



Trust Based Philanthropy

February 25, 2025 / Philanthropy Together





Tyeshia 'Ty' Wilson

Senior Director of Community

Philanthropy Together is a nonprofit initiative to grow and strengthen practices of collective giving around the world.



What does that mean?

Philanthropy Together:

- Provides Trainings
- Tells Stories
- Conducts Research
- Hosts Convenings
- Builds Community
- Connects Groups



EVERYONE IS A PHILANTHROPIST

10th men of oshawa
DATE Sept 12/17
PAY TO THE ORDER OF EPILEPSY FOUNDATION \$10,000

Today we'll cover...

PART ONE

WHY Trust-Based
Philanthropy
matters &
WHAT is it

PART TWO

HOW is Trust-Based
Philanthropy
Practiced

PART THREE

WHO is
practicing
Trust-Based
Philanthropy

PART FOUR

Resource
sharing +
Open space
for your
questions!

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WHAT is Trust-based Philanthropy?

WHY is Trust-Based Philanthropy Gaining Momentum?

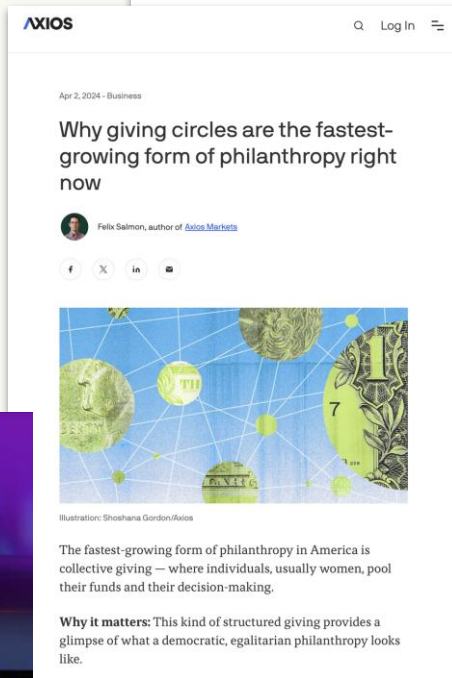
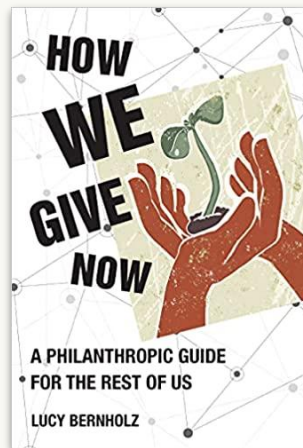
- ❖ The **pandemic** illuminated the importance of **being flexible & responsive** in unpredictable times
- ❖ Growing recognition that **building trust & relationships is essential** to advancing social impact
- ❖ Aligned with **calls for justice and equity**, and a desire to undo harms historically imposed against communities
- ❖ More leaders with **nonprofit experience** taking on positions in philanthropy



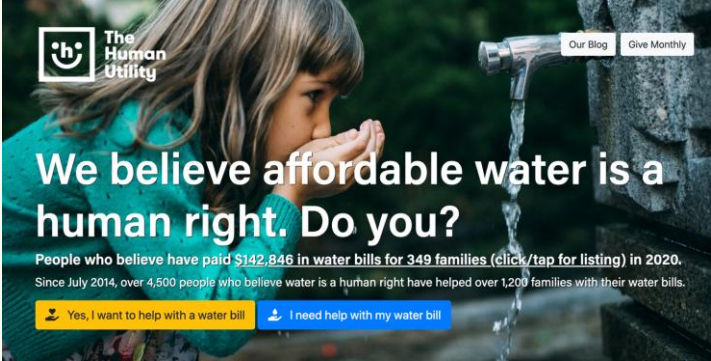
Grassroots giving collectives and movements are gaining mainstream and institutional attention

What's Next for Philanthropy in the 2020s Seeing Philanthropy in a New Light

Gabriel Kasper, Justin Marcoux, Jennifer Holk, and Jeff Morshed



Organizations are taking action where they see enormous need and developing collective solutions with trust at the root.



