A Guide to Meaningfully Engaging Next-Generation Adults in Your Philanthropy

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NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILY PHILANTHROPY

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Introduction

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT MOMENTS IN A FAMILY'S PHILANTHROPY is when those who are currently managing the giving formally welcome members of the next generation—or generations—into the work. Many families start this process when their children are young, imparting family values of generosity and community engagement throughout their daily lives and, over time, introducing them to a more formal structure. Other families choose to engage the next generation when they reach adulthood (which is defined differently depending on the family, but often is when they have graduated from higher education and are beginning their careers) or when they are well into their adult lives. Welcoming next-generation family members at any stage requires careful planning, but formally doing so when they are adults can be particularly complex. Bringing adult family members into your family's philanthropy in a substantial way without a thoughtful strategy can lead to both generations feeling frustration and disappointment, and can hinder impact. Doing it well, however, can bring great personal meaning, bolster your family's legacy, and move your philanthropy closer to achieving the positive changes you seek in the world.

Inviting next-generation adults to play a significant role in your family's philanthropy can come with myriad challenges: Adults typically have busier, more demanding schedules; may be pursuing careers; are often involved in caregiving of children and/or older parents and in-laws; may live in geographically different locations than their extended family; and oftentimes have long-standing, more complex family dynamics to navigate.

It also comes with great benefits: Adults possess skills and knowledge from years of professional and community engagement. They typically also have a greater depth of experience within the family system and often feel a stronger understanding and embrace of its values. They may have developed a deeper desire to steward the family legacy as they have gotten older. Moreover, they may have fresh and diverse ideas about how to create positive impact.

Over the span of many years, the National Center for Family Philanthropy (NCFP) and National Philanthropic Trust (NPT) have collaborated with, and spoken to, hundreds of families who have brought adult leaders into their philanthropy, surfacing ideas on how to do it well. Recently, the organizations commissioned a series of interviews in partnership with Ellie Frey Zagel, third-generation family member and trustee of the Frey Foundation, to better understand the pathways to engage next-generation leaders. While the details of each family's experience are unique, we have found several common insights that can best position leaders to intentionally evolve their family's philanthropic leadership. It can be helpful to think of the transition in the following three phases.

1. **LAY THE GROUNDWORK:** The managing generation creates the positive conditions and expectations for the next generation of leaders to succeed.

2. **COMPLETE EFFECTIVE ONBOARDING:** The next generation feels equipped and excited to join the family's philanthropy.

3. **CONTINUE TO GROW TOGETHER:** An ongoing process for individuals and the family as a whole to learn and improve well beyond the initial transition period.

This guide will help you engage in an inclusive and thoughtful invitation and onboarding process that builds on your own expertise and expands your family's philanthropy by bringing in new voices, distinct perspectives, and deep knowledge. Not all the tips here will work for all families, especially as families may use a variety of giving vehicles including foundations and donor-advised funds (DAFs). However, at this important inflection point, strong communication, a considerate process, and authentic humility will allow you to achieve both great impact in the world and profound family connection.

PHASE 1

Lay the Groundwork

AS THE MANAGING GENERATION OF YOUR FAMILY'S PHILANTHROPY, you are responsible for building and nurturing the conditions for incoming leaders to succeed. Taking the time and making the effort to prepare for engagement and clearly communicating the details of an invitation to engage will pay dividends as you welcome new family members into your giving. Thoughtful ways to lay the groundwork include:

Articulate the Motivation for Engagement

Welcoming the next generation into a family's active philanthropy can happen for many reasons, and it behooves both the current managing generation and new participants to understand the purpose behind the invitation. Why engage them in the work? What value will these new leaders offer? Why bring them on now? Often, this is a planned, expected shift as generations change and age. Or there may be an age requirement that the next generation has hit, spurring the transition. Families may bring on new leaders for practical reasons (e.g., the managing generation is getting older and is unable to contribute the time needed to effectively handle the philanthropy) or for strategic reasons (e.g., an adult in the next generation has a specific skill or knowledge that is a current gap in the organization, or there is a desire to broaden the group of decision-makers or expand the perspectives on the board). It is worthwhile to set aside the time for reflection and, if you find it difficult to articulate the rationale for the proposed transition, it may be beneficial to engage a facilitator to help discover and clearly express your reasons.

By defining the "why" behind the invitation, all family members can move forward with a shared understanding, setting everyone up for deeper alignment during the onboarding phase and beyond. Clarity allows each generation to support the other, acknowledging their role in making the process smooth. For example, if an adult in the next generation has known for years that once they are 30 they will be included in the family's philanthropy, the situation will be different from that of an adult son taking over because his ailing mother can no longer manage the family's philanthropy—or if an adult granddaughter is being brought onto the team by her grandfather because of her expertise in rural early education. As with most things in family philanthropy, making the implicit explicit can help avoid potential conflicts or misunderstandings.

