

L'Année PhiLanthropique The PhiLanthropic Year

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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

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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

ÉTUDES DE CAS | CASE STUDIES

Trois études de cas vous sont présentées : une sur la narration et la réflexivité en philanthropie, une autre sur le transfert du pouvoir décisionnel dans les mains des communautés, et une dernière sur une communauté de pratique portant sur la philanthropie et l'équité.

Three case studies are presented here: One on storytelling and reflexivity in philanthropy, another on placing decisions in communities' hands, and a final piece on a Community of Practice focused on Philanthropy and Equity.

Artiste | Artist: Kai Yun Ching



ÉTUDES DE CAS | CASE STUDIES

Philanthropy aka Love of Humanity, But Whose Humanity?

By Tanya Hannah Rumble, CFRE, Fundraising Leader

Nicole McVan, MA, Non-Profit Leader



Tanya Hannah Rumble, CFRE is a fundraising leader who has raised millions for some of Canada's largest charities. Tanya is passionate about equity, diversity and inclusion; and power and privilege and how these intersect with philanthropy. Tanya holds an Honours Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from McMaster, earned a Graduate Certificate in Marketing Communications at NYU; she is also a graduate of the AFP Inclusion and Philanthropy Fellowship, and DiverseCity Fellowship. Tanya is a mom, third culture kid, and a travel and baking enthusiast. Tanya gratefully acknowledges the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas and Haudenosaunee nations, whose traditional territory she is a settler and responsible steward of.

Nicole McVan (they/them) is a non-profit leader with 20+ years of experience. In their current role as Vice President, Philanthropy & Marketing at United Way Greater Toronto they are employing an anti-oppressive

lens in building philanthropy and marketing plans to work with and for communities most affected by poverty. As a White, able-bodied, transgender, and non-binary person they are working to transform philanthropy away from harmful 'best practices' and towards a discipline rooted in equity. As a treaty person, Nicole acknowledges their role in reconciling the relationship between Indigenous peoples and colonial settlers on Turtle Island.

We are frontline fundraisers. Each of us has spent our career fundraising in institutions, developing relationships with donors, and raising funds for causes we care about. We have worked in all sorts of roles and done all types of fundraising and have found that regardless of the type of role we have held, there is a common thread in our experiences through the years – a thread that is both joyous and devastating. The moments of joy always center around building

community: for example: connecting deeply with a donor; developing a strategy with teammates; or facilitating an engaging volunteer committee meeting. It's the relationships that are built on trust and purpose; the ones that pull you into this profession and keep you here.

The devastating moments are often centered around isolation and division: for example: not feeling valued; getting bullied by a donor; or having your ideas ignored or stolen. The moments that make you question why you are in this profession.

Our Journey

In 2020, we began working together to develop and deliver webinars for fundraisers based on our experiences and our desire to be an active part of transforming the sector to be more equitable. We focus on helping fundraisers understand and work towards dismantling structures of power and privilege in fundraising. Centering an equity and anti-oppression approach to philanthropy that anyone can practice regardless of positionality or institution. There are many similarities to the values we espouse in our Community of Practice and the [Community Centric Fundraising](#) approach that has been launched by racialized Seattle-based fundraisers in 2018.



We are pragmatic in our approach; we want people to leave with not only a better understanding of the issues related to power and privilege in philanthropy, but with tangible ways they can change their practice and their organization to be more equitable. We also strive to create community and, through this community, begin to heal from the devastation we experience as fundraisers—particular racialized, queer, trans, and disabled fundraising professional. We focus on three steps:

1. UNDERSTAND: Understand your social location and the system you are working and living within.

2. UNLEARN: Unlearn the harmful 'best practices' in philanthropy and our sector.
3. COMMIT: Make a daily commitment to be actively anti-oppressive in your actions.

In each of our webinars, we carve out time for people to practice what they are learning. Often the hardest part of putting anti-oppression into action is having a practice space to build that muscle. In each of our webinars we go over the key concepts, and then provide scenarios for people to work through. We break people into groups so that they have a smaller and hopefully braver space to flex their equity muscle and talk through how to handle a particular quandary – whether it is how to address saviorism in fundraising, or how to respond when a donor says something oppressive etc. More on brave spaces [here](#). Working through a situation with fellow fundraisers can be a powerful and empowering experience. Below is an example of a situation that we workshop:

In your meeting with a long-term donor, you ask them how they have been. They say 'well things are good, but this past year has been so hard on me. I feel like the press is blowing this whole Black Lives Matter, Indigenous Land Rights, and Anti-Asian hate thing out of the water. These are distracting from the bigger concerns right now like our health system and the global crashing economy'.

What do you do in this situation? What oppressive practices are at play? Do you call in or call out the donor? What if you freeze up and say nothing? What if you are Indigenous, Black and/or Asian? What is an appropriate response to what they have said? How can you ensure your own wellbeing and safety in this scenario? Will your manager and organization support you? These are the types of questions we work through together in an effort to prepare ourselves for these sorts of encounters.

By creating time for people to work through this scenario, they get to put their learning into practice. Our hope is that this approach catches fire. That we spend more time practicing and talking through challenging situations, so that we are ready when they come up; we are ready to act and be the disrupter that we want to be. Our goal is to normalize this type of work as part of the practice of fundraising and philanthropy, so that it doesn't sit on the side of someone's desk as an equity goal.

Our goal is to be an agent of change in fundraising and philanthropy; to transform this well-intentioned though often problematic practice so that it is more equitable, inclusive, supportive, and effective in making real and lasting change. We believe that we can only do this together as a community. We believe in the power of collective wisdom.

Creating a Community of Practice

Feedback from these webinars consistently praised the time set aside for situational practice. So we created a monthly Community of Practice focused on Philanthropy and Equity.

The monthly workshop is a space for fundraisers to be brave, and discuss issues around philanthropy, equity, inclusion, and accessibility that they encounter both externally with donors and volunteers, and within their own organizations.

We start each session with a quick overview of key concepts and then break into small groups to discuss the scenarios and learn from each other. There is power in collective wisdom and the session is an opportunity to engage with fellow fundraisers to explore some challenging questions and situations.

After a couple of months, we split out into two sessions per month. One session is for people who identify as White and/or allies. The other session is for people who identify with a visible intersecting identity such as being racialized, transgender, and/or disabled. People self-select the session that works for them and we have similar conversations. Creating two spaces is important for us to cultivate a brave space especially for people who hold a with visible intersectional identity. White people and allies' interest in equity work has skyrocketed in the past 18 months and while this is important, we recognize that harm can come from well-intentioned White people and allies stumbling in this work, in the form of insensitivities and microaggressions.

We all have the capacity to create harm in this work, so part of our practice includes a reminder of the grounding principles that guide our time together.

- We have come to learn.
- We have all been taught misinformation and we will make mistakes.
- We will experience discomfort.

- We can respectfully challenge each other.
- We respect confidentiality.
- We create space for all voices.
- Our impact is more important than our intentions.
- Equity work is healing work. We will make space to take care of ourselves and others.



In the past year we have covered a number of critical areas that can transform our work.

- Being talked over and ignored by colleagues and donors.
- Working with donors that have good intentions but are ignorant of anti-racism work.
- Getting tokenized and being asked to do equity work.
- How do you bring in more diverse perspectives and content to your donor communications and experiences?
- Do you code switch?
- What does sharing power look like?
- How do you support your colleagues whose

intersectional identities are not visible to bring those identities into their work in fundraising?

- Why do we need to recruit donors with intersectional identities outside of the dominant group?
- What challenges are you facing and working with recruiting donors with racialized donors?
- How do we dismantle the myth of meritocracy?

You can see that we started with practice-related topics, and then evolved into larger questions that we grapple with in our professional and society more broadly. What we have found in these sessions is that we are building community. There is joy in this work of connecting with one another and working through challenging issues. There is hope that we can transform how we work and the shape of philanthropy in the future.

This Community of Practice is a brave space for fundraisers to discuss situations and issues around philanthropy, equity, inclusion and accessibility that they encounter externally with donors and volunteers, and within their own organizations.

HERE IS WHAT A FEW OF OUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS HAVE TO SAY...

#PhilanthropyandEquity

Our hope is that we bring more people into these sessions. No matter where you are on your equity journey, the more people we can bring into this the better. The benefits of a community of practice have been studied extensively. Communities of practice are a learning strategy that encourages sharing and can lead to cultural change. We feel that justice work, the work of dismantling and sharing power, and addressing inclusion is a passive and scholarly practice for many. Consumption of books, podcasts,

and articles on anti-oppression work is fairly easy, but practicing the actions that make you actively anti-oppressive is harder, especially with your source of income on the line. We hope that in creating our Community of Practice, we have cultivated a space for folks to develop the skills they need, share helpful resources, and address the unspoken yet harmful norms that dominate fundraising and philanthropy.



Source: [Community-Centric Fundraising](#)

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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