



COUNCIL *on* FOUNDATIONS

LEADING  
**TOGETHER**  
TO STRENGTHEN PHILANTHROPY



COUNCIL MEMBER RESOURCES

## A Message from President & CEO Vikki Spruill

# Greetings!

The Council on Foundations exists to provide the opportunity, leadership, and tools philanthropic organizations need to make a meaningful difference. As a national organization with a large and diverse membership, the Council possesses a unique ability to offer strategic leadership for philanthropy in its many forms.

In helping foundations LEAD TOGETHER, the Council aims to help grantmakers leverage their resources for common purposes.

Our field is strongest when foundations collaborate in their efforts to address today's toughest challenges, like the climate crisis, justice reform, or rural flight. To make a difference, we need to act together.

Informed by the most innovative thinkers in the field, the Council continuously works to provide our members with key programmatic and policy support, especially around:

- ◆ Professional development
- ◆ Knowledge sharing
- ◆ Public policy leadership
- ◆ Community building
- ◆ Legal expertise

We are encouraged and excited about our future. I invite you to learn more in these pages, and join us as we strive to expand, enhance, and sustain our members' ability to advance the common good.



With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vikki".

**Vikki Spruill**  
**President & CEO**

The Council focuses member value within two broad areas of work:

- ◆ **Public Policy & Legal Affairs**
- ◆ **Knowledge & Leadership**

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# A Strong Voice for Philanthropy

From our unique national perspective, the Council maintains a strong voice in Washington, D.C. In support of our members, we engage in a broad array of government relations and policy activities, including analyzing proposed legislation, elevating member voices with policymakers, and much more.

## How can the Public Policy team help you?

Please reach out to Council staff ([govt@cof.org](mailto:govt@cof.org)) with questions or concerns you may have about policy developments. They can connect you with elected officials, relevant federal agencies, or important thought leaders. The Council's Legal team is also available to help you understand rules and regulations pertaining to advocacy.

## Priority Policy Themes

- ◆ Comprehensive Tax Reform
- ◆ National Standards for Community Foundations
- ◆ Public-Philanthropic Partnerships
- ◆ Cross-Border Grantmaking Laws and Regulations

## Understand Important Policy Issues Facing Foundations

The Council maintains up-to-date information on crucial issues facing philanthropy, such as:

- ◆ Charitable Tax Extenders
- ◆ Donor Advised Funds
- ◆ Private Foundation Excise Tax
- ◆ IRA Charitable Rollover
- ◆ Charitable Deduction
- ◆ Mandatory E-Filing of Form 990
- ◆ Foundation Governance

## Washington Snapshot

The Council's weekly policy newsletter, Washington Snapshot, provides up-to-the-minute information and analysis, so you have the policy updates you need to make informed decisions about your organization's policy priorities.



## Additional Policy Resources

- ◆ Policy Alerts
- ◆ Advocacy Toolkits
- ◆ Policy Summits for Foundation Executives

## YOUR Voice Matters: Join More Than 200 Foundation Leaders for Philanthropy Week in Washington, DC – or in Your Own Community

- ◆ Learn What Issues Are at Stake
- ◆ Participate in *Foundations on the Hill* and National Twitter Chats
- ◆ Highlight Philanthropy's Impact in Your Community

### Did You KNOW ?

The IRA charitable rollover is a popular and beneficial giving tool for donors. Unfortunately the rollover expires each year and must be re-instated by Congress. The uncertainty created by the annual expiration of this provision makes it challenging for donors and charitable organizations to plan gifts in advance. The Council is a strong advocate for making the IRA charitable rollover permanent law. We work with Congress to make permanent and expand this giving tool so donors can make charitable contributions to donor-advised funds, supporting organizations, and private foundations without triggering a tax burden. Learn more about the IRA charitable rollover and other key issues at <http://cof.org/public-policy>.

*"We value the services provided by the Council on Foundations. They are our 'eyes and ears' in Washington on legal and regulatory matters, helping us understand issues important to our field. In addition, the networking opportunities provided by COF help my board and staff create a stronger community foundation."*

– **David J. Bennett, Executive Director, Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne**

*"The advocacy work of the Council on behalf of the philanthropic sector alone justifies the membership dues!"*

– **William G. Wardle, Chair, Wardle Family Foundation**

Contact the Council's Public Policy Team at [govt@cof.org](mailto:govt@cof.org), and Legal Affairs Team at [legal@cof.org](mailto:legal@cof.org).



## Leadership Development

As a Council member, you have access to learning and certification programs that provide essential skills, professional knowledge, and introduction to the fundamentals of philanthropy.

Through high-impact programs, like Career Pathways (relaunching this year), C-suite retreats, and continuing education training, the Council is growing the talent pipeline that will help lead philanthropy for years to come.

