



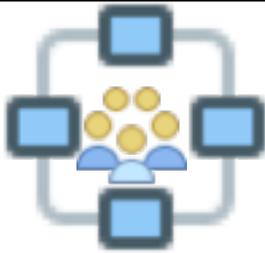
Thinking | Teaching | Talking

Making philanthropy work: 5 strategies



Some of our biggest societal changes have been backed by big philanthropists in campaigns that have taken decades. Here's how they did it.

1



Build a shared understanding of the problem and its ecosystem.

You can't solve a problem you don't understand. Appreciate and carefully frame the issues to address: who is affected and what forces perpetuate the problems — deeply entrenched racial, cultural, and economic dynamics, enabling one to attack root causes. Revisit these questions as the problems and surrounding ecosystems evolve.

2



Clear milestones and compelling messages: Making progress is hard when the goal is big and vague. Identify concrete, measurable goals — what we call “winnable milestones”— and pair them with emotionally compelling messages or calls to action. Honing an emotionally resonant message requires a range of activities, such as polling, message testing, and conducting focus groups.

3



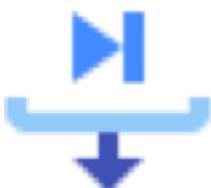
Solutions that will work at massive scales: A solution that doesn't work at the scale of the problem isn't a real solution. Unfortunately, billions of philanthropic dollars are poured into perfecting social services and products that are truly viable only for small numbers of an affected group. Such efforts are often local, entrepreneurial, or academic responses to unmet needs.

4



Actively drive demand, don't take it for granted: *Even if you build it, they may not come.* Invest in solutions that users and partners actually want. Fund robust sales and marketing efforts to promote the programme's ambitious goals: the creation of new government requirements or regulations, ensuring strong distribution networks that help drive uptake by providing easy access, media coverage.

5



Be supple, embrace course corrections: Every long-haul effort hits roadblocks. Funders need to support their grantees' capacity to continuously improve. Challenges may differ by context (urban versus rural versus last mile) and population segment; social-impact organisations need to experiment, measure, and adapt as those factors change.