ABOUT #GIVINGTUESDAY

Founded by the team at the Belfer Center for Innovation & Social Impact at 92nd Street Y, #GivingTuesday is a global giving movement that has been built by individuals, families, organizations, businesses and communities in all 50 states and in countries around the world.

This year, #GivingTuesday falls on November 27. #GivingTuesday harnesses the collective power of a unique blend of partners to transform how people think about, talk about, and participate in the giving season. It inspires people to take collective action to improve their communities, give back in better, smarter ways to the charities and causes they believe in, and help create a better world. #GivingTuesday demonstrates how every act of generosity counts, and that they mean even more when we give together.

ABOUT POWERED BY DATA

Powered by Data’s mission is to maximize the availability and impact of data for public good. Through an approach that blends data policy and data strategy development, Powered by Data helps establish infrastructure and governance frameworks that will enable the social sector to better share, use, and learn from data. Powered by Data works with nonprofits and civil society groups, government, funders, and global data initiatives. To learn more, visit our website at: www.poweredbydata.org

Powered by Data operates on Tides Canada’s shared platform, which supports on-the-ground efforts to create uncommon solutions for the common good.

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#GivingTuesday is more than a Moment. It’s a Movement.

Since its inception in 2012, #GivingTuesday has established itself as an important annual event and social innovation in the philanthropic sector. In 2017, it generated over $300M in online donations, and is continuing to expand around the world.

However, since it’s beginnings, #GivingTuesday has focused on being more than a single “day of giving.” The movement champions gift-giving as a valuable and participatory civic action, and seeks to promote and increase charitable giving worldwide - by encouraging more giving and philanthropic engagement by individuals.

As part of that work, #GivingTuesday has identified gaps in the philanthropic sector. To better motivate and encourage individual giving, practitioners and service providers need to better understand giving behavior itself. To build and promote “best practices,” the sector needs to understand the motivations, triggers, mechanisms, and dynamics of individual charitable giving - as well as how to apply that understanding to its fundraising strategies and channels. This is becoming increasingly important as digital channels and platforms become more widespread.

As in many areas of the nonprofit sector, there is a need for more evidence-based decision making and practice. In the fundraising space, this is because of two issues:

1. Insufficient knowledge transfer from academic researcher to practitioners and service providers
2. Insufficient or incomplete research on fundraising and giving - both in quantity and in relevance to the needs of practitioners and service providers

As a key part of its mission, #GivingTuesday is working to address these problems and enable evidence-based decision making in this space, by:

1. Promoting and sharing insights into charitable giving among its partners and the wider sector
2. Supporting and enabling more (and more relevant) research in this area
The #GivingTuesday Data Collaborative is one example of this work - where #GivingTuesday is creating new data assets to drive research in this area, and is sourcing research needs and priorities from its partners to share with researchers.

This literature review is intended to help address both of these issues. By compiling research across disciplines related to this area, the review will serve to inform practitioners and service providers on the current state of our understanding of giving behavior. In addition, the review is intended to encourage further research, by surfacing new opportunities for researchers in the space of fundraising and charitable giving.

Objectives, Methodology, & Overview

OBJECTIVES

In order to effectively build on (and not duplicate) previous reviews on this topic, we endeavoured to expand the scope of research included and synthesize research from across disciplines and domains. To that end, this literature review was guided by four objectives:

1. To provide a synthetic review of scholarship on giving across multiple disciplines.
2. To encourage new research on giving as long-term, sustained, and transformative activity.
3. To connect research on giving with the opportunities and challenges presented by the GivingTuesday initiative, including movement-building, improving online capacity, and advancing data-driven understanding of contemporary giving practices.
4. To foster greater collaboration between academic and non-profit research across the charitable sector.

The review built on other reviews and studies on giving, from different disciplines, including: Andreoni and Payne 2013; Bekkers and Wiepking 2011a, 2011b; Barman 2017; Sargent and Woodliffe 2007). We also build off a literature review previously conducted by ideas42 for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which focused primarily on documenting findings of behavioral science experiments on solicitation techniques and outcomes.

This review expands the scope of previous work to assess giving research across the social sciences, and focuses on the broader causes and mechanisms that shape giving over time. Less emphasis is placed on the specific solicitation techniques covered by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation literature review, in order to avoid duplication. We also report on a growing body of research on the #GivingTuesday movement itself and identify cases of other giving movements, to help shine light on ongoing innovations in the charitable sector.

METHODOLOGY

For this project, Powered by Data worked with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to develop a scope of inquiry and research questions related to the goals above. It was decided that a thematic approach would best contribute to the interests of #GivingTuesday members. Desktop research of websites and online media provided data for the five case studies of collective giving initiatives found in part III.

This review employs a framework that links diverse strands of academic knowledge about giving into a synthetic whole.
We adopted this approach in order to orient readers and researchers from diverse backgrounds around the common themes across multiple academic disciplines. However, the approach is not without limitation. In particular, by emphasizing a wide and inclusive scope, sacrifices have been made to methodological depth and fidelity to disciplinary rigor. Readers drawn to specific disciplinary approaches are encouraged to seek out domain-specific and technical reviews as cited in the bibliography.

OVERVIEW

The report is arranged as three parts:

Part I - Contemporary Trends
Provides a short summary of three key patterns in contemporary giving that provide points of entry for the subsequent literature review.

Part II - Issues
Comprises the substantive literature review and is broken into three main sections:

• **Theories of Giving** examines theories and explanations of general causes for giving behavior;
• **Mechanisms of Giving** provides discussion of key factors that shape donor decision-making at point of solicitation;
• **Online Giving** addresses the role of internet and digital media in reshaping contemporary practices.

Part III - Innovations
Summarizes current analyses using data drawn from the #GivingTuesday event and cases of other giving movements worthy of future study.
This section provides a brief overview of three giving trends. These patterns and transformations in contemporary philanthropy help motivate the thematic literature review of Part II. The three trends to be discussed are: 1) National Giving Patterns; 2) Nonprofit Growth and Donor Acquisition; 3) Cultural Shifts and Online Giving.
I.1 National Giving Patterns

Assessing charitable giving at macro-levels is complicated. Researchers typically derive indicators from two main sources: donor surveys and personal income tax returns. However, the limitations of donor self-reporting and variations among state tax systems make comparison across national domains difficult. Moreover, while Giving USA’s Annual Report remains a standard measure of total charitable giving in the United States, consensus elsewhere is rare. In Canada, for example, widely diverging accounts exist of national and regional trends in giving (see Devlin and Zao 2017; Lamman, Hasan, and MacIntryre 2017).

Analyzing three 2015 donor surveys of cross-national giving in Europe, Bekkers (2016) observes a high degree of variability in the reporting of specific countries.¹ For instance, the Eurobarometer finds 65% of Finland’s population gives to charity, but the Gallup World Poll reports only 50%. Meanwhile, “figures for the United Kingdom show an opposite difference: 79% in the Gallup data and 58% in the Eurobarometer” (26). Despite discrepancies, Bekkers notes that strong correlations in the data show there are “reliable cross-country differences in philanthropy”.

