Discussion Modules

There are many ways to approach talking about philanthropic legacy. We find that legacy is often interwoven into conversations about values, impact, generational transition, succession planning, and strategy—that is, how a giving family wishes to do their work and to be known. There are many entry points, and many meaningful and effective ways to explore the topic of legacy.

Some of the core questions around legacy include:

- What values guide and ground our giving?
- What goals do we have for our shared philanthropy – for the communities and causes we serve and for our family?
- What are the geographic places that matter to us? Are there causes and issue areas that are particularly important to all of us?
- How does the element of family play into our giving, past, present, and future?
- How does the way we do our work – in relationship with one another, in partnership with grantees, in long term giving or advocacy – reflect our desired legacy?
- Who are we as a giving family? Who have we been and who do we wish to be? What do we want to be known and remembered for?
- How are we thinking about concepts such as equity and racial justice in relationship to our family's legacy?

- What are our intentions? What is the compass point our approach and strategies points towards?

On a practical level, here are just a few of the ways we've seen families approach these conversations:

- Include time at each board meeting, even if just 30 minutes, to explore one or more of the above questions
- Hold a retreat—one to three days away together to dig deep in a more time-generous and spacious way into the topic of legacy and the sub-topics below
- Hold monthly virtual meetings of 75-90 minutes over a series of months to discuss these matters

To help families begin or continue legacy conversations with a modern framework, this short guide offers a collection of ten discussion modules on a wide variety of questions related to philanthropic legacy. Each module can be explored in 45-90 minutes, can expand or contract to be even shorter and longer, and can be adapted for in-person or virtual gatherings. The modules can work with groups of 4, 8 or even groups of more than 20. You can use each one independently or stitch them together for a set of legacy conversations at a retreat.

These modules have been crafted specifically for the NCFP community drawing on the experiences, stories, and actual meetings and retreats of giving families from around the US. They were developed by Janice Simsohn Shaw, author of Legacy in Family Philanthropy: A Modern Framework and related publications and a frequent family foundation facilitator. Many of these modules reflect sessions she has designed and led with philanthropic families around the country. Janice thanks them for their trust and generosity.

Discussion Modules

Designing Effective Meetings

Each of these discussion modules uses the simple framework of POP – Purpose, Outcomes, Process.

Purpose: Why are we having this conversation?
Outcomes: What, specifically, do we hope to gain or come away with?
Process: How do we actually have this conversation? Step-by-step instructions.

We encourage you to take these modules and adapt them for your own circumstances; our hope is to make exploring this sometimes-daunting topic more accessible and to offer you a space for meaningful conversation.

Five tips for effective meetings:

- Tap a facilitator, whether from within or outside your family, to hold responsibility for keeping the meeting on-time and on-point and to draw out all voices in the group.
- Be realistic about time—any one of these topics can be explored in 45 minutes or over a week... or over a lifetime for that matter! Use the time you have wisely and you'll be productive.
- Make use of a variety of modalities to appeal to different learning and reflecting styles, from individual journaling to paired conversations to large group. Pairs are a great way to draw everyone into conversation, simultaneously. Use breakout groups, even in virtual meetings.
- Hearken back to the POP to stay clear on the meeting's goals and structure.
- Open and close thoughtfully. The tone you start and end with matter mightily.

For more practical tips on designing and facilitating effective family meetings, see NCFP's guide *Meetings Matter: How to Plan Effective, Efficient, and Enjoyable Family Meetings*.

Do We Need an Outside Facilitator?

This workbook has been designed to support giving families in facilitating their own conversations about legacy. With that said, only you know when it makes sense to tap an outside facilitator for their help!

For some meetings, bringing in an outside facilitator can be tremendously helpful—they bring expertise in meeting design and facilitation, can be responsible for keeping everyone on-task, and free up the family (and staff, if applicable) to be fully present and engaged in the work at hand. Asking your own staff members to serve as facilitators can be effective at times, but it can also put them in a tricky spot navigating family dynamics and different roles.

