RESOURCE GENERATION PRESENTS

THE GUIDE TO...

GIVE BIG, GIVE NOW, KEEP GIVING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

GUIDANCE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE GIVING

One of the most powerful things we can do right now is invest in the organizations that are fighting for love and justice. For those of us with access to wealth, this is the moment to **thoughtfully and boldly leverage our resources** to fund movements resisting the policies and governance that appeal to bigotry and fear to benefit the wealthy.

We are offering these guidelines to help you make sense of all the opportunities to give, from contributing to a friend's fundraiser on Facebook to making a big gift to a social justice organization. We want you to be able to make thoughtful choices about ensuring the people who are most impacted are the most well-resourced and empowered to lead us to an equitable, sustainable, and peaceful world.

These guidelines are to help you be intentional about giving during this unsettling political moment. They are also applicable way beyond and besides a particular election or President.

And remember: **there is no one right way to fund movements.** We can't let a desire for perfection stop us from giving money or taking risks. There are so many incredible organizations and communities to support - as long as you are moving money in the direction of social change efforts led by people most impacted by injustice, you're headed in the right direction (for more detailed guidance on creating a "giving plan," see the resources section at the end).

These guidelines are in three sections:

1. HOW MUCH TO GIVE
2. GIVE BIG, GIVE NOW, AND KEEP GIVING
3. WHERE TO GIVE

1

HOW MUCH TO GIVE

Resource Generation member Holly Fetter **has some great advice:** **There's no magic number or formula, but here are some possible approaches...**

- Check out the average amount that people in your income bracket give away, and do more. For people in the top 10% of financial net wealth, double that average - which pitifully hovers roughly around 1-2% of their income, compared to lower income folks who give away closer to 8% just from their income.
- Double what you gave away last year.
- Choose a politically significant percentage. For example, white people earn 40% more than Black people on average, so if you're white maybe you chalk that chunk of your income up to unearned privilege and give it away.
- Choose an amount that will make you feel invested in the movement or organization.
- Choose an amount will make you feel proud, like you've really showed up.
- Give enough that it feels risky - if you feel comfortable, you're probably not stretching enough. If you feel destabilized, it might be too much.

2

GIVE BIG, GIVE NOW, AND KEEP GIVING

GIVE BIG RIGHT **NOW!**
Organizations around the US are pivoting quickly, organizing direct actions and campaigns that need be resourced immediately. We should be prepared to move money just as quickly: during this post-election time period, that means within the next couple of weeks and leading up to Inauguration.

GIVE BIG AND BE NIMBLE
The movement is going to continue to need us to be open and flexible as donors, as new strategies emerge. Anytime you make a donation, be clear if you are willing to be asked for additional donations as new projects emerge throughout the year, and how to best keep you informed about their evolving work - and then make sure to respond to those updates and requests!

SUSTAIN THAT BIG GIVING FOR THE NEXT **4 YEARS** to protect vulnerable communities and build power in the grassroots.

In addition to groups taking action against the administration's policies, frontline communities need protection from the threats of deportation, policing, and surveillance. It is essential to protect and defend these communities.

Change is not going to come from a single protest, petition, rally, or single policy victory. It is going to come from sustained organizing, pressure, and effort -- movement-building! Just as movements are sustained over time for many years, so should our giving. What is financially sustainable for you to make a multi-year giving commitment?

GIVE BIG AND BE FLEXIBLE - **NO STRINGS ATTACHED.**

Give to general operating support. Earmarking donations only for specific programs results in funders dictating an organization's priorities. We need to trust the people who work day in and day out at the organization to know where the money will be best used.

De-prioritize tax deductibility: especially for wealthy people, consider if getting a tax deduction is really crucial for your financial sustainability. Without that restraint on your donations, for example, you can give to initiatives that might not have official non-profit status, give directly to individuals, or bail someone out of jail.

