



# GENERATIONS OF GENEROSITY

Racial, Ethnic and Tribal Philanthropy



 **FORUM**  
OF REGIONAL  
ASSOCIATIONS  
OF GRANTMAKERS





“When we talk about Hopi – we never talk about poverty,” says Barbara Poley, executive director of the Hopi Foundation. “We come in at the **strength of what our culture has taught us,**” she adds. Guided by the principle of Itam naap yani – “doing the work ourselves”—the foundation has spent 20 years helping Hopi tribal members sustain their culture as they work to improve jobs, health care and housing and enhance life among its 7,000 members who live on the reservation.





**G**enerosity is a hallmark of every race, ethnicity and tribe. But for almost a century, the donors who earned their money during America's Industrial Age have dominated the philanthropic landscape.

Now the spotlight is turning to communities of color that are joining these donors in a global quest to relieve human suffering. Communities of color are amassing wealth, formalizing their giving, and creating new definitions of organized philanthropy. These racial, ethnic and tribal communities have their own ideas about grantmaking and their own structures for giving money away.

Researchers from the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers' New Ventures in Philanthropy initiative are studying giving patterns among America's newest donors and discovering that their giving enriches the traditional grantmaking community.

This brochure will explain why grantmaking within communities of color is important, how racial, ethnic and tribal philanthropists structure their giving, and how you can support these donors.

---

## WHY IS INVESTING IN RACIAL, ETHNIC AND TRIBAL PHILANTHROPY IMPORTANT?

- More money becomes available for community investment
- New communities of potential donors become interested in organized philanthropy
- Greater impact can be achieved with traditional philanthropic dollars because racial, ethnic and tribal funds use them to spur giving in communities of color, build endowments, or improve organizational capacity
- Project success is enhanced because racial, ethnic and tribal leaders' cultural competence ensures appropriate design and community acceptance
- Traditional foundation boards acquire knowledge and on-the-ground experience from racial, ethnic and tribal leaders
- Communities of color gain stable institutions they can trust for support





## WHAT ARE RACIAL, ETHNIC AND TRIBAL FUNDS?

These funds are grantmaking institutions created by people who share the same culture.

### Why are Racial, Ethnic and Tribal Funds Beneficial?

Racial, ethnic and tribal funds honor the philanthropic traditions of racial, ethnic and tribal donors. The funds expand the pool of dollars flowing to and from these communities. Racial, ethnic and tribal funds' staff or advisory boards decide how and where to make grants in their communities, thereby contributing to project success.

### What Kinds of Donations to Racial, Ethnic and Tribal Funds Would be Helpful?

You can contribute toward pooled funds (such as scholarship funds) or permanent funds (such as endowments). Unrestricted grants that give funds the flexibility to support their general operations as well as organizational capacity-building grants are also useful. Donations for leadership development, capacity-building and fund-raising can be critical as well.

### Where Can I Find a Racial, Ethnic or Tribal Fund to Support?

Funds can be stand-alone organizations or funds can be housed within traditional foundations. Visit the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers' Racial, Ethnic and Tribal Knowledge Center at [www.givingforum.org/retphilanthropy](http://www.givingforum.org/retphilanthropy) for a list of racial, ethnic or tribal funds in your area.

## WHAT ARE GIVING CIRCLES?

Giving circles are groups of people who share the same funding interests and who want to make grant decisions together.

### Why are Giving Circles Important?

Giving circles attract donors who may be new to formal grantmaking. Giving circles often offer a lower giving threshold than traditional foundations, which appeals to donors who may not consider themselves wealthy.

### Where Can I Find a Giving Circle that Interests Me?

Giving circles can be separately incorporated or can be housed within racial, ethnic and tribal funds, traditional foundations or women's funds. To locate an existing giving circle or learn how to start one yourself, visit the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers' Racial, Ethnic and Tribal Knowledge Center at [www.givingforum.org/retphilanthropy](http://www.givingforum.org/retphilanthropy).

“We realized there were a lot of young people out there who had \$20 to give. Of that group, about 20 percent were seriously interested in philanthropy and really wanted to do something to **help their own** in the Asian community. Young professionals may not know how to get started, and if we can help them, then that's just the beginning. I hope our circle will grow, and that it will help individuals to develop their own philanthropy style.”

