

# Audacious Philanthropy...

## 5 ways to improve your giving.

Based on **Audacious Philanthropy: Lessons from 15 world-changing initiatives**, by Susan Wolf Ditkoff and be Grindle

1

Build a shared understanding of the problem.

2

Set winnable milestones.

3

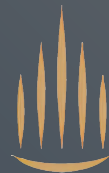
Design approaches that work at scale.

4

Drive (rather than assume) demand.

5

Embrace course corrections.



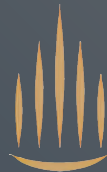
# 1

Build a shared understanding of the problem.



You can't solve a problem you don't understand. The leaders of successful social movements appreciate and **carefully frame the issues** they seek to address. They know who is affected as well as what forces perpetuate the problem. They often study deeply entrenched social and economic dynamics, **enabling them to attack root causes**, figure out who loses and who benefits from the status quo, and **build evidence bases that propel action**.

**Key Lesson:** Spend time learning about root causes, not just symptoms.



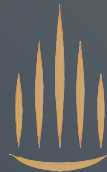
## 2

### Set winnable milestones.



Making progress is hard when the goal is big and vague. **Successful change-makers identify concrete, measurable goals** and pair them with emotionally compelling calls-to-action. Philanthropists who achieve measurable results often do so because they understand the importance of **backing initiatives which are neglected by other funders**. This can involve supporting activities outside the traditional scope for donors, such as polling or message testing.

**Key Lesson:** Consider how you can help charities to meet their KPIs (this might involve core cost funding).



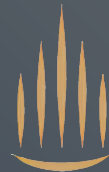
# 3

## Design approaches that work at scale.



Designing a solution that works at scale is enormously challenging. People often think of ‘scaling-up’ in micro terms. Instead, **you should ask how an innovation that can serve 500 people can effectively serve 50,000 or 500,000 people**, rather than just 5,000 people. You may get more bang for your buck by patiently supporting grantees in rigorous R&D until they discover an approach that works to solve the issue at scale.

**Key Lesson:** For maximum impact, support R&D projects.



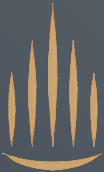
# 4

Drive (rather than assume) demand.



Even if you build it, they may not come. Successful Philanthropists invest in solutions that users and partners actually want. Then they **fund robust sales and marketing efforts** to support their ambitious goals. They support the creation of new government policies or regulations. And they ensure strong distribution networks that help drive uptake by providing easy access. **Designing the solution is only half of the battle.** Work still needs to be done to get the message out and encourage confidence in – and adoption of – the solution.

**Key Lesson:** Support efforts to market and distribute solutions to social problems.



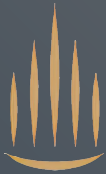
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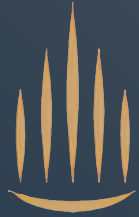
## Embrace course corrections.



Every long-haul effort hits roadblocks. To achieve winnable milestones over decades, **funders need to support their grantees' capacity to continuously improve.** Only a handful of philanthropists today invest deeply in creating the space and infrastructure for grantees to learn, adjust, and – at times – fail. Grantees cannot hope to make their solutions more efficient and effective if funding does not account for redesigns and improvements.

**Key Lesson:** Factor in failures when funding a charity/project.





## More information and further reading...

These insights have been pulled from a comprehensive study carried out by Susan Wolf Ditkoff and Abe Grindle in 2017. The in-depth research looks at 15 examples of audacious philanthropy from around the world and the lessons we can learn from it.

We would recommend examining the full article [here, at Harvard Business Review.](#)

[Beacon Blog](#) – [Philanthropy Stories](#) – [Philanthropy News](#)