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# STEPPING UP: Strategic Ultra-High-Net-Worth Philanthropy in Action

BY HILARY MCCONNAUGHEY AND  
MELISSA STEVENS

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The Milken Institute Center for Strategic Philanthropy (CSP) advises individuals and foundations seeking to develop and implement transformational giving strategies.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

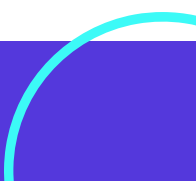
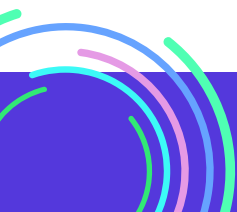
The Milken Institute Center for Strategic Philanthropy thanks the principals and philanthropic staff who graciously shared their personal philanthropic journeys and insights for this publication's development.

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## INTRODUCTION

In 2020, the Milken Institute Center for Strategic Philanthropy (CSP) published [\*Stepping Off the Sidelines: The Unrealized Potential of Ultra-High-Net-Worth Philanthropy\*](#). This landscape report provided a holistic view of the giving trends and approaches of high-capacity philanthropists. We analyzed a number of best practices and offered recommendations on how donors can adopt them into their own philanthropy.

The 2020 report noted that since the wealthiest 1 percent donates 99 percent of the world's charitable gifts,<sup>1</sup> there is a need to strengthen ultra-high-net-worth (UHNW)<sup>2</sup> philanthropy and motivate more giving. In addition, the 2020 report noted that philanthropists can set the stage for more effective change-making by being more intentional and strategic with their allocated resources. To unlock the strategic deployment of this philanthropic capital, CSP called upon donors to follow these guidelines:

- **Take on risk thoughtfully**

Philanthropy is uniquely positioned to serve as society's risk capital. As such, philanthropy should support experimentation and innovation, while funding the scaling up of proven solutions. To this end, the very concept of philanthropy is evolving to include more risk-tolerant and hybrid approaches, such as mission-aligned investing and impact investing. Individuals are able to engage in these practices through innovative and flexible organizational structures, including limited liability corporations (LLCs). Donors can also shoulder more risk in groups, which is why participating in funder collaboratives and pooled funds are compelling options for individual and institutional philanthropists alike.

- **Diversify philanthropic portfolios**

True strategic philanthropy occurs when donors evolve from reactionary giving to a more intentional, discerning, and impact-focused channeling of resources. As with financial investments, philanthropists should diversify their giving in terms of their approach and their beneficiaries. Philanthropists should deploy the full spectrum of assets at their disposal (e.g., financial, social, intellectual) to generate an impact and follow a holistic approach to foster transformative change. Prioritize diversity in both thought and experience among staff, advisors, and other individuals in a philanthropist's inner circle. Donors should challenge themselves to learn about and evaluate unfamiliar organizations to ensure capital is being used to advance a diverse set of effective solutions.

- **Commit to building the nonprofit sector**

How an individual engages in philanthropy influences the extent to which the social sector is empowered and equipped to contribute to enduring, systemic change. To that end, it

is worthwhile to consider offering multiyear and unrestricted general support, as it is the most flexible and allows organizations to operate as needed best to achieve their mission. Investments in capacity building enable organizations to scale effective solutions so that they can better absorb large amounts of capital and further their impact. In addition, because those closest to the problem are often closest to the solution, philanthropists should listen frequently to constituents, learn continually, and take feedback seriously. These kinds of practices demonstrate trust between funder and beneficiary and can help disrupt entrenched inequities within philanthropy, the nonprofit sector, and society.

The 2020 report also acknowledged the challenges facing UHNW philanthropists, including not knowing where to start. Research by CSP found that hearing from peers is a strong motivator toward action. This companion piece—*Stepping Up: Strategic Ultra-High-Net-Worth Philanthropy in Action*—puts into greater focus the ways in which experienced philanthropists have operationalized best practices. Using the concepts highlighted in *Stepping Off the Sidelines* as a touchstone, the vignettes that follow provide concrete examples of what strategic philanthropy looks like in practice, complete with practical guidance and lessons learned from the funders themselves.

