

2019  
YEAR IN  
REVIEW:

*Philanthropic  
News & Trends*

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# Introduction



We hope this catalog serves as a tool for leaders and their organizations. Many of the published articles this year have demonstrated more ways for nonprofits, NGOs, and charities to raise funds to support their visions and missions.

We have used our vantage point as communications and fundraising consultants to observe shifts in philanthropic efforts over the course of the year while at the same time observing trends from the perspectives of our clients and their communities. We know that it is essential for our clients to keep track of these changes, opportunities, and trends in order to strategize for the years ahead and sustain optimal fundraising efforts; that is why we have assembled twelve articles representing pivotal trends from 2019 and for the years ahead.

Lassiter & Associates, LLC, is a consulting firm specializing in strategy and implementation for organizational planning, fundraising, public relations, and communications. Our clients include nonprofit organizations, corporations, and foundations. Through entrepreneurial thinking and execution, we partner with our clients to drive strategic and impactful change within their organizations.

Valeria Lassiter

CEO

*Lassiter & Associates, LLC*

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

# January & February

## “More Charitable Giving Projections and Greater Underlying Disquiet”

Nonprofit Quarterly  
January  
Ruth McCambridge

McCambridge overviews the IUPUI Lilly School of Philanthropy and Marts & Lundy’s *The Philanthropy Outlook*. This document details projections of the charitable giving outlook for the next two years, especially as they relate to changes in tax law. These predictions are cautiously optimistic, despite earlier concern. Some of their general forecasts for giving include growth in total charitable giving, growth in giving by individuals, greater giving from foundations, estates, and corporations, and increased giving to nonprofits centered on education, health, and public-society benefits. Despite these more optimistic outlooks for the future, they also detail possible scenarios in which these upturns in charitable giving belie a more concerning economic trend.

## “Blackbaud Institute Releases 2018 Charitable Giving Report”

PR Newswire  
February  
Blackbaud

Blackbaud, a cloud software company focused on social good, released their seventh annual Charitable Giving Report by the Blackbaud Institute for Philanthropic Impact™. The report analyzes trends in overall and online giving in the U.S. nonprofit sector. Highlights of this year’s report, drawing on data from giving in 2018, include an overall increase in charitable giving (1.5%) and well as in online giving (1.2%). It also found that technology becoming more substantially involved in funding; 8.5% of overall fundraising revenue outside of grants came from an online source, and 24% of these online transactions were made on a mobile device. Looking at trends since 2016, the report also found that overall giving has increased 9% and online giving has increased 17%.

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2. Blackbaud. “Blackbaud Institute Releases 2018 Charitable Giving Report.” PR Newswire: Press Release Distribution, Targeting, Monitoring and Marketing, 20 Feb. 2019, [www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/blackbaud-institute-releases-2018-charitable-giving-report-300798657.html](http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/blackbaud-institute-releases-2018-charitable-giving-report-300798657.html)

# March & April

## “In a World of Fewer Donors, What Should Your Organization Do?”

Nonprofit Quarterly  
March  
Martin Levine & Ruth McCambridge

Increasingly nonprofits are seeing a trend of fewer donors, but with larger average gifts. Data from 2018 shows that, while total giving increased, the total number of donors fell by more than 4%, and donor retention fell more than 6%. This presents a problem for smaller nonprofits especially because diverse capital is essential for an organization’s robustness and avoid vulnerability should a donor fall through. It may also indicate the start of a downward trend in the sector. Levine and McCambridge suggest that tactical methods that smaller nonprofits are tending towards, such as making funding requests more visually appealing or making it easier to opt into recurring giving, are less effective than strategic moves. They encourage nonprofits to be selfish to an extent; to focus on maintaining their own resources and seeing that their needs are met. They close with a quote by Rabbi Hillel: “If I am not for myself, who is for me? And being for my own self, what am I? And if not now, when?”

