



As a partner for donors, Triangle Community Foundation connects individuals with critical charitable programs to create lasting positive change in our region now. The Foundation is here to help Giving Circles, too, by supporting groups of individuals to combine resources and thus make a greater impact than they might on their own. We help Giving Circle members network, leverage resources, learn about community needs, and enhance their impact. Giving Circles are an increasingly popular and important form of philanthropy; they harness the power of collective giving.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is a Giving Circle?

A: Giving Circles – a form of shared giving and social investment networking – represent a growing trend in philanthropy as individuals want to have greater involvement and impact with their giving. They usually comprise a group of unrelated people who have come together to combine their money and decide where to donate it. Giving Circles vary in size and structure. They offer members a chance to learn more about giving and community issues, work with others toward a common goal, share expertise, learn more about a particular nonprofit, and increase the dollars going to chosen causes.

Q: Is a Giving Circle right for you?

A: Being a part of a Giving Circle is an active, team approach to philanthropy. Before joining a Giving Circle, you should consider the stage of the Giving Circle and how much time you have to give. Being a part of the start-up process usually requires more time from members.

Q: What kinds of organizations do Giving Circles generally support?

A: Giving Circles support many different issues and organizations. Some choose to focus on youth development, women and girls, or human services. Giving Circles are often created to honor or pass down cultural traditions of giving or to support organizations serving communities of a specific ethnic background, geographic region, or demographic attribute.

Q: How much money does each donor contribute?

A: Each Giving Circle can choose a financial level that is right for its members. Some Giving Circles set a lower giving level (\$150-\$500 per year) and others choose to set a higher giving level (\$5,000-\$20,000 per year). It can be flat dollar amount or a percentage of income or assets. Many Giving Circles ask that each member give the same amount. Some Giving Circles have a “give what you can” philosophy.

Q: Do Giving Circles encourage their members to volunteer?

A: Circle members often give extra support to nonprofit organizations by volunteering, but there is no requirement that members volunteer.

Contact us to learn more!

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HOW GIVING CIRCLES WORK AT TRIANGLE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Step 1: Members Set Up a Giving Circle Fund

Fund Agreement Signed. Two authorized members of the Giving Circle meet with Foundation Staff and sign a fund agreement with the name, purpose, and composition of the Giving Circle. These two members become the Fund Advisors or name other individuals to advise the Fund. The agreement verifies that the Fund Advisors have read and understand the Foundation's Guidelines for Giving Circle Funds.

Initial Gift and Fund Balance. An initial gift and fund balance of \$10,000 or more is recommended to establish a Giving Circle Fund at the Foundation. However, many Giving Circles are not able to start with or maintain that amount and the Foundation may allow a Giving Circle to maintain a lesser fund balance. Giving Circle members should discuss the anticipated financial model of the Giving Circle with Foundation staff before establishing a Giving Circle Fund at the Foundation.

Investment Portfolio Selected. The Fund Advisors select from the Foundation's four investment portfolios for funds of \$10,000 or more. The Foundation has an endowment portfolio and three portfolios for non-endowed funds. Giving Circle Funds with a balance of less than \$10,000 will not be invested until the minimum fund balance is reached. Up-to-date information about these investment options is available from Foundation staff.

Fees. All Giving Circle Funds, regardless of fund balance, are charged an annual administrative fee payable to the Foundation of 1% of the fund balance or a minimum fee of \$300 per year (these fees are assessed quarterly). There are also management fees assessed against funds which are invested; more information is available from Foundation staff.

Online Access. Once the Giving Circle Fund is established, Fund Advisors access fund information anytime through *DonorCentral*, our online portal. Information about gifts into and grants from the Fund are posted weekly; investment earnings/losses are posted monthly. Additionally, information about Foundation events and other resources are listed on *DonorCentral*.

Step 2: Make Gifts into the Giving Circle Fund

Giving Circle members begin making gifts of cash and publicly-traded stock into the Fund; members can make donations online through www.trianglecf.org (minimum contribution is \$100). The Foundation will provide written acknowledgement of all donations of \$250 or more. Contributions of complex gifts, such as real estate or closely-held business interests may also be received. Contact Foundation staff to learn more.

Step 3: Recommend Grant Distributions from the Giving Circle Fund

Once gifts are received into the Fund, Fund Advisors recommend grants based on Giving Circle decisions and distributions are processed by the Foundation to charitable organizations here in the Triangle or beyond. The Foundation takes care of verifying the organization's charitable status and sending the check. Giving Circles will have access to Foundation staff who can help research community needs and specific nonprofits.

Step 4: Monitor and Evaluate the Impact of the Fund

The Foundation can help the Giving Circle assess the impact of its grantmaking and connect members with tools to grow and improve.