

L'Année PhiLanthropique The PhiLanthropic Year

Volume 3 | Hiver / Winter 2021



PhiLab

Coordonnées | Contact

philab@uqam.ca
 www.philab.uqam.ca
 514-987-3000 #8576

Directeurs de publication**Publication Directors**

Jean-Marc Fontan & Peter R. Elson

Rédacteurs en chef | Editors in Chief

Juniper Glass & Adam Saifer

Coordination de la rédaction**Edition Coordination**

Katherine Mac Donald

Contributeurs | Contributors

Isidora G. Sidorovska
 Mario Radrigán
 Catalina Nadales
 Saouré Kouamé
 Lynda Rey
 Alexandra Williamson
 Gerlinde Scholz
 Josh Newton
 Michael Alberg-Seberich
 Amélie Artis
 Lidia Eugenia Cavalcante
 Shelley T. Price
 Tanya Hannah Rumble
 Nicole McVan
 Sharon Redsky
 Darío Castillo Sandoval
 Juniper Glass
 Leigha McCarroll
 Sophie Louey
 Pascale Lassagne Jullien

Conception graphique | Graphic Design

Sare Nalbantoğlu Aslankılıç

Traduction | Translation

Sirois Translation
 Darío Castillo Sandoval

Prochaine publication | Next Publication

Automne 2022 / Fall 2022

À propos du PhiLab | About PhiLab

Le Réseau canadien de recherche partenariale sur la philanthropie (PhiLab), anciennement Laboratoire montréalais de recherche sur la philanthropie canadienne, a été pensé en 2014 dans le cadre de la conception de la demande de financement du projet développement de partenariat CRSH intitulé « Innovation sociale, changement sociétal et Fondations subventionnaires canadiennes ». Ce financement a été reconduit en 2018 sous le nom d'« Évaluation du rôle et des actions de fondations subventionnaires canadiennes en réponse à l'enjeu des inégalités sociales et des défis environnementaux ». Depuis ses débuts, le Réseau constitue un lieu de recherche, de partage d'information et de mobilisation des connaissances des fondations canadiennes. Des recherches conduites en partenariat permettent la coproduction de nouvelles connaissances dédiées à une diversité d'acteurs : des représentants gouvernementaux, des chercheurs universitaires, des représentants du secteur philanthropique et leurs organisations affiliées ou des partenaires.

Le Réseau regroupe des chercheurs, des décideurs et des membres de la communauté philanthropique à travers le monde afin de partager des informations, des ressources et des idées.

The Canadian network of partnership-oriented research on philanthropy (PhiLab), previously called the Montreal Research Laboratory on Canadian philanthropy, was thought up in 2014 as part of the conception of a funding request by the NRCC partnership development project called "Social innovation, social change, and Canadian Grantmaking Foundations". From its beginning, the Network was a place for research, information exchange and mobilization of Canadian foundations' knowledge. Research conducted in partnership allows for the co-production of new knowledge dedicated to a diversity of actors: government representatives, university researchers, representatives of the philanthropic sector and their affiliate organizations or partners.

The Network brings together researchers, decision-makers and members of the philanthropic community from around the world in order to share information, resources, and ideas.