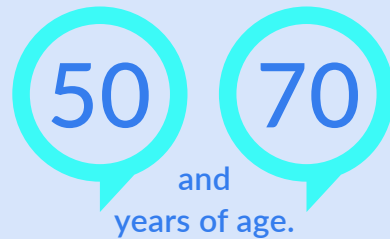
The world today looks very different from a few years ago, and philanthropic capital is more important than ever. Despite initial giving spikes at the onset of COVID-19, charitable giving levels for individuals have not meaningfully increased in a sustained way.<sup>3</sup> What's more, the world's wealthiest have expanded their personal fortunes, and the total number of ultra-high-net-worth individuals (UHNWI) has increased.<sup>4</sup> Unlocking the potential of UHNW philanthropy remains a critical need for the social sector. We hope this resource helps equip these individuals further with the knowledge and tools necessary to channel their resources for good.

# UNDERSTANDING THE ULTRA-HIGH-NET-WORTH INDIVIDUAL<sup>5</sup>

## ABOUT THE INDIVIDUAL

### AGE

Most UHNW donors are between



### DONATION SIZE

In 2020, the average total donation amounted to

**\$590,000**  
per UHNWI

There are three times as many ultra-wealthy donors younger than 50 in Asia as in North America.

### GEOGRAPHY

- In 2020, North American UHNWIs contributed 51 percent of global giving by the ultra-wealthy, with total donations of \$90.5 billion for that year.
- While Asia is the world's second-largest ultra-wealthy region, UHNWIs in Asia accounted for just 12 percent of global UHNW giving in 2020.

### GENDER



Approximately nine of every 10 UHNW philanthropists are men.

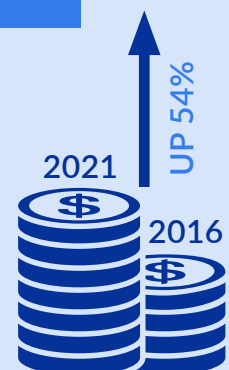


Collaboration among women philanthropists is on the rise, thanks to the increasing popularity of gender-specific peer-learning initiatives and pooled funding opportunities.

### WEALTH

UHNW combined wealth totaled

**\$42.9**  
**TRILLION**  
in 2021



## UNDERSTANDING THE TRENDS

### UHNW PHILANTHROPY IN CONTEXT

36% global individual giving

23% total giving

UHNWIs annually account for 36 percent of global individual giving and 23 percent of total giving, with donations totaling more than

**\$175**  
BILLION  
in 2020

### MAJOR PHILANTHROPISTS

Of donors who gave or pledged at least \$100,000 or gave a single philanthropic gift of \$50,000 or more in the past five years:

86%

MEN

84%

SELF-MADE

Donors had a medium net worth of

**\$100**  
MILLION

(excluding billionaires).

### TOP CAUSES

Education remains the most popular charitable cause across North America, Europe, and Asia.



## SPOTLIGHTS: STRATEGIC PHILANTHROPY IN PRACTICE

### Systems Change: The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust

To create positive and lasting social change, major improvements must be made at the systems level of an issue area. This entails reconfiguring policies, processes, and power structures to alter the “conditions that are holding a problem in place.”<sup>6</sup> By targeting the root causes of problems with the larger ecosystem in mind, philanthropy has the potential to catalyze enduring, transformational changes.

**Big-bet philanthropy** refers to making a gift of \$10 million or more to a single nonprofit. Financial investments of this magnitude can be game-changing for an organization, empowering it with the capital it needs to scale its operations, establish new programming, and transform an issue or community.

[The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust](#) began grant-making in 2008 across a range of philanthropic priorities, including a focus on health care and medical conditions such as type 1 diabetes (T1D). David Panziner is a trustee of the organization, and while at the onset he was clear on *what* his T1D goals were and why he focused on them, the *how* was fuzzy at best. Panziner spent a year listening and learning from others, and the lessons he absorbed have helped inform Helmsley’s systems-changing pursuits in the T1D space.

Over the last dozen years, Helmsley has been behind landmark efforts to normalize early screening for T1D—and other autoimmune diseases—which is increasingly within reach. Support for developing new therapies that may prevent or delay the onset of T1D in people with a genetic predisposition is also part of Helmsley’s portfolio. To date, Helmsley’s investments in T1D are approaching \$1 billion.

“It’s an obligation for philanthropy to be committed to the long term,” says Panziner, trustee of the Helmsley Charitable Trust. “We embrace the long game, which you have to do if you are going to invest in medical research. There are no shortcuts.”

While patience is required for research, the unfortunate reality is that the quality of care available to most people with T1D is lacking. The urgent need to ensure proper care today is what sparked Helmsley to create and pilot Blue Circle Health, a novel approach that puts patients’ needs first.

“The current health-care system is flawed in that it treats symptoms and not people. We are interested in creating a new system, one where geography and other aspects of a patient’s demographics are not factors in the quality of care received,” says Panziner.



To make this vision a reality, Helmsley acquired Cyft in late 2021. Cyft is an analytics company that has helped dozens of health-care delivery organizations launch value-based care. In early 2022, Helmsley began the process of transforming Cyft into a public charity, Blue Circle Health, which will provide high-quality supplies, insurance support, peer coaching, behavioral health care, endocrinology care, and education to people with T1D.

Helmsley's initial commitment to Blue Circle Health is \$45 million over three years. The program will be established to serve the needs of a city-specific underserved population and its surrounding area, with subsequent, stepwise expansion to other geographies.

Blue Circle Health builds on lessons from earlier Helmsley-funded efforts. One of those is support for [Project ECHO's](#) ECHO-Endo, which harnesses telemedicine and training models to advance the kind of care that doctors can provide to support patients with T1D in better managing their condition. Helmsley has also invested time in nurturing connections with heads of industry, some of whom collaborate with in-kind supplies support to help launch Blue Circle Health.

*"It's the kind of bold move that is demanded of philanthropies,"* according to Panziner. *"We have a responsibility to take risks that others can't or won't. We always ask, 'If not us, then who?'"*



## Risk, Innovation, and Next-Generation Philanthropy: Lien Family Foundation

Just as philanthropy is an inherently personal endeavor, so is a donor's definition of and appetite for risk. Individuals who are willing to assume more risk can venture beyond philanthropic safe bets, which some consider to be established and endowed institutions such as universities, museums, and hospitals. Next-generation (next-gen) philanthropists—the beneficiaries of inherited wealth—tend to have a higher tolerance for risk and are more inclined to call for innovation to disrupt current systems.

The [Lien Foundation](#) was founded in 1980 in Singapore. Initially, it funded scholarships and other higher-education efforts. A liquidity event in 2002 allowed the family to commit more significant investments toward philanthropy and set the stage for the younger generation to revitalize the foundation's strategy.

Laurence Lien, grandson of the founder, now serves as chairman of the foundation. Under his leadership, the Lien Foundation has adopted a brand of radical philanthropy that embodies the courage of conviction, creativity, and conscience to do what is right. In practice, the Lien Foundation strives to encourage more entrepreneurship in the social sector and support new models that address the root causes of social challenges.

"There are areas where people tend to gravitate—the more downstream or urgent issues to solve—but our foundation wants to focus on the things that others don't want to do, and to approach them holistically," says Lien.

In Singapore, young children do have access to preschool. In 2011, however, the Lien family felt that the quality of this early-childhood education varied drastically. In response, the Lien Foundation opted to fund research and advocacy—an unusual move for philanthropies in that part of the world—to understand better what should be changed. These efforts resulted in public reports and an index that initially ranked Singapore 29th in early education among 44 countries. Shining a spotlight on this issue helped prompt a doubling of public investments from 2012 to 2017, and another doubling after that.

The Lien Foundation recognizes that the size of the philanthropic contribution will always be less when compared to government funding. For that reason, it focuses support on areas for innovation that the public sector can later take up. The foundation has pursued this path in unique areas of need in Singapore, including improving senior care and changing norms around discussion and preparation for end of life.

*"Our foundation's identity is not tied to particular projects. We keep it moving, keeping in mind a systems point of view, and understanding the larger context of an issue area,"* Lien says.

## Place-Based Philanthropy: Walton Family Foundation

**Place-based philanthropy** describes an approach that targets a specific location—be it a neighborhood, municipality, or even multiple counties—upon which to focus charitable resources and make a transformative impact. Philanthropy’s value in place-based social change programs is its staying power, ability to convene, and capacity to leverage resources and relationships for sustaining the momentum with the end-goal in mind.

Since its founding in 1987, the [Walton Family Foundation](#) has remained committed to its philanthropic priorities while staying responsive to external needs and the interests of the extended family. Five third-generation family members sit on the board, but all 26 of the adults in the family set and approve the larger foundation strategy, including its most recent [2025 strategic plan](#). In this way, they are fulfilling founder Sam Walton’s personal vision for the “Foundation [to be] the place that keeps the family together,” as Executive Director Caryl Stern describes.

For the Walton Family Foundation, place-making is also a philanthropic commitment. One of its programmatic pillars supports the Home Region, which includes communities in northwest Arkansas and the Arkansas–Mississippi Delta. The evolution of this work has been transformative both to the area and to the foundation itself.

