

NATION  
SWELL

# Datasets for **economic mobility**

A curated collection of resources for  
Institutional Members

Updated February 2023

# About This Deck

This slide deck provides **social impact leaders** in the **public and private sectors** with a roundup of data-driven tools to strengthen their decision-making processes in addressing the **economic opportunity gap**. The resources provide specific consideration for indicators of **racial equity and social justice** and factors that promote **mobility** for disadvantaged groups across neighborhoods, communities, and states.

## Resources include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Tools that allow companies to benchmark themselves against others on strategy and progress;
- Datasets that support deciding which communities would benefit most from company investments to increase equity;
- Resources that encourage companies to prioritize racial and social factors that affect indicators of wealth (e.g., access to education and employment, and asset ownership).

*This is a living document and, as such, may have omissions. To suggest an addition, email us at [insights@nationswell.com](mailto:insights@nationswell.com)*



# Table of Contents

## 04 The Problem

## 05 Datasets

[American Opportunity Index](#)

[Financial Health and Wealth Dashboard](#)

[Inclusive Growth Score](#)

[Mobility Pathways](#)

[National Equity Atlas](#)

[Opportunity Atlas](#)

[Racial Wealth Equity Database](#)

[Rural Aperture Project](#)

[Smart Growth Strategies](#)

## 15 Additional Reading

# The Problem

## What is the **economic opportunity gap**?

Wealth inequality and income inequality in the United States are significantly higher than in other OECD countries.<sup>1</sup> And economic mobility is rigid. The likelihood of an individual moving from low wealth status to high wealth status over the course of their lifetime is low.<sup>2</sup> Income disparity and wealth inequality are rooted in an array of social and economic factors, including race and geography. These factors create what is known as the economic opportunity gap.

### In numbers:

**1 in 5** Black Americans are experiencing poverty for the third generation in a row, compared to **1 in 100** white Americans;<sup>3</sup>

Black and hispanic adults above the age of 25 see at least a **\$30,000 difference** in annual salary compared with white adults;<sup>4</sup>

The potential lifetime income disparity between workers at bottom quintile companies and workers at top quintile companies with a similar role is **\$1.5 million**;<sup>5</sup>

**Top quintile companies' wages are 2.5 times higher** than wages at bottom quintile companies across a range of roles.<sup>6</sup>



# Datasets

# American Opportunity Index

## WHAT IT IS

---

The **American Opportunity Index: A Corporate Scorecard of Worker Advancement** “provides companies and other stakeholders robust tools that measure how well major employers are doing in fostering economic mobility for workers and how they could do better.”<sup>7</sup> Dimensions of a firm’s opportunity generation include: the access they offer to opportunity; the pay they offer in low-and middle skill roles; and, the level of mobility experienced by their employees both within and beyond the firm.

## HOW TO USE IT

---

Exploring the data fulfills the following goals: “to empower workers to make better decisions as to what positions to seek and what firms to prioritize in their job searches; to recognize firms that are setting an example of how to create opportunity; to arm executives and HR leaders alike with the data they need to take meaningful action to boost the competitiveness of their workforce.”<sup>8</sup>

## WHO IT IS FOR

---

- Corporate leaders
- Workers

**Creators:** [The Burning Glass Institute](#), [Harvard Business School’s Project on Managing the Future of Work](#), [Schultz Family Foundation](#)



# Financial **Wealth and Health** Dashboard

## WHAT IT IS

---

**The Financial Wealth and Health Dashboard** “illustrates financial health and wealth across cities and states by race and ethnicity, where data are available.”<sup>9</sup> Indicators of financial well-being applied include income, credit, debt, savings, assets, and wealth.

## HOW TO USE IT

---

The dashboard provides a map for the user to explore measures of financial health and wealth with racially disaggregated city-level metrics where available. The map divides states into areas containing no fewer than 100,000 people, also known as **Public Use Microdata Areas** (PUMAs). The tool includes strategies for local leaders to help residents manage daily finances, build their economic resilience, and promote their upward mobility.

## WHO IT IS FOR

---

- Local city and community leaders from government, philanthropy, and practice.

**Creators:** [Urban Institute](#), [JPMorgan Chase & Co.](#)

# Inclusive Growth Score

## WHAT IT IS

---

### **The Inclusive Growth Score (IGS)**

“aggregates yearly measures related to place, economy, and community to provide a comparative social and economic profile of a neighborhood. It helps to: uncover and prioritize opportunities for revitalization; build a case for investments in inclusive economic development initiatives; track changes over time and benchmark against other regions.”<sup>10</sup>

## HOW TO USE IT

---

Users can search for a community to explore all census tracts in the U.S. and all postcode sectors in the U.K; discover a community’s Inclusive Growth Score, and compare communities and benchmark results.

## WHO IT IS FOR

---

- Corporate leaders
- Local planners
- Policymakers
- Community leaders
- Impact investors in the U.S. and U.K.

**Creators:** [MasterCard Center for Inclusive Growth](#)



# Mobility Pathways Tool

## WHAT IT IS

---

The **Mobility Pathways** tool “visualizes data on real job-to-job transitions to show how workers can advance through labor markets.” It is designed to provide information on realistic pathways to higher-paying jobs; filling staffing needs while supporting upward mobility; and real-time actionable data on the labor market.<sup>11</sup>

## HOW TO USE IT

---

“Users can compare jobs by wage level, current demand (estimated from real-time job postings), and ‘mobility index’ ranking.”<sup>12</sup> The tool can help employers identify the right workers to address staffing needs. It suggests industries and occupations where hiring managers might find individuals likely to succeed, perhaps with some targeted training or upskilling.

## WHO IT IS FOR

---

- Corporate leaders
- Workers
- Policymakers

**Creators:** [\*The Brookings Institution Workforce of the Future Initiative\*](#)

# Racial Equity Index

## WHAT IT IS

---

“**The Racial Equity Index** is a data tool designed to help communities identify priority areas for advancing racial equity, track progress over time, and set specific goals for closing racial gaps. It provides overall equity outcomes for cities, counties, regions and states.”<sup>13</sup> “The Index is a composite score based on two components: an inclusion score that indicates the extent of racial gaps in outcomes for a series of nine equity indicators, and a prosperity score that indicates how well the population is doing overall on those same indicators.”<sup>14</sup>

## HOW TO USE IT

---

“The Racial Equity Index is designed for users to compare equity outcomes for one type of geography at a time to see how a place is doing relative to its peers. Users can find outcomes in each geography broken down into three indicator categories: economic vitality, readiness, and connectedness. This type of comparative analysis helps to identify the issue areas in greatest need of improvement for a given place.”<sup>15</sup>

## WHO IT IS FOR

---

- Corporate leaders
- Advocates
- Policymakers
- Community leaders

**Creators:** [National Equity Atlas](#), [PolicyLink](#), [USC Equity Research Institute](#)

# Racial Wealth Equity Database

## WHAT IT IS

---

**The Black Wealth Indicators** bring together national and county-level measures of wealth to compare how race influences education, employment, asset ownership, and other indicators that contribute to wealth. “The tool paints a holistic picture of the variations that exist among communities and fuels a data-driven discussion on wealth equity in the United States.”<sup>16</sup>

## HOW TO USE IT

---

Using data from the Racial Wealth Equity Database, users can look up how an individual county measures up nationally or they can compare two counties. The tool generates graphs with county-specific data on indicators like black population percentage, social vulnerability index, number of business formations, median home value, and more.

## WHO IT IS FOR

---

- Corporate leaders
- Policymakers
- Community leaders

**Creators:** [Black Wealth Data Center](#), [Bloomberg Philanthropies Greenwood Initiative](#), [Prosperity NOW](#)

# Rural Aperture Project

## WHAT IT IS

---

**The Rural Aperture Project** is a “multi-story series that uses data to shift the national conversation about racial and economic equity in rural places.”<sup>17</sup> The resource publishes data visualizations and accompanying narratives at the local, regional, and national levels to create a more accurate portrayal of rural America.