Why bring in an outside facilitator? Sometimes families do so when issues are contentious or complex—and often when they simply need someone else to keep them on track. One family recently tapped a professional facilitator for a meeting with their two college-aged daughters saying, "we'd just dissolve into giggles without someone keeping us on task!" Another family, in the early stages of shifting into the next generation of leadership, simply found themselves overwhelmed with the many discussions that needed to take place and asked for help in the process of defining their shared values.

Legacy Module 1. Values and Legacy

Purpose:
To identify the core values that guide and underpin your family's philanthropy

Outcomes:

- Time for individual and group reflection, exploration and discussion on values
- Clarity around key values that are shared in your family group
- Ideas about how to utilize and activate these values in your family's giving

Process:
Mix of individual, paired, and full group work

Materials:
Recommended: 21/64 Motivational Values Cards

Opening Reflection:
Begin with each member of the group going around and sharing their response to an opening reflection:

- Why are you glad we are talking about values, and what's one thing you hope we get out of this conversation, or one way it benefits our work together or giving moving forward?

  OR

- What's one value that's deeply important to you personally, and how has it helped you make an important decision in your life?

Why begin with such a question? Opening thoughtfully in this way invites each member of the group to personally identify the benefits of—and investing their time in—discussing values.

We recommend that each person set a timer for the same amount of time (1-2 minutes) so that you open with hearing each of your voices and that the group takes shared responsibility for—even in this small, initial way—welcoming one another's unique perspectives and equalizing voices and power dynamics around the (virtual or real) table.

Values Short-Listing Exercise
Framing: Today we will be working on our shared philanthropic values—which will likely have much overlap with our personal values! Together, we will look for commonality, and seek to identify meaningful and compelling values to guide and ground our shared philanthropy.

Activity:
Provide each participant with a deck of 21/64 Motivational Values Cards and point out how each has a word and definition. Take about 10 minutes to individually look through the cards. Select the top five that are important to you personally and that you believe could be meaningful for your family's giving. If there's an important value to you that is not on the cards, add it!

After each person has pulled their top five, work in pairs, sharing which five you've selected and why. Together, work to prioritize a total of three values to bring forward to the rest of the family for consideration and discussion. Then come back together as a family, sharing the three values each pair has selected.

Discussion:
Vote to prioritize if needed. Some giving families find a shorter list of 5 or fewer as being most helpful, while others have a longer list of 7-10 values or more that guide their work. Be sure to come up with a pithy definition of each (from the cards or beyond) to help ensure clarity and shared understanding.

Activation:
Finally, explore ***how you wish to utilize and activate these values in your giving***. How will these values guide your grantmaking and operations and how you work together as a family? What are the behaviors, attitudes, and actions that would correspond to each one? This important final step helps take values from nice words and bring them into vital, living practice. Values are a central part of legacy—start here.

Legacy Module 2.
Storytelling and Lesson-Learning: A Cross-Generational Exploration

Purpose:
Ask and listen across the generations to bridge shared understanding and notions of legacy.

Outcomes:

- Time for informal, one-on-one, thoughtful question-asking and careful listening
- Cross-generational connections, especially in larger families
- Sharing of stories of motivation, pride, success, learning from failure, and questions

Process:
Individual reflection on questions, one-on-one speed networking, full group discussion

Materials:
Notepads and pens

Activity:
Open by sharing the POP above. Then give everyone 5-10 minutes to write down questions they have for other members of the family, particularly those of other generations. Some questions we've seen emerge in other families are:

<u>Questions for founding or older generation:</u>

- Why did you start this giving enterprise in the first place? What was your motivation and hope?
- What are a few grants you're particularly proud of, and why?
- What are a few mistakes you've made?
- What have you learned along the way? Who have you learned from?
- What useful gifts, skills, and perspectives do you bring to the work?
- What makes you excited about getting other generations involved? What makes you nervous?
- What are some of your biggest hopes for the future?
- What haven't I asked that's important to you that I hear?