The Human Utility logo is in the top left corner. In the top right corner, there are links for "Our Blog" and "Give Monthly". The main text reads: "We believe affordable water is a human right. Do you?" Below this, a sub-headline states: "People who believe have paid \$142,846 in water bills for 349 families (click/tap for listing) in 2020. Since July 2014, over 4,500 people who believe water is a human right have helped over 1,200 families with their water bills." At the bottom, there are two buttons: a yellow one with a thumbs up icon that says "Yes, I want to help with a water bill" and a blue one with a thumbs down icon that says "I need help with my water bill". The background image shows a young girl with her hands cupped under a public water tap, drinking water.

**Grantmaking,
Simplified.**

**Welcome to JustFund,
the only nonprofit
grantmaking solution
that helps move money
more quickly through
an equity-centered
grantmaking process.**



**Let's JustFund,
Together.**



The banner has a red header with the text "GIVING GAP/" in white. Below the header, there is a small line of text: "Using this banner to attract more equity in giving and mobilize positive action for Black lives by connecting people to causes they care about." There are also links for "Learn more" and "Get the banner". The main image shows a close-up of a young Black woman and a young Black man looking towards the camera with serious expressions.

Values / Practice Disconnect

“We are committed to reducing barriers, advancing opportunity, and strengthening our community.”

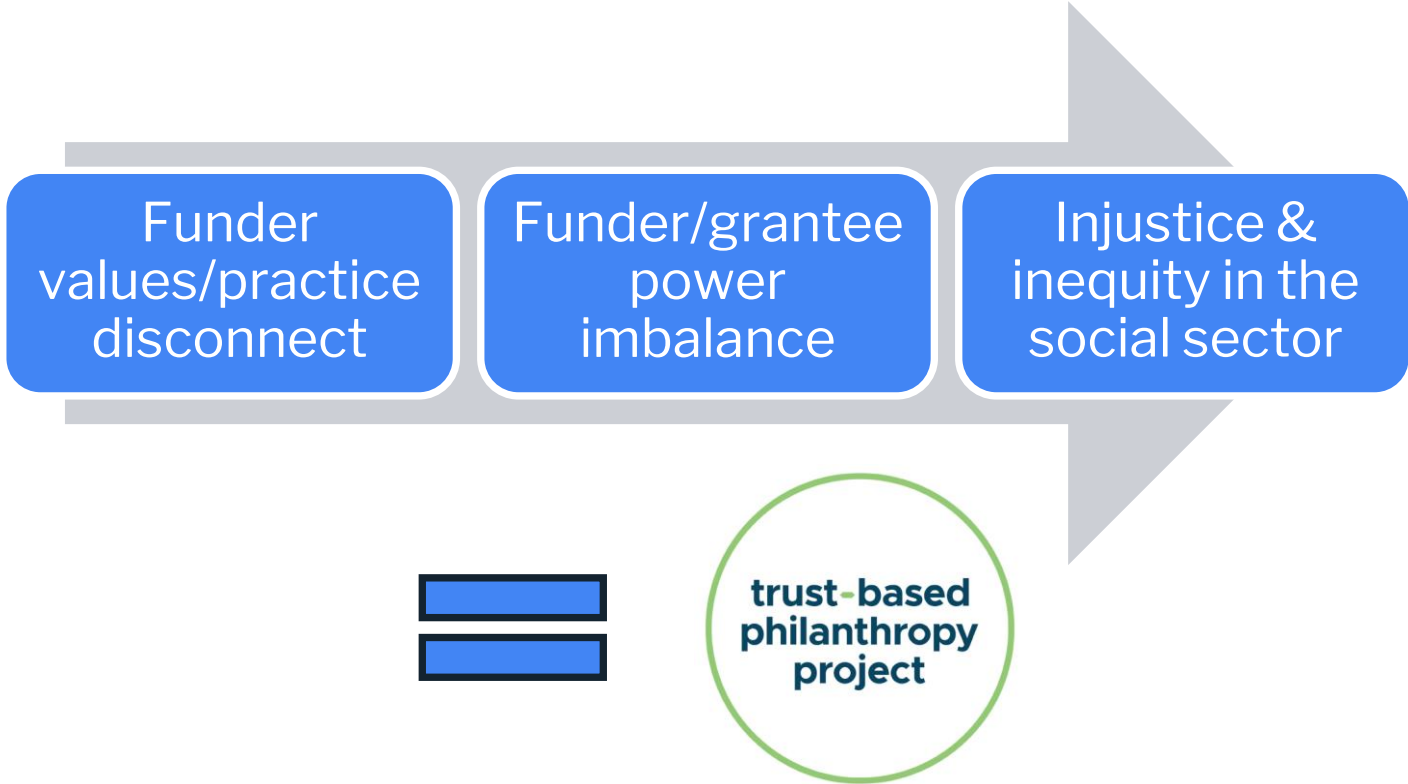


FUNDERS



**NONPROFITS
& COMMUNITIES**

The issues



Where funding is flow..

