



FIDELITY CHARITABLE TRUSTEES' INITIATIVE

2021 Impact Report

 **FIDELITY** CharitableSM
Make more of a difference

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

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



Pamela Norley
President

A message from the Board of Trustees and the President

Before the pandemic hit, the Institute for Nonprofit Practice used grant funding from the Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative to digitize its programming and update its website. Because of this simple investment in infrastructure, the nonprofit was able to jump into action to help other nonprofits navigate the COVID-19 crisis and had the immediate ability to take its work virtual while so many others were struggling to do just that.

"We could give people real-time information," says Yolanda Coentro, President and CEO for the Institute for Nonprofit Practice. That real-time information included advice on how nonprofits could access much-needed Paycheck Protection Program loans.

Infrastructure organizations, like the Institute for Nonprofit Practice, play a critical role in a crisis. They are well-positioned to share fast, trustworthy information that can make all the difference to a frontline nonprofit.

"Infrastructure sounds abstract," says Coentro, "Until you start to get emails from people who are like, 'If I didn't know this funding was open, I wouldn't have gotten \$300,000 to pay my employees.'"

Frontline nonprofits have risen to the challenges of the past year and a half, but they can't do it alone—and they shouldn't have to. Infrastructure organizations provide the support system that makes all the difference in a crisis.

The Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative has been supporting nonprofit infrastructure organizations for years—2021 is showing us why that investment is so important. Simply put, infrastructure is what nonprofits need to get their best work done: leadership training, appropriate technology, knowledge of best practices and a voice in advocacy. Every nonprofit has infrastructure needs, and some nonprofits focus solely on supporting their colleagues in the field, preparing the sector for whatever comes next.

"We underestimate what organizations need to be entrepreneurial, to respond in a crisis, to really advance their impact," says Coentro.

“Nonprofit infrastructure may not be the first thing that comes to mind when you think of impact, but it plays an essential role in how well a nonprofit can achieve its mission, especially in times of crisis.”

– Catherine D’Amato
Chair of the Trustees’
Philanthropy Fund
Committee

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

\$55M



Sammy Moon, Executive Director for the Mississippi Alliance of Nonprofits and Philanthropy, agrees.

“As a capacity-building organization, we often get overlooked as being important, when we’re vital—critical—to effective service delivery,” says Moon about infrastructure nonprofits.

The Alliance received a grant to design, build and test a virtual platform that connects Mississippi nonprofits to quality training and leadership development. The platform also links high-impact nonprofits to funders that can support their projects. The ultimate goal is to scale the initiative to other states.

Supporting infrastructure organizations, such as nonprofit networks like Moon’s, is one way that donors can have greater impact. By funding one organization, a donor can help many smaller, more local organizations complete work they wouldn’t otherwise be able to. Another example: a grant from the Fidelity Charitable Trustees’ Initiative to the National Council of Nonprofits enabled it to help all nonprofits navigate the CARES Act, ensuring organizations like the Institute for Nonprofit Practice, Mississippi Alliance of Nonprofits and Philanthropy and many more had accurate, up-to-date information to share with nonprofits across the country.

Funding infrastructure nonprofits is all about return on investment, says Moon. The ultimate reason to collaborate and build capacity is that you get better results. “You achieve greater impact,” says Moon.

A network for collaborating and sharing ideas. Training to lead teams to tackle new challenges. Support when you hit a roadblock. We all need these things to have an impact—as individuals, as organizations and as a sector.

There’s never been a greater need to support the nonprofit sector but there’s also never been a greater opportunity to recognize the importance of the work of these organizations.



About the Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative

The Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative (Trustees' Initiative) is a direct grantmaking program of Fidelity Charitable, separate from its donor-advised fund program. Last fiscal year, ending June 30, 2021, the Trustees' Initiative made 30 grants totaling over \$8 million. These grants provided funding for social sector infrastructure; the networks, resources, data and advocacy that nonprofits as well as donors rely on to achieve the most positive impact.