> "As we move on to the next generation, it is important that we find the right balance between honoring [our founders] while providing the freedom to make the work fun and exciting."
>
> Susan Packard Orr
> *David and Lucile Packard Foundation*

Consider Who Is Best Positioned to Join
You must also think critically about the skills and experience needed to further the purpose of your family's philanthropy. Whether the next-generation family member will be an active participant for a few years or plans to take on the leadership role in the near future, determining who from the next generation is best suited to join as a leader and how they are uniquely positioned to carry on the legacy of the family's work is vital.

Ask yourself what professional and personal experiences may fill a gap and what skills are particularly valuable now and in the future. For example, you may want to engage a family member who has deep ties to the community in which you provide grants (a granddaughter who is a public school teacher in the region you support), or someone who is adept at bringing family together (a son who is always hosting family holiday meals), or someone who has technical know-how that will help you advance a new initiative (a niece who is a climate scientist as the family shifts its focus to environmental justice). To assist in understanding the opportunities, some multigenerational families have a simple application process that helps gauge the interest as well as the skills new leaders can bring to the work. In smaller families, a simple conversation may be sufficient for further understanding interests and skills.

Identify Guardrails and Open Gates
As the next generation of adults engages in your family's philanthropy, it will be enormously helpful for them to understand what is rigid and what is flexible. Determining this up front (and refining it in collaboration with the next-generation leader) will also help you avoid surprises or disappointments in the future. For each family, these categories will look very different, but it may be helpful to consider the following questions:

- What are the values we hope will always remain true to our family's philanthropy? How might these shift as the world around us changes?
- What decision-making power will the next generation of leaders have (immediately and in the future)? What decision-making structures or operations will we need to shift to ensure we are authentically sharing power?
- Which issues, geographies, and/or populations do we currently focus on? Do we anticipate this shifting with community needs and/or family desires?

- What operating principles do we currently work under? Are there elements of the way in which we support our grantee partners and the communities in which we work that we hope will remain after we leave?
- What is our expectation about the lifespan of the philanthropic vehicle? Do we hope our family's shared giving continues in perpetuity, or are we open to the next generation sunsetting our philanthropic giving?
- What are the true time and effort commitments we need to include in an invitation to ensure the next generation is clear on what is needed in this role?
- What traits, skills, and knowledge will next generation bring to the family's philanthropy as they move into leadership positions?

Careful consideration and communication of both guardrails and open gates provide you with the ability to quickly align with the next generation on hopes for the long-term evolution of the work. Susan Packard Orr, who was the second-generation leader of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, reflected deeply on this balance as she strived to manage a thoughtful transition to the third generation. She noted, "As we move on to the next generation, it is important that we find the right balance between honoring [our founders] while providing the freedom to make the work fun and exciting."

At the end of the first phase of your transition, you should have the confidence and enthusiasm to bring new next-generation leaders into your family's philanthropic efforts.

PHASE 2

Complete Effective Onboarding

ONCE YOU HAVE APPROPRIATELY LAID THE GROUNDWORK, it is time to formally invite and onboard the next generation of leaders. The formality of this stage may depend on your giving vehicle. For example, with a private foundation, you may have roles as part of the governance structure to fill. For families with a DAF—or with multiple giving vehicles—the principles below hold true but may be applied in different ways.

The best invitations are warm, clear, and flexible. The main goals during this phase are to share an exciting opportunity with your family; impart wisdom, knowledge, and connections with grantees and community members that you have cultivated over time; and to learn from your successors. Ways to make this phase effective and positive include:

Begin—and Pace—the Engagement

Once you have defined the purpose of your invitation and the role you wish members of the next generation to fill, it's important to determine the timing and pace of engaging them. Many families establish informal opportunities for adult members of the next generation to begin to learn about the work prior to a formal invitation and full commitment to board or other leadership roles. For example, Theo Avery of the Durfee Foundation shared that attending some board meetings and retreats run by his family's foundation, joining site visits, and sitting on a grantee selection panel allowed him to learn quite a bit about the work, thereby increasing his confidence and excitement once he was formally invited to participate.

Slowly introducing an adult member of the next generation to leadership of your family's philanthropy before extending the ultimate invitation can meaningfully build commitment and excitement, as well as add the benefit of matching different individuals' life stages and availability. However, if you have not yet begun to involve the next generation and you need to do so immediately (e.g., because of an unforeseen gap that needs to be filled), clearly explaining why—and perhaps pacing their participation so they can steadily ramp up involvement, offering specific mentorship opportunities, and/or creating proper training tools—will help new leaders better prepare themselves for this responsibility.

