

Chapter 1

Introducing Philanthropy: Your Passport to Helping Others

In This Chapter

- ▶ Discovering philanthropy and how to join in
 - ▶ Considering different ways to help and causes to support
 - ▶ Maintaining your enthusiasm and commitment
 - ▶ Helping today and in the future
-

Congratulations! By buying this book you've taken an important step towards giving more effectively, enjoyably and strategically. In fact, you're already a philanthropist, because we're donating our proceeds from the book to charities (see the Appendix to see where these proceeds are going).

Perhaps you're unconvinced that buying this book qualifies you to be a philanthropist. After all, the word is associated with the likes of John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, and, more recently, Bill and Melinda Gates and Jeffery Skoll (we write more about the latter in Chapter 11). Seems like a pretty exclusive – and well-heeled – club to get into. But when you consider what a philanthropist really is, you see that you can fit right in.

The word *philanthropy* simply means to love your fellow humans (it's a combination of two Greek words: *philos* (to love) and *anthrop* (humans)). Toss in the 'ist' at the end and the definition changes slightly to 'one who loves his (or her) fellow human beings'. And that's you!

Although the word is often used to mean handing over cash to others, philanthropy can be much more than that. Here are some of the things you can give:

- ✔ **Your time:** For example, volunteering to help at an event or at a charity's project site (check out Chapter 12 for more).
- ✔ **Your talents:** For example, *pro bono* use of your professional or other skills (read Chapter 13 to find out how).

- ✓ **Your treasure:** Which can include financial giving, but also that old car or the smartphone lying in your sock drawer (see Chapter 14).
- ✓ **Your money through your everyday transactions:** Such as buying a pair of glasses from an organisation that provides another pair to a person in the developing world (Chapter 15 has the details).

This chapter is an introduction to the book and to philanthropy and how you can start to make a difference today. We cover ways to give, selecting which organisations to help and focusing on immediate needs and longer-term aims. We also provide tips on keeping up your commitment.

Getting into the Spirit of Giving and Philanthropy

A core focus of this book is helping you to be more effective in your philanthropy. The fact that you're even holding it means that you're probably already interested in giving. Throughout this book, we help you understand the 'what' (see Part III) and the 'who' and 'where' (read the chapters in Part II) of giving, and because change is only possible when people take action, we focus throughout on the 'how' of giving. But in this section, we discuss the 'why' – the 'spirit' of giving – because it's a prime mover, the first cause, of all other charitable or philanthropic actions and endeavours you – or anyone else – take.



Without the spirit of giving, the 'what', 'who', 'where', and 'how' of giving simply don't exist.

Reasons for giving are as diverse as people: some give to help their local communities; others to help regions far across the world. Some give as a way of advocating for a cause, such as housing for the homeless or food for the hungry; others to support community resources, such as libraries and parks. Some give to provide necessities, such as fresh drinking water or access to healthy foods; others to make the highest cultural expressions of art, music, and architectural masterpieces accessible to all. Some give to help people reach their potential; others to ease the pain and fear of terminal illness.

People who give are young and old, rich and poor, from cities and the country; they're people of religious faith and none, from all racial and ethnic backgrounds, and of all educational levels. In fact, the only thing they all share is that they want to make a difference for the better.



You find your motivation by tapping into your own spirit of giving. Then you just need to find a way to express that motivation as you set about changing the world for the better.

Beacons of light

Each year, the Beacon Fellowship Charitable Trust (beaconfellowship.org.uk) gives an award to people (individuals, families, and small groups of individuals) who make particularly noteworthy philanthropic achievements in the UK and around the world. To demonstrate the wide spread of philanthropic champions and causes, and to inspire you, check out the following 2013 Beacon Fellows (some names you'll know and others will be new to you):

- ✓ **Harris Bokhari:** National advisory board member for the Prince of Wales's charity Mosaic (www.mosaicnetwork.co.uk), an organisation that sends mentors into primary and secondary schools to help young people living in disadvantaged communities (we discuss education philanthropy in detail in Chapter 5).
- ✓ **Richard Bradbury CBE:** Fundamental supporter of the charity Scope (www.scope.org.uk), which supports disabled people and their families (see Chapter 8 for more on helping the ill and disabled).
- ✓ **Angila Chada and Michael McKibbin:** Ambassadors for the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (www.communityfoundationni.org), which supports community development to drive social change.
- ✓ **Sir Ronald Cohen:** Chair, Big Society Capital (www.bigsocietycapital.com); Former Chair, Social Investment Task Force; Former Chair Commission on Unclaimed Assets; Co-Founder and Former

Chair, Bridges Ventures; and Co-founder and former Director, Social Financial UK.