Grants from the Trustees' Initiative focus on organizations, programs and projects that:

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

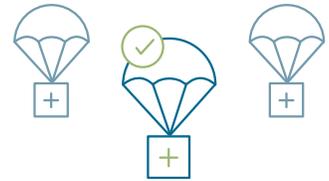
In addition to these pillars, the Trustees reserve flexible funding in order to react to emergencies. During this fiscal year, this flexible funding was crucial to respond to the continued critical health needs around the country caused by the pandemic, as well as provide relief for those affected by Hurricane Laura and massive wildfires in California.

Fidelity Charitable Trustees' Initiative 2021 Impact

30 grants
totaling more than
\$8M

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

\$55M



\$4.4M

Nonprofit infrastructure grants

\$3.4M

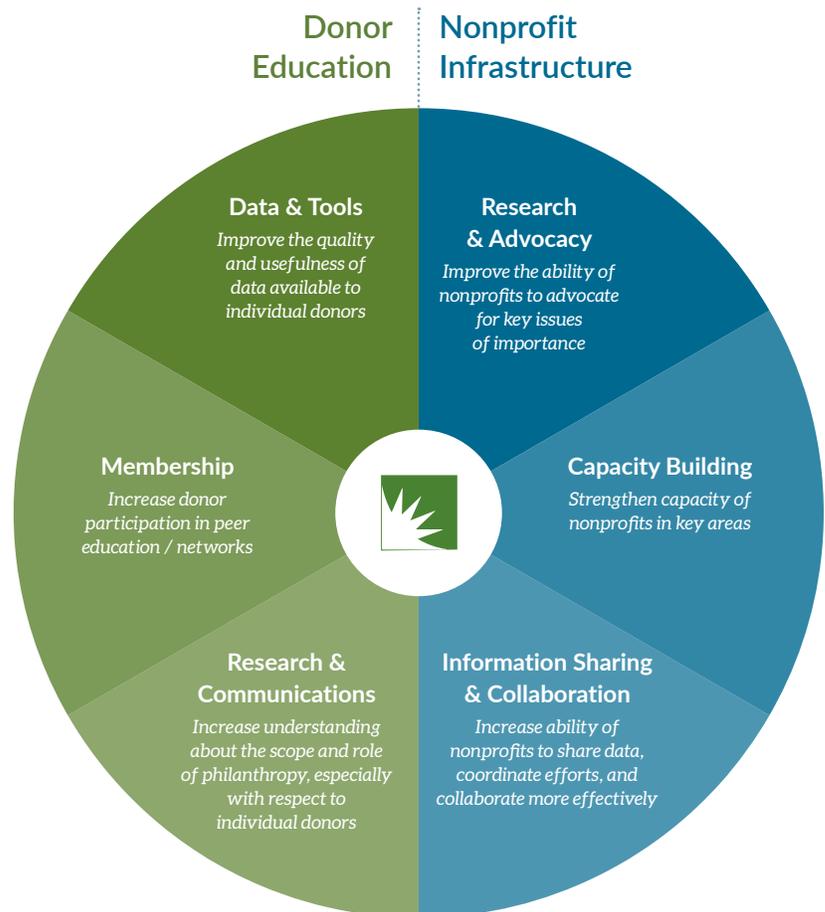
Donor education grants

\$300K

Special opportunity grants



Grants from the Trustees' Initiative support:





Connecting nonprofits to the networks, research and advocacy they rely on

The social sector needs infrastructure support to weather the ongoing challenges of doing business in a post-pandemic world, such as continued reliance on technology to run programs and access to fast and accurate information to craft nimble responses when situations change quickly.

When nonprofit staff are equipped with training, information and support networks, nonprofits can more effectively fulfill their missions and pivot when needed.

