

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

Funders “spark” to achieve ambitious goals that are larger and more complex than any one funder can achieve alone. Some efforts follow a collective impact framework and seek to reform large public systems that allocate public dollars and regulate how services are delivered at the county or municipal level. Other efforts seek to affect an ecosystem by changing perceptions, ways of doing business, and/or structures through which the nonprofit sector achieves its goals. Whatever their ultimate goals, funders “spark” in order to achieve outcomes that are sufficiently ambitious and important to justify the time and costs of partnering.

Over the past few years, we've observed that collaborative initiatives of all types and sizes that gain traction over time exhibit certain success factors similar to those of a collective impact model. We've seen that funders really “spark” when there is:

FUNDER LEADERSHIP

Funders support or take the early lead to identify a need, raise awareness, and build a constituency that brings stakeholders together to address challenges and create a shared vision. Collaboration and systems change require new types of leadership and we are starting to see a new generation of philanthropic leaders emerge.

AUTHENTIC PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

Strong cross-sector partnerships are built on mutual trust and respect in which each partner's contribution is viewed as important. Strong leadership cannot eclipse partner engagement.

INFRASTRUCTURE

A dedicated organization or “backbone” provides coordination, facilitation and structure, ensuring forward momentum and a driving focus on the collective goal, supported by evidence-based strategies.

A SENSE OF URGENCY

A catalytic event or growing awareness of a problem can be utilized to drive collaboration and motivate collective action.

PATIENCE

Urgency gets partners to the table, but patience keeps them together to achieve a long term vision to stay the course through inevitable obstacles.

EFFECTIVE FRAMING

An issue needs to be defined in ways that are salient for funders and other key stakeholders and broad enough so that many people can see themselves as part of the solution. This works best when there is an actual initiative to fund.

TARGETED USE OF RESOURCES

Effective collaborative leaders understand and articulate the different roles that private and public funders can play. Philanthropic resources are best used to convene partners, to develop strategies and test innovative ideas, and to support evidence-based practices and advocacy in the social sector. Operations and scaling are best supported with public funds.

MULTIPLE ENTRY POINTS FOR PRIVATE FUNDERS

Multiple avenues through which the diversity of funders can invest enables an initiative to diversify and sustain long-term philanthropic support as some funders exit and new funders invest.

CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF COSTS

Collaboration is expensive, time consuming and staff intensive but is recognized to be worth the effort. Collective action is most successful when the transactional costs of coordination and partnering, including partners navigating different funder deadlines and requirements, is acknowledged and addressed throughout the process.

WHAT'S NEXT

While we know that working collaboratively presents a unique set of challenges, we firmly believe that funders collaborating for clear results and greater impact is worth the effort. We are committed to helping members build their capacity to be strong partners, so in 2015 we identified five cross-cutting competencies that we consider to be critical to fostering successful collaboration:

1. Promoting diversity, equity and inclusion
2. Supporting nonprofit capacity and effectiveness
3. Using evidence-based practices and data to inform funding strategies
4. Incorporating innovation and risk-taking into grantmaking
5. Leveraging change at the systems level through partnerships and advocacy

Moving forward, these competencies will be infused throughout our work and woven into the 50+ educational programs that we provide annually for members. We will continue to build on the momentum already achieved to advance solutions within the original five issue areas, while also embracing a broader approach to build funders' capacity to effectively work together and improve practice so that we can spark solutions across a greater number of vital issues.

In 2016, Philanthropy Network will undertake a strategic visioning process to assess our progress against the goals of the 2013-15 Strategic Plan, attest to what has been achieved, reset or refine goals where necessary, and forge a path to accelerate the vision of Sparking Solutions to harness opportunities that deliver on philanthropy's promise and potential for *Smarter Giving, Greater Good*.

JOIN US!

Philanthropy Network Greater Philadelphia is the region's membership association for organizations and individuals active in philanthropy. Serving primarily Philadelphia, Bucks, Montgomery, Chester and Delaware counties, plus adjacent areas, Philanthropy Network champions the role of philanthropy in improving the quality of life in the region and educates and inspires members to do their best giving.

We welcome new members and partners.
For more information, contact Maari Porter, Executive Director at 215-790-9700 x4 or maari@philanthropynetwork.org.

