Matching Intent to Impact for Donors and Nonprofits

When making a large contribution to a cause, we all want to be sure that our gift matches the desired impact, from the perspective of the donor and the nonprofit. There are tried and true and increasingly sophisticated ways of working with nonprofits to ensure a great match. Here we’ll tease out the pros and cons of the most popular practices.

**Core operating support**

When you know and trust an organization implicitly, a gift of core operating support allows it the maximum flexibility to use your donation in the most effective way possible. This approach, however, doesn’t fit if you have a particular project or goal in mind.

**Matching gifts**

Donors might consider leveraging dollars by offering a donation if the organization can match it. Recently, a CCF donor established a new scholarship at an emerging opera company, but wanted to ensure that the company was also invested in the work. He asked that the company allocate $50,000 for the new scholarship to match his $100,000 gift.

This can be a great way to help nonprofits expand their donor base or improve their fundraising acumen. Be careful to work closely with the nonprofit on a realistic goal and timing – when a challenge grant unduly taxes an organization, it can take away from the very work you seek to support.

**Grant agreements**

When you have a specific end result in mind, write it down and make sure everyone is on the same page in a grant agreement. Read more about grant agreements on page 3.

**Group giving**

Pooling resources may help catapult a particular project or organization to a next level. Examples include giving circles and groups like the Heritage Preservation Foundation, a collaboration of arts patrons throughout the country that pool money through contributions to a fund at CCF and then make larger grants to deserving artists and arts organizations.

CCF can help with any of these grantmaking approaches, helping you determine the best approach for you, negotiating agreements with nonprofits, and providing advice and counsel to maximize impact for all parties.
Giving Back to Students and Working Actors

An acting career can be called a leap of faith. The road to success is uncertain, requiring years of sacrifice and hardship.

Chandra Wilson, a noted television, stage and film actress and Los Angeles resident currently starring in Grey’s Anatomy, has experienced the highs and lows. Today she’s creating opportunities for acting students and young actors by channeling some of her success into charitable giving.

“I never want to forget all that it took to be where I am today,” Ms. Wilson said. “And nothing brings me more joy than giving — so it wasn’t hard to decide to set up scholarships and fellowships that filled needs I had as I was coming up.”

Ms. Wilson has chosen very careful, impactful and personal fellowships that filled needs as she was coming up. As she’s creating opportunities for acting students and young actors by channeling some of her success into charitable giving.

• Two annual scholarships at the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Houston, her alma mater, for Theatre Department seniors to pursue theatre arts in college.

• Two annual scholarships at NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts, for Undergraduate Drama students who are in their senior year and need financial support to finish at Tisch. This scholarship is based on Ms. Wilson’s personal experience as a student struggling financially during her undergraduate senior year to finish school.

• Two fellowship awards to mid-career actors for financial support in continued training to develop and support their skills.

• Grants to nonprofits doing work and research in areas close to her heart such as CureMito, which also has a fund at CCF.

“I know that my philanthropy will grow and change, as I have,” said Ms. Wilson. “The funds I have created at CCF allow me to adapt and at the same time stay true to my personal mission and values.”

Turning Plans into Gifts

Real estate or other complex gifts. Few organizations have even basic gift acceptance policies. That’s where you as a nonprofit board member or supporter can help.

CCF has created a Planned Giving Toolkit to help educate and motivate local nonprofits on how simple, quick and inexpensive it is to begin or improve their planned giving program. It even includes template materials that any organization, large or small, can use. Recommend to your favorite nonprofits that they get a free kit today at pgtoolkit.org.

Grant Agreements for Impact and Mutual Benefit

Grant agreements can be an excellent way to personalize and ensure impact for a donation to a nonprofit, especially for a major gift. Here are some things a donor might consider when working on a grant agreement:

• Start with the end in mind. What are you hoping to achieve through this gift? Don’t be afraid to be specific.

• Partner with the right people. Which nonprofit is best suited to help you achieve your goal? The best grant agreements align your objectives with the nonprofit’s work and future goals, so fit is key.

• Consider leveraging options. Some donors make matching grants, requiring the nonprofit to raise funds to meet a specific goal. Other common options include specifying a naming opportunity, charitable purpose or new program.

CCF helps donors articulate their goals, works with nonprofits to ensure viability and compatibility, and coordinates the grant agreement process. Grant agreements are made between a donor advised fund and a nonprofit, with CCF helping to craft appropriate language and monitor the terms of the grant over time. Because CCF cannot be responsible for agreements or pledges that donors make personally and directly, we ask that donors consult with us beforehand to enter into an agreement on behalf of your fund.

For more information on grant agreements that ensure your giving goals are achieved, contact Terri Mosqueda at (213) 413-4130, ext. 298 or tmosqueda@ccalfund.org.

Smart Growth Protects Low-Income Angelenos

by Ann Sewill

New public transit options create economic development, driving new jobs, housing and economic opportunities. But this growth can have negative consequences, particularly in low-income communities, when it causes gentrification and sends rents skyrocketing.

Los Angeles is already one of the nation’s least affordable places to live. With nearly 25 percent of renters paying more than half of their income on housing, it is not uncommon for several families to squeeze into one high-cost apartment. Others rent homes far from work and pay high commuting costs, which add to the region’s air pollution.

This is why smart growth – the practice of addressing environmental, housing and transit issues together to create healthy communities and equitable development – is essential for the future economic well-being of Los Angeles County.

To help accomplish this, CCF, through its Housing and Neighborhoods Program, is awarding $400,000 in grants to support community groups collaborating to develop vibrant, healthy communities around the expanded transit system funded by Measure R, approved by Los Angeles voters in 2008.

With thoughtful planning, we have an unprecedented opportunity to make Los Angeles a more affordable place to live.

To get involved, or learn more, please contact CCF’s Vice President of Housing and Neighborhoods, Ann Sewill, at (213) 413-4130, ext. 267 or asewill@ccalfund.org.
72 percent of the children in well-to-do households are not involved in the family’s charitable decisions.

Are yours?

CCF helps families of all types give charitably in whatever way is best for them. We facilitate open, honest and comfortable conversations about one’s legacy, distributing your assets, current interests in causes or commitments to organizations, the benefits of giving now versus later, and much more.

To start a conversation, contact Nichole Baker at (213) 413-4130, ext. 241 or nbaker@calfund.org.

The public foundation for individuals, families and organizations in Los Angeles County since 1915.