ONLY

8%

Goes to
**communities
of color**

ONLY

1.8%

Goes to
**Womens &
Girls Causes**

ONLY

0.28%

Goes to
**LGBTQ+
Causes**

WHAT is Trust-Based Philanthropy?



An approach



A movement



A funder initiative



A philosophy

What is Trust-Based Philanthropy?

- ❖ *A values-driven approach* that addresses the inherent power imbalances between funders, nonprofits, and the communities they serve
- ❖ Is centered on the belief that funders play a critical role in *redistributing resources and power* toward advancing a healthier, more equitable, and more democratic society
- ❖ Flips the script on conventional philanthropy by prioritizing *relationships and mutual learning over transactions and top-down accountability*

What is Trust-Based Philanthropy?

At its core, trust-based philanthropy is about **redistributing power** -- systemically, organizationally, and interpersonally -- in service of a healthier and more equitable nonprofit ecosystem.

www.trustbasedphilanthropy.org





Trust Based Philanthropy: An Overview

Trust-Based Philanthropy Core Values:

- Powersharing
- Equity
- Transparency
- Collaboration
- Humility
- Curiosity

This approach recognizes the power imbalance between funders and gift recipients, and deeply values relationships.

A Values-Based Approach



**WORK FOR
SYSTEMIC
EQUITY**



**REDISTRIBUTE
POWER**



**CENTER
RELATIONSHIPS**



**PARTNER IN A
SPIRIT OF
SERVICE**



**MUTUAL
ACCOUNTABILITY**



**EMBRACE
LEARNING**

THERE IS NO
**TRUST-BASED
PHILANTHROPY**
WITHOUT

EQUITY



trust-based
philanthropy
project

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How can foundations practice Trust-based Philanthropy?

The Four Dimensions of Trust-Based Philanthropy



www.trustbasedphilanthropy.org

g

trust-based
philanthropy
project

DEFINITION:



The expression of your values in your organization's norms, systems, and practices. Culture is your organization's general "way of being."



STEPS FUNDERS TAKE:



- **Assess your current culture: identify any practices that may be misaligned with trust-based values.**
- **Normalize conversations about power and race.**
- **Support continuous learning.**
- **Create space for reflection and dialogue.**



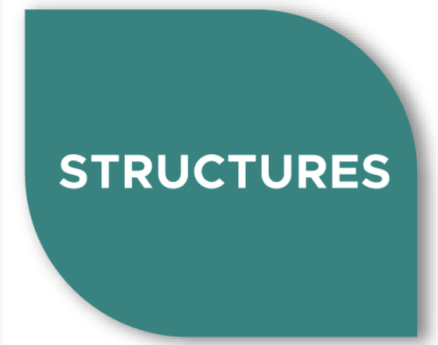
DEFINITION:



STRUCTURES

The hierarchies, systems, protocols, policies, and technologies of the org. Includes personnel policies, grants management systems, as well as learning and decision-making structures.

STEPS FUNDERS TAKE:



- **Conduct an internal audit: assess policies and procedures to ensure that they express your values and reflect the purpose of your mission.**
- **Apply an antiracist, values-based lens to hiring practices.**
- **Decentralize decision-making structures.**
- **Apply a relational lens to grant management.**
- **Revisit and revise job descriptions and grant contracts.**
- **Adopt emergent learning tools.**



DEFINITION:



The ability to inspire and align around a common purpose and shared values. Trust-based leaders embody values of humility, curiosity, and transparency. They are willing to share power in order to build collective power.

STEPS FUNDERS TAKE:



- Be self-aware, listen, and be transparent.
- Build a strong support system.
- Acknowledge power and race—and be willing to take action.
- Redefine “risk” and “failure.”
- Coach rather than control.
- Invite collaborative culture-shaping.



DEFINITION:



What you do and how you show up as a grantmaker. This includes the process by which you identify grantees, how you disseminate funds, what information you collect, and how you show up in relationship with your grantee partners.

HOW can we practice “Trust-Based Philanthropy?”

