



The Giving State 2024

An Updated Report on Utah's Philanthropic Landscape

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Report Partners:



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The Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation was established in 2007 to continue the philanthropic spirit exemplified by Larry and Gail Miller for future generations. The Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation supports programs that enrich lives and communities in the areas of health and medicine, shelter and food security, education and skill development, jobs and economic self-reliance, and cultural and spiritual enrichment.

Contents

Foreword	2
Giving in Utah	4
Giving in Context of World Events	4
Giving to Religious Organizations	5
Individual Giving	6
Institutional Giving	8
Areas of Progress	10
Collaboration	10
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning	12
Areas of Opportunity	13
Recommendations	15
Recommendation 1: Focus Strategically	15
Recommendation 2: Increase Accountability and Learning	17
Recommendation 3: Engage Expansively	20
Final Thoughts	22
Appendix	23
Authors	23
Methodology	24
Key Terminology	24
Giving in Utah	26
Nonprofits in Utah	26
Fundors in Utah	26
Notes	26

Foreword

Seven years ago, Cicero Group published The Giving State Report to uncover why Utah is a demonstrated leader when it comes to charitable giving. We highlighted Utah's position as first in the nation when it comes to giving and volunteerism, shining a light on who gives, why they give, and what the impact of their giving is. Our report also took a closer look at what good giving looks like and where opportunities for improvement existed across Utah's philanthropic landscape. The 2017 report¹ showed that:

- At the time, Utahns gave 3.5 percentage points more per year in discretionary income and volunteered 43 more hours every month per capita than the average American.
- The sector included thousands of very small nonprofit organizations that often result in duplicative efforts and limited impact. This was evident from the sheer number of nonprofit organizations in the state and in how nonprofits and funders alike typically operated in an isolated, siloed fashion.
- Nonprofits and funders often struggled to connect. Nonprofits needed more support for their mission, while funders found it hard to understand the real impact, making it tough for both sides to align and communicate effectively.

Since the first report in 2017, our nation has experienced a variety of events and circumstances that have influenced charitable giving and community needs. These events include the COVID-19 pandemic; increasing political polarization; cultural battles; racial unrest; support for, and pushback against, Environmental, Social and Governance Reporting (ESG), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts (DEI); rising costs of living; and increasing average income with accompanying inflation.

Utah has experienced significant shifts in addressing issues like homelessness and education, changes in the local corporate landscape with the rise of tech companies, and spirited debates about water conservation. All the while, our community continues to expand, with a population growth of 8 percent in the last six years.²

These changes contributed to a 3.4 percent decline in charitable giving nationwide down to \$499.3 billion (a drop of 10.5 percent when adjusted for inflation³) and the fourth decline in the last four decades. Despite this, Utah continues to lead the nation in both giving and volunteerism. While these numbers are encouraging, we know that Utah's philanthropic landscape did not escape the devastating impacts of the last 5 years unscathed.

In 2023, **Utahns donated five times more** than the lowest-ranking state for annual donations (West Virginia) **while volunteering twice as many hours** as the lowest-ranking state in volunteerism (Florida).⁴

As we present this year's report, we're excited to highlight Utah, 'The Giving State,' a national leader in philanthropy that is still navigating the solutions to some of today's most pressing social challenges. This report provides up-to-date answers to questions like:

- What are the biggest needs in the state? What progress has been made on them?
- What are the sources, volume, and priorities of various donors in the state?
- What are individual donors' objectives and approaches to giving? What informs these objectives?
- What are the areas of concentration (or lack thereof) among donors?
- How do the priorities of institutional or philanthropic funders align with, or deviate from, the needs of the local community?
- What trends, opportunities, capabilities, needs, questions, and concerns are donors and nonprofit leaders focused on?
- What investments and/or collaborative efforts within Utah's philanthropic sector will catalyze additional giving and effectiveness?
- And how has all of this changed considering the global events of the last six years?

Given the national and local changes, we are excited to be partnering with the Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation to bring forward an updated version of the Giving State Report.

The answers to these questions are ever evolving and deeply complex. Therefore, it was instrumental to the success of this study that we engage a wide array of stakeholders to accurately understand the issues at hand. We compiled insights from over 800 survey responses from high-net-worth individuals, nonprofit leaders, and the general public. We conducted in-depth interviews with 22 nonprofit leaders, individual funders, private and community foundation leaders, and government officials throughout the state to understand their priorities, activities, and perspectives. Finally, we analyzed available data on registered nonprofits in the state to understand their focus, geographic distribution, and size.

In conducting this research and answering the above questions, we aim to:

1. Celebrate the giving spirit and efforts that make Utah the Giving State.
2. Provide a comprehensive, albeit evolving, understanding of philanthropic and charitable giving in the state.
3. Inspire and guide more effective, collaborative, and impactful giving through information, insights, and examples.
4. Identify areas of need and improvement which, when focused on by donors and funders, will result in improved quality of life and opportunity for Utahns, particularly its most disadvantaged citizens and communities.

We hope this report provides the general population, funders, and nonprofits alike with a greater understanding of the progress we have made and what we can achieve when we work together. Regardless of one's role in the philanthropic landscape, this report contains valuable insights to help inform both giving and serving. For the purposes of this report, a donor is defined as an individual that makes a grant, simple monetary contribution, or volunteers time to a recipient organization. This may also be known as the grantor or Grantmaker, and a funder is defined as an individual or entity, including family foundations, corporate foundations, and corporate social responsibility groups, engaged in large-scale charitable giving (financial, volunteer, and/or in-kind support).

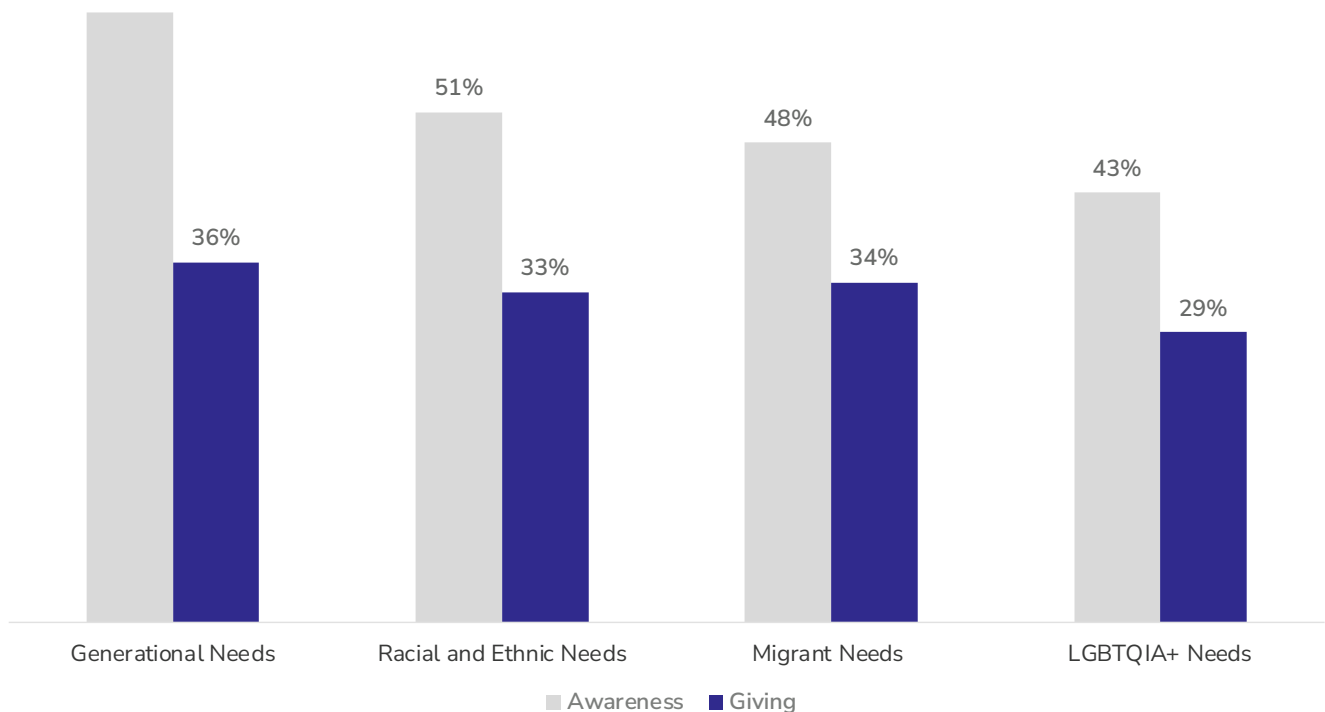
Giving in Utah

Giving in the Context of World Events

Since 2017, our world, state, and local communities have faced major changes, including the COVID-19 pandemic, racial unrest, political divides, economic shifts, and environmental challenges—each of which has affected us. As reported by the American Psychological Association, we are a nation grappling with increased instances of negative mental and physical health due to the collective trauma of the pandemic and economy.⁵

These pivotal changes have profoundly impacted philanthropy, transforming how we perceive and respond to community needs. Survey respondents were asked if their awareness of community needs was heightened due to COVID-19, and whether this heightened awareness led to an increase in philanthropic giving. On average, giving to specific needs rose by one-third when awareness increased by at least 43 percent (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Increased Awareness of Needs and Increased Giving to Those Needs

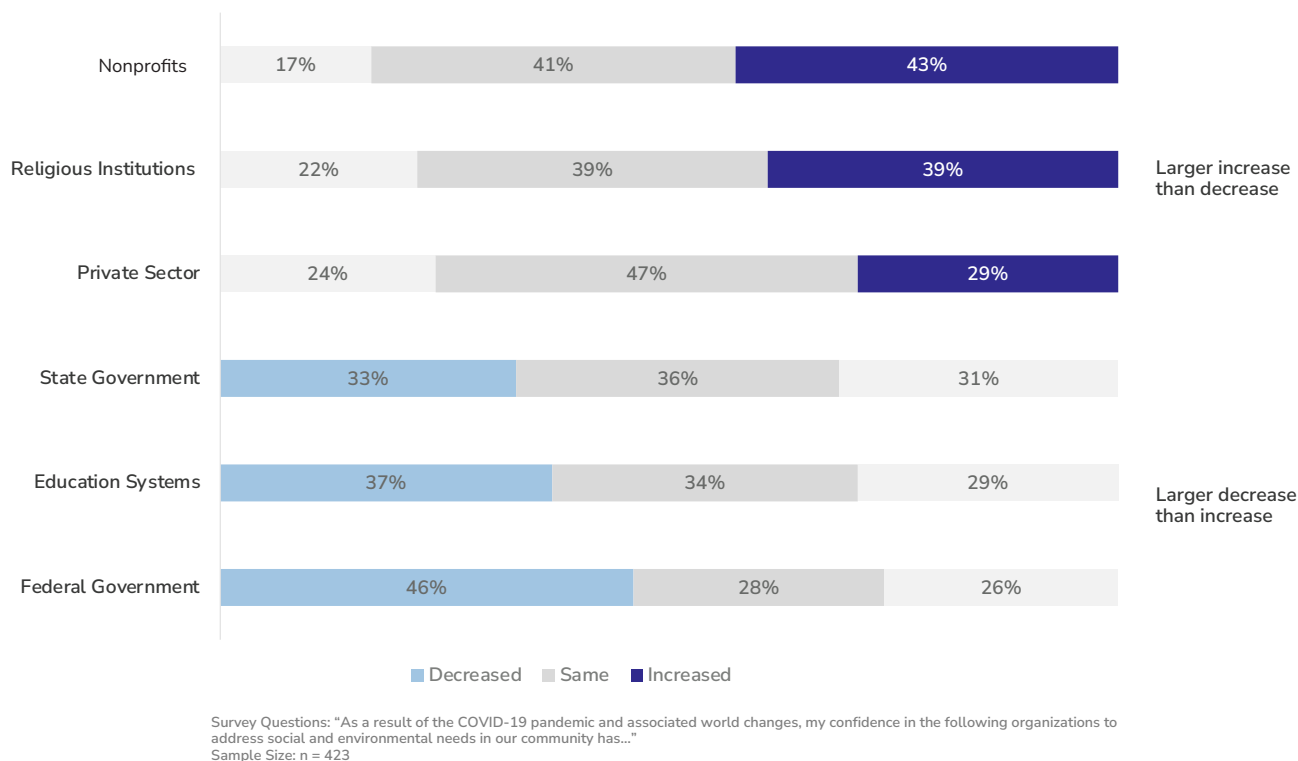


Survey Questions: "Q18 - The degree to which you agree with the following statements. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated world changes...I am more aware... I have increased my philanthropic giving..."
Sample Size: n = 423

This increased interest in community needs and subsequent willingness to give might come as a surprise considering the rhetoric we hear in today’s news headlines about peoples’ shifting confidence in the ability of traditional institutions to address social and environmental needs.

