

Engaging your family

Whether you are seeking to involve your children with your philanthropy or engage multiple generations, family dynamics can be tricky.

Many delve into their first conversation thinking that there is values alignment with their family members when in fact, values, cause areas and approach/attitudes across generations can be quite different. A miscalculated conversation early on can result in apathy or even resentment.

Conversations about inheritance should also be navigated carefully as 'give while you live' style philanthropy grows in popularity.

You may have been discussing or modelling giving your money and time since your children were young or decided to start giving when they have reached adulthood. Regardless of where you are in your journey, it's important to be prepared to listen and be flexible, particularly if you want them to engage in a way that's meaningful to them or take some responsibility as a trustee or in the distribution of funds.

To begin, here are two considerations:

1 Plan your initial conversation

2 Practical ways to engage the next generation

Describe why you are talking to your family about your philanthropy.

ie. Do you want them to participate and if so, to what extent?

Who do you consider to be family?

This is relevant when you are deciding who will be involved with your philanthropy.

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In what context will you begin your conversation about philanthropy? In person? At a family gathering?
How will you begin the conversation, and explain your motivations for giving?

What are some of the ways you'd like your family could engage?

As part of this question, think about the amount of time and inclination family members may have to contribute.

How will you work together as a family? For example, will you have regular meetings?
How will you manage disputes?