6 Guiding Frameworks

Give Multi-Year, Unrestricted Funding

Do the Homework

Simplify & Streamline Paperwork

Be Transparent & Responsive

Solicit & Act on Feedback

Offer Support Beyond the Check

via Trust-Based Philanthropy Project

Build Roadmaps





Give Multi-Year Unrestricted Funding

Unrestricted funding over time is essential for creating healthy, adaptive, effective organizations.



Do the Homework

It should be the funder's responsibility to get to know prospective grantees, not the other way around.





Simplify & Streamline Paperwork

Nonprofit staff will be more effective if their time is freed up to concentrate on mission.





Be Transparent & Responsive

Open, honest, transparent communication minimizes power imbalances and helps move the work forward.





Solicit & Act on Feedback

Grantees provide valuable perspective that can help inform a funder's support and services.





Offer Support Beyond the Check

Responsive, adaptive non-monetary support can help foster healthier organizations by bolstering leadership and capacity.



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Who's practicing Trust-based Philanthropy?

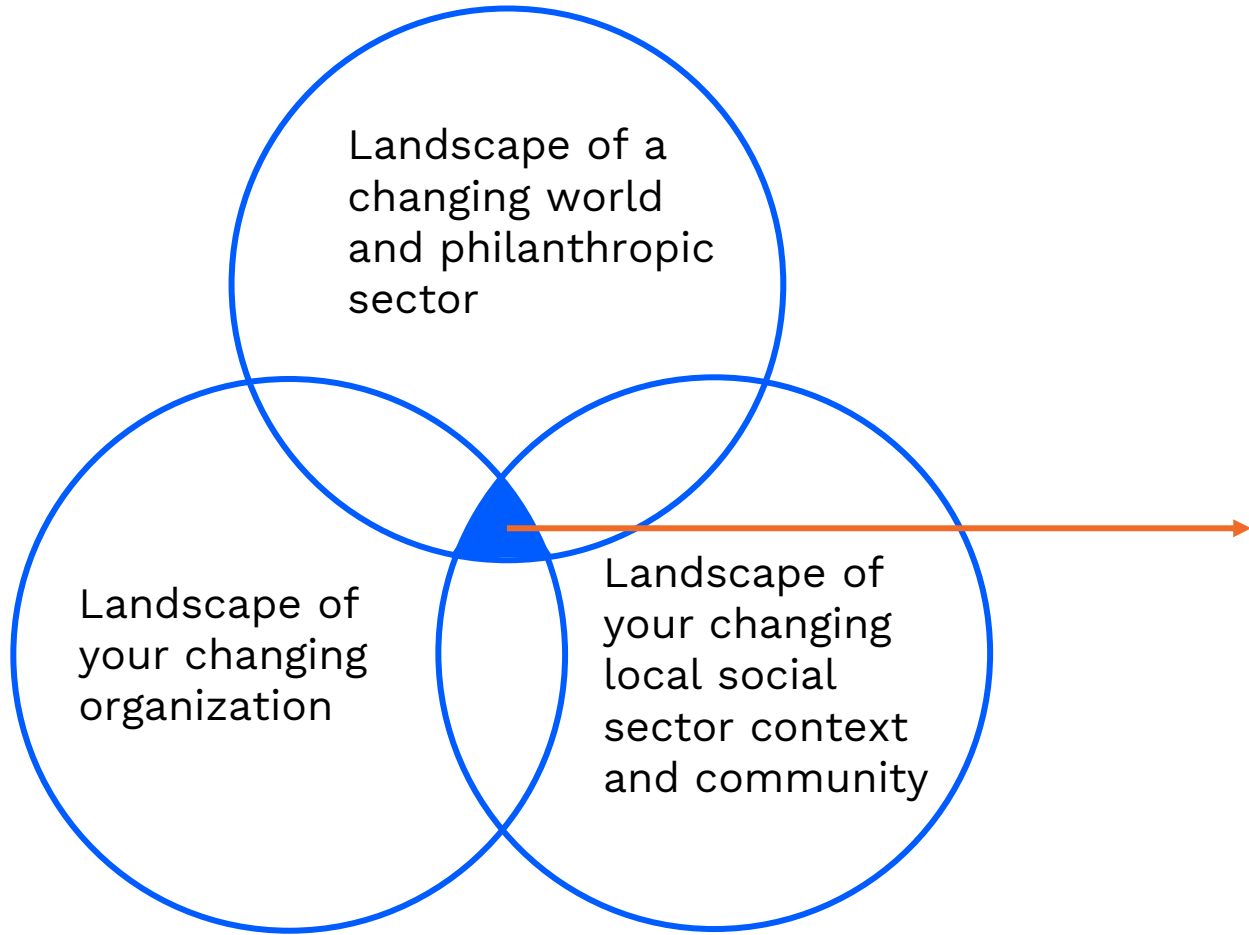
Many people
come together

Everyone
gives —
money, time,
talents and
more

The group
decides
where the
collective gift
goes

Impact is
multiplied!

