



# THINK *generosity* for FOUNDATIONS

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## SEED PHILANTHROPIC TRIBES

Donors give not because we ask—or because there’s a need and they have wealth. Some people are unmoved when surrounded by immense problems and scintillating possibilities. Others act although they have very little and surmount enormous odds to make a difference. Generosity begins not with anything outside us, but in our being. It’s a way of life. It arises from inner abundance and an identity rooted in kindness and greathearted purpose.

There are few reinforcements for this. Many norms extol taking more than giving, acquiring over sharing, and self above all else. For philanthropy to expand, we need philanthropic tribes that reinforce each other. People who craft brilliant lives and spur each other on.

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Foundations can seed these philanthropic tribes. This would be far more effective than just asking for gifts. There's a cacophony of askers. And seeing the wealthy only for what they can do for us makes us one more in a long line.

It also contributes to a particular kind of isolation for the wealthy. Because people see them as a means to an end, the wealthy often come to protect, suspect, and keep a distance. There are few genuine allies. It's harder to be perceived for *who you are* rather than *what you own*.

If we think differently as a foundation, we begin with the unmet need of the donor. And we become a partner providing unique value. People then seek us and connect their friends. The relationship becomes transformational rather than transactional. It's no longer only about funding a thing, but growing and exploring together.

A philanthropic tribe is not a giving circle. Those in it may be from many places and give to many organizations. They come together for life insight and inspiration. As a foundation, we can provide tools and resources, sojourns, conversations, adventure, and immersive experiences—even playful things like card decks, intuitive coaches, and artists to help people imagine their next generosity chapter.

This approach puts us in an enduring relationship with those able to heal and enliven the world. There's no better place to be, and perhaps, no more important work to do.

## LET'S ASK OURSELVES:

Do we have the beginning of a philanthropic tribe anywhere? If so, how could we partner and become a trusted ally?

What do we need to change in our own thinking and practices to seed philanthropic tribes?