RESOURCES FOR ONBOARDING NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The NCFP Guide for Effective Family Philanthropy: This guide defines effective family philanthropy and explores the four core principles that all board members should reflect upon: accountability, equity, reflection and learning, and relationships.

Building the Board Your Foundation Deserves: The Governance Checklist: This short guide describes a checklist of governance-related questions all board members should be familiar with, including an overview of the expectations of board members; board composition, selection, and terms; and more.

Good Governance: Basic Rules for Governing a Family Foundation: This guide provides an overview of the basic rules for effectively governing a family foundation.

10 NCFP Webinar Replays Every Board Member Should Watch: A collection of webinars for family foundation board members, including the two-part "Toeing the Line" series, which explores the most common legal pitfalls in family foundation governance and grantmaking.

Fifteen Timeless Tips for Trustee Training and Succession: Tips and principles essential for any family foundation thinking about how to prepare next-generation family members to participate in the work of the foundation.

Share a Clear Invitation

In multigenerational family philanthropy, the managing generation often communicates engagement as an expectation without clearly defined and agreed-upon desires for how to participate. To build and nurture the conditions for success and long-term engagement, it is far better to create a real sense of invitation and opportunity, understanding that the answer to the invitation may sometimes be "no" or "not yet." Says one second-generation family foundation board member, "Don't assume that you are giving your kids a big gift by inviting them to be involved. That's a big assumption to make."

Elements of a clear invitation include:

- Background on the family's philanthropic journey and hopes for the future
- Clarification on how the individuals' skills, knowledge, and expertise could benefit the family's philanthropy
- Exact role that the individual is being asked to fill (e.g., will they immediately become a voting board member or an advisor for your DAF or will there be a transition period?)
- Clear estimate of the time commitment related to role and responsibilities (e.g., 40 hours per quarter to review proposals, two in-person full-day meetings every year, and 20 hours a year for site visits)
- Ideal start date for engagement and expected length of service

Resources for Onboarding New Board Members (continued)

Policy Central: Board Meetings, Roles, and Qualifications: A collection of approaches to creating policies and practices for board orientation and training from peer foundations.

Demystifying Decision-Making in Family Philanthropy: This brief examines the kinds of decisions that family foundations often face and sets out practical, easy-to-apply guidelines for ensuring that the foundation's decision-making methods vary appropriately, as conditions and circumstances change.

"It's important that you don't have two sets of rules for the next generation and for the managing generation. Say what your expectations for participation are, and then allow younger family members to opt in or opt out. And if they opt in, give them an equal voice," says a second-generation foundation board member.

By sharing a clear and thoughtful invitation, you are starting your formal philanthropy-related relationship with respect for the next generation's time and interest. This is especially critical when onboarding adults with various responsibilities and priorities, as it allows both parties to identify areas of potential negotiation or needs for adjustment. It's also important to communicate to others in the family who may not have been invited to participate.

Sharing clear reasons for a closed invitation as well as expectations for the future (e.g., all cousins will have a chance to serve on the foundation's board within the next 10 years, etc.) will help maintain support and collaboration across the family outside of formal roles.

Most important, when extending this invitation, come from a collaborative mindset. Nick Tedesco, president and CEO of NCFP notes, "The families who are successful across generations are those that bring in that next generation from a place of partnership with respect, with openness, with trust, and understand that they are inviting in a relationship of equals. And that is quite distinct from families who are bringing in the next generation as a set of administrative partners."

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Second-generation foundation board member

Offer Support and Flexibility

When engaging next-generation adults, it is likely these family members have full lives with commitments to school, work, and/or family and friends. Different generations also inherently work in different ways, and you must incorporate these evolved approaches to work and family into a new version of your family's philanthropy. Additionally, you may view asking them to prioritize the greater family's philanthropy as an exciting opportunity, but they may see it as one more important responsibility for which they are not sure if they have time or energy. Having early conversations about the types of flexibility and support the next generation will need to meet expectations will help ensure your family's philanthropy can be an opportunity for meaning and joy. On the flip side, there also may be requests for flexibility or support that you are unable to offer, and it is critical to be transparent about this. Some approaches you may consider incorporating include:

- Having clear terms for serving as a foundation's board member or committee member for a giving entity, or understanding the expectations of being a DAF advisor.
- Rotating foundation board roles or other leadership roles to allow individuals to be more or less involved at different moments in time, offering different levels of leadership to match various life stages and ability to serve.

