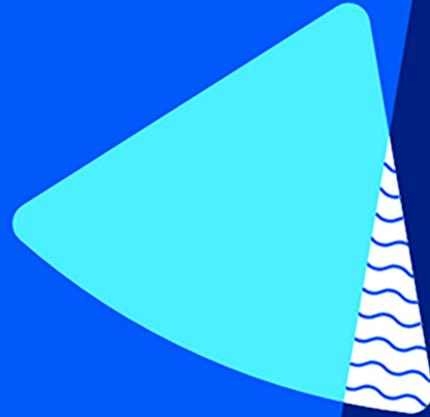


2023 Year in Review



From Our CEO



Kathleen Enright
President and CEO,
Council on Foundations

Research shows it's [human nature](#) to focus more on negative experiences than positive ones. But some of us are wired differently – and that proclivity toward optimism is one reason we're drawn to philanthropy.

I'm always awed by how you make your communities and our society better. You know progress is possible, and that you can help. Working through division and conflict, you find solutions.

As I reflect on 2023, with all its challenges and hardship, I am even more grateful for the large and expanding philanthropic community committed to collaborative action in service of the greater good.

I see it in the collaborative efforts of global grantmakers to drive more resources to [locally led development](#). And in the hundreds of you who banded together to fight for the [right to give](#) in alignment with values. I see it in the amazing [2023 class of Career Pathways](#), cheering each other on and growing together into philanthropy's leaders of tomorrow.

Turning the page on another year, we look forward to continuing to join you in working through our challenges and [across our differences](#) – always with a belief that together we can and will make things better.

Trust: Our North Star

Change that advances the greater good can't happen without collective effort, and no collective can succeed without trust. First and foremost, that requires holding ourselves and each other accountable, and the Council rolled out a set of [ethical principles](#) early in 2023 to do just that. Constructed by and for our membership, these guidelines will help ensure we all operate with the highest integrity.

Trust, of course, is a two-way street, and a part of earning it is showing trust in our partners. On the global stage, that means working directly with local leadership in



Locally Led Development is an effective, trust-based approach to international giving that the Council is proud to support.

countries and communities around the world. The Council and our partners have long [convened leaders](#) and [created tools](#) to move the field in this direction, and we were proud to continue that advocacy in 2023 with the release of [Advancing Locally Led Development: An Overview of U.S. Foundations' Direct Global Giving](#) and a [statement endorsing](#) locally led development from 15 global funders and the United States Agency for International Development at the [United Nations General Assembly](#).

Trust is also an important driver of advancement within the U.S., one that's been weakened by years of toxic polarization, division, and extremism. Recognizing this,

2023 Year in Review

Shared purpose. Collective voice. Greater impact.



DIGITAL FOOTPRINT



897K+

WEBSITE USERS



3.2%

FOLLOWER INCREASE
ACROSS ALL SOCIAL
MEDIA PLATFORMS



12,500+

FACEBOOK



59,000+

TWITTER



33,000+

LINKEDIN

2,200+

TOTAL PHILANTHROPY
EXCHANGE USERS

930+

NEW EXCHANGE USERS

34,000+

EXCHANGE
ENGAGEMENTS

FOSTERING CONNECTION

GUIDING PHILANTHROPY



6

PUBLICATIONS

4,900+

PUBLICATION DOWNLOADS

1,400+

UNIQUE ORGANIZATION
DOWNLOADS

900+

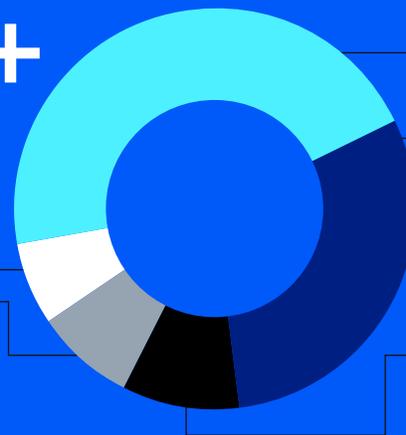
MEMBERS

Associate Members 8%

Public Charities 6%

140+

NEW MEMBERS



45% Community
Foundations

30% Private
Foundations

9% Corporate
Grantmakers

1,500+

LEGAL QUESTIONS
ANSWERED

SUPPORTING MEMBERS

CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP

2

LARGE EVENTS AND RETREATS

Leading Locally, HR Summit

53

PEER EVENTS

Networking, workshops, roundtables, etc.

