

NNIP's 20th Anniversary: Celebrating the Past and Charting the Future

Wednesday morning 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

By the early 1990's, two major trends prepared the way for expanded use of local neighborhood data - increased availability of local administrative data in electronic format and broader access to geographic information systems. An institutional innovation also took place. The Center on Urban Poverty and Social Change (now the Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development) at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio adopted the mission of collecting and organizing neighborhood-level data from various local agencies in order to make the data available for use, and keeping the data up to date over time to track changing neighborhood conditions. Organizations in five other cities (Atlanta, Boston, Denver, Oakland, and Providence) began doing similar work.

The six organizations approached the Urban Institute about creating a new peer learning network to support organizations doing this work. The partners' theme was "democratizing information," implying a commitment to directly engage neighborhood practitioners and residents in using data in community improvement efforts. After initial research to document the local activities and confirm the value of the model, the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP) was formed in 1996. Today in 2016, it consists of organizations in 30 cities and the NNIP model continues to attract the interest of organizations in cities across the country.

The purpose of this session is to learn about the origins of the NNIP network, reflect on how the network supports the critical contributions of current partners, and explore how the network can continue to evolve, while staying true to its founding principles.

Cindy Guy of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, a financial supporter and strategic partner since the beginning of the network, will moderate the session. She will share the foundation's perspective on investing in the network and proceed with 35 minutes of moderated questions and plenary discussion.

- *Claudia Coulton* from Case Western Reserve University will relate how the idea of using neighborhood data in community change emerged and how the original vision has evolved over time.
- *Sheila Martin* from Portland State University and *Laura McKieran* from Community Information Now will reflect on the value of the network and the current role of partners in today's environment.

Discussion: (15 minutes)

- How can the network better communicate and promote its principles and values of democratizing information?
- How should the network improve its practices to serve its local partners and educate the broader field?
- Are there any new activities that the network should launch in response to the changing environment?
- What other organizations and networks should NNIP be collaborating with to advance its mission locally and nationally?