**How does collective
giving work?**



**GIVING
CIRCLES!**

Collective giving is a rapidly expanding movement!

BETWEEN 2017 AND 2023



61% of participants joined a collective giving group since 2016



Give Multi-Year Unrestricted Funding

THE CHICAGO GIVING CIRCLE

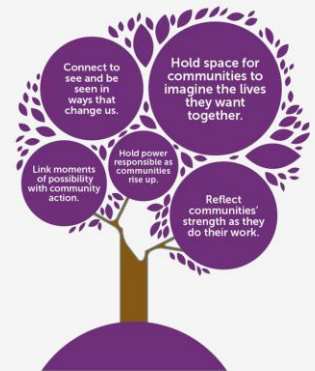
- Mission to accelerate the impact of promising growth-stage Chicago area nonprofits.
- Annual Grant cycle- families and individuals. 2 yrs old
- Has granted \$500,000 to four growth-stage Chicago nonprofits
- **Each year, CGC selects two nonprofits to award a 3-year, conditional, \$300,000 grant - meaning if the organizations meet the agreed upon annual performance metrics**



Give Multi-Year Unrestricted Funding

Empire Health Foundation

- On a collaborative mission to dismantle health inequities in WA
- In Spring 2025, launching Building Connections Initiative to fund 20 by-and-for grassroots nonprofits
- Multi-year, unrestricted funding



For us, everything starts with community voices.



Do the Homework

WOMEN'S GIVING CIRCLE HOWARD COUNTY

- Building a community of philanthropists to address the needs of women and girls in Howard County, MD.
- Grants Committee provides a proposed slate of grants each year that is voted on by the WGC Advisory Board after identifying projects and programs
- **Standard framework for grantmaking using a vetted, researched gender lens**



California Wellness Foundation

- Provide community-based grants
- \$1 billion in assets--CAs largest public health philanthropic org- \$43M annually in grants
- Advancing Wellness Grantmaking accepts “letters of interests” from 4 funding priorities
- **1 hour grant application.**
- **Applicants can apply for funding for general ops or project support**

**Simplify &
Streamline
Paperwork**



**Simplify &
Streamline
Paperwork**

Collective 365

- Provide community-based grants to Black and Brown people in DMV area
- Grants to individuals, nonprofits, businesses or group
- **30 minute grant application.**
- **Applicants can apply for funding via written application, video or a phone interview**

How do I apply?

- Submit an application
- We offer three options for submissions:
- 1) written application
 - 2) video
 - 3) phone interview



San Francisco
Foundation

Be
Transparent &
Responsive

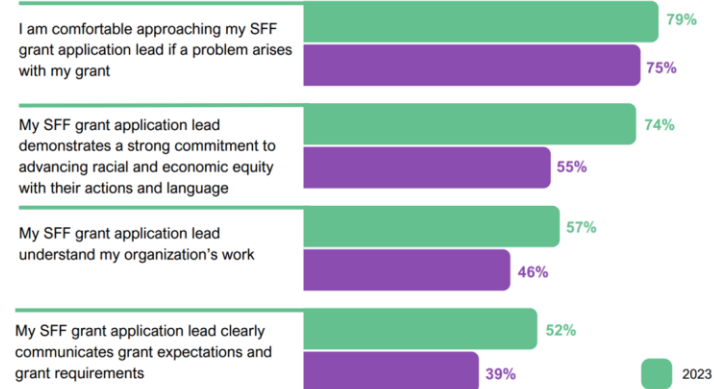
San Francisco Foundation

- 75 yr old foundation committed to social justice and racial equity
- Conduct an **Annual Grantee Perception Survey**. Also, **conversational reports, site visits and convenings**

Access to Funding and Transparency

Increase in agreement for questions as compared to 2022. Still includes the 4 of the 5 lowest rated questions

“
We are very grateful for how proactive SFF is, more than any other foundation. That said, navigating the Foundation is like navigating a black box. Without staff support and prompting we'd have no idea where to start.”
”



2023

2022



Solicit & Act on Feedback

San Francisco Foundation

- Equipping grantees with greater flexibility and freedom by providing more unrestricted, multi year grants.
- Increasing our support for Native leaders and communities.
- Using our influence and convening power to help partners build multi-racial coalitions.
- Making our online grants portal more user-friendly.



