

## Guidance for Fundraising Professionals

### CECP DATA

- Companies are applying the same management “best practices” to community investments as they do in other areas of the business, and that is translating into:
  - More strategically-driven societal investments;
  - Increased measurement and evaluation of the results;
  - Refinement of goals and partnerships to drive efficiency
- Companies are giving more. In 2018, median total giving was \$20.7 million (N=250). Six out of ten companies that provided their contributions data in all years between 2016 and 2018 (N=204) increased total giving. Median total giving increased by 11% for these companies.
- The Giving in Numbers Survey asked companies specifically whether they were or were not focused on four top social issues. **Workforce** and **Disaster Response** were the social issue areas most often selected as highly important, with 71% and 67% of companies reporting them as such respectively, followed by 62% of companies reporting **STEM** and 37% of companies reporting **Healthy Lifestyles** or Related.

Source: *Giving in Numbers Report: 2019 Edition*, available on <http://cecp.co/gin>.

### CECP INSIGHTS

In this new era of corporate purpose, nonprofits seeking corporate support might consider the following ideas to align their excellent work with the corporate purpose agenda:

- **Showcase your relevance.** Rather than anchoring your pitch on what the company has funded in the past, we suggest researching the potential threats and opportunities that are looming for the company, which will allow your proposal to be forward-looking. These issues are usually outlined in the materials companies share with their stockholders—10K filings, annual letter to shareholders, etc. If there is alignment between your nonprofit’s future and the company’s future, use that overlap as a departure point.
- **Showcase your scalability.** Large companies inherently have a scalability mindset and often expect their partners to share that orientation. Let your appetite for scaling inform which corporate partners you target. Outline the aspects of your nonprofit’s work that are (and aren’t) scalable, being honest about your limits and aspirations.
- **Showcase your complementarity.** The best corporate-nonprofit relationships are more than the sum of their parts. Think about how your nonprofit might be the “missing piece” that a corporate donor is looking for—how might your assets and theirs blend to achieve something truly great? Partnerships like the one between [FedEx and Direct Relief](#) exemplify this complementarity. The organizations share a goal to strengthen healthcare systems worldwide. Their partnership leverages FedEx’s core competencies in logistics and transportation, and Direct Relief’s expertise in medical supply distribution.
- **Showcase your impact.** Corporations are intensely interested in understanding the impact of their funding—both on society and to their business—because their stakeholders and shareholders demand transparency and accountability. According to CECP’s Giving in Numbers 2018 research, measurement of business impact is a key factor in maximizing resources. Companies that not only measure social outcomes and impacts of community investments/grants but also measure the business value of such community investment attain higher levels of total giving and volunteer participation rates. Nonprofits that are equipped to align on quantitative goal-setting and evaluation strategies are attractive to corporate funders.

- **Showcase your versatility.** Pro bono support, board service programs, skills-based volunteering and product donations—companies are eager to blend these offerings to support their nonprofit partners. Is your nonprofit open to putting a mix of corporate assets to good use? While companies understand that cash is king, they like to amplify their impact with blended grants. For example, GSK operates a skills-based volunteer initiative called PULSE, in which motivated employees are matched to a non-profit organization for three or six months full-time, contributing their skills to help solve healthcare challenges at home and abroad. These employees lend the same expertise that they have been applying in their GSK roles in order to help non-profit partners. Since the start of the program in 2009, 810 GSK employees have volunteered with 127 non-profit organizations at home and abroad.

While the evolution toward corporate purpose emphasizes the narrowing strategic focus of corporate giving, the good news is that the partnerships that do form are increasingly long-lasting and integrated—and less susceptible to cuts when the company experiences financial difficulty. The changing landscape of corporate societal investment is ultimately about solving societal problems with companies looking to be better, more complete partners in that process. Nonprofits that seek to work with companies will find that the right alignment can unlock resources and a level of commitment that was rare in a previous era.