Questions for younger/emerging generation:

- Why do you choose or seek to be involved in our shared family giving?
- What are a few grants the philanthropy has made that you're particularly proud of, and why?
- What have you learned so far? Who have you learned from? Who do you hope to learn from?
- What useful gifts, skills, and perspectives do you bring to the work?
- What is hard for you about being involved? What is easy? What brings you joy?
- What are some of your biggest hopes for the future?
- Are there ways you think we might want to consider changing how we work, or what we give to?
- What haven't I asked that's important to you that I hear?

Hold paired conversations and be sure each person gets to ask the other one a few questions that are important to them. Change partners after 10-15 minutes, speed networking style. Depending on how many members of your group and how much time you dedicate to this conversation, you may have the chance for everyone to speak in a second pair. It is important to note that this is not a "learn from the elders" conversation—rather, it's "learn from each other."

After these paired conversations, it can be beneficial to talk in generational groups—or simply return to the full group.

Discussion:
What was striking about the conversations? What surprised you? What did you learn? What will you take with you moving forward?

Sharing stories in this way allows a group to share and meld experiences across individuals and generations as you build a cohesive sense of narrative, purpose, and legacy.

Legacy Module 3. Headlines of the Future

Purpose:
To imagine and articulate what success would look like for your family's giving.

Outcomes:

- A chance to dream and vision individually and collectively
- Informal articulation of what success might look like and who key audiences are
- Findings can inform your goals and orient your strategy and giving accordingly

Process:
Individual journaling/drawing, followed by group sharing and discussion

Materials:
"Headlines of the Future" worksheet, pens, pencils (and markers if you're an artsy group)

Please note that this particular activity can be useful for talking about your philanthropy overall, or about a particular giving area in which you wish to make change.

Activity and Discussion:
In advance (or collectively in the moment) decide for what time-horizon you want to envision success, whether 5, 10, 25, or 50 years. Provide each participant with a worksheet (a version can be found on the next page).

Invite each family member to take a few minutes to simply dream and imagine in response to the following questions:

What's a newspaper article, (or LinkedIn post, or podcast, or neighborhood newsletter) you'd be proud to read that celebrates the success you were part of? What will the headline be? Will the article talk about your giving? About your grantees or partners? About a change in policy, whether federal or local? What will some key points be? And what visual will tell this story?

After taking 10-15 minutes to fill out the worksheet, go around and each take a few minutes share what you wrote. It's amazing how creative and specific this activity helps people become!

Headlines of the Future can be a great jumping off point to conversations about legacy, as it allows people to articulate what they hope your giving will accomplish in a different way. It can also be a great help in conversations about strategy, impact, and evaluation. It's much easier to chart a path forward once you know where you are headed.

Headlines of the Future

Headline:

Publication Name:

Publication Date:

Main bullet points (few words in bold print that ID key points of article)

Photo or graphic accompanying the article:

Legacy Module 4.
Power of How

Purpose:
Learn together about philanthropic strategies and approaches that define how you give

Outcomes:

- Everyone has a chance to be a learner and a teacher
- Explore a number of strategies in an efficient, creative way
- Discuss and begin to identify approaches that resonate with your family's giving

Process:
Pre-work (reading and populating a slide deck), sharing highlights, discussion

Materials:
Skeleton Google slide deck, selected readings

Increasingly, giving families—and especially younger donors—speak about the importance of *how* they do their philanthropy as a central lever in defining their legacy. This module gives you a chance to explore this angle.

Activity:
In advance of the session, create a simple Google slide template with two slides per pair, and assign readings to pairs of family members. Each pair will read an assigned article about one or more topic and come prepared to share highlights via the Google slide deck (think Cliff Notes) with the group, along with reflections on approaches that might be most effective for the family.

