

Power Giving

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR PHILANTHROPIC IMPACT

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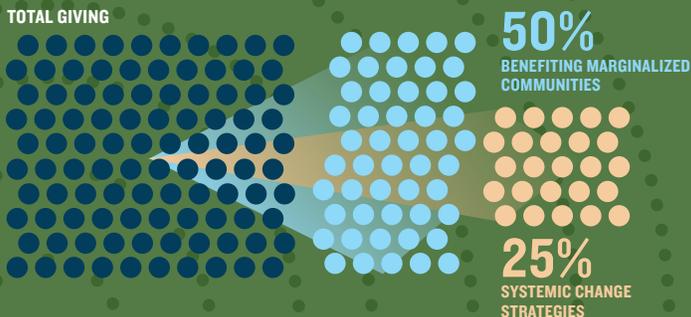
Two-thirds of U.S. philanthropy comes from individuals, not foundations. Effective individual donors understand the intersection between philanthropy, power, opportunity and equity.

Philanthropic “Power Givers” do 3 things:

- 1. Give to groups that build community power and movements.**
- 2. Share power with grantees.**
- 3. Wield their power, access and assets for positive impact.**

What is Building Power?

Supporting systemic change by funding civic engagement, advocacy and community organizing led by impacted communities.



→ FUND MOVEMENT BUILDING

Less than 15% of foundation giving goes to systemic change strategies, yet NCRP research shows that each dollar invested in those strategies leads to \$115 of public benefit. Power givers devote at least 25% of their giving to systemic change strategies.

→ INVEST IN FRONTLINE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Only 33% of foundation dollars benefit poor people, people of color, immigrants, LGBTQ people and other marginalized communities. Yet when impacted groups lead, everyone benefits. Power givers devote at least 50% of their giving to marginalized people.

What is Sharing Power?

Creating transparent, trusting relationships by freeing recipients to pursue impact.



→ CUT THE (PROJECT-SPECIFIC) STRINGS

General multi-year support allows recipients to rapidly respond to crises and opportunities, maintain staff continuity and organizational leadership, overcome unforeseeable challenges, innovate and improve planning.

→ STREAMLINE VETTING

Too often, the recipient vetting process is needlessly complicated and drawn out, creating significant capacity burdens for grantees and using time they could otherwise be putting in the service of impact.

What is Wielding Power?

Exercising public leadership beyond giving to create equitable, catalytic change.

It makes no sense to use 5% of your wealth to try to promote something, while the other 95% might be doing something totally contrary.

— VICTOR DE LUCA, FORMER CEO, JESSIE SMITH NOYES FOUNDATION

ALIGN INVESTMENTS

LEVERAGE ACCESS TO OPEN DOORS

USE YOUR VOICE

Power givers use all the resources at their disposal — not just charitable giving — to advance progressive change.

→ ALIGN INVESTMENTS

Hiring of diverse investment managers, investment screens, shareholder advocacy and mission-aligned investing are 4 ways to align your portfolio with your values and support — or at least not undermine — your grant partners' mission and impact.

→ LEVERAGE ACCESS TO OPEN DOORS

One of the most important ways donors can wield their power is to facilitate relationships with other donors and support access to decisionmakers.

→ USE YOUR VOICE

Your status as a community leader gives you a powerful platform — use it to advocate for equitable policies whenever you have the opportunity.

5 Steps to Becoming a Power Giver

1

Join A Power-Building Donor Network

Seek out donor networks and giving circles that prioritize funding systems change and social movements, like Solidaire, Resource Generation, Way to Win, Womens Donor Network and the Movement Voter Project.

3

Solicit and Act On Grantee Feedback

Ask current grantees how to improve your application and reporting process. If they can't think of anything to improve, you're either the perfect donor ... or they are afraid to tell you what you really need to hear.

2

Start a Giving Circle

If there aren't any near you, you can start a giving circle that provides an opportunity for shared learning and get your feet wet with this funding approach. [Here is one useful resource](#) on how to get started.¹

4

Align Your Investments

Talk to your advisor about aligning investments with equity values and divesting in those that cause harm. Get support on how from groups like the Mission Investors Exchange.

5

Leverage Your Influence

Map your strongest relationships with other funders, policymakers and the media. Ask grantees if and how these connections could support them in advancing their goals.

¹ Ten Basic Steps to Starting a Giving Circle, United Philanthropy Forum. <https://www.unitedphilforum.org/resources/ten-basic-steps-starting-giving-circle>