

For Immediate Release

New Report: Strategic Philanthropy Must Turn to Social Justice to Maximize Impact

Current approach to strategic philanthropy limits its own potential



Washington, D.C. (1/29/13) – Strategic philanthropy has helped make the nonprofit sector more effective, but a new report released today by the [National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy](#) (NCRP) contends that it is limited by its top-down, technocratic approach. The report recommends the use of approaches familiar to social justice philanthropy to address these limitations, especially when the problems facing the nonprofit sector are so complex.

In "[Real Results: Why Strategic Philanthropy is Social Justice Philanthropy](#)," NCRP reports that the current practice of strategic philanthropy typically favors short-term metrics, is largely disconnected from grantees and the communities these nonprofits serve, and usually lacks authentic feedback to inform the strategies. Unless grantmakers explicitly address the needs of underserved communities and invest in policy and community engagement – strategies long practiced by social justice philanthropists – they are unlikely to achieve their goals.

"All grantmakers want to maximize the impact of their grants," said Aaron Dorfman, executive director of NCRP. "What they may not realize is that the missing piece in their grantmaking

strategy is the social justice lens."

Authors Niki Jagpal, NCRP's research and policy director, and Kevin Laskowski, senior research and policy associate, examine why these two seemingly different approaches to philanthropy are, in fact, the same:

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The clarity of desired goals includes understanding who benefits and how they benefit.

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A commitment to evidence-based strategy cannot ignore the tangible, measureable impact – and often the necessity - of nonprofit advocacy and grassroots organizing.

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Truly strategic philanthropy incorporates direct input from grantees and the communities these nonprofits serve.

Jagpal and Laskowski draw on common themes seen in a series of reports on high impact strategies for arts, education, environment and health philanthropy to demonstrate how a social justice approach produces concrete results and society-wide benefits regardless of issue focus.

" [Real Results: Why Strategic Philanthropy is Social Justice Philanthropy](http://www.ncrp.org) " is available at www.ncrp.org

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The National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy in Washington, D.C. is a national watchdog, research and advocacy organization that promotes philanthropy that serves the public good, is responsive to people and communities with the least wealth and opportunity, and is held accountable to the highest standards of integrity and openness. Visit www.ncrp.org .

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