EPISCOPAL HEALTH
FOUNDATION

Solicit & Act on Feedback

Episcopal Health Foundation

- EHF provides grants to support comprehensive, bold projects that address both the medical and non-medical drivers of health among Texans.
- With input from previous grantees, community partners, universities, donors,, EHF announced their new Strategic Grantmaking Framework 2024-2030
- EHF grants are by invitation only and are largely focused on continuing support for current grantees.



STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES AND
HONORING OUR LEGACY

Offer
Support
Beyond the
Dollar

HERitage Giving Fund

- Black women's giving circle focused on women and girls in North Texas

Advice for Start Up Nonprofits (0-3 years)

LIVE VIRTUAL EVENT -
SEPT 9, 2021 | 6:00PM CT



Facilitated by:
Kimberly O'Neil



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Resource Sharing and Q&A!



Trust-based Philanthropy is about...

supporting grassroots

community building

challenging status quo

acting as first funder

systemic change

shifting power

Long-Term Benefits of TBP



Better learning about the barriers and accelerators to social impact



Stronger community relationships with more honesty and transparency



Community partners able to scale their impact in new ways, over time



Staff and board gain a deeper sense of meaning and connection to the work

Making the Case for Trust-based Philanthropy

- Share why TBP is values-aligned
- Share why it's gaining momentum in the sector
- Share how it will impact your grantee relationships
- Share how it will impact your grantee's work
- Get curious- question practices, culture, operations, etc.
- Be empathetic- understand and prioritize the grantee perspective and lift it up internally at your organization

What we hope to work with you on building space for:

- **(UN)LEARNING**
- **COURAGEOUS & CANDID DIALOGUE**
- **COLLECTIVE STRATEGIES**

Series: Trust-Based Philanthropy for Community Foundations

Session #2: Engaging Donors and DAF Holders in the Trust-Based Journey

Hosted Thursday, July 13, 2023



Overview: Part two, “Engaging Donors and DAF Holders in the Trust-Based Journey” explores ways to engage donors to understand the value of trust-based giving, and the unique role of community foundations as conveners and relationship-brokers in the community.

Featured Speakers:

- Marisa Magallanez, Vice President of Strategy & Equity, [Albuquerque Community Foundation](#)
- Pamela Ross, Vice President, [Indianapolis Foundation](#)
- Patricia Mejia, Vice President of Community Engagement & Impact, [San Antonio Area Foundation](#)

Session #1: Operationalizing Trust-based Philanthropy In Community Foundation Grantmaking

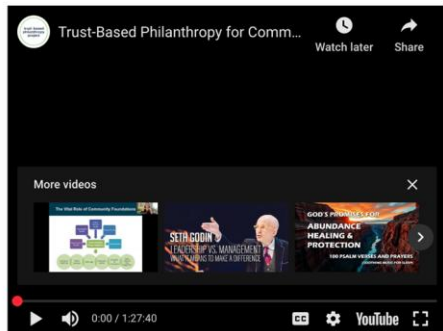
Hosted Thursday, June 8, 2023

Overview: Part one, “Operationalizing Trust-based Philanthropy In Community Foundation Grantmaking,” explores strategies and opportunities for incrementally building trust-based practices and deepening community relationships in your grantmaking.

Featured Speakers:

- Khia Griffis, Community Impact Director, [Albuquerque Community Foundation](#)
- Patricia Mejia, Vice President of Community Engagement & Impact, [San Antonio Area Foundation](#)
- Sharon Miracle, President & CEO, [Yakima Valley Community Foundation](#)

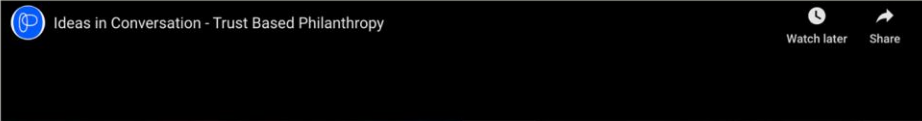
[View the full list of resources at **Trust Based Philanthropy Project!**](#)



