housing finance innovations can build wealth in black communities, and helped launch a collaborative effort to spark policy change nationally and in key cities.

As Urban begins its next 50 years, we will strive to advance upward mobility, equity, and shared prosperity by

- conducting rigorous research with analytic excellence and independence
- supporting changemakers to accelerate solutions
- leveraging cutting-edge research technologies and data science
- understanding and confronting structural racism
- delivering accessible insights to influencers and changemakers
- continuing to inform federal policymaking
- deepening collaboration with states and communities
- reflecting and embracing a changing America

INFORMING DEBATES ON POVERTY AND THE SOCIAL SAFETY NET

Assessing proposed work requirements. Urban's rapid-response research and analysis played major roles in educating policymakers and the public as Congress and the administration considered far-reaching changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Medicaid, and other programs. Our 2017 distillation of the literature on work requirements, for instance, was highlighted by leading advocates and called "required reading" by congressional aides in 2018. Urban's findings informed litigation over work requirement proposals in several states and were cited in the federal court ruling that halted implementation of Arkansas's plan.

Measuring families' well-being. Inaugural results from our [Well-Being and Basic Needs Survey](#) contributed to widespread recognition that many Americans are not reaping the benefits of economic recovery. Among other findings, the survey revealed that nearly [40 percent of adults struggled to meet at least one basic need](#) for food, medical care, or housing. Dozens of media outlets cited the survey, as did many policymakers, advocacy organizations, and other influencers.

Expanding housing opportunities. An Urban [study of landlord discrimination](#) in the Housing Choice Voucher Program touched off a wave of action in the advocacy and policy communities. Our study provided definitive evidence that landlords routinely reject voucher holders without meeting them, regardless of ability to pay and other factors. The findings prompted the Department of Housing and Urban Development to launch [a new campaign to boost landlord participation in the program](#). It also contributed to [legislation](#) in Los Angeles protecting voucher holders from discrimination and to similar proposals being considered in other cities.

DELIVERING ACCESSIBLE DATA AND INSIGHTS TO INFLUENCERS

Spurring investment in low-income communities. Urban Institute data, analysis, and strategic guidance helped policymakers and impact investors make effective use of [Opportunity Zones](#), a new federal incentive to encourage private investment in low-income communities. Shortly after the 2017 tax overhaul created this program, Urban issued a rubric for [assessing which eligible census tracts could most benefit](#) and helped policymakers in multiple states apply this tool in decisionmaking. Urban analyses contributed to awareness that extensive cross-sector collaborations may be required for the Opportunity Zone program to achieve its community development goals. We worked intensively with stakeholders in Chicago and other cities to foster such collaborations.

Expanding treatment for opioid use disorder. Urban research contributed to efforts by the California Health Care Foundation and other partners to prompt increased investment in treatment for people with opioid use disorder. Drawing on innovative methods, we issued fact sheets for each California county delineating [how many additional providers would be required to address unmet needs](#). We helped leaders in several counties use this data effectively, which also helped build momentum for state action to expand treatment capacity.

SUPPORTING CHANGEMAKERS TO ACCELERATE SOLUTIONS

Advancing bold ideas for the future. With the generous support of the Citi Foundation, we celebrated Urban's 50th anniversary by looking to the future: We launched our [Next50 initiative](#) to develop the knowledge that transformational leaders need to advance equity, upward mobility, and shared prosperity in the decades ahead. In 2018, we began this yearlong effort by convening diverse changemakers from across sectors to explore bold solutions for some of the country's biggest challenges, in areas ranging from affordable housing and employment equity to public health and criminal justice. These Next50 conversations have helped articulate ambitious knowledge-building agendas and cultivate new partnerships with some of today's leading entrepreneurial thinkers and doers.

Promoting shared prosperity in cities. Together with The Kresge Foundation, the Brookings Institution, and Living Cities, Urban launched the [Shared Prosperity Partnership](#) to promote inclusive economic growth and racial equity. The partnership is helping cross-sectoral collaboratives in select cities tackle their highest priority challenges—and do so in ways that “plan with, rather than for” traditionally excluded communities. In [Fresno, California](#), Urban played a lead role in helping a diverse coalition start aligning the city's community development, workforce, and economic development systems.

Revitalizing Detroit's housing market. Urban played a key role in the launch of the [Detroit Neighborhood Housing Compact](#), a cross-sector coalition dedicated to restoring health to the city's market for single-family homes. Modeled on the successful Preservation Compact in Chicago, this effort is advancing an evidence-based agenda for preserving quality affordable housing while renovating large numbers of dilapidated homes.

In close partnership with Detroit Future City, an innovative policy and advocacy organization that will coordinate the compact moving forward, Urban facilitated the planning process that helped compact members use data to align on shared goals and strategies.

