

CDP Webinar Responses and Resources

COVID-19: [How Philanthropy Can Stand Up For Vulnerable Populations](#)

It is difficult to get to all questions posed during the webinar, but it is important to us that we provide responses and share resources. Similar questions are grouped together, however questions answered by the panelists are not included here but can be accessed in the recording of the webinar. Presentation slides and recordings are available [on our website](#), generally within 48 hours of the webinar.

Q1) How do you suggest funders monitor the impact/outcomes achieved with their grants when making unrestricted grants in a crisis where the recipients may be unable to set SMART goals?

Answer: Certainly, we are all operating in new territory and under great stress, so one option is to not require assessment at all, or at least not a formal assessment. When that is not feasible funders can look at different ways of conducting evaluations. A simple report and write-up about what was done, perhaps with some quantitative data, may be the most an organization is capable of doing in a crisis. We often ask grantees to send us stories – a photo with caption and quotes – that highlight the work they did with our funds. A modified [Process Evaluation](#) may help discover what worked in the implementation. A focus group (with staff, with clients) may provide qualitative data about the success of the activities. While this kind of [participatory evaluation](#) can produce very interesting results, all types of evaluation is an additional activity, not always funded in the application.

Q2) Can the presenters comment on the call by a number of philanthropists to double the mandatory 5% payout rate for foundations for the next 3 years and to impose the same rate on donor advised funds?

Answer: This is addressed in [Question 6](#) in the Managing Multiple Disasters webinar resources.

Q3) By "immigrants" do you mean workers with undocumented status? There's an important distinction there.

Answer: When CDP references immigrants we generally distinguish between documented and undocumented immigrants, as well as between refugees, internally displaced people and asylum seekers. Increasingly, we are seeing immigrants used as shorthand for all types of people who have entered a country other than their one of native origin. An example of this is the way in which exclusions in the CARES Act were reported by mainstream media. There was an exclusion for immigrants without a Green Card – including many undocumented immigrants - and their families but most stories – especially headlines – spoke only of “immigrants”. For example, this [CBS news article](#). In this webinar, panelists were referring to both documented and undocumented immigrants.

Q4) Are there been some “wins” already from NGOs and philanthropists advocating to the government for full inclusion of immigrants, for example, in the relief support? What are the most effective ways to do it?

Answer: As you can see from the answer to the previous question the term “immigrants” can be confusing. If an individual is a documented immigrant with a Green Card, they have full access to the provisions of the CARES Act as does an American citizen. Individuals who are undocumented or who are working under certain visas have different access to programs. [Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees](#) have a number of resources to support these questions.

- [What has been included to date](#) and what the next relief package must include for refugees and undocumented immigrants.
- COVID-19 and [refugee resettlement](#).
- How to protect the [economic well-being](#) of immigrants and refugees.
- Although from much earlier in COVID's impact in the U.S., this report examines what was known at the time about the impacts on [refugee and immigrant communities](#).
- A [call for philanthropic action](#).
- More resources are being added to their [COVID-19 page](#).

Q5) While I understand the need for funders to be open to a variety of groups and requests, it is important to understand that funders also have limited budgets and capacity in their own right to support EVERY nonprofit who asks - regardless of how incredible the cause may be. Fielding hundreds of grants and requests is hard to do on the part of funders too.

Answer: Absolutely, it can be very difficult and that is one reason that many funders have moved to invitation-only applications. If funders would like to move toward a more open process, there are a couple of options for reducing the workload and demands. One is setting very clear requirements (perhaps including a checklist) that an organization must meet before applying. Another option is opening up more broadly for a one- or two-page concept note that can be used as a screening tool before moving to a full proposal invitation. A third option is seeking broad nominations/suggestions from board, staff and colleagues, then assessing these organizations to narrow down the list. CDP has met with close to 200 organizations so far in half hour phone calls. Thirty of these – to date – have resulted in a successful grant, with others pending or in review. Not all of the organizations have been invited to apply but it cast a wider net than we might have otherwise reached.

Q6) How was gauging capacity in the South different than in other areas? (This question was in reference to a point Aaron made about assessing capacity.)

Answer: Here is the landing page for the initiative: <https://www.ncrp.org/publications/as-the-south-grows>. The first report, On Fertile Soil addresses the capacity question in depth and the final report So Grows the Nation summarizes the whole effort, including capacity issues.

Q7) Any suggestions/best practices to ensure target communities are represented on funder's board/grant committees while managing conflicts of interest?

Answer: Everyone brings with them their own interests and affiliations when they join a board or committee. A strong [conflict of interest policy](#) that addresses when an individual should abstain from a vote and/or discussion is a key way of addressing biases. That said, there are a couple things to consider: the removal of barriers in supporting inclusion. For example, does your board require a minimum gift to the organization? If so, a community member living in poverty may be challenged to do that and would either be excluded from that criteria or have it addressed in a different way. In fact, you may need to spend money to include community representatives on a board including transit support, childcare, food and honoraria. Here are some resources that address issues connected to board diversification:

- [If Your Board Looked Like Your Community](#)
- [Diversity on NonProfit Boards](#)
- [The Importance of Diversity \(and Inclusion\): A Call to Action for Community Foundations](#)
- [Increasing Participation and Membership](#)
- [The NonProfit Sector's Diversity Problem](#)
- [Beyond Political Correctness: Building A Diverse Board](#)
- [When and Why Diversity Improves Your Board's Performance](#)

Q8) I know this webinar is addressed primarily to organizations, but do Aaron and Ruth have any tips for how regular folks can speak up and communicate with philanthropies and nonprofits to let them know the best ways to help their communities? And what should organizations keep in mind when listening to the feedback of regular people?

