



FIDELITY CHARITABLE TRUSTEES' INITIATIVE

# 2019 Impact Report

 **FIDELITY** Charitable<sup>SM</sup>  
*Make more of a difference*

The Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative is a direct grantmaking program, separate from the Fidelity Charitable donor-advised fund, whose mission is to expand charitable giving and advance the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors.



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**Catherine D'Amato**  
Chair of the  
Trustees' Philanthropy  
Fund Committee



**Pam Norley**  
President

*"This year's grants reflect the wide-ranging and critical work done by infrastructure organizations that work every day to help donors and charities across the country."*

– Sarah Gelfand  
Vice President,  
Social Impact Programs

## A message from the Board and the President

Just as roads and bridges provide critical support to our society, the social sector relies on an infrastructure in order to do its work. Although a strong infrastructure is fundamental to a vibrant social sector, it is easy to take for granted all that is required to maintain our sector's "pipes and plumbing"—and for donors and grantmakers to overlook the organizations that work in this space.

Recent shifts and trends—both in society at large and specific to the philanthropic sector—are changing the way that nonprofit leaders operate. As nonprofits endeavor to respond to these environmental changes, the role for infrastructure organizations that can help them is tremendous. For example, as technology evolves, nonprofits must keep up—enhancing their data security protocols and enabling a seamless online experience for donors. Similarly, it is increasingly clear that the social sector must advance its efforts to embrace diversity, equity and inclusion. And as charities continue to push to address complex and multi-faceted issues, finding ways to collaborate can help them save costs, increase efficiency and grow their impact. Several of our recent grants—including those detailed in this report—reflect some of these trends.

In early 2018, the Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative refocused its grantmaking strategy to concentrate primarily on strengthening the social sector's infrastructure—the universe of organizations providing the support systems needed to help donors and nonprofits thrive. In the 2019 fiscal year, we granted \$6.4 million to organizations working to shore up our sector's foundation regionally and nationally. And we are excited to continue supporting and shining a spotlight on this vital work.

As we reflect on the last year and look ahead to the future, we are guided by our core belief that a high-performing philanthropic sector is imperative to solving some of the toughest problems the world faces. Building a strong framework today will ensure we have a healthy, inclusive and vibrant sector tomorrow and for the future beyond.

# About the Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative

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The Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative is a direct grantmaking program of Fidelity Charitable separate from its donor-advised fund program. Last fiscal year, the Trustees' Initiative made 23 grants totaling \$6.4 million to strengthen the resilience, sustainability and effectiveness of the social sector's infrastructure.

To achieve this mission, the Trustees' Initiative provides funding for the shared resources, information, networks, research and advocacy that all donors and nonprofits need to achieve their intended impact. Its grantmaking is focused on programs, projects and organizations that:

- Enhance individual donors' ability to make effective and informed giving decisions.
- Strengthen intermediaries and networks that provide information, research and advocacy needed by nonprofits to achieve their intended impact.

**Since its inception, the Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative has made grants totaling more than \$34 million.**

# Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative 2019 Impact

In FY 2019, the Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative funded

23 grants totaling

\$6.4M



**\$2.2M Individual donor education and support**

**\$1.7M Nonprofit collaboration and information sharing**

**\$1.5M Nonprofit capacity-building services**

**\$475K Research and policy advocacy**

**\$300K Special opportunities**

\$279,000

Average grant size



40%

of grants are multi-year commitments

Since inception, the Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative has made grants totaling more than

\$34M



# Why infrastructure?

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Nonprofits in the social sector need infrastructure to support their frontline work of doing good in the world—things like feeding, educating, rebuilding, healing and supporting populations in need. The charities that are best positioned to achieve their missions are the ones that have strong internal management, up-to-date technology and robust financial capabilities.

Nonprofits often get the coaching and resources they need to develop and strengthen these capabilities from nonprofit service providers—which often deliver their services for free or a low cost. These providers deliver the research, professional training, policy advocacy and governance support that help nonprofits build and hone their management and operational capabilities.

Despite the essential role that these intermediary organizations play in strengthening charities, they are easy for grantmakers and donors to overlook. In fact, the Foundation Center estimates that roughly \$190 million went to support the social sector's infrastructure in 2015—representing a mere 0.6 percent of total giving that year.

