

Are you a Sustainer, Campaigner or Launcher?

Understanding the
3 main approaches to giving



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The Definitions

The Sustainer

The Sustainer donor supports their favorite nonprofit(s) consistently year after year. They feel that a successful funding strategy relies on general support donations, without any strings attached. The donor trusts the nonprofit completely.

The Campaigner

The Campaigner donor sees an exciting opportunity but is concerned about a problem standing in the way of success, and wants to fund organizations working on solutions to the identified problem with a clear timeline, benchmarks, and outcomes. Once the organization has successfully achieved the solution to the said problem, this type of donor no longer funds the organization or the issue.

The Launcher

The Launcher donor is similar to the Campaigner because they see an opportunity and a major problem standing in the way of success and want to mount pressure to find a solution. The difference is that they are primarily interested in filling a gap for ultimate success. They will help start a new organization and/or add funding to an existing nonprofit to support a program or project that does not currently exist but is necessary to successfully accomplish a win.



Examples

The Sustainer

The [Trust-Based Philanthropy Project](#) is an example of the sustainer donor approach. It offers one possible framework to honor a sustainer model with multi-year donations. There are often very few strings attached and the donor trusts the nonprofit to do a good job.

Featured Podcast: [Episode #21](#) A Conversation with John Esterle

I recommend that you listen to my podcast interview with John Esterle, co-founder of Trust-Based Philanthropy.

The Campaigner

The [Plastics Solution Fund](#) is an example of a funder campaign to “create a world in which only truly necessary and non-toxic plastics are produced.”

[Renewal Philanthropy](#) is another example of a funder campaign “to find and support organizations that equip people (survivors) to combat the causes of injustice they survived.”

Featured Podcast: [Episode #55](#) The Best Tips from an Amazing Funder at Marisla Foundation. I recommend that you listen to my podcast interview with Sara Lowell, Marine Program Director and Trustee of the Marisla Foundation because she helped to start the plastics campaign referenced above.



The Campaigner {Continued}

I also interviewed all three of the founders of Renewal Philanthropy for my podcast series:

Episode #76 The Creation of a Giving Circle to Support Survivor Driven Change with Ken Kroner, Principal, Kroner Family Foundation

Episode #74 How Collaborations Help to End Injustice with Nicole Bice, Executive Director, Hovde Foundation

Episode #68 When a Donor is Inspired to End Injustice with Richard Leong, President, Two Tunics Fund.

The Launcher

The **Climate Advocacy Lab** was created by a founding donor in order to fill a gap in climate change work. This donor learned that the good data and science were not shared among groups effectively and this caused unnecessary duplication. The donor created the Climate Advocacy Lab from scratch for organizations to share information and data efficiently related to climate change issues.

As a second example, a donor realized through her own personal experience that oftentimes insurance companies do not pay for patients to get access to cancer clinical trials that could save their lives. She created the **Lazarex Cancer Foundation** in order to pool funds to pay for travel and support for patients who cannot pay on their own for access to cancer trials.



The Launcher {Continued}

Listen to examples of initiatives that were started by a launcher funder, and are now successful organizations that fill a critical gap. The following two interviews are with leaders of organizations that a donor started up from scratch in order to fill such a gap.

Featured Podcasts: [Episode #97](#) **How Donors Can Give Effectively to Important Campaigns in California and Across the Country** with Michale Mantell Founder of Resources Legacy Fund.

[Episode #1](#) **Put Your Best Foot Forward With a Funder-Driven Initiative** with Sean Kosofsky, Climate Advocacy Lab.