However, in digging deeper, we found that donor confidence has increased for nonprofits, religious institutions, and the private sector while simultaneously decreasing for the federal government, the state government, and education systems (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Confidence Change in Organizations to Address Social and Environmental Needs



As can be seen, awareness and giving has increased in the past few years across a variety of social issues because of increased visibility, dialogue, and understanding. However, confidence in public and private institutions has shifted as well. This presents a challenge for organizations as they require public support, both monetarily and through other channels, to truly be effective in their actions. Increased transparency, with an emphasis on open dialog and listening, will encourage mutual understanding, alignment, and success.

Giving to Religious Organizations

As we found in 2017, a significant proportion of individual giving by Utahns goes to religious organizations. Yet, this proportion has dropped from 58 percent in 2017 to 40 percent of general public survey respondents donating to religious organizations in 2023.

The predominance of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) in Utah continues to play a significant role in this dynamic. Only 15 percent of the LDS population reported not donating to any organization, compared to 47 percent of their non-religious peers. This trend holds true across all religious affiliations (see Figure 3).

As noted in the [2017 report](#), nearly all of the top 10 most generous states in terms of individual giving are also among the top 10 most religious states. See the table below for further details on the intersection of religious organizations and statewide giving.

Figure 3: Distribution of Utahns’ charitable donations by destination and religious affiliation

RESPONDENT RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION	DESTINATION OF CHARITABLE DONATIONS			
	Religious Organizations	Nonprofit Organizations	Private Foundations	Haven’t Donated to Any Organizations
LDS n=181	76%	20%	10%	15%
Non-Denominational n=79	16%	37%	14%	43%
Catholic n=65	42%	32%	14%	23%
Protestant n=18	33%	22%	17%	28%
Evangelical n=43	49%	40%	30%	21%
Other Religions n=51	35%	38%	24%	29%
Not Religious n=121	9%	29%	10%	47%
Atheist n=20	15%	45%	20%	30%

Note – Respondents could select more than one option.

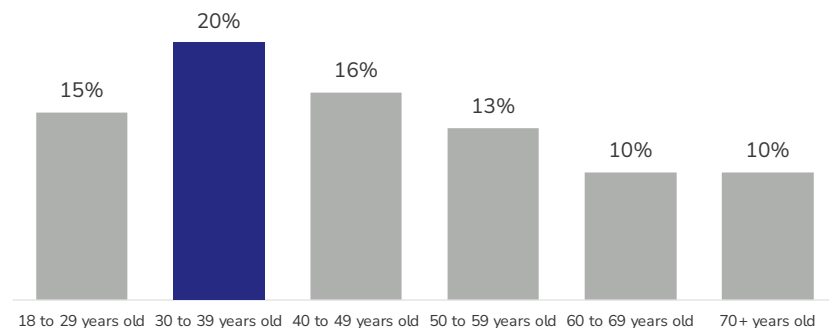
Individual Giving

Giving in Utah can be divided into two categories: individual giving and institutional giving. For the purposes of this report, individual giving is defined as any giving done by the general population across the state. Institutional giving is done by foundations, corporations, and high-net worth donors. These two categories have similar priorities and motivations, but differ strongly in their gift amount, frequency, and expectations.

Utah has been ranked as the most charitable state in the nation for 7 of the last 8 years. The Beehive State earned this distinction by ranking first for percentage of donated income, percentage of the population who donated time, and volunteer hours per capita.⁴

Our research found that 70 percent of the general population survey respondents gave to a charitable cause in 2022. When looking at the demographics of givers across the state, it becomes clear that there is no singular profile of donors. Givers come from all backgrounds, races, ages, income levels, and religions. However, millennials were shown to be the most “generous” group, donating the highest percentage of their income (see Figure 4). This is a promising trend as it indicates that the investments currently being made in the community may continue to be carried forward by future generations.

Figure 4: Percentage of Income Donated by Age



Survey Questions: "Approximately, what percent of your total household income would you say you gave to nonprofit organizations in 2022?"
 Sample Size: n = 423

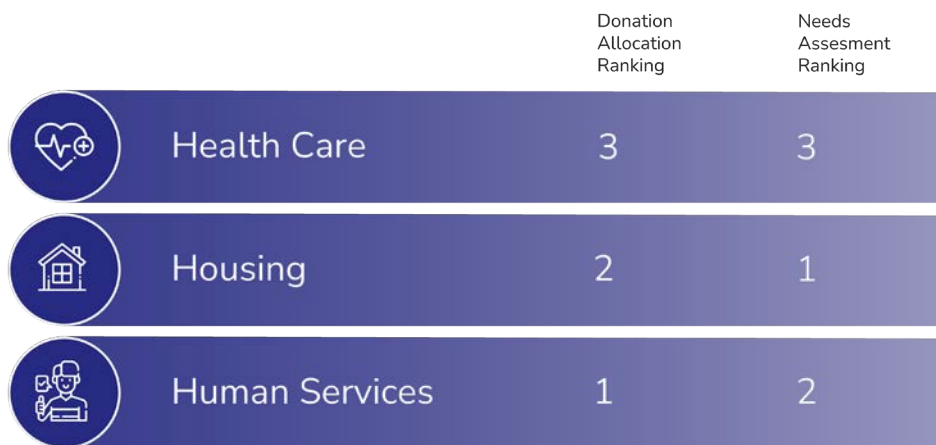
When asked how to decide which organizations and causes to give to, the majority of respondents (67 percent) stated that a personal passion to the cause was the primary driver, with perceived need (49 percent) as a secondary driver.

Utahns demonstrate a deep understanding of their community’s needs. As shown in Figure 5, the top three areas where donors focused their

2022 giving closely align with the top three needs identified by Utahns living at 200 percent of the poverty level, according to the 2022 Utah Community Needs Assessment conducted in partnership with Cicero and Utah Community Action.

Furthermore, Utahns prefer to give locally, directing three out of every five philanthropic dollars to nonprofit organizations within the state. In fact, despite the turbulence caused by COVID-19 and associated world changes, 43 percent of donors reported that their confidence in nonprofits has increased in the last three years. When deciding whether to give, it is most important to residents of the ‘Beehive State’ to understand how the organization will use the donation, the impact the organization is having, and whether there is any negative publicity regarding the organization.

Figure 5: Needs Assessment Ranking by Donation Ranking

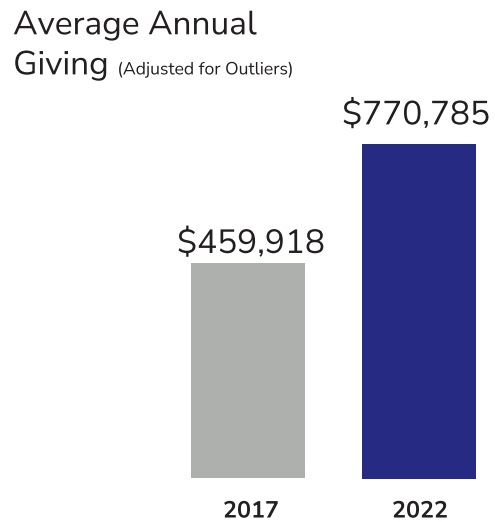


Survey Questions: "What percent of your giving in 2022 was allocated to each of the following issues?"
 Sample Size: n = 423
 Additional Source: Utah Community Needs Assessment, Utah Community Action

Institutional Giving

Institutional donors or funders, which for the purposes of this research are defined as foundations, corporations, and high-net-worth individuals, exhibit similar trends as individual donors. Overall giving has increased over the last six years. In 2017, only 42 percent of funders reported giving more than \$10,000 per year. That figure has increased to 63 percent. This comes despite adverse economic trends and worldwide difficulties. Institutional donors are also increasing the percentage of their total assets that are dedicated to philanthropy. These donors, on average, are dedicating 10 percent of their total net worth to philanthropic causes each year, up from 6 percent in 2017. Overall, funders reported a 68 percent increase in average annual giving from 2017 to 2022 (see Figure 6).

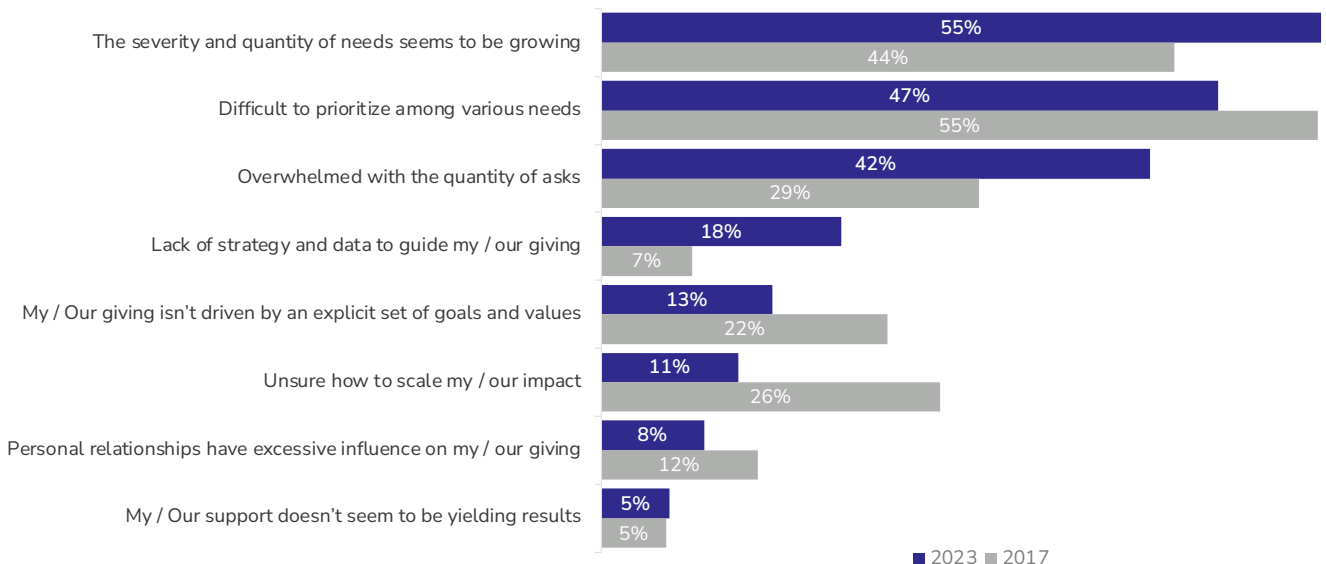
Figure 6: Average Annual Giving 2017 vs. 2022



Funders expect to see this increase in dollars and hours volunteered to continue rising. When asked to project their future activities, 59 percent said they believe the amount of funds they give will increase over the next 3 years. Similarly, 44 percent estimated that the total amount of hours they spend volunteering will increase over the same period.

While this increase in institutional giving is promising, institutional funders still face difficult decisions about who and what they will give to. In 2017, 55 percent of funders said that one of their greatest challenges was prioritization between various needs; 44 percent said the same about continual growth of the severity and quantity of needs in the community. In 2023, these challenges are largely the same. Prioritization and increasing needs remain the greatest challenges faced by funders across the state. See Figure 7 below for funder challenges from 2017 compared to 2023.