You may look at any potential area of interest; some that emerged in the research as common priorities are:

- Long-term flexible support
- Authentic relationships, listening, and trust
- Investing in grassroots community leaders
- Creative tools, from advocacy to time-bound giving to impact investing

By a deadline a few days prior to the session, each pair should do their reading and populate their two slides with key take-aways and recommendations for family consideration. An example template is available here.

Discussion:
In the session, each pair should be given the chance to share their learnings with the group and offer recommendations for approaches that the family may want to consider, as well as ideas for things the family may want to do differently and/or stop doing.

After everyone has shared, take time to discuss together and begin to narrow down some strategies and approaches that resonate and seem a good fit for your family's values and approach to change-making.

Legacy Module 5. Exploring Our Why

Purpose:
Explore why we are each involved, and what's the big why behind our family philanthropy

Outcomes:
- Each individual has a chance to reflect on their own reasons for participation
- Shared understanding of individual motivations
- Discussion of why the family giving enterprise exists, big picture

Process:
Individual reflection, paired conversation, and group discussion

Materials:
Paper and pen (individual), white board or flip chart paper

Understanding what drives us—that is, our "big why" both individually and as a collective—is an important piece of grounding our philanthropic work together as a family.

Activity:
Begin by explaining that in this meeting, you'll be exploring the why behind what you do; share the POP above informally to explain why and how you'll be doing so.

The first piece of this activity is called *The Five Whys*. Working in pairs (you can have one triad if numbers don't quite work), arrange yourself physically so you are eye-to-eye and knee-to-knee. If online, move into paired breakout groups. Do your best to be fully focused on your partner, maintaining great eye contact and using supportive body language and affirmations. Each individual has five minutes that is totally about them, using the prompts below. Decide which partner will be reflecting first.

This is an exercise in repeated asking and listening. The reason? Repeated asking and answering why helps us surface more answers—and often deeper ones. Don't worry if you don't think you have more to say—you might repeat earlier reflections that seem most salient, you may have a few minutes of silence, or you may find you have more to say than you expected! Just be present in the conversation and see what emerges. Your listening partner can "mm hmmm" and nod affirmatively, but this is not a standard back and forth conversation. They simply ask and listen actively. They'll get their turn next!

Here's how the process goes. The same question is asked repeatedly—five times.

Begin your five-minute timer.

Partner A asks: "Why are YOU involved in our family philanthropy?"

Partner B answers.

Partner A asks (again): "Why are YOU involved in our family philanthropy?"

Partner B answers.

Partner A asks (again): "Why are YOU involved in our family philanthropy?"

Partner B answers.

Partner A asks (again): "Why are YOU involved in our family philanthropy?"

Partner B answers.

Partner A asks (again): "Why are YOU involved in our family philanthropy?"

When timer goes off after five minutes, thank your partner and switch.

Debrief as a group. Possible questions:

-How was that? How was it to reflect repeatedly? How was it to just talk and answer without the expectation of conversation? How was it to be in listener-only mode?

-Observations or themes that emerged?

Next, we'll explore our collective big why—that is, the answers to the question:

Why are we engaged in family philanthropy? Why do we give, and why do we do so *together*?

Put this question up on a white board, or in the chat if you're online, and give everyone a few minutes to jot down on their own paper as many answers as they can.

Then, share your collective responses on a big brainstorm list. Give everyone a chance to identify which of the responses on the brainstorm list feel like the one to three most important drivers, and flag these with asterisks. Discuss these most important ones together to help you best understand your big why.

Take a picture of this collective list and save in your meeting notes for easy future reference.

Legacy Module 6. Family Matters

Purpose:
To discuss what the "family" in family philanthropy means to us—past, present, and future

Outcomes:

- A chance to talk openly about what it means to give as a family
- Clarity on how this has or has not evolved over time
- Discussion about our shared intentions for the future vis-à-vis the "family" in our philanthropy

Process:
Individual journaling/drawing, followed by group sharing and discussion

Materials:
Family matters worksheet, pens, pencils (and markers if you're an artsy group)

Why is this discussion important?