A stable comparative finding is that the United States leads other countries in philanthropic giving. In 2016 Americans gave a staggering $390 billion to charity², contributing between 1.5% to 2% of annual GDP to charitable causes. In comparison, private donations in the Netherlands comprise only 0.3 to 0.7% of GDP, despite the country having a larger nonprofit sector, in terms of proportional employment and volunteer participation. In Canada, the average household gave 0.5% of its annual income to charity (in 2014).³ The average American household gave double that amount (1%). Whether by amount or proportion, Americans generally give more than other wealthy nations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>People (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>68</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Top 10 Countries by Participation in Donating Money. Source: CAF World Giving Index 2016

Somewhat less clear are relative participation rates. The yearly World Giving Index uses Gallup World Poll data to survey global trends in generosity.⁴ In 2016, the percentage of people reporting donating money to charity was higher in the Netherlands (64%), United Kingdom (64%), and Canada (61%) than in the United States (56%). Again, attention must be paid to method and indicators. For instance, looking strictly at tax filers reporting donations, the 2016 percentage of individuals giving is higher in the United States (24.5%) than

¹European Social Survey, Gallup World Poll, and the Eurobarometer
²Giving USA: https://givingusa.org/tag/giving-usa-2017/
in Canada (20.9%). However, tax-filing data only captures households that itemize deductions, which is more common among high-income earners. Thus, lower income households are underrepresented amongst the data.

The World Giving Index provides the best data available on global perceptions of giving trends. One trend in particular - an observed decline in charitable participation in developed countries - bears contemplation. In Canada, when adjusted for inflation, the value of claimed donations has remained stagnant since 2010, while its percentage of tax filers claiming gifts has fallen each year.\(^5\) Similar observations are made in the United States. Only 24 percent of taxpayers reported making a charitable gift in 2015, whereas “a decade earlier that figure routinely reached 30 to 31 percent”.\(^6\)

This suggests a long-term, gradual decline in overall charitable participation in wealthy nations. The Lily Family School of Philanthropy estimates the share of US households giving dropped from 67% in 2004 to 59% in 2012. A recent study applying US household-level panel data finds the 2008 global recession had a significant and long-term negative effect on American attitudes towards giving (Meer, Miller, and Wulfsberg 2017). The CAF UK Giving Report 2018 finds that the small increase in overall giving in the UK for 2017 “is driven by fewer people giving more”.\(^7\) These findings connect to concerns with donor retention cited below.

Within countries, there is also a great degree of regional variation. In the United States, evidence suggests that giving corresponds to a ‘Red State/Blue State’ divide. Using itemized tax claims, the Chronicle of Philanthropy’s listing of most generous states reveals donations to be higher in states that traditionally vote Republican (see Table 2). Moreover, Republican-leaning states raise more funds for non-profits per capita.\(^8\) Regionally, charitable households from states in southern US give proportionally more of their income (5.2%) than giving households in the north-east (4%). Meanwhile, according to the Fraser Institute, the regional direction of Canadian generosity inclines heavily to its western provinces.\(^9\) It’s important to note that much debate exists over the validity of rankings limited by tax-filing data. Rankings by the Boston Foundation, which adjust measures to account for non-tax filers, find much different results.\(^10\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Income (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>6.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>5.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>4.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>4.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>4.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>4.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>4.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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\(^8\) 2017’s Most Charitable States [https://wallethub.com/edu/most-and-least-charitable-states/8555/](https://wallethub.com/edu/most-and-least-charitable-states/8555/)


Nonetheless, the implication of such variations is that context matters to giving outcomes. For instance, though the political patterns cited above “make some commentators uneasy”,\textsuperscript{11} it’s clear a relationship exists between government social policy and giving behavior. Bekkers argues that the lower rates at which Dutch give to charity vis-a-vis Americans does not suggest less generous and civically-minded individuals, but rather the presence of a robust welfare state that redirects individual wealth transfers to public programs (2015). The question remains as to causal direction of the effect: i.e. is it population preferences or government mandates that determine relative giving rates? In Part II, we discuss further explanations and factors affecting giving across contexts.

\textsuperscript{11} Who gives most to charity: https://www.philanthropyroundtable.org/almanac/statistics/who-gives

I.2 Growth, Competition, and Donor Retention

As discussed, overall participation rates in giving-related activity have stagnated or else declined in past years. This starkly contrasts the widespread growth of national nonprofit sectors at large. Between 2001 and 2011, nonprofit organizations in the US grew at a rate fifty times that of the private sector.\textsuperscript{12} Yet, the American nonprofit and charitable sector is proportionally only the fifth largest globally, trailing both the Netherlands and Canada in relative size.\textsuperscript{13} In short, nonprofits are booming - it’s just not evident charitable giving is keeping up.

That said, charitable income in the U.S. has steadily risen in years since the 2008 recession, growing by 2.7% in 2016.\textsuperscript{14} In comparison, relatively flat growth has been seen in the UK\textsuperscript{15} and Canada\textsuperscript{16}. Competition among charitable issues is uneven and varies by national domain; with the exception of religious organizations, which universally receive more donations than any other charity type. However, the market share for religious charities varies across countries. It is much larger in Canada (41%) and the US (31.5%), for example, than in the UK (19%). In the UK, animal rights and

\textsuperscript{12} For Nonprofits, a Bigger Share of the Economy https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/09/business/for-nonprofits-a-bigger-share-of-the-economy.html

\textsuperscript{13} Key Facts about Canada’s Charities: http://www.imaginecanada.ca/resources-and-tools/research-and-facts/key-facts-about-canada%25E2%2580%2599s-charities


environmental causes receive a higher share of charity dollars (13%) than in the US (2.8%). On the other hand, the UK’s heavily subsidized post-secondary system helps account for the tiny share education organizations receive (2%) vis-à-vis the US (15.3%).

Discrepancies exist between sector size and charitable market share. In the U.S., Human Service Organizations (HSOs) comprise the largest organizational type, representing 35.5% of all public charities, yet receive 11.7% of contributions. Sector characteristics are a factor, as HSOs typically have more access to public revenue. Nonetheless, “a steady stream of donor support is especially critical to the financial stability and flexibility of HSOs” (Giving USA 2016, 1).

Accordingly, a trend that draws concern among commentators is falling levels of donor retention. The yearly donor retention rate for American HSOs fell from 51% in 2006 to 44% in 2015, echoing a similar decline in other nonprofit sectors. At the same time, the loss of repeat donors was not compensated by a rise in new donors. Annual donor acquisition rates fell from 55% 2006 to around 43% in 2012, only recently to have returned to 50% in 2015 (Giving USA Spotlight 2015).

The greater implications of falling retention rates is unclear. Lower retention may simply reflect increased nonprofit competition and greater choices available for donors to contribute funds. Declining retention can be an expected outcome in an otherwise thriving nonprofit sector. However, coupled with the suggestive claims of ‘fewer people giving more’, it remains a trend to be observed. In Part II, we address the scholarship on donor behavior and donor retention.

I.3 Cultural Shifts and Online Giving

Implicit in concerns with declining rates of giving are worries that individuals are becoming less socially caring and oriented to civic life. In his book Bowling Alone (2000), Robert Putnam argued that Americans were turning away from community associations, leading to a general erosion in civic values. Fifteen years later, that narrative has re-emerged in discussion of millennials - i.e. those born roughly between 1980 and 2000. A 2014 Pew research study encapsulated millennials as “detached from institutions; networked with friends”.17 Pew's alarmist view is countervened by the 2017 Millennial Impact Report18, which found millennials to be far more engaged in political and social causes than commonly believed.

That said, it remains questionable if the millennial label provides insight into the purported values of such a broad cohort. More commonly, it is a cultural shorthand to discuss wider technological changes impacting civic participation at large. This includes the expansion of social media, the rise of online social activism (derided as ‘slacktivism’), and the ubiquity of smartphone usage. These trends prevail across all age groups, but millennials are often early adopters. Millennial behavior then is read as a cultural barometer for what’s to come.

On that note, it’s apparent the digital transformation is significantly altering the giving landscape. While growth in online retail has

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continued to outperform the nonprofit sector, online giving transactions tracked by MasterCard rose by 8.9% in 2015 and by 8.6% in 2016.\textsuperscript{19} According to Blackbaud, 7.2% of overall funding revenue (excluding grants) was raised online in 2016 and 10% of online donations were $1000 or more.\textsuperscript{20} Mobile devices are increasingly relevant to giving transactions, with 17% of online gifts being on a device. Given the sector’s acknowledged slower uptake of trends and technologies, the lack of engagement with new channels offers alternative possibilities for the observed decline in rates of giving.

\textsuperscript{19} Donation Insights: https://partners.mastercard.com/donation-insights/


The shift to online gift-giving is complemented by new ways for donors to participate through the web. Movements like #GivingTuesday are characteristic of the shifting nature of giving. Applications like Twitter and Facebook enable donors to personalize giving activities, using gifts to also publicize social causes and identities. This new participatory and online trend reflects another key theme of this review (section II.3).
Part II presents a synthetic review of academic research on charitable giving. It is broken into three sections:

1. **Theories of Giving** examines different theories and explanations as to the general causes of giving behavior;
2. **Mechanisms of Giving** provides discussion of contextual factors that shape donor decision-making at point of solicitation; and
3. **Online Giving** examines the role of internet and digital media in reshaping contemporary giving practices.
II.1 Theories of Giving

Where does the motivation to give to charity come from? Is altruism a personal trait of individuals, or a collective aspect of communities? Is charitable generosity foremost self-interested and rational, or does it develop through norms and affective processes? Should we see charitable giving as a type of market transaction, or is it better understood as a form of civic participation?

These questions can appear abstract and removed from the practices of everyday fundraising. Nonetheless, there are reasons why theories of altruism are important to consider:

1. They help bridge ‘rules of thumb’ that guide everyday fundraising practices with the findings of peer-reviewed academic research, encouraging more substantive theories for practitioner-focused research.
2. How altruism is understood and conceptualized carries deep implications for strategies to grow and sustain a broad-based ‘culture of generosity’.
3. The general characteristics of giving have meaningful importance to the efficacy of tools fundraisers can employ to increase donor outreach, solicitation, and retention.

II.1.1 SPECTRUM OF ALTRUISM

While there are many theoretical perspectives on altruism, they can generally be read along a spectrum between two contrasting poles:

1. The individualist pole (actor-oriented): Altruism is a variable property of collectives (e.g. communities, social networks, donor-fundraiser relationships, cultures) that enables and constrains giving as a broad, social activity.

   The individualist pole (common to classical economics and traditional psychology) sees altruism as a discrete preference or value, which is enacted at the individual level. The will to give comes from rational decision-making or impulsive feeling. Donors are understood to make charitable donations based on benefit to themselves - material, emotional, or prestige.

   The relational pole (common to sociology and anthropology) downplays individual motivation in favor of the social, political, and cultural contexts that enable giving as a practice. Emphasis is on the roles, groups, institutions, network ties, and narrative frameworks that structurally permit and culturally legitimate giving as a social activity.

   Much research on giving emphasizes both individualist and relational factors - i.e. accepting that charitable motivation is partly fixed as an individual inclination, yet mediated and interacting with social norms and constraints. Intradisciplinary debates over altruism often come down to shifting weight from one side of the spectrum to the other.

   Explanations and analyses of giving behavior can be further categorized based on the types of variables analysed: compositional and contextual. The former is concerned with attributes of donor populations, while the latter looks to the role of environmental conditions in shaping outcomes.
• **Compositional analyses** study the relative impact of discrete attributes of donors that influence them (either as individuals or groups) to give. For instance, education level and general trust are two compositional factors known to increase levels of giving in a population. Socio-demographic and market segmentation analyses use compositional variables to understand the comparative make up of donor populations across domains.

• **Contextual analyses** study how distinct shifting or environmental conditions alter giving outcomes. Comparing the differential impacts of country tax systems on charitable contributions or how shifting solicitation strategies alter donor activity are exemplary of contextual approaches.

Table 3 provides a summary of the four categories discussed above, along with some examples of factors that will be highlighted. This section moves from the individualist to relational pole in discussing general causes of charitable giving.

### II.1.2 ECONOMIC EXPLANATIONS

The field of public economics has made the longest sustained study of charitable giving—starting in the 1970s. The literature wrestles with a fundamental question: how do we rationally explain the seemingly irrational act of giving to charity? As a whole, economists place great emphasis on conditional mechanisms (e.g. price or signalled information about public goods) that ‘act on’ the discrete preferences of utility-maximizing actors and influence their likelihood to give.

A seminal work in this tradition is Mancur Olsen's *The Logic of Collective Action* (1965). Olsen’s argument is that public goods, by nature, have diffuse benefits across society and are susceptible to free riding. Since the benefits of charity are social and collective, there appears to be little incentive for individuals to contribute resources if it’s not mandatory of others. The free riding problem assumes any rational motivation to give is necessarily self-interested.

Early public economics explanations counter the notion that donors are primarily motivated...
by interest in the public good or ‘pure altruism’ (Becker 1981). The notion of pure altruism holds that individuals donate to charity in response to gaps in the government provision of a public good. It suggests, for instance, that charity for poverty alleviation will rise when government welfare provision is found wanting. This assumption leads to a classic economics problem known as ‘crowding out’. If individuals respond to the presence or absence of government funding, then we should see a one-to-one inverse correlation between government funding and charitable donations. However, early studies found little to no empirical evidence of such a symmetrical relationship (Abrams and Schmitz 1984).

The theory of warm glow giving provided an influential revision to this model (Andreoni 1989). Warm glow theory suggests that individual altruism is ‘impure’ and is partially motivated by non-material self-interest: giving makes people feel better about themselves. In other words, the benefits of charitable giving are reciprocal.

Summary

- Public goods are susceptible to free-riding
- Pure altruism is the idea that individuals donate in response to public funding gaps
- Warm glow theory suggests individuals are partly motivated to give because it makes them feel good

II.1.3 CROWD OUT, CROWD IN?

For public economists, warm glow theory helped explain the disconnect between donor responses and government funding. Crowding out remains a core puzzle in economic studies of giving. It is debated whether external funding serves to displace (crowd out) or encourage (crowd in) gift-giving. While the vast majority of research examines the effects of public funding on private contributions, this mechanism is also relevant to other kinds of funding such as foundation grants or leadership matching (i.e. where a lead donor pledges to match contributions made by other donors).

There are two explanations as to the hypothesis of external funding crowding out private charitable contribution. The more traditional explanation is that individual donors view external funding as a substitute for their own contributions. A more recent explanation is that external funding de-incentivizes charitable organizations from investing in fundraising activities (Andreoni and Payne 2003).

Econometric evidence of crowding out is mixed and much debate concerns its measurement (see Andreoni and Payne 2013). An example of alternative hypothesis is that external funding may encourage charitable contribution by promoting awareness and legitimacy of a public cause (Brooks 2000). Notably, support for crowding out effects has been found strongest among social welfare charities, with no such evidence for health-related or international causes. Using panel data of 8000 charities, Andreoni and Payne (2011) finds a crowding out of 70 cents for social welfare and community organizations.