Social Sciences and Humanities
 Research Council of Canada

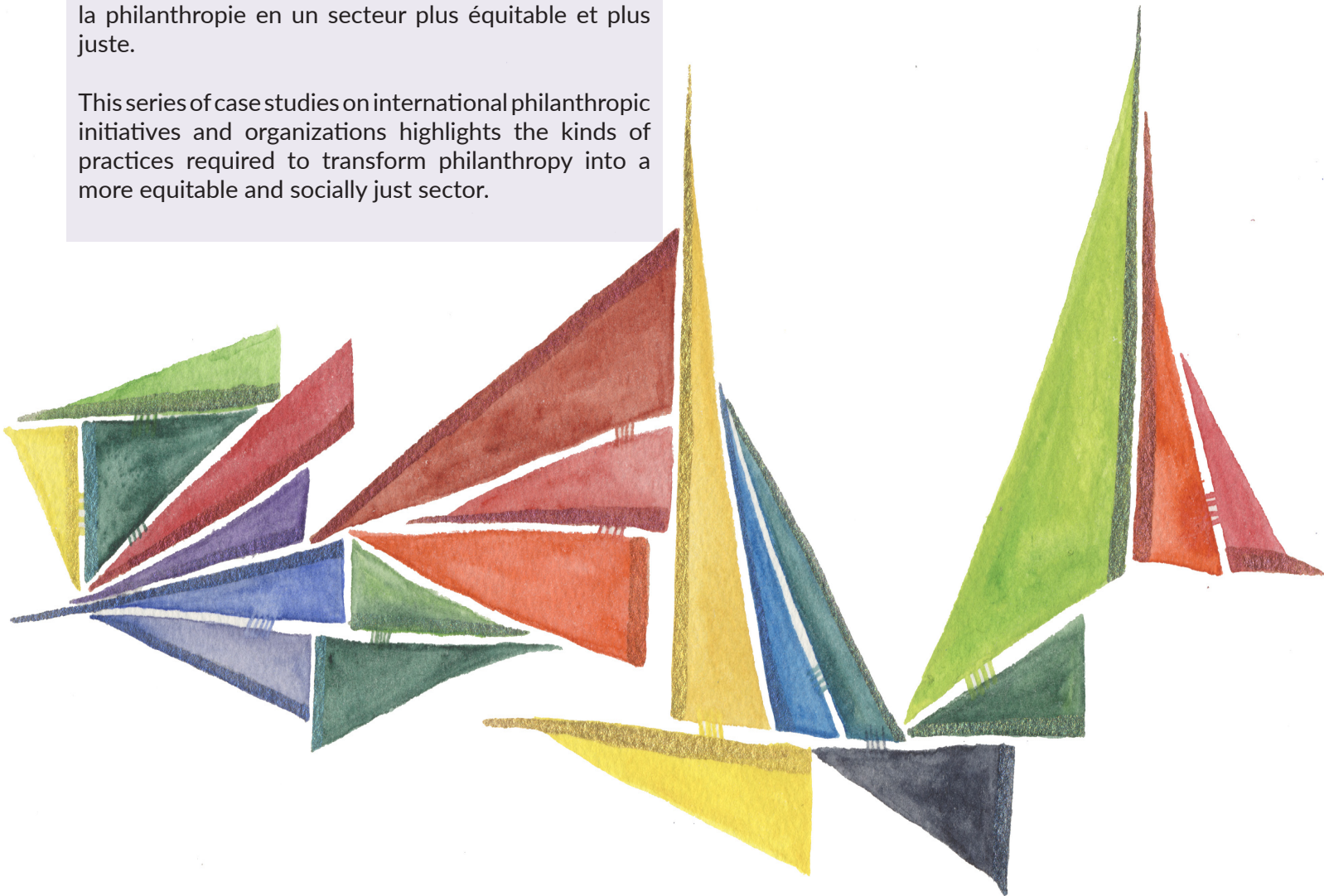
Conseil de recherches en
 sciences humaines du Canada

Canada

DOSSIER SPÉCIAL | SPECIAL FEATURE

Cette série d'études de cas présente des initiatives et des organisations philanthropiques à l'international qui révèlent des pratiques contribuant à transformer la philanthropie en un secteur plus équitable et plus juste.

This series of case studies on international philanthropic initiatives and organizations highlights the kinds of practices required to transform philanthropy into a more equitable and socially just sector.



Artiste | Artist: Kai Yun Ching



INTRODUCTION

In its quest to better understand the Canadian philanthropic sector, PhiLab has been building relationships beyond the country's borders, sowing the seeds for international research units. Fostering international networks allows us to establish meaningful relationships with fellow philanthropy researchers and research hubs abroad, which are often studying very different contexts for philanthropy.

This Special Feature focuses on the work of PhiLab's colleagues around the globe. We have curated a series of case studies on philanthropic initiatives and organizations outside Canada that highlight the kinds of practices required to transform philanthropy into a more equitable and socially just sector. Covering organizations from North and South America, Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa and Australia, we hope this series offers insight into the diversity of alternative approaches to grantmaking that prioritize equity and community-led action.