Check out resources at **Philanthropy Together!**



About Collective Giving Start a Collective Giving Group Webinars & Events Resources About Us



Masha Chernyak
Vice President of Programs
Latino Community Foundation

Pia Infante
Co-Executive Director
The Whitman Institute

Watch on YouTube

MOVING AT THE SPEED OF TRUST - FUNDING LEADERS OF COLOR EQUITABLY
MAY 11
6 PM ET / 3 PM PT

 Cheryl Dorsey Echoing Green	 Hali Lee Radiant Strategies	 Tyeshia Wilson Philanthropy Together
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View the full list of resources at [Philanthropy Together](#)

Check out our custom giving circle toolkit with the Trust-Based Philanthropy Project

The screenshot shows the website for the Trust-Based Philanthropy Project. At the top left is a circular logo with the text "trust based philanthropy project". The top navigation bar includes links for "the approach", "about us", "resources", "blog", "events", "engage", and social media icons for Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Email. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main heading is "Trust-Based Philanthropy Explained (for Giving Circles)". Below the heading is a breadcrumb trail: "PARTNER RESOURCE • OVERVIEW • CULTURE • BEING TRANSPARENT". A green box on the left contains the text "resources from the field" and "Trust-Based Philanthropy Explained (for Giving Circles)". To the right, there is a quote: "Building a giving practice rooted in Trust-BasedPhilanthropy takes time. When you cultivate your trust based practice your circle will open up to a variety of opportunities to deep your relationships with each other and the community in a meaningful way, as well as, broaden your impact. Use this guide as a conversation starter and a roadmap for how to infuse trust into your circle." Below the quote is a green button labeled "VIEW RESOURCE". At the bottom left is the "Philanthropy Together" logo, which consists of a blue circle with a white interlocking 'P' and 'T' design. Below the logo are social media icons for Facebook, X, Pinterest, Email, and a share icon.

View the full list of resources at [**Trust Based Philanthropy Project!**](#)

LOVE OF HUMANITY



"Giving by,
for, and with the
communities we
represent is the
future of
philanthropy"

Thank You!

tyeshia@philanthropytogether.org

www.philanthropytogether.org

[@philanthropytogether](https://www.instagram.com/philanthropytogether)

Misperceptions About Trust-Based Philanthropy

DEBUNKED

trust-based
philanthropy
project

Misperception: *Trust-based philanthropy lacks accountability.*



REALITY: By prioritizing relationship-building, transparency, and dialogue, trust-based philanthropy enables a deeper sense of accountability between funders and nonprofits.

Misperception: *Trust-based philanthropy is not concerned with impact.*



REALITY: TBP is geared toward achieving results. In fact, it relies on the premise that philanthropy will be more impactful if it is informed by the perspectives of the people who are closest to the issues.

Misperception: *Trust-based philanthropy lacks rigor and strategy.*



REALITY: TBP is a deeply rigorous approach that requires self-evaluation, dynamic relationship management, and ongoing learning to sharpen and refine strategies. By shifting funders' focus away from compliance to relationship, it frees them up to think more strategically about their grantmaking.

Misperceptions About Trust-Based Philanthropy

DEBUNKED

trust-based
philanthropy
project

Misperception: *It is not possible to measure impact in a trust-based philanthropy framework.*



REALITY: There are many ways to measure impact in trust-based philanthropy. This can include self-reflective measures specific to the funder-grantee relationship (e.g., grantee satisfaction, quality of relationships, new insights gained) as well as using long-term field-level data to assess change over time.

Misperception: *Trust-based philanthropy means giving money with no strings attached.*



REALITY: Trust-based is a highly relational approach that positions funders as partners who collaborate with nonprofits on a shared vision for change. It focuses on relationship- and trust-building in order to foster a mutual sense of accountability between funders and nonprofits.

Misperception: *MacKenzie Scott is the most prominent example of trust-based philanthropy.*



REALITY: While Scott's approach of giving large unrestricted gifts with minimal paperwork is in line with some of the trust-based practices, the approach has not modeled the transparency and relational rigor that is essential to a holistic trust-based philanthropy.



Philanthropy
southwest

Connected, Impactful Philanthropy

Scan to give us your feedback on this session!

We would love to hear your thoughts on the breakout session you just attended! Your feedback is invaluable in helping us improve future sessions. Please take a moment to evaluate your experience by considering the content, engagement level, and overall value. Thank you for your participation!