These studies contrast with others finding little to no crowding out effect (Marcuello and Salas 2001). In addition, there are many others that find positive crowding in outcomes across the sector. Brooks identifies a dynamic effect at play: increased government support was correlated with a higher number of donors but with lower average private contributions (2003). Finally, a meta-analysis of sixty studies on crowding out finds that “government grants have almost no correlation with private donations” (Lu 2016).
PART II: ISSUES

Summary

- Crowding out occurs when external funding substitutes for private contribution
- Evidence of government crowding out private contributions is not robust
- Crowding out may occur if external funding disincentives nonprofits from investing in fundraising efforts

II.1.4 IMPLICATIONS OF IMPURE ALTRUISM

From a social psychology perspective, an intriguing implication of warm glow theory is that giving is (partially) a self-interested act that adopts a social veneer of selflessness. Various self-interested benefits can encourage individuals to donate: tax incentives, reputation and peer approval, and heightened self-worth. A large body of research explores the relationship between charitable giving and market-based incentives (see Andreoni and Payne 2013).

A reliable finding relevant to these incentives is that when the personal cost of giving goes down, donations increase (Eckel and Grossman 2004; Karlan and List 2007). Rebates and donation subsidies are found to have an overall positive effect on the likelihood of people to give (Eckel and Grossman 2003). However, while donors are responsive to cost, they can be also wary of adopting a ‘market mentality’ around giving. In other words, too much emphasis on financial incentives can contradict the ‘warm glow’ self-benefit of donor altruism. The good feelings that come from giving are dependent on the perceived prosocial qualities of the act (Meier 2007).

A 2007 study of neuroeconomics provides some insight into the physiological roots of warm glow. In the experiment, two groups were subjected to MRI brain scans as they played a dictator game. Both groups had $100 to transfer. One group was told that some of their fee would be involuntarily given to charity; the other group could give voluntarily. Though the contribution amount was the same for donors in each group, those that volunteered their contributions showed significantly higher neural activity in areas linked to reward processing (Harbaugh, Mayr, and Burghart 2007). In sum, altruistic and voluntaristic aspects are core to ‘the joy of giving’. However, the emotional benefits one receives by giving can be reduced when prosocial behavior is mandated.

Reviewing fifty experimental studies, Bowles and Polania (2012) assess whether economic incentives replace or complement prosocial motivations. Their conclusion challenges the traditional assumption that economic mechanisms - e.g. donor matching - have effects on behavior independent of donor preference and social norms. Rather, they argue that the value of incentives depend heavily on their meaning for donors; “and this depends on the social relationships among the actors, the information the incentive provides, and the preexisting normative frameworks of the actors” (418). Thus, it is important for fundraisers to take into account how economic incentives may be perceived by donors, outside of their specific financial value, and in relation to prosocial perceptions.

Summary

- Impure altruism implies giving is self-interested but has selfless image
- Donor incentives can lower cost of giving, yet encourage a market mentality
- If the prosocial image of giving weakens, warm glow feelings can be diluted
II.1.5 SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS

The above section highlights connections between economic and psychological explanations of giving behavior. Social psychology literature on giving behavior looks at the interaction between perception, information, and social standards to explain giving. It emphasizes norms, peer judgment, and cognitive frames to explain seemingly irrational patterns in donor decision-making (Dovidio et al. 2017).

An example of an ‘irrational’ pattern is the propensity for those who have less to give more. Studies find a positive linear relationship between annual income, home ownership, and amount of charitable donations (Wiepking 2007). However, when measured as a percentage of income, researchers identify a curvilinear pattern in US data: low-income and high-income households donate a higher share of income than middle-income households. The severity of the curve is debated, and whether it is U-shaped or J-shaped. Though James and Sharpe (2007) find a U-shape profile in US household income data, they suggest this is heavily skewed by 5 percent of households that are highly-committed donors. When these households are removed, they argue that giving rates are level at 1% of income across all categories.

Skewed or not, higher giving rates of poorer households require explanation. Two oft-cited causes are religious membership and giving norms. Religious membership is reliably found to have a positive relationship with giving propensity. Since lower-income groups have higher rates of religious affiliation, it follows that the effects of religion on giving would be stronger. The question is whether the impact derives from religious conviction or religious community.

The ‘conviction’ thesis holds that religious beliefs, values, and attitudes encourage greater altruism. The ‘community’ thesis, meanwhile, asserts that members of religious congregations are exposed to greater social pressure and opportunity for charitable solicitation (Bekkers and Wiepking 2011). Notably, a negative relation is found between congregation size and religious contribution (Stonebraker 2003), which suggests less anonymity in a community leads to higher donation rates. In other words, peer judgment plays a large role in shaping the decision to give.

Meanwhile, using panel data from the Netherlands, Wiepking (2007) rejects the religious affiliation thesis in favor of the notion of a ‘giving standard’. The giving standard implies:

There are social and internalized norms regarding the amount of money households prefer to donate to charitable causes in specific circumstances.... When deciding how much to donate, people think about the amount they feel that is “right” to donate in specific circumstances. This right amount is influenced by the amount people believe others will donate in the same circumstances (343).

According to Wiepking, the giving standard suggests there is a “persistent negative direct effect of income on proportion of income donated” (2007). In a general study of prosocial behavior, Piff et al. (2010) argue that lower income individuals are more oriented to the welfare of others from empathy and personal experience with struggles of poverty.

Whether diverging by religion or class, analyses show that donor perception of giving costs and generosity do not commonly match with objective measures (Wiepking and Breeze 2011). A fundraising implication is that people are inclined to think in absolute amounts when deciding on
donations and don’t take into account their wealth relative to other potential donors. Furthermore, donors often perceive their relative contribution to be much higher than it actually is. The Camber Collective has found 75% of Americans think they donate more than the average - but in fact 72% of Americans actually donate below the mean amount.21

Summary

• An observed U-shape income profile in giving is accounted for different giving standards among lower-income households
• Most donors believe they give more than the average, though most actually give less than the average

II.1.5 DONOR VALUES, DISPOSITIONS AND PREFERENCES

Personal values and behavior may be a more accurate guide than group convention in predicting decisions to give. Psychologists argue that personality traits of individuals incline, or disincline, them to prosocial behavior. Van Ingen and Bekkers (2015) point out that generalized trust, a strong predictor of charitable giving, remains a relatively stable trait in individuals regardless of socialization. Preference-based models, common in market research, help profile donors based on composite values and interests (Sargeant & Woodliffe 2007).

Research has found positive associations between a number of personal values and heightened levels of philanthropy. This includes humanitarianism, egalitarianism, low materialism (Sargeant et al. 2000), social care and social responsibility (Schuyt et al. 2010). Studies connect personal and political values with those endorsed by a charitable organization (Bennett 2003).

While values and demographics have been traditional measures of donor disposition, there is much opportunity to advance behavior-based segmentation of donor markets. By analyzing Canadian survey data, O’Reilly et al. (2012) identify three behavioral segments of donor personality types: donors loyal to an organization, donors who habitually switch, and those with mixed behaviors. They find that those loyal to an organization reliably donate more than those who are more promiscuous in their organizational choice. Besides stressing the importance of donor loyalty, the study suggests that fundraising strategies have disparate effects on promiscuous donors, and that fundraisers should attune their solicitation strategies accordingly (specific strategies are discussed in more detail in 2.2).

Camber Collective’s Money for Good report (2015) similarly segments donors on basis of attitude and behavior. Based on surveys and interviews, five donor types are identified: Contented Benefactors; Busy Idealists; Cautious Strivers; Unaware Potentials; Unengaged Critics. They argue the middle three (Idealists, Strivers, Potentials) represent individuals with the highest likelihood of changing giving behavior and thus fundraisers should target solicitation to match respective preferences. Like the previous study, the implication is that donor strategies should be tailored to the motivations and obstacles faced by distinct donor identities.

Summary

• Individual-level norms, preferences, values, and behaviors may incline some to give more than others
• Donor segmentation categorizes donor groups based on shared individual traits
• While preference segmentation is more common, behavioral segmentation may have better insight

21 Money for Good: http://www.cambercollective.com/moneyforgood
II.1.7 SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

Similar to research on values, socio-demographic research on donor behavior is extensive (see Bekkers and Wiepking 2011b, 2012). These analyses provide insight into the social profile of donors. Much debate exists concerning the relative weight of demographic variables. However, it is agreed that religion, age, and education are all key influences on charitable giving.

Those who regularly attend religious services are more likely to make donations to both religious and secular causes, although the extent varies by denomination (Bekkers and Wiepking 2011b). The propensity to give increases as individuals get older but falls off late in life; it’s unclear if this pattern results from generational values or life-course effects. Education has a significant and positive effect on giving likelihood and giving amount.

Other factors are more contested, including gender, household composition, and income. On gender, it is argued that, on average, men give more and to fewer causes than women, but the relationship is strongly mediated by other variables. As more socioeconomic variables are included in models - e.g. education, occupation, marital status - the smaller the reported gender difference (Barman 2017).

From a relational perspective, sociodemographic variables are worth considerings not because they directly motivate individual giving per se. Rather “they serve as proxies for membership in social collectives” (Barman 2017), which create the opportunities and obligations to engage in philanthropy. This provides an entry point into sociological explanations of giving - which emphasize the influence of networks and groups in constituting altruistic behavior.

Summary

- Sociodemographic attributes are another way to segment donor populations
- Religion, age, education all have robust positive effects on giving likelihood
- Sociodemographic variables can serve as proxies for group membership and norms

II.1.8 SOCIOLOGICAL EXPLANATIONS

Sociological approaches focus on the role of relational contexts in shaping giving outcomes. These studies try to understand how charitable giving is influenced and constituted by social networks, cultural norms and institutional practices. Donors are understood as embedded in “communities of participation” (Schervish and Havens 1997) that diverge in their giving practices and the opportunities available for fundraisers to solicit donations.

While economists conceive charitable giving as a public form of market activity, sociologists are inclined to see gift-giving as outside of traditional market or state domains, embodying a special kind of civil society practice (Barman 2017). Giving is often tied to other community-oriented activities, including volunteering (Wang and Grady 2008), giving blood (Healy 2004), and social movement activism (Eikenberry 2006). At the macro-level, institutional scholars engage in cross-national comparison of public policy frameworks and democratic practices that foster national philanthropic cultures (Reich, Cordelli, and Bernholz 2016).

An influential theme in this regard is the notion of “civic engagement” and how a community’s social capital and trust levels influence charitable giving. Putnam (2000) defines “social capital” as the “features of social organization such as
networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit”. He argues that social capital increases the ability of communities to resolve collective action dilemmas (e.g. free riding) and strengthen democratic institutions. Research built from this claim studies the relations between charitable giving, networks, and civic engagement.

Summary

- Relational analyses stress the embedded and local context of giving
- Sociologists often view gift-giving as taking place in civil society (not markets)
- A popular research area looks at how giving participation overlaps with other kinds of civic engagement

II.1.9 SOCIAL NETWORKS, ENGAGEMENT, AND TRUST

Putnam’s conception of social capital and civic engagement has influenced an argument that giving is largely driven by a ‘civic core’ of donors. The civic core thesis suggests that a small and networked portion of a population is responsible for a great proportion of its total engagement (including giving). Reed and Selbee (2001) provide cross-sectional evidence for a civic core existing in Canada. They find that just 6% of Canadians are responsible for 35% of all charitable giving, 42% of all volunteer hours, and 20% of all civic association. In a similar study for England and Wales, Mohan and Bulloch (2012) find similar results. They break populations into primary core, secondary core, and unengaged peripheries (not unlike market segmentation approaches). The civic core thesis provides another means to differentiate collective orientations of donors, in relation to overlapping participation with other forms of civic engagement.

Other social network studies draw attention to overlaps between volunteering and giving. Wang and Grady (2008) find that trust, social ties, and volunteering activity positively affect both secular and non-secular giving in the US. In the European context, regional-level trust is observed to meaningfully predict higher individual-level giving (Glanville, Paxton, and Wang 2016). Testing the relative effects of prosocial personality, human capital, and social capital, Bekkers (2006) contends that “giving has a consistently stronger relation to human and social capital than to personality”. In other words: the resources, opportunities, and obligations of one’s social network can have greater impact on giving outcomes than one’s altruistic attitude.

Sociologists broadly agree that networks and social capital matter in influencing giving outcomes. However, they disagree whether the main positive effect of social networks lies in cultivating collective norms or via linking individuals to information, resources, and opportunities that enable them to act on intrinsic prosocial values (see van Ingren and Bekkers 2014). Employing the Netherlands panel data, Wiepking and Maas’s findings support the latter argument: “People with a more extended social network are more often exposed to solicitation by charitable organizations, very likely through people in their own network” (2009, 17). The main conclusion is that networks have a strong influence in determining the likelihood that an individual chooses to give.

Summary

- Civic core is the idea that a small portion of people predominate all forms of civic engagement (volunteering, giving, civic association)
- Some research suggests volunteering positively affects giving likelihood
• Strong community networks are thought to engender higher trust levels, leading to higher levels of giving.

II.1.10 ALTRUISM AS AN ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEM

Staunchly relational accounts claim that individual-level motivation is less important than the institutional norms, cultural narratives, and organizational strategies that legitimate and make the act of giving logistically possible. The empirical fact this literature turns on is that the most robust predictor of a donor giving to charity is being asked to give to charity (Barman 2017). Evidence shows that where more organizational opportunities to donate exist, individuals are more likely to donate (Healy 2010). Giving generosity cannot be understood independent of the solicitation strategies used by fundraisers, and how they constitute donor-beneficiary relationships. As Healy argues (2004, 387):

Helping, giving, or caring is systematically elicited from people by organizations that are usually the immediate recipients of individual goodwill or, at least, the necessary brokers for it. Without these organizations, much of the altruism we observe would not happen. Altruism, in short, is highly institutionalized.

A seminal work in this tradition is Richard Titmuss’s The Gift Relationship (1970), which examines cross-national variations in how the act of giving blood is structured. Other studies explore the reciprocal nature of giving (Ostrander and Schervish 1990; Halfpenny 1999), drawing attention to network ties between donors and beneficiaries, and how charitable patterns are affected by fundraising strategies and practices (Alexander 1998). Beyond their fundraising efficacy, solicitation strategies are critical in constituting the capacity of donors to participate in the charitable sphere. In this view, solicitation strategies do not merely respond to donor preferences - they help create those preferences as well:

The production of altruistic action can be thought of as a resource extraction problem for organizations...An individual’s capacity for altruism and the social organization of procurement are not separate questions, but rather two aspects of the same process. As organizations create contexts for giving they generate altruistic action differentially across populations (Healy 204, 388).

At the meso-level, scholars scrutinize the efficacy of organized solicitation strategies and cultural frameworks in growing donor bases and mobilizing actors into charitable action (2007). Studying the emergence of giving circles, Eikenberry (2006) emphasizes how ‘new philanthropy’ frameworks have helped reframe conventional understandings of charitable giving. Contrasted to the traditional approach of “writing a check” to charity, the newer frame emphasizes hands-on collaboration, unconventional giving, and a focus on small organizations and grassroots. Meanwhile, Barman (2007) explores workplace charity and examines how the United Way structures philanthropic opportunities for donors through donor control and gift designation. A similar change of frame is required to understand new online channels and mechanisms as well.