While not always evident, this behind-the-scenes work can be catalytic—touching not just one life or one population, but bolstering the full community of nonprofits working to make a difference. Maintaining a strong foundation is essential to ensuring a strong and healthy philanthropic sector, and that is why the Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative is committed to funding infrastructure. Where others see challenge, we see an opportunity to strengthen the resilience, sustainability and effectiveness of the social sector at large—which, in turn, will make more of a difference for us all.

# Helping donors make smarter philanthropy decisions

The first pillar of the Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative grantmaking strategy is to fund organizations that help individual donors make more effective philanthropy decisions. These grants support organizations creating the resources and providing the information that donors need to make informed decisions about charitable giving. Educated, well-equipped donors are able to achieve their intended impact more successfully—which is best for donors, the charities they support and the sector at large.



## EXAMPLE

### VolunteerMatch

Many charities rely heavily on volunteer support, but it can be challenging and inefficient to link organizations with people who wish to get involved. VolunteerMatch is a national nonprofit working to make those connections as the nation's largest volunteer matchmaking platform—connecting more than 15 million people with volunteer opportunities over the last 20 years.

With a recent pivot to focus on corporate employee engagement, VolunteerMatch is strengthening their support for businesses that wish to offer meaningful volunteer opportunities to their employees. Funding from the Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative has helped VolunteerMatch scale a subscription model that gives corporate partners access to their database of volunteer opportunities—allowing them to offer employees more engaging, relevant ways to serve their communities. Greg Baldwin, CEO of VolunteerMatch, said, "We're passionate about putting technology to good use to help people get more connected to the causes they care about, and to be a part of the community that they live in."

# Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative Donor Support Grants

FY2019

Grantee	Purpose of grant
<b>Candid</b>	To design and test a re-imagined GuideStar user experience to make it easier for donors to search for and identify nonprofits of interest.
<b>Charity Navigator</b>	To assist in the migration of the organization's technology platform to the cloud and to help support the expansion of their ratings platform.
<b>Giving Tuesday (92nd Street Y)</b>	To support Giving Tuesday as it transitions to a new entity. This grant also helped with development of a new technology platform for data-sharing and collaboration related to online giving.
<b>GreatNonprofits</b>	To develop a video storytelling service, which would allow donors to share their giving and volunteering experiences.
<b>Pro Inspire</b>	To develop training programs focused on race equity for individual donors.
<b>Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania</b>	To underwrite the Center for High Impact Philanthropy's Annual High Impact Giving Guide, which identifies opportunities for donors to make a bigger difference with their charitable gifts.
<b>VolunteerMatch</b>	To develop an open technology platform that will support the organization's focus on employee engagement—allowing businesses to offer more meaningful volunteer opportunities to employees.

# Building capacity to effect greater change

The Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative also funds intermediary organizations providing exceptional capacity-building services that improve the effectiveness of nonprofits in key areas, such as: leadership development, professional training, financial management and more. These skilled intermediary organizations are well-positioned to reach charities across the country—creating a ripple effect of positive change and carrying out the Trustees' Initiative goal of helping nonprofits do their work more effectively.



## EXAMPLE

### Propel Nonprofits

Propel Nonprofits is a Minnesota-based organization that fuels the missions of other Midwest nonprofits by providing guidance, expertise and capital. Propel was formed in 2017 by a merger of MAP for Nonprofits, which provided strategic planning and governance guidance, and the Nonprofits Assistance Fund, which focused on financial health. The two organizations were complementary, and saw that by merging, they could streamline support services for the nonprofits they both served.

The Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative provided a grant to support Propel through a period of post-merger changes and challenges, from combining data systems and processes to organizational culture building. Funding will be granted over three years, allowing Propel to take a long-term approach and ensure that they are implementing the best solutions for continued growth and enduring success. "In the next three years, we hope to have fully integrated finance, strategy and governance services together into an interconnected approach so that everything is done through those three lenses," said Kate Barr, President and CEO of Propel.



## SPOTLIGHT

# Minnesota Council of Nonprofits

The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits (MCN) is an organization working to inform, promote, connect and strengthen individual nonprofits and the nonprofit sector in Minnesota. Established in 1987, MCN has grown to more than 2,200 members—one of the largest state nonprofit associations in the country. MCN has a long history of providing vital resources and training for nonprofits across their state, and they don't want that to change. But MCN leaders were faced with one thing they definitely needed to shake up: their technology. It was time to upgrade.

In Minnesota, where many nonprofits are rurally located, providing online access to resources is critical for MCN to maximize their reach and serve their furthest members—as evidenced by the 1.5 million annual visitors to their website.