- ✓ **Carol Colburn Grigor CBE:** Manages her family-founded Dunard Fund (opencharities.org/charities/295790), which makes donations for the training and performance of classical music, the education and display of visual arts, and construction of new architectural masterpieces (see Chapter 13 for more on these areas).
- ✓ **Stephen Dawson OBE:** Co-founder of Impetus Trust (www.impetus.org.uk), which supports charity sustainability, effectiveness, and growth through venture philanthropy (see Chapter 10 for details on this subject).
- ✓ **Lloyd Dorfman CBE:** Member of the National Theatre Board (www.nationaltheatre.org.uk), which is 'dedicated to the constant revitalisation of the great traditions of the British stage and to expanding the horizons of audiences and artists alike' (Chapter 13 covers the arts).
- ✓ **Sir Vernon Ellis:** Chairman of the National Opera Studio, President of English National Opera, Chair of the British Council, President of the Classical Opera Company, former Trustee of the Royal College of Music and RCM Fellow (for arts philanthropy, turn to Chapter 13).
- ✓ **Nick Ferguson CBE and Jane Ferguson:** Founders of The Kilfinan Trust (www.foundationscotland.org.uk/

(continued)

(continued)

programmes/kilfinan.aspx), which supports 'voluntary organisations and charities working in the Kilfinan area of Argyll and Bute' that seek to 'encourage young people to learn economic skills to stay in the Kilfinan area' and to 'help young families facing rural isolation'.

- ✓ **Michael Harris, Adam Pike, Sam Cohen, Alex Dwek, Alex Gardner, Paul Gorrie, Niccolo Manzoni, Jack Prevezer, Conor Quinn:** Founders of Young Philanthropy Syndicate, a new philanthropic model that 'enables young professionals to invest in niche projects, with the support of experienced philanthropists' (www.youngphilanthropy.org.uk).
- ✓ **Sir Thomas Hughes-Hallett:** Ex-Chief Executive of Marie Curie Cancer Care (www.mariecurie.org.uk), which provides end-of-life care to the terminally ill.
- ✓ **Harvey McGrath:** Chair of the education charity, The Prince's Teaching Institute (www.princes-ti.org.uk), an organisation committed to 'increasing aspiration and improving education in state-funded secondary schools' (read about education philanthropy in Chapter 5).
- ✓ **Paul Marshall:** Co-founder and trustee of international children's charity ARK (www.arkonline.org), which works for children's education, health, and protection (Chapter 5, 7, and 8 cover education, young people, and health matters, respectively).
- ✓ **Gordon Morrison:** Chairman of Sargent Cancer Care for Children (www.clicsargent.org.uk), which provides 'clinical, practical, financial, and emotional support to help children cope with cancer and get the most out of life' (see Chapter 8 for charity healthcare).
- ✓ **Michael Norton OBE:** Founder of over 40 charities including Youthbank (www.youthbank.org) and buzzbnk (www.buzzbnk.org), which help raise money for community programmes.
- ✓ **Kavita Oberoi:** Chair of the Global Girls' Fund Board (www.theglobalgirlsfund.com/en/home), which supports the efforts of Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting to change the lives of 'girls and young women around the world by equipping them with valuable skills, knowledge, and opportunities' (we discuss volunteering for these organisations in Chapter 12).
- ✓ **Nick O'Donohoe:** CEO of Big Society Capital and Board Member of the Global Impact Investing Network (www.thegiin.org), both of which are dedicated to increasing the scale and effectiveness of impact investing (something we examine in Chapter 16).
- ✓ **John Pontin OBE and Wendy Stephenson:** Founders of Converging World (www.theconvergingworld.org), which invests in renewable energy in order to create and support social and environmental projects (read Chapter 9 on becoming an eco-warrior).
- ✓ **JK Rowling OBE:** Founder of The Volant Charitable Trust (www.volanttrust.com), which funds research into the causes, treatments, and possible cures for multiple sclerosis and programmes and charities that seek to alleviate 'social deprivation, with a particular emphasis on women's and children's issues' (see Chapter 7 for children's philanthropy and Chapter 8 for more on tackling health issues).
- ✓ **John Stone:** Founder of The Stone Family Foundation (www.thesff.com), which supports 'innovative, sustainable, and entrepreneurial approaches to tackling major social issues across the UK and around the world' (see Chapter 16).