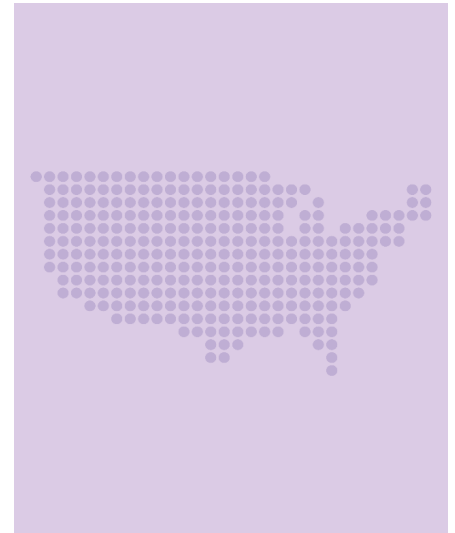
Dans sa quête pour mieux comprendre le secteur philanthropique canadien, le PhiLab a tissé des relations par-delà les frontières du pays, semant les germes pour que se constitue une plus grande unité de la recherche à l'international. La création de réseaux internationaux nous permet d'établir des relations constructives avec des collègues chercheurs et des centres de recherche qui étudient la philanthropie dans des contextes très différents du nôtre.

Ce dossier spécial met l'accent sur le travail de collègues du PhiLab qui sont basés aux quatre coins du globe. Nous avons réuni une série d'études de cas portant sur des initiatives et des organisations philanthropiques hors Canada qui révèlent des pratiques contribuant à transformer la philanthropie en un secteur plus équitable et plus juste. Couvrant des organisations en provenance d'Amérique du Nord et du Sud, d'Europe, d'Afrique subsaharienne et d'Australie, nous espérons que cette série offrira un panorama de la diversité d'approches subventionnaires qui priorisent l'équité et l'action communautaire.

UNITED STATES

Shifting Power Through Participatory Grantmaking: Liberty Hill Foundation's Community Funding Board

By Josh Newton, Urban Planning & Public Policy PhD student at the University of Texas



Josh Newton is an Urban Planning & Public Policy PhD student in the College of Architecture, Planning, and Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Arlington. His research interests include nonprofit community development, place-based interventions, public participation, placemaking, gentrification/displacement, and radical planning theory.

“We believe the people closest to the pain should be the closest to the power.”¹

Social justice has received increased attention in the United States over the past decade due to movements such as the Occupy movement, Black Lives Matter, #MeToo, and movements for environmental/intergenerational justice; yet foundation grantmaking to these causes is dismal. In 2017, U.S. grantmaking to address systemic injustices totaled only 8% of grant dollars from the 1,000 largest foundations.² Social justice grantmaking has typically been thought to produce significant impact beyond its miniscule funding through promotion of democratic pluralism. However, even when foundations are actively engaged in social justice philanthropy, there is often a “contradiction between social justice grantmakers’ beliefs in democracy and their general unwillingness

(or perhaps the structural impediments that make it difficult) to democratize their own grantmaking.”³ While most foundations struggle to cede control of resources to communities, a small public foundation, the Liberty Hill Foundation in Los Angeles, California, has been working to amplify community voices in social justice grantmaking since 1976. A case study of Liberty Hill’s community funding board illustrates one approach to enhancing public participation in grantmaking.



The community funding board approach is based in the idea that community activists should directly participate in community development. This perspective originated with San Francisco’s Agape

Foundation in 1970 and quickly spread to other social justice-oriented foundations over the next decade.⁴ One of these foundations, Liberty Hill, was the first to create a mixed, activist-donor community funding board in 1976.⁵ As of 2021, Liberty Hill has a funding board that consists of 28 activists, donors, academics, and other experts; though, activists always maintain a majority voice to ensure high levels of community control over the grantmaking process. Board members are volunteers chosen through an evolving selection process that attempts to harness foundation relationships to replicate the demographic diversity of Los Angeles and incorporate long-time grantees. The community funding board at Liberty Hill Foundation has full decision-making power in grantmaking, which is informed by internal experience and knowledge, as well as organizational reviews, applicant interviews, and site visits performed by community funding board members. Though Liberty Hill did not originally consider the complications that could arise through such an arrangement, the community funding board has produced creative solutions such as a conflict-of-interest policy in grant decisions for board members' own organizations. Beyond this, community perspectives shared in the funding board remain fundamental to Liberty Hill's process for three reasons.

Liberty Hill FOUNDATION

First, the community funding board is a ***means to amplify the voice of community activists*** in the grantmaking process. Though staff provide board members guidance in understanding the foundation's goals, decision-making power truly rests in the hands of community activists and other board members. Maggie Mireles, Deputy Director of Capacity Building, claims, "We are always centering our partners and seeing them as partners by valuing their ideas and expertise."⁶ The foundation realizes community activists best know the needs and desires of the communities in which they work. Possibly more important, they understand the "capacity and culture of communities."⁷ Community funding board members are recognized as partners that bring equally valuable resources to the table.



