



SUPPORT BEYOND THE CHECK

How Funders Can Partner in a Spirit of Service

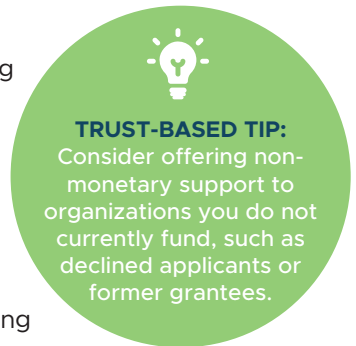
Trust-based philanthropy encourages funders to partner in a spirit of service to nonprofits, which means thinking holistically about ways to use your power and position to help organizations advance their goals. Providing non-monetary support – such as moral support, thought partnership, introductions to potential partners, and capacity-strengthening – can go a long way towards both reinforcing trust-based relationships and helping grantees advance their work.

This type of support can be particularly critical for organizations that historically have not benefited from the networks, access, and reach that their more established peers have been able to rely on. At its core, support beyond the check is an exercise in sharing power toward building trust.

REMINDER: Power dynamics are always present, even when offering support beyond the check.

Consider these tips:

- Be proactive about acknowledging the power dynamics
- Actively listen for ways you can support rather than assuming what they need
- Create mindful opportunities for partners to share feedback about needs and opportunities
- When offering support, clarify that it is completely optional and will not impact their funding status
- Always be accountable and respond to grantees in a timely manner



TRUST-BASED TIP:

Consider offering non-monetary support to organizations you do not currently fund, such as declined applicants or former grantees.

Ways to Embed an Ethos of Support Across Your Organizational Culture, Structures, and Leadership:



CULTURE

Normalize a culture of listening, responsiveness, and care

- Listen continuously and proactively for opportunities to support grantees
- Provide encouragement and acknowledgment when it's due
- Check in to see how partners are doing, especially in times of difficulty
- Encourage (and fund) partners to take time off for rest and reflection
- Promote a culture of learning and iteration, and be flexible to changes in timelines and plans when necessary



STRUCTURES

Build support beyond the check into your systems and structures

- Offer paid access to opt-in trainings and leadership development
- Offer restorative retreats
- Provide wellness stipends
- Offer free access to office space and community space
- Promote and celebrate grantees' work in public-facing communications
- Integrate emergent strategies for organizational support, e.g. address the gaps in technology resources and proficiency your grantees may be experiencing



LEADERSHIP

Use your power and position to be responsive to grantees' big picture needs

- Provide coaching, mentorship, or professional development opportunities
- Facilitate introductions to other funders
- Support grantees' board development, e.g., strategize with them about board priorities and introduce them to prospective board members
- Create opportunities for networking and connection among values-aligned and issue-aligned partners
- Offer connections to trustees or other colleagues who may be able to provide support or expertise in a particular issue area
- Support or endorse coalition-building efforts and/or legislation that directly affect grantees' work
- Talk to other funders about the benefits of trust-based philanthropy, and lift up grantees' successes as an example of impact