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SPARKING SOLUTIONS

PROGRESS REPORT
MARCH 2016

In 2013, Philanthropy Network Greater Philadelphia adopted a new, three-year strategic plan that advanced an action-oriented and problem-solving approach to philanthropy. Later that year we launched Sparking Solutions, an effort to actively promote and foster collaborative philanthropy that improves conditions, creates opportunities and changes lives in Greater Philadelphia.

At the heart of Sparking Solutions is a simple yet powerful idea: funders have to work collaboratively, in partnership with each other and across sectors, if we are to move the needle on critical challenges in the region.

The idea of collaborating for greater impact has firmly taken hold among Network members, yet there is still work to be done to help funders adapt to this shift in thinking, approach and investing.

As our 2013-15 strategic plan comes to an end and we consider the future of *Sparking Solutions*, we want to acknowledge the momentum this effort has gained across philanthropy in the region, reflect on what we have learned and consider the implications for how we can have even greater impact moving forward.

Smarter giving. Greater good.
philanthropy
NETWORK
GREATER PHILADELPHIA

SPARKING SOLUTIONS CONFERENCES

Philanthropy Network's three recent fall conferences have served as a forum to explore the application of Sparking Solutions and ways that philanthropy, nonprofits, businesses and government can work collaboratively to more effectively address complex social issues.

2013: COLLABORATION

The 2013 conference served as the official kick-off for *Sparking Solutions*, where attendees were introduced to the Network's efforts to actively engage members in collaborative philanthropy.

2014: COLLECTIVE IMPACT

More than 360 attendees joined us for *Sparking Solutions 2.0* where we explored the "collective impact" model as a strategy to advance joint action around a common agenda.

2015: DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

The following year brought our largest conference ever, *Sparking Solutions 2015: Learning and Leading Together in a Diverse Landscape*, where we went a step further on our *Sparking* journey to explore the region's changing demographics.

2016 AND BEYOND

ISSUE AGENDA

Philanthropy Network identified an initial *Sparking Solutions* Issue Agenda around five critical, poverty-related social and economic problems:

While members were actively engaged in a wide variety of issues, this agenda reflected priority needs in the region, top concerns and interests of Philanthropy Network members, and areas where funders had already begun to coalesce.

1. Reading by fourth grade
2. Promoting youth safety and youth development
3. Increasing access to health care
4. Preventing and ending homelessness
5. Reducing hunger and fostering healthy eating

MEMBER INVESTMENTS

Philanthropy Network members give an estimated \$1 billion annually. In response to a survey conducted in spring 2014, 71 members provided information on their total giving and the amounts, types and purposes of support directed to the *Sparking Solutions* issue areas. The research revealed that in 2013, respondents gave \$55 million—22 percent of total reported regional giving of \$248 million—to *Sparking* issues.

GIVING TO SPARKING SOLUTIONS ISSUE AREAS	INVESTMENT
Grade Level Reading	\$19M
Youth Safety	\$16M
Access to Health Care	\$10M
Homelessness	\$5M
Hunger	\$5M
Total Sparking Giving FY13	\$55M
Total Reported Regional Giving FY13	\$248M

NOTE: These numbers, while significant, most certainly under-report giving totals. Since this baseline data was collected, we know that Network members have made substantial additional investments across these issues.



READING BY 4TH GRADE

Using a collective impact approach, the READ! By 4th campaign has developed a six year plan with partnership and advisory governance structures in place led by the Free Library of Philadelphia. The first year got off to a strong start in 2015 thanks to a joint \$30 million investment from Lenfest and William Penn Foundations and the School District of Philadelphia to improve training and resources for teachers and place libraries in classrooms. A public awareness campaign and the establishment of a citywide model for infusing literacy in out-of-school time settings and summer camps is underway.

