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USING YOUR VOICE



Teen Philanthropy café

SNACKABLE BITES ON GIVING, FOR TEENS

ON TODAY'S MENU: COLLABORATION IN PHILANTHROPY



Welcome to the Café



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO COLLABORATE? WHY IS IT HELPFUL TO COLLABORATE WITH OTHERS IN PHILANTHROPY? WHAT MAKES A GOOD COLLABORATION? WHAT STEPS CAN YOU TAKE TO COLLABORATE IN YOUR OWN GIVING?



These are big questions, and you've come to the right place for answers. In this issue, we'll explore how philanthropists work together. So pull up a seat, order up a hand-crafted sparkling soda, and we'll get you thinking and talking about collaboration. Would you like a lime on that?

On Today's Menu

COLLABORATION IN PHILANTHROPY

OBJECTIVE:

Discuss the value of collaboration in philanthropy. Learn how philanthropists work together to leverage their time, money, and results. Think about ways you can work together with others for causes you care about.

As someone who cares about giving, there's good news: You don't have to go it alone. Joining forces with others can be a way to accomplish your giving goals—and do more than you could have on your own.

These days, more philanthropists are working together to make their money go further and have more impact. (Check out *The Path To Impact*, another reader in the Teen Philanthropy Café series, to learn more about impact.) Some funders come together to learn from one another; others align their giving for greater public awareness. Still others combine their money into one collective "pot" and decide—as a group—where to give their dollars.

You're probably already very savvy about collaboration from group work in school! This guide will help you translate that experience into working with others in philanthropy in a way that's both effective and fun.

SO DIG IN AND BEGIN.

PHILANTHROPISTS SPEAK

"One of the biggest advantages of collaboration is the building of a shared voice—especially when you are talking about a group of funders getting together, this can carry a lot of weight, either within a specific community, or on a specific issue."

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.



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GETTING THOUGHTFUL ABOUT COLLABORATION

In philanthropy, collaboration means philanthropists coming together to learn and give. (Sometimes the group is called a *funder collaborative* or *donor collaborative*.) These collaboratives often bring together people around a common mission or cause, and involve sharing expertise and/or pooling dollars (putting money together) to meet a collective giving goal.

There are at least three distinct types of collaborations (and probably many more!):

A LEARNING NETWORK is a group of givers who come together to hear what's happening in a field or issue area, share information, and explore grant strategies. Members might invite speakers to educate them on specific issues, and may find opportunities to align some of their giving. For example, affinity groups like Grantmakers for Education help those involved in funding education do so more effectively.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENTS attract givers who share the same mission or goal, and who work together to gain public awareness, traction, and impact. Although members of the group may collaborate on certain projects or support some of the same nonprofits, most do their giving independently (meaning, they don't combine their money). For instance, in Washington, DC, a small group of funders has come together to better understand how philanthropic investments are made in the region to improve access to healthy, affordable food. They've held convenings and educated public officials to try to move the needle on this issue.

A POOLED (COMBINED) FUND allows givers to contribute to a collective "pot" of money, from which they make grants. Some pooled funds require a lot of time and energy from each member, whereas others require a simple financial commitment. Some pooled funds are called *giving circles*. Impact 100 is one model found in many cities.



WHY DO PHILANTHROPISTS COLLABORATE?

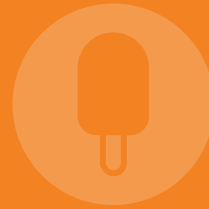
Collaboration offers philanthropists the opportunity to:

- EXCHANGE INFORMATION AND BEST PRACTICES
- LEVERAGE GRANTMAKING—THAT IS, MAXIMIZE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR DOLLARS
- STREAMLINE EFFORTS FOR FUNDERS AND GRANTEEES ALIKE
- WORK ON A LARGER SCALE IN TERMS OF DOLLARS OR VISIBILITY
- EXPLORE A BIGGER APPROACH TO SOLVING PROBLEMS
- SHARE RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES
- RAISE MORE MONEY FOR A CAUSE THAN THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO GIVE ON THEIR OWN
- LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER



HERE'S A TIP: Philanthropists say collaborating isn't always easy, but it sure is more social! In a collaborative, you come together with others who care about supporting the same causes as you do. You get to know people, learn from their experiences and viewpoints, and learn to work together as a team. And chances are, you'll make a lot of friends in the process!

GETTING THOUGHTFUL ABOUT COLLABORATION



“ A BIG ADVANTAGE TO COLLABORATION IS CREATING A SHARED VOICE WITH OTHERS ON ISSUES YOU CARE ABOUT. ”

FIELD SNAPSHOTS: FUNDER COLLABORATIVES

THE SUMMER FUND is a funder collaborative made up of foundations and individual donors. It provides a strategic and coordinated approach to build, strengthen, and sustain a network of high-quality summer camps and programs for disadvantaged and at-risk youth in Boston.