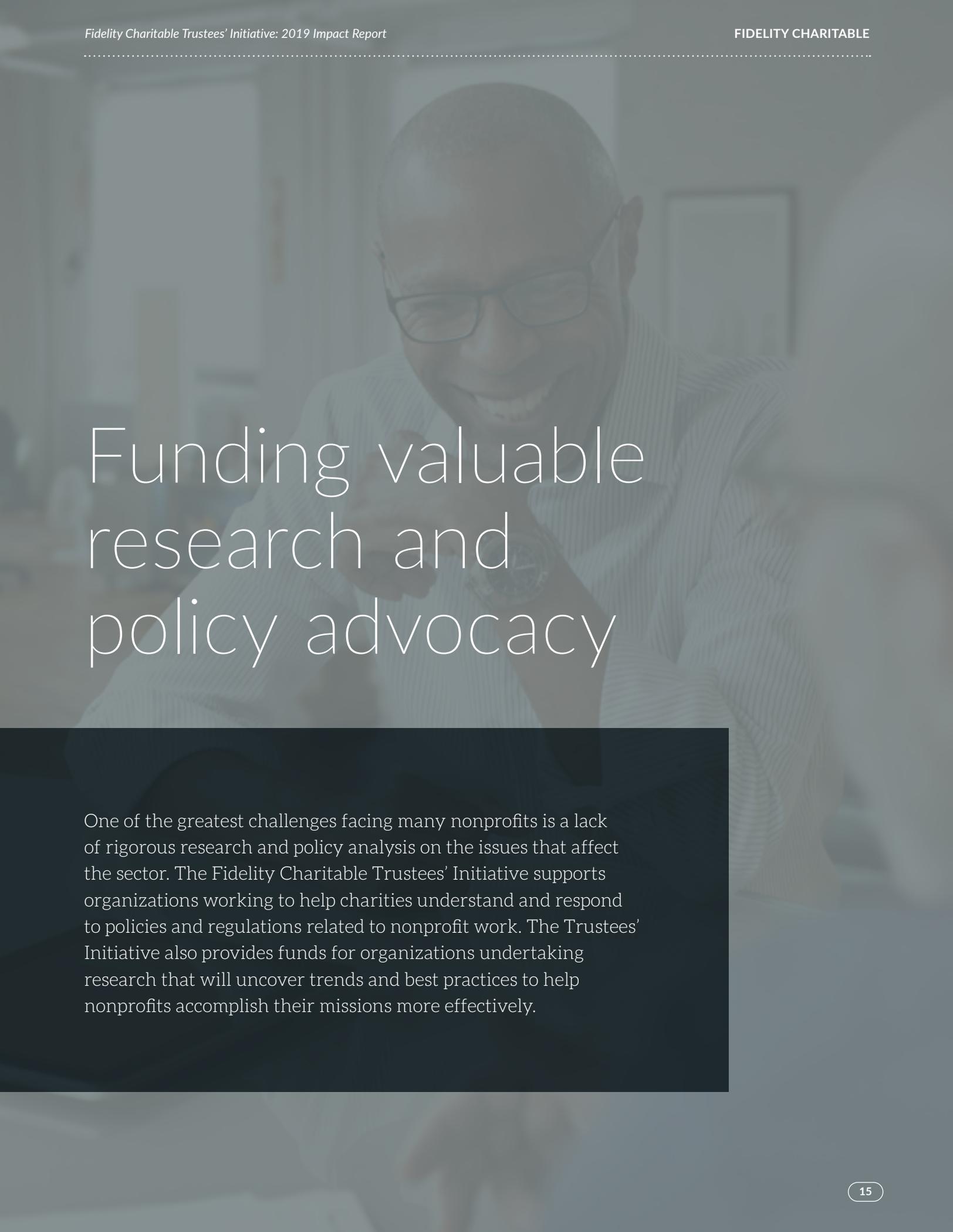
“We needed a way to build on the existing work that our state association has been able to lead for so many years, but really take it into 2019,” said Kari Aanestad, MCN's Director of Advancement. “It was about finding a way to expand the number of people who are accessing our training opportunities.”



# Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative Capacity-building Grants

FY2019

Grantee	Purpose of grant
<b>Association of Leaders in Volunteer Engagement</b>	To support the development of a strategic plan for the National Alliance of Volunteer Engagement, which helps promote and encourage volunteering.
<b>Institute for Nonprofit Practice</b>	To develop a comprehensive marketing and communications plan that will help the organization in expanding its training services to nonprofit leaders.
<b>Propel Nonprofits</b>	To assist with post-merger activities, including data consolidation, internal process improvements and organizational culture building.
<b>Tech Impact</b>	To integrate two organizations' platforms—Tech Impact and Idealware—and to develop an online nonprofit technology resource center for nonprofits to learn about technology solutions.
<b>The Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Junior University</b>	To develop and deliver curriculum and workshops about digital data governance and security to nonprofit leaders and boards.

A man with glasses and a white shirt is smiling and looking at a smartphone. The background is a blurred office setting.

# Funding valuable research and policy advocacy

One of the greatest challenges facing many nonprofits is a lack of rigorous research and policy analysis on the issues that affect the sector. The Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative supports organizations working to help charities understand and respond to policies and regulations related to nonprofit work. The Trustees' Initiative also provides funds for organizations undertaking research that will uncover trends and best practices to help nonprofits accomplish their missions more effectively.



*“This funding has positioned our organization not only to dig deeper into understanding which practices matter most, but to understand what investments are going to make the biggest impact for thousands of nonprofit leaders.”*

– Zach Davis, BoardSource  
Director of Strategic Development

#### EXAMPLE

## BoardSource

BoardSource is a national nonprofit working to strengthen the philanthropic sector by providing valuable tools and resources to support nonprofits' leadership and governance. The Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative provided a grant to help expand the research BoardSource conducts to understand challenges, opportunities and best practices for nonprofit boards—with the aim of developing additional resources to help boards optimize their effectiveness and overall organizational performance. “Our goal is to provide the right tools so boards that aren't performing effectively can surface the opportunities that they need to grow,” said Zach Davis, Director of Strategic Development at BoardSource. “This funding has positioned our organization not only to dig deeper into understanding which practices matter most, but to understand what investments are going to make the biggest impact for thousands of nonprofit leaders. It's going to have a lasting impact on the sector and on our organization.”

# Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative Research and Policy Advocacy Grants

FY2019

Grantee	Purpose of grant
<b>Independent Sector</b>	To support tax policy research and scenario modeling to evaluate the impact of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act on the nonprofit sector, with a special focus on UBIT impact.
<b>Independent Sector</b>	To support the organization's general operations and core programs including its policy, research and sector-building work.

A background image showing three women in business attire looking at a document together. The image is faded and serves as a backdrop for the text.

# Enabling critical collaboration among nonprofits

One way to maximize efficiency and extend the limited resources available to many charities is to share data and increase collaboration among complementary organizations. But what sounds like a straightforward solution is far from simple. The Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative provides funding to support organizations creating strategic partnerships among nonprofits that allow the groups to achieve more than what was possible alone.



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*“It’s just too important a time in the nonprofit world. There’s significant need for any and all change that can help nonprofits sustain and grow their community impact at a greater level.”*

— Nadya K. Shmavonian,  
SeaChange Partner

#### EXAMPLE

## SeaChange Capital Partners

SeaChange Capital Partners provides vital resources to address the needs of nonprofits, such as capital, analysis, advice and connections. SeaChange manages three funds that provide financial support and education to nonprofits that are exploring or implementing mergers or acquisitions. With more than 1.5 million nonprofits in the United States—77 percent of which have annual operating budgets of less than \$1 million—more nonprofits could benefit from the efficiencies that long-term sustained collaborations can provide, such as pooled resources and data-sharing. But because these collaborations are not yet widespread in the nonprofit sector, many nonprofit leaders lack expertise around how to navigate these transactions.

The Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative provided SeaChange with grant funding to develop a strategy that broadens the scope of their work beyond direct transactions to build the field of sustained nonprofit collaboration nationally. Nadya K. Shmavonian, a partner at SeaChange, believes that this work is critical to the long-term health of the philanthropic sector. “It’s just too important a time in the nonprofit world,” she said. “There’s significant need for any and all change that can help nonprofits sustain and grow their community impact at a greater level. We believe that sustained collaborations are a vital tool for achieving that goal.”



## SPOTLIGHT

# CDC Foundation

When faced with an emergency response, the immediate need is to ensure that those directly impacted get the relief and protection required to overcome the crisis. The last thing on the minds of most victims is soccer. But when crisis struck one community, that's exactly what they received: boxes and boxes of new soccer balls.