- Creating opportunities to use technology to communicate (e.g., video conferencing for some meetings that may have typically been in person, or email correspondence rather than phone calls to allow for asynchronous work).
- Sharing a specific process for taking a leave of absence or exiting from family philanthropy responsibilities when the need arises.
- Setting the decision-making or grantmaking calendar in light of other priorities, including children's school and work calendars.
- Providing options to join or lead committees outside of serving on a foundation's board.

Keep in mind that support and flexibility will look different for each family and individual, so we encourage open and curious conversations to learn more about what you can offer the next generation to make joining the family's philanthropic work more realistic and exciting. Says Megan Costigan of the Tracy Family Foundation, "We understand that family members will go through various life stages and may not always be able to engage in our family foundation as much as they desire. It is essential that we continue to understand, accept, and support this as a family foundation. We offer a variety of engagement opportunities to accommodate different levels of experience and interests, ensuring that everyone can participate in a way that excites them."

As crucial as it is to onboard the next generation with intention and structure, it's also important to provide clear opportunities for family members to take off-ramps to exit permanently or for a period of time, perhaps by incorporating check-in points where you can reaffirm or readjust the level of involvement together. Knowing these off-ramps are available may effectively assuage potential anxiety that once someone is engaged there is no turning back.

It is important to remember that, even with a thoughtful invitation and onboarding support, members of the next generation may decline or defer the opportunity. Should that happen, it is critical to be understanding and to leave the door open for engagement in other ways and other times. You may also want to revisit the questions and reflections in the first phase to determine who else you may invite and how you might adjust your vision for engagement accordingly.

Make the Most of New Talent
Adult members of the next generation have skills, interests, and knowledge that complement or add to those of the managing generation. It's vital to identify the talents and experiences they bring and to incorporate them into the

organization's efforts. Not only will this ensure the philanthropy benefits from the skills of all team members, but it will also engender enthusiasm and a sense of inclusivity for the next generation of leaders. As Tedesco says, "Human nature tells us that if we are not valued, if our contributions are not respected and welcome, then we're not going to be incentivized to engage."

The first step is to understand what skills and know-how the next generation can—and is excited to—contribute through conversations or a formal questionnaire. You will likely want to ask about skills (e.g., grantmaking process, communication, facilitation, budgeting, or marketing), knowledge base (e.g., health care, early education, or climate change), network (e.g., community-based leaders, peer funders, or government officials), and learning interests (e.g., trust-based philanthropy practices, meeting facilitation, impact investing, or racial equity in grantmaking). Tripp Frey of the Frey Foundation believes that family members can contribute in a variety of ways, as long as you take time to understand skills and interests. "Someone might be a great leader, someone else might be not as great a leader but might be really good with numbers, or could be stellar with the grants, have a ton of experience on the grantmaking side. You want to find those things out," he said.

"We understand that family members will go through various life stages and may not always be able to engage in our family foundation as much as they desire. It is essential that we continue to understand, accept, and support this as a family foundation. We offer a variety of engagement opportunities to accommodate different levels of experience and interests, ensuring that everyone can participate in a way that excites them."

Megan Costigan
Tracy Family Foundation

Once you have a clearer sense of what the next generation can offer, initiate a follow-up conversation to honestly discuss how and when you can build these skills and interest areas into your family's philanthropy. For those with a family foundation, this could include joining or creating a specific committee, taking on discrete responsibilities in line with skills and interests, or leading grantmaking in an area of expertise.

For some donors, this may be a stage where a separate DAF account is created for adult children to manage their own portfolio of grants and practice learning by doing. Keep in mind that this may require you to be open to shifting long-standing practices, roles, and responsibilities.

Assess and Address Internal Power Dynamics

To engage effectively in their family's philanthropy, next-generation adults must have agency, voice, power, and the opportunity to inform and shape the family giving enterprise. This can be complicated as in most families, power dynamics are longstanding and complex. As some families grow—sometimes to include spouses, extended family members, and adopted children—their members may not all share the same race, background, socioeconomic status, and/or physical abilities, which can make power dynamics more nuanced and layered.

As you begin to build a different, more professional relationship with incoming adult family members, it can be helpful to lean on processes to ensure each individual has a voice in decisions so that the family does not fall into patterns of having the eldest generation control decisions. Setting up strong operations and processes in advance of difficult conversations and decisions can significantly increase ease of power sharing across multigenerational boards and leadership roles. Some ways to manage this include formally shifting bylaws to incorporate equitable voting structures, reviewing and resetting communication norms for day-to-day and meeting interactions, and hiring an outside facilitator to ensure a balanced and unbiased presence is in the room for big decisions.

