2018 was a milestone year for Fidelity Charitable’s San Francisco donors, who topped $500 million in recommended grants—of which more than $100 million went to local charities. The San Francisco region is one of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas for Giving Accounts, with a 25 percent increase that far outpaces Fidelity Charitable® nationwide (13 percent). Many donors here—whose average recommended grant ($10,385) was more than twice the national average ($4,092)—apply the same innovative, change-oriented approach to philanthropy that has driven the area’s technology wealth.

4,012
NUMBER OF GIVING ACCOUNTS

49,255
NUMBER OF GRANTS

$511.5M
TOTAL GRANT DOLLARS FROM REGION

$10,385
AVERAGE GRANT AMOUNT

12.3
AVERAGE NUMBER OF GRANTS PER GIVING ACCOUNT®

$107M
TOTAL GRANT DOLLARS TO LOCAL CHARITIES

MOST POPULAR CHARITABLE SECTORS
1. EDUCATION
2. HUMAN SERVICES
3. SOCIETY BENEFIT

MOST POPULAR NONPROFITS SUPPORTED BY FIDELITY CHARITABLE® DONORS IN THE REGION

1. KQED
2. San Francisco Food Bank
3. The Alameda County Community Food Bank
4. Regents of the University of California at Berkeley
5. University of California, Berkeley Foundation
6. Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano
7. California State Parks Foundation
8. Corporation of the Fine Arts Museums
9. Habitat for Humanity
10. Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy

NEW
Highlights in San Francisco giving

Active and generous grantmaking
Donors in San Francisco gave more to the causes they care about in 2018, with an average grant amount of $10,385—more than twice than the national average of $4,092. San Francisco donors are also more actively engaged in recommending grants. Averaging 12.3 grants per Giving Account® in 2018, they were more active than the national average of 10.4.

Giving across the sectors
San Francisco appears on top 10 lists for giving to six of the eight charitable sectors—environment and animals (ranked third), arts and culture (third), education (fourth), international affairs (fourth), human services (fifth) and society benefit (fifth). San Francisco donors balance a diverse set of needs and interests that influence its philanthropic priorities.

Consistent local support
Donors in San Francisco are committed to the local causes they support; eight of the top 10 local grant recipients in 2018 also appeared on the 2017 list. Local public media organization KQED easily maintained its status as the most popular local nonprofit—receiving support from three times more Giving Accounts than the next most popular nonprofit. The American Civil Liberties Union Foundation of Northern California and the University of California, San Francisco fell from the top 10 list, surpassed by Habitat for Humanity and Golden Gate National Parks—which reflect the area’s focus on human services and the environment.

GIVING SECTOR SPOTLIGHT

Human services
With one of the largest income gaps in the country—and 28,000 residents experiencing homelessness¹—the Bay Area can be a difficult place for low-income residents to eke out a quality standard of life. San Francisco donors recognized this problem and made human services the second most popular charitable sector for grantmaking in 2018—with 58 percent of the area’s Giving Accounts sending support to both local and national organizations working in this space. Locally, food security is a popular issue with San Francisco donors—with three food banks on the city’s list of top local nonprofits.

Most popular human services charities supported by donors from the San Francisco area:
- American Red Cross
- Second Harvest Food Bank
- San Francisco Food Bank

¹ Bay Area Council Economic Institute, Bay Area Homelessness, 2019.