Answer: An interesting question. Each philanthropy and nongovernmental organization (NGO) has different requirements in terms of what it funds or the activities it carries out. Some have very tight restrictions based on founding requirements or program funding, while others can be more responsive. See if there is an opportunity to get involved as a volunteer, board or committee member or to attend events (once quarantine is over) where you can talk to decision-makers. Get on their mailing lists – sometimes groups hold focus groups or conduct surveys to see how the community feels. Write to a key staff person and let them know of your concerns -- most organizations want to hear from the communities they serve and the broader communities they operate within. At the same time, they may hear 100 different opinions, from 100 different people, and have to move forward in alignment with mission, funding and strategic plans.

Q9) Feels like we've had this conversation for years now, but funders still hold all the cards. Attempts of nonprofits or nonprofit coalitions to change laws so that philanthropic sector is forced to give away more, or to track who they are giving the money to, or to change public benefit test for donor-advised funds (for example) have resulted in backlash against those nonprofits that support these changes. Can nonprofit sector actually do anything to change the rules?

Answer: There are a number of funders, as Aaron identified, who are calling for philanthropy to do its work differently, more effectively and better. Aaron's organization, the [National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy](#) is a leader in this work as is the [Center for Effective Philanthropy](#). Follow what they are doing and support their work. Build coalitions and collaborations of funders and organizations so that everyone has more visibility on the needs of the other sector. As individuals you can also discuss these issues with your legislators.

Q10) What are some ways to encourage a community foundation to increase their giving and increasing how much they use from endowments for granting purposes? Are there tools available to share with staff and board expressing the importance of increasing giving and how to do so effectively?

Answer: This is similar to the answer to Q9 above. The Center for Effective Philanthropy has developed a [rapid response feedback tool](#) that could be very helpful to communicate needs to board and staff. The Council on Foundations [call to action for philanthropy](#) to respond to COVID differently has been signed by over 750 organizations. Check to see if your community foundation is on the list and ask them to sign if they are not. The list of potential commitments provides a good opportunity for a foundation board and staff to discuss how they might respond differently.

Q11) Combining two questions into one answer:

What sort of movement have you seen from larger, more conservative funders? Groups like Libra Foundation are great allies, but we are wondering if other funders who have traditionally not funded movements and the grassroots are beginning to see our needs on the ground. /// I'd assume that many funders are directing giving towards larger established nonprofits, which likely are not as diverse or serving the most critically vulnerable populations. How do we balance funding smaller, grassroots organizations, that may not have the infrastructural scale or reach, but are as equally as valuable in the community in comparison to the larger/national/affiliate structured organizations?

Answer: In our [Rapid Response webinar](#), we talked about the importance of funding intermediaries. These groups often allow a flow between mainstream or large funders and small, grassroots organizations. In its last round of grantmaking, CDP's COVID-19 Response Fund granted \$75,000 to the [Emergent Fund](#) to support the work of current and prospective grantees as they meet the needs of their

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communities related to COVID-19. Focus will be on organizations, led by people of color, that are mobilizing to respond to the impact of the pandemic in vulnerable communities by utilizing their power-building strategies, including digital organizing, membership development and outreach, narrative development and direct action. As a Rapid Response intermediary fund, the Emergent Fund is able to move money quickly to impacted communities.

We also know from our partnership with [Candid](#) there are a substantial number of [funders supporting COVID-19 response](#). As of today (May 26), there are 4,555 COVID-19 commitments worth \$10.7 billion (USD). This is not just the usual funders in disasters. It includes some very big names, including traditionally more conservative funders. Now, not all of those conservative funders are supporting grassroots projects but there is significant movement from funders to support communities that are typically left out of response and/or experience disproportionate impacts.

Q12) What programs are available for new American businesses that may not have the financial records required to qualify for SBA/PPP loans? (e.g. They have been operating like dairy farms of the past, everyone works but no one really receives a listed "salary.")

Answer: Unfortunately, this question seems to be asking about SBA loans for for-profit businesses, so is out of the expertise of our panelists and staff.

Q13) Some have said that absent a "revolution" important changes systemic racism could not happen. How can COVID-19 be seen as the kind of disruption that could create space for change?

Answer: Some insights are in this [quote from Arundhati Roy](#), “What is this thing that has happened to us? It’s a virus, yes. In and of itself it holds no moral brief. But it is definitely more than a virus ... Whatever it is, coronavirus has made the mighty kneel and brought the world to a halt like nothing else could. Our minds are still racing back and forth, longing for a return to ‘normality’, trying to stitch our future to our past and refusing to acknowledge the rupture. But the rupture exists. And in the midst of this terrible despair, it offers us a chance to rethink the doomsday machine we have built for ourselves. Nothing could be worse than a return to normality. Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next. We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it.”

During the webinar, Aaron mentioned his vision for the future includes the need for philanthropy to [move power](#) from funder to grantee, and specifically to the grassroots organizations. When this happens, in combination with deep equity, there will be space for change.