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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Innovia Foundation Board Adopts Anti-Hate Policy for Grantmaking**

SPOKANE, WA, April 2, 2020; Today, the Innovia Foundation Board adopted an anti-hate policy that ensures no funding will be directed to organizations that engage in hateful speech or activities. This policy applies to all Foundation grantmaking including donor-advised grant recommendations.

This policy is the culmination of more than two years of organizational change that has transformed the Foundation. In 2018, under new leadership, Innovia Foundation began exploring and implementing intentional organizational changes, working alongside the community to update the community foundation's mission, vision and values to reflect and advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion.

"The new anti-hate policy builds on the diversity, equity and inclusion journey of our staff and Board over the past two plus years," said Innovia Foundation CEO Shelly O'Quinn. "After examining best practices for community foundations nationwide, we found that a simple board policy condemning hate, by itself, was not going to be enough. We needed to do the deeper process of working alongside our communities to update our mission, vision and values accordingly, to facilitate difficult discussions about race and racism with community partners, and ultimately, to develop a collective vision for our region's future that would advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion."

Today's Board meeting and policy development was facilitated by Sheri Clarke, PhD, Vice Present of Diversity and Inclusion at Eastern Washington University, and Kiantha Duncan, nonprofit and community leader and equity facilitator.

The anti-hate policy at Innovia Foundation states:

*"Innovia Foundation will not make grants to organizations that Innovia knows or has reason to believe support or engage in hateful activities. Innovia will implement this policy through due diligence to ensure that hateful activities are identified and steps are taken to avoid any Innovia support for them."*

*Hateful activities is defined to mean activities that incite or engage in violence, intimidation, harassment, threats or defamation targeting an individual or group based on their actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, immigration status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability. These activities are contrary to Innovia’s mission and its charitable purpose. Innovia Foundation relies on data crosschecked from various sources to determine if a nonprofit falls into one of these categories.*

*Decisions regarding grant distributions made from a donor-advised fund, and the investment of assets, are made at the sole discretion of Innovia in furtherance of its charitable mission.”*

In recent years, a handful of foundations across the country have worked to develop approaches that facilitate charitable giving to recognized nonprofits, while preventing the flow of funds to groups that promote hate. The new policy adopted by Innovia Foundation is based on work from East Bay Community Foundation (Oakland, CA), Brooklyn Foundation (New York, NY) and other community foundations leading the field in promoting hate-free philanthropy.

“We are thankful for our colleagues at Council on Foundations, equity consultants Doug Stamm and Richard Woo, and the local, regional and national partners who are advanced in this work. They have provided valuable guidance and a sound framework to establish our own anti-hate policy,” said O’Quinn. “We are coming alongside the foundations who are leading the way and are honored to be joining them in this work that will reshape community philanthropy.”

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**ABOUT INNOVIA FOUNDATION:** Innovia Foundation ignites generosity that transforms lives and communities so that every person has the opportunity to thrive. As the community foundation for Eastern Washington and North Idaho, we partner with people who want to make our world better. We work together to address and solve our region’s problems, help those in need, identify and respond to our greatest opportunities and leave a lasting impact. Each year, Innovia Foundation invests nearly \$7 million into our communities through grants and scholarships to nonprofit organizations and local students.

**MISSION, VISION, VALUES AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:** To view Innovia Foundation’s Strategic Framework visit: <https://innovia.org/news/strategic-framework>