26

VIRTUAL CONNECTIONS

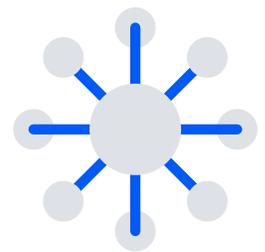
Webinars, online trainings

30

OTHER EVENTS

110

EVENTS
HELD



6,800+

REGISTERED
FOR EVENTS

the Council expanded our [Building Common Ground](#) initiative to strengthen philanthropy's ability to work across differences. We were thrilled to welcome 60 members into an eight-month [leadership cohort](#), begin work on a landscape scan of bridging work in the field, and introduce [sector-wide convenings](#) on connecting and collaborating across difference.

The Power of Community

In an increasingly virtual world, community comes in many forms. But that reality did not dampen the excitement of the Council's first in-person conference since the pandemic: [Leading Locally](#). Convened in Denver in June 2023, Leading Locally trained a spotlight on collaborations that [strengthen](#), [build](#), and [embrace](#) the places we live and work, drawing more than 800 attendees eager to share with and learn from each other.

Recognizing the role our members play in establishing and maintaining community, both internally at your organizations and in partnership with those you serve, the Council was excited to welcome a new cohort to our annual [Career Pathways](#) leadership development program and to partner with [CHANGE Philanthropy](#) on our [HR](#)

[Summit: Moving the Philanthropic Workplace Forward](#), actively focusing on how philanthropy, together, can work toward a more equitable and effective sector.

Like all communities, philanthropy thrives most when it has a shared baseline of information, values, and goals. To that end, the Council brought [CF Insights back](#) into its portfolio so community foundations across the country can compare their organizational sustainability and performance to that of their peers. We also provided pragmatic, real-world guidance on strengthening your policies on [values-aligned philanthropy](#), including a [discussion guide](#) for foundation boards.

Finally, with our members ever committed to humanitarian needs in communities across the globe,



CF Insights returned to the Council in 2023, offering community foundations another method for benchmarking their operations.



Leading Locally, held in Denver in June, drew 800 attendees to the Council's first in-person conference since the pandemic.

Council resources supported relief efforts in the wake of disasters in [Afghanistan](#), [Libya](#), [Morocco](#), and [Türkiye and Syria](#), as well as conflict-driven crises in [Sudan](#), around the [Israel-Palestine](#) conflict, and in response to the war in [Ukraine](#).

The Greater Good

As our members worked to serve their communities in 2023, the Council worked to ensure that philanthropy's voice was heard – and that its best interests prevailed. Amid court challenges to [race-conscious admissions](#) and [grantmaking](#), the Council assumed a prominent role, collaborating with legal experts to offer insight and guidance to members. Perhaps most visibly, we partnered with [Independent Sector](#) to file an amicus brief in the [Fearless Foundation lawsuit](#), advocating for foundations' right to express their values through grantmaking.

Additionally, amid the tumultuous political landscape of 2023, the Council remained a steadfast [advocate for philanthropy](#) on Capitol Hill. Our efforts remained focused on expanding access to charitable deductions, streamlining federal grants, and, through meetings and resources, educating policymakers and their staffs on topics important to philanthropy.

Finally, in addition to amplifying philanthropy's voice, the Council took steps to cultivate a shared voice that the sector can use to tell its own story. In 2023, the Council partnered with the [Center for Public Interest Communications](#) on a long-term project to [shift the way we tell our stories](#). This multi-year commitment includes research and the development of tools and trainings to help philanthropy build trust through deeper storytelling and clear language.

Looking to Tomorrow

The Council will celebrate its 75th year in 2024, a diamond anniversary marking three-quarters of a century of being a trusted partner for philanthropy. We remain singly committed to fostering an environment where philanthropy can thrive, and in our 75th year that means working through division, staying ready through upheaval, and advocating for a sector that works every day to advance the greater good.

As we move into 2024, the Council is resolute in our commitment to bridging differences and building common ground, and we hope to see you at [Building Together](#) in Chicago in May and [many other events](#)

throughout the year. Know that, whatever 2024 may bring, we will remain firmly focused on what we've done every day for 75 years: Work to strengthen philanthropy and the nonprofit sector. With the guidance of our membership and the dedicated professionals who believe in the impact our sector can make, we will continue the work of bridging differences and building common ground to advance the greater good in 2024 and beyond.



Fearless Foundation is the target of a lawsuit alleging discrimination in its grant programs for Black women-owned businesses. The Council and Independent Sector filed an amicus brief supporting the foundation.