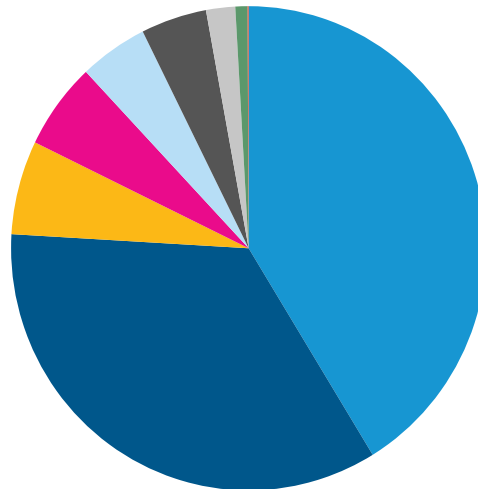
Transforming Tulsa's approach to mental health. The Anne & Henry Zarrow Foundation, the University of Tulsa, and a steering committee of civic leaders partnered with Urban to produce a [10-year plan](#) that has galvanized efforts to improve mental health and the mental health care system. Urban experts helped foster dialogue grounded in facts about the city's needs and resources and helped identify gaps and inefficiencies. Our experts also contributed to a bold plan for strengthening a continuum of care across multiple systems including health care, education, housing, criminal justice, and workforce development—and for measuring success as the plan moves forward. The plan generated a strong, positive response from the public in Tulsa and has garnered attention from other cities.

Reducing prison populations. In partnership with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Urban broke new ground in showing how specific changes in justice policy can affect mass incarceration. We developed an online [state prison population forecaster](#) that allows anyone to forecast how different policy reform outcomes impact incarceration, corrections spending, and the racial and ethnic composition of state prison systems. And we advised the ACLU and its affiliates as they drew on the forecaster to develop “blueprints” showing how each state and the District of Columbia can transform their criminal justice systems. The blueprints are a centerpiece of the ACLU's Campaign for Smart Justice, which aims to shrink the prison population by half and curb racial disparities in the justice system.

2018 Financials

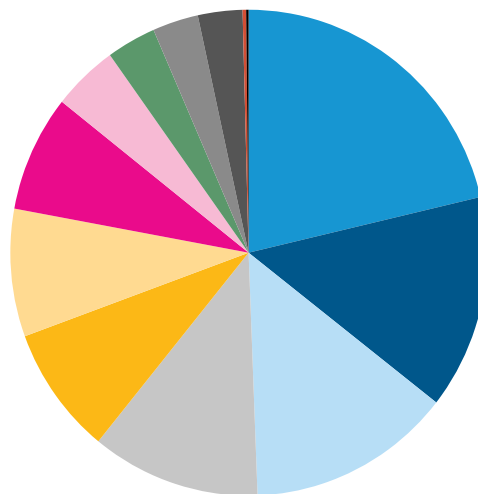
Revenue

- **41.2%** Federal Government
- **34.7%** Foundations
- **6.3%** Corporations
- **5.8%** Urban Institute Endowment Support
- **4.6%** Nonprofits & Universities
- **4.5%** Individuals
- **2.0%** State & Local Governments
- **0.8%** International Organizations & Foreign Entities
- **0.1%** Publication & Other Income



Program Expenses

- **21.3%** Health Policy Center
- **14.3%** Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center
- **13.8%** Income and Benefits Policy Center
- **11.5%** Justice Policy Center
- **8.6%** Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population
- **8.5%** Tax Policy Center
- **7.8%** Research to Action Lab
- **4.5%** Executive Office Research
- **3.4%** Center on International Development and Governance
- **3.1%** Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy
- **3.0%** Housing Finance Policy Center
- **0.2%** Statistical Methods Group
- **0.2%** Office of Technology and Data Science



Statement of Activities

OPERATING REVENUES	
Contract amounts earned	35,943,071
Program and project grants	45,544,646
General support grants and contributions	3,238,826
Publication income	25,574
Investment return designated for operations	5,207,522
Other income	28,722
TOTAL OPERATING REVENUES	89,988,361

OPERATING EXPENSES	
Research expenses	
Incurred under contracts	33,715,948
Incurred under grants	29,710,393
Incurred for other research	22,872,285
Total program costs	86,298,626
Development	791,176
Publication and public affairs costs	172,809
Other costs	3,016,594
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	90,279,205

NONOPERATING ACTIVITIES	
Investment return, net	(5,779,966)
Investment income allocation	(5,207,522)
Contributions received	33,412
TOTAL NONOPERATING ACTIVITIES	(10,954,076)
Change in net assets	(11,244,920)
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF THE YEAR	158,046,241
NET ASSETS AT END OF THE YEAR	146,801,321

Statement of Financial Position

ASSETS	
Cash and cash equivalents	17,133,175
Endowment-related cash and cash equivalents	3,927,631
Accounts receivable, net	15,069,569
Contributions receivable, net	11,106,153
Prepaid expenses and other assets	1,218,612
Property and equipment, net	6,719,177
Long-term investments	114,669,610
TOTAL ASSETS	169,843,927

LIABILITIES	
Accounts payable	3,689,965
Accrued payroll	2,251,981
Accrued paid time off	3,040,547
Other accrued expenses	321,818
Deferred revenue	13,344,402
Deferred rent	393,893
TOTAL LIABILITIES	23,042,606

NET ASSETS	
Without donor restrictions	115,928,103
With donor restrictions	30,873,218
TOTAL NET ASSETS	146,801,321
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	169,843,927

Our full audited financial statements are available at www.urban.org/financials.

Thank You to Our Funders

We are grateful for your support, which helps Urban's scholars transform evidence into solutions.

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† represents a pledge of endowment funds * reflects annualized amount of multiyear contribution(s)



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