YOUTH PHILANTHROPY CONNECT one of the sponsors of this series, is a funder collaborative, with four founding small foundation partners who share a passion for and commitment to youth engagement in philanthropy.

THE BRAVEWELL COLLABORATIVE brings together philanthropists and physicians around a mission to change the healthcare system through integrative medicine. Through the collective efforts of its 12 partners, the Collaborative has developed a national network of integrative medicine clinics, supported a PBS documentary, convened a national summit, and advocated for prevention as a national policy.



WHAT'S A GIVING CIRCLE?

A giving circle is one form of collaboration. It's a term to describe a group of people who come together, pool (combine) their money, and give it away to causes they care about. Members decide as a group where to donate their dollars, and, in doing so, they learn together about their community, philanthropy, and how to collaborate well with others.

Giving circles aren't just for the wealthy. They provide anyone—at any giving level, in any place, giving to any kind of cause—a way to come together to share money, skills, and creativity. A giving circle might be made up of friends, colleagues, family, or neighbors—anyone who joins together to make a difference for their community or cause. To learn more about giving circles, visit www.givingcirclesfund.org.

“ COLLABORATION ALLOWS FUNDERS TO GIVE IN MEANINGFUL WAYS BEYOND THEIR OWN GRANTMAKING. ”



USE THESE QUESTIONS TO REFLECT OR DISCUSS WITH YOUR FAMILY OR PEERS.

HAVE YOU EVER COLLABORATED WITH OTHERS ON SOMETHING—WHETHER IT WAS IN PHILANTHROPY, FOR A SCHOOL PROJECT, OR SOMETHING ELSE? IF YES, WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE COLLABORATION? WHAT WAS IT LIKE FOR YOU TO BE A PART OF IT?

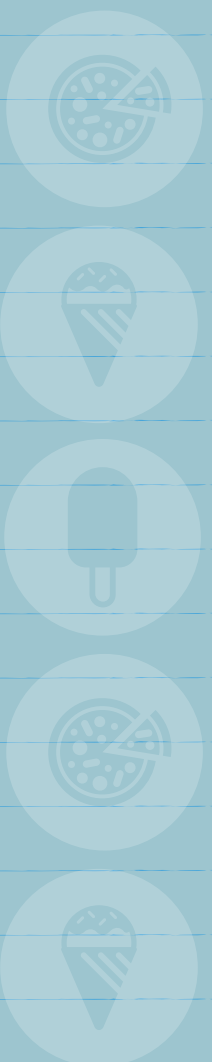
IF YOU COULD CHOOSE ONE TOPIC OR CAUSE YOU WOULD WANT TO COLLABORATE ON IN PHILANTHROPY, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT FEELS UNCOMFORTABLE OR CHALLENGING TO YOU ABOUT COLLABORATING?

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THE IDEA OF WORKING TOGETHER/GIVING TOGETHER WITH OTHERS?

IF YES, WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU COULD DO TO FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE AND CONFIDENT IN YOUR COLLABORATION SKILLS (E.G., TALK WITH OTHERS WHO HAVE DONE IT, PRACTICE “COLLABORATING” IN SMALL WAYS)?

WHAT SKILLS OR NEW LEARNING DO YOU THINK YOU GAINED, OR COULD GAIN, FROM COLLABORATING WITH OTHERS?



8 SIGNS OF A SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

What makes for a successful giving collaborative? Here is a summary of what philanthropists say can make or break a collaboration.

- 1 PLAN CAREFULLY.** Gather the group of people you want to join forces with and discuss what the collaboration could look like (including how much time, money, and commitment it will involve).
- 2 ALIGN YOUR GOALS AND STRATEGIES.** It's not enough to share an interest. It's also important to share a common sense of how to approach the problem. Talk with others who have collaborated successfully and learn from their experiences.
- 3 BUILD RELATIONSHIPS THOUGHTFULLY.** It takes trust and energy to collaborate with others. Like any meaningful relationship, collaborations take time to build.
- 4 IF NEEDED, ASK SOMEONE TO HELP YOU.** Collaboration is a complex mix of money, personalities, thoughtfulness, and opportunities. Some collaboratives are totally volunteer-run, whereas others are large and complex enough to require staff. If you feel stuck or need support, ask for adult help!