Figure 7: Funder Challenges 2017 vs. 2022

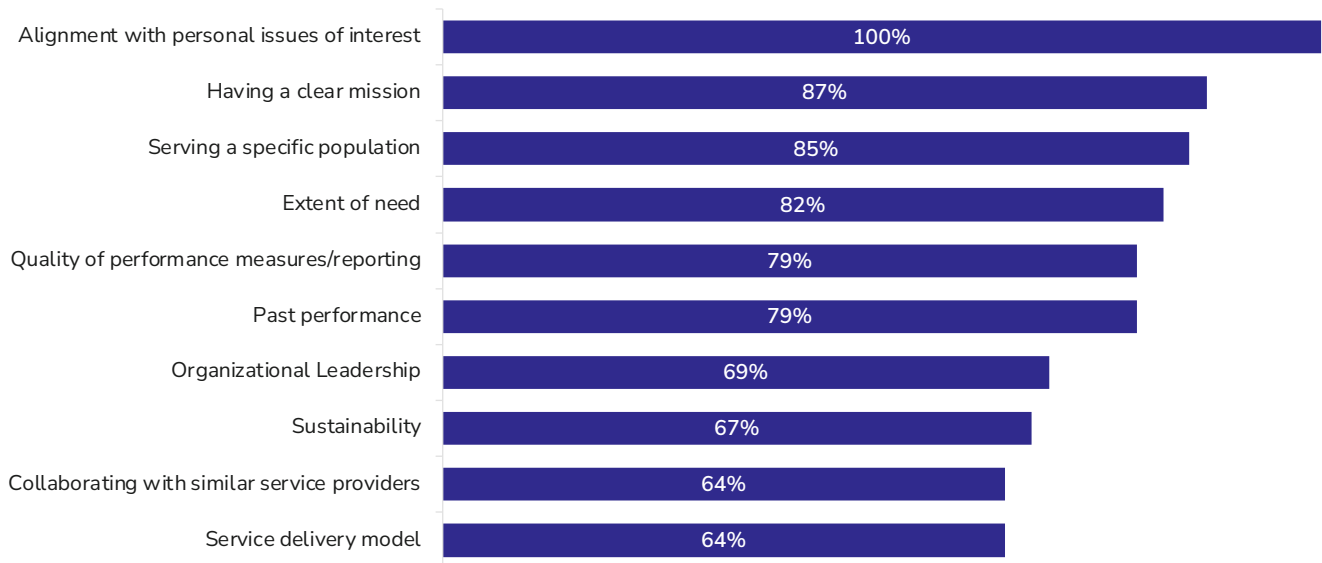


Survey Question: "When making philanthropy decisions, what are the top 3 challenges you face?"
Sample Size: n = 38

Further, 77 percent of funders project that the number of organizations they support will stay the same or decrease in the next three years, citing a desire for deeper focus and greater intentionality as the drivers behind these expectations.

Yet, despite these challenges, funders continue to find and support organizations that align with their personal issue areas of interest, execute a clear mission with a specific population, and report quality measures of past performance (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Funder Priorities in Selecting a Nonprofit



Q26 - To what extent do the following aspects influence your funding decisions of an organization you're considering providing philanthropic support?
Sample Size: n = 23

Areas of Progress

Collaboration

In 2017, we noted a lack of collaboration and coordination as an issue facing the Utah philanthropic landscape. As previously mentioned, fragmentation continues to be a difficulty. We have, however, seen a noted uptick in collaboration between funders, between nonprofits, and between the two groups. This encouraging trend has been exemplified by the increase in giving to Utah Community Foundation, for example.

“When I started here in 2015, we had \$27 million in donor allocated funds (DAFs), we now have \$220 million and have granted \$360 million. The level of sophistication, trust, and collaborative relationships have gone up and allowed our donors to have a larger impact.”

– Alex Eaton, CEO of Utah Community Foundation

Other examples of collaborative philanthropy include:

1. Utah Impact Partnership – A convening of stakeholders across the state that have secured \$50 million in state support for our most vulnerable populations and are engaging with the Utah Homelessness Council to establish a statewide plan to address and serve our homeless population.
2. Great Salt Lake Watershed Enhancement Trust – A state-funded collaborative effort to address declining water levels and other environmental concerns related to the Great Salt Lake. Leadership is comprised of both public and private stakeholders working together.
3. The Period Project – A massive collaboration between the state Legislature, private family foundations, private businesses, institutions of higher education, public and charter schools, the Utah corrections system, and various nonprofit organizations collaborating to provide free access to menstrual products across the state.

In our 2017 survey of funders across the state, only 52 percent were focused on and interested in collaboration. In 2023, this figure had increased to 82 percent. Similarly, the number of funders considering nonprofits collaboration with other organizations in their funding decisions increased by over 30 percent.

Overall, this massive shift in attitudes, mindset, and behavior has led to an increase in collaboration throughout the state. By pooling giving, focusing on key issues, and convening multiple stakeholders, collaborations are yielding more impact than ever before.

“

Knowledge is power. The more we know about what we're doing and how it works, the better prepared we'll be to create effective processes, systems, and evaluations for giving. This strong foundation will empower those who come after us to continue making a meaningful impact.

Gail Miller

Chair of the Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

Using metrics and measurement to understand the impact created by donations is crucial for both funders and nonprofits. In 2017, this was identified as an area for improvement in Utah.

We have seen marked improvement in some aspects of monitoring and evaluation since 2017. The percentage of nonprofits who hold regularly scheduled meetings with leadership to review outcome metrics has increased from 54 percent to 71 percent. Similarly, the percentage of those that remain accountable to key funders by sharing measurement data has increased from 85 percent to 95 percent.

This shift has not gone unnoticed by funders. Eighty-two percent of funders across the state are satisfied with the quality of performance measurement and reporting by the organizations they give to, up from 64 percent in 2017. Further, data collection and impact measurement was noted in 82 percent of interviews with funders as an increasingly important priority in their approach to giving.

While there remains room for improvement, the changes we have seen are highly encouraging and suggest a bright future for philanthropy in Utah.

“

“It seems everyone has a different definition of impact. Some think anything measurable is impact; others don’t think real impact can be measured at all. But while it is surely challenging to estimate a program’s impact on intangible life outcomes, it is incumbent upon each organization to measure impact in a manner as objective and rigorous as possible.”

Brittany Erikson
Executive Director, Ray and Tye Noorda Foundation

Areas of Opportunity

Despite the plethora of community support from individual donors and institutional funders alike, 70 percent of funders and nonprofit leaders reported that needs are increasing significantly. Similarly, a significant 80 percent of nonprofits have observed a noticeable increase in both the severity and volume of needs they are addressing. For example, take education, housing, and the environment, all of which are consistently ranked as top priority areas for funders and community members alike. Since 2017, Utah has experienced:

- Education: Statewide declines in English, math, and science proficiency scores for grades 3-8 compared to 2019.⁶
- Housing: 96 percent increase in individuals experiencing chronic homelessness since 2019.⁷
- Environment: The lowest water levels ever recorded in the Great Salt Lake in November 2022.⁷

With significant support coming in through donations and volunteer time, yet problems continuing to worsen, it raises the question: Where is the disconnect?

As we heard from donors and nonprofit leaders alike, there are no easy solutions. Social issues are deeply complex and ever evolving. The rate of change in our communities requires solutions that are adaptive, scalable, and sustainable all at once. A tricky combination to achieve. Yet, we have a responsibility to be better.

As we look toward the future, each individual and organization will find themselves at a unique point in their philanthropic journey. There is no single answer or approach, but after decades of work with hundreds of funders and nonprofits, and in listening to those who have learned lessons along the way we are happy to provide the following recommendations. These recommendations are not intended to be “one size fits all.” Each suggestion should be applied to the needs and circumstances of organizations and our community as needed and appropriate.

Expert Opinions

“The people we care about need us to change the systems that keep producing these outcomes. None of us can do that alone. We need results-focused partnerships and infrastructure, and we have to actually believe that these problems can be solved.”

– **Bill Crim, CEO of Utah’s Promise**

“To begin with the end in mind means to start with a clear understanding of your destination. It means to know where you’re going so that you better understand where you are now and so that the steps you take are always in the right direction.”

– **Stephen Covey**

“Too many philanthropists decide that they are going to start a new organization or new solution to a problem. We are already experts in the space, we do not need you to recreate the wheel.”

– **Anonymous Nonprofit Leader**

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Focus Strategically

Time, money, and energy are finite resources and act as the limiting factor in almost all of life's pursuits, philanthropy included. Deciding where and how to give is an endless struggle for almost all funders, especially as new needs arise throughout our community and the world. About 64 percent of funders said that they have difficulty prioritizing various needs, while over half of them said they feel overwhelmed with the quantity of asks.

As a result of these limitations, funders often distribute their funds across many causes and organizations. General population donors donate to an average of eight different organizations each year and 54 percent of institutional funders have seen the number of organizations they give to increase over the last 3 years. This trend is extremely significant. Utahns' willingness to give is one of the defining attributes of our state. However, there is much value in being intentional about the causes and organizations that one gives to.

There is a growing movement towards choosing a smaller number of focus areas to give to amongst leading funders in the state. One large funder outlined their story in stages.

For funders and nonprofits, it is extremely important to clearly articulate the goals you wish to accomplish and the pathway that leads to that impact.



When I started my philanthropic journey, I told myself 'I'm going to be thoughtful and intentional about how and where I give.' Very quickly, I found myself overwhelmed with requests, opportunities, and organizations. I began to look at other families and organizations and just donated to what they were doing. I never wanted this chaotic approach to my giving, but that's where I ended up. I came to realize that smaller donations here and there are great, but there was a possibility for me to have more impact. I took time to be intentional about which causes I am passionate about. After doing that, I identified the organizations that address that cause well. While choosing the focus areas and organizations was difficult and required time and energy, I have now been able to have significantly more impact through my giving. I have become more of an 'expert' in the areas I'm focused on. My donations have started going towards long-term solutions and investments. My philanthropic activities have become more meaningful to me personally and more valuable to the community around me.

– Anonymous Funder

STEP 1: CONCENTRATE ON A FEW THINGS

Funders should begin by identifying the causes that are most important to them and align with community needs. Philanthropy is most effective when driven by personal passion. Once funders have defined one to three focus areas, they should seek out the organizations already at work in those areas.

By identifying and then partnering with nonprofits already in the space, funders can leverage one another's expertise and experience without starting from scratch.

STEP 2: CHART A CLEAR PATH

As funders mature, they can begin to define specific impact strategies for their individual focus areas. These guiding strategies can be utilized by individual donors or for entire philanthropic organizations. Impact strategies should contain answers to questions like:

- What is my desired impact?
- Who am I going to serve?
- How am I going to have that impact?
- Who am I going to work with to create impact?
- What is my role in creating that impact?
- How am I going to measure that impact?

Nonprofit organizations should also be intentional about clearly defining their impact strategy. A common approach in the nonprofit space is to define your organization as what you do, rather than the *impact* you have. Shifting the paradigm to clearly defined impact clarifies the reasoning behind nonprofit activities and programming, while also making measurement and evaluation simpler and more meaningful.

The benefits of this approach are plentiful for funders and nonprofits. Funders can spend less time and energy deciding where to give, shifting their perspective towards how they give. They naturally develop more knowledge and experience in the areas they give due to their deeper involvement with the cause and organizations. Nonprofits benefit from more stable funding and increased opportunities for collaboration. Many funders and nonprofit leaders shared the difficulty of understanding who exactly does what and who exactly gives where. Clear definitions and strategic focus increase impact throughout all aspects of philanthropic and nonprofit efforts and interaction.