It is important to remember that power dynamics are not all tied to how a giving vehicle is structured. Power can be shared by asking the next generation for advice; giving them time to share their perspectives in meetings; and allowing them to grow into becoming the external face of your family's philanthropy through building grantee relationships, engaging in learning opportunities, speaking engagements, and meeting with peer funders. One next-generation trustee noted the importance of framing her involvement, "Our questions, our comments were encouraged. So, we weren't told that we were listening. We were told that we were participating."

Clearly Share Your Vision for Your Role

As you prepare for and navigate bringing in the next generation, you need to also think critically about your own role moving forward. In some cases, as next-generation adults join the family's philanthropy enterprise, your role will not immediately shift. While there may be many questions still unanswered (e.g., the vehicle's strategic lifespan, the number of family members on the board versus independent directors) it is helpful to align on what you do know now and how it might affect your role currently and in the near future.

Options may include:

- Fully stepping back from all family philanthropy
- Receiving occasional updates on family philanthropy (e.g., through a quarterly email or conversation)
- Serving as an on-call advisor to assist the new leaders with especially complex topics
- Serving on a specific foundation committee or working group related to your personal interests and/or skills
- Serving in an emeritus role at your family foundation (which may or may not include some level of voting power)

Being clear about desires for engagement as the family's philanthropy evolves will help all family members have a clear road map for continued collaboration and respect across the generations.

At the conclusion of Phase 2, you will have completed the formal onboarding of next-generation adults into the family's philanthropy. This can make you feel relieved that you've checked off a box. However, the work of multigenerational family philanthropy is ongoing to ensure all members of the family and the communities they serve continue to learn and grow.

"Our questions, our comments were encouraged. So, we weren't told that we were listening. We were told that we were participating."

Second-generation foundation trustee

PHASE 3

Continue to Grow Together

FEW PEOPLE ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING A STATIC ENTERPRISE and the next generation is no different. They want to enter a dynamic environment that reflects on and learns from its history, family, peers, and broader community. As the managing generation, it is important to foster a culture of learning between and among family members, any staff members your philanthropy may have, your community, and your trusted partners. This also entails being open and vulnerable enough to learn from those who may succeed you. Both generations must also learn the historical context of the family's philanthropy and understand the current conditions of the issues and communities you and your family seek to serve. This often involves a deep exploration of equity, spurring sometimes uncomfortable and challenging conversations that require humility, curiosity, and an authentic willingness to evolve perspectives and practices.

Practice (and Encourage) Humility

It is critical for members of every generation to practice humility—and to acknowledge the privilege of being a donor and all that they have to learn, particularly from the communities they serve and from each other. Part of the managing generation's work is knowing—with humility—when to step back and make room for other decision-makers with new ideas and passions. A core tenet for one foundation president we interviewed is to offer grace to herself, her adult sons who will succeed her, and their grantee partners. This allows for trust-based relationships both internally and externally, which in turn provides space for everyone to grow and improve.

Most next-generation leaders are eager to learn and passionate about their family's history and legacy, but they are also ready to forge their own paths. They grew up in a world that's different from that of older members of their family, and they see both different issues that need to be addressed and new potential approaches for stewarding their family's philanthropic resources. "Philanthropy has evolved considerably in the past several years, let alone across generations. One positive shift is that many new leaders are focused on equity. This evolved understanding of a funder's role in a community has deepened the impact they can have and strengthened their relationships with grantee partners and community members," says Jenna Mulhall-Brereton, chief philanthropy officer at NPT.

After years (or maybe decades) of being in a decision-making seat, it can feel new and perhaps uncomfortable to see new leaders make changes or decisions you may not have if you were in charge. However, prioritizing family connection through mutual respect and shared values, and calling on humility, will allow the philanthropy to evolve into a new form that is both true to the family's values and makes space to address complex emerging issues.

"Philanthropy has evolved considerably in the past several years, let alone across generations."

Jenna Mulhall-Brereton
National Philanthropic Trust

Collectively Commit to a Learning Agenda

Grounded in humility, new leaders can be more open to thoughtful partnerships and community building that will allow them to make smarter, more community-driven decisions with their grantmaking. Many of the people we spoke with reflected on the powerful insights, and lasting impact, from time working in nonprofit organizations in formal and volunteer capacities. Next-generation leaders also highlighted the usefulness of attending conferences, joining peer networks, nurturing mentorship relationships, and tapping into professional advisors for guidance. Other ways to learn are from experienced family or staff members, attending site visits, as well as listening to, and developing relationships with, nonprofit leaders and community members proximate to the work. All generations in family philanthropy need to maintain a learning mindset when it comes to best practices in governance, strategy, and decision-making.