This literature suggests a great need to expand knowledge of the broader impacts of solicitation strategies beyond their efficacy at securing financial donations. Donating is more than an economic transaction, it is also a participatory act which transforms relationships. Movements like #GivingTuesday play a crucial role in transforming
the charitable landscape by fostering connections and civic identities that provide new meaning to the act of giving. Deepening understanding of how the social foundation of giving is nurtured and effectively sustained, beyond the initial transaction, remains critical to understanding and encouraging charitable giving.

Summary

• The strongest predictor of giving is have been asked by someone to give
• Organizational analyses focus on solicitation strategies that constitute and make altruism possible
• Cultural frameworks constitute giving as a social and participatory activity

II.2 Mechanisms of Giving

This section focuses on the specific mechanisms that influence the decision to give at the point of solicitation. Being asked to give a donation “in and of itself has been shown to be the single biggest determinant of charitable giving” (Barman 2017). A wealth of studies emphasize the importance of effective solicitation techniques in securing charitable donations (Simmons and Emanuele 2004; Wiepking and Maas 2009).

Therefore, understanding how and why solicitation succeeds or fails is critical to any fundraising practice. As in the previous section, a discussion of economic determinants is followed by a review of psychological and sociological explanations.

II.2.1 COSTS AND INCENTIVES

When financial costs of giving are lowered, the likelihood of giving increases (Karlan and List 2007). Fundraisers employ various solicitation techniques to subsidize costs of giving - including rebates, gifts, and gift-matching. Experiments have found that gift-matching is reliably more effective than other techniques at encouraging gift-giving (Eckel and Grossman 2003; Karlan and Shafir 2011; Anik, Norton and Ariely 2014).

Benabou and Tirole (2006) argue that warm glow theory helps explain why rebate subsidies can be less effective than matching subsidies. Whereas matching lowers cost but does not provide reimbursement, accepting rebates may make donors feel “greedy” and less altruistic. They return to the tension between prosocial feelings and market mentalities, and suggest that rebates dilute the donor’s feelings of self-worth.

Besides a financial incentive, matching helps communicate information concerning the suitability of a charitable cause for donors (i.e. “market signals”). A leadership match can promote the credibility and value of a charitable organization or cause. Likewise, matches signal that the cause is a time-imperative need that is worthy of social support (Vesterlund 2003). Familiarity and the reputation of the leader are also shown to be a determinants for successful matching.

The literature is still unclear about the long-term effects of matching incentives on sustaining donations or attracting loyal donors. Meier (2007) finds that matching initially increases contributions, but after matching has ceased the contribution rate declines. The research suggests that the matching mechanism can have a negative net effect on participation rate. Consequently, when measuring the impact of matching tactics, it’s important to assess effects on the donor beyond the matching period itself.
Summary

• Incentives that lower giving costs lead to more donations
• Donor matching has stronger effects than rebates or subsidies
• Matching has key signalling elements that lower uncertainty for donors
• More research is needed into the long-term effects of matching on donations

II.2.2 EMOTIONS AND MOODS

As indicated in section II.1.4, the ‘joy of giving’ may be an implicit reward donors seek when giving. Psychological evidence shows positive emotion encourage a giving attitude. Smith and Davidson describe a ‘paradox of generosity’: individuals who voluntarily and purposively give resources report a far higher rate of happiness than those who do not participate in charitable giving (2014). Indeed, donors self-report ‘feeling good’ as one reason they give to charity (Bekkers and Wiepking 2011).

Research on emotions and moods often focuses on the psychological impacts of various solicitation techniques. For instance, the ‘foot-in-mouth effect’ is a solicitation technique that encourages positive donor moods by asking initial questions that always lead to positive answers. Other research has found that people are more likely to donate when purchasing frivolous products than functional ones (Strahilevitz and Myers 1998). In a similar vein, one lab experiment shows that as donors are provided with more information to deliberate a decision emotion-based giving goes down (Small, Loewenstein, and Slovic 2007). Bekkers and Wiepking advise fundraisers “to test fundraising materials for their mood effects, and to avoid the use of materials that bring about a negative mood” (2011a: 939).

Studies suggest that donor empathy also plays an important (albeit complex) role in the decision to give. Whereas humanistic and egalitarian values have generally positive effects on giving, the effects of empathy are conditional - both on context and on how donors view the beneficiaries. Experiments have shown that photographs of individual beneficiaries can elicit positive emotions and motivate generosity (Genevsky et al. 2013). However, these positive associations rely on donor’s moral assessment of recipients. Lee, Winterich, and Ross show that when donors perceive the beneficiaries as “responsible” for their own plight, the donor is less willing to give (2014).

Further, empathy is an especially difficult emotion to leverage because it is associated with feelings individuals may actively seek to avoid (e.g. self-reflection, guilt) or are known by the prospective donors themselves to affect their self-judgment. Field experiments have shown individuals go out of their way to avoid emotion-driven solicitation, whether to justify not giving or to shield themselves from the guilt of saying no (Exley and Petrie 2015). In sum, the research on emotion and moods highlights irrational and subjective factors that influence donor decision-making.

Summary

• Individuals who give report higher levels of happiness
• Positive moods are associated with higher propensity to give
• Empathy is dependent on donor perceptions of beneficiaries
• Empathy involves negative emotions (e.g. guilt) that can lead to avoiding emotion-driven solicitation

II.2.3 SOCIAL IMAGE AND REPUTATION

As with economic incentives (see section II.1.4), donor motivations based on social approval seemingly contradict the altruistic image of charitable giving. While donors often deny the
influence of peer pressure, social approval and reputation is consistently found to be a strong driver behind charitable donations (Smith and McSweeney 2007). The reputational gains or social costs accrued by giving or not giving are mediated by the relative visibility and anonymity of the charitable act itself (Karlan and McConnell 2013).

When presented a choice, donors typically prefer their gifts to be made publicly known (Andreoni and Petrie 2004). Scholars note the utility of ‘conspicuous compassion’ or providing symbolic prizes - e.g. ribbons, bumper stickers - that donors use to self-promote their altruism (Grace and Griffin 2006). Lab research suggests that selective recognition, or indicating that high-level donors will be recognized, has positive effects on total charitable contributions (Samek and Sheremeta 2014).

The donor image mechanism may be leveraged with new donors by ensuring their generosity is consistently affirmed. The ‘foot-in-the-door’ technique uses an initial small donation, suitably affirmed as generous by the solicitor, to create pressure for a second larger donation ask. For existing donors, fundraisers can leverage donor image through reminders of past gifts. Survey research has found that when committed donors anticipate negative consequences for the beneficiary group, or otherwise anticipate feeling guilty, they are more likely to donate again (Sargeant and Woodliffe 2005; Smith and McSweeney 2007).

Finally, there are important interactions between financial incentives and social image. Ariely, Bracha, and Meier (2007) argue that donor image motivations may undermine monetary incentives, specifically when those incentives are made known to a donor’s peer network. The authors suggest monetary incentives are more likely to be counterproductive for donations that are made public than for discrete private donation.

Summary

- Social approval and reputation have significant influence on donor behavior
- When presented with a choice, donors choose to have their giving publicly recognized
- Donor image can be leveraged through reminders of past gifts
- Monetary incentives can undermine a donor’s wish to be seen as altruistic by peers

II.2.4 EFFICACY AND NONPROFIT CREDIBILITY

When donors believe their contribution will not make a difference, they are less likely to give. Thus, positive perception of charitable “efficacy” and belief that nonprofit activity has meaningful impact are key motivations to donate (Bekkers and Wiepking 2011a). Surveys reveal making a meaningful impact to be a priority donor preference (Smith and McSweeney 2007), and how an organization uses contributions is reported as a top donor concern (Camber Collective 2015).