Ashley Blanchard, a family foundation trustee, ruminates on the balance she sees as essential for a healthy family giving endeavor:

"We think a lot about what's the benefit of having us [family] involved in this? What do we bring to this? Is our involvement worth it? How do we justify a public trust for the purposes of family unification? Can we justify it? I think we feel confident that the scales are balanced, that we are doing really important work in the world, but we think about what would happen if we got off balance."

Activity and Discussion:
Provide each participant with a worksheet (a version can be found on the next page).

Begin with individual reflection and time to write using the worksheet below as a guide. Or you may choose to provide the worksheet in advance and ask people to spend some time reflecting and writing prior to discussing together—you know your family best and which process will work best for your unique group!

Questions to reflect upon:

1. What did family mean to our giving early in our history, whether that's 5 or 50 years ago?
2. What does the family in family philanthropy mean to me—and us—now?
3. How does giving as a family make our giving—and our family—stronger?
4. What are the downsides and possible pitfalls we want to avoid?
5. What are our hopes about what the family in our philanthropy will mean in the future?
6. How can we best set ourselves up—whether through our giving focus or our grantmaking process or involving family (and/or non-family members)—to help bring this future vision into reality?

After each individual has had time to reflect and write, talk through each question. Be sure to manage time carefully so you have time to discuss each question. For some families, part of their vision for family philanthropy includes the critical addition of outside voices, whether trusted family friends or advisors, or community or topical experts—so be willing to open yourselves to this possibility!

Family Matters Worksheet

1. **What did family mean to our giving early in our history, whether that's 5 or 50 years ago?**

2. **What does the family in family philanthropy mean to me—and us—now?**

3. **How does giving as a family make our giving—and our family—stronger?**

4. **What are the downsides and possible pitfalls we want to avoid?**

5. **What are our hopes about what the family in our philanthropy will mean in the future?**

6. **How can we best set ourselves up—whether through our giving focus or our grantmaking process or involving family (and/or non-family members)—to help bring this future vision into reality?**

Legacy Module 7.
Talking 'Bout My Generation

Taking time to talk in generation-specific groups can be a rare and revelatory experience.

Purpose:
To understand the defining events of each generation and their philanthropic ripples

Outcomes:

- Individual reflection on what events and dynamics define your generation
- Increased understanding of these differing generational forces and identities
- Discussion of how these differences inform how we think about social change and philanthropy

Process:
Fishbowl structure, group discussion

Materials:
None

This piece builds upon an activity developed by 21/64 called Generational Personalities © 2015 21/64, Inc. 21/64, Inc. is a nonprofit practice providing multigenerational advising, facilitation and training for next generation engagement.

Activity and Discussion:
Begin by identifying what generations you have represented in your family. A common breakdown can be found below:

- The Greatest Generation – born 1901-1924
- The Silent Generation – born 1925-1945
- The Baby Boomer Generation – born 1946-1964
- Generation X – born 1965-1979
- Millennials – born 1980-1994
- Generation Z – born 1995-2012
- Gen Alpha – born 2013 – 2025

Divide the amount of time you have for this discussion by the number of generations you have represented. If a no-longer involved or alive family member of an older generation is still a strong presence in the room, or if you are soon to include new, younger generations, you might even hold a bit of time to consider them too.

Each generation will have the chance to be the focal point of questions and reflection. The rest of the group will ask them a series of questions:

- What have been the three to five defining historical events or forces in the broader country or world since your birth?
- How have these events defined your generation—and you?
- What do you see as prevalent stereotypes about your generation? What elements of these stereotypes ring true for you and your own experience?
- What do you feel is important for your family to know about how your generation impacts who you are and how you see the world—particularly with respect to social change and philanthropy?

After each generation has had a chance to share, debrief and discuss together. Some questions you might explore:

- What did you find most interesting about that exercise?
- What surprised you? What did you learn?
- How does having multiple generations at the table strengthen your giving? How does it sometimes make it more challenging?
- How can we intentionally capitalize on this breadth of generational perspectives to make our giving more enjoyable and more effective?