## “State of Social Entrepreneurship 2019”

Echoing Green  
April  
Ben Beers, Cara Lee, Liza Mueller, and Janna Oberdorf

Echoing Green, a global nonprofit that provides fellowships, seed-stage funding, and strategic support to social entrepreneurs, received 2,574 applications for their 2019 cycle. Using these applications as a sample, they examine what data can be gleaned about the state of entrepreneurship and funding across the globe. Their applicants represent 3,006 people from 161 countries, and Echoing Green believes that they represent one of the largest collections of data on social enterprise applicants. From these applications they found some trends in funding bias. These biases disadvantage people of color, women, and indigenous leaders, and show disproportionate concentrations of global wealth. In addition, they found that funding is heavily concentrated in a small portion of organizations. There are intersectional funding inequalities; women, people of color, and those operating in countries determined to be lower on indices of development potential face the greatest biases, and those with a combination of any of these demographics face greater bias. The greatest disparity was between their black applicants and their white applicants; median funding for white applicants was \$12,245. For black applicants, the median was \$0.

3. Levine, Martin, and Ruth McCambridge. “In a World of Fewer Donors, What Should Your Organization Do?” Non Profit News | Nonprofit Quarterly, 13 Mar. 2019, [www.nonprofitquarterly.org/in-a-world-of-fewer-donors-what-should-your-organization-do](http://www.nonprofitquarterly.org/in-a-world-of-fewer-donors-what-should-your-organization-do).

4. Beers, Ben, et al. “State of Social Entrepreneurship 2019.” Echoing Green, 10 Apr. 2019, [www.echoinggreen.org/ideas/state-social-entrepreneurship-2019](http://www.echoinggreen.org/ideas/state-social-entrepreneurship-2019).

# May & June

## “13 Common Fundraising Mistakes Made by New Nonprofit Organizations”

Forbes  
May  
Forbes Nonprofit Council

The National Center for Charitable Statistics found that there are over 1.5 million tax-exempt organizations in the U.S., making finding donors difficult for nonprofits without an established reputation. To help fledgling nonprofits find funders, the Forbes Nonprofit Council, comprised of 13 chief executives from successful nonprofits, created a list of the most common mistakes they see new organizations making and what can be done to avoid them. Their advice includes focusing on relationships that donations build rather than the amount given, communicating about what your organization is doing and how donations help, diversifying your funding portfolio, and finding funders that align with your mission rather than trying to appeal to everyone.

## “This Funder is Getting to the Root of Problems with a Do, Learn, Share Approach”

Forbes  
June  
Alyssa Wright

Philanthropist Charlotte Wagner, founder of Boston’s Wagner Foundation, established a framework called “Do, Learn, Share” that gives a chance for grantee partners to “establish best practices for long term impact” and ensure resources are well and encourage collaboration amongst NGOs.

The Wagner Foundation shows the success of their model with the example of one of their grantees who has recently benefited from it: Root Capital. Root Capital connects farmers in Latin America, Africa, and Asia to global markets. In 2018, they launched their Gender Equity Grants program that was being funded by Wagner Foundation. When it became clear that their deadlines would need to be extended another six months, the Foundation not only supported the extension, they asked Root Capital to keep them updated about what was working and what wasn’t so they could continue to learn and grow from this setback. Wagner says this framework is based on a willingness to take risks, something the nonprofit community sorely needs, and to learn how to “better serve the communities they care about”.

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# July & August

## “Can Organized Philanthropy Learn to Learn?”

Forbes Magazine  
July  
Timothy McClimon

McClimon reviews *Learning in Philanthropy: A Guidebook*, published by Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO), as a resource for nonprofit organizations to “make lasting progress toward the goals that they share with their nonprofit partners and communities”. To do this, he says, these organizations need to be constantly learning: about what is happening in their community and how change is impacting nonprofits.

The GEO is made up of over 7,000 grant-makers who seek to disseminate grant-making practices to strengthen the philanthropic field. Their guidebook is based on the feedback and advice from these grant-makers and seeks to answer questions nonprofits may have about how to learn and grow with their donors and community, and to better connect with learning at all levels of their organization.

Philanthropy Women  
August  
Kiersten Marek

## “Women Give More with Less”

Research recently conducted by PayPal indicates that, despite making 19% less than men, women are donating more and getting more generous as they age. PayPal’s 2018 annual Global Impact Report, drawing on the payments they process for more than half a million charities, shows trends in where and how people donate their money electronically. Some key information from this report includes data showing that people from the lowest income bracket give the greatest percentage of their income, women donate more frequently on average than men, and women 50 and over donate more than any other category. Marek notes that this research can be a great model for corporations to highlight women’s leadership in philanthropy.