Michelle Tong, donor relations director,  
Asian American Federation of New York  
donor, AsiaNextGen Giving Circle





The Kresge Foundation awarded the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS) a \$1.5 million challenge grant in 2002, which motivated the nonprofit to boost its fundraising. “We were like a thirsty person every time they challenged us, and we always ran with it,” remembers Maha Freij, chief financial officer for ACCESS. By June 2004 ACCESS had reached the challenge grant goal.

By 2004, ACCESS had raised \$20.6 million—enough to build the first Arab American national museum in the United States and the family health and research center. And ACCESS is debt-free. In eight years ACCESS had grown from a 30-person staff organization with a \$1 million budget to a 200-staff operation with a \$12.5 million budget.

It had also expanded its database of donors by 800 percent, established ongoing giving from the community at nearly 20 percent. ACCESS is now bringing to that network educational programs about fundraising, working with foundations and a host of issues related to running a nonprofit organization.

## WHAT IS DONOR EDUCATION?

Donor education occurs in many ways, including workshops, one on one discussions and other educational opportunities offered by a variety of organizations, including funds and foundations, regional associations of grantmakers and other organizations that work with individual donors

### Why Is Donor Education Useful?

Through donor education, new and existing donors learn about the process of sharing their time, talent and treasure, and network with others to be effective for the good of their community.

Racial, ethnic and tribal donor education is a special opportunity to broaden the donor landscape by providing opportunities for these donors to learn about additional philanthropic options available to them, strategies for giving, and a deepening of the connection between their philanthropic gifts and their desire for improved communities. Donor education also gives them the opportunity to share their giving traditions and cultural experience with the broader philanthropic community.

The Hispanic Development Fund’s (HDF) relationship with the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation is a positive one, notes its cofounder, Ramon Murguia. The community foundation provides a sense of security and credibility and offered HDF opportunities for growth during its creation.

But the community foundation also benefited from HDF and its efforts. Prior to HDF’s establishment, the foundation had no history of working with the Latino community and did not have a mechanism for responding to emergency community needs.

“We had the opportunity to help them understand the Latino community,” Murguia remembers. “We’ve always made the final decision – they’ve never questioned our grants.”

The community foundation also has begun to tap HDF for Latino leaders to fill open board seats. “We’re grateful to be playing a role in trying to craft solutions that we feel are best for our community,” says Murguia.





---

## HOW CAN I CHAMPION RACIAL, ETHNIC AND TRIBAL PHILANTHROPY?

### For new givers:

- Make a donation to a stand-alone racial, ethnic or tribal foundation or a fund housed within a traditional foundation
- Start a giving circle with your friends and colleagues
- Contact your local regional association or philanthropic support organization to learn about starting your own foundation
- Visit the Racial, Ethnic and Tribal Philanthropy Knowledge Center at [www.givingforum.org/retphilanthropy](http://www.givingforum.org/retphilanthropy) to locate opportunities for donor education
- Talk to your financial advisor about tax incentives related to setting aside some of your wealth for philanthropic causes

### For traditional philanthropists:

- Support the long-term stability of racial, ethnic and tribal philanthropic organizations by funding endowments, capital campaigns or organizational capacity building
- Offer matching grants to help racial, ethnic and tribal funds attract new funders or individual donors
- Fund general support proposals, giving racial, ethnic and tribal fund leaders flexibility to respond to needs within their communities or organizations
- Contribute to racial, ethnic and tribal funds' pooled or permanent funds
- Help research and disseminate best-practice models in the field of racial, ethnic and tribal philanthropy.
- Become a fiscal agent for a racial, ethnic or tribal fund that is not yet ready to stand alone
- Promote racial, ethnic and tribal philanthropy on your Web site. Visit the Racial, Ethnic and Tribal Knowledge Center for ready-made press kits, press releases or firsthand stories
- Learn more about racial, ethnic and tribal philanthropy by attending conferences and workshops

“It does not take Warren Buffett’s wealth to be philanthropic. It starts with young professionals who are building lucrative careers. Our generation has an incredible opportunity to give back to our community in ways our parents and grandparents could not. We must remember to **lift others as we climb.**”

– Tiffany Singleton, an African-American investment management associate for JP Morgan



FORUM OF REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF GRANTMAKERS

1111 19th Street, NW, Suite 650

Washington, DC 20036

p 202.467.1120 f 202.467.0055

[www.givingforum.org](http://www.givingforum.org)

NEW VENTURES IN PHILANTHROPY IS A NATIONAL INITIATIVE OF  
THE FORUM OF REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF GRANTMAKERS