Over the decades, the Walton Family Foundation has made unprecedented investments in northwest Arkansas’ physical infrastructure to enhance the region’s economic and cultural vibrancy. The foundation continues to support local nonprofits—art organizations, groups helping entrepreneurs, and more—for both their capacity-building and programmatic needs.

As the foundation approached 2021—the start of a five-year strategic planning cycle—the Walton family opted to expand the concept of the Home Region programmatic pillar more holistically, to address a genuine need by working to make the region a place where everyone belongs. The better to enable a vibrant quality of life for residents in northwest Arkansas, the foundation is also now supporting new aspects of place-based philanthropy, including housing, transportation, amenities, and more.

“The easiest way to engage in place-based work is through the things that you can touch and feel that make a place special: art museums, trails, etc.,” says Emma Pengelly, deputy director of the foundation’s Home Region program. “The next level entails bringing everyone together to establish an aligned community vision.”

A key part of the foundation’s work across all of its program areas and in its place-based work includes approaching it with a lens focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). This involves elevating the voices of, and openly collaborating with, grantees and other individuals in the community. To this end, the foundation regularly facilitates learning opportunities and other issue-specific events to foster collaboration among municipal leaders, business representatives, and

community members. Through these partnerships, place-based efforts can flourish and lead to true community-driven change.

*“Financial capital should be thought of as catalytic only,” says Pengelly. “Keeping sustainability in mind, funders should think of themselves as connectors. Build things that the community, the city can take over.”*



## Partnerships and Constituency Input: Pivotal Ventures

Donors can engage in collaborative philanthropy and share data, best practices, lessons learned, and strategy with one another. Some may also choose to participate in funder collaboratives, pooling their charitable funds to catalyze systems change in an economically efficient and coordinated way.

No matter the issue area, elevating and incorporating the voices of local constituencies and beneficiaries is an important practice in any social impact effort. By intentionally and thoughtfully understanding the lived experiences of individuals who endure entrenched problems, philanthropists can glean insights that will help them achieve the impact they seek.

Melinda French Gates established [Pivotal Ventures](#) to accelerate social progress by removing the barriers that hold people back. The organization's first area of focus is to expand women's power and influence in the United States, and French Gates has committed \$1 billion over 10 years to this pursuit. As an LLC, Pivotal Ventures can take part in grant-making as well as traditional investment activities, which allows it to be flexible and engage in whatever way impact can best be attained. Before providing financial support, however, the organization takes time to understand the programmatic priorities and how Pivotal Ventures can best be of service.

"We engage in partnership and investments with individuals and organizations who share our values," says Nicole Bates, director of Strategic Partnerships & Initiatives at Pivotal Ventures. "We want to be respectful of who is already in the space and prioritize collaborations with others who have been doing this work. Only then do we think about Pivotal Ventures' unique contribution."

Another crucial component to Pivotal Ventures' operations is its commitment to involving people with lived experience in strategy development and implementation efforts. As it continued to shape a gender-equality strategy, Pivotal Ventures assembled a women's design council to inform the organization's strategy on women and girls of color. Members of this design council included people who have been focused on these issues for years—sometimes decades—and have been on the front lines. Drawing from their different ethnicities and industry backgrounds, their lived experience has brought both direction and accountability to Pivotal Ventures' investment strategy.

Pivotal Ventures' recent [Equality Can't Wait Challenge](#) exemplifies its commitment to partnerships and advocacy. The organization joined forces with MacKenzie Scott and Dan Jewett and the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies to award \$40 million to organizations or coalitions with the most compelling proposals for expanding women's power and influence in the US by 2030. A motivator driving this funding campaign was to hear directly from those on the front lines about their ideas to advance change.

"At Pivotal Ventures, we can't know everything and everybody," notes Bates. "The Equality Can't Wait Challenge provided an opportunity for those who we don't know to share their gender-equality dreams and encouraged the people we already know to dream even bigger."

The goals of Pivotal Ventures and its partners are ambitious. Staff members recognize that change will be incremental and cannot—should not—be attributed to one organization alone. Indeed, the team at Pivotal Ventures acknowledges that philanthropy addressing complex social issues must take the long view; progress is the true measure of success.

*“When it comes to gender equality, we’re not going to see huge immediate upticks, but we want to bend the curve. It is our hope to accelerate the pace of change,”* says Bates.



## Holistic Philanthropy: Jean and Steve Case

Social change cannot be achieved through monetary contributions alone: It requires a coalition of talented people working together to solve complex problems. A philanthropist's time, expertise, and network are also invaluable assets that can empower others and amplify impact. Investing in two or more of these assets toward philanthropic aims is often a more effective way to catalyze change.