3

DECIDING WHERE TO GIVE

Finding social justice work to fund isn't hard - it is happening all over the place. Here are some ways to get started:

1 **Is there a social justice organization you already know and love?** Talk to them directly to see what a larger contribution to them would mean. Check out their partner organizations or coalitions they're part of, and expand your giving to include those groups too.

2 **Research groups in your area you're not currently aware of.** Maybe you went to or heard about a great protest or action - look up who were the organizers, who they are connected to, and give to them. Or check out the list of grantee partners of the social justice foundations listed below as a place to start. Ask activists you know, who do they think is the most effective and connected to community?

3 Make sure groups you're supporting **focus on systemic change, addressing the root causes of racial, economic and environmental injustice, not just the symptoms.** For example, in a low-income community with widespread asthma due to air pollution from a trash incinerator in the neighborhood, it's the difference between focusing on medical treatment for people with asthma, and uplifting organizing in the community to close the incinerator.

4 Support groups that center the **leadership of people who are impacted by the injustices they are fighting, and build power in marginalized communities.**

Social justice organizers and people who are directly impacted by social problems and inequities know the most about which solutions work best for their communities. Assess this by looking at who is in the highest levels of leadership of an organization - the senior staff, the board? Do they reflect the identities of the constituency the organization serves? Do they have public messaging about building power, organizing communities, and developing leaders?

5 **Consider geography.** Giving where we live is a great way to invest in our own communities and get connected to local work. At the same time, there is much less funding available in places like the South, midwest, and rural areas in general. Decide for yourself how you want to split your giving between close and far.

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6 **Rely on social justice foundations or pooled funds (also known as intermediaries)** to find organizations to support, and as entities to support, themselves. It can be hard to know where to give, especially if you're new to being a donor or new to social justice. It is the job of social justice intermediaries - funds and foundations - to know about grassroots organizing on the ground. They have systems of accountability and community control that result in more consistent and transparent funding for grassroots organizations. They also organize donors, bringing even more resources into the work. Along with your direct support for organizations, consider giving to these intermediaries as a key strategy for ensuring social justice is funded for the long-haul. Here are a few to get started:

INTERMEDIARIES

All of the **activist-led social justice foundations** in regions around the country, that were part of the former Funding Exchange (FEX) network

Social Justice Fund Northwest

National public foundations and intermediaries in Funders for Justice

The Emergent Fund

Still We Rise Fund

Solidaire's **aligned giving to the Movement for Black Lives**

Trans Justice Funding Project

IDEX (International Development Exchange)

Grassroots International

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7 **Don't forget about small organizations, with small budgets.** Some of the most innovative and effective work comes from small groups. There are many large organizations doing social justice work that are also important to support - just don't confuse size with effectiveness or base your decision solely on marketing materials. Small organizations usually don't have the resources for development departments to court donors, flashy websites, or mainstream name recognition. They might not be the first ones your Facebook friends know or suggest; "charity guides" like CharityNavigator.org won't even rate organizations with budgets less than $1 million. Seek out these small social justice organizations that often don't have access to foundation funding.

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8 **Think about who you want to be in a relationship with and be accountable to.** Giving creates a relationship. You might get email or personal updates on the work or even invitations to events. You'll almost certainly be asked to give again. What do you want to learn about? What work/communities do you want to be connected to?

Here are some great **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES** that dive into much of what we touched on...

RG's blog post on "**best and worst donor practices**"

RG's giving plan workbook - good for all ages!

Are you a young person (ages 18-35) with wealth and class privilege? **Get involved in Resource Generation!**

If you are a wealthy person of any age and are seeking to be involved in other progressive donor communities, check out the Women Donors Network, Solidaire, and a whole host of **other giving communities**.

resource generation

ORGANIZES YOUNG PEOPLE WITH WEALTH AND CLASS PRIVILEGE TO BECOME TRANSFORMATIVE LEADERS WORKING TOWARDS THE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH, LAND AND POWER.