STEP 3: CREATE LEVERAGE

As both funders and nonprofits continue their efforts to increase impact, they will inevitably (and often quickly) realize that their efforts and resources alone are insufficient to meet the needs of those they seek to serve. Many seek to scale the breadth and depth of their influence and impact. Some even begin to look for ways to progress from individual impact for those they can serve to changing systems so all can benefit.

Most often, these efforts are best achieved by creating leverage through collaboration—combining one's own resources and efforts with others' such that $1 + 1 = 3$. Nonprofits can more easily identify partner organizations to increase efficiencies and reduce duplicated efforts. Funders, with their developed experience and expertise, can act as conveners, bringing together various sources of funding and organizations in order to create real, valuable solutions together.

Caveat – A strategic focus on giving for funders should not eliminate all giving outside of the selected focus areas. Funders should continue to donate how and where feels most impactful and meaningful to them. Clearly defining the percentage of donations that will go to “focused” versus “other” giving can be a valuable practice and is increasingly common amongst large funders.

To Summarize:

Clarify what your desired impact is as an individual or an organization. Identify what specific actions or programs you will implement to achieve the desired impact. Leverage experience and strategic focus for increased scale up to and including systems-level change.

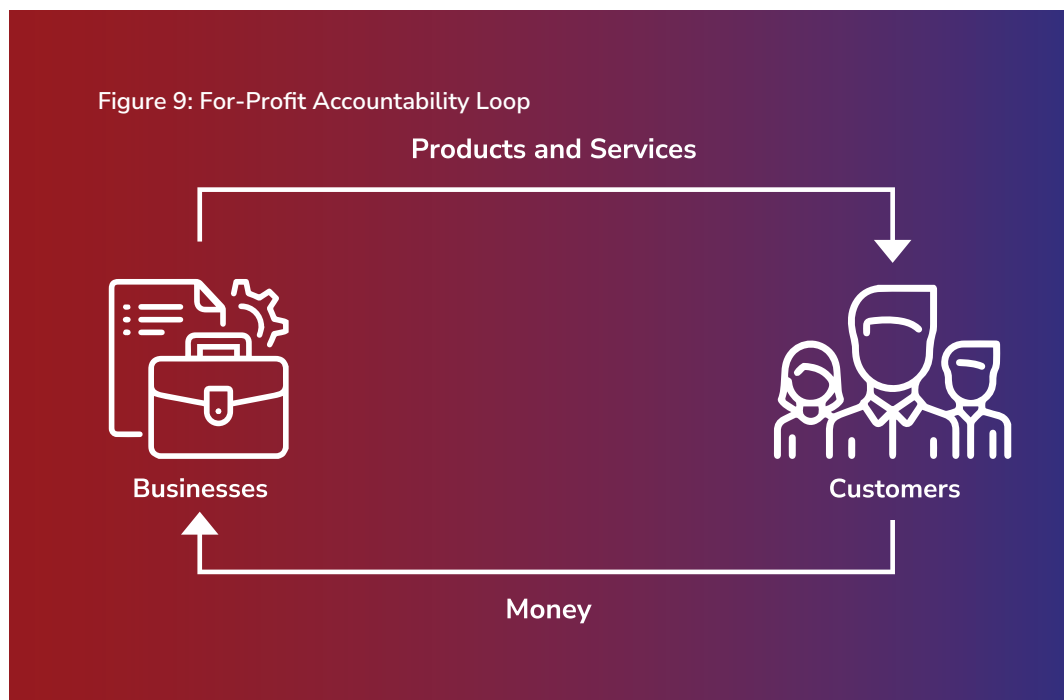
- Funders: Begin by defining one to three focus areas that you will give to and research who is working in those areas. Clearly outline your personal or organizational impact strategies within each of those focus areas and hold yourself accountable to that strategy.
- Nonprofits: Begin with the end in mind when thinking about what you do as an organization. Clearly define your desired impact and how each program or activity you do achieves that impact. Communicate your impact strategy to potential funders in a clear, concise way.

• “As funders, we should prioritize the impact we’re achieving more than the dollars we’re donating. Catalytic philanthropy is when the impact is much greater than the donation.”
• – Jim Sorenson

Recommendation 2: Increase Accountability and Learning

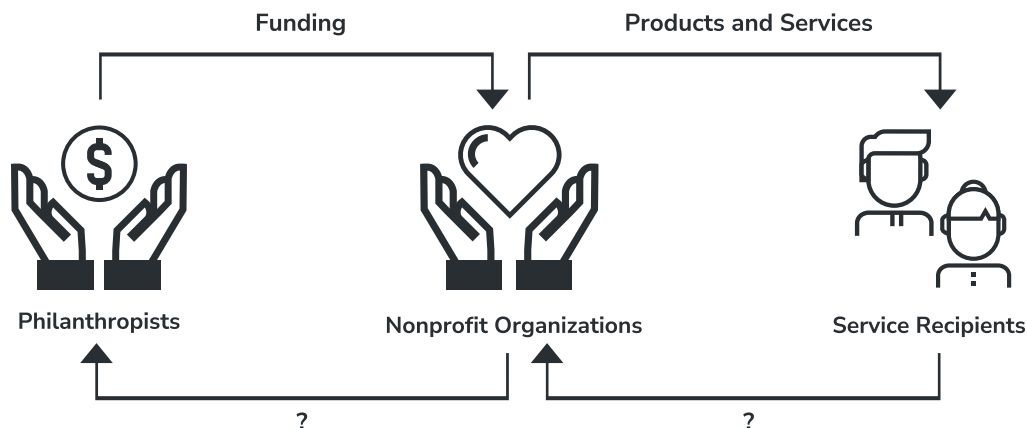
In the for-profit space, accountability is a simple feedback loop. Businesses provide goods and services to customers and customers give businesses money. When customers become dissatisfied with the products and services, they hold businesses accountable by declining to make purchases. (See Figure 9) While this is perhaps overly simplified, it is clear that this type of feedback

loop is much less ambiguous than that in the nonprofit space. The for-profit feedback loop provides a clear path for measurement of a business’s efficacy and ensures accountability and learning from the business. In the nonprofit space, funders provide funding for nonprofits, who in turn



provide programs and services to those in need. In contrast with the immediately visible signals present in a for-profit market, there are few automatic sources of feedback in the social sector—either from recipients to nonprofits or from nonprofits to their funders. (See Figure 10) The result is that it is difficult for any of the key parties to understand the progress made and pain points addressed by philanthropic activities.

Figure 10: Nonprofit Accountability Loop



Both funders and nonprofit organizations have increasingly recognized and sought to address this reality so that they can understand what impact they are (and are not) making, what is (and is not) driving that impact, where and how they can improve, and what they can do more (and less) of. But there are many reasons that it is difficult to increase accountability and learning between stakeholders in the system. To name just a few: inequitable relationships exist between recipients, nonprofits, and funders; incentives rarely prioritize investments in measurement or complete transparency of both positive and negative results; the approach to, and complexity of, measuring and determining the causes of change varies greatly across contexts, issue areas, and outcomes; and standardized approaches and easy-to-use, low-cost systems are still not widely available. In short, accountability and learning—to oneself and to others, whether as funders, nonprofits, or beneficiaries—is both incredibly important and very challenging. Fortunately, getting started and aiming for improvement over time is well worth it

STEP 1: CONDUCT DUE DILIGENCE

For funders, increasing accountability and learning begins with an analysis of the organizations you intend and ultimately choose to give to. The Noorda Foundation serves as an excellent example of this at one end of the spectrum. Their trustees have chosen to give only to organizations that have proven interventions—programs and services that have significant, rigorous evaluation evidence that demonstrates their effectiveness. This means that organizations requesting funding from them must provide proof of their impact in the community. This creates a virtuous cycle as nonprofits are incentivized to track their outputs and outcomes more closely, which in turn increases the quality and quantity of services to those in need.

- “[Due diligence and accountability]
- are how we can create the biggest
- impact with the dollars we have
- available.”
-
- – Erin Blackford, The Noorda
- Foundation

Of course, not all funders will set the bar as high as the Noorda Foundation. And conducting due diligence does not necessarily need to be intensive, and should not overburden nonprofits, but acts as a powerful starting point for increased accountability. Where possible, funders should avoid asking for entirely new documentation or metrics but should leverage existing impact reports. For their part, nonprofits should approach these conversations as an opportunity to create a meaningful relationship, rather than a burdensome hoop to jump through.

STEP 2: MONITOR, EVALUATE, AND LEARN

Another critical step during the grant application process is to identify exactly what impact measurements will be collected to understand and quantify success. Again, funders should not impose new datapoints or measurements on nonprofits unless there is no impact tracking taking place. As all parties dutifully collect impact measures, adjustments to investments and programming can be made to maximize total impact.

• “Without that time on the apartment floor, I wouldn’t understand what the true barriers are. Being there, with her, was the only way that I could truly learn what was going on.”
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• – Anonymous Funder

Another result of this increased accountability through impact measurement is the ability to share data to drive real solutions (as discussed further below).

STEP 3: SHARE DATA AND IMPACT SYSTEMS

Shared data can be used to drive real, systemic change. Every organization and funder hold a vital piece of the puzzle within each issue area. It is only when these pieces are combined in a meaningful, integrated way that the full picture becomes clear.

Each of these steps and processes work in tandem to hold nonprofits accountable to funders, and vice versa. However, an oft overlooked piece of accountability is the accountability to those who are being served. Ideally, those that funders and nonprofits seek to serve should have a seat at the table to help interpret and guide action on data and results. One funder shared the importance of sitting with a struggling single mom as she sat on the floor of her apartment trying desperately to find her next steps:

“As nonprofits and funders seek to address key issues in our community, it is important that any conversation related to services or solutions involves those who are directly affected by those services and solutions. Doing so will maximize the impact of all efforts, decrease blind spots, and decrease the likelihood of inadvertent harm potentially caused by benevolent behavior.”

Funders must be aware that an increased focus on accountability via metrics and data collection may necessitate more funds being dedicated to those activities by the nonprofits they serve. Only 67 percent of nonprofits report currently having the necessary infrastructure to collect measurement data. As funders seek to maximize their personal impact through measurement, nonprofits will be forced to build their internal resources and capabilities. Funders should be aware of this effect and accept the related uptick in overhead costs as necessary for impact.

To Summarize:

Seek to facilitate both accountability and learning between yourself and those with whom you work through impact measurement and data sharing. As much as possible, involve those you serve in key decisions in order to ensure accountability to them.



When we think about **magnifying our impact**, partnerships and private enterprise need to be a part of every solution

Clark Ivory
CEO, Ivory Homes

- **Funders:** Conduct due diligence before donating, especially when scaling the size of the donation. Seek to identify personal impact measurements to track, as well as working with nonprofits to identify their relevant impact measures. Remember that accountability shouldn't overly burden those you provide funding to and additional funding may be required to do this well.
- **Nonprofits:** Define internal impact measurements and vigorously track, report, and learn from what you find. Be willing to share data and information with funders as is pertinent. Seek to leverage your impact measures to create change systematically. Hold yourselves accountable to those you serve, as well as those who provide your funding.

Recommendation 3: Engage Expansively

Finally, to drive positive change in Utah, funders and nonprofits alike must prioritize equitable stakeholder engagement, encourage effective partnerships, and deploy catalytic capital. First, including funders, nonprofits, government, and community members in a united effort is essential to addressing root societal problems, as leaving any key group out can reduce impact. Intentional engagement ensures solutions that uphold dignity and address core issues. Second, effective partnerships are crucial, with an emphasis on both the quantity and quality of collaborations to maintain a focus on impactful outcomes. Finally, deploying catalytic capital—combining various funding types such as grants, equity, and low-interest loans—lowers financial barriers for impactful projects, enabling organizations to take on riskier initiatives and attract diverse supporters. This layered approach maximizes resources to scale impact across the state.