While surveys show charity effectiveness is a popular donor preference, more research is needed to assess the impacts of accountability and transparency on giving outcomes. Some research has suggested that organizational transparency and efficiency is positively related to the amount of donations the organization receives, particularly among committed donors (Aton et al. 2012). However, work remains to be done to better understand the ways donors access and interpret information related to effectiveness.

Discussed previously in section II.2.1, leadership matching and endorsement by reputable
individuals is one means by which donors evaluate effectiveness. Lab research shows that the impact of leadership grants is dependent on the leader’s celebrity and status. Meanwhile, another experiment has found that “flashy” solicitation materials may undercut a nonprofit’s credibility (Bekkers and Crutzen 2007).

Efficacy perceptions are also tied to perceptions of organizational costs. Survey research has found that giving is negatively affected by perception of high-cost fundraising methods (Sargeant and Woodliffe 2005). Relatedly, studies have suggested that donors are inclined to overestimate the cost of charitable fundraising. Donors are more likely to contribute when they sense their contributions are going to a charity’s impactful activities and not to their overhead or fundraising (Sargaent, Ford and West 2006). As there is no agreed upon measure of impact and effectiveness, this is largely dependent on the donor’s heuristics and interpretation of available information and narratives.

Summary
• Nonprofit efficacy and trust are important determinants of giving
• More research is needed on relationship of nonprofit transparency with giving
• Leadership matching is one way donors estimate nonprofit effectiveness
• A donor’s likelihood of giving is negatively affected by perceptions of high-cost fundraising

II.2.5 MESSAGING AND BENEFICIARY FRAMING

The stories told by fundraisers convey more than a social need. They also ascribe behavioral norms, legitimate charitable efforts, and frame the identities of donors and benefactors. Solicitation messages have both informational and emotional components and shape donor perceptions of beneficiary need (Sargent, Ford and West 2006).

On an emotional level, Merchant, Ford, and Sargent (2010) argue that the best stories are tools that help guide donors through emotional stages, from initial negative feelings of being made aware of a problem to anticipating a positive emotional pay-off in donating to a cause. Research has shown that effective nonprofit messaging connects to donor self-identity, personal experience, and feelings of community belonging.

Donor-beneficiary relationships are framed through fundraiser messaging, and much research has examined how the implicit or explicit presence of beneficiary identity in messaging affects donor solicitation. Hung and Wyer (2009) find that generating sympathy by charitable advertising is highly dependent on donors pre-existing capacity to ‘imagine’ the lives of beneficiaries. They find sympathy effects are strongest when donors have little previous exposure to the stories of beneficiaries in question. Diamond and Gooding-Williams suggest that emotion-based messaging is more effective on new donors than on repeat donors (2002).

Other research has looked at solicitation imagery and visual depiction of beneficiaries. In a lab experiment, Genevsky et al. (2013) find that facial pictures of beneficiaries engender positive emotions in donors and lead to heightened generous feelings. Meanwhile, Small and Verrochi (2009) contend that the facial expressions of people intended to be helped are important in transferring an intended emotional response: sad faces transfer sadder emotions and are believed more likely to elicit sympathy.
Finally, research suggests that stories that stress unique and distinguishable beneficiaries are more effective than statistics concerning more vague and diverse populations. Smith, Faro, and Burson (2012) call this the ‘entitativity effect’. Entitativity is the relative cohesion and uniformity of a group. The authors find the greater conveyed entitativity of beneficiaries - that is, the more beneficiaries are presented as a singular identifiable group - the easier it is for donors to form a moral judgment and elicit an empathetic response.

Summary

- The best stories guide donors to the emotional payoff of giving to a cause
- Emotional stories are most impactful on new donors
- The clearer beneficiaries are defined as a singular and unified group the higher an emotional response

II.2.6 CAMPAIGNS, GIVING REGIMES, GENEROSITY CYCLES

While many of the mechanisms discussed above have been extensively studied in the literature, there is still a lack of study on more relational and collective mechanisms of giving. Whereas mechanisms in previous sections focus on factors involved in individual-level donor decision-making, those below are more relevant to organizational and community-level factors that shape solicitation outcomes.

As Van Leeuwen and Wiepking suggest, broad-based and national charitable campaigning reflects “an ocean to be explored” (2012, 233). The lack of research reflects the rareness of large-scale campaigns as observed phenomena, a shortage of data, and a lack of theory on how charitable campaigns are collectively mobilized. Consequently, case studies of national campaigns have largely been restricted to psychological analyses of disaster relief charity.

These studies stress the unique characteristics of disaster-based fundraising. Such events are often international, heavily publicized by media, and triggered by acute demand for immediate help. Disaster relief often involves intergroup donor-beneficiary relations, where one community or country assists an outside group. Research finds natural disaster relief attains higher donations than human-made disasters and that donors respond in higher proportion to domestic disasters than out-of-country events (Einholf, Philbrick, and Slay 2012).

A cross-national review of 500 campaigns in the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and the United States identify three determinants of campaign success: 1) how recipients are perceived, such as need, agency, and blamelessness; 2) donor characteristics, including geographic and cultural proximity to recipients; 3) the structural characteristics of the “giving regime” (van Leeuwen and Wiepking 2012). A giving regime may be understood as the opportunities and constraints local contexts provide to growing charitable campaigns, such as level of social trust, government rules and regulations concerning charity, media coverage, national economic cycles, and campaign timing.

The giving regime notion, while somewhat vague, provides a means for interpreting cross-national differences in charitable campaign outcomes. It also connects to political and sociological scholarship on social movements (see Kreisi, Snow, and Soule 2007), particularly the idea that national campaigns are shaped by political opportunity structures and cycles of protest. This scholarship highlights how campaigns are embedded in local contexts, and on
Social psychology studies of charitable campaigns are largely limited to interpreting phenomena as aggregate individual behavior. Consequently, they minimize the role of fundraising strategy in shaping giving outcomes. For instance, while psychological analyses emphasize donor perceptions as a key determinant, they downplay the role of fundraisers in fostering perceptions through donor messaging and framing choices. Likewise, while donor-beneficiary proximity or affinity is cited as a key determinant of campaign success (van Leeuwen and Wiepking 2012), little attention has been paid to how fundraisers may effectively overcome existing intergroup and cultural divides between donors and beneficiaries. Are campaigns only successful when beneficiaries are ‘blameless’? How do campaigns then succeed where beneficiaries are viewed as politically contentious or otherwise ‘difficult’?

Further, there is a need to better understand the temporal dynamics of charitable campaigns and generosity cycles. Recent literature has begun exploring the most effective times to employ leadership matching in a campaign cycle (Castillo, Petrie, and Samek 2017) and when social information concerning peer donations is most effective at growing crowdfunding campaigns (van Tuenenbroek and Bekkers 2017). In sum, there are many opportunities to develop a better understanding of the temporal dynamics of charitable campaigning.

**Summary**

- More research is needed on national level comparisons of giving campaigns
- Disaster and international relief campaigns have unique intergroup dynamics
- Giving Regime is a way to interpret different cross-national contexts for giving
- More studies are needed on the effects of campaign strategy for fundraising outcomes

**II.2.7 ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL AND COLLECTIVE GIVING**

With the exception of online crowdfunding (discussed in Section III), newer, more public, and grassroots solicitation strategies have received relatively little scrutiny. Micro-level models of giving behavior limit group dynamics to the role of norms, information, and social pressure. In such models, the effect of the constitutive organizations in shaping giving behavior as collective activity is largely ignored. As a consequence, organizational strategies and innovations that define the participatory and civic aspects of giving remain a relatively undeveloped area of giving research.