*Sometimes offering examples can be helpful to get folks thinking. Here are a few:

- The Vietnam (or any other) War
- 9/11
- The elections of President Obama and President Trump
- The Great Depression
- Slavery, The Holocaust, Internment Camps
- Hurricane Katrina
- Sandy Hook shooting
- Legalization of same-sex marriage
- Immigration waves
- Suburban sprawl
- Introduction of new technology—private home phones, computers, cell phones, the internet

Legacy Module 8.
Founder Interview

Simple approach to interviewing and documenting your donor's story and hopes for the future

Purpose:
To hear directly from the founder(s)

Outcomes:

- Opportunity for the founders to share about their philanthropic journey
- Chance for other family members to ask questions, listen, and learn
- Formal or informal documentation of founder story and hopes for the future

Process:
Fishbowl structure, group discussion

Materials:
Questions list, two mechanisms for recording (phone and video, or two phones for back-up)

Recommendation: Meet in a comfortable living room space, not around a table.

Many families wish they had video or audio of their founders available to center their giving, to hearken back to, to share with future generations, etc. You can hire a documentary writer or filmmaker, certainly and some giving families have done so with great outcomes. But you can start much simpler, by having a family conversation and recording it.

Activity and Discussion:
Set aside time to interview the donors or founders of your family giving enterprise. In advance of your interview session, determine who and how you'll record the discussion (audio and/or video) and be sure to have a second mechanism as back-up.

In advance of recording, create a list of interview questions. You can create your own, more personalized list, or build from the list below. Decide how you'll ask the questions—whether one person will serve as interviewer, or whether you'll take turns asking questions. We recommend the latter to engage everyone in the process.

Be sure to share this list with your interviewees in advance; some people need time to reflect and others are fine off-the-cuff, but give them the opportunity to prepare if they wish. And, approach the interview with empathy—this can be a daunting prospect for many donors, even just in discussion with their loving family.

Founder Questions – A Starting Point*

- What are some of your earliest memories of giving, helping, or volunteering?
- What have been meaningful gifts you've received in your life, material or metaphorical?
- Why did you begin this foundation (or donor-advised fund, etc.)?
- What are your hopes for what giving as a family will accomplish for the world? For our family?
- What worries you about our family philanthropy?
- Are there specific organizations or general areas, topical or geographic, you want us to give to always? Approaches you want us to take? Or do you feel flexible?
- What are your hopes for the future of our family giving?
- What are some of the values that have guided and sustained you through life? Where did these values come from?
- What family stories or role models have instilled your values and worldview? What opportunities in your life were most crucial to your own success?
- What is an accomplishment you are deeply proud of in your career? In your roles and relationships within your family?
- What's been one of the most meaningful gifts you've ever received, whether advice or something material, and why?
- What's a grant or philanthropic gift you've made—or other philanthropic involvement—that you are particularly proud of or connected to, and why?
- What have you learned along the way as a donor? Any fumbles or foibles you'd like to share?
- What aspects of how you give have been meaningful to you, whether multi-year giving, named (or anonymous) gifts, building deep relationships with grantees, etc.?
- What's a change in the family giving that has already occurred that you would note as being healthy growth and development of your giving?

- Is your hope and intent that the foundation hews closely to your current vision and foci and giving approach, or that successive generations lead and give as they see fit given ever-shifting community needs and board passions?
    - ◊ Are there key grantees or geographic areas you'd like to ensure will always remain a part of the family's giving?
- What are your greatest hopes for the future of our family giving, whether around what we give to, how we give or work together, or if/how future generations are involved?
    - ◊ Can you imagine non-family members being involved?
- (If using a family foundation as vehicle) Why did you establish the foundation as a family philanthropy? Why not as an individual giving program—one where you wrote checks directly to nonprofits? Why not as a general bequest to your favorite organization(s)?
    - ◊ What does the "family" in family philanthropy mean to you?

After the interview, thank the donors for their candor and thoughtfulness, and be sure to save the documentation in multiple places and share it with the family.

Legacy Module 9.
Stewardship and Governance

Purpose:
To gain insight into how younger and succeeding generations will be best prepared and equipped to support the family philanthropic work.

Outcomes:

- Time for current and future leaders to reflect and listen
- Articulation of wants, needs, and priorities in this process
- Ideas for next steps

Process:
Generational conversations, full group discussion

Materials:
Questions list, two mechanisms for recording (phone and video, or two phones for back-up)

> Recommendation: Meet in a comfortable living room space, not around a table.

This module builds on module #2; it is an opportunity for open dialogue within and across generations about what is needed for trusting, meaningful passing of the leadership baton.

An openness to change is a critical component to healthy transition. For some younger generations, simply administering the giving in a different manner can make all the difference in it being an accessible enterprise, whether that means staff or utilizing a donor-advised fund.

Activity and Discussion:
Note: This activity builds on a model from Liberating Structures called What I Need From You.

The first portion of this session takes place separated by generations. Many families find this is the first time they've done so in a philanthropic context.

Each generational group should explore and take their own notes on the following questions:

- What do you need to feel comfortable transitioning leadership to the next generation/to you?
- From what surfaces in this first question, what are your true needs, and what are your wants?
- What feels like the most important priority items to allow for this transition?
- What do you envision as an ideal timeline for this transition to take place—it could be in the next 12 months, or 10 years from now.

Each generation should nominate a spokesperson.

Bring the groups back together and share openly your answers to these questions. Note where there is easy agreement, and where there are a range of perspectives. Discuss—or plan to discuss—those places of divergence. This is unlikely a one-time conversation, but a beginning.

Legacy Module 10.
The Question of Lifespan

Purpose:
To discuss lifespan of your giving—whether 10 years or perpetuity.

Outcomes:

- Articulate assumptions
- Explore alternative paths
- Discuss implications—pros and cons—of both

Process:
Individual or paired reflection, group discussion

Materials:
Lifespan Implications Worksheet (see next page), pens/pencils

Whether a specific family giving enterprise is set up for perpetuity or for a specific lifespan of 10 or 50 years can have a tremendous impact on all aspects of how you do your work. To be clear: we are talking about what is the time frame in which you intend to give away your philanthropic assets? But lifespan tends to be an elephant in the room question—important and weighty, but all too often avoided. And sometimes when assumptions are further explored, different choices are revealed.

Activity and Discussion:
Depending on the size of your group and appetite for pre-work, either complete the attached Lifespan Implications Worksheet ahead of time or at the beginning of your session. You may do so individually or in partners; you choose the best path for your unique family group.

The worksheet invites you to explore two lifespans or time horizons for your family giving enterprise:

- The first is your current stated (or presumed/best guess, if not explicitly stated) time horizon.
- The second is a different time horizon you'd find it compelling to consider or discuss. For instance, what would it look like to spend down all your assets in the next 10-20 years?

For each time horizon, you'll answer the following questions:

- What are the benefits of this time horizon, for our family and for the world?
- What are the downsides, for our family and for the world?
- What other implications are there of this lifespan?

After everyone has completed the worksheets, discuss together as a group and determine if there is a shared understanding of your time horizon, how to move towards one if not, and if you want to consider a change. This, like many of the discussion modules, is well worth revisiting!

Lifespan Implications Worksheet

CURRENT TIME HORIZON:_______________ YEARS

What are the benefits of this time horizon for the world?	What are the benefits of this time horizon for our family?

What are the downsides of this time horizon for the world?	What are the downsides of this time horizon for our family?

What other implications are there of this lifespan?

DIFFERENT **TIME HORIZON:_______________ YEARS**

What are the benefits of this time horizon for the world?	What are the benefits of this time horizon for our family?

What are the downsides of this time horizon for the world?	What are the downsides of this time horizon for our family?

What other implications are there of this lifespan?