This is where you can set the tone and create the conditions for learning. More often than not, the next generation of leaders is eager and willing to learn—and finds that it enriches their participation. Tripp Frey reflects on how one of his first learning experiences with the foundation began with observation. "I remember when our investment consultant went through some basic education on the foundation's investments and endowment." Looking for simple ways to pull back the curtain on details of the inner workings of the family's philanthropy can stick with the next generation in meaningful ways.

Often, this is also where the next-generation leaders might be able to highlight (and question) how the family's giving practices came to be. For example, Ila Duncan of the Lumpkin Family Foundation has prompted their family to analyze its own giving practices which had been historically focused on primarily white geographies. Duncan has encouraged the foundation to expand its giving to communities of color based in a city proximate to the family's hometown and has begun to question how to steward the wealth they now oversee. While this was not the foundation's focus area, board members have been open to and accepting of Duncan's new approach to the family's philanthropy. This openness has the potential to both accelerate impact and nurture confidence in the new leadership team.

Navigate Conflict With Compassion and Grace

People in different generations, as well as those within the same generation, will inevitably bring disparate points of view. Conflict is nearly unavoidable as generations come together, and yet most families are not prepared to manage through conflict and often actively try to avoid it. When this avoidance and lack of preparation are met with unhealthy communication, great harm can result. However, by embracing healthy conflict, families can find clarity, challenge biases, and become more effective.

Embracing healthy conflict begins by recognizing and respecting the contributions of all members of the family without dominating or dismissing the younger or older generations. When difficult situations arise, it's important to return to the "why" behind an individual's participation in the family philanthropy in an effort to see and understand their perspective.

"The willingness of the managing generation to be open, to meet their children as equal adults in this space, and to hear and value them is vital," says a seasoned philanthropy advisor. "In the best discussions that I helped facilitate, there could be disagreement, but there was this recognition of 'I hear your point,' 'I understand that it's grounded in these realities,' 'Here's my counterpoint.' And then being able to reach a consensus or an agreement to not agree."

Even with the best-laid plans and intentions, some conflict areas are simply too complex or sensitive to effectively navigate without support. Depending on the type and level of conflict, external

MORE RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES IN TRANSITION

Family Philanthropy Transitions: Possibilities, Problems, and Potential: This brief explores the circumstances and dynamics of transitions and shares the experiences of practitioners in dealing with them, including questions to ask and common challenges they may anticipate.

Generations of Giving: Transitions in Family Foundations: This book excerpt describes the six components of transitions in family foundations.

Legacy in Family Philanthropy: A Modern Framework: This workbook features a collection of 10 legacy discussion modules, each offering activities and tips for intergenerational discussions on various aspects of legacy and its connection to your current and future philanthropy.

Things We Wish Our Founders Had Told Us: Interpreting Donor Legacy: This essay is a must read for any family thinking about capturing the values and perspectives of donors while they are living, and for any donor wondering what types of guidance will be most helpful in generations to come.

facilitators and experts can often bring the calm, neutral perspectives and advice that a family may need to overcome snags that may be impacting not only philanthropic work, but also relationships among family members more broadly. Kelly Nowlin, formerly of the Surdna Foundation and Andrus Family Fund, notes: “Our family engagement programs have always been led and facilitated by outside, non-family partners. This has allowed for a neutral voice, specific expertise, and skilled facilitation, and has positively impacted the experience for family members.”

Honor Collective and Individual Growth and Change

Collective growth is essential to achieve the two main goals of family philanthropy: create positive change in the world and connect with your family members. Individual growth increases meaningful engagement and strengthens ties to your family’s philanthropic work. Staying curious and informed about the ever-evolving world; engaging authentically with, and learning from, community members your family is hoping to serve; and addressing different perspectives within your family will support consistent and steady growth.

While many families have a general goal to continue to learn, leaning into a more structured learning agenda and putting into practice regular checkpoints to celebrate development, determine areas for improvement, and make new goals will ensure your family never stops bringing new ideas and perspectives to its philanthropy. Many families are increasingly engaging community members (e.g., by including them on a foundation’s governing or advisory board in addition to family members), which accelerates the family’s ability to learn from people who understand better both the work and the need. For instance, the Durfee Foundation hopes to create a board “very close to half” of whose members are from the community, acknowledging that this is the way the family can learn from the community and act in alignment with its priorities.

Creating inclusive family philanthropy leadership for a new generation of adults can be a great joy for your family and has the potential to accelerate impact on the issues your family cares about as new perspectives, experiences, and approaches are woven into a deep legacy. While working across generations can be complicated, the wisdom and energy of a multigenerational team can spur some of the richest lessons and strategies. Honoring this moment with time, patience, and effort will create a powerful next chapter for your family.