- Nonprofit networks create a web of support nationally, by state and locally. They provide information, advocacy, leadership development and capacity-building services to the sector.
- Access to research leads to more informed decision making, and shared learnings help nonprofits benefit from each other's experience and expertise.
- Advocacy means nonprofit needs are heard and nonprofits are included in solutions, like being included in government aid packages.

Nonprofit support grants

Capacity-building grants

Grantee	Purpose of grant
BoardSource	To support general operations as the organization brings leading resources and research on board governance to the sector
Candid	To support the delivery of a digital fundraising capacity-building program in collaboration with technology company Lightful
Catchfire Foundation	To support the development of a Catchfire Lab City to bring pro-bono capacity-building opportunities to more nonprofits
Institute for Nonprofit Practice	To support general operations as the organization expands its renowned programs for nonprofit leaders to new communities
Management Center	To support general operations that enable nonprofit leaders to have access to equitable management training and coaching
North Carolina Center for Nonprofits	To support general operations as a leading capacity-building hub and provider for nonprofits throughout the state
ProInspire	To support general operations as the organization helps nonprofit leaders build more racially equitable organizations
Social Impact Commons	To support the expansion of technology offerings, including new online tools for fiscal sponsors and funders, and additional core staff
Tech Impact	To invest in new program services, upgrade website and improve data collection and evaluation
TSNE MissionWorks: Building Movement Project	To develop a new capacity-building tool that helps nonprofits develop key competencies in creating more equitable workplaces

Collaboration and information-sharing grants

Grantee	Purpose of grant
Idealist	To support general operations of the leading nonprofit connecting people to nonprofit jobs and educational opportunities
Mississippi Alliance of Nonprofits and Philanthropy	To support a virtual platform that connects nonprofits, funders, and volunteer organizations across the state to address community needs collaboratively

Research and policy advocacy grants

Grantee	Purpose of grant
National Council of Nonprofits	To support general operations of the leading network that connects nonprofits to ensure the sector has the resources needed to thrive



SPOTLIGHT

Nonprofit networks support organizations through times of drastic change

As soon as the CARES Act passed in March of 2020, the six-person staff at the National Council of Nonprofits (NCN) started planning a webinar for nonprofits around the country that were asking “what does this mean for me?”

“I think we met on that Saturday morning right after the CARES Act passed on Friday afternoon... and we decided to hold a webinar on Tuesday to explain it to nonprofits,” remembers Amy Silver-O’Leary, Director of Knowledge Sharing and Special Projects at the National Council of Nonprofits.

The webinar maxed out its attendance at 10,000 participants, with an additional 10,000 on a waiting list by that Tuesday. Nonprofits needed fast, accurate information about the legislation.

NCN, which received a general operating support grant from the Trustees’ Initiative, is the largest nonprofit network in North America. The organization is an advocate, information source and capacity-builder for the 1.3 million charitable nonprofits across the country. This general operating support funding helped NCN ensure that nonprofits were included in pandemic relief packages and made sure nonprofits were eligible for Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans. Ultimately, \$46.5 billion went to charitable nonprofits through forgivable PPP loans¹.

“We keep hearing stories from nonprofits that, but for that legislation, they would have had to close down,” says NCN President and CEO Tim Delaney.

¹ Source: Small Business Administration and Federal Pandemic Recovery Accountability Committee

SPOTLIGHT

Networks facilitate essential two-way communication among nonprofits. NCN quickly shared out information about legislation to the state nonprofit associations in their membership. In turn, the state associations shared the information with all of their member nonprofits, while also communicating back up the chain about what nonprofits on the ground needed so NCN could accurately represent those needs to legislators.

The North Carolina Center for Nonprofits is one such association that's part of NCN's national network and also a grantee of the Trustees' Initiative. President and CEO Jeanne Tedrow says ensuring nonprofits stay in front of the knowledge curveball is important because nonprofits often play a large role in responding to communities' needs, as well as in strengthening their economies. In fact, charitable nonprofits are the nation's third-largest employer².