STEP 1: PRIORITIZE EQUITABLE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The ultimate goal of our work across Utah is to change the lives of those we serve for the better and to address the root causes of societal problems. Neither of these goals are easily achieved, especially if they are undertaken alone. Funders, nonprofits, individual donors, government and community leaders, service providers, and service recipients all hold unique and important roles in achieving these goals. If any of the relevant parties are left out of the work, we lose the

ability to create maximum impact. Currently only 35 percent of funders feel united with other key philanthropic stakeholders across the state.

Concerted efforts to identify and engage all stakeholders must be undertaken at every level across philanthropic activities. Doing so ensures that programs and activities truly address the problem at hand, solutions can be catered to address the root causes, and dignity can be maintained by all. We recommend that as part of impact strategies funders and nonprofits intentionally identify all stakeholders and make strategic efforts to work with each of them.

STEP 2: ENCOURAGE EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships in philanthropy can take many shapes. Multiple funders can come together to pool money and other resources towards one cause, multiple nonprofits can work together at providing services larger groups of funders and nonprofits can come together to strategically address core issues, etc. Since 2017, we have seen an uptick in the amount of collaboration taking place across the state (See Areas of Progress). As a continued emphasis on the quantity of partnerships takes place, we must also take steps to ensure that the quality and effectiveness of these partnerships remains consistent, if not improved.

When convening a partnership, it is easy to lose focus of the truly desired impact and associated metrics.

- “Somebody must wake up every day
- thinking about moving a group of
- people toward a result. The ‘who’
- is not as important as how well it is
- done.”

STEP 3: DEPLOY CATALYTIC CAPITAL

In addition to who is engaged in your partnership, it is important to consider the broad range of potential capital that can be leveraged to propel social innovation. By engaging beyond traditional gifts/grants, funders can unlock incredible impact through catalytic capital.

- – Anonymous Philanthropic
- Convener

Catalytic capital stacks combine different types of funding sources—like gifts/grants, equity, debt, and concessionary capital—in ways that optimize financial support for social initiatives. By mixing these sources, they help lower the cost of capital for high-impact projects, making it feasible for organizations to take on risks or scale up efforts that wouldn’t be sustainable with traditional grant-funding alone. This flexibility can also attract a wider range of partners, each willing to support different aspects of a project, thereby driving positive social and environmental outcomes while mitigating financial risk.

To Summarize:

By intentionally balancing who is at the table, how they can most effectively work together, and what resources (capital) they are able to deploy, funders and nonprofits will be better positioned to create positive change at scale.

- Funders: Think expansively about your approach to philanthropic giving. Consider the variety of potential partners as well as resources, strategies and approaches at your fingertips that can be applied to the nonprofit sector to drive change.
- Nonprofits: Begin each partnership with an intentionally designed, desired impact and associated metrics for the said impact. Use the defined impact statements to measure success and drive transparency towards long term outcomes.

Final Thoughts

The recommendations above advocate for several simple (and a few more complex) ways to improve giving. Of course, there's a balance between fostering more giving and facilitating better giving, both of which are important and need to be balanced. Donors and nonprofit organizations should continue to be cognizant of this balance in their efforts to increase the impact they have.

And when it comes to both the quantity and the quality of giving—efforts to improve life for those around us—our state has much to be proud of in our philanthropic efforts. Together we have continued to care for those in our community, despite adverse global conditions. We continue to see growth not only in the amount of giving, but in the maturity and intentionality of those who are giving in our community.

At the same time, our community faces increasingly complex challenges that, at times, seem to just be getting worse despite our best efforts. These challenges do not come with any easy solutions or “silver bullets,” but we are well equipped to take them on together. A proven history of charity, kindness, ingenuity, and grit will serve us well as we continue towards an even brighter future for Utah, our Giving State.

Appendix



Authors

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Callie Kennel is a Principal with Cicero. Callie has extensive Social Impact experience spanning many sectors including, Healthcare, Non-Profit, Higher Education, and Public and Private entities. Callie's expertise includes non-profit impact analytics, maximizing impact through effective strategy, performance monitoring and impact evaluation (M&E), and effective implementation.



Parker Hull is a Business Analyst at Cicero Group. Prior to joining Cicero Group, Parker was a Data Analyst at Real Salt Lake, where he focused on synthesizing customer feedback into actionable business solutions. Other responsibilities included supporting C-suite executives with data visualization, survey design, and data pipeline creation. He also worked as a Summer Associate for Leavitt Partners: An HMA Company. There he contributed to a variety of client projects relating to mergers & acquisitions, strategic growth, and competitive landscape evaluation.



Ayush Rajpal is a Business Analyst at Cicero. He is always looking forward to the next challenge and opportunity to develop. His Analytics, Research and Data handling skills help him to better serve Cicero's clients and be a good fit for the company. Prior to joining Cicero, Ayush graduated from Delhi University with a bachelor's in commerce (Honors) degree.

Methodology

We conducted in-depth interviews with 22 nonprofit leaders, individual philanthropists, private and community foundation leaders, and government officials throughout the state to understand their priorities, activities, and perspectives on our Giving State.

We fielded three studies to understand attitudes and practices around philanthropy in Utah:

- 99 nonprofit executive directors and staff responded to a nonprofit survey
- 69 family foundation officers, corporate giving officers, and individual philanthropists responded to a funder survey
- 604 members of the general public participated in a panel study

We analyzed available data on registered nonprofits in the state to understand their focus, geographic distribution, and size. We limited our data analysis to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations (identified by an IRS subsection code 3) with annual revenue of at least \$25,000, with the exception of Intermountain Healthcare and Western Governors University. Both of these 501(c)(3) organizations are significant outliers in terms of budget and scope; we excluded them to gain as accurate and representative a picture of Utah's nonprofit sector as possible. In terms of funders, we looked at foundations, corporations, and key individual donors to 501(c)(3) organizations.

Key Terminology

Donation

Money, time, goods, or services contributed for charitable purposes.

Donor

An individual or organization that makes a grant, simple monetary contribution, or volunteers time to a recipient organization. May also be known as the grantor or grantmaker.

Family Foundation

An independent private foundation whose funds are derived principally from members of a single family. Family members often serve as officers or board members and play a significant role in grantmaking decisions.

Foundation

A nonprofit entity that contributes funds and other support to other organizations. May be a private family foundation, a public charity that accepts contributions from a variety of sources, or a corporate foundation affiliated with a for-profit entity.

Funder or philanthropist

An individual or entity, including family foundations, corporate foundations, and corporate social responsibility groups, engaged in charitable giving (financial, volunteer, and/or in-kind support).

Grant

An award of funds to an organization to undertake charitable activities.

Individual Giving

Individual giving is defined as any giving done by the general population across the state.

Institutional Giving

Institutional giving is done by foundations, corporate, and high-net worth donors.

Impact Investing

Investments made in companies, organizations, and funds with the intention of generating measurable, beneficial social or environmental impact alongside (or in lieu of) financial return.

In-kind Contribution

A donation of goods or services rather than cash or appreciated property.

Nonprofit Organization

An entity whose main goal is achieving a particular mission rather than generating profit.

Outcome

Changes in behavior, knowledge, skills, status, and/or level of functioning that occur because of an organization's work.

Output

The activities and programs that define what an organization does. Typically a measure of volume of activity.

Overhead

Administrative funds which cannot be attributed or isolated to a specific program or activity but are necessary to an organization's functioning. Includes administrative costs such as rent, utilities, staff salaries, and insurance.

Philanthropist or Funder

An individual or entity, including family foundations, corporate foundations, and corporate social responsibility groups, engaged in charitable giving (financial, volunteer, and/or in-kind support).

Philanthropy

Donations of money, time, and/or goods and services.

Population-level Outcomes

Positive social changes across an entire community or system, such as increasing graduation rates for a state, or decreasing the percentage of people in abject poverty across the globe.

Program

A structured set of activities and projects designed to achieve a desired outcome.

Program-level Outcomes

Changes that occur as a result of specific program.

Restricted Funds or Grants

Grant funds that are restricted to funding for specified activities, typically related to a core programmatic offering.

Service Provider

An organization that offers social services to a specified population. It typically receives support from philanthropy, individual donors, and/or government.

Service Delivery Model

A set of principles, standards, policies, and constraints used to guide the design, development, deployment, and retirement of services delivered by a service provider.

Theory of Change

A theory of how and why a desired change is expected to happen. Describes the relationship between inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact.

Transparency

Clarity around an organization's strategic aims, its priorities, and how it operates.

Notes

¹Cicero, 2017. Cicero. [Online]

Available at: https://cicerogroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Cicero_The-Giving-State-Report.pdf

²Census, U., 2023. Population and Housing Unit Estimates Tables, s.l.: s.n.

³Lily Family School of Philanthropy, 2023. Giving USA: Total US charitable giving declined in 2022. [Online]

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[Accessed 8 Nov 2023].

⁴McCann, A., 2023. Most Charitable States for 2024. [Online]

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⁵Association, A. P., n.d. Stress in America™ 2023: A nation grappling with psychological impacts of collective trauma. [Online]

Available at: <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2023/11/psychological-impacts-collective-trauma>

⁶Utah State Board of Education and the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, Inc. (2021). Exploring the Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Student Achievement in Utah. [Executive Report]

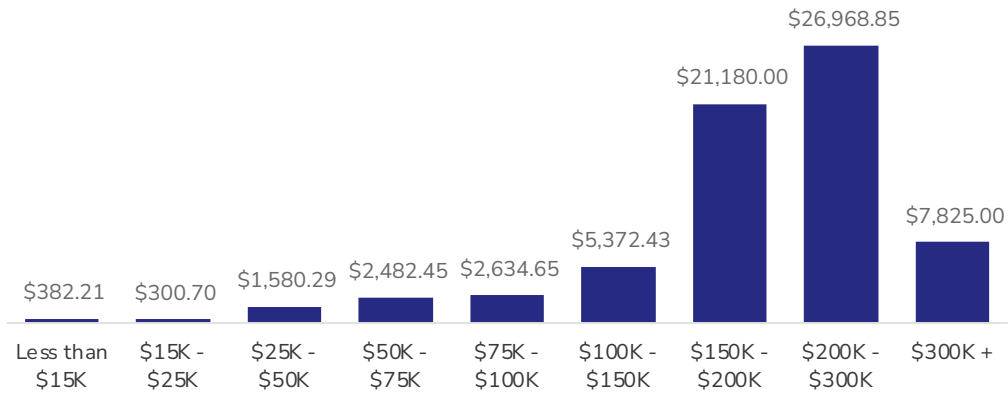
Available at: <https://www.schools.utah.gov/file/b3c018ec-ccb-4565-8199-248646c79524>

⁷Services, U. D. o. W., n.d. Annual Data Report on Homelessness. [Online]

