

Jumpstart your giving



About this roadmap

Have you ever felt stuck in your giving? You're not alone. With so many causes, nonprofits, and giving options to consider, even experienced donors have moments when deciding what to do next feels hard.

This roadmap is designed to help you navigate the "speedbumps" that can arise in giving and spot the "green lights" that can help guide your next steps with clarity and confidence.

Along the way, you'll find encouragement, practical ideas, and suggested actions designed to help you move forward—one decision at a time. Whether you're clarifying your values, learning about nonprofits, or simply looking for an easy way to get going, these prompts can help you build momentum and discover the impact that your generosity can have.



Speedbump

Common donor question or moment of hesitation



Green light

Simple, actionable next step

No step is too small

Momentum often begins with a simple decision. Start with an action that feels achievable and build from there.

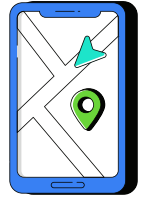
- **Consider a learning grant:** Recommend a small exploratory grant to get to know an organization and its work.
- **Increase impact where you already give:** Consider giving more to organizations you already support to deepen your generosity.
- **Schedule your grants:** Use your Giving Account® to schedule one-time or recurring grants to nonprofits you regularly support.
- **Reach out directly:** Contact an organization you're interested in to understand where your gift can have the greatest impact.



Here you'll find **tips and tools** to help you along the road.



Navigating giving in a changing world



The world is changing rapidly. Is now the time to give?

Yes! In times of change, nonprofits often face rising demand for their services while funding becomes less predictable. Philanthropy can provide stability when it's needed most.

Anchor in your values

It's natural to worry about making the "right" giving decisions. One helpful place to start is with the values and causes that matter most to you. When so much feels in flux, your personal values can provide clarity and direction.



Reflect on your goals: Review your goals and vision for change, and take the [Fidelity Charitable® Philanthropic Identity Quiz](#) to explore where to deepen or shift your support.



Review your past giving: [Log in to Fidelity Charitable®](#) to analyze your past grants and identify where you may want to deepen or shift your giving focus.

Learn and get inspired

Learning more about the causes you care about and the nonprofits making a difference can help grow your confidence and enthusiasm for giving.



Right-size your learning: Commit to a manageable amount of time—like an hour per week—to learn about a cause or nonprofit.



Explore and learn: Follow philanthropists you admire and the organizations they love! Read amazing [donor stories](#) on the Fidelity Charitable website and explore how other donors support causes they care about.



Support enduring community needs: Advancements in areas such as early childhood education, affordable housing, and economic mobility can help strengthen communities over time. For additional ideas, explore the Center for High Impact Philanthropy's [2026 High Impact Giving Toolkit](#).



Conquering decision overload

There are so many causes and nonprofits to consider.
How do I narrow my focus?

When the possibilities seem endless, simplify your options.
A little structure can help transform overload into action.

Focus with trusted tools

Trusted frameworks and curated resources can help you identify opportunities that align with your goals and values.



Use strategic frameworks: Leverage the Center for High Impact Philanthropy's [Four Philanthropic Plays](#), which offer helpful structure. The [Fidelity Charitable® Charting for Impact Report](#) can also help you clarify your approach.



Find vetted organizations: Curated recommendations from community foundations, trusted funders like [Lever for Change](#), and publications such as [The Giving List Women](#) can help you give with confidence. [The Audacious Project's](#) grantees can also introduce you to well-vetted organizations.



Respond to crises effectively: Many donors want to help during disasters or crises but aren't sure where to begin. Fidelity Charitable® often shares [disaster relief resources](#), including information about organizations responding to urgent needs.



Gaining confidence in your decisions



What if I choose the wrong organization or don't give enough?

These concerns are common and often reflect how much you care. Giving is a learning journey, and you don't have to navigate it alone.

Learn from other people

You don't have to figure everything out on your own. New perspectives can help you rev up your learning.



Follow trusted voices: Philanthropic advisors, nonprofit leaders, and sector experts can help you stay informed about giving strategies.



Gain insights from other donors' experiences: Learn from Fidelity Charitable® donors and their [giving journeys](#).



Explore collaborative funds: Giving alongside others can be a powerful way to learn, share ideas, and support vetted nonprofits, while amplifying the collective impact. [Philanthropy Together](#) and its [Collective Conversations card deck](#) can help you learn more about yourself and the world.

Learn from nonprofits

Nonprofits are not just recipients of generosity. They're also sources of expertise that can help guide your giving.



Trust nonprofit expertise: If you care about an organization but aren't sure where support is needed most, make an unrestricted gift that allows the nonprofit to direct resources where they can have the greatest impact.



Ask good questions: Use the [Fidelity Charitable® Charting for Impact Discussion Guide](#) to better understand an organization's needs. This set of [Nine Questions You Should Ask Every Nonprofit](#) is also a great way to get to know an organization better.



Finding and vetting nonprofits

How do I find organizations that align with my values and create meaningful impact?

You may be closer to achieving this than you think. Local communities, trusted networks, and nonprofit resources can help you discover organizations working on the causes you care about most.

Begin in your own backyard

Your neighborhood can be one of the best places to start your research.



Look locally: Community newspapers, local media outlets, and regional giving guides frequently highlight organizations making a difference close to home. Regional grantmakers like [United Way](#) and [community foundations](#) can help you connect with credible organizations doing meaningful work.



Join a giving circle: Giving circles bring people together to learn about issues, pool resources, and make decisions collectively. [Grapevine](#) can help you identify opportunities to join or start a giving circle.



Leverage trusted databases: [Giving Compass](#) and [GreatNonprofits](#) can also be valuable sources of recommendations and inspiration.

Look for alignment and impact

As you evaluate organizations, look for evidence that their mission, work, and outcomes align with the kind of change you'd like to support.



Explore the organization's story: Review its mission and vision statements, stories about its work, and the outcomes it shares. Annual reports can offer valuable insight.

Remember to enjoy the journey

Every giving journey has unexpected turns, new discoveries, and many opportunities to make a difference. Make your values your compass, use trusted resources when you need direction, and remember that a meaningful journey is covered one mile at a time.

Notes

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