Jean and Steve Case established the [Case Foundation](#) back in 1997. The family's philanthropy commitment runs deeper than just one organization as family members seek to invest in and support "people and ideas that can change the world." In fact, the Cases' driving intention to maximize impact has prompted them to "use all arrows in the quiver"—from personal giving and investing to launching the [Case Impact Network](#), an LLC committed to unleashing business and capital as powerful forces for change. Leaning into this holistic approach to philanthropy, they devote their social and intellectual capital, in addition to their monetary assets, to help create the change they wish to see in the world.

*"Everyone thinks about using checks, and they don't necessarily think about going all in—being willing to be shoulder-to-shoulder in the work, opening up your network, and doing what it takes,"* says Jean Case.

The Case family members have chosen not to direct their philanthropy with a particular cause in mind. They simply want to make a difference. In practice, they focus on key initiatives that change every five years, and these endeavors often relate to capacity-building needs for the social sector.

For example, the Cases have sought to bring impact investing from niche to mainstream. After personally engaging in various value-aligned investing practices, such as impact investing, sustainable investing, and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) investing, they saw the impact potential that these activities could have if adopted at scale.

In pursuit of this objective, Jean Case participated in the G7 Social Impact Investing Task Force to prioritize impact investing on the G7 agenda in 2013. In addition to their goal of advancing this practice in the public sector, the group approached businesses and helped secure more than \$1.5 million in impact-investing commitments.

Approaching the issue from various angles, the Cases have further primed the field for impact investing by developing a technical resource called the [Impact Investing Network Map](#). Jean Case also created a newsletter to educate younger audiences about values-aligned investing.

With their orientation toward holistic philanthropy and capacity building, the Cases want their efforts to be catalytic, so that others may become inspired to take on the work of social change and make it their own. These experienced philanthropists consider themselves in "steward mode," striving to set the stage for future impact and share learnings whenever possible.

## Mission-Aligned Investing: Justin Rockefeller and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund

Philanthropy has evolved beyond grant-making and charitable gift-giving. **Mission-aligned investing** describes activities that integrate the pursuit of purpose and profit and take steps not to induce negative externalities. Investing in this way can take many forms, such as divesting from companies that cause harm or applying an ESG lens, which assesses a business's financial standing while considering its sustainability and societal impact. Additionally, **impact investing** is the act of financing an organization or fund that aims to achieve a social or environmental impact in addition to a financial return, which may range from below-market to market-rate.

As a fifth-generation member of his family, Justin Rockefeller recognizes that he was predisposed to contemplate his legacy and the mark he wants to make in the world. Mindful that what people do with money has moral consequences, Rockefeller has designed his life so that he allocates his resources—including his time, career, network, and capital (both investment and charitable)—toward the goal of reducing current and future suffering. As a trustee of the [Rockefeller Brothers Fund](#) (RBF), he has helped align the foundation's endowment with its mission. He also cofounded and chairs [The ImPact](#), a global membership network designed to help families make “more impact investments more effectively.”

“By helping to build the impact-investing movement, I seek to honor my family's traditions of capitalism and philanthropy, which both inform and are foundational to impact investing,” says Rockefeller.

Within his nuclear family, Rockefeller sets his philanthropic *and* impact investing priorities with a challenging but helpful exercise. Every other year, he and his wife each rank and assign percentages of what's important to them: the causes they care about (philanthropy) and various impact sectors (investing). After doing this individually, they combine their philanthropic interests into a consolidated giving plan, as a foundation would. For their investment priorities, they give their respective impact sector lists to a wealth manager to incorporate into their investment aims and investment policy statement. To stay focused on their family's impact goals, they make sure that no more than 5 percent of their philanthropic capital goes toward reactionary giving in response to solicitations from friends.

RBF has embarked on a mission-aligned investment journey of its own. As part of the goal of aligning its endowment with its mission of advancing social change that contributes to a more just, sustainable, and peaceful world, in 2014 RBF announced it would divest from fossil fuels. A significant part of the fund's grant-making focuses on fighting climate change, and RBF decided it could leverage the Rockefeller name and its historical ties to the fossil-fuel industry to achieve more positive impact. The fund's endowment is invested with an ESG screen and targets at least 25 percent invested with a gender and racial equity lens. Target criteria are related to the



representation of women and/or people of color in positions of organizational ownership and leadership, and otherwise to advance the senior talent pipeline for these individuals. Aligning endowment with mission necessitated moving from one outsourced chief investment officer to another that does not commingle multiple clients' funds but manages RBF's endowment as a separate account. RBF supports the field of sustainable investing, and other institutional investors, by [being hyper-transparent about its holdings, efforts, and process](#).

Rockefeller's day job as Head of Impact at [Addepar](#), a tech-forward wealth-management platform, focuses on building technology that empowers its clients to align the \$3.5 trillion they track on Addepar with their values.

*"Synergy among The ImPact, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and Addepar enables me to use finite hours to fuller effect," says Rockefeller. "Investors and donors will reduce suffering in the world if peers and technology make it easier for them to allocate capital in accordance with their values."*



## CONCLUSION

Harnessed effectively, philanthropy can catalyze enduring change. Financial assets play varied roles in accomplishing philanthropic pursuits; thus, it is important to leverage all the opportunities that align with your values and interests. Move beyond top-down giving by establishing feedback loops with beneficiaries and applying an equity lens to the philanthropic priorities you have identified. Philanthropy that is inclusive and holistic is best set up for success.

The world is constantly evolving, and philanthropists must recalibrate accordingly to channel their resources most effectively. Emerging and experienced donors alike can hone their philanthropic strategies and execution to address the selected issues of focus most effectively and amplify their impact.

While the practice of philanthropy is deeply personal, philanthropists do not have to go it alone. They can look to their peers and even philanthropic support organizations to find guidance, glean insights, and adapt. The adoption of new approaches—for instance, donating beyond your immediate network, offering multi-year general operating support, or applying any of the pursuits spotlighted in this publication—can align your giving with best practices that are intentional, strategic, and already shown to galvanize transformative change.

Tapping philanthropy's potential begins with the individual. We encourage donors at all levels to get started, get involved, and give strategically.

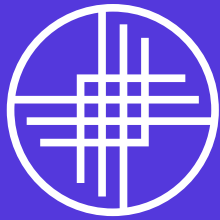
## ENDNOTES

1. “Changing Philanthropy: Trend Shifts in Ultra Wealthy Giving” (Wealth-X, December 2016), <https://www.wealthx.com/report/the-wealth-x-and-arton-capital-philanthropy-report-2016/>.
2. Defined as having a net worth of \$30 million or more.
3. Maya Imberg, Maya, Maeen Shaban, and Stephanie Warburton, “World Ultra Wealth Report 2021,” (Wealth-X, June 2021), <https://go.wealthx.com/world-ultra-wealth-report-2021>.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Hilary McConnaughey** is an associate director at the Milken Institute Center for Strategic Philanthropy. She has spent a decade of her career in philanthropy, advising foundations, corporations, and high-net-worth individuals on their charitable endeavors. At CSP, McConnaughey consults with high-capacity philanthropists, conducts research, and develops resources to advance the sector and individual giving. Previously, she worked at a biotech startup in San Francisco, where she led community partnerships and its corporate social responsibility efforts. She also worked at the grant-making nonprofit Tipping Point Community, where she engaged in human-centered design to pilot social service programs impacting people in poverty and determined whether these concepts could be scaled. McConnaughey received her Master of Public Policy from Brown University and BA with honors from Colgate University. She is based at the Institute's Washington, DC, office.

**Melissa Stevens** is the executive director of the Milken Institute Center for Strategic Philanthropy, leading its work with individual and family philanthropists and foundations seeking to deploy their capital to make a transformative, sustainable impact. Since cofounding the Center in 2015, she has overseen the creation and execution of strategies that have influenced \$1 billion in philanthropic capital, and managed the development of programs and organizations including the Melanoma Research Alliance, the largest private funder of melanoma research. Under her leadership, the Center for Strategic Philanthropy has more than tripled in size, expanding its areas of expertise to include education and environmental conservation philanthropy, as well as health and medical research. Previously, Stevens was the deputy executive director of the Milken Institute's FasterCures center, leading its growth and expanding its programmatic scope to include the development of a novel financing mechanism for early-stage drug development and building a global resource for large-scale, cross-sector collaboration. She also directed FasterCures' Philanthropic Advisory Service, which aimed to deploy philanthropic capital effectively to advance medical solutions. This ultimately led to the creation of the Center for Strategic Philanthropy. Prior to joining the Institute, Stevens worked in the health sciences practice of PricewaterhouseCoopers, advising commercial and federal clients such as the US Department of Veterans Affairs and the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development. Stevens received a bachelor's degree in biochemistry and an MBA from Pennsylvania State University. She is based at the Institute's Washington, D.C. office.



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