LEAD FUNDERS

- The Barra Foundation
- Wells Fargo, Corporate Sponsor
- The Alfred and Mary Douty Foundation
- Eagles Youth Partnership
- Samuel S. Fels Fund
- Lenfest Foundation
- Lincoln Financial Foundation
- United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey
- William Penn Foundation

KEY PARTNERS

- Free Library of Philadelphia
- iHeartMedia, Media Supporter
- Public Citizens for Children and Youth
- Urban Affairs Coalition
- School District of Philadelphia
- City of Philadelphia
- Philadelphia Charters for Excellence
- Philadelphia School Partnership
- Independence Mission Schools
- Archdiocese of Philadelphia
- The Annie E. Casey Foundation



PROMOTING YOUTH SAFETY AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Through the leadership of the Stoneleigh Foundation, the City of Philadelphia's 2013 Youth Violence Reduction Plan and Philadelphia Youth Violence Prevention Collaborative (YVPC) were created to mobilize the resources of 100+ government, philanthropic and private-sector organizations committed to reducing youth violence in Philadelphia. Together, public and private partners have invested \$8,835,000 in a multi-system, place-based approach targeting one of Philadelphia's highest-crime, highest-need neighborhoods -- the 22nd Police District in North Philadelphia.

LEAD FUNDERS

- Stoneleigh Foundation
- William Penn Foundation
- Samuel S. Fels Fund
- Genuardi Family Foundation
- Greenlight Fund Philadelphia
- Patricia Kind Family Foundation
- Lincoln Financial Foundation
- Mayor's Fund for Philadelphia
- Seybert Foundation
- United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey

KEY PARTNERS

- City of Philadelphia
- U.S. Department of Justice
- U.S. Attorney's Office



INCREASING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

The first open enrollment period following passage of the Affordable Care Act was a catalyst for funders to coordinate education and outreach around expanded health coverage for the state's uninsured. The Pennsylvania Health Funders Collaborative (PHFC), provided a natural forum through which to align activities and strategies in pursuit of the shared goal of greater access to high quality, cost effective health services for vulnerable populations.

PHFC's ongoing work at the intersection of health philanthropy and state health policy has resulted in a number of public policy and programmatic successes, including funding for a fiscal impact study by the Pennsylvania Economy League that helped influence the commonwealth's position on Medicaid expansion.

LEAD FUNDERS

- Pennsylvania Health Funders Collaborative (PHFC), and a network of 40+ foundations across the commonwealth
- PHFC is led by HealthSpark Foundation and the Jewish Healthcare Foundation



PREVENTING AND ENDING HOMELESSNESS

To address the issue of homelessness in the region, funders have rallied around the initiative Your Way Home Montgomery County (YWH), a partnership between philanthropic, government, nonprofit and community partners to end homelessness in Montgomery County, PA. Between 2013 and 2015, YWH increased the percentage of people moving from homelessness directly to permanent housing from 31% to 46%; and in 2015 prevented 428 adults and children from becoming homeless.

Utilizing a collective impact approach, YWH aims to provide a model for solving homelessness in other communities and has been recognized nationally for its impacts. Looking ahead it will expand efforts to end chronic, youth and veteran homelessness.

LEAD FUNDERS

- HealthSpark Foundation
- The Curaterra Foundation
- Genuardi Family Foundation
- Patricia Kind Family Foundation
- Montgomery County Foundation, Inc.
- North Penn United Way
- The Philadelphia Foundation
- United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey

KEY PARTNERS

- Carson Valley Children's Aid
- Inter-Faith Housing Alliance
- Keystone Opportunity Center
- Pottstown Cluster of Religious Communities
- Salvation Army of Norristown and Pottstown
- Resources for Human Development



REDUCING HUNGER AND FOSTERING HEALTHY EATING

In February 2013, the Greater Philadelphia Food Funders (GPFF) was awarded a \$60,000 matching grant from the national Convergence Partnership to advance their collaborative efforts. The grant supported the development of the GPFF 2014-2018 strategic plan and the guide, *Donor Strategies to Prevent Childhood Obesity: Lessons from Greater Philadelphia*.

In addition to its ongoing efforts to educate members on the intersection of food and philanthropy, the GPFF has participated in food policy discussions at the local and state level, has hosted other food funders from across the commonwealth, and has begun to explore the creation of shared metrics for the region's food system.

LEAD FUNDERS

- Claneil Foundation, Inc.
- Comunidades Latino Giving Circle
- Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
- HealthSpark Foundation
- The Merchants Fund
- The Philadelphia Foundation
- The Leo & Peggy Pierce Family Foundation
- Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation
- St. Christopher's Foundation for Children

To learn more about these initiatives, visit www.philanthropynetwork.org.