Identifying Ways to Give

Almost every culture and society has a tradition of giving and philanthropy. Nearly every mythology features, say, a destitute wanderer whose life is made better by the generosity of others. People are trained, from an early age, to have compassion for the sick and goodwill towards those less fortunate. But how you act on these feelings of love, understanding, and sympathy is what shapes your philanthropy.

This section discusses the different kinds of giving: from a distance or in person, on the spur of the moment or in a co-ordinated way, and to meet immediate needs or solve long-term problems.



We don't want to discourage or encourage any particular type of philanthropy, but to help you understand the various types of giving available. By becoming more familiar with the options, you can find the right opportunities for you. You can make a difference at every level and with every mix of activities. Head to Chapter 3 for a general rundown of ways to give and Part III for details on a variety of different strategies.

Giving remotely or in person

In the modern day, you have two primary kinds of giving:

- ✓ **Remote giving:** You send a cheque in the mail or use a credit card online. This type of giving offers you the opportunity to plan the amount you give, to research the charity involved, and so forth. A potential downside is that you may miss the personal connection, which for some people is the most rewarding part of philanthropy.
- ✓ **In-person giving:** You make a personal connection with the people you're helping, whether you're giving to a busker or a beggar, helping a stranger with a bus fare or serving lunch at a food bank. In-person giving is often based on the interpersonal rapport between donor and recipient. The downside is it may be difficult to gauge how to help or whether the help you're offering provides a path to a better future or only a better today.

Both ways are valuable illustrations of the spirit of giving and both have their place in philanthropy.

Acting spontaneously or in a co-ordinated fashion

Letting the spirit of generosity move you to give ‘in the moment’ can be enormously rewarding. Countless charities have been saved by the just-in-time cheque or the heroic volunteer. Nevertheless, when your sole method of giving is one in which you react to sudden calls to action, you may be missing the opportunity to maximise the impact of your donation. Also, by not being part of a co-ordinated or well-planned effort, your generosity is less likely to have a long-lasting impact.



Although giving to others is amazing and wonderful, seeing the results is even better – and these results often come from well-planned, well-timed giving. By thinking about what causes you want to support and then devising a strategy that enables you to support that cause for the long term – whether through donations, volunteering, or other ways to be involved – you increase exponentially the impact of your good works. We discuss ways to organise and plan your giving in Chapter 17.

Don’t underestimate the power of the spirit of giving within you to help others and to make an enormous difference. Our goal with this book is to help you make the biggest difference you can – and to have fun in the process!

Addressing immediate needs or solving long-term problems

One question gets to the heart of the issues regarding how to best help others: do you give someone who’s starving a fish for one dinner or do you teach that person to fish for all her meals into the future? Some people argue that a starving person needs immediate assistance (for example, you throw a drowning child a life preserver instead of standing on the riverbank lecturing about learning to swim). Others argue that immediate assistance meets only the immediate need: without addressing the underlying problems, your solution is temporary at best.

The fact is that the world needs both approaches: ways to address immediate needs and ways to solve long-term problems – and you can address both in a co-ordinated way. As you decide which charities or charitable organisations you want to support, consider their missions and find the ones that take the approaches you prefer.

Finding Causes and Organisations to Support

All the areas of need that exist in the world and all the organisations that address those needs can overwhelm even the most dedicated philanthropist. Read on to discover how to decide which cause(s) and organisation(s) to support.

Focusing on favourite causes

Do you want to see something change in the world? Because you're reading this book, the answer is probably yes. In fact, the chances are that you want to see multiple changes. To begin to narrow the field from all worthy causes (which is a very large field indeed) to causes you're particularly interested in, carry out the following process (and head to Chapter 4 for detailed information on how to search for and select causes):

1. **Make a list.** Whether your concern is reducing poverty, fighting hunger, providing healthcare, helping children, improving education, or any of the hundreds of other causes, identify the areas that mean the most to you.



Mull over what inspires you and grabs your attention. Think of the park you played in as a child or the museum you enjoyed visiting. Think of the places where you saw a favourite concert or an animal you love. These evocative, exciting memories may be the very things that lead you to find a cause to support.

2. **Go through your list and narrow down your interests.** If you wrote 'healthcare', for example, try to narrow the category: are you more interested in fighting AIDS, researching cures for cancer, or making medications more widely available? If 'education' made your list, are you more concerned with access for the disadvantaged to universities in England or the availability of primary education in Kenya?

Such a list helps you focus your philanthropic efforts on areas that matter to you.



If you're still having a hard time deciding which cause to focus on – maybe your list is lengthy or every cause is near and dear to your heart – try the following:

- ✓ **Look for areas that overlap and identify any themes.** For example, if your list includes 'childhood nutrition' and 'fighting obesity' (see Chapter 8) and 'food deserts' (which we discuss in Chapter 15) –

you know that promoting access to healthy foods is important to you, even though you may not have identified it specifically. That awareness can help you begin to co-ordinate your efforts or search for organisations that address that issue.

- ✓ **Prioritise the list.** Arrange the items in order from most to least important to you and focus on the top one or two.
- ✓ **Tackle all the causes, one at a time.** If you find that narrowing down your list is impossible, give yourself permission to contribute to all the causes – one year at a time. Pick one to focus on this year, and next year (and every year after that) revisit your list to choose a different cause for the following year. After all, who says you can't do everything? You just can't (or shouldn't) do everything all at once. Head to Chapter 3 to find out why.

Choosing an organisation

After you identify your cause, you need to find an organisation that supports it. The difficulty comes when you realise that multiple organisations are probably addressing the issues you care about. Here are some general suggestions to help you choose:



- ✓ **Do an online search for charities that address the issues you care about.** Type your cause in your search engine and see what comes up, or better yet go to Charity Navigator (www.charitynavigator.org) or Charity Choice (www.charitychoice.co.uk), which list charities by categories and provide information about the organisations: their missions, contact information, and more.
- ✓ **Understand the scope of the problem relative to the scope of the organisation you're considering working with.** A local organisation, for example, may be excellent at providing for the needs of the local community but is unlikely to tackle the problem on a national or global scale.
- ✓ **Reach out to others who have experience with this area.** Think about where the most help is needed; whether the local health clinic needs help raising money or volunteers in the evenings; whether the local homeless kitchen needs people with specific culinary skills or a few extra people in the warehouse on Saturday to make a big difference. When you understand what kind of help is needed, you can determine whether that charity is a good fit for you.



Figure out how you can find the change already underway near you and help aim, focus, and accelerate it with your skills, time, and passion! It is easier and faster to ally yourself with a nearby project that is already picking up steam

than to begin from square one! Head to Chapter 4 to discover what to look for in charities and how to determine whether the charity you're considering is reputable and makes good use of the donations it receives.

Staying Engaged and Committed

Often, raising your hand or stepping forward to help is a powerful act – the first step you take to bring about the changes you want to see in the world. But don't make it your only step; if you want your efforts to produce lasting impact, you need to follow it up with others.

This section describes what you can do to keep your momentum going – and growing. Plus, because you can become disappointed when (despite the best efforts) change comes slowly or solutions fall short, we also offer advice on how to avoid feeling discouraged and giving up.

Following-up and following-through

Everyone can fall into the trap of becoming involved in projects that 'spoke' to them in the moment but then faded from their minds over time. Whatever happened to that campaign you 'liked' on Facebook or supported with a signature last year? Did the park up the street get built? And what about the resort where you spent last winter's holiday – how's that project to fund an orphanage coming along?



Engaging with a cause involves more than writing a cheque or signing a petition. Follow-up and follow-through are extraordinarily meaningful in the area of charity and philanthropy.

Here are some suggestions to help you stay engaged and avoid the 'you mean a lot to me until I forget about you' syndrome that plagues busy people:

- ✓ **Keep a journal or notebook and write down ideas, websites, and locations relevant to your philanthropy.** Doing so creates a useful record for later research and a trove of information if you're ever trying to follow-up with people you meet, causes you hear about, or places you visit.
- ✓ **Schedule time – at least a couple of hours or an afternoon a month – to devote to your cause or charity.** Even if you only have time to check in on the status of the project or send relevant articles about the issue to friends, you're making a difference. The next section has more on how sharing information is a great way to maximise your impact.



Don't wait for a charity to get in touch with you – contact it! The organisation may offer an email list or a monthly meeting, but also reach out to the staff, mention that you have a bit of time and ask whether they can put you to use. If they're having trouble managing relationships with individuals like you, perhaps you can help them with better marketing materials, an easier-to-use website, or by making telephone calls to donors. Chapter 13 discusses how you can put your specific professional or personal talents to use in your charitable giving.



If your problem is lack of time, consider replacing an activity you'd like to do less of anyway with volunteering. Suppose that you watch 28 hours of telly per week (apparently about average) but have been telling yourself that you need to watch the goggle-box less and get out more: make a plan to reduce your TV time to 24 hours a week (still plenty of time to keep up with *Eastenders* and *Downton Abbey*) and devote the other 4 hours to volunteering at your favourite neighbourhood charity. You'll be amazed how much 'extra' time even busy people can find in their schedules when they replace undesirable activities with rewarding ones – you may well even find that you look forward to these times!

Sharing your hope, commitment, and energy with others

Sharing is a two-way street: you encourage others in what they're doing to help the world and let them encourage you. Here are some ideas:



✓ **Tap into the power of social media.** The Internet provides an excellent way to interact with the world and discover new opportunities that can use your time, talent, and treasure. Keep in mind, however, that going out into the world is far more inspiring than sitting at the computer.

✓ **Look for ways to incorporate volunteer activities into your social life.** Convert meetings with friends into projects, take walks to areas you wouldn't normally visit, and talk with neighbours you don't normally interact with.

You're likely to get great ideas just by listening to your friends, family, co-workers, and neighbours; and you can share great ideas with them!



✓ **Lead by example.** Most great philanthropists do so and educate those around them – not by preaching but by learning alongside them. When a friend phones to have tea on Saturday, saying that you're busy is easy; but explaining that you're volunteering at the community garden in your area is more informative, interesting, and engaging. Plus, you can invite the friend to join.



Consider making a plan with a friend whose interests are similar to your own. By doing so, you encourage one another and work together to find exciting, accessible, and rewarding causes. Local community organisations can often help you find a friend or mentor within the organisation, which is especially valuable on your first volunteering experience.



You inspire people to act simply by how you interact with them. Listen to what gets them excited and remain positive and encouraging. After all, motivating and inspiring the people around you is a type of philanthropy (check out Chapter 19 for ideas).

Staying positive

The amount of work needed in the world of philanthropy can be daunting and frustrating. Despite the thousands of mosquito nets given away, children still contract malaria. Despite so many inoculations, people continue to be stricken with preventable diseases. But *staying positive* is absolutely crucial, as is realising that the situation isn't a matter of 'you against the world'.

One way to avoid getting discouraged is to set realistic goals about how much progress can be made and how much you can contribute. The idea is to start small: walk before you try to run, as the saying goes. Here are some suggestions:



- ✔ **Set achievable goals that are easy to measure.** If you put more ambitious goals into your plan, be sure that you set realistic dates.

Achievable short-term goals help you stay positive. Just as you don't begin an exercise programme by setting out to run a marathon, don't set yourself up for not meeting your charitable or philanthropic goals.

- ✔ **Figure out how much time or money you can spare.** An hour or two per week is great! Find a way to stick with it and think of what you're doing as being like a coin bank – the total sum is what matters!
- ✔ **Don't overpromise and don't let an organisation dictate your volunteering.** Part of being a good volunteer is to be honest about what you can do for the organisation with which you're working. Part of being a good organisation is respecting volunteers' boundaries.



If you feel that you're being overworked or asked to do anything dangerous, bring the issue up immediately with a supervisor. The relationship between the volunteer and the organisation should be respectful and mutually beneficial.

Improving the World Today, Tomorrow, and into the Future

The old adage about giving a man a fish or teaching him to fish is a nice use of the fact that fish is both a verb and a noun, but does little to truly inform our philanthropy. In most situations, we want the world to be better both today and tomorrow. But how can we use our resources to make sure the world is on a path to getting better? The truth is that some split between today and tomorrow is necessary. But we must also recognise that the present is linked to the future: the child vaccinated today won't fall sick tomorrow, the person given a chance at school today will be a more productive member of our society tomorrow.