Tedesco believes, “Success for family philanthropy across generations is a relationship of equals. It shows up when there is room for dissent. It shows up when there is room to question. It shows up as meaningful engagement that is marked by joy, that is marked by a desire to continue to engage in the system, that is marked by an enthusiasm not just for the work itself, but the process that supports the work.”

About the Author

Cara Binder-Kopchick is a philanthropy advisor with a passion for facilitating meaningful conversations, nurturing trusting relationships between donors and grantee partners, and building smart operations. Prior to starting her own consulting practice, Cara spent 15 years focused on many different angles of philanthropy, working on both international and local grantmaking teams at the David and Lucile Packard Foundation; facilitating workforce development grants through the City and County of San Francisco; leading the Midwest regional advisory team at Arabella Advisors; and serving as the founding director at Samvid Ventures. She has an MPA from the University of San Francisco, graduating with high honors, and a BA in journalism from Michigan State University, where she specialized in social justice. She lives in Michigan with her husband and two young children.

About National Center for Family Philanthropy

The National Center for Family Philanthropy (NCFP) is a network of philanthropic families committed to a world that is vibrant, equitable, and resilient. We share proven practices, work through common challenges, and learn together to strengthen our ability to effect meaningful change. Our wide-ranging programs and services support family philanthropy at its many points of inflection and help families embrace proven practices and advance momentum. Explore our resources, all rooted in a Family Giving Lifecycle, by visiting www.ncfp.org.

About National Philanthropic Trust

National Philanthropic Trust (NPT) is a public charity dedicated to providing philanthropic expertise to donors, foundations, and financial institutions, enabling them to realize their philanthropic aspirations. NPT was founded in 1996. Since that time, it has made more than 672,000 grants totaling over $28.5 billion to charities all over the world. NPT has raised more than $57.3 billion in charitable contributions and currently manages $35.1 billion in charitable assets. It ranks among the largest grantmaking institutions in the United States.

In addition to the family donors we interviewed for this article, we'd like to thank Ellie Frey Zagel, Janice Simsohn Shaw, Jason Born, and Miki Akimoto for their contributions.

A Guide to Meaningfully Engaging Next-Generation Adults in Your Philanthropy

Reflection and Discussion Questions

As you begin to engage the next generation of adults in your family's philanthropy, you will have multiple moments for reflection and discussion. We suggest reviewing the discussion questions below with your board or leadership team and, when appropriate, the next-generation adult leaders themselves to ensure a thorough and thoughtful process.

Phase One: Lay the Groundwork

Articulate the Motivation for Engagement

- Why is engagement of the next generation important?
- How do you foresee the next generation impacting the family philanthropy?
- What will success look like after this onboarding is complete?

Consider Who Is Best Positioned to Join

- Who are the individuals in the next generation who could join this work?
- Are there any individuals you know who are especially excited by the opportunity?
- Are there any individuals you know who are uninterested?
- What are the gaps or needs in the work that the generation might be able to fill?
- Do you have the information you need to extend an invitation, or would an application process be a better fit for our family?

Begin—and Pace—the Engagement

- How can you introduce the next generation to the work before formal engagement?
- Why do you need the next generation involved in the family's philanthropy right now?
- When might formal engagement begin?
- Are there opportunities for ramping up formal engagement in ways that allow for flexibility and learning?

Identify Guardrails and Open Gates

- Are there values you hope will always remain true to your family's philanthropy? How might these shift as the world around you changes?
- What decision-making power will the next generation of leaders have (immediately and in the future)? What governance or operations will you need to shift to ensure we you authentically sharing power?
- Which issues, geographies, and/or populations do you currently focus on? Do you anticipate this shifting with community needs and/or family desires?
- What operating principles do you currently work under? Are there elements of the way in which you support your grantee partners and the communities you work in that you hope will remain after you leave?
- What are the true time and effort commitments you need to include in an invitation to ensure the next generation is clear on what is needed in this role?
- What traits, skills, and knowledge do you hope the next generation of leaders will bring to bear as they move into leadership positions?

Phase Two: Complete Effective Onboarding

Share a Clear Invitation

- What background will be most helpful to share with those being invited (e.g., values statement, founders' story, hopes for future legacy)?
- What skills, knowledge, and expertise are those you are inviting bringing to the table to benefit the family's philanthropy?
- What is the exact role the individual is being asked to fill?
- What is the estimated time commitment related to the roles and responsibilities?
- What is the ideal start date for their engagement?
- What is the expected length of service?
- How and when will you be delivering this invitation?
- What is your backup plan if the invitation is declined or deferred?
- Are there any individuals not invited that you feel you should communicate with directly (e.g., cousins, spouses)?