Second, the community funding board is a ***mode through which the foundation remains knowledgeable of and discovers new developments*** in the social justice ecosystem. Shane Murphy Goldsmith, the President and CEO of Liberty Hill Foundation, insists the community funding board assists leadership and staff in comprehending "the whole landscape...the power analysis, what issues are gaining traction, what issues are not getting the attention they need, what are some of the trends in terms of challenges community organizations are facing."⁸ Community activists act as mediators providing Liberty Hill a gateway into communities, but also connecting other activists to the work of the foundation. Ultimately, the knowledge of community activists on the funding board help Liberty Hill "distinguish between good gambles and foolish risks."⁹

Finally, the community funding board is a ***way to enhance and enlarge the social justice network*** in Los Angeles County. The community funding board brings activists with varying priorities together from all over Los Angeles County, an area over 4,750 square miles with a population over 10 million. Moreover, the community funding board convenes board members across racial and class lines. Liberty Hill acknowledges and confronts the inherent divide between donors and residents from communities targeted by initiatives. Murphy Goldsmith submits "it is not one big perfect community, but we bridge the gap."¹⁰ The goal is not perfect harmony, but rather to break down barriers to advancing social justice movements in Los Angeles by convening diverse voices and perspectives to address power dynamics and systemic inequalities.

Liberty Hill's community funding board, then, is an attempt to operate authentically by pursuing

democracy not only through equitable outcomes in grantmaking but also in the foundation's internal organization. Liberty Hill Foundation seeks to magnify the voice of Angelenos in the larger county, but also in their grantmaking process. Perhaps most emblematic of this is the experience of its President and CEO. Shane Murphy Goldsmith was introduced to Liberty Hill when applying for a grant for her community-based organization. Though her organization wasn't funded she became fascinated with their approach and later served as a volunteer for two years on the community funding board. The rest is history, but her experience illuminates Liberty Hill's commitment to magnifying grassroots voices and working to shift power to communities.



Shane Murphy Goldsmith (Source: [Shane Murphy Goldsmith at Liberty Hill's 2018 Upton Sinclair Dinner](#))

Notes

- 1 Liberty Hill Foundation. (2021). *Our Priorities*. Liberty Hill Foundation. <https://www.libertyhill.org/what-we-do/our-priorities/>
- 2 Ingulfsen, I., Miller, K., & Thomas, R. (2021). *Advancing Human Rights: Annual Review of Global Foundation Grantmaking*. New York, NY: Candid and Human Rights Funders Network.
- 3 National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy (2003, April 2). *Understanding Social Justice Philanthropy*. Washington, D.C.: National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, 23.
- 4 These foundations include Vanguard Foundation in San Francisco, Haymarket People's

Fund in Boston, The McKenzie River Gathering in Portland, Bread & Roses in Philadelphia, North Star in New York, and Liberty Hill Foundation in Los Angeles. For more see: Jenkins, J.C. & Halcli, A. (1999). *Grassrooting the System? The Development and Impact of Social Movement Philanthropy, 1953-1990*. In E.C. Lagemann (ed.) *Philanthropic Foundations: New Scholarship, New Possibilities*, pp. 229-256. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Current examples boards outside of the United States include the Canadian National Railway Company and the TELUS Friendly Future Foundation, both of which have established metropolitan or regional community boards.

- 5 Korten, A.E. (2009). *Building Community-Based Power in Los Angeles*. In *Change Philanthropy: Candid Stories of Foundations Maximizing Results through Social Justice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- 6 Maggie Mireles, personal interview, February 11, 2021.
- 7 Osborn, T. & Ramirez, M. (2002, May/June). *Grantmaking from the Grassroots*. *Foundation News & Commentary*.
- 8 Shane Murphy Goldsmith, personal interview, February 12, 2021.
- 9 Osborn, T. & Ramirez, M. (2002, May/June). *Grantmaking from the Grassroots*. *Foundation News & Commentary*.
- 10 Shane Murphy Goldsmith, personal interview, February 12, 2021.

L'Année PhiLanthropique

The PhiLanthropic Year



PhiLab

Réseau canadien de recherche
partenariale sur la philanthropie

Canadian Philanthropy Partnership
Research Network



Université du Québec à Montréal
Pavillon Saint-Denis (AB), 10^e étage.
1290, rue Saint-Denis
Montréal (Québec) H2X 3J7

Téléphone : 514-987-3000 #8576
Courriel : philab@uqam.ca

www.philab.uqam.ca