Two organizational forms of giving that have received some attention are workplace charity and giving circles. Both modes are more public than traditional private giving. Workplace charity refers to formal programs that solicit collective donations from employees of an organization, typically via payroll deduction (Barman 2007). A US survey of workplace giving campaigns (Nesbitt, Christensen, and Gossett 2012) finds that workplace charity is effective in widening giving participation. At the same time, the authors find workplace giving does not displace personal giving, with 93% of participants who give through workplace charity indicating they also give outside the workplace. The researchers also found that workplace structure was reflected in the level of employee contributions: workers of higher position, seniority, and tenure
gave more than non-tenured and lower seniority employees. While this pattern agrees with the influence of education and wealth, other sociodemographic determinants (age, religion) were found to be less relevant. This suggests workplace dynamics, such as organizational hierarchy and level of workplace attachment, are relevant variables in effective workplace charity campaigns.

“Giving circles” are grassroots community-based initiatives, operating through loose networks or small formal groups, where members pool time and funds for selected causes (Eikenberry 2006). While social venture partnerships are the best known and more professionalized kind of this arrangement, smaller ‘neighbourhood philanthropy’ initiatives also operate in a less bureaucratic and participatory form. Giving circles provide not only a means to give collectively, but also serve as means for members to educate and network. Member education takes place both informally, through learning about everyday fundraising operations, and through formal workshops, seminars, and presentations.

Research on the giving circle landscape in the US, drawing from web searches and secondary data, estimates there are 1,087 active, independently run initiatives (Collective Giving Research Group 2016). Further, it is estimated that giving circles have engaged 150,000 Americans and raised $1.29 billion in the past 15 years. As community-driven initiatives, the fundraising efforts of giving circles are often directed to issues directly relevant to the locality or identity of its membership. They more commonly support causes related to women and girls, human services, education, and health. While they less commonly support international or religious causes. The preference in causes is likely owed to member composition of giving circles, who tend to be local and more commonly women.

Workplace charity and giving circles represent interesting developments in the way altruism is being mobilized. Along with online giving (discussed in next section), evolving organizational models reflect how past notions of giving as ‘breaking out the checkbook’ are currently being redefined. In section III.2, similar organizational and movement-driven innovations are discussed.

Summary

• More research is needed on grassroots and collective giving
• Workplace charity and giving circles are two relatively new forms of collective giving
• Research on workplace charity suggests organizational environment shapes giving outcomes
• Research on giving circles has highlighted their participatory and educational elements
II.3 Online Giving

The scholarly literature on online giving is very much nascent. Limited available research prevents a complete synthetic review as the previous sections. Instead, we discuss four themes prevalent in current studies of online giving, followed by a summary of seven relevant and noteworthy studies.

II.3.1 FOUR THEMES

How online contexts mediate existing giving mechanisms

Research has tried to account for the influence of digital networks and social media on shaping giving costs, norms, social pressure, and solicitation strategy. In particular, studies point to two central dynamics that are transforming online giving contexts: first, radically altered transaction costs in relaying information and disseminating solicitation requests; second, the greater ‘public’ or socially visible aspects of giving online. Concerning the first, scholarship has been interested in how social media fosters broader solicitation opportunities through online social networks. The second dynamic speaks to the heightened consideration of peer reputation and audience when contributing or soliciting across social media.

The efficacy of crowdfunding as a solicitation strategy

In crowdfunding, a fundraising goal is achieved by amassing a very large number of relatively small individual contributions. The crowdfunding model leverages ‘the strength of weak ties’ by permitting low-level, low-risk contributions by individuals who may be only tangentially connected to a cause. In peer-to-peer fundraising, the networks of committed or “first mover” donors can be leveraged to engage bystanders or those less tied to a charitable cause. Crowdfunding models may help overcome issues of donor proximity, low-level social trust, and lack of awareness, which all hinder traditional fundraising efforts. More critical views, meanwhile, contend that crowdfunding involves a ‘slacktivist’ model of participation, suggesting that such efforts are unlikely to produce sustained giving behavior for the long-term.

Nonprofit use of social media for community engagement

Research has started to account for how nonprofits are using online tools to strengthen ties and engagement with their donor communities, both during and outside fundraising campaigns. This includes quantitative approaches to tracking number of ‘likes’ and social media mentions through services such as Facebook and Twitter and textual analyses of messaging content and online perceptions, as well as qualitative study of nonprofit practice in developing online engagement capacity. Notably, much early research has focused on measuring fundraising campaign outcomes. However, there is also a need to understand nonprofit online engagement outside of fundraising, specifically how donor communities and networks are cultivated in the interim between campaigns.

How online activity transforms participatory aspects

The last theme connects online giving with the broader literature on digital collective action and civic participation. Crowdfunding and online giving are more than fundraising strategies, they’re also new means for donors to participate and champion civic causes in the public sphere. Online fundraising campaigns can generate new social ties and digital communities, which may persist long after the fundraising drive itself. Moreover, the increased
visibility of online communication provides new ways for donors to ‘personalize’ giving activities for public consumption and leverage them for civic participation. This theme is discussed further in the conclusion.

II.3.2 SELECTED RESEARCH ON ONLINE GIVING

The Determinants of Giving Through Social Media, Saxton and Wang (2014)

This study employs data from Facebook Causes to explore how online fundraising differs from traditional offline methods. A 2010 sample of fundraising efforts by 66 top US nonprofits using Facebook Causes is analyzed. The authors find that there is a distinct “social network effect” that contradicts traditional economic explanations of giving outcomes. They find that giving costs and organizational efficacy are less influential in generating online donations. Rather an organization’s “web capacity”, i.e. the reach and quality of its website, is observed to be the critical determinant for online campaign success. The study further suggests that smaller organizations stand to benefit from online outreach and raising awareness more than larger nonprofits, who may already be known to the public.

Fundraising Through Online Social Networks, Castillo, Petrie, and Wardell (2014)

This field experiment using Facebook activity scrutinizes the implications of peer-to-peer solicitation on traditional mechanisms of cost and social pressure. The authors stress that the Facebook environment has distinct transaction costs and norms related to sending and receiving peer donation requests. In the experiment, donors who had completed an online transaction were asked to share their donation either on their profile wall or via private message to a Facebook friend. Some of the donors were offered a small ‘add-on’ donation for completing this request. The researchers found that the add-on donation increased a donor’s willingness to post. Further, they found that nuisance costs can impede asking online: those not already logged into Facebook were less willing to complete the request. Finally, they found that there are differential social costs to posting publicly versus by private message. Donors needed larger monetary incentives for sending a personal request vis-a-vis sending out a general request on their Facebook wall.

Friends Asking Friends For Charity, Castillo, Petrie, and Wardell (2017)

A follow up to the study above, this field experiment similarly looks at crowdfunding campaigning on Facebook. In this experiment, the researchers examine three different forms of peer-to-peer solicitation: diffuse solicitation over a donor’s Facebook wall; direct solicitation to a friend by private message; and direct solicitation by posting on the friend’s wall. As with the previous experiment, small add-on incentives were randomly assigned to donors. They find that audience and social pressure, rather than information efficiency, is the key mechanism in successful social media fundraising. While diffuse messaging was the most popular method of peer-to-peer solicitation, directly asking a friend to give on their wall was most economically effective (i.e. a more favourable ratio of donation amount received to expenditure on incentive). The authors find direct solicitation had a two-dollar return for every dollar spent on incentives. However, the willingness to make a direct and highly visible appeal was found to be the least popular of the three methods.
How Does Social Media Affect Contribution to Public Versus Private Goods, Hong, Hu, and Burtch (2015)

Findings from this panel study suggest that the distinct crowdfunