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USING YOUR VOICE



Teen Philanthropy CAFÉ

SNACKABLE BITES ON GIVING, FOR TEENS

ON TODAY'S MENU: THE PATH TO IMPACT



Welcome to the Café



WHAT DOES IMPACT MEAN IN PHILANTHROPY? HOW DO PEOPLE “CREATE IMPACT” THROUGH GIVING? WHAT ACTION STEPS CAN YOU TAKE TOWARD MAKING AN IMPACT?



These are big questions, and you’ve come to the right place for answers. In this issue, we’ll explore impact in philanthropy. So pull up a seat, order up a tall “half-caff” coffee or hot chocolate, and we’ll get you thinking and talking about impact. Would you like to add marshmallows?

On Today’s Menu THE PATH TO IMPACT

OBJECTIVE:

Discuss the importance of impact in philanthropy. Learn how philanthropists strive toward and create impact.

As a philanthropist (or a one-day-will-be philanthropist), you have an incredible opportunity to make a positive change—big or small—on issues and causes you care about. By cultivating a passion for something, being intentional about it, and learning all you can, you can have an impact far beyond what you thought was possible.

But what is impact? You might hear people use the word impact a lot these days (especially in philanthropy), but not everyone uses or understands it in the same way. Impact can mean different things to different people—even among funders. Philanthropists often use the term when referring to the *results* of their giving, and whether those results match what they intended when they gave their money and time.

Achieving impact through your giving may take time, and lots of experiments—some successful and others not. The good news is, there are certain ways to move toward impact. This guide will help you learn the ins and outs of impact, so that you can consider ways to make your *own* mark on issues you care about.

SO DIG IN AND BEGIN.

WHAT DOES IMPACT MEAN?

(Noun) a significant positive effect
(Verb) to strongly influence a cause, field, or community

As a philanthropist (or a one-day-will-be philanthropist), you have the power to positively affect others with your time, talent, treasure, and ties. A simple way you can apply the definition of impact, then, is as follows:

- What difference do you want to make?
- (After the fact...) Did you achieve it, and how?
- What changed as a result?

ABOUT THIS GUIDE:

This series introduces young people to strategic, thoughtful philanthropy, and inspires them toward giving with impact. Families and adults who work with youth can use these guides to facilitate peer discussion and fun activities around giving. This project is a partnership of Exponent Philanthropy and Youth Philanthropy Connect, with funding by the Frieda C. Fox Family Foundation.



exponent
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GETTING THOUGHTFUL ABOUT IMPACT

Some philanthropists say three ingredients help them achieve more impact in giving: passion, being intentional about what they want to achieve, and a love of learning.

IMPACT TAKES PASSION

To achieve real, lasting change, you need to be passionate about something. It can be anything! People are often passionate about what's personal for them. It could be something that triggers an emotion—such as hope, anger, joy, frustration, or urgency. It is something upon which you feel *driven* to make a difference, even if it takes a lifetime to do it.

How do you feed your passion? It's simple: You learn a ton about a topic, connect with those you are interested in helping, talk with and even rally others around the issues, and, hopefully, see the actual results (the impact) of what you've contributed.

IMPACT TAKES INTENTIONALITY

Intention means getting clear on what you want to do, and then taking steps to follow through.

Philanthropists who achieve impact typically have a clear plan to achieve their goals. They then intentionally give their dollars and time according to that plan. Sometimes, they need to make adjustments along the way, and that's fine. What's important is that their intentions stay clear and focused.

Intentional funders are conscious, deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful. They know that achieving impact takes knowledge, planning, making hard decisions, maintaining good relationships, and investing more than money.

“INTENTIONAL FUNDERS
ARE CONSCIOUS,
DELIBERATE, PURPOSEFUL,
AND THOUGHTFUL.”



HERE'S A TIP: Although it is tempting to think you can be truly passionate about multiple causes, the truth of the matter is this: Passion must be fed, or it will fade away. Most funders find they can be truly passionate about only one or two things.

IMPACT TAKES A LOVE OF LEARNING

Do you love to learn? Not just in school, but in life? If so, you may have a leg up when it comes to achieving impact through your giving. If not so much, finding what you are passionate about could help you be a more curious learner.

Studies on impact have shown that philanthropists who love to learn—either formally or informally—are more successful at achieving impact. This could be...

- 💡 **LOVING TO LEARN ABOUT THE REAL EXPERIENCES OF THEIR FAVORITE NONPROFITS AND WHAT THEY DO**
- 💡 **LOVING TO LEARN ABOUT NEW OR CREATIVE STRATEGIES FOR BETTER RESULTS**
- 💡 **LOVING TO LEARN ABOUT A FELLOW FOUNDATION'S OR PHILANTHROPIST'S CHOSEN GRANT STRATEGY**

A love of learning can also manifest in the use of simple evaluation or measurement techniques. Once funders know what they want to achieve and their chosen path for getting there, they can gather simple data, consider the results, and add that learning into their next round of planning and giving.



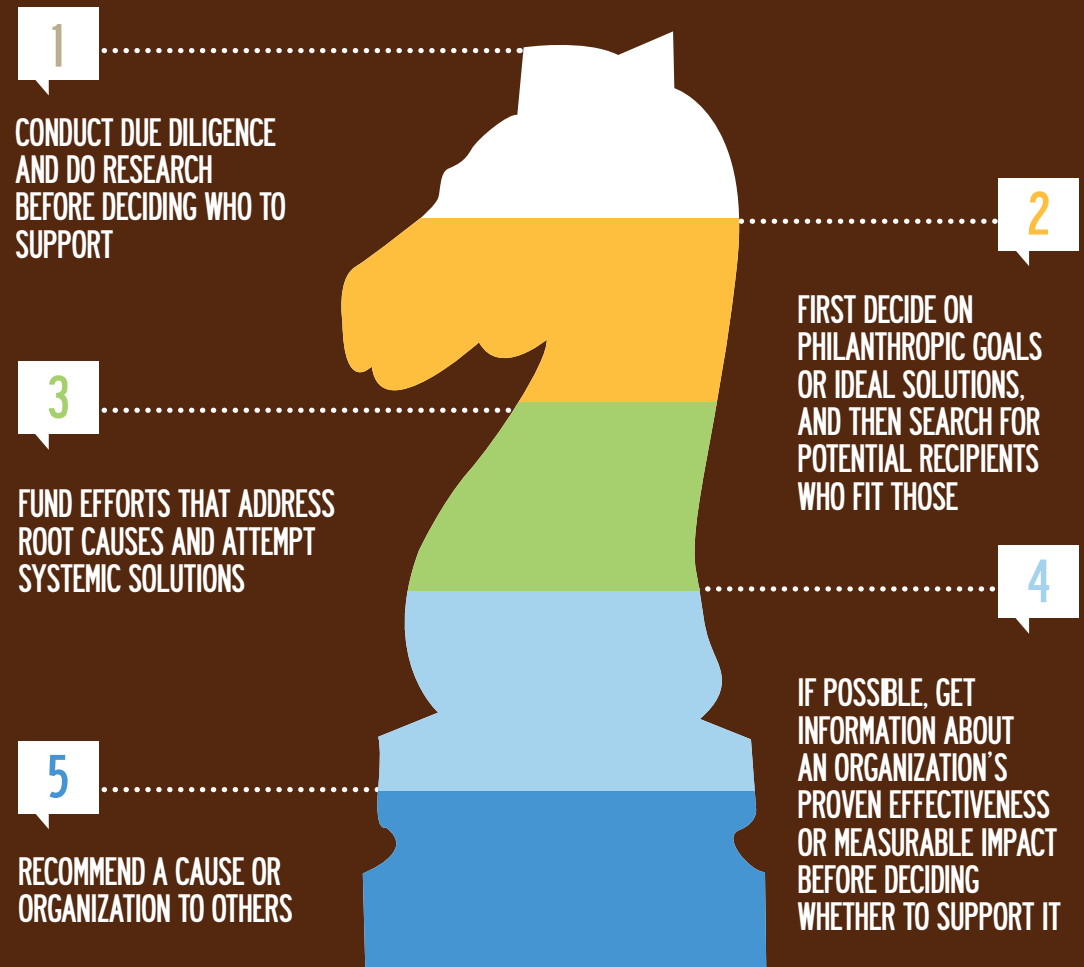
A PATHWAY TO IMPACT

Want to know how next gen donors are giving with impact in mind? Here's what they say are five of their most important strategies:

- 1 **FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH FIRST,** and then search for organizations that can help bring your vision to life.
- 2 **DUE DILIGENCE MATTERS.** Just like you would in school, do your homework on an organization before supporting it.
- 3 **GO FOR MORE THAN A BANDAGE SOLUTION.** Consider giving to efforts that get to the root causes of the issue you care about.
- 4 **DIG DEEPER.** Find out more about the organization and how it measures its own success.
- 5 **TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT IT!** Let your peers know what you give your time, money, and talent to. Maybe they will want to get involved too.



