



Philanthropic Giving Questions

An excerpt from

Wealth with a Why

Part 2: The Purposeful Investment Landscape

Presented by Stephanie & Stuart Mills and Partners

*"We offer you our story of how we reignited our love of land and sea
when we asked ourselves, 'Can we do better with our money?'
This question spearheaded our deep dive into the world of sustainable finance."*

The Small Print

The views represented here are those of Stuart and Stephanie Mills.

The guide resonates with their practice, but they recognise that your needs may differ and that there will be other resources available to you, specific to your interests, location, or needs. It aims to help you identify the types of services and financial vehicles to seek in order to meet your financial needs and values whilst serving the planet.

Philanthropic Giving Questions

ASK YOURSELF:

- **What kind of change am I hoping to see as a result of my philanthropic contributions?** Am I looking for immediate relief, long-term systemic change, or something in between? Think about the impact you want to have.
- **How important is it for me to understand the effectiveness of the organisations I support and the impact they are having?** Do I want to see reports and evidence of the difference my money is making, or am I willing to trust the organisation will achieve its aims without the need for direct reporting?
- **Am I interested in simply making donations, or am I open to more strategic forms of giving, like venture philanthropy or setting up a donor-advised fund?**
- **How much of my capital (my 5Ts) am I prepared to dedicate to philanthropic activities?** Consider not just the amount of money, but also the time and effort you might want to contribute.

ASK THE ORGANISATIONS YOU SUPPORT:

Due diligence can begin with publicly available information from websites or their publications. The Charities Commission hosts a searchable register of all registered charities that provides basic information, which you can then delve deeper into conversation with the charity to learn more.

- **What is your organisation's mission and why?** What problems are they addressing? Ask for a clear and concise explanation of their core purpose.
- **Can you articulate your specific goals and how you measure your success in achieving them?** What are your key performance indicators (KPIs) for social or environmental impact? What else is important to you in terms of measuring and understanding the impact of the work you do?
- **How does my donation contribute to outcomes that wouldn't happen otherwise?**

- **Who is on your senior leadership team?** Learning more about the staff or trustees gives insight into how the organisation is run.
- **Can you provide examples of the impact you have achieved with previous funding?** Ask for data, stories, or reports that demonstrate their effectiveness.



If due diligence and research aren't your strengths, find others who do enjoy the process. Join others with your giving. This is where collective philanthropy is at its best! It's a community, learning, and fun all rolled into one.

- **What is your organisation's governance structure? How are decisions made about the use of philanthropic funds in line with the structure?** Organisations may have explored different business models to best fit their mission.
- **How do you ensure transparency in your operations and the use of donations?** Are your financial reports readily available?
- **What kind of relationship do you have with your donors? Do you foster relationships among donors?** Will I receive updates on your work and the impact of my contribution?
- **If you collaborate with other organisations, how do you ensure alignment and effective use of resources?**
- **What are your biggest challenges, and how can my support best help you overcome them?** Understanding their needs can help you give more effectively.
- **Are you exploring or using innovative financing approaches like blended finance that might leverage philanthropic capital?**



There can be an unspoken power balance with funders, where charities tend to cater to the wishes of the funder rather than the people, causes, and communities they are supporting. But most charitable organisations are time and cash-poor, with staff stretched thin at the best of times. You can be interested without being demanding: Be

respectful of how much time you're asking of the organisation, in line with the size of your donation.

ASK YOUR PHILANTHROPIC ADVISER/DEVELOPMENT MANAGER:

- **What is your experience and expertise in advising on philanthropy, particularly in the areas I am interested in?**
- **Can you help me clarify my philanthropic goals and develop a giving strategy that aligns with my values?**
- **What are the pros and cons of Donor Advised Funds (DAFs) or Charitable Trusts?** Would these vehicles make a good fit for my goals?
- **How do you research and vet potential charitable organisations to ensure their effectiveness and alignment with my goals?** What due diligence processes do you have in place?
- **Can you help me understand how my philanthropic giving can complement my impact investing strategy within the spectrum of capital?**
- **How do you track and evaluate the impact of the philanthropic contributions you advise on?** Can you help me understand the impact of reporting from the organisations I support?
- **Are you aware of opportunities for collective giving or collaborative philanthropic efforts in areas I'm interested in?**
- **Can you advise me on the tax implications and administrative aspects of different philanthropic giving methods?**
- **What are your fees, and how are they structured?** Ensure transparency in costs.
- **Can you provide case studies or examples of successful philanthropic strategies you have helped clients implement?**
- **How do you stay up-to-date on the latest trends and best practices in effective philanthropy?**

By asking these questions, you can approach philanthropy with the same intentionality and focus on purpose that you bring to your investments, ensuring that your giving truly contributes to the positive change you wish to see in the world. Remember, generosity, when guided by purpose, can be a powerful force!