Available at: <https://jobs.utah.gov/homelessness/homelessnessreport.pdf>

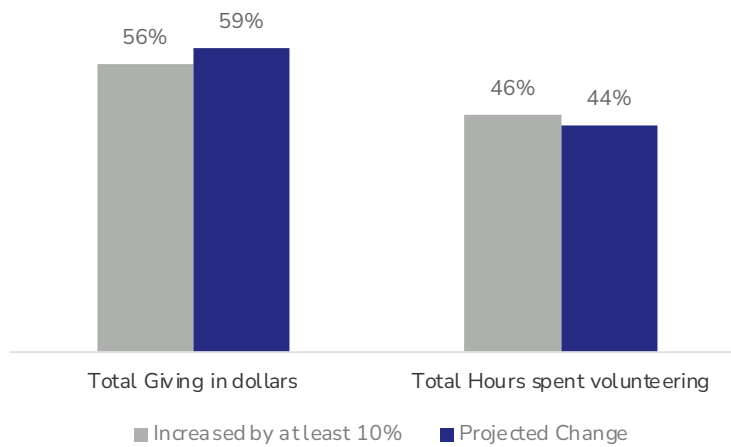
Figures

Average Gift Size by Income Level



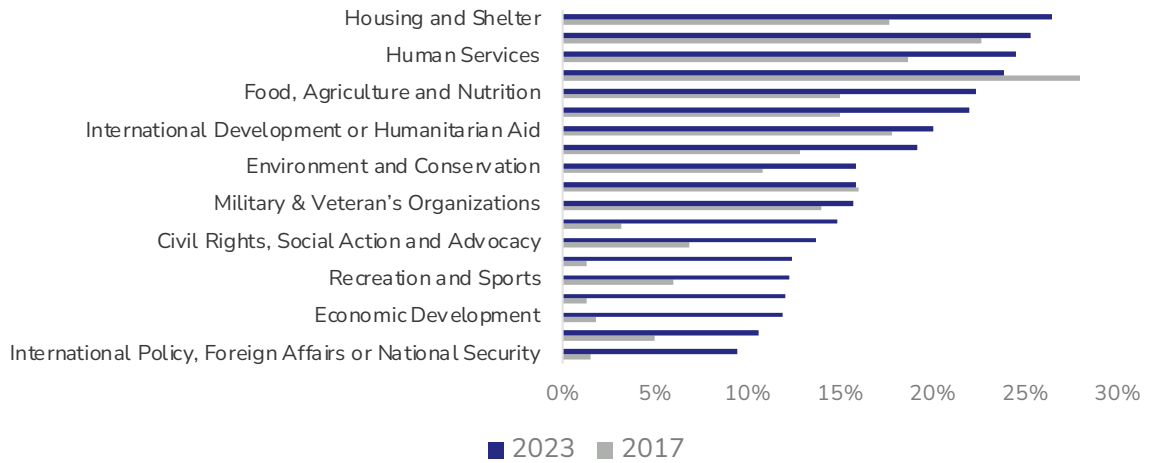
Survey Questions: "In 2022, approximately how much money did you personally donate to nonprofit organizations in total", "What is your annual household income?"
 Sample Size: n = 423

Increased Awareness of Needs and Increased Giving to Those Needs



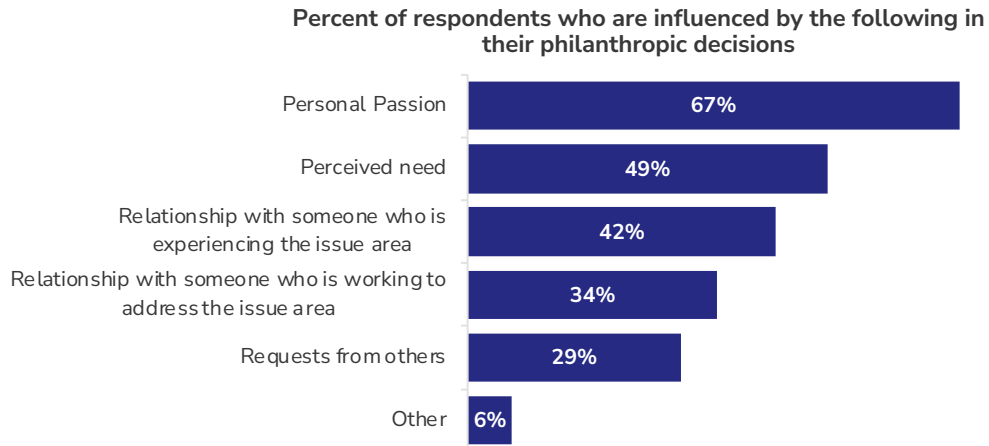
Survey Questions: "Q18 - The degree to which you agree with the following statements. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated world changes...I am more aware... I have increased my philanthropic giving..."
 Sample Size: n = 423

Figure 2: Percent of Individuals who give to each cause



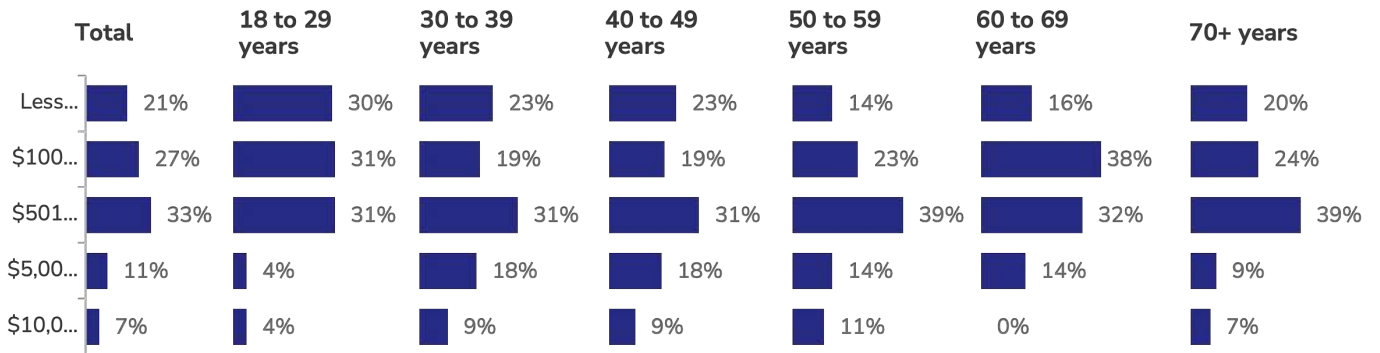
Survey Questions: "What percent of your giving in 2022 was allocated to each of the following issues?"
 Sample Size: n = 423

Figure 3: How Individuals Choose to Give



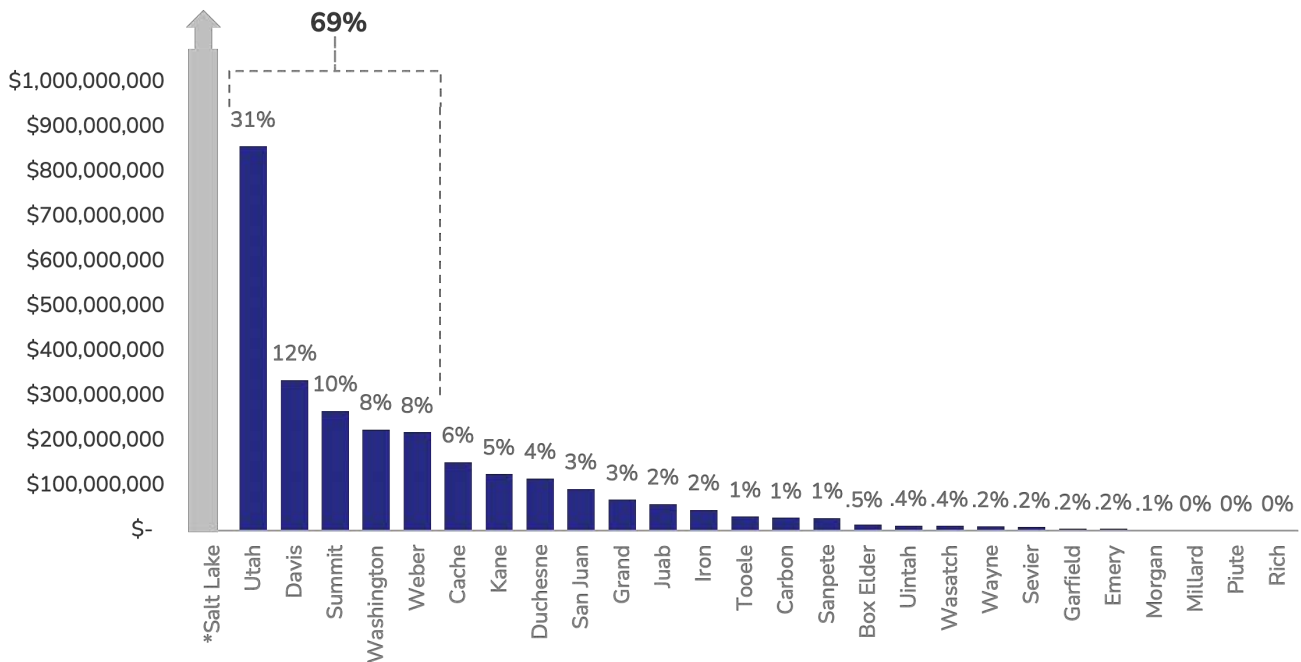
Survey Questions: "How do you decide which issue areas to support and address through philanthropy?"
 Sample Size: n = 423

General Population Donation Amount by Age



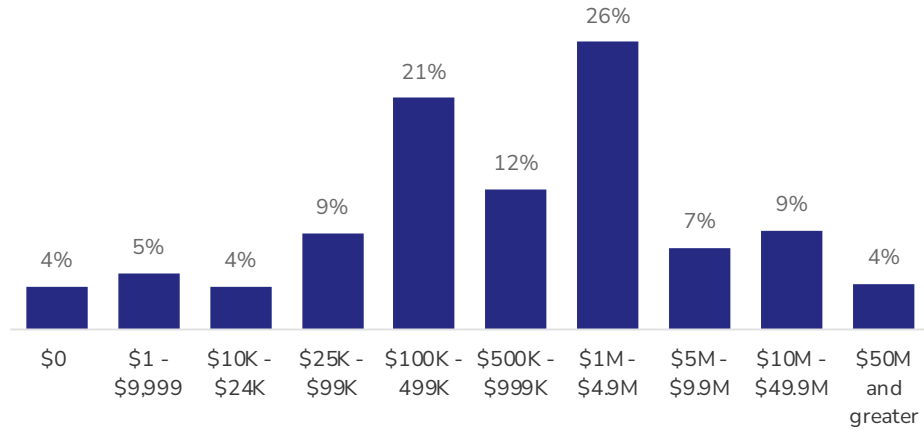
Survey Question: "In 2022, approximately how much money did you personally donate to nonprofit organizations in total?"
 Sample size: n = 423

Proportion of Total Nonprofit Revenue by County



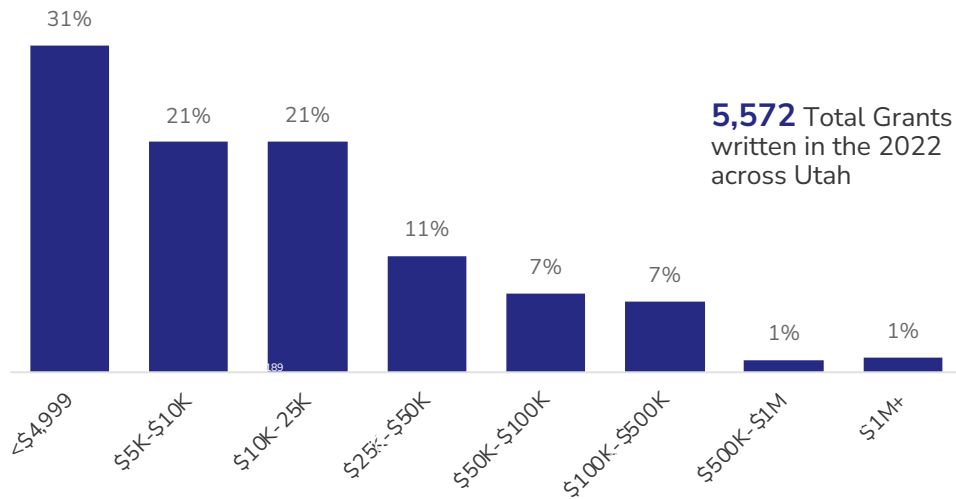
*Note: For illustrative purposes, Salt Lake county's revenue was not included in calculating the proportion of revenue by county. When included, Salt Lake county accounts for 58% of the reported revenue for the state.