"There was a lack of prioritization of resources and requests, and the soccer balls got sent when there were more critical resources needed—like water and medicine—that should have been priorities," said Melissa Bennett, emergency response coordinator at the CDC Foundation, who heard the story as a part of a listening session they conducted among partners involved in emergency response.

This story illustrates one of the biggest problems with crisis response: the gap in coordination and communication between government, private and philanthropic entities leading up to and in the hectic aftermath of a crisis—which can result in inefficiencies and gaps in serving those who need the help. And with the frequency and severity of disasters and other crises on the rise, the need for effective coordination and support is greater than ever. The CDC Foundation and other Atlanta organizations are looking to help address this problem. The CDC Foundation is an independent nonprofit that forges partnerships between private businesses, charitable organizations and individuals in support of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) mission to protect the health, safety and security of people in America and around the world.



# Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative Collaboration and Information-sharing Grants

FY2019

Grantee	Purpose of grant
<b>Benetech</b>	To support the pilot and implementation of a centralized data platform in the Bay Area that allows human service nonprofits to more efficiently manage and deliver the data needed by referral agencies.
<b>CDC Foundation</b>	To develop a blueprint for a global health crisis coordination center, which will coordinate government, private and philanthropic organizations in the aftermath of a public health emergency to enable quick and effective responses.
<b>Community Solutions International</b>	To develop a communications module that will help communities better advocate their work to address homelessness.
<b>Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF)</b>	To establish a learning community that informs the development of new products and services that will allow NFF to better support collaborative projects among groups of nonprofits.
<b>Seachange Capital Partners</b>	To develop a strategy to de-stigmatize and increase long-term collaborations, such as mergers and acquisitions, among nonprofits—in an effort to optimize efficiency and effectiveness.

# Responding to needs in real time

In addition to its established grantmaking strategy, the Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative has maintained flexibility for a small portion of its funds to be used in real-time response to communities experiencing emergencies and natural disasters. This fund gives the Trustees' Initiative flexibility to offer support when help is needed most.

# Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative Disaster Response Grants

FY2019

Grantee	Purpose of grant
<b>American Red Cross</b>	To support the 2018 California Wildfires Relief Fund, assisting Californians in the aftermath of wildfires that consumed thousands of acres.
<b>Center for Disaster Philanthropy</b>	To support the 2018 Atlantic Hurricane Season Recovery Fund. These funds were designated for the Carolinas, where Hurricanes Florence and Michael caused catastrophic flooding and billions of dollars in damages.

# Empowering employee generosity at Fidelity Charitable

For three years, the Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative has funded the Make More of a Difference Challenge—a program designed to engage Fidelity Charitable employees directly in its grantmaking mission. This associate-led philanthropy program invites employees to nominate a nonprofit, advocate for their chosen organization and ultimately vote to select four finalists that will each receive a \$25,000 grant. The final selections each year include nonprofits based within 30 miles of Fidelity Charitable's offices in Durham, NC and Westlake, TX, as well as two nonprofits that can be located anywhere in the United States.

# Make More of a Difference Challenge Finalists

FY2019

Grantee	Purpose of grant
<b>Casa Myrna</b>	Casa Myrna provides shelter and supportive services to survivors of domestic violence, providing safety, resources, advocacy and information. They also operate SafeLink, the Massachusetts-wide domestic violence hotline.
<b>Durham Literacy Center</b>	Based in Durham, NC, the Durham Literacy Center provides free literacy services to adults and out-of-school youth. Their programs include English classes for immigrant adults, preparation and tutoring to help youth and adult learners pass high school equivalency tests, and GED and life skills classes for incarcerated youth.
<b>Family Gateway</b>	Family Gateway provides stability and life-changing supportive services to children and families affected by homelessness in Dallas County, TX. The organization focuses on housing and income for adults and education stabilization for children—providing emergency shelter and supportive housing and many other critical services.
<b>World Central Kitchen</b>	World Central Kitchen is dedicated to providing hot, chef-prepared meals to those in need. The organization activates in response to disasters around the world, including devastating hurricanes in the Caribbean in 2017.

*“When I was in third grade, my family and I found ourselves in need of a safe haven. Casa Myrna gave us that haven and also provided a community of families going through similar experiences. I was extremely honored to be one of the Make More of a Difference Challenge finalists, and I am so grateful to know that the Fidelity Charitable Trustees’ Initiative gift will help other families that find themselves in a similar position.”*

- Lujan Johnson, Vice President, Technology Agile Office

# Fidelity Charitable Board of Trustees



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as of June 30, 2019



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