TOP 5 MOST IMPORTANT COMPONENTS OF PHILANTHROPIC STRATEGY



Source: #Next Gen Donors: Respecting Legacy, Revolutionizing Philanthropy, nextgendonors.org



USE THESE QUESTIONS TO REFLECT OR DISCUSS WITH YOUR FAMILY OR PEERS. YOU MAY NOT KNOW THE ANSWERS TO SOME OF THESE QUESTIONS, AND THAT'S OKAY! THEY ARE HERE TO SPARK YOUR GOOD THINKING. YOU CAN ALWAYS RETURN TO THEM LATER.

**WHAT ISSUE ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT?
(PICK JUST ONE—WE KNOW IT'S HARD!)**

**WHAT SKILLS OR NEW LEARNING DO YOU THINK
YOU COULD GAIN FROM MAKING AN IMPACT?**

**WHAT IMPACT DO YOU WANT TO MAKE, OR
COULD YOU SEE MAKING, ON THIS ISSUE?**

**WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT WHEN
IT COMES TO THE PROSPECT OF MAKING AN
IMPACT?**

**WHAT ACTION (IF ANY) HAVE YOU ALREADY
TAKEN ON THIS ISSUE? IF YOU HAVEN'T YET
TAKEN ACTION, HOW MIGHT YOU FIND OUT
WHAT YOU COULD DO?**

**WHAT QUESTIONS MIGHT YOU ASK TO
DETERMINE IF YOU'VE MADE AN IMPACT?**

A GREAT STORY OF YOUTH IMPACT:

In Michigan in the early 1990s, the Kellogg Foundation gave seed grants to start Youth Advisory Committees (YACs) at community foundations around the state. By now, more than 13,000 youth have participated. This initiative had at least one major impact: changing state law so that youth ages 16-17 can serve on nonprofit boards!

ACTIVITY ONE

INTERVIEW A PHILANTHROPIST

Here's a way to learn from philanthropists who are creating impact in their communities or funding areas. Find a staff or board member from a foundation or giving program (maybe it's even your own family foundation), and ask if you can interview him or her by phone or in person. Ask these questions, or any others that you're curious about.

- 1 What does impact mean to you?
- 2 What are some ways you measure impact through your grants or in your funding area? What are some examples?
- 3 What is the hardest part about measuring impact?
- 4 What kind of impact do you expect or require of grantees?
- 5 In your opinion, what qualities or thoughtfulness goes into achieving impact? What are the "steps toward impact," if there are any?
- 6 What advice would you give someone who is new to the idea of making impact?

**ACTIVITY
TWO**

TAKE ACTION TOWARD IMPACT...TODAY!

- 1 What are some ways you can make impact in the next three to six months? Drill down to a plan of action and start moving it forward!

- 2 What is one difference you would like to make, either in your community or area of interest? Start small or start big—it's up to you!

- 3 What are three concrete steps you can take to move toward that difference?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

- 4 In what time frame can you commit to taking these three steps?

- 5 What results would you like to achieve? How will you define success?

- 6 (After the fact...) Did you do it? How did it go?

IN SUMMARY:

To-Go Box

- People define impact in different ways. A simple way to define impact in philanthropy is by answering the questions: What do you want to achieve? How did you do it? What were the results?
- Impact often requires passion for an issue or cause, being intentional about how you want to help, and a love of learning.
- Next generation donors care about making an impact through their giving, and do so by giving their time, talent, money, and connections.



WANT MORE?

If you're curious to learn more, check out these resources:



Youth Philanthropy Connect: youthphilanthropyconnect.org

Exponent Philanthropy: exponentphilanthropy.org

Research on Next Gen Donors: nextgendonors.org

generationOn: generationon.org

Youth-Led Campaigns: dosomething.org

Youth Service America: ysa.org

Follow us on Twitter: [@exponentphil](https://twitter.com/exponentphil) and [@EngagingYouth](https://twitter.com/EngagingYouth)

BOOKS:

The Power of Half
Start Something That Matters

QUESTIONS?

Contact info@exponentphilanthropy.org

Thanks for coming by!
See you next time at
Teen Philanthropy Café.

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