

What is a Funder Affinity Group?

- A group or network of funders that come together around a shared interest.
- Funders interact, and often collaborate, to maximize their impact.
- There is a funder affinity group for just about every community or issue you can think of.

Funders frequently network and collaborate to maximize their impact on issues of shared interest. Some funder affinity groups are informal networks or close-knit giving circles, and some are full-fledged organizations that organize annual conferences, conduct and publish research, advise funders, engage in strategic advocacy, and more.

Can you give me some examples?

Name a community or issue, and there is probably a funder affinity group related to it.

- There's Grantmakers in Health, Grantmakers in the Arts, Grantmakers for Girls of Color, and the Environmental Grantmakers Association; Native Americans in Philanthropy, Philanthropy Southwest and the Southern Black Girls and Women's Consortium.
- The Center for Disaster Philanthropy helps donors make giving decisions during disasters.
- Funders for LGBTQ Issues publishes research on LGBTQ philanthropy and brings funders together at conferences, among many other activities.
- SMU DataArts offers an online platform through which arts organizations can share programmatic and financial information with multiple funders through a standard format, saving both funders and applicants time in the grants process.
- ABFE has developed a framework for responsive philanthropy in Black communities and coordinates the Black Philanthropic Network.
- Resource Generation organizes young people with wealth to move resources to poor, working-class, and Black, Indigenous, and people of color-led organizations working toward racial and economic justice.
- AAPIP (Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy) works to address the gap in philanthropic resources going to AAPI communities.



There are numerous networks and affinity groups in women's philanthropy. To name just two: The Women's Funding Network brings together women's funds, donors and allies from around the world to promote giving to women's funds. Women Moving Millions is a network of more than 300 high-net-worth women (and counting) who have each made a commitment to give at least \$1 million to organizations and initiatives that benefit women and girls.

On both the right and the left, there are donor networks that work to advance policies in line with their respective values.

Truly, these are just a few examples of the many and diverse funder affinity groups active today. You'll often find funder affinity groups linked in one way or another to philanthropy-serving organizations, especially regional associations of grantmakers, which often organize local affinity groups.

Do funder groups do anything for fundraisers or grant recipients, or is it all funder-focused?

Most funder affinity groups aim to make a positive impact on philanthropy in their area of focus—whether that means increasing the amount of money or number of grants going to that area, educating funders about an issue, or pooling resources for maximum impact. All of that stands to benefit the grantseeking organizations doing good work.

But funder affinity groups sometimes have a more direct relationship with nonprofits and grant recipients, too. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was Funders for LGBTQ Issues that gathered info about which rapid-response funds were serving LGBTQ people and communities impacted by the pandemic, and published this information on its website in a resource hub for those seeking funds. Funders Together to End Homelessness, as another example, has tried to steer both philanthropic and federal grants toward community-based organizations working at the intersection of housing and racial justice.



You may also want to check out:

- What is a philanthropy-serving organization?
- What is a philanthropic intermediary?
- What are regional associations of grantmakers?

