

New Jersey Principles for Philanthropy

Vision: CNJG envisions a healthy, thriving, and civically engaged New Jersey where people of all places, racial identities, socio-economic backgrounds, abilities, and identify expressions are valued for their gifts and talents, and we can all reach our full potential and participate generously in the common good.

Mission: CNJG supports and elevates New Jersey's philanthropic community through shared learning, collaborative and trusting relationships, network building, and leadership.

Principles for Philanthropy

Each principle begins with a common understanding followed by developmental steps **for members** beginning to look at these principles as well as the aspiration for each principle. These principles are intended to promote continuous learning, vulnerability, and reflection for how philanthropy can evolve from its historical roots to a more trusting, accountable, and equitable model.

The principles include:

- 01. Ethical Leadership**
- 02. Stewardship**
- 03. Values**
- 04. Equity & Justice**
- 05. Community Engagement**
- 06. Public Voice**
- 07. Continuous Learning**
- 08. Transparency & Accountability**

Adopted by the CNJG Board of Trustees October 20, 2023

01. Ethical Leadership

Understand:

We believe that ethical leadership is required to build and maintain community trust in philanthropy. This is achieved through adherence to laws, good governance and community-informed decision-making.

Begin:

We serve our partners and communities in a way that engenders trust. We adhere to all applicable laws and take seriously our fiduciary duties. In order to maintain trust, we seek to continuously improve our governance, decision-making processes and organizational culture.

Aspire:

We actively engage the community in our governance and decision-making, balancing donor intent and community need. We strengthen community trust by including new and diverse voices on our governing bodies and decision-making teams.

02. Stewardship

Understand:

As philanthropic entities established for charitable purposes, we operate with a privileged tax status. We recognize that, in addition to money, foundation assets include investments, relationships, human resources, connections and networks, knowledge and expertise, and stature.

Begin:

We recognize our roles as funders, employers, economic entities and community members. Through each of these roles, we use the wide range of assets held by philanthropy to create positive benefits and impact with our communities.

Aspire:

We use all of our assets to build equity and strengthen communities, as defined by the communities, themselves. We use all available tools such as values-based investing, impact investing and giving beyond any minimum requirements, to generate community benefits.

03. Values

Understand:

Having clear and transparent goals, missions and values allows us to be purposeful in philanthropy and facilitates accountability with communities and stakeholders.

Begin:

Our missions and goals are clearly stated and are transparent to the community. We hold ourselves accountable to them. We periodically examine our missions and goals for relevance, impact and alignment to our values.

Aspire:

We seek to understand and incorporate the values of our stakeholders and the communities we serve into our missions, values and goals. The community participates in examining our mission, values and goals for relevance, and holds us accountable to them.

04. Equity & Justice

Understand:

We recognize two truths. Philanthropy is created to promote the welfare of others. Our commitment to equity requires us to dismantle disparities in access to power, money and resources. At the same time, philanthropy is a system that is built on historical structural inequities and systemic racism. These inequities create a resource gap and power differential between philanthropy and the community.

Begin:

We are in a unique position to promote equity and justice. We seek to understand how intersectional inequities and racism manifest in our philanthropy and our communities. We work to become anti-racist individuals and organizations. In order to advance equity and justice, we listen to the community, honor their story and rely on their lived experience to inform our grantmaking.

Aspire:

We acknowledge our privilege in resources and resulting power. We commit to increase power sharing with our community, especially with communities that have been historically marginalized. We believe in trust and shared power in decision-making, which increases community access to philanthropic resources. This increases equity and makes progress toward dismantling racism and eliminating systemic inequities.

05. Community Engagement

Understand:

Philanthropy works best when it builds long-term community relationships rather than focusing on short-term transactions. Positive impacts increase when we hold mutually respectful, direct relationships with the community. As a result of community engagement, philanthropic efforts become more relevant and donors/grantors more accountable to our community.

Begin:

We listen to the desires of the community and we interact with the community in culturally appropriate, meaningful and respectful ways. We engage in continual and reciprocal listening and learning, cultural curiosity and humility. In our relationships, we respect the community's time and resources and strive to give more than we receive.

Aspire:

We take time to understand our relationships with the community, align our aspirations and actions, and adjust our work, as needed. We solicit community critique and feedback. We strengthen our grantmaking through power sharing, joint decision-making and funding of solutions defined and led by the community.

06. Public Voice

Understand:

Philanthropic organizations and individual donors enjoy power and influence that we must use responsibly, both individually and collectively, for the greater good. Our public voice augments our grantmaking to demonstrate partnership in communities and to advance our goals.

Begin:

We form our public voice by listening humbly to those with lived experience on issues we seek to influence. We use our collective voice to share knowledge, educate ourselves and others, and impact change on issues that advance equity and strengthen our community.

Aspire:

We amplify the voice of communities that have been historically marginalized. We use our collective voice to impact change in public policy and public opinion on issues important to our communities. We use our resources to amplify community voices and support grassroots organizing and advocacy.

07. Continuous Learning

Understand:

We have unprecedented access to information from local and global sources including science, research and community networks. Our communities offer rich information about the human impact of policies and resource distribution. We are obligated to use various information sources to actively learn and strengthen our practice and allow for vulnerability and openness to the evolution of our work.

Begin:

We are curious about our work and engage in activities that help us to consider new viewpoints and address individual biases. Through a range of learning activities including research, self-assessment, evaluation, professional development and community engagement processes we seek and use information that improves our grantmaking and expands our understanding of the community.

Aspire:

With the community, we engage in ongoing learning and jointly define funding priorities. We respect many cultural ways of learning and knowing and work to achieve individual and organizational cultural competency. We promote continuous learning with our teams and alongside our grantee partners. We improve our work by offering and using peer feedback and being open and vulnerable in the process.

08. Transparency & Accountability

Understand:

Transparency builds trust and strengthens our accountability to the community. By being transparent, we are accountable to our mission, values and goals.

Begin:

We exhibit transparency by being clear, consistent and timely in our communications, decisions and commitments. We share information publicly in order to meet regulatory requirements and uphold community expectations, in the context of our missions. We demonstrate accountability by learning from community feedback and critique.

Aspire:

We consider state and federal regulatory requirements to be the minimum standard of transparency. We excel at transparency and accountability by engaging the community in decision-making and external evaluation of our work.