



element ten: **INCUBATING**

APPLYING THE 13 ELEMENTS TO FOUNDATIONS



THE ALCHEMICAL FOUNDATION: INCUBATING

In their infancy, some things need specialized protection and specialized nurturance—without it, the *bud never becomes the blossom*. Most innovations fail not because the idea isn't good, but because the habitat isn't right. Alchemical foundations provide more than money. They create incubation spaces.

1 MOVEMENT. When there's movement in the relationship with a donor, we know the next right thing to do together. We embark on an open-ended adventure where we imagine a possibility, launch an attempt, learn from it, and design the next iteration. We're always incubating the next and more elegant form, so engagement rarely stalls and falls into stasis.

2 RESERVE. Many organizations lack reserve. Everything is consumed by what's proven and necessary for survival today. The pressure for returns on each and every thing makes it impossible to wander, discover, and explore—and achieve unusual or surprising breakthroughs. There's no *breathing space*. Alchemical foundations preserve some small portion of total time and resource for experimentation.

3 HABITAT. Too often a donor's dream fails to take hold because it requires more than money to root and flourish. It may threaten political interests or established ways of thinking. Alchemical foundations bring many types of resource into combination. They create the initial conditions essential for success. Once incubated, an innovation can be managed and grown in the operational culture.