

Philanthropy Terms and Definitions

Philanthropy: The giving of time, talent, ties, testimony, or treasure. The effort or inclination to increase the well-being of humankind, by charitable aid or donations. The literal translation is “love of mankind/humankind.”

Foundation: An organization, recognized by the IRS as a nonprofit with the goal of enhancing the quality of life through grantmaking.

Community Foundation: A foundation developed to enhance the quality of life for its local community through grantmaking with support from local community members as donors, volunteers, and board members.

Endowment: A permanent fund of money held by an institution for the purpose of providing long-term support of a specific purpose. The funds originate from the donations of individuals, corporations, and other entities in order to provide a long-term funding structure for the organization's work.

Fund Development: The raising of money to serve a nonprofit's mission, oftentimes through the development of relationships with individuals, corporations, foundations, and other entities that donate money, goods, and services.

Grantmaking: The process of providing grants to nonprofit organizations from a formal grantmaking organization.

Challenge Grant: A type of grant used to incentivize donors to give by matching gifts to provide a multiplying effect for the original gift. Otherwise known as a "matching grant."

Proactive Grantmaking: The process by which a grant maker, after assessing the needs of its community, requests proposals for grants on a targeted issue or works with a specific organization to positively affect its community.

Grant Cycle: The time period when a foundation decides on a group of grant applications. Foundations may offer only one grant cycle per year or multiple grant cycles, with specific grant application and announcement deadlines throughout the year.

RFP (Request For Proposals): An invitation for organizations to submit grant proposals targeted at the types of programs or issues that the grant maker wants to support.

Youth Empowerment: The process by which young people gain the ability and authority to make decisions and implement change in their own lives and the lives of other people.

PR (Public Relations): The use of various communication tools (i.e. press releases, interviews, social media, etc.) aimed at promoting the mission and/or work of an organization.

Needs Assessments: The methods of determining the areas of greatest concern within a community to better inform the grantmaking and service priorities of an organization.

Community Service: The volunteer work done by individuals and organizations to benefit the community.

Council of Michigan Foundations (CMF): The Council of Michigan Foundations (CMF) is a statewide philanthropy-serving organization, of which many Michigan community foundations are members. CMF leads, strengthens and supports Michigan's community of philanthropy by emboldening and equipping CMF members in the relentless pursuit of equitable systems and inclusive diversity, fortifying the field through public policy action, fostering the growth of current and future philanthropy leaders and advancing exemplary philanthropic practices and field expertise.

Donor: A person who contributes money, goods, or services to a nonprofit organization, public charity or fund.

Form 990: The annual federal return form that tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organizations must file with the IRS.

Nonprofit Organization: A term describing the IRS designation of an organization whose income is not used for the benefit or private gain of people with an interest in the organization. The organizational income must be used solely to support its charitable purpose and operations.

DEI Terms and Definitions

Diversity: The understanding that each individual is unique and recognizing our individual differences. The practice of including people from a range of different demographic backgrounds.

Equality: Equality alludes to identical apportionment. When we talk about equality, we are talking about equal sharing and exact division. The state of being equal, especially in status, rights and opportunities.

Equity: represents fairness and actions to achieve equality of outcomes and access to opportunities. This involves recognizing that systems and policies have put particular groups at a disadvantage, in regard to race, gender, socioeconomics and other factors and demographics. When we say equity, we refer to the qualities of justness, fairness, impartiality, and even-handedness.

Inclusion: The process of seeking out and consider the perspectives of diverse individuals to overcome current and historic systemic barriers and exclusion, thus ensuring that all individuals have equitable opportunity to participate in society and philanthropy.

Intersectionality: A methodology to examine how biological, social, and cultural categories like gender, race, class, ability, and others interact on multiple levels. Intersectionality allows us to consider the ways that parts of people are bound and relate within cultural patterns of oppression/ privilege.

LGBTQA+: An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual, and more. These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity (*Defining LGBTQIA+*).

Race: A social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on physical appearance, ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, and ethnic classification.

Social Identity: The parts of a person's identity from belonging to particular groups including age, ethnicity, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, veteran status, education, marriage status, familiar status and socioeconomic status.

Pronouns: The linguistic tools used to refer to people. These should never be assumed.

- He/Him/ His: An individual who identifies as male
- She/Her/Hers: An individual who identifies as female
- Ze/Zem/Zir: An individual who identifies as nonbinary, genderfluid, etc.
- Ey (eye)/Eir(air)/ Em: Pronouns for generic references or for individuals with no characteristic of either sex
- They Their/Them: An individual who does not identify as male or female