Utah Foundations by Asset Amount



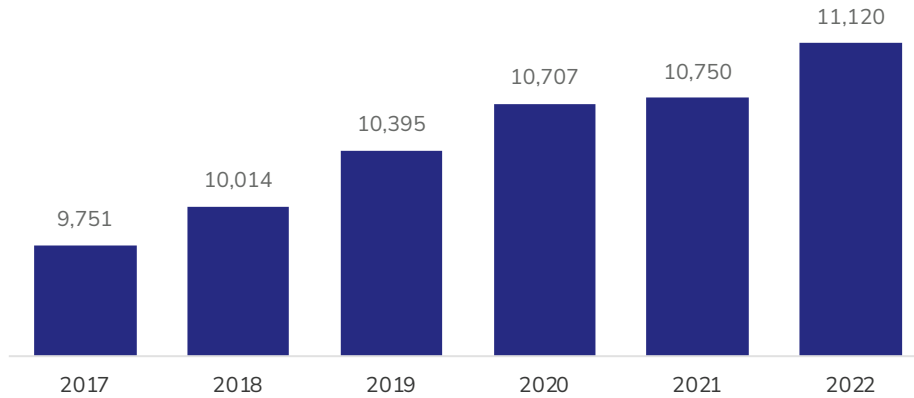
Source: Foundation Directory Online, <https://fconline.foundationcenter.org>

Number and size of grants made by Utah Foundations



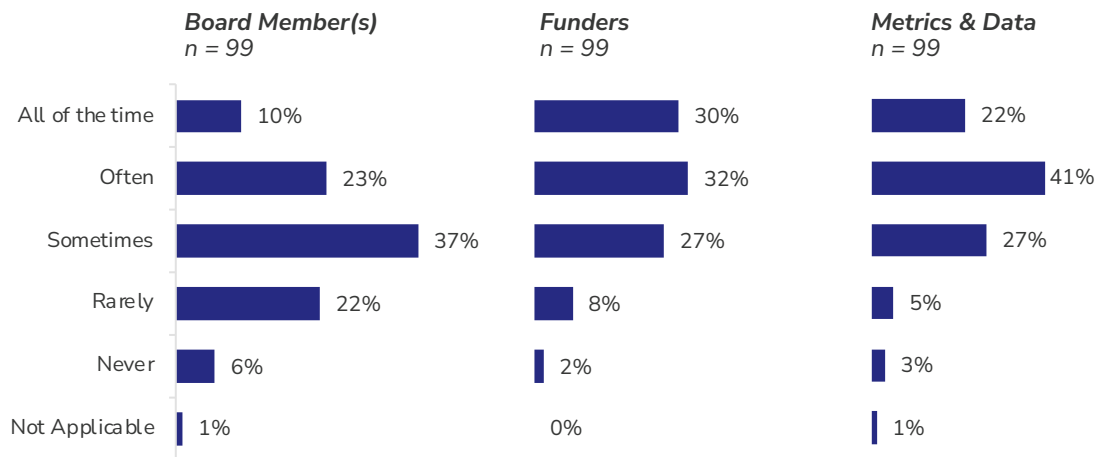
Source: Foundation Directory Online, <https://fconline.foundationcenter.org>

Number of registered nonprofits in Utah every year from 2017-2022



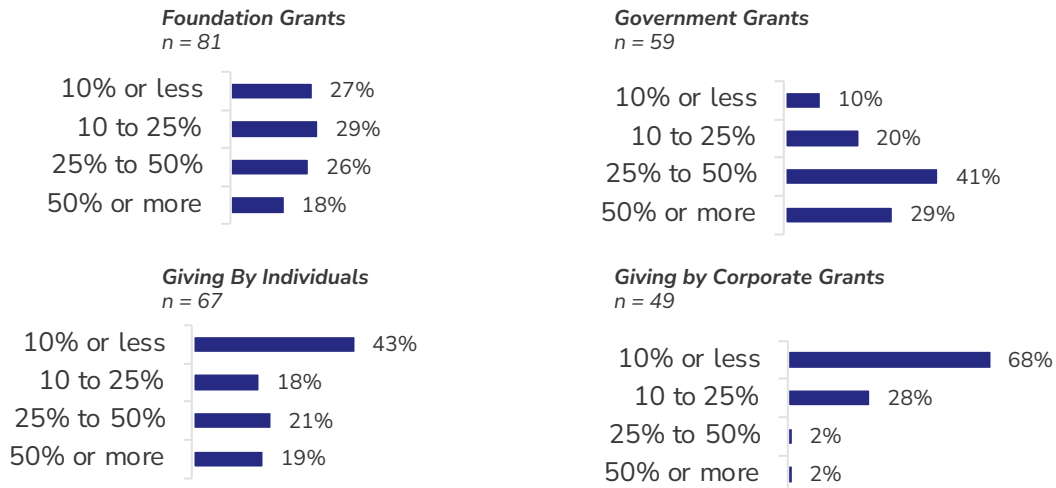
Source: 2017-2021 [Utah Non-Profit Association](#), 2022: IRS Data

Influences on nonprofit programs in Utah



Survey Question: "Please indicate the extent to which the following influences the programs and services your organization provides"
Sample Size: n = 99

Funding types as proportion of overall funding mix for nonprofits in Utah



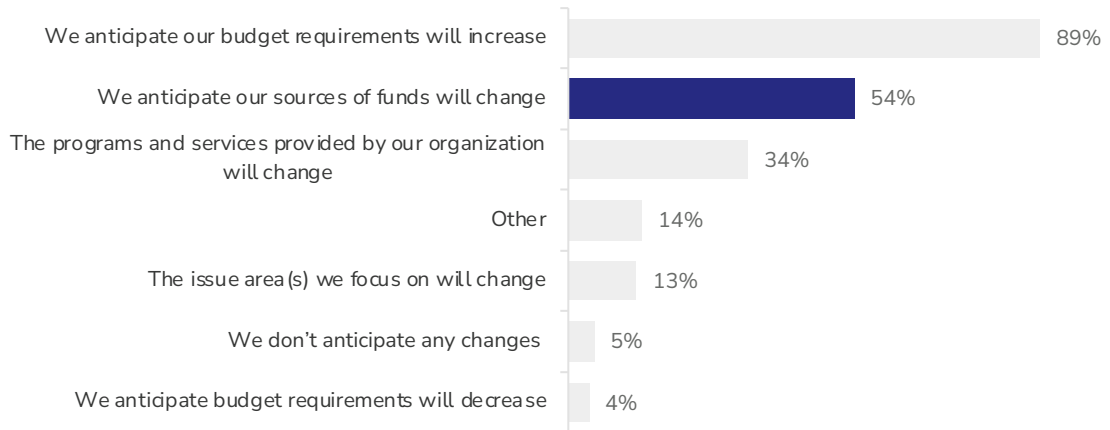
Survey Question: "Of your total funds in 2022, approximately what percentage was provided by the following sources?"

Preferred funding types for nonprofits in Utah

Preferred Sources of Funds	Percent Selecting Top Rank	50% or more of 2016 funding
Foundation grants	30%	19%
Giving by individuals	23%	14%
Government grants	22%	20%
Earned income	16%	11%
Corporate grants	3%	1%
Corporate sponsorship	2%	3%
Giving by bequest	4%	1%

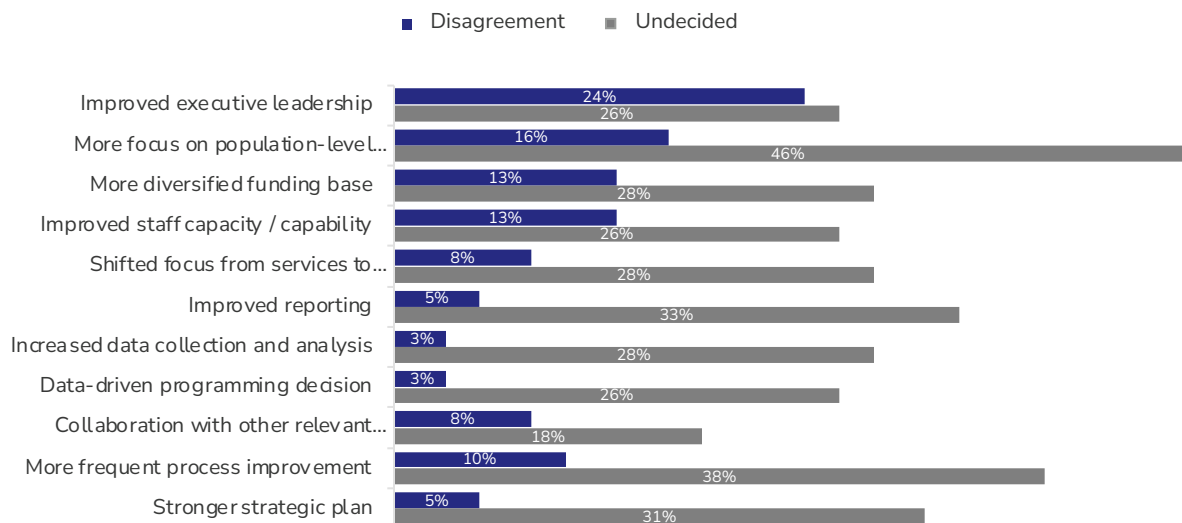
Survey Questions: "What are your organization's top 3 preferred sources of funds?"
 "Of your total funds in 2022, approximately what percentage was provided by the following sources?"
 Sample Size: n = 99

Utah nonprofits' anticipated organizational changes in the next three years



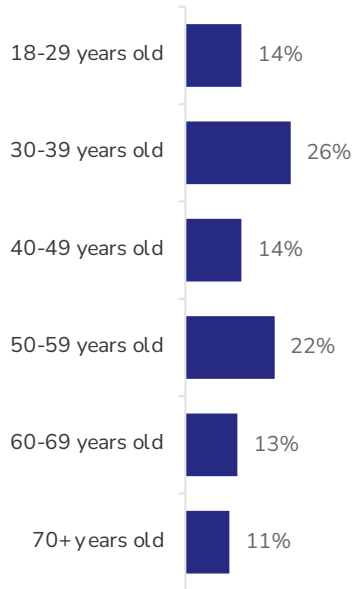
Survey Question: "Which of the following do you believe is likely to change for your organization over the next 3 years?"
 Sample Size: n = 99

Changes funders recommend nonprofits make



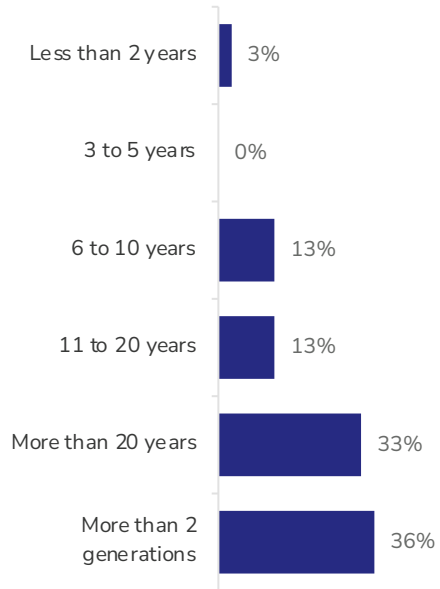
Survey Question: "What would you like to see more of from the organizations you support?"
 Sample Size: n = 39

Funders age distribution



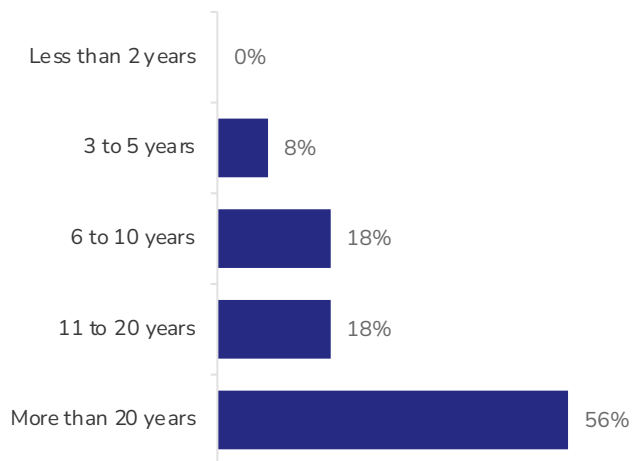
Survey Question: "What is your age?"
Sample size: n = 69