## HOW TO USE IT

---

The project releases a series of data stories focusing on specific topics ranging from defining rural America, who lives in rural America and answers story-specific questions like how data shapes conceptions of diversity. Users are encouraged to explore and keep up to date with the series to inform how they can “better tell stories, conduct research, distribute resources, make investments, or develop policy.”<sup>18</sup>

## WHO IT IS FOR

---

- Corporate leaders
- Practitioners
- Journalists
- Researchers
- Philanthropists
- Government officials

**Creators:** [Center on Rural Innovation](#), [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#), [The Aspen Institute's Thrive Rural Initiative](#), [MDC](#)

# Smart **Growth Strategies** Tool

## WHAT IT IS

---

“**The Smart Growth Cities Tool** is an interactive guide for economic workforce planning in the U.S. Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and Economic Development District (EDD) levels. The tool uncovers the industry strategies that best leverage an area’s underlying capabilities. Identifying these capabilities is associated with success in generating both economic growth and an upwardly mobile workforce, and they include a specialized workforce, unique geographic amenities, legacy industries for new business attraction, or other local advantages.”<sup>19</sup>

## HOW TO USE IT

---

“Planners can explore the trade-offs that are implied by each industry strategy in terms of economic growth, good job creation, and equitable job creation which then inform a workforce plan for meeting the strategy. The resulting industry and workforce plans can be saved and shared with colleagues.”<sup>20</sup>

## WHO IT IS FOR

---

- Corporate leaders
- Local level policymakers
- Urban planners

**Creators:** [The Brookings Institution Workforce of the Future Initiative](#)

# Social Capital Atlas

## WHAT IT IS

---

“**The Social Capital Atlas** is a data visualization platform that uses social network data to measure and analyze social capital in the United States. The tool provides data on different forms of social capital across communities and measures associated with income mobility and other outcomes.”<sup>21</sup>

## HOW TO USE IT

---

Users can select a specific county, zip code, high school or college in the U.S. to explore data on indicators of social capital such as economic connectedness (based on current income), cohesiveness (based on clustering), and civic engagement (based on volunteering rates). Each measure of social capital also includes specific determinants. They can then explore how each of these measures rank (by percentile from low to high) and how they relate to economic mobility.

## WHO IT IS FOR

---

- Corporate leaders
- Researchers,
- Policymakers
- Practitioners

**Creators:** [\*Opportunity Insights at Harvard University\*](#), [\*Data for Good at Meta\*](#), [\*The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation\*](#), [\*The Overdeck Family Foundation\*](#)





## Additional Reading

1. **Racial and ethnic gaps in the U.S. persist on key demographic indicators** | Pew Research Center
2. **Stuck on the ladder: intragenerational wealth mobility in the United States** | The Brookings Institution
3. **The economic gains from equity** | The Brookings Institution
4. **The economic impact of closing the racial wealth gap** | McKinsey
5. **The next move: how businesses can close the racial economic gap** | The Aspen Institute
6. **Flipping the pyramid: steps companies can take to close the opportunity gap** | University of Pennsylvania Wharton School of Business

*NationSwell would love your feedback on this resource so that we can continue providing valuable insights to you and your organization. Please consider taking 30 seconds to complete this [brief questionnaire](#).*

## Works Cited

- 1 **Stuck on the ladder: intragenerational wealth mobility in the United States** | The Brookings Institution
- 2 **Stuck on the ladder: wealth mobility is low and decreases with age** | The Brookings Institution
- 3 **Long shadows: the black-white gap in multigenerational poverty** | The Brookings Institution
- 4 **Racial and ethnic gaps persist in the U.S. on key demographic indicators** | Pew Research
- 5 **About** | The American Opportunity Index
- 6 **About** | The American Opportunity Index
- 7 **About** | The American Opportunity Index
- 8 **About** | The American Opportunity Index
- 9 **Financial health and wealth dashboard** | Urban Institute
- 10 **Inclusive growth score** | MasterCard Center for Inclusive Growth
- 11 **Mobility Pathways** | The Brookings Institution
- 12 **Introducing the mobility pathways tools for workers, employers, and policymakers** | The Brookings Institution
- 13 **Racial equity index summary** | National Equity Atlas
- 14 **Introducing the racial equity index** | National Equity Atlas
- 15 **Introducing the racial equity index** | National Equity Atlas
- 16 **Racial wealth equity database** | Black Wealth Data Center
- 17 **The rural aperture project** | Center on Rural Innovation
- 18 **The rural aperture project** | Center on Rural Innovation
- 19 **Introducing the smart growth cities tool** | The Brookings Institution
- 20 **Introducing the smart growth cities tool** | The Brookings Institution
- 21 **About the social capital atlas** | Opportunity Insights



**NATION  
SWELL**

Thank you