



Steps to Building Community-Driven Philanthropy Lessons from the John Rex Endowment's Kaleidoscope Project

1. Articulate values and commit to racial equity as an explicit goal. The foundation for community-driven philanthropy is interrogating systemic racism and centering the people most impacted.
2. Assemble a working group of diverse stakeholders (funder, grantees, community) to co-design the process. This builds trust and shared vision.
3. Identify a pilot community partner willing to experiment and cede some control. Choose a site serving people vulnerable to structural racism.
4. Recruit a team of leaders from the community compensated for their expertise. Center their lived experience as valuable knowledge.
5. Provide training and support to build community leaders' skills and confidence in leading.
6. Community leaders collect input from the wider community to identify needs and ideas.
7. Give community leaders decision-making power over programs/funding to meet identified needs. Funder and grantees provide encouragement, parameters, facilitation, not top-down direction.
8. Monitor challenges where the system resists change; pivot and adjust accordingly.
9. Focus on building trust, relationships, and community, not rigid timelines.
10. Capture lessons in process and outcomes; reapply learning to expand the model.