7. McClimon, Timothy J. “Can Organized Philanthropy Learn To Learn?” *Forbes*, Forbes Magazine, 29 July 2019, [www.forbes.com/sites/timothyjmcclimon/2019/07/29/can-organized-philanthropy-learn-to-learn/#4d4b12744946](http://www.forbes.com/sites/timothyjmcclimon/2019/07/29/can-organized-philanthropy-learn-to-learn/#4d4b12744946).

8. Marek, Kiersten. “Women Give More from Less.” *Philanthropy Women*, 27 Aug. 2019, [www.philanthropywomen.org/research/women-give-more-from-less](http://www.philanthropywomen.org/research/women-give-more-from-less).

# September & October

## “Silicon Valley’s Brand of Philanthropy”

Axios  
November  
Kia Kokalitcheva

Many nonprofits rely on corporate sponsors for funding needed to operate their organization and to reach a wider audience, but it can be difficult to get attention from corporations, especially the right corporations. Eight members of Forbes’ Nonprofit Council give their guidance on success and standing out. Some of their advice discusses how to be more attractive to corporate sponsors, such as clearly stating what association with your organization will bring to corporations and tuning into what’s in it for funding partners. Others talk about values, advising nonprofits to seek sponsors with matching ethics and setting boundaries about what your organization will and will not negotiate on.

## “JPMorgan Chase Invests \$675,000 to Help 20 Nonprofits Led by or Serving People of Color”

Crain’s Detroit Business  
October

On October 29<sup>th</sup>, JPMorgan Chase, in partnership with IFF and Fiscal Management Associates, contributed \$675,000 to the Stronger Nonprofits Initiative. This initiative works with 20 Detroit-based nonprofits, all of which are led by people of color or serve low-income communities of color in Detroit. Leaders of these nonprofits will participate in full-day workshops and one-on-one sessions on topics of “financial management, capital access, facility management, and the role real estate analysis plays in the financial health of their organizations”, all intended to help the participants build capacity and maximize the impact of their organizations. This investment is part of JPMorgan Chase’s \$200 million commitment to aid in Detroit’s economic recovery.

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10. “JPMorgan Chase Investing \$675,000 to Help 20 Nonprofits Led by or Serving People of Color.” Crain’s Detroit Business, 30 Oct. 2019, [www.crainsdetroit.com/nonprofit/jpmorgan-chase-investing-675000-help-20-nonprofits-led-or-serving-people-color](http://www.crainsdetroit.com/nonprofit/jpmorgan-chase-investing-675000-help-20-nonprofits-led-or-serving-people-color).



# November & December

## “Eight Key Actions Nonprofits Should Take When Pursuing Sponsors”

Forbes  
September  
Expert Panel, Forbes Nonprofit  
Council

The new money class of Silicon Valley is increasingly seeking to commit their donations to “effective altruism” by using data to seek the causes with the highest yield. This method is focused on big picture issues that are deemed fixable, but often neglect local issues, more traditional areas of giving like the arts, and ongoing hard-to-fix issues like hunger and inequality. Over the past few years, only 10% of donations from Silicon Valley (excluding San Francisco) have gone to local charities, and less than half of that have gone to groups that deal with community issues like food banks. Kokalitcheva remains hopeful though, saying that local nonprofits are getting wise to this trend and beginning to be clearer about community issues and their solutions, and tracking “impact metrics” to show exactly how their organization is helping people.

## “Rethinking Philanthropy For The Next Generation”

Forbes  
December  
Lawson Bader, Forbes Nonprofit  
Council

Millennials are increasingly being recognized as the most generous generation, despite earning less and having greater debt than previous generations. Entrepreneurs in the generation are giving more than twice their time and money to charitable causes than baby boomer and Gen X entrepreneurs, and overwhelmingly use the power of collective action to make their small changes have a greater impact. This new shift in charitable demographic means a change in giving patterns; millennials tend to give frequently, in small amounts, and often online. Millennials are also more likely to give to causes meant to ease suffering rather than what previous generations preferred: hospitals, arts, and education. Bader expresses concern that this may mean a trend away from giving to sustainability causes or causes that address bigger societal issues and calls for a rebranding of this type of philanthropy so it will better mesh with Millennial values.

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[www.lassiterassociates.org](http://www.lassiterassociates.org)  
(240) 235-5045  
[vlassiter@lassiterassociates.org](mailto:vlassiter@lassiterassociates.org)

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