

Planning a Portfolio of Philanthropic Services

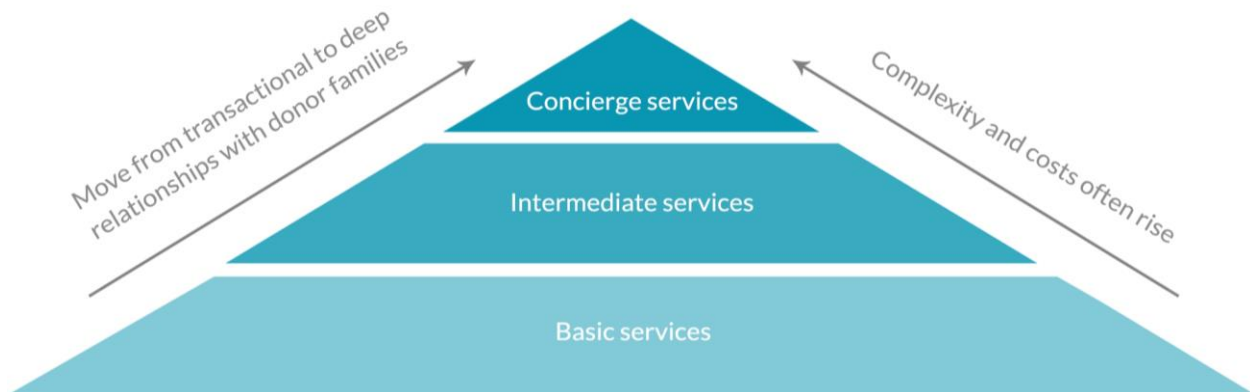


Figure 1

Definitions

Community foundations differ in goals, capacities, and activities to attract, retain, and engage donor families. Their terms for their activities vary widely. NCFP uses the following definitions for its *Family Philanthropy Playbook* and *Readiness Self-Assessment Tool*.

- **Stewardship Activities** – the basic functions of accurately processing and acknowledging gifts, thanking donors over time, keeping accurate records of funds and planned gifts, processing fund statements and grant recommendations, and sending mass communications about the foundation’s activities and impact. Effective donor stewardship work provides a grounding for the other services below. A Center for Effective Philanthropy survey¹ of community foundation donors showed that the primary driver for donor satisfaction (and retention) is staff responsiveness, followed by the donors’ perception of the foundation’s impact in the community.
- **Donor Services** – offering donor education programs and materials, youth philanthropy programs, and opportunities to give or grant collaboratively with other donors or the foundation’s unrestricted grantmaking programs. This also may include more intensive grantmaking, evaluation, or research services for donor-advised funds and basic support for helping donors clarify their goals, interests, and giving styles.
- **Family Philanthropy Services** – services that actively involve multiple generations and/or branches of a family in effectively giving, granting, learning, investing, and/or volunteering together. Examples include creating family mission and values statements, facilitating family meetings, creating governance and succession plans, preparing heirs for leadership roles (“next gen programs”), and helping the family engage in community leadership and problem-solving activities.
- **Philanthropic Services** – the umbrella term for a foundation’s portfolio of donor stewardship, donor services, and family philanthropy activities. Those activities may be a mix of basic, intermediate, and customized or concierge services.

¹ *What Donors Value: How Community Foundations Can Increase Donor Satisfaction, Referrals, and Future Giving*, Center for Effective Philanthropy, 2014

Tiering or Layering Philanthropic Services

Most community foundations tier or layer their services, sometimes formally and sometimes informally. The Philanthropic Services Pyramid (Figure 1) provides one common framework. A few community foundations create a fluid continuum of options based on demand by the donors and donor families.

At the base of the pyramid, community foundations provide basic Stewardship support and offer basic Donor Services to all donors. They then offer intermediate level services to some donors, most often based on the size of funds and/or aggregated gifts and giving potential. Those services help build staff expertise in discerning and serving donors' varied goals, values, and learning styles. They also provide early windows into how donors prefer to involve their peers, families, and advisors in philanthropy. Lastly, a community foundation may offer concierge-level Donor Services and/or deeper Family Philanthropy Services to a smaller set of donor families.

Over time, each foundation builds a portfolio of services based on its unique goals and business model, internal strengths, priorities voiced by customers, and any local competitors and partners.

Going up the pyramid offers the opportunity for more proactive, purposeful work with donors, leading to deeper, more trusting relationships. Members of NCFP's Community Foundations Family Philanthropy Network note that the deeper relationships often lead to donors more frequently asking to work together on community issues and co-invest in solutions.