Funder time living in Utah



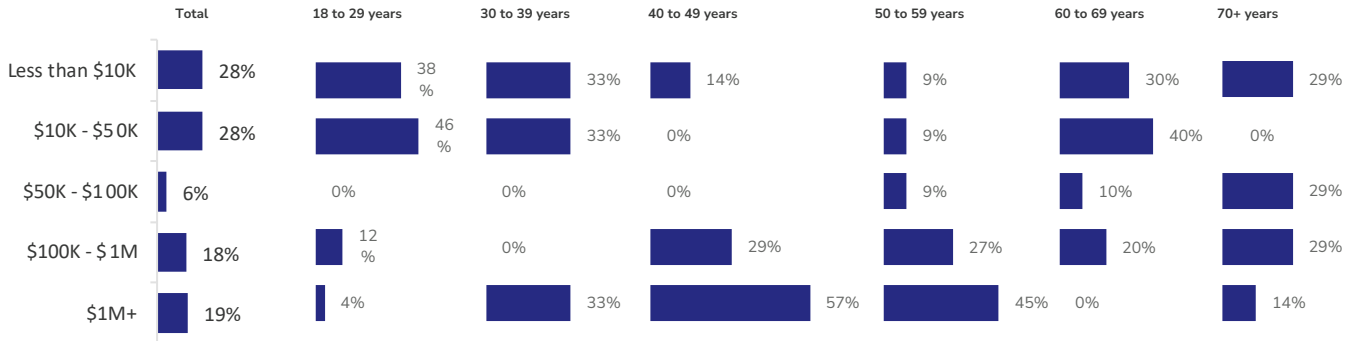
Survey Question: "How long have you and/or your family lived in Utah"
Sample size: n = 39

Funder amount of time engaged in philanthropy distribution



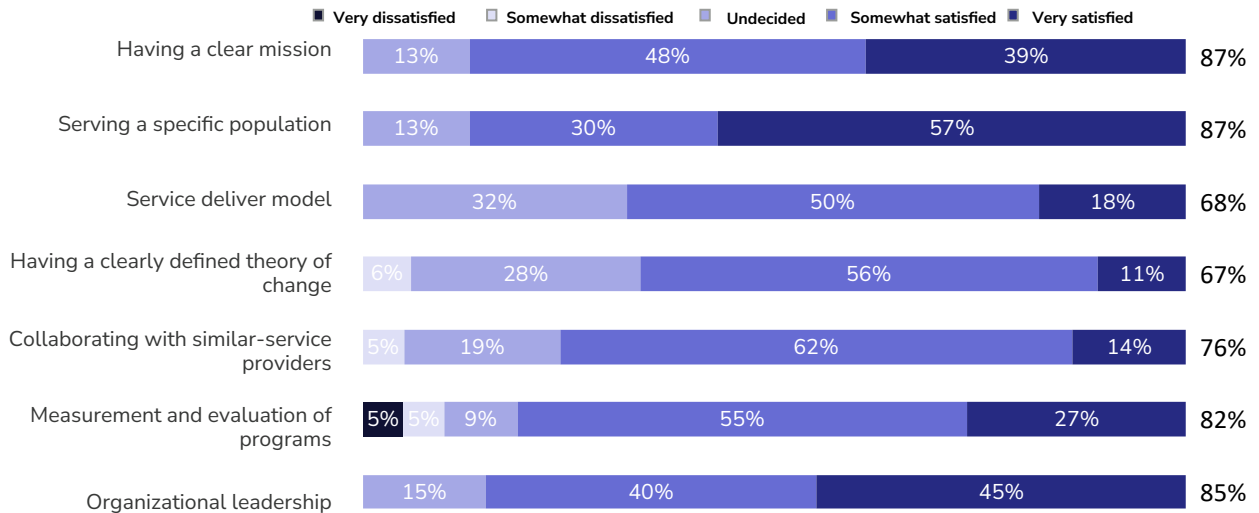
Survey Question: "For how many years have you as an individual or organization been engaged in philanthropy?"
Sample size: n = 39

Funder donation amount by age



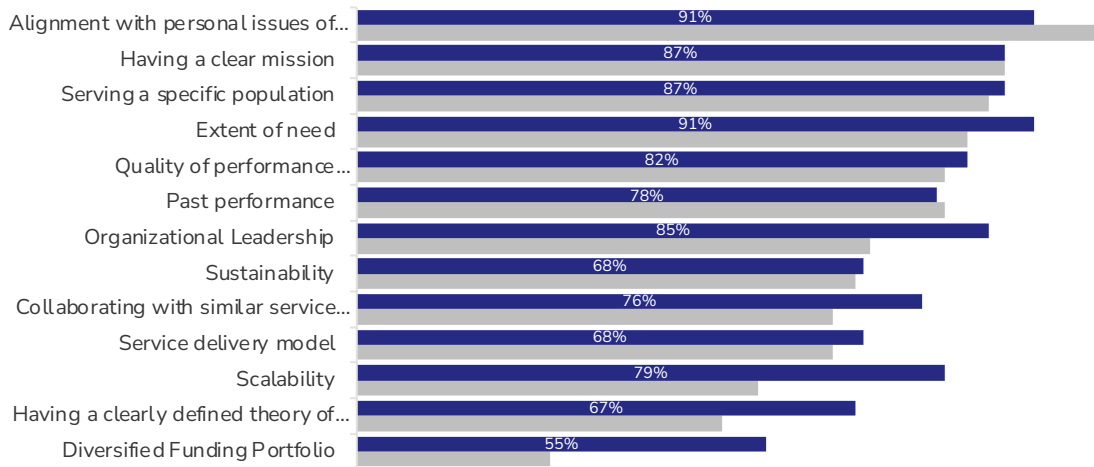
Survey Question: "In 2022, approximately how much money did you personally donate to nonprofit organizations in total?"
 Sample size: n = 67

Funder satisfaction with nonprofit performance



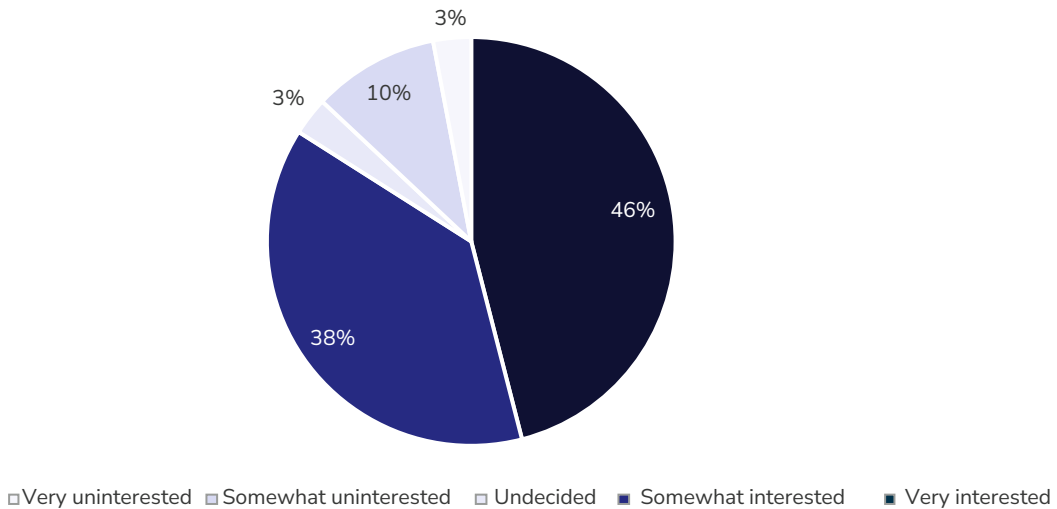
Survey Question: "Please indicate how satisfied you are with the following aspects of the organizations you support in general"
 Sample Size: n = 23

Nonprofit aspects influencing funding decisions



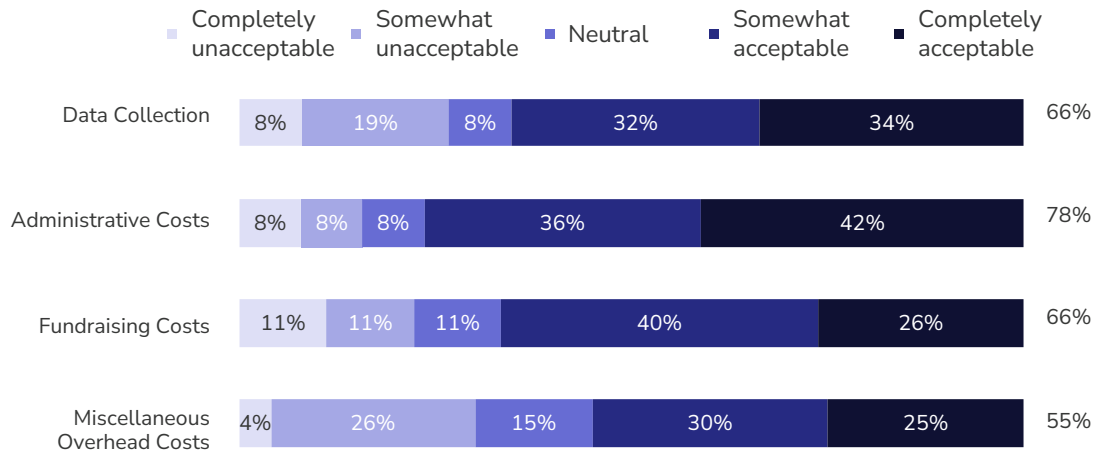
Survey Question: "Please indicate how satisfied you are with the following aspects of the organizations you support in general"
 Sample Size: n = 23

Funder interest in collaborating



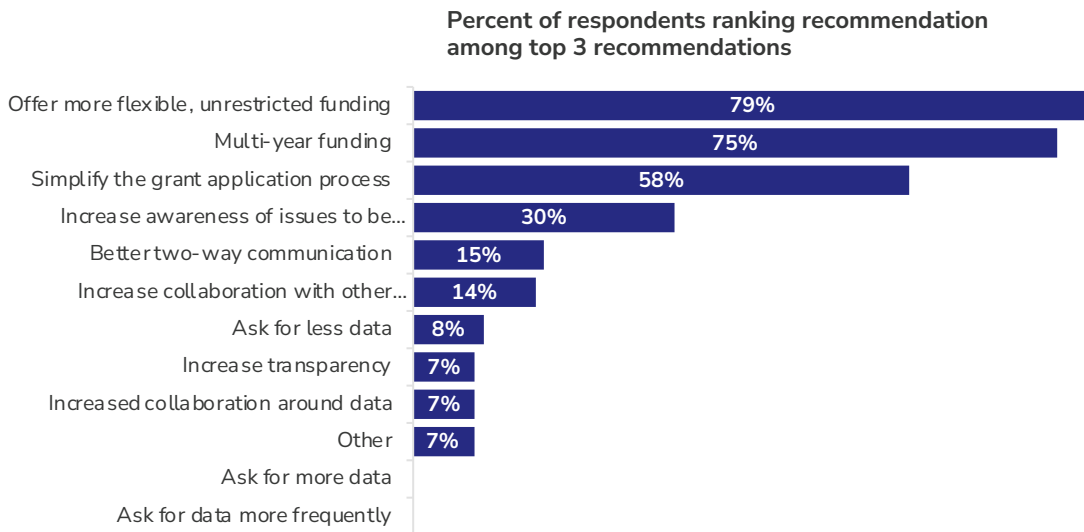
Survey Questions: "What level of interest do you have in collaborating with other philanthropist?"
 Sample Size: n = 39

Funders view on acceptability of types of overhead spend



Survey Question: "How acceptable is it that your donation to a nonprofit be spent on the following overhead costs?"
 Sample Size: n = 53

Nonprofit recommendations for funder improvements



Survey Question: "Please rank the top 5 things funders can do to be more effective in their philanthropic giving?"
 Sample Size: n = 89



The Giving State 2024

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