### Advanced Leadership Retreats

We understand the opportunities and pressures CEOs face. The Council offers annual invitation-only retreats where participants can learn from one another, develop connections to colleagues, and discuss their biggest challenges.

#### Examples of Recent Retreats Include:

##### *CEO Retreat: Donor Advised Funds (DAFs) and Public Policy*

We hosted a high-level retreat where community foundation executives discussed pressing needs and informed the Council's multi-year tax reform strategy for community foundations.

##### *CEO/Trustee Retreat*

This one-day gathering allowed CEOs and board members space for thoughtful, candid, off-the-record conversations on current issues facing philanthropy as well as the challenges that keep foundation leaders up at night.

## Training the Next Generation of Leaders

The Council offers a variety of opportunities and resources for training the field's next generation of leaders.

- ◆ **Career Pathways:** This program to expand philanthropy's leadership pipeline stems from the Council's belief that diversity contributes to innovation, inclusion, and organizational excellence. Career Pathways fosters the career readiness of philanthropic professionals and prepares them for the responsibilities of higher leadership.
- ◆ **Foundation Leadership Certificate:** The FLC program, set to launch in 2017, will provide rising foundation leaders with the professional competencies they need to excel. This program will ensure that all leaders in the field possess the skillsets, thinking, and resources to usher foundations into a new era of strength, adaptability, and sustainability.

### Center for Community Foundation Excellence (CCFE)

Developed in conjunction with Indiana University's Center on Philanthropy, the Council's CCFE course helps community foundation staff, board members, and volunteers master the unique aspects of the community foundation field. Participants learn about effective practices, get helpful tools and information, and have the opportunity to network with others in the field.

All Center for Community Foundation Excellence courses are created and led by experienced community foundation practitioners.



## Excellent Foundation Management

Executives and board members must understand key management issues facing foundation leaders. With over 65 years of experience supporting foundations, the Council maintains valuable resources, provides staff expertise, and develops top-notch training on foundation management:

- ◆ In-Depth Knowledge of Mission, Vision & Values
- ◆ Public Disclosure Requirements
- ◆ Legal Information
- ◆ Governance/Staff Administration
- ◆ Stewardship Principles
- ◆ Strategic Planning

## Legal Affairs

With almost a dozen attorneys on staff, the Council remains one of the leading centers for foundation legal expertise. We work closely with our members to ensure that they understand relevant laws and legal issues.

Our legal team fields over 2,000 questions a year from professionals in philanthropy, and we host a number of webinars focused on legal issues facing foundations.

Our legal team also spends a significant amount of time on the road, where they speak about important legal topics at regional association meetings, professional gatherings, and other philanthropy-focused events.

## Compendium of Legal Resources

The Council's legal team is modernizing our library of legal information and guidance by creating a comprehensive, user-friendly, and easily updatable Compendium of Legal Resources. We will release the first chapters in 2016 and additional chapters in subsequent years.

## Build Your Professional Skills

Highlighting the best thinking in philanthropy, our webinar and workshop offerings allow continued training and learning. Recent topics include:

- ◆ Refining Organizational Practices to Enhance Place-Based Initiatives
- ◆ Passing National Standards: What We've Learned in Beta
- ◆ Impact Investing and Community Foundations: The Nuts and Bolts
- ◆ Legal Lunch Series with Legal Affairs
- ◆ Using Data to Inform Your Decisions: Key Insights from the Grantmakers Salary and Benefits Report

View the list of upcoming and past webinars and workshops at [cof.org/events](http://cof.org/events). To contribute to Council webinars, please write [membership@cof.org](mailto:membership@cof.org).

## Did You KNOW ?

The American Bar Association chose the Council's Senior Council and Vice President of Legal Affairs Suzanne Friday as its "2015 Outstanding Nonprofit Lawyer Award" – one of the most prestigious national awards in the legal profession.





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## Knowledge, Research, and Community

Through our Knowledge Center, Philanthropy Exchange, research, and other initiatives, we offer the tools and expertise you need to achieve your organization's highest goals.

### Research

A cornerstone of many Council programs is the national research we conduct with partners on foundation management, diversity & inclusion, compensation, governance, and investment performance and practices.

This data also advances the public policy position of philanthropy by allowing foundations to understand the operational practices of their peers.

Our signature products include:

- ◆ **Grantmakers Salary and Benefits Report** - The most comprehensive information available on staff composition and compensation for U.S. foundations.
- ◆ **Diversity and Inclusion Report** - Set to be released in 2016, a groundbreaking look at trends in compensation, benefits, and diversity in the field.
- ◆ **Council on Foundations-Commonfund Study of Investments for Private and Community Foundations** - The most comprehensive and authoritative annual survey of its kind on foundation investment and governance practices.

Access our reports on the Council website or contact [research@cof.org](mailto:research@cof.org).