Menu of Philanthropic Services Options

The chart on the following pages is a sample menu to help you start thinking about developing your own portfolio of services. NCFP compiled the chart from information shared by members of our Community Foundations Family Philanthropy Network, shared by The Philanthropic Initiative, and in the 2005 *Making the Commitment* report by Bryan Clontz. Note that:

- The list is not comprehensive, but shows common options by category of service and typical level of difficulty. Many of the options could be listed in multiple categories.
- No foundation will deliver all the options or be able to deliver them equally well.
- A foundation might have unique staff abilities, or have relationships with trusted consultants, that help it deliver intermediate or concierge services to larger audiences and/or at lower prices.

Stewardship & Gift Planning	Basic	Intermed.	Concierge
Internal procedures to ensure consistently quick, accurate responses to donors, e.g. a “24 hour rule” on call returns	√		
Timely, accurate gift processing, acknowledgement letters, and fund statements	√		
Fund advisor handbook	√		
New fund advisor welcome/onboarding meeting	√		
Annual call/visit, annual holiday card	√		
Donor appreciation events	√		
Recognizing milestones in giving and/or grantmaking		√	
Planned giving educational programs and off-the-shelf tools		√	
Collaborating with a professional advisor team on legacy planning beyond tax issues			√
Collaborating with a professional advisor team on transitions in a family business			√
DAF or Supporting Org has customized webpage, letterhead, etc			√
<i>Your suggestions</i>			
Donor Services: Community Needs & Trends Info	Basic	Intermed.	Concierge
Info on website or in annual report	√		
E-news about unrestricted grants & community planning efforts	√		
Group education programs, Jeffersonian Dinners	√		
Group site visits and bus tours		√	
Proactive sharing of information with donors or families		√	
Engaging donors in giving alongside unrestricted grantmaking programs		√	
Publishing issue briefs with ways donors can make a difference		√	
Customized research on issues or geographies that aren't core to your foundation			√
Customized site visits for individual donors or families			√
<i>Your suggestions</i>			

Donor Services: Grantmaking & Evaluation	Basic	Intermed.	Concierge
Timely, accurate assessment of current charity status and processing of grants	√		
Sharing due diligence and evaluation already completed by staff	√		
Consistent reporting about the foundation's community impact	√		
Analysis of donor's giving/granting history and trends		√	
Personalized due diligence and evaluation (based on a template)		√	
Facilitating giving circles or other collaborative grantmaking groups		√	
Customized grantmaking programs, RFPs			√
Customized prizes, capacity-building, impact investing programs			√
Multi-grant, multi-year evaluation programs			√
<i>Your suggestions</i>			
Donor Services: Community Leadership	Basic	Intermed.	Concierge
Asking donors to fund your community leadership initiatives	√		
Connecting donors with local volunteering opportunities	√		
Connecting fund advisors and successor generations with local leadership development programs	√		
Collaborative planning ("co-creation") of initiatives with donors		√	
Leveraging families' connections, talents, expertise in community problem-solving		√	
Customized family volunteer events			√
Staffing donor-led strategic initiatives and community leadership projects			√
<i>Your suggestions</i>			

Donor Services: Philanthropic Planning	Basic	Intermed.	Concierge
Basic donor intake on goals, interest areas, community connections	√		
Providing off-the-shelf or DIY tools for creating vision/mission/purpose/goals statements	√		
Facilitating vision/mission/values/purpose exercises for founders		√	
Individual/family giving/granting styles discussions		√	
Personalized consulting/advising time on goals, action plans, results			√
Developing integrated, multi-gen. family legacy plans			√
<i>Your suggestions</i>			
Family Philanthropy Services	Basic	Intermed.	Concierge
Family philanthropy speakers in larger group settings	√		
Articles, books available on family philanthropy issues	√		
NCFP webinars, Knowledge Center available to donors	√		
Small group or individual family time with outside experts		√	
Youth grantmaking or Next Gen grantmaking programs		√	
Facilitating vision/mission/purpose/goals statements and philanthropy plans for multiple generations and/or branches			√
Facilitating family meetings & retreats			√
Developing governance structures for families			√
Developing succession plans for families			√
Longer “next gen education” series for peer groups and/or individual families			√
For-fee or contracted services for family foundations		√	
Separately branded “Center for Philanthropy”			√
<i>Your suggestions</i>			

As you consider your options, also note the following skillsets useful in delivering the differing tiers of services.

Likely Staff Skills & Experience Needed	Basic	Intermed.	Concierge
Fundraising and gift planning, perhaps a CFRE certification	√		
Program officer or nonprofit evaluation work	√		
All-purpose nonprofit or foundation management	√		
Some training in philanthropic advising – the consultative and discernment styles of donor/client conversations		√	
Some training in facilitation, concierge customer services, and/or adult or youth education		√	
Regularly attend professional development programs – NCFP, youth philanthropy, etc		√	
Certifications such as 21/64, Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy®, family therapy, coaching			√
Previous experience with managing family dynamics, serving families with wealth, family enterprise lifecycles			√
Ability to accurately scope, price, and deliver customized services			√