



William Davidson

WILLIAM DAVIDSON FOUNDATION

Dear Grantees and Partners... Colleagues and Friends,

Like you, we have been carefully monitoring the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, praying for the tens of thousands of people who have contracted the disease, and considering our response to this rapidly evolving global challenge. The full impact – on people’s health, on the economy, and on our daily life – is still being felt and understood. But the world feels different.

Crises like the one we find ourselves in today can be moments that bring people together. They remind us of our interdependence, our mutual concerns, and our shared vulnerability. Even as we learn about and take steps to encourage “social distancing,” I hope that the reminder of the things we hold in common will ultimately help us come closer to one another.

But we also know crises, by their very nature, are disruptive. We know your organizations have had to postpone conferences and performances, reschedule trips and retreats, close schools, and discover new ways to deliver services online. Many of you have understandable concerns about raising funds, meeting grant milestones, making payroll, and supporting your teams in a variety of ways. Although you may be rising to meet all these challenges, you also undoubtedly have much more personal worries weighing you down – from vacation plans and childcare arrangements to ensuring your loved ones are healthy and the most vulnerable among us are protected. Thank you for telling us about your cancellations and contingency plans, but also about your fears, your families, and your needs for the future.

I wish that the uncertainty of this moment would quickly wane and that those of us at the William Davidson Foundation could assuage all these concerns for you. Of course, that’s not possible. But here’s what we can do.

As a Foundation, we will be as flexible as possible as we all steer our way through this uncharted territory. My hope is that this is exactly how you have experienced our partnership and relationship in the past, but it is worth articulating and reinforcing our commitments and principles:

- We want you to have the time to plan and respond. We understand that time spent preparing reports, planning for site visits, and meeting with Foundation staff may distract from your ability to provide critical services at this time. Please contact us to reschedule or

extend reporting deadlines and meetings as necessary.

- We will adjust our expectations in light of changed circumstances. We understand that certain goals (e.g. the number of people provided with services) may not be met as a result of coronavirus's impact on either your staff or the individuals you serve. Foundation staff will work with each of you to amend grant benchmarks that cannot be met as a result of this crisis.
- We will coordinate with other funders whenever possible. When foundations and other supporters share information and coordinate support, that helps limit the burden on grantees, especially in times like this. We are in regular contact with our philanthropic partners about what they are seeing and how they are preparing and responding.
- We will maintain our funding commitment. We have invested in your organization. Please know that all existing grant commitments will not be affected by market volatility or other factors. Of course, please let our team know how we may be helpful if there is a need to take a second look at the timing of our scheduled grant payments.

The situation is a dynamic one, but we are committed to working with each of you to provide the peace of mind and maximum flexibility possible to respond and adapt to this crisis. In this stressful time, if any of us here can be a sounding board, a sympathetic ear, or a coach as you continue your important work, please reach out by email or phone any time.

On behalf of everyone at the William Davidson Foundation, including our board members and colleagues in Michigan and Israel, thank you for your leadership and best wishes to you and your families.

All the best,



Darin McKeever
President and CEO

The William Davidson Foundation is a private family foundation that honors its founder and continues his lifelong commitment to philanthropy, advancing for future generations the economic, cultural and civic vitality of Southeast Michigan, the State of Israel, and the Jewish community.

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