

HYPOTHETICALS

I am pleased to offer you hypothetical situations that are based on my real-life experience as a philanthropist. These are meant to offer you food for thought as to how you may want to approach and support the nonprofits when they come to you with an idea for collaboration.

Hypothetical #1

The charismatic leader hypothetical

You have a close relationship with the Executive Director of a nonprofit. You click really well with this Executive Director and the nonprofit they run is aligned with your interests and goals. This Executive Director then comes to you with a challenge that they identify, which will require an additional cost to pay for experts to do a scientific study that will research why the increasing cost of housing in your city may be displacing thousands of people. The Executive Director that you trust anticipates in order to tackle the problem they will need to work with a large suite of partner organizations to reverse the worrisome trend of houselessness in your region. The Executive Director is asking only for funding to do the research study even though they have identified the fact that there are partner organizations to work with, but there is no reference to finding funding for the other organizations – the focus of this Executive Director is just on raising money for their organization only.

Thought prompts – actions you can consider

- **One donation** - offer this organization an additional donation to do the research study and leave it at that.
- **Investigate** - You feel like the issue that the organization you trust may require active collaboration between many organizations to adequately tackle the rising houselessness crisis in your community. You are glad that the organization you trust is doing a study, but you also want to go out into the community to find more organizations also tackling the problem. You then use the steps identified in this lesson on Collaborations to work with all of the groups to create one proposal or multiple proposals to support the community in tackling the challenge. You also find other funders interested in the issue to partner with and leverage resources.

Now jot down your own thoughts about how you would approach solutions in this hypothetical

Hypothetical #2

The multiple groups hypothetical

Four or five organizations all come to you separately and let you know that they want to work on the houselessness issue in your community. You know three of these organizations really well and the other two were referred to you by friends. You notice that the organizations have no plan or coordinated effort to tackle this issue together. Instead, this idea of a need for collaboration is all happening sort-of organically where everyone is separately bringing up the issue and need with you but they all don't really seem to be talking together about how to leverage funds or share resources to win.

Thought prompts actions you can consider:

- **Offer donations and leave it at that** – you like what the groups are doing and you simply offer funding to them as they ask you individually.
- **Investigate** – you notice that the individual groups are asking for funding for similar activities that appear to be trying to tackle a similar major issue. You want to support the cause and the issue but you want to be sure that the organizations are actually talking and working together to win. You start to let each organization know that others are also approaching you with the same issue that they want to tackle and you work with them all to either submit one proposal or multiple proposals in a more formal collaboration where everyone is clear on what each group is doing. For example, you notice that one group is really good at social media where as another is good at scientific research. You want to be sure you fund each group to expand on their strengths and not to try and carry the entire weight of the issue on their own lonely shoulders.

Now jot down your own thoughts about how you would approach solutions in this hypothetical: