

# womengive | 2020

**NEW FORMS OF GIVING IN A DIGITAL AGE:**

Powered by Technology,  
Creating Community



**IUPUI WOMEN'S PHILANTHROPY INSTITUTE**  
LILLY FAMILY SCHOOL OF PHILANTHROPY

**RESEARCH THAT GROWS WOMEN'S PHILANTHROPY**

## Women's Philanthropy Institute

The Women's Philanthropy Institute (WPI) is part of the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. WPI increases understanding of women's philanthropy through rigorous research and education, interpreting and sharing these insights broadly to improve philanthropy. Learn more at <https://philanthropy.iupui.edu/WPI>.

## Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy

The Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at IUPUI is dedicated to improving philanthropy to improve the world by training and empowering students and professionals to be innovators and leaders who create positive and lasting change. The school offers a comprehensive approach to philanthropy through its academic, research and international programs and through The Fund Raising School, Lake Institute on Faith & Giving, the Mays Family Institute on Diverse Philanthropy and the Women's Philanthropy Institute. Learn more at <https://philanthropy.iupui.edu>.

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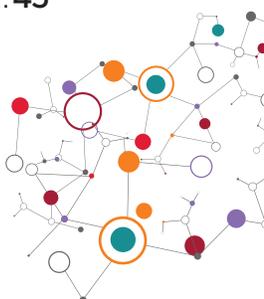
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## HIGHLIGHTS

Technology is influencing every aspect of society—the way people connect with one another, how they work and earn incomes, how they make purchases, and the content they consume. Philanthropy is no exception: giving is increasingly taking place online, and the Internet has shifted how organizations and individuals fundraise, circulate funds around the globe, create awareness for key issues, build movements, combine resources, and ultimately solve societal problems. Technology enables people to give more easily, to learn about causes, organizations, and projects they may never have considered, and to connect with one another around giving through virtual communities.

However, the same advances that reduce barriers and costs to giving also introduce challenges to the sector. How do organizations cultivate trust with their online donors? To what extent should platforms hand-pick causes to receive more attention? What is the right balance between the ease of measuring dollars given and the importance of being generous with more than money? And how can donors and nonprofits foster a sense of community when giving is increasingly taking place online?

This study builds on research that shows broad gender differences in how women and men use the Internet and social networks, and how they give. It is now well understood that gender differences exist in how and why women and men give. By focusing on technology, *Women Give 2020* seeks to understand how women's greater use of social networks and greater presence in key online spaces might influence philanthropy. This subject resonates in particular with women donors who are often drawn to philanthropy through collective giving and the sense of community they build when giving together. Women are inclined to give more than money, combining charitable donations with volunteer or board service, or with more informal giving and helping. Moreover, women donors tend to be drawn to some causes in particular, such as women's and girls' issues, or other organizations to which they are connected personally.

*Women Give 2020* seeks to understand how women and men are using technology for good in similar and different ways. No one report can capture all aspects of such an expansive topic, and this study takes a novel approach, using data from four partner organizations to provide case studies of how women and men use these platforms and apps. This approach also allows for those organizations to offer key lessons learned along the way, and to address broader questions about the intersection of technology and philanthropy. The case studies challenge donors as well as organizations across the nonprofit sector—including platforms and apps that enable giving—to grapple with the implications of technology for philanthropy.

Technology has already become a vital tool for women and men to research, connect with, and give to the causes and organizations they care about. To successfully serve women donors beyond 2020, tech platforms must: take a comprehensive view of philanthropy; meet donors where they are no matter how spontaneous or intentional their giving; and cultivate trust and a sense of community online.

## KEY THEMES

Key themes are based on four datasets from online donation platforms and apps, as well as on discussions with representatives of these platforms. Combined, the four datasets include more than 3.7 million gift transactions. The first three themes draw from multiple case study datasets to provide an overarching view of how women and men use technology to give.

### ***1. Women give more gifts than men, and contribute a greater proportion of dollars than men.***

Across all four case studies, women give greater numbers of gifts than men (nearly two-thirds of gifts, across platforms). While average gift size is relatively equal, and in some cases men's gifts are slightly larger, women's greater number of donations means they are giving more dollars than men through each platform studied (53%-61% of dollars, depending on the case study).

### ***2. Women give smaller gifts than men, and give to smaller charitable organizations than men.***

Across most case studies (three of the four), women give smaller gifts than men. Women's gifts also tend to go to smaller charitable organizations compared to gifts from men, which are more likely to go to large organizations.

### ***3. Women's and girls' organizations receive substantially more support from women donors than from men donors.***

Three of the four case studies allowed for analysis of funding for women's and girls' causes, with women giving between 60% and 70% of dollars to women's and girls' organizations, depending on the dataset.

Each of the themes below draws on one or two case studies in particular to demonstrate the challenges that organizations face when integrating technology and giving.

**4. *Broadly defining philanthropy goes hand-in-hand with engaging diverse donors—and both appeal to women donors.***

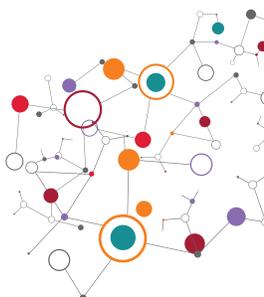
A case study on GivingTuesday shows that expanding the definition of philanthropy to more than money can help a movement spread globally, in particular to a more diverse group of women donors.

**5. *Technology enables donors to give in the way they would like and to organizations that align with their values and interests; platforms can also support donors by identifying causes they might prefer and by building trust with donors.***

GlobalGiving, an online platform for giving to grassroots NGOs, provides a case study of how to curate these choices for donors.

**6. *To appeal to women donors, platforms and organizations must build community online and continue to support in-person connections for donors.***

While technology means giving is increasingly taking place online, case studies from Givelify (an app for giving to religious congregations) and Growfund (a \$0-minimum donor-advised fund for individuals and giving circles) show that in-person community is essential for engagement in philanthropy.



## INTRODUCTION

Technology is disrupting every aspect of society—the ways people connect with each other, how they work and earn incomes, how they purchase and the content they consume. Technology and new forms of giving are changing philanthropy, too, from online giving in a broad sense, to giving days, crowdfunding platforms, apps, and more. The Internet has transformed how organizations and individuals fundraise, circulate funds around the globe, create awareness for key issues, build movements, combine resources, and ultimately solve societal problems. Social networks play an outsized role in how technology disrupts philanthropy. These networks allow individuals from around the globe to connect over shared passions, and these social platforms provide a way for individuals to pool resources, ideas, and skills to create large-scale impact. Further, advances in mobile technology mean that organizations and individuals can engage in social change via smartphone, through mobile giving, new apps, and texting.<sup>1</sup>

The subject of technology, gender, and giving is expansive and diverse enough that one report cannot detail all the ways in which women and men engage in giving online. *Women Give 2020* provides case studies of platforms, apps, and movements that are using technology to transform giving. These case studies highlight the unique role of women in using these tools to move philanthropy forward. It has been established that gender matters in philanthropy: women give more and tend to spread their giving across more organizations compared to men, who give larger average amounts but to fewer organizations. This study reflects these big-picture findings, revealing that the same dynamics are at play in the tech space. *Women Give 2020* asks: How can women and men use technology effectively to support their giving? How can nonprofits and tech platforms engage more donors and keep them connected to causes and organizations?

Technology has disrupted philanthropy in largely positive ways. Online giving democratizes philanthropy and opens it to a more diverse set of donors. Anyone with Internet access can learn about, donate to, and advocate for causes that matter to them. Giving online is often easier for donors, and technology allows donors to learn about and support a wide variety of causes, organizations, and projects they may not encounter in their day-to-day lives. Advances in technology have also shifted the definition of community, and donors and nonprofits are increasingly connecting with one another online. Giving occurs in virtual communities; at the same time, in-person connection is vital for philanthropy and can benefit from technology supporting, rather than replacing, this sense of community.

With all the benefits that technology brings to philanthropy, potential challenges must also be addressed. If giving increasingly takes place online, how do organizations build relationships and cultivate trust with their donors? If platforms pick causes and nonprofits to highlight on their sites and apps, are they providing some groups with an unfair fundraising advantage? And if dollars given are the easiest measure of generosity in this online age, how can the field expand the definition of philanthropy to be more inclusive of diverse donors? *Women Give 2020* provides insights about the intersection of gender, technology, and giving, seeking to answer these questions and more through a gender lens.



## BACKGROUND

### *The Internet, Cell Phones, and Social Media*

To understand how technology has influenced giving, one must first appreciate the ubiquity of the Internet and social media. The Internet has become almost necessary in most Americans' everyday lives. Today, nine in ten American adults uses the Internet. In 2018, more than half of people globally (around 3.8 billion, 51% of the world's population) were connected to the Internet. In the U.S., women are slightly more likely to use the Internet than men.<sup>4</sup>

When people go online, they often do so using their smartphones; more than four out of five Americans own a smartphone (81%),<sup>5</sup> and one in three smartphone users rely on their phone for transactions, information, news, and to find resources.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, Americans are spending more and more time on their phones: in 2018, they averaged more than 3.5 hours per day.<sup>7</sup> A survey of college students found women spent more time on their phones than men, and women tend to use their cell phones as a social and communicative tool when accessing the Internet.<sup>8</sup>

Nearly three in four American adults use social media (72%),<sup>9</sup> and the vast majority of social media access takes place on a mobile device.<sup>10</sup> Women are more likely than men to use social media, a gender difference that has persisted over the last decade and appears to be widening.<sup>11</sup> In 2019, 65% of men and 78% of women were present on at least one social media site.<sup>12</sup> Women are more likely than men to stay in touch with friends through social media (69% of women and 54% of men).<sup>13</sup>

On Facebook, women are more active (measured by number of posts) and have wider networks (measured by number of friends) compared to men.<sup>14</sup> There are also gender differences across other social networks; women are more likely than men to use Facebook, Pinterest, and Instagram, while men are slightly more likely to use Twitter.<sup>15</sup> Some studies show women may choose social networking sites designed to build connections and relationships in an effort to maintain a sense of community through these sites.<sup>16</sup> While social networks enable individuals to connect with others around the world, most adults use social media to stay in touch with people they already know.<sup>17</sup>

## Philanthropy and the Internet

Not only do most Americans rely on the Internet, but their giving is migrating to online platforms, as well. A majority of Americans now prefer to give online,<sup>18,19</sup> and online donations are growing faster than more traditional means of giving.<sup>20</sup> Mobile giving has grown 80% since 2013.<sup>21</sup> One global survey found that donors prefer giving online to almost any other method of giving, such as through the mail or using cash.<sup>22</sup>

Some studies have shown that gender and age influence online giving. In 2018, 64% of mobile donations came from women.<sup>23</sup> One study showed women are more likely to give via Facebook fundraisers compared to men (19% of women donors and 14% of men donors).<sup>24</sup> Social media is key in bringing awareness to fundraisers and nonprofit organizations, but women are more likely than men to say they have been inspired to donate by social media (32% of women donors and 24% of men donors).<sup>25</sup> Younger people may be more likely to give via smartphone since they often use their phones to spend money in other ways.<sup>26</sup> Younger donors may also link trust in an organization to their online presence; if they are unable to donate easily online, they are less likely to trust the organization.<sup>27</sup>

Generous behavior online encompasses more than just making donations using the Internet. For example, women may use their networks in other ways to advocate for causes they care about. One study found women were more likely than men to sign online petitions.<sup>28</sup> A report on Change.org petitions found that while women create fewer petitions than men, they sign petitions more often, and the petitions they create are more successful.<sup>29</sup> The study found that women-created petitions tend to be more successful because women are more effective at mobilizing their networks to sign.

Crowdfunding is yet another way generosity can be shown online. Crowdfunding is a broad term that involves raising capital from a large and diverse pool of donors via online platforms.<sup>30</sup> While crowdfunding can take many forms, such as funding for-profit projects and businesses as well as facilitating peer-to-peer giving, its support of nonprofit organizations is of greatest interest for this study.<sup>31</sup> Crowdfunding donors tend to be younger (46% of Millennials regularly donate to crowdfunding campaigns),<sup>32</sup> and women are slightly more likely than men to donate to crowdfunding campaigns.<sup>33</sup>

Venture capital and other mainstream funding has historically overlooked women entrepreneurs, who have received a disproportionately low share of these investments. Crowdfunding presents women with a new opportunity for fundraising in this space. Research on crowdfunding has primarily been by entrepreneurship or economics scholars, and the role women play in crowdfunding for philanthropy has yet to be fully examined. Crowdfunding also sheds light on the question of trust in online transactions: if engagement is entirely online, how do fundraisers and the organizations they represent build genuine relationships with current and potential donors?



## NEW QUESTIONS AT THE INTERSECTION OF GENDER, TECHNOLOGY, AND GIVING

Technological advances have moved philanthropy forward in many ways. Giving online is easier than ever before, social networks provide virtual communities for giving and advocacy, and the Internet allows donors to access information about projects and organizations and send funds in seconds. Despite these positive aspects of technology and giving, some challenges have arisen. The case studies in *Women Give 2020* touch on these developments and provide examples of organizations working to use technology for good in ways that rise to meet these challenges.

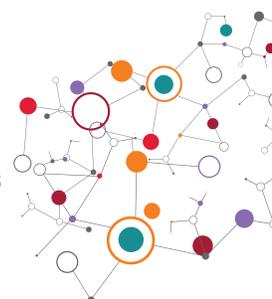
***Defining or diluting philanthropy:*** Measuring philanthropy only in dollars is tempting in this new technological age, because it is a seemingly universal language. How much money is going to various causes and organizations? Some groups are pushing back against this definition of philanthropy, expanding the idea to include giving time, or any generous act like helping a neighbor or someone in need. Previous research shows that a broad definition of philanthropy is also more inclusive of diverse groups of donors.<sup>34</sup> For example, donors of color are more likely to give time and money in informal ways; and younger donors are more likely to use multiple resources, such as purchasing and investing, for good rather than focusing solely on charitable donations. How can the field balance the desire to be inclusive and build a holistic movement with the need to make change and do more than tell stories?

***Building community and engagement:*** When giving is online, and face-to-face engagement is lost, what happens to the community that forms around traditional philanthropy? This is especially relevant with giving to religious congregations, where giving is seen as a communal activity; where social norms encourage greater giving; and where visible examples of giving provide an opportunity to transmit the value of generosity to the next generation. When giving migrates online, how can a sense of community be retained? Workplace giving is another example: the convenience of online giving has replaced in-person campaigns, but evidence is building that this is a major reason for the consistent decline in workplace giving in the past few years.<sup>35</sup>

**Curating organizations, and building trust and accountability:** While the Internet brings donors into contact with countless organizations, platforms that enable giving often make some causes or organizations more prominent than others. What causes are getting more attention, and are platforms leveling the playing field or contributing to inequity by providing certain groups with higher levels of visibility? How do platforms and nonprofits build trust with donors if giving takes place online? How can donors be sure their funds are going to what is promised? To what extent do donors hold platforms and the nonprofits they support accountable? How are organizations and causes vetted, since donors may not be familiar with a specific nonprofit if it is located outside their local community?

Gender matters in philanthropy: women and men have different patterns of giving. Technology is rapidly changing the way people give. *Women Give 2020* explores this intersection of gender, philanthropy, and technology in broad terms to ask: **How do women and men interact—similarly and differently—in using technology to give?** Through the case studies in this report, *Women Give 2020* also addresses the following questions:

- How do women and men give when using technology, as exemplified in the case study platforms and apps? Are there gender differences in the number or size of gifts?
- What organizations or causes benefit when women and men give online?
- If giving “treasure” is the simplest and most convenient way to measure generosity in an online world, how can the field promote a more expansive definition of philanthropy to include many diverse groups of donors?
- How should platforms responsibly curate information, and how can they build trust with their donors?
- How can organizations cultivate online gifts without losing the sense of community that comes from in-person donor engagement?



## STUDY METHODS

This report uses four datasets from online donation platforms and apps:

- Charity Navigator, an organization that evaluates nonprofits in the U.S. and enables giving to those charities via its “Giving Basket” donation feature. *Women Give 2020* uses these data to examine giving patterns around GivingTuesday.
- GlobalGiving, a funding platform that connects donors with organizations and projects around the world, primarily grassroots NGOs.
- Givelify, a mobile giving app and donation management tool, mainly used for giving to congregations.
- Global Impact, a nonprofit organization with several areas of focus, including workplace giving to international charities. *Women Give 2020* uses data from its Growfund tool, a \$0-minimum donor-advised fund (DAF) that serves individuals, corporations (via workplace giving), and giving circles.

Each dataset includes anonymized transaction data for donations taking place over at least two calendar years. At minimum, each dataset includes the date and amount of each gift, the gender of the donor (using appended demographic data for Charity Navigator and programs that identify gender using first name for other datasets).

Table 1 summarizes these four data sources, including the information available to identify recipient charitable organizations and causes.

**Table 1:** Data sources

Data source	Description	Date range	# Observations	Recipient data
Charity Navigator (for GivingTuesday)	Donations via nonprofit evaluation aggregator to analyze GivingTuesday	2016-2019 (4 years)	597,47	Employer Identification Number (EIN)
GlobalGiving	Funding platform for giving to grassroots global organizations	2016-2019 (4 years)	703,234	Project type (cause area), EIN <sup>i</sup>
Givelify	An app for giving to congregations	2016-2018 (~2 years)	2,408,729	Congregation size
Global Impact (Growfund)	\$0-minimum DAF emphasizing giving circle use	2018-2019 (2 years)	7,450 <sup>ii</sup>	EIN

<sup>i</sup> While EIN was available, this study uses project type or cause area instead of EIN since it is a more specific categorization. Both variables were analyzed and results were fairly similar.

<sup>ii</sup> These observations are split into four categories (individual investments in Growfund accounts; giving circle investments in Growfund accounts; individual gifts from Growfund accounts; and giving circle gifts from Growfund accounts).

This report generally presents summary statistics, such as the percentage of gifts or dollars in a dataset given by women or men. Other methods, like regression analysis and t-tests, are used when the data allow. Results discuss statistical significance of gender differences when appropriate.<sup>iii</sup>

To provide adequate context for the case studies, interviews were conducted with the case study organizations: GivingTuesday, GlobalGiving, Givelify, and Global Impact (Growfund data). These interviews asked similar questions of each team, including about the history and growth of the organization, its reactions to key findings, and lessons learned about the challenges and opportunities for technology and philanthropy. Additionally, three global GivingTuesday leaders were interviewed to illustrate the growing global nature of this movement.

## Limitations

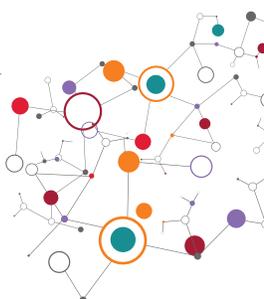
Case study results apply to each specific dataset and should not be overly generalized, as the data have several key limitations. First, the datasets do not represent all online giving platforms or apps. Each app, platform, and website used for giving to charity is unique and attracts its own set of users. Second, the data lack extensive donor demographic variables. Previous research shows that many demographic characteristics affect giving—especially wealth, income, education, and marital status or family size. Because the datasets in this study do not contain an extensive set of demographics, gender differences may be due to underlying factors for which data are unavailable. Third, results cannot be generalized to show trends over time. While the datasets cover two to four years of time, technology advances in such unpredictable ways that analyzing changes over time in these datasets may say more about the specific app or platform and its development than about larger trends in giving. Finally, these datasets—and this report as a whole—deal with donations made online via an app or online giving platform; results are not generalizable to all charitable giving (including offline giving).

A note on how donor gender is estimated: For GlobalGiving, Givelify, and Growfund data, donor gender was estimated through programming applications that use first names to identify gender. This process is imperfect, and some services tend to correctly guess more names than others, or to have trouble with names originating in non-Western locations. Since the primary variable of interest (gender) was obtained for three of four datasets using these services, results in this report may need to be refined as gender predicting apps improve or as more accurate gender data become available.

See the Methodology section at the end of this report for further detail on the methods and data used in this study, as well as their limitations.

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<sup>iii</sup> Statistical significance means that a particular result is not likely due to chance. Significance is a statistical term that states the level of certainty that a difference or relationship exists.



## THEMES

The first set of themes in this report is illustrated by multiple case study datasets. While the four case studies differ in key ways, common themes emerge about how women and men give through technology across the organizations studied.

**Theme 1: Women give more gifts than men, and contribute a greater proportion of dollars than men.**

Across all four case studies, women give a greater number of gifts than men (nearly two-thirds of gifts, across platforms). While average gift size is relatively equal, and in some cases men’s gifts are slightly larger, women’s greater number of donations means they are giving more dollars than men through each platform studied (53%-61% of dollars, depending on the case study). Figure 1 summarizes these key results across the datasets.

**Figure 1:** Share of total number and total dollar amount of gifts by women and men



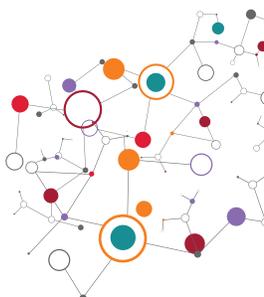
Notes: Growfund data measure gifts donated from individual and giving circle DAF accounts to recipient nonprofits. See Methodology section at the end of this report for more information.

Figure 1 illustrates that across case studies, women give more gifts than men (with the exception of individual Growfunds), and that women also give a greater proportion of the total dollars.

- Women give 64.5% of gifts on GivingTuesday. Women give slightly smaller gifts on average (\$104) compared to men (\$111). However, because women give more gifts than men, they contribute 63.0% of dollars on GivingTuesday.<sup>iv</sup>
- Women give 62.1% of gifts on the GlobalGiving platform. Women give smaller gifts on average (\$76) compared to men (\$109). Because women give more gifts than men, they contribute more than half (53.4%) of the dollars through this platform.
- Women give 62.6% of the gifts on Givelify. Women give slightly smaller gifts on average (\$96) compared to men (\$109). However, because women give more gifts than men, they contribute 59.6% of dollars through this app.
- For individual Growfund accounts, men give 54.9% of gifts from DAF accounts to charities. However, women give higher amounts on average (\$570) compared to men (\$345), which means women contribute 57.6% of dollars from individual Growfund accounts to charitable organizations.
- For giving circle Growfunds, women give more than three-quarters of gifts from the account to charitable recipients (77.5%). Men tend to distribute higher amounts than women from giving circle accounts (\$5,932 on average for men compared with \$2,446 for women). However, because women's giving circles distribute such a large majority of gifts, they distribute 58.7% of the dollars going from giving circle Growfunds to nonprofit organizations.

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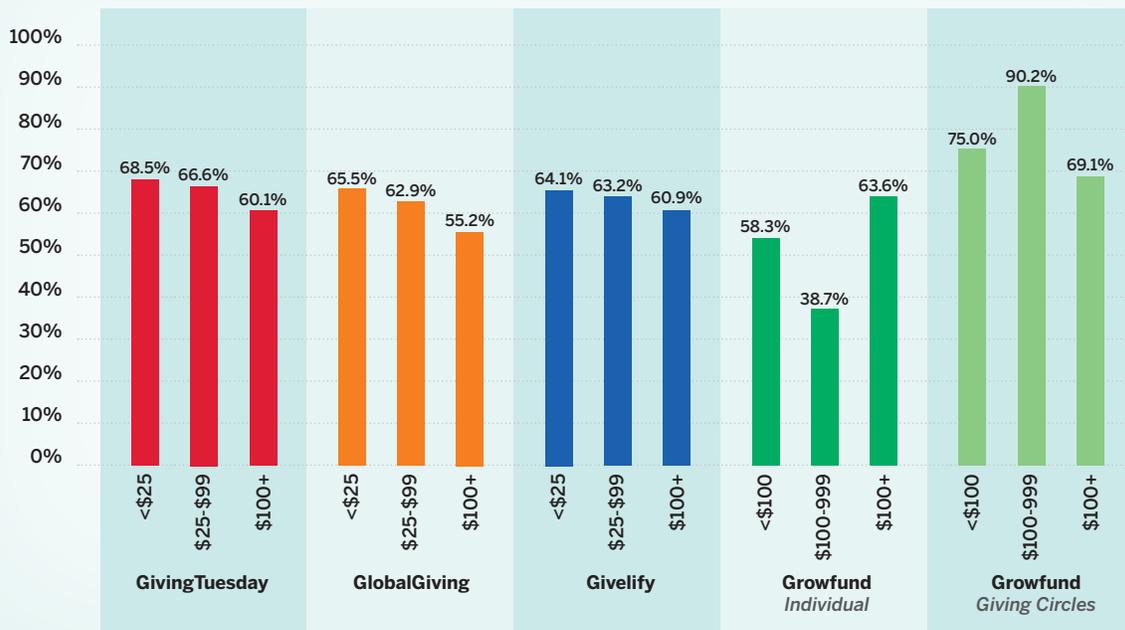
<sup>iv</sup> Note that GivingTuesday has collected data from a number of data partners and conducted similar analyses. While WPI did not have access to the full set of data for this study, GivingTuesday has confirmed that their findings are similar in direction, though they may vary in magnitude. In particular, women give more gifts and have a slightly smaller gift size, but still more dollars overall compared to men. Discrepancies may be due to how platforms and data sets define gender and the complexities of households (e.g., a household where the man is the primary credit or debit card holder, even if the woman is making the donation).



**Theme 2: Women give smaller gifts than men, and give to smaller charitable organizations than men.**

Across most case studies (three of the four), women give smaller gifts than men; this echoes the information about average gift size provided under Theme 1. Figure 2 below summarizes key results.

**Figure 2:** Share of total number of gifts by women, by gift size

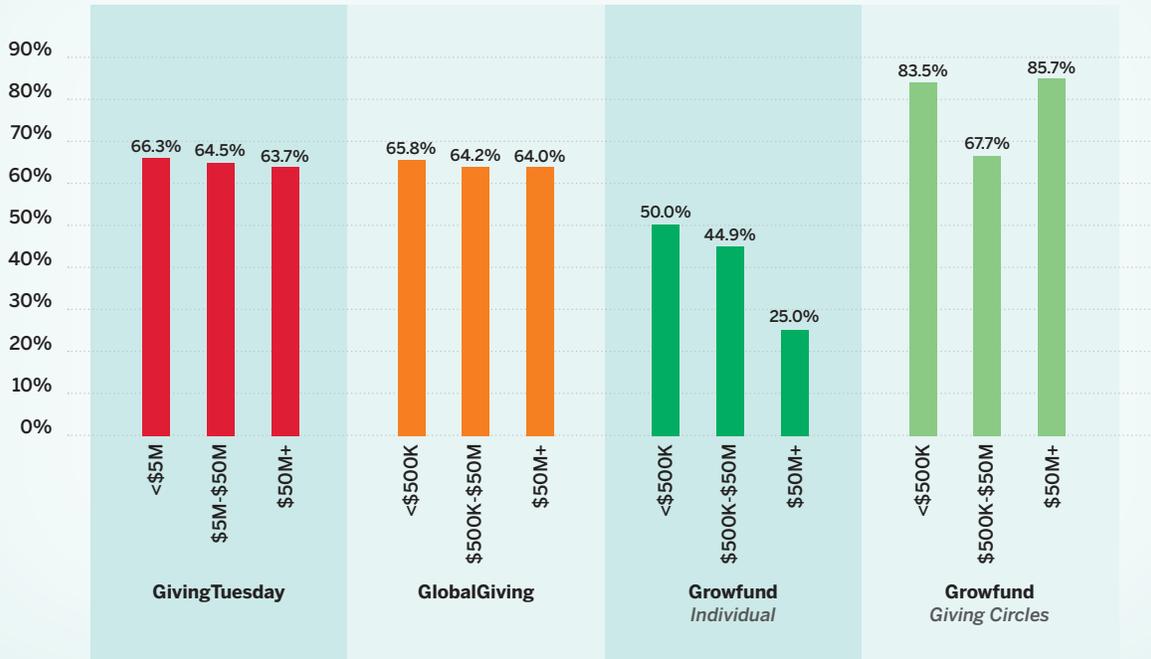


Notes: Growfund data measure gifts donated from individual and giving circle DAF accounts to recipient nonprofits. See Methodology section at the end of this report for more information.

Figure 2 illustrates that across most case studies, women give smaller gifts than men. For GivingTuesday, GlobalGiving, and Givelify, women give more gifts than men overall. For these three datasets, as the gift size decreases, women give a greater percentage of gifts. Growfund seems to be the exception. For individual Growfund accounts, women give most of the small and large gifts, but men give the majority of mid-sized gifts (women give 38.7% of gifts between \$100 and \$1,000). For giving circle Growfunds, women give broadly across gift sizes, but give a lower percentage of the largest gifts.

Women’s gifts also tend to go to smaller charitable organizations compared to gifts from men, which are more likely to go to large organizations, as seen in Figure 3.

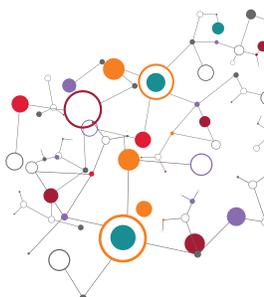
**Figure 3:** Share of total number of gifts by women, by recipient organization revenue



Notes: Growfund data measure gifts donated from individual and giving circle DAF accounts to recipient nonprofits. See Methodology section at the end of this report for more information. While Givelify data do not include organization revenue, congregation size may be a proxy for this measure; this analysis is show in Figure 5 of the report.

Figure 3 illustrates that with the exception of giving circle Growfunds, as recipient organizations decrease in size (measured by revenue), women give a greater percentage of gifts. For giving circle Growfund accounts, women still make the vast majority of gifts, but men are most likely to make gifts to mid-sized organizations.

Together, Figures 2 and 3 show that for the datasets in this study, women donors give more dollars, but are doing so by giving large numbers of fairly small gifts. This points to the idea of a diversifying donor base as participation in philanthropy opens up to a larger pool of donors.



**Theme 3: Women's and girls' organizations receive substantially more support from women donors than from men donors.**

Three of the four case studies allowed for analysis of funding for women's and girls' causes, with women giving between 60% and 70% of dollars to women's and girls' organizations, depending on the dataset.

Thanks to the recent creation of the Women & Girls Index (WGI), an analysis of giving to women and girls can be conducted where EIN data are available.<sup>36</sup> Since EIN data are included in three of the four datasets, a comparison of those three platforms is shown in Figure 4. Across the datasets, with one exception (individual Growfunds),<sup>v</sup> women are much more likely than men to give to women's and girls' organizations, and give more dollars to these organizations.

**Figure 4:** Share of total number and total dollar amount of gifts by women to women's and girls' organizations



Notes: Growfund data measure gifts donated from individual and giving circle DAF accounts to recipient nonprofits. See Methodology section at the end of this report for more information.

Taken together, the case study data provide three broad themes about how many gifts women give, the size of those gifts, and the size of recipient nonprofits (as well as their focus on women and girls). In the next section, subsequent themes rely on one or two datasets in particular to demonstrate the challenges organizations and platforms face when integrating technology and philanthropy.

<sup>v</sup> Men give 42.9% of gifts, and 86.5% of total dollars, to women's and girls' organizations from individual Growfund accounts. Several sizeable gifts were distributed to women's and girls' organizations from male Growfund account holders during the period studied.

## GI<sup>♥</sup>NGTUESDAY **A global movement begins online**

GivingTuesday was created in 2012 as a simple idea: a day that encourages people to do good. The idea went viral, growing quickly into a global phenomenon with measurable activity in nearly every country and territory around the world. Over the past eight years, GivingTuesday has grown into a global movement that inspires hundreds of millions of people to give, collaborate, and celebrate generosity.

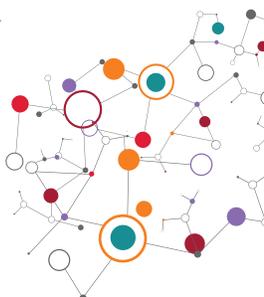
The leadership network of GivingTuesday represents 65 countries, over 400 local community and cause coalitions globally, and more than 60 data platforms. Nearly \$2 billion was donated in the U.S. alone on GivingTuesday 2019—along with countless acts of generosity and kindness performed around the world.<sup>37</sup>

Participation in GivingTuesday can take many forms, from donors sharing causes and organizations they are passionate about online and through social media, to donation processors, nonprofit organizations, and social media platforms boosting the message of generosity. Facebook, for example, has grown its donation processing from 4% of all online charitable giving on GivingTuesday 2016, to around one-third of donations in 2018.<sup>38</sup> Studies have shown gender differences in engagement on GivingTuesday.<sup>39</sup>

### **Key data takeaways:**

- Women give more donations than men on GivingTuesday. As highlighted in Theme 1, women give 64.5% of gifts on GivingTuesday.
- While women give slightly smaller gifts on average, their greater number of donations means women give a greater share of dollars than men on GivingTuesday (63.0%).
- Women appear to be especially interested in GivingTuesday. For the entire four-year Charity Navigator sample, women gave 52.1% of donations and 48.1% of total dollars, demonstrating their participation in GivingTuesday is far beyond their typical giving levels on other days.
- While women are more likely to give to women's and girls' causes on GivingTuesday (see Theme 3), environmental causes also stand out. Women give 70.3% of the gifts and 73.3% of the dollars to environmental causes on GivingTuesday.<sup>vi</sup>

<sup>vi</sup> Note that while women give a higher number of gifts and dollars to these causes overall, the numbers on GivingTuesday are markedly higher. Overall (throughout the entire sample), women give 59.0% of the gifts and 58.0% of the dollars to women's and girls' causes. Overall (throughout the entire sample), women give 60.0% of the gifts and 56.1% of the dollars to environmental causes.



## GivingTuesday Goes Global: Conversations with global leaders

GivingTuesday began in the U.S. but has grown into a worldwide generosity movement.<sup>40</sup> GivingTuesday activities have been tracked in nearly every country, and more than 60 countries have national GivingTuesday movements of their own. These countries are just beginning to collect data on how women and men celebrate GivingTuesday, so key country leaders shared their perspective on local movements to provide global context. #UnDiaParaDarMX in Mexico started soon after GivingTuesday launched in the U.S.,<sup>41</sup> #GivingTuesdayIndia began in 2017,<sup>42</sup> and #GivingTuesdaySA in South Africa launched most recently, in 2018.<sup>43</sup> While each country's GivingTuesday story is unique, some common patterns emerged.

**Women are driving the global GivingTuesday movement.** Data on gender and GivingTuesday in these countries are limited. In Mexico, results from a few donation platforms indicate between 60% and 70% of GivingTuesday Mexico donors are women. Anecdotally, women in Mexico drive giving and generous activities on GivingTuesday, according to country leader Anita Gallagher. Several organizations with successful GivingTuesday campaigns have involved mothers and daughters working together to support a cause they care deeply about. As an example, one mother and daughter team in Cancun used GivingTuesday to encourage donations of nutritional supplements for children fighting cancer, within an organization set up to honor the mother's other daughter who had died of cancer.

Data on GivingTuesday in India are limited to information about website users—but show significant engagement by women. Typically, around 70% of Internet users in India are men. But on GivingTuesday, 55% of users of the GivingTuesday India website are women. Women also outnumber men in measures of social media engagement for GivingTuesday India. Anecdotally, several of the strongest allies supporting GivingTuesday India are women, according to country leader Pushpa Aman Singh.

**To succeed globally, GivingTuesday must emphasize more than money.** In Mexico, India, and South Africa, country leaders have prioritized differentiating country campaigns from the original American GivingTuesday. For example, in Mexico the hashtag #UnDiaParaDarMX emphasizes the word “dar” to mean giving time and talent in addition to simply donating money. In India, GivingTuesday has taken on a dimension of public awareness in addition to philanthropic campaigns. One of the most successful campaigns was developed by Mumbai's metro service and educated riders about women's empowerment and nonprofits serving women. In South Africa, the term “philanthropy” can have negative associations of being only for the very wealthy. Therefore, country leader Laura Parker has worked to root GivingTuesday in the concept of *Ubuntu*, a sort of “horizontal” philanthropy that involves informal giving within one's family and community.

***GivingTuesday's flexibility and adaptability enable its translation as a movement into other national contexts.*** At its core, GivingTuesday is connected to an American holiday, Thanksgiving. To truly become a global movement, some countries are working to decouple these two events. In India, GivingTuesday is actually celebrated for one full week in October, completely removed from the U.S. timing. India built on an existing celebration of giving, the Festival of Giving, which begins on Gandhi's birthday, October 2. In South Africa, Mandela Day is already celebrated with many of the same themes of service and community as GivingTuesday, which provides the movement an opportunity to build on these concepts at a different time of year (July 18, Mandela's birthday).

***Theme 4: Broadly defining philanthropy goes hand-in-hand with engaging diverse donors—and both appeal to women donors.***

The case of GivingTuesday demonstrates that expanding the definition of philanthropy beyond financial resources can help a movement spread globally—in particular to women donors, as well as to donors around the world.

In its early days, GivingTuesday emphasized numbers of donations and dollars. While these remain important measures of growth, GivingTuesday increasingly embraces a more comprehensive definition of philanthropy. According to internal GivingTuesday research, giving money is the most popular behavior for both women and men on GivingTuesday in the U.S., but *only* giving money is the least popular behavior. Generally, donors are taking some other action on GivingTuesday, such as volunteering, donating something besides money, or talking to fellow donors about giving.

GivingTuesday has moved to intentionally embrace a wider view of philanthropy and generosity in recent years. GivingTuesday Co-Founder and CEO Asha Curran noted, "Donating to nonprofits is an important and meaningful way to express generosity. But, we are focused on generosity using the most expansive definition. We have found that taking the focus off of financial donations is actually great for donations because people don't want to be ATMs. This resonates with donors and nonprofits alike."



## **GlobalGiving** A platform to support causes around the world

GlobalGiving is a funding platform that connects donors with organizations and projects around the world, primarily grassroots NGOs. Its founders, former World Bank executives, envisioned an alternative to the standard top-down international development programs that grant to the largest NGOs. GlobalGiving launched in 2002 as an online crowdfunding marketplace to connect donors to small, local nonprofits, both in the U.S. and around the world. Nearly two decades later, the original vision for GlobalGiving remains the same: a platform serving nonprofits and NGOs, individual donors, and corporations.

Quickly realizing that donors are more motivated by being asked to give, world events, or existing relationships and communities, GlobalGiving began by working with companies, affinity groups, and other partners to bring donors to the platform. Today, in addition to those sources, many new donors find GlobalGiving via its nonprofit partners or another third party—like media stories about a disaster response it is leading. The platform emphasizes different cause areas, such as disaster giving (which brings the most donors to the site) and giving to women and girls; it also supports corporations, including through workplace giving.

### **Key data takeaways:**

- Women give more gifts on GlobalGiving compared to men. As highlighted in Theme 1, women give 62.1% of gifts.
- While women give slightly smaller gifts on average, their greater number of donations means women give a greater share of dollars than men on the GlobalGiving platform (53.4%).
- Gender differences are more pronounced for both U.S. donors and for U.S.-based projects. These differences are illustrated in Table 2. However, these gender differences should be interpreted with caution, as they may simply point to data limitations.
- While women are more likely to give to women's and girls' causes via the GlobalGiving platform (see Theme 3), animal-related causes also stand out. Women give 74.4% of gifts and 70.6% of dollars to animal causes and projects.

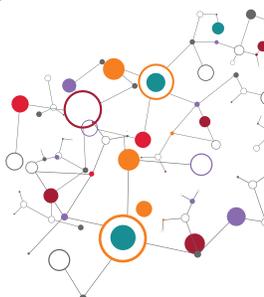
**Table 2:** Share of gifts and total dollars from women, by geographic location of donor and project (GlobalGiving)

		Women's share of # of gifts	Women's share of \$ of gifts
<b>Overall</b>		<b>62.1%</b>	<b>53.4%</b>
<b>Donors</b>	<b>U.S.-based</b>	<b>63.3%</b>	<b>54.2%</b>
	<b>Non-U.S.-based</b>	<b>56.3%</b>	<b>48.6%</b>
<b>Projects</b>	<b>U.S.-based</b>	<b>67.7%</b>	<b>58.1%</b>
	<b>Non-U.S.-based</b>	<b>60.6%</b>	<b>52.2%</b>

Notes: See Methodology section at the end of this report for more information.

Table 2 illustrates that the gender breakdown is more pronounced for both U.S. donors and for U.S.-based projects.<sup>vii</sup> Compared to non-U.S. donors, women make up a greater proportion of U.S. donors on the GlobalGiving platform, measured both by the number of gifts and by the total dollars given. Donors to U.S. projects are also more likely to be women compared to projects outside the U.S., although all projects have a majority of women donors, whether U.S.-based or not.

<sup>vii</sup> While these numbers generally align with expectations based on GlobalGiving's own web analytics, it is important to note that the data are limited by the strength of the gender estimator. The gender estimating tool works best with U.S.-based Western names, and does relatively poorly guessing the gender of Indian and other Asian names, which make up a significant number of the non-U.S. donors in the dataset. While these results point to interesting future research, they should be interpreted with caution.



***Theme 5: Technology enables donors to give in the way they would like and to organizations that align with their values and interests; platforms can also support donors by identifying causes they might prefer and by building trust with donors.***

GlobalGiving, an online platform for giving to grassroots NGOs, provides a case study of how to curate choices for donors. GlobalGiving has curated giving to women and girls from its inception, thanks to an emphasis by the founders as well as key partners like the Women's Funding Network. Themes 1 and 3 showed that for GlobalGiving data, women are the majority of donors, and that donors on this platform also emphasize giving to women and girls. These figures raise the question: are more GlobalGiving donors giving to women and girls because more of them are women? Or did GlobalGiving's initial emphasis on women's and girls' causes influence the types of donors being brought to the site?

Platforms should examine the bigger picture of the organizations and causes that benefit from their donors' generosity. What nonprofits benefit from women giving more than men? What equity issues might arise as other causes receive less attention, and is there a role for GlobalGiving and similar organizations to help level the playing field?

GlobalGiving curates the causes and organizations that appear for donors in two ways. First, it curates giving via funds to certain cause areas, for example women and girls. Second, it uses an algorithm to provide more visibility to certain projects, based generally on the organization's engagement with donors (such as posting updates, receiving donations, etc.).

GlobalGiving extensively vets each nonprofit organization on the site. Each project is reviewed before going live, and the organization is re-vetted and renewed every two years. Projects are also required to post a quarterly report for donors.

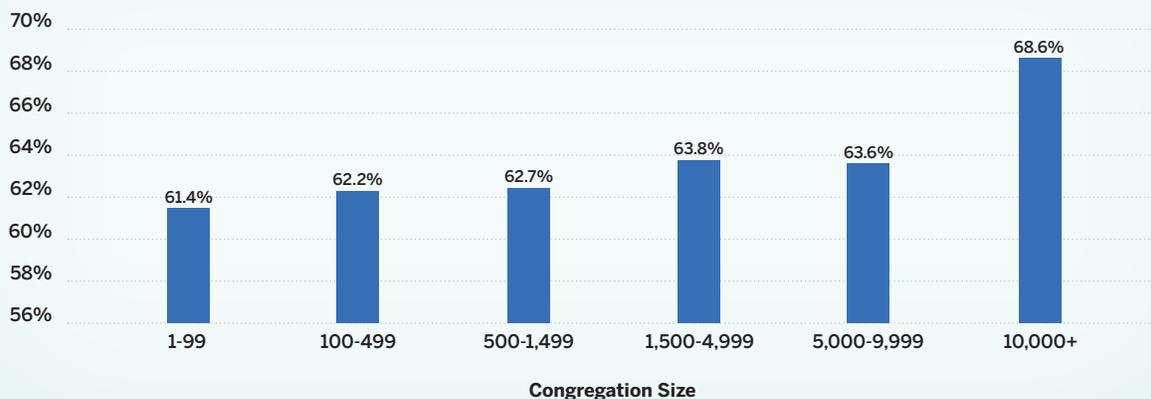
## Givelify **An app that supports giving to religious congregations**

Givelify is a mobile giving app and donation management tool used for giving to religious congregations and nonprofit organizations. Givelify launched in December 2013, born out of a desire to help donors connect with their congregation or other nonprofits in the moment they are motivated to give. Since the app launched, it has processed over \$1 billion in charitable gifts to more than 35,000 organizations. The data provided by Givelify for this research study was primarily from African American religious congregations.

### Key data takeaways:

- Women give more gifts on the Givelify app compared to men. As highlighted in Theme 1, women give 62.6% of the gifts. This could be due in part to the gender makeup of the predominantly African American congregations that Givelify serves, as women tend to outnumber men both as members and as donors.
- While women give smaller gifts on average, their greater number of donations means women give a greater share of dollars than men through the Givelify app (59.6%).
- Gender differences are more apparent for larger congregations. For small congregations of fewer than 100 people, women give 61.4% of gifts. For the largest congregations (10,000 or more members), women give 68.6% of the gifts. More research is required to explain this trend, illustrated in Figure 5 below.

**Figure 5:** Share of total number of gifts from women, by congregation size (Givelify)



Note: See Methodology section at the end of this report for further information about Givelify data.



## **Growfund® A \$0-minimum DAF becomes a tool for giving circles**

Growfund is a \$0-minimum donor-advised fund (DAF) that serves individuals, corporations (via workplace giving), and giving circles. Global Impact, which turned 64 years old in 2020, is a workplace giving federation, similar to the United Way but focused on international causes. The idea for Growfund, a tool launched in 2016, grew out of a desire to make DAFs available to a wider group of donors, not just high-net-worth donors or those with financial means. Individual donors can contribute to their Growfund account via workplace giving and payroll deductions, allowing donors to give strategically over time.

### **Key data takeaways for individual Growfunds:**

- Men contribute greater amounts to their Growfund accounts. There is a roughly even gender split between the actual number of contributions made to an account (47.9% women, 52.1% men).
- However, the average dollars show a gender difference: on average women contribute \$367 and men contribute \$540 when they contribute to their Growfund. This means women contribute around 38.5% of the total dollars *going into* Growfund accounts.
- While this number is not in line with the other women-dominant statistics thus far, Growfund notes that individual Growfund accounts are typically started by a workplace giving employee, so this gender difference could be a result of gender wage gaps or other factors that cannot be controlled for in the data.
- Women distribute more dollars from their Growfunds to nonprofits. Slightly more men than women distribute funds from their DAF to an organization (54.9% men and 45.1% women). However, the average amount given shows that women give greater amounts than men—\$570 on average for women compared to \$345 for men. This means women contribute around 57.6% of dollars *going from* Growfund accounts to nonprofit organizations.
- Scott Jackson, CEO of Global Impact, suggested that women giving out more gifts and dollars reflects his experience that women donors at Growfund are more proactive, plan their giving, and give consistently over time. The men holding Growfund accounts tend to be reactionary givers, responding to the causes that are put in front of them or when someone asks them to give.

As Global Impact launched Growfund, women were a major area of focus as potential donors. Global Impact realized that the people opening Growfund accounts were already connected to philanthropy in some way, for example as a dedicated donor, committed to a particular charity or cause or a member of a giving circle. This realization led to the launch of Growfund for Giving Circles, an effort to reach more donors—primarily women—by serving giving circles (since the vast majority of giving circle members are women).

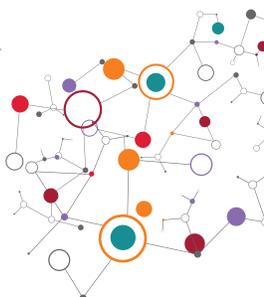
Influenced by research on giving circles,<sup>44</sup> Growfund offered giving circles two key services: (1) low-cost fiscal sponsorship; and (2) a sense of community via the online Growfund platform. The following data takeaways provide insight on how giving circles use Growfund accounts.

### **Key data takeaways for giving circle Growfunds:<sup>viii</sup>**

- Women contribute a greater number of gifts to Growfund giving circle accounts; women contribute 83.6% of gifts to Growfund giving circle accounts, compared to 16.4% from men.
- However, the average dollars show a gender difference: on average, women contribute \$117 and men contribute \$300 when they give to their giving circle Growfund. But because women contribute such a vast majority of gifts, they are giving around 66.5% of total dollars going to giving circle Growfund accounts.
- Women distribute greater numbers of gifts from their giving circle Growfunds to recipient charities. Women give 77.5% of gifts from Growfund giving circle accounts, and men give 22.5%.
- However, the average dollars show a gender difference: on average, women distribute \$2,446 from giving circle Growfunds compared to \$5,932 for men. But because women's giving circles distribute so many more gifts, they distribute 58.7% of the dollars distributed from giving circle Growfunds to nonprofit organizations.

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<sup>viii</sup> For Growfund giving circle results, gender of donors to Growfund giving circle accounts reflects the membership of those giving circles. Gender of donors distributing funds from Growfund giving circle accounts reflects the giving circle administrator.



**Theme 6: To appeal to women donors, platforms and organizations must build community online and continue to support in-person connections for donors.**

While technology means giving is taking place increasingly online, case studies from Givelify (an app for giving to congregations) and Growfund (a \$0-minimum DAF for individuals and giving circles) offer two unique examples of how in-person community is essential for engagement in philanthropy. Online giving reduces barriers and costs of giving, but one challenge of this giving is building trust and engagement with donors.

Givelify's focus on congregational giving ties into fundamental questions of building community. When congregants give on their phones rather than through a visible offering plate, does that change the dynamic in which seeing others give might motivate a potential donor? Furthermore, many families take the opportunity to teach their children about giving through the traditional church offering. If this is no longer the pattern, how and where does this learning happen?

The Givelify team has considered this potential challenge from the very beginning, understanding that many churches might feel compelled to continue certain traditions around giving. Early on, Givelify would print and send donation slips to have a physical item to place in the offering showing that a congregant gave on the app. Givelify rarely receives requests for these donation slips anymore, and congregations are taking other steps to celebrate online giving visibly. For example, one church asks donors to hold up their phone when the offering plate is passed to signal that they have given.

Instead of seeking to build community *in spite of* giving taking place online and via smartphone, Givelify believes it is building community *through* this online giving. If community is narrowly defined as all the people physically present for a church service, then transitioning to online giving may present a challenge. Instead, Givelify sees technology as expanding the idea of community. For someone sick at home, or traveling and unable to attend a service, technology provides an opportunity to maintain contact with a church community.

When it comes to bringing children and families together through giving, Givelify cites WPI research that just role modeling giving is not enough, and talking about giving is needed to teach children to give.<sup>45</sup> Additionally, younger generations will likely do without physical checkbooks and cash, and they already use apps for everyday activities including sending money to one another. Young donors are growing up online and using apps, so learning to give to a congregation via an app is more natural than giving in other ways.

Global Impact CEO Scott Jackson indicates that building community online and offering ways to give strategically set Growfund apart: “There are so many sites and apps out there, any one of them can process a donation. That transactional giving is being done well by many groups, and that’s no longer the standard. For giving circles, women, and other highly engaged donors, the ability to be more strategic, save or even invest funds, and then give out based on research and based in community—that can increase giving by all.”

Growfund created its online platform to empower, support, and complement the giving circle community—not to replace it. While giving circles still meet in person and hold events, the Growfund giving circle platform facilitates and enables event planning and management, online votes, communications among members, and knowledge sharing—specific areas of need according to research on these groups.





## Crowdfunding

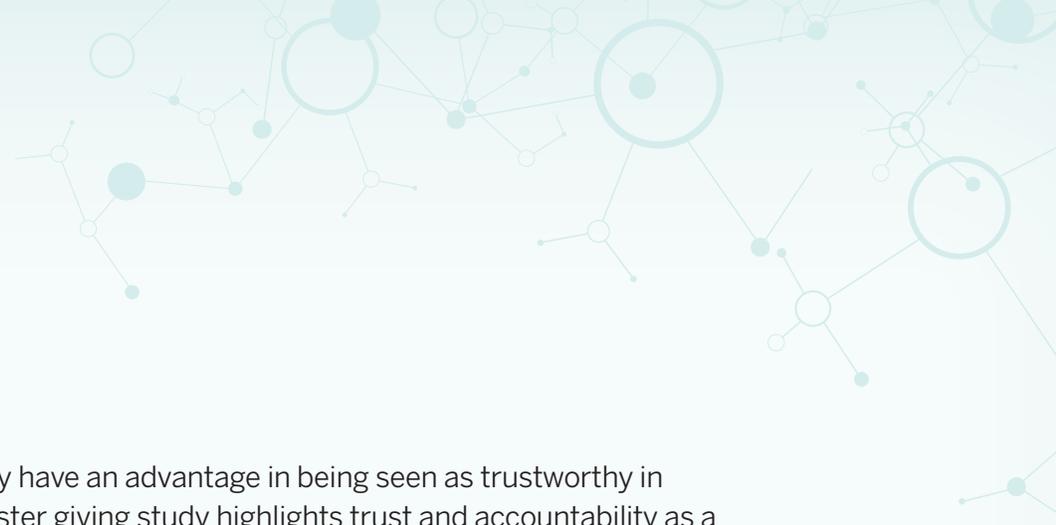
Crowdfunding is a key tool at the intersection of technology and philanthropy. Mainstream funding for entrepreneurs has often overlooked women entrepreneurs, who receive a disproportionately low share of venture capital and other investments. Crowdfunding (through sites like Kickstarter, Indiegogo, and GoFundMe) disrupts this pattern, democratizing funding by creating new channels for women to raise funds—both as entrepreneurs themselves and on behalf of social and philanthropic causes.

While previous research has not extensively examined crowdfunding for philanthropy, some studies have explored how women and men fundraise generally on these crowdfunding sites. For example, one study showed that despite investor bias against women, female fundraisers are perceived as more trustworthy, which can benefit women in a crowdfunding setting.<sup>46</sup> Overall, crowdfunding may help narrow the gender gap in how women-owned businesses obtain funding.<sup>47</sup> Finally, women appear more successful than men in crowdfunding. Nearly half (47%) of successful campaigns on Indiegogo are run by women.<sup>48</sup> In another study, campaigns led by women were 32% more successful than those led by men.<sup>49</sup>

Women are more likely to give to crowdfunding for disasters compared to men. A 2019 study surveyed donors about giving for disaster relief in 2017 and 2018.<sup>50</sup> Overall, about 10% of households that donated to disaster relief reported doing so through a crowdfunding platform. Among donors to disaster relief, women are more likely than men to give via crowdfunding: 12.1% of female disaster donors gave through crowdfunding compared to 6.9% of male disaster donors.<sup>ix</sup> The study also raised the issue of trust in crowdfunding, since donors expressed hesitation to trust crowdfunding projects as a way to give.

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<sup>ix</sup> This result is statistically significant at the  $p < 0.1$  level.



Women fundraisers may have an advantage in being seen as trustworthy in crowdfunding. The disaster giving study highlights trust and accountability as a key area of tension in crowdfunding. When donors or investors give to people they do not know personally, they are trusting the fundraisers to do what they promised with the funds. Another study, conducted by Wendy Chen, used Indiegogo data to examine the relationship between the gender of the fundraiser and the success of crowdfunding projects.<sup>51</sup> Chen found that the project fundraiser's gender matters: social projects are much more likely to be initiated by a woman than commercial projects. (Women initiate 52% of social projects and 14% of commercial projects.) However, women are less likely to meet their full fundraising goals for social or commercial campaigns.

The Indiegogo study shows that women have advantages and disadvantages in crowdfunding. On the one hand, a woman is more likely to initiate a social project with an aim to make a difference in the world; in this way there is an opportunity to raise large-scale funds that was not present before crowdfunding. On the other hand, women are less likely to attain their crowdfunding goals. This may be because social projects generally are less likely to be fully funded (49% are successful, compared to the 60% success rate of commercial projects).<sup>52</sup>

Crowdfunding is one technological advancement that has helped to reduce the gender gap in fundraising and to foster inclusive practices. Crowdfunding also raises questions around transparency and accountability between fundraisers and donors or investors. While this research is in early stages and crowdfunding is a complex topic, it may be an effective tool for women who want to launch social projects. The research in this report suggests they should carefully consider how to build trust with donors and use their networks to achieve success.



## DISCUSSION

Despite the different goals and audiences for the platforms in this study, patterns emerge that provide an overarching understanding of the intersection of gender, technology, and giving. Overall, gender differences in giving patterns appear in data from online platforms and apps. Women give a greater number of gifts than men. Women's gifts tend to be smaller on average, and go to smaller nonprofit organizations, compared to gifts from men. Women are more likely than men to give to women's and girls' causes. Ultimately, women's higher number of gifts means they are driving the bulk of the dollars flowing through the platforms and apps examined in this study.

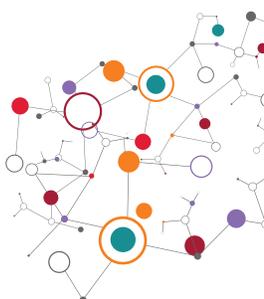
Examining case study data confirms that gender differences in giving appear consistent in certain online donation platforms. Beyond the data, these platforms illuminate common challenges and opportunities for donors, nonprofits, and technologies as giving increasingly migrates online. These challenges include the emphasis on measuring only money donated, choices donors are offered through the platforms, and the loss of the traditional sense of community gained from in-person engagement.

Technology makes it easy to donate money, and for donors from all backgrounds and walks of life to connect with and learn about organizations and causes. However, a focus on donating money risks narrowing the broad definition of philanthropy that includes informal giving and other ways that donors—especially donors from diverse communities—give. While emphasizing that generosity takes many forms may seem counterintuitive for fundraisers and nonprofits, evidence shows that this holistic view may benefit the sector in the long run, by more fully engaging donors and by reaching out to those who have not always seen themselves as philanthropists.

Technology has also provided donors with choices—how to give, where to give, and when to give. Donors who want to give spontaneously when they are inspired to do so may use an ever-increasing number of platforms. Those who want to invest their philanthropic dollars and take their time developing a giving strategy have options, as well. But, in a society where donors have myriad options online, it can be challenging to learn about and seriously consider new organizations or issue areas. Intentionally seeking out resources that curate or advise giving might help those who worry about making their online giving in a bubble.

Finally, with all the convenience that technology offers for giving, a major risk in bringing giving online is removing the vital in-person connection and community engagement. Traditional fundraising, especially for higher gift levels, focuses on relationships and the transition from money to meaning, the aspirational and inspirational values that drive donor intent. Technology is not likely to replace the deeper in-person transformative conversations that lead to significant gifts but it may grow the pool of prospective donors and accelerate the process. How can technology serve to enhance the in-person experience of giving and connecting with fellow donors or community issues and causes? What new traditions can be cultivated that take advantage of the ease of technology, but combine it with the sense of engagement that could be lost? The online world should enhance and add to the in-person experience, rather than replace it.

These big-picture issues are centered on the intersection of technology and giving, especially for women. Women use these tech platforms more than men, and give more than men. Women also tend to give more than money, using their time, expertise, advocacy, and networks, to apply all of their resources to work for good. Emphasizing an expansive definition of philanthropy resonates with women donors. Women tend to give many smaller gifts, and some are more strategic than others; tech for good must provide women with the tools they need at any point in their philanthropic journey. And women are generally interested in collective giving or in the community that results from philanthropy. Technological innovation that augments, but does not replace, the in-person giving experience will serve women—and all donors—well.



## IMPLICATIONS

*Women Give 2020* offers learning opportunities for donors, fundraisers and nonprofit leaders, and tech platforms. For donors, technology provides countless tools and options for giving. Now more than ever before, donors have all the information they need at their fingertips, from learning about giving, to finding like-minded donors, to pooling funds with others, to discovering new organizations and causes. While donors can leverage technology for their giving, this can also present challenges as relationships and face-to-face connection become rarer in philanthropy. Donors who seek out a community to enhance their giving experience, rather than giving online in a vacuum, will likely remain engaged for a longer time.

Fundraisers and nonprofit leaders must embrace technological innovations to keep up in today's society. Using technology to identify, solicit, connect with, and thank donors has immense promise for the sector. Technology often allows organizations to meet donors, especially younger donors, where they are, a trend that is gaining traction across the sector. It allows nonprofits to customize and personalize communications with donors rapidly and efficiently. At the same time, there is a risk to only focusing on the bottom line, particularly if in-person interaction with donors is infrequent. Encouraging a broad definition of philanthropy and focusing on what donors bring to the organization beyond money will benefit everyone in the long term. No donor wants to be treated like an ATM or a computer screen.

Tech platforms themselves should work to optimize the consumer experience and learn how donors might use technology to interact with others and form a sense of community. Platforms and developers must also consider diversity in their products. How can online giving unlock more opportunities by meeting the needs of more diverse groups of donors? Are these tech platforms fulfilling their potential to level the playing field, add to the democratization of philanthropy, and expand the donor base to include new donors, younger donors, and more donors from diverse communities?

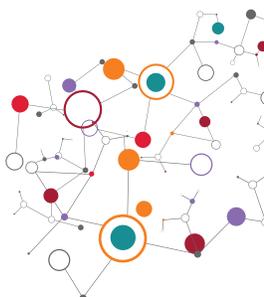
Finally, this study shows that there are many opportunities for future research in this space. Existing data are limited, and organizations and platforms across the philanthropic sector should work together to better understand their own donors. One key challenge in this area of research is the limited demographics available to understand donor diversity. Other questions to answer in the future may include:

- Does technology create new donors, or simply move them online? Does online giving add to total giving or just change its format?
- Do different causes benefit when people give online versus offline? One critique of philanthropy is that well-known, popular causes also receive more funding. Does online giving follow the same pattern?
- Crowdfunding is ripe for future research on gender and giving because gender has been shown to matter for both the fundraiser and the donor. More work is needed to better understand women's advantages and challenges in this space.

For more than a decade, the Women's Philanthropy Institute has built a body of research that underscores that gender matters in philanthropy. *Women Give 2020* adds that gender also matters in tech for good and online philanthropy. From women donors connecting on social networks, to nonprofits engaging their women donors online, to tech platforms building new tools that resonate with women and men—this focus on women donors can only move the field forward.

## The Women Give Research Series

*Women Give 2020* is the eleventh in a series of signature research reports conducted at the Women's Philanthropy Institute that focus on gender differences in giving to charitable organizations. Each report explores unique questions about the factors that shape gender-based giving patterns—including age, religion, income, marital status and more—in order to increase understanding about how gender influences philanthropy. The *Women Give* reports are available in the WPI research library: <https://philanthropy.iupui.edu/ResearchWPI>.



## METHODOLOGY

### *Data and Sample*

This report uses four datasets from online donation platforms and apps:

- Charity Navigator, an organization that evaluates nonprofits in the U.S., and enables giving to those charities via its “Giving Basket” donation feature. *Women Give 2020* uses these data to examine giving patterns around GivingTuesday.
- GlobalGiving, a funding platform that connects donors with organizations and projects around the world, primarily grassroots NGOs.
- Givelify, a mobile giving app and donation management tool, primarily used for giving to congregations.
- Global Impact, a nonprofit organization with several areas of focus, including workplace giving to international charities. *Women Give 2020* uses data from its Growfund tool, a \$0-minimum donor-advised fund (DAF) that serves individuals, corporations (via workplace giving), and giving circles.

Each dataset includes anonymized transaction data for donations taking place over at least two calendar years. At a minimum, each dataset includes the following variables:

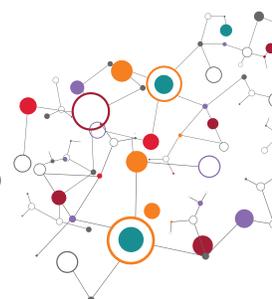
- Gift date
- Gift amount (in U.S. \$)
- Donor gender (see Table A for more detail)
- Recipient charity data (not consistent across datasets; see Table A for more detail)

**Table A:** Data sources (detailed)

Data Source	Charity Navigator (for Giving Tuesday)	GlobalGiving	Givelify	Global Impact (Growfund)
Description	Donations via nonprofit evaluation aggregator to analyze GivingTuesday	Funding platform for giving to grassroots global organizations	An app for giving to congregations	\$0-minimum DAF emphasizing giving circle use
Date range	2016-2019 (4 years)	2016-2019 (4 years)	2016-2018 (~2 years)	2018-2019 (2 years)
# observations	597,472	703,234	2,408,729	7,450 <sup>x</sup>
Donor gender	Demographic data appended from third party	GlobalGiving used Gender Guesser program, uses first name	WPI used Genderize program, uses first name	WPI used Genderize program, uses first name
Other donor demographics	Yes (standard demographics, e.g., geography, income, education)	Geography (U.S. and non-U.S. used in study)	Geography	Geography
Recipient charity data	EIN	Project type (cause area), EIN, <sup>xi</sup> geography (U.S. and non-U.S. used in study)	Congregation size	EIN

<sup>x</sup> These observations are split into 4 categories (individual investments in Growfund accounts; giving circle investments in Growfund accounts; individual gifts from Growfund accounts; giving circle gifts from Growfund accounts).

<sup>xi</sup> While EIN was available, this study uses project type or cause area. Both variables were analyzed and results were fairly similar. Given that project type is a more specific categorization, EIN is not used in this report for GlobalGiving data.



**GivingTuesday, via Charity Navigator.** To analyze giving on GivingTuesday, this study used donation transaction data from Charity Navigator, an organization that evaluates U.S. nonprofits, and enables giving to those charities via its “Giving Basket” donation feature. The dataset spanned the time period from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2019. Charity Navigator provided Giving Basket daily transaction data for donations made through its website, and merged these data with demographic information about donors, including gender, and organizational data on the nonprofits. The dataset contains information on the gifts themselves (e.g., amount, date, and time), the organizations receiving donations (e.g., EIN and subsector), and donors (such as gender, income, and geography). For more information on GivingTuesday, please visit [www.givingtuesday.org](http://www.givingtuesday.org). For more information on Charity Navigator, please visit [www.charitynavigator.org](http://www.charitynavigator.org).

**GlobalGiving.** GlobalGiving is a funding platform that connects donors with organizations and projects around the world, primarily focusing on grassroots NGOs. The dataset spanned the time period from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2019. The dataset shared by GlobalGiving included the date and amount of each gift; the gender and residence of the donor; and the recipient organization’s location, EIN, and project/cause area. GlobalGiving identifies 19 different cause areas; this study discusses project type as it provides more detail than charitable subsector. The GlobalGiving project types are:

- Animals
- Arts & Culture
- Children
- Climate Change
- Democracy & Governance
- Disaster Recovery
- Economic Development
- Education
- Environment
- Health
- Human Rights
- Humanitarian Assistance
- Hunger
- LGBTQAI+
- Microfinance
- Other
- Sport
- Technology
- Women & Girls

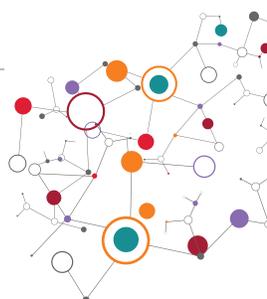
For more information about GlobalGiving, please visit [www.globalgiving.org](http://www.globalgiving.org).

**Givelify.** Givelify is a mobile giving app and donation management tool, primarily used for giving to congregations. The dataset spanned the time period from January 1, 2016 through February 18, 2018. The dataset shared by Givelify included the date and amount of each gift; the first name and residence (city, state, ZIP Code) of the donor; and the recipient organization's name, location (city, state, and ZIP Code), denomination, reported congregation size, and recipient type.<sup>xii</sup> For more information on Givelify, please visit [www.givelify.com](http://www.givelify.com).

**Growfund, via Global Impact.** Growfund is a giving tool hosted by Global Impact, a nonprofit organization with several areas of focus, including workplace giving to international charities. Growfund is a \$0-minimum donor-advised fund (DAF) tool that serves individuals, corporations (via workplace giving) and increasingly, giving circles. Data were provided for individual and giving circle donation transactions. The dataset spanned the time period from December 26, 2017 through January 1, 2020. The dataset shared by Global Impact included information about deposits into Growfund accounts as well as distributions from those accounts to recipient charitable organizations, for accounts held by individuals and giving circles (i.e., workplace giving is excluded from this study). For more information about Growfund, please visit [www.mygrowfund.org](http://www.mygrowfund.org). For more information about Global Impact, please visit [www.charity.org](http://www.charity.org).

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<sup>xii</sup> Recipient type is either religious or nonprofit. Over 99% of recipients via Givelify are religious; nonprofit organizations are verified 501(c)(3) organizations.



## Measuring Key Variables

**Charitable subsector.** In this study, giving to charitable and nonprofit organizations is measured in gifts of money to organizations whose primary purposes are one or more of the following (subsectors or cause areas):

- Arts
- Education
- Environment
- Health
- Human Services
- International
- Public, Society Benefit
- Religious<sup>xiii</sup>
- Mutual/Membership Benefit
- Unknown/Unclassified<sup>xiv</sup>

GlobalGiving uses its own definitions for cause areas and those results are presented in this report. Both GlobalGiving cause areas/project types as well as traditional charitable subsectors were analyzed as a robustness check, and results were similar.

**Women's and girls' causes.** This study examines women's and girls' causes as a key recipient cause area for three of the four datasets (GivingTuesday using Charity Navigator data; GlobalGiving; and Growfund). Women's and girls' organizations were identified using the *Women & Girls Index housed* at the Women's Philanthropy Institute.<sup>53</sup> While GlobalGiving categorizes women and girls as its own cause area, to treat datasets consistently the *Women & Girls Index* classification was used in this report. GlobalGiving's women and girls project type was also analyzed as a robustness check, and results were similar.

**Donor gender.** Charity Navigator data included gender as one of several demographic variables (in analysis of these data to understand Giving Tuesday). For the other three datasets, first names were used to identify gender using programming applications. GlobalGiving analyzed its own data using the Gender Guesser API and shared a dataset that already included the gender variable. Givelify and Growfund shared donor first names, allowing WPI to identify a gender variable using the Genderize.io API. These gender identification software tools have their limitations. For example, GlobalGiving did not have variable information for many donors outside the U.S., as the software used is not yet effective for many names from the Indian subcontinent. Some services tend to correctly guess more names than others, or to have trouble with names originating in non-Western locations. Since the primary variable of interest (gender) was obtained for three of four datasets using these services, results in this report may need to be refined as gender-guessing apps improve or as more accurate gender data are available.

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<sup>xiii</sup> Congregations (religious organizations) do not appear in EIN-based data often since they are not required to file an IRS Form 990.

<sup>xiv</sup> The data contain very few Mutual/Membership Benefit organizations; in this study these are combined with the Unknown/Unclassified organizations due to their small number.

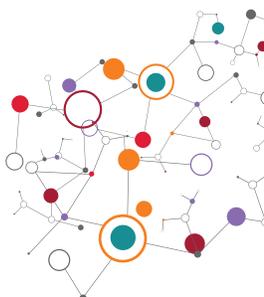
## Methods

This report generally displays summary statistics, such as the percentage of gifts or dollars in a dataset given by women or men. Other methods, like regression analysis and t-tests, are used when the data allow. T-tests analyze whether two numbers are statistically significantly different from one another. Regression analysis allows for additional variables to be taken into account, for example understanding how gender might influence giving, separate from other factors that influence giving like income or education. Because these variables are not available for most datasets used, this is only the case for Charity Navigator data.

Robustness checks are used when possible, meaning the data are looked at in multiple ways to be sure results are consistent—such as using a wider range of data or a different type of analysis.

Results specify when gender differences are statistically significant. Statistical significance is a term used to describe results that are unlikely to have occurred by chance. Significance is a statistical term that states the level of certainty that a difference or relationship exists.

To provide adequate context to the case studies, interviews were conducted with the case study organizations: GivingTuesday, GlobalGiving, Givelify, and Global Impact (Growfund data). These interviews asked similar questions of each team, including about the history and growth of the organization, their reactions to key findings, and lessons learned about the challenges and opportunities for technology and philanthropy. Additionally, three global GivingTuesday leaders were interviewed to provide the growing global context of this movement.



## Limitations

While the case study results speak for themselves, we do note several key limitations that mean results cannot be overly generalized:

First, the datasets used do not represent all online giving platforms or apps. Each app, platform, and website used for giving to charity is unique and attracts its own set of users. For example, Givelify is not representative of all apps, or even of apps that focus on religious giving. Growfund is not representative of all donor-advised funds. Each app has a unique set of users. This report makes no claims about the broad universe of giving apps and platforms.

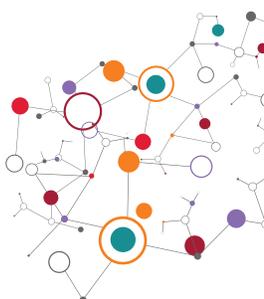
Second, the data used in this study are also limited by a lack of extensive demographic data for donors. Previous research shows that many demographic variables affect giving—especially wealth, income, education, and marital status or family size. Because the datasets in this study do not contain a robust set of donor demographics, it is important to verify these results with more data when available. When the data show that women are giving more gifts, it is not possible to conclude that it is because (for example) women are more generous than men, or because women have a propensity to use a certain app or platform more than men. It might be that women using this app or platform tend to be higher income than the men, or that they are all employed in a certain economic sector, etc. The challenge of working with these platforms is that they have provided transaction data but very little information about the donor.

Third, results cannot be generalized to show trends over time. While the datasets cover two to four years of time, technology advances in such unpredictable ways that analyzing changes over time in these datasets says more about the specific app or platform and its development than about larger trends in giving. This report makes no claims about changes over time. Technology is changing too quickly to be able to extrapolate from changes over time in one dataset to a broader statement about changes over time in online giving.

Finally, these datasets—and this report as a whole—deals with donations made online via an app or online giving platform; results are not generalizable to all charitable giving.

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