Offer Support and Flexibility

- What are some current facts or potential future scenarios for which individuals may require flexibility and support for board service (e.g., living abroad, parent of young children, demanding work environment, chronic illness, or caregiver for an elderly family member)?
- How can you find out about the current schedules, demands, and responsibilities of invitees?
- What are some nonnegotiable responsibilities that new board members will need to fulfill?
- Where are the opportunities for flexibility? For example:
  - Can you rotate foundation board roles to allow individuals to be more or less involved at different points in time?
  - Can you create new communication norms to allow for more remote and/or asynchronous work (e.g., video conferencing or email correspondence)?
  - Can you create an understanding for how to take a leave of absence when the need arises?
- Are there other demands in leaders' lives (e.g., work or school schedules) around which you can plan the foundation or giving calendar?

- What would flexible and supportive off-ramps entail for your family?
- Are there options for engagement outside of board or formal leadership service (e.g., join a committee or attend site visits for an invitee who declines or defers the role)?
- How will you communicate the above opportunities for flexibility to invitees? Will it be within or following a formal invitation?

Make the Most of New Talent

- What do you know about the skills, knowledge, network, and learning interest of the individuals you are inviting to engage in the family's philanthropy?
- How can you find out more about the new talent you are bringing onto your team? Would a questionnaire or a conversation be a better avenue to learn more?
- What are the opportunities readily available for the next generation to make the most of their skills and knowledge?
- How might you adjust your work to incorporate the new talent more strategically if currently there are no clear ways for individuals' skills to be put to use?
- What areas can the next generation learn more about from the managing generation?
- What areas can the managing generation learn more about from the next generation?

Assess and Address Internal Power Dynamics

- What are the core decisions that the family needs to make?
- Who currently oversees each decision and why?
- What changes to decision-making power will be needed moving forward to ensure full, authentic engagement of the next generation?
- What decision-making and operations processes will you need to update, given these shifts, to formalize the sharing of power (e.g., bylaws, voting structure and practice, communication norms, outside facilitator engagement)?
- How can you, as the managing generation, ensure the next generation feels a sense of ownership and responsibility alongside you outside of governance and operations?
- What are the layers of nuance in your family dynamics that might complicate power dynamics (e.g., race, socioeconomic, gender, political, or religious beliefs)? How might you be able to mitigate and address them?
- Are there opportunities for grantee partners and/or community members to join your family philanthropy's circle of decision-makers?

Clearly Share Your Vision for Your Role

- Once the next generation is on board, what do you want your role to look like immediately? How about in one year? Five years?
- If you seek to stay involved, what do you want that to look like (e.g., receiving occasional updates, serving as an advisor, joining a committee, or holding voting power)?
- If you seek to retire, do you want to fully step back or are there any expectations you have for communication/engagement?
- Is the plan the same or different for different members of the managing generation?
- How will you communicate these desires to the next generation?

Phase Three: Continue to Grow Together

Practice (and Encourage) Humility

- What are some mistakes or failures you have had? What did you learn from them and how can you share this story with the next generation in a meaningful way?
- Which grantee partners and/or community members have taught you the most about the work you do? How can you introduce them to the next generation?
- What are some ways you can encourage the next generation to forge their own paths without fear of failure or disappointment?
- How can you and the next generation continue to nurture an environment where your philanthropy's leaders and grantee partners are encouraged to learn and grow?

Collectively Commit to a Learning Agenda

- What are some of the ways that you have learned about the issues your family is committed to?
- How might you share these ideas with the next generation?
- How can you collaborate with the next generation to hear their ideas and interests for their own learning?
- What are you eager to learn about from the next generation?

Navigate Conflict With Compassion and Grace

- What are some areas you are concerned might spur conflict between and/or among your multigenerational family team?
- How can you learn more about what the next generation is anxious or concerned about?
- Who do you know that you might want to call on to help your family navigate challenges? If you have not worked with an outside facilitator, do you know people who can offer a referral?

Honor Collective and Individual Growth and Change

- How does your family enjoy celebrating one another (e.g., shared meals, letters)? Can you use this culture of celebration in your family's philanthropy work?
- What are some effective ways you have found to interrogate areas for improvement?
- How can you strategically introduce external voices into your internal reviews (e.g., surveys or conversations with grantee partners)?
- Are there creative, enjoyable ways that you can collectively set goals (e.g., within a retreat or through vision board exercises)?

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April 2024