- 5 POOL MORE THAN MONEY.** When everyone pitches in a certain amount of money, that's great! Yet consider what else, beyond money, each person/funder brings to the table, such as connections, contacts, skills, and expertise.
- 6 COMPROMISE.** When giving jointly with others, you may not always get what you want. Don't be afraid to speak your opinion, but be willing to compromise sometimes for the sake of the group. Remember, you should all be aligned with your end goal.
- 7 GIVE PEOPLE AN OUT.** Be clear up front that collaboration is voluntary and that everyone is there because they want to be there. If someone isn't happy, they should be able to exit the collaboration gracefully.
- 8 CELEBRATE TOGETHER!** Be willing to celebrate your successes and share recognition with others in the group.

LET'S GIVE TOGETHER! EXAMPLES OF YOUTH COLLABORATIONS:

ROSE YOUTH FOUNDATION

What if someone gave you \$60,000 and said, Take this money and use it to make our community a better place. What would you do? Each year, Jewish teens from throughout Greater Denver and Boulder answer this question together as grantmakers for the Rose Youth Foundation.

Rose Youth Foundation is a diverse group of 20+ Jewish students in grades 10–12 who want to use their Jewish values and the tools of strategic philanthropy to make a real difference in their community. Each year, a new cohort of members work together to identify needs in the community, set funding priorities, and meet with nonprofit organizations—all as a way to determine how they can use grantmaking as a tool for positive change.

YOUTH PHILANTHROPY PROJECT

The Youth Philanthropy Project (YPP) is a 9-month leadership, service, and philanthropy institute for high school-aged youth interested in being at the center of change. Twenty Richmond, VA-area youth engage in service projects, grantmaking, and leadership activities to affect positive change in that community. The program empowers youth to plan, to act, and to give for common good. Started in 1998, YPP is now a collaborative effort between the Community Foundation Serving Richmond & Central Virginia and HandsOn Greater Richmond.



ACTIVITY INTERVIEW A PHILANTHROPIST

Here's a way to learn from philanthropists who have collaborated with other givers. Find a staff or board member from a foundation (maybe it's even your own foundation), a giving circle, or an individual donor, 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 collaboration mean to you?
- 2 In what ways have you worked together with other philanthropists?
- 3 What's the best part about collaborating with others?
- 4 What, if anything, do you find challenging about working in collaboration?
- 5 What ways have you encouraged your grantees to work together, if applicable?
- 6 What advice or tips would you give to people looking to collaborate with others?

IDEAS: TAKE ACTION IN COLLABORATION


GET TO KNOW OTHER FRIENDS OR PEERS in your area who might have an interest in giving. Perhaps organize a simple meet-up with no agenda and see what kind of interests you share in common. Then learn more as a group about areas of shared interest.

CALL YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OR REGIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GRANTMAKERS to find out who else is involved in a given topic in your area.


JOIN A CLUB, MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATION, OR YOUTH GIVING CIRCLE to share ideas, make decisions in a group, and learn how to give together.

PARTNER WITH OTHER GIVERS ON SPECIFIC INITIATIVES. This may include pooling your money as a donation or participating in a service project together.

HOST AN EVENT TO RAISE MONEY FOR A CAUSE YOU AND OTHERS CARE ABOUT. Some fun ideas include:

 **MOVIE SCREENING:** Borrow a projector and screen one of your favorite movies. Invite all your friends and charge a small "ticket" fee for those who want to contribute to a certain cause or organization. Don't forget the popcorn and snacks (which you can also sell as part of the fundraiser)!

 **CREATE AND SELL CARDS:** Whether for the holidays or simple everyday notecards, sites like kidskards.com make it easy to create unique cards using your own art and then sell them to benefit the charity of your choice!

 **DANCE-A-THON:** Host a dance party with multiple fundraising components. Folks can get pledges for minutes danced, you can sell homemade or store-bought snacks and admission tickets, etc. People have also done swim-a-thons, or even trike-a-thons for young kids!

IN SUMMARY:

To-Go Box

- Philanthropists often work together (collaborate) with other givers to do more with their money and make a greater impact.
- There are many ways to collaborate, at different levels of involvement and intensity, and no two collaborations look alike. Some philanthropists come together just for learning and networking; others combine their money and decide, as a group, where to give it.
- Collaboration can take work, but it can be a whole lot of fun too. There are easy ways to work together with others, and you can start today!

WANT MORE?



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

Youth Philanthropy Connect: youthphilanthropyconnect.org

Exponent Philanthropy: exponentphilanthropy.org

Giving Circles Fund: givingcirclesfund.org

GrantCraft: grantcraft.org

Grantmakers for Effective Organizations: geofunders.org

Online Petitions: change.org

Amplifier Giving: amplifiergiving.org

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QUESTIONS?

Contact info@exponentphilanthropy.org

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

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