"In North Carolina, we account for 1 in 10 jobs," says Tedrow. She calls nonprofits the "second responders" in communities.

In addition to keeping nonprofits informed, networks provide a space for organizations to share best practices and learnings and support each other—something that has been vitally important during the pandemic.

"There's strength when you find out that you've got a commonality of challenges," says Rob Maddrey, the Center's Chief Sustainability Officer.

A general operating grant from the Trustees' Initiative helped the Center do several things: develop a learning platform that nonprofits can use to assess what kinds of management strategies will be most effective for them and create a program that pairs a nonprofit with an advisor to work on a personalized plan for capacity-building efforts. It also helped with upgrading its website to better serve its members.

² Source: Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies Nonprofit Economic Data Project



SPOTLIGHT

Nonprofit technology needs are complex; infrastructure organizations can help

Nonprofit technology struggles aren't new, but the events of the past two years have certainly amplified them. Leanly staffed nonprofits often don't have in-house technology expertise. Much of the technology that nonprofits rely on isn't built for their needs. Grants rarely include money for the technology needed to do the work. And many people seeking help from nonprofits simply don't have the access needed to utilize remote programs. Nonprofits have to grapple with technology being a solution for some people and a barrier to others.

Nonprofit NTEN, a Trustees' Initiative grantee since 2018, focuses on supporting nonprofit staff in using technology strategically and in racially-equitable ways. NTEN CEO Amy Sample Ward knows better than anyone that the questions coming from nonprofits this year aren't new, but the pandemic has increased the volume of them. NTEN received a grant from the Trustees' Initiative to support its

Data Empowerment Project. The project included the creation of a report analyzing the current challenges and needs for using data in nonprofits, as well as the creation of data management guides, policy templates and other resources for organizations.

Cohorts of twenty nonprofits at a time participated in in-depth training, coaching and leadership development to build up technology-management capacity, as well as receive the necessary support to advance data projects in their organizations. The participating nonprofits span different missions and cause areas, from food banks to community health services to environmental stewardship.

SPOTLIGHT

Many of those nonprofits reached out to NTEN during the pandemic about technology issues that were completely unrelated to the Data Empowerment Project, knowing the organization was a trusted source of expertise.

"They knew they were in this safe, padded, resourced place to help them navigate things," says Sample Ward.

Nonprofits like NTEN offer support to other nonprofits that they don't often have otherwise. Plus, the Data Empowerment Project facilitates sharing of best practices and ideas among the participating nonprofits, as they help each other solve problems.

"We're not reinventing the wheel in over a million nonprofits," says Sample Ward, because infrastructure organizations work with enough nonprofits to see trends and provide solutions at scale.

Sample Ward hopes that donors recognize that infrastructure—technology included—is essential to a nonprofit's impact. Funders can play a big role in helping nonprofits meet their missions by funding the technology needs of an organization or a project.

"Technology is a cost related to every program, every service, every function of an organization... If you didn't have technology, you were not running programs for the last 16 months"

— **Amy Sample Ward**
CEO of NTEN



Helping donors make smart philanthropic decisions

Giving away money should be joyful! But at each stage of giving, there are decisions that can create speed bumps for donors—from establishing a personal mission, to evaluating what charities are a good fit. Providing tools and resources that reduce this friction is important. Because when donors are well informed and involved, they are best positioned to achieve the impact they hope for. The Trustees' Initiative addresses both sides of the giving equation; nonprofits have the tools and advocacy they need to be successful, and donors have the education and knowledge they need to be effective.

Donor support grants

Donor membership and peer learning

Grantee	Purpose of grant
Global Impact	To support Philanthropy Together, a global movement for democratizing philanthropy through giving circles
National Center for Family Philanthropy	To support organizational development work and strategic planning efforts
Possibility Labs	To support a partnership with Radiant Strategies to design and launch a pilot project to study peer influence among donors who have identified equity as their primary philanthropic goal
Social Innovation Forum	To support the development of a cohort of organizations to share learnings around philanthropic models that combine nonprofit capacity-building and donor education
Social Venture Partners International	To support the development of the Reimagine Giving platform, which will create new avenues for donors to become system change advocates
Women's Funding Network	To support the Response, Recovery and Resilience Collaborative's efforts to sustain women's funds across the country recovering from the pandemic

Donor data support and tools

Grantee	Purpose of grant
Charity Navigator	To support organizational development needs and technology development
GivingTuesday	To support general operations as the organization utilizes data to inspire year-round generosity
Hispanics in Philanthropy	To support the Lideres and HIPGives programs, which support the development of the next generation of Latinx philanthropic leaders and donors
The Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Junior University	To support the Effective Philanthropy Learning Initiative at Stanford University's Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society
Tides Foundation: Impact Genome Project	To support research on the types of impact data that influence donors' giving
Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania	To support the Center for High Impact Philanthropy disseminate guidance for donors in light of the pandemic

SPOTLIGHT

Capacity-building organizations lead the push for racial equity

Infrastructure organizations have been playing a role in diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts for years. And for those that specialize in this work, now is the time for action.

"We were built for this moment," says Yolanda Coentro, President and CEO of The Institute for Nonprofit Practice (INP). "We were founded to advance more people of color and women into leadership. This is our moment, as the general public is increasingly educated about the importance of prioritizing racial equity."

INP, a Trustees' Initiative grantee, offers leadership development programs for nonprofit professionals with a focus on those who are historically underrepresented in leadership. A general operating support grant helped INP significantly upgrade its website and technology systems to both run its core programs and offer additional services virtually.

In order to best address issues of equity, nonprofits need diverse voices in leadership at all levels. INP has programs that focus on early career leaders and those who consult in the nonprofit sphere, as well as mid-to-upper-level nonprofit staff. Coentro is also quick to point to the rigor involved in advancing DEI initiatives in nonprofits. "It's not just a value, it's an ongoing practice," she says.

Monisha Kapila, Founder and Co-CEO of the nonprofit ProInspire agrees. "Understanding structural racism and how that impacts our communities is actually a skill...This understanding of racism and the inequities that people are facing is leading to better choices that organizations are making for their programming."

ProInspire received a grant from the Trustees' Initiative to support its race equity training offerings to nonprofit professionals at the individual level and organizational level.

Another Trustees' Initiative grantee, BoardSource, focuses on a different level of leadership—nonprofit boards of directors. BoardSource received a grant that helped them create DEI resources for nonprofit boards seeking guidance. Boards can play a big role in advancing equity both in their organizations, and the nonprofit field in general, says President and CEO Anne Wallestad, but according to BoardSource's recent survey of more than 800 nonprofit CEOs and board chairs, boards are currently disconnected from the communities and people they aim to serve. The organization strives to mitigate this disconnect by offering both practical support to nonprofits as well as research.

Supporting DEI work at all levels in the nonprofit sector is particularly important because inequity is often what drives people to turn to a nonprofit for help in the first place, says ProInspire's Kapila. "Do you want to address the root causes that your organization is focused on? Because I think that's what equity is about."

While 2021 continues to be difficult for the sector, many nonprofits are using crises as catalysts for change. "We can't wait to have these conversations," Kapila says. "Crises can be a moment to say, 'what matters most and how do we focus on that?'"



Responding to needs in real time

Strengthening the sector’s infrastructure is fundamental—especially in times of change and upheaval. Pairing this commitment with flexible funding to respond in real time to emergencies like natural disasters is also essential. We call these special opportunity grants.

Special opportunity grants

Grantee	Purpose of grant
Americares Foundation	To support international COVID-19 relief
Give2Asia	To support international COVID-19 relief
American National Red Cross	To support Hurricane Laura response and recovery efforts
California Community Foundation	To support the California Wildfire Relief Fund

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