

Moving Your Philanthropy Closer to Social Justice

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Pathways to Progress

- A project of Effective Communities LLC
- Presented on the World Wide Web as www.JustPhilanthropy.org
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Purposes of the Project

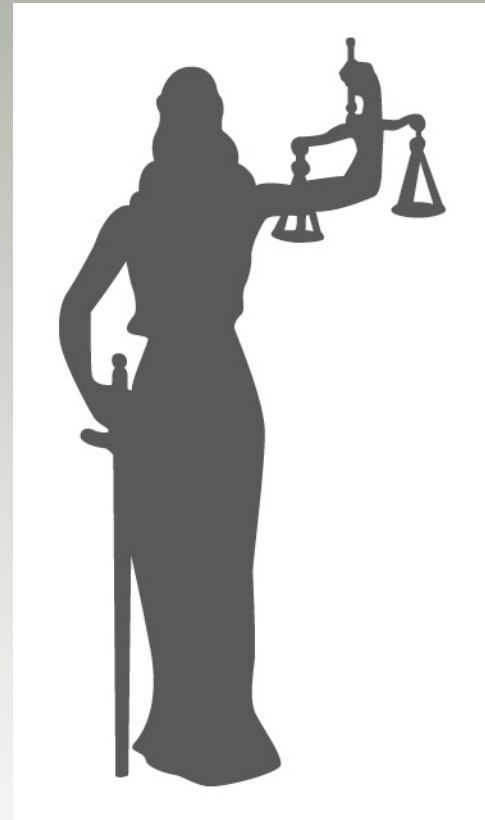
- Support more social justice through philanthropy
- Develop benchmarks for evaluation and communication
- Create tools that support discussion and inform strategy
- Communicate a vision for philanthropy that includes effectiveness and justice

Our Approach

- Searched for roots of effectiveness in addressing disparities
- Learned from practitioners and organizations doing the work
- Interviews and analysis by multicultural team
- Synthesized “what progress looks like” into “pathways to progress”
- Disseminating findings through website and conferences

Major Findings

- Gaps or disparities are everywhere
- Progress is possible
- Philanthropy, if done well, can help
- There's a role for all kinds of organizations
- The challenge: orient philanthropy to address disparities



home

about the project

pathways to progress

resources

about us



Choose a path

PATHWAYS TO PROGRESS

The data are consistent: increasing racial equity and strengthening social justice remain challenges to our society. Philanthropy has much to contribute in furthering progress, but could be more intentional.

JustPhilanthropy.org presents six pathways to focus philanthropy on racial equity and social justice, along with promising practices, examples from the field, and many additional resources.

We welcome your feedback.

JustPhilanthropy.org

- Prepares your organization – and others -- to be more productive in arenas you already care about
- Raise awareness of issues as well as opportunities
- Grows support in key sectors of your community
- Stimulates better ideas
- Suggests practical steps along practical pathways

Pathways to Progress

- 1) Preparing the Organization to Address Social Justice
- 2) Talking Safely and Listening Productively About Social Justice
- 3) Advancing Solutions That Can Close Disparities and Create Justice
- 4) Strengthening Relationships, Networks, and Leadership
- 5) Increasing Philanthropic Resources to Address Disparities and Gaps
- 6) Closing the Gaps or Disparities in Social Justice

Pathway: Preparing the Organization



Challenges:

- “*What* problems?”
- “It’s not what we do”
- “We’ll lose donors”
- “What will people think?”
- “Not now”

Pathway: Preparing the Organization



Promising practices:

- Discover where your interests intersects with injustice
- Explore tools for integrating social justice into your repertoire
- Inquire into local conditions
- Increase diversity of viewpoint, experience, information, and skills
- Become a learning organization, and foster learning communities

Pathway: Preparing the Organization



Benchmarks for evaluation & communication:

- We're better at seeing, understanding, and talking about problems of injustice
- We see an improved role for our philanthropy and are taking "next steps"
- Our organization is better connected to key segments of the community
- We've gained more support from others than we've lost

Pathway: Talking and Listening



Challenges:

- The term “social justice” can trigger emotional reactions
- It’s very easy for people to feel threatened by “the Other” – and to stop listening
- Many people, especially of a dominant culture, don’t see the problems of disparities

Pathway: Talking and Listening



Promising practices:

- Create conversations that “go deeper and safer”
- Create conversations that bridge divides
- Create opportunities that create trust

Pathway: Talking and Listening



Benchmarks for evaluation and communication:

- The term “social justice” creates less fear now that we better understand it and can get closer to its issues and people
- We’re more open to learning – and we have been learning -- from more and different segments of our community
- More of us and more of them are able to talk about social justice without freaking out

Pathway: Moving Solutions Along



Challenges:

- Not everyone *wants* solutions, and many good ideas or solutions are allowed to wither on the vine
- “Looking upstream” for good ideas not a practiced habit
- There’s a long road between conceiving a good idea and seeing it sufficiently implemented to make a difference.
- Good ideas coming from “the Other” are more likely to be dismissed
- Community organizing and advocacy are under-appreciated

Pathway: Moving Solutions Along



Promising practices:

- Invite discussion in your community about local trends
- Help communities surface, upgrade, and promote promising solutions
- Encourage discussion (especially across traditional lines), facilitate next steps, and encourage broader participation

Pathway: Moving Solutions Along



Benchmarks for evaluation & communication:

- We're taking a closer look at the root causes of some of our communities' problems, not just its symptoms
- Good ideas or solutions are getting more of a hearing and are gaining support
- Resistance to progress is less than it was
- There's greater buy-in from more segments of the community

Pathway: Relationships, Networks, & Leadership



Challenges:

- Trust is an essential but insufficiently widespread commodity
- Minority or disenfranchised groups carry the long-standing scars being marginalized and are insufficiently organized
- Minority networks and leadership are often only partially visible to or appreciated by the larger community
- Networks of support are not well-enough developed, especially where distance and isolation are an issue

Pathway: Relationships, Networks, & Leadership



Promising practices:

- Support relationships built on trust
- Strengthen partnerships built on trusting relationships that can implement good ideas
- Strengthen networks and leadership that can create wider support for good ideas
- Support emerging leaders and tend to the long-term quality of the social justice workforce
- Convene groups to spread innovation

Pathway: Relationships, Networks, & Leadership



Benchmarks for evaluation and communication:

- Increase in the level of trust across communities
- An increased role for disenfranchised groups in creating solutions
- Stronger networks of support
- More engaged leadership
- Less isolation of rural strength

Pathway: Increasing Philanthropic Resources



Challenges:

- The term “philanthropy” is alien to many people, even though it’s so widely practiced
- The amounts given to “social justice” represent a very small portion of the total pie.
- Models of philanthropy historically have been more focused on helping the needy than on fixing systems that contribute to problems
- Philanthropy’s endowed funds are often invested in ways that work against social justice

Pathway: Increasing Philanthropic Resources



Promising practices:

- Help communities discover their assets and cultivate generosity
- Upgrade philanthropy's "business model" to free up more funds for social justice
- Allocate more to efforts that contribute to social justice
- Help the field orient to social justice philanthropy

Pathway: Increasing Philanthropic Resources



Benchmarks for evaluation and communication:

- The term “philanthropy” is increasingly embraced and practiced by more segments of the community
- The amounts we’ve given to social justice have increased, especially relative to the whole
- Our own philanthropy is increasingly focused on fixing systems that contribute to problems
- Our investments practices and operational budgets are more aligned with our mission and activities

Pathway: Putting it All Together & Fixing the Problem



Challenges:

- Injustice and disparities are everywhere, according to data
- Too many organizations aren't well enough prepared to play a useful role
- The subject of justice easily inflames counter-productive emotions
- Promising solutions can die on the way to implementation
- The connections and leadership needed to move solutions are poorly supported
- Philanthropic resources directed to this issue are insufficient
- Strategy, discipline, and patience are not virtues in traditional philanthropy

Pathway: Putting it All Together & Fixing the Problem



Promising practices:

- Choose an injustice to focus on, create a plan to fix it, pursue it, and stay focused on evidence of progress
- Choose or develop external indicators or metrics of progress, and commit to “moving that needle” or “bending that trend line”
- Integrate elements from *all* the pathways, especially in combination, and evaluate and communicate your progress along the way
- Direct a *variety* of your organization’s assets to the challenge
- Create a culture of accountability and cooperation inside and outside the organization

Pathway: Putting it All Together & Fixing the Problem



Benchmarks for evaluation and communication:

- Indicators of the injustice we're working on show progress
- Our organization is better able to play a useful role
- The subject of justice is increasingly legitimate for discussion
- We've helped surface and advance promising solutions
- The necessary relationships, partnerships, and leadership are more capable
- We've increased philanthropic resources directed to this issue
- We're learning the art and craft of using our community's resources to the challenge of moving the needle and bending the trend lines

Summary: JustPhilanthropy.org – can help you to...

- Prepare your organization – and others -- to be more productive in arenas you already care about
- Raise awareness of issues as well as opportunities
- Grow support in key sectors of your community
- Stimulate better ideas
- Suggest practical steps along practical pathways

Supportive consultation can facilitate all this!

Current and Future Goals for *JustPhilanthropy.org*

- Present to meetings of networks and associations in philanthropy and social justice
- Facilitate staff and board discussion to identify opportunities for addressing disparities
- Coach organizations in strategies for evaluation and communication

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