Making the world a better place today

The world changes slowly. But that doesn't mean that humans can't make speedy progress towards a better world! In other words, you can make a huge difference *today*. Really! The key is to think about your impact on the world in little bites, not big gulps. Considering how to 'save all the whales' or 'end cancer' may appear noble, but neither of those outcomes is going to occur this afternoon – or maybe even within your lifetime.

What can happen today is that you demonstrate an enormous dose of kindness to an older person you'd otherwise not meet (see Chapter 6 for helping the elderly), or act on your feelings of generosity towards a charity you've long admired, or finally cement your commitment to spend some time helping in your community's vegetable garden (check out Chapter 9).



Change doesn't happen suddenly, but you can achieve small things quickly. Don't hesitate or procrastinate! You can do something to make the world better in the time it takes you to read this chapter. Jump to Chapter 20 for some ways . . . now!

Having trouble? Here are some ideas to get you started:

- ✓ **Come up with an issue that you have been thinking about wanting to change, say, about once a month.** Now think about how you can change it a little bit today. For example, if passing someone begging for money in your area bothers you, talk with that person. Investigate what part of the social services safety net has failed and what can be done to address the situation. Often small adjustments yield substantial impacts.

- ✔ **Find out where in the world you think you can make the biggest difference.** Have a conversation with a friend or colleague about that subject today, instead of about England's football team losing again or why your favourite TV soap character was killed off.
- ✔ **Discover who in your community most needs a break, a smile, or a meal.** Provide some charity or comfort to that person today.



You've probably seen films in which, for comedic or dramatic effect, a single angry or unkind response sets off a chain of other angry or unkind responses, which pass from person to person to person until everyone is infected. Turn this dynamic on its head and make a point of setting off a chain reaction of kindness or generosity instead.

Being a champion for the next generation

You decide to give to charity for a whole variety of reasons. In fact, we outline them in Chapters 2 and 18 and reinforce them with the inspiring examples throughout this book. But one of the most important reasons for giving is that the effects of savvy generosity are long-lasting. They may well outlive you, and perhaps even last long enough for the enjoyment of your grandchildren!



A large part of charity and philanthropy is future-focused. People act because they want the world to be better, not just for today but for the future, too. Philanthropists' actions are based on the hopes of a better world: that children can live in safer places, have better lives, enjoy better schools, hold better jobs, and have better options. Therefore, making the world a better place now also means providing a better world for the next generations.

Here are a few areas in which you can make a lasting impact:

- ✔ **Building and infrastructure charities and aid organisations:** These organisations take on building projects, from supplying water to villages to repairing bridges to bringing electricity to remote villages. The impact of infrastructure on the next generation is enormous – having a weather-tight building in which to attend school and clean water to drink increases health, safety, and happiness. Head to Chapters 9 and 12 for more on these organisations.
- ✔ **Education and social services charities:** These organisations work on improving the accessibility and quality of education. Aside from the direct impact on a student, higher levels of education mean more innovation in society, more qualified candidates for political office, and better prospects for social mobility. We devote Chapter 5 to education charities.

✔ **Medical and health charities:** These organisations focus on health today, which has a huge impact on the next generation. More children have healthier childhoods, receive the necessary early childhood care and inoculations, and live in communities that are healthy enough to nurture them. Head to Chapter 7 for charities that focus on the issues children face and Chapter 8 for ones addressing healthcare issues.



However you decide to make an impact on the world, remember that you're contributing to the welfare of everyone. Many people may see philanthropy as putting one's name on a building or opening a university, but although grand, worthwhile projects are great, there's plenty of room for everyone to contribute – and be recognised.

The next generation, and the generation thereafter, will have to make the best of the world they inherit. Help to ensure that they're left a gift rather than a problem!



When musing on the long-term changes you want to see in the world, think about what problems your children are likely to face. If you don't have children, ask yourself 'if I were born today, what would I be likely to worry about?' to consider the problems the next generation may face. Whether it's climate change, disease, or food security, people are working to tackle these problems today and in the future – and you can join them!