## The Knowledge Center

The Knowledge Center is an invaluable member benefit that offers a centralized hub to access tools, resources, and information. Curated by an experienced foundation management team, well-versed in the philanthropic landscape, the Knowledge Center provides:

- ◆ Practical guidance on foundation operations best practices
- ◆ Sample tools and templates - job descriptions, employee evaluations, spending policies, and more
- ◆ Resource guides on the CEO search process, simplifying grantmaking, and emerging topics
- ◆ Connections to subject matter experts and foundation peers

Contact the Knowledge Center at [knowledge@cof.org](mailto:knowledge@cof.org).

*"We place great value on our membership with the Council on Foundations. We measure that value not only in terms of what we get, but by what we are contributing to the field of community philanthropy as a whole."*

– **Dan Templin, Executive Director, DeKalb County Community Foundation**

## The Philanthropy Exchange

Facing a new challenge?

Collaborate, share resources, and discuss common issues with peers through the Council's dynamic digital platform, Philanthropy Exchange.

Gain instant access to the expertise of our community. Check it out at [exchange.cof.org](http://exchange.cof.org). Log in with your email address and password for the Council's website.

The Philanthropy Exchange helps you forge meaningful connections, answer questions, and engage in conversations from anywhere in the world.

### Benefiting from the Philanthropy Exchange

- ◆ Use the Exchange for unparalleled professional networking
- ◆ Connect with fellow grantmakers for insights, ideas, and feedback
- ◆ Connect with members to share and discuss news and topics of relevance in the field
- ◆ Share informative and educational materials to build the efficacy of the field.

*Check it out at [exchange.cof.org](http://exchange.cof.org).*

## Conferences and Other Gatherings

The Council's Annual Conference remains the largest and most diverse gathering of philanthropic professionals. With world-class programming, the conference helps foundation staff adapt to the needs of a changing field.

LEADING TOGETHER! - The conference now provides focused programming for community, corporate, and family foundations, while building collaboration across foundation type.

*"I believe that the Council on Foundations provides critical philanthropic infrastructure for funders in addition to services that help us improve our capacity to do our work more effectively."*

– Peter Brach, Ed.M., Trustee, Brach Family Charitable Foundation



## Special Initiatives

We also engage with our members on a variety of special programs and initiatives that address timely and pressing areas of interest in the field.

*Harnessing the expertise of member Foundation leaders working in these areas, the Council's current special initiatives include:*

- ◆ Ensuring an Inclusive Workforce
- ◆ Supporting Veterans and Their Families
- ◆ Impact Investing
- ◆ Disaster Philanthropy

### Did You KNOW ?

Foundations are increasingly looking to connect their investment practices to achieving their mission through Impact Investing. Through its social innovation work, the Council has been working for several years to help foundations unlock new capital for social good. The Council's impact investing work is developed in close partnership with leading experts such as the Case Foundation and Mission Investors Exchange.

We are always eager to hear what others are working on. Contact us to introduce yourself!

## Ensuring an Inclusive Workforce

Our team is analyzing data collected through the Salary Report to provide a groundbreaking look at trends in compensation, benefits, and diversity in the field. This retrospective report will provide a data platform for additional programs.

Two additional reports in 2016 will focus on key human capital needs - developing pipelines of talent and retiring foundation executives. Related in-person and virtual learning opportunities will be developed as part of this key initiative.

## Unprecedented Support For Veterans and Military Families

The Council has played a critical role organizing the Veterans Philanthropy Exchange, a group of funders focused on supporting veterans and military families. With over 200 grantmakers, the group has pledged more than \$275 million in efforts that will make a lasting difference.

More importantly, these funders have committed to working together to share information and expertise, so that they can support our national heroes.

## Disaster Philanthropy

Through ongoing partnership with the Center for Disaster Philanthropy, the Council provides members with up-to-date resources as disasters occur, and we also maintain a response repository where funders can share their efforts and learn how others are responding.

Learn more about Immediate Relief, Short Term Recovery, Long-Term Rebuilding and how you can get involved at [www.cof.org/content/disaster-philanthropy](http://www.cof.org/content/disaster-philanthropy).



## Global Philanthropy

The Council supports our U.S. and international members to undertake cross-border philanthropy and effectively fund grantees globally. We work closely with policymakers at the World Bank, United Nations, U.S. State Department and U.S. Treasury to support a positive enabling environment for global philanthropy. We also regularly convene members to discuss important international issues, like the Sustainable Development Goals.

## Cross-Border Grantmaking

The Council works with a range of partners to track policies and legislation around the globe that impact cross-border grantmaking by our members. Our team works closely with the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, the European Foundation Centre, the Worldwide Initiative for Grantmaker Support, as well as think tanks and academics. The Council is also a member of the Transnational Civil Society Working Group on FATF and works regularly to represent the sector in global conversations about the regulation of cross-border philanthropy.

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