

# THE PHILANTHROPY TOOLKIT

*An Introduction to Giving Effectively*

THE STANFORD UNIVERSITY  
EFFECTIVE PHILANTHROPY LEARNING INITIATIVE



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## ACTIVITY CRAFT YOUR FOCUS STATEMENTS

A focus statement frames your values and motivations and connects them with your philanthropic intentions. A strong focus statement can help guide your philanthropic plan. While you may want to have an overall giving statement the same way some nonprofits have vision and mission statements, we recommend also creating a separate focus statement for each issue, including the specific population and location you would like to serve.

### EXAMPLE

*We aim to address education inequality for low-income secondary school students in Grand Rapids Public Schools because this aligns with our commitment to equity in public education.*

### INSTRUCTIONS

Craft short statements that articulate your intention for how to address each of your selected focus areas.

If you don't yet feel ready to articulate focus statements, you can return to them later in this toolkit or as you actually engage in giving, recognizing that they may change over time.

If you need additional inspiration, you can look online for various resources on crafting vision, mission, and focus statements. Feel free to borrow from statements that inspire you and rework them to make them your own.

WORKSHEET  
CRAFT YOUR FOCUS STATEMENTS

## INSTRUCTIONS

Complete the statement below, using your selected Value Cards and Issue Cards to identify the essential components. Craft focus statements for each of your focus areas in the space below.

We aim to address **[WHAT]** for **[WHO]** **[WHERE]** because this aligns with our commitment to **[WHICH VALUES]**.

- WHAT:** What causes/issues do you want to address with your philanthropy (e.g., environment, education, animal-related)?
- WHO:** Who will benefit from your philanthropy (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, children from low-income backgrounds, abused animals)?
- WHERE:** Where, geographically, will you focus your philanthropy (e.g., a specific location, locally, statewide, nationally, globally)?
- WHICH VALUES:** Which values are driving your goal (e.g., respect, diversity, empathy)?

*Example:*

We aim to address **EDUCATION INEQUALITY** for **LOW-INCOME SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS** in **GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS** because this aligns with our commitment to **EQUITY IN PUBLIC EDUCATION**.



WORKSHEET  
**CRAFT YOUR FOCUS STATEMENTS**

Keep these four principles in mind:

- Be specific.
- Use simple language (avoid buzzwords).
- Keep it concise.
- Make it actionable.

**1.**

We aim to address .....

for .....

.....

because this aligns with our commitment to .....

.....

**2.**

We aim to address .....

for .....

.....

because this aligns with our commitment to .....

.....



WORKSHEET  
**CRAFT YOUR FOCUS STATEMENTS**

**3.**

We aim to address .....

for .....

.....

because this aligns with our commitment to .....

.....

**4.**

We aim to address .....

for .....

.....

because this aligns with our commitment to .....

.....

**5.**

We aim to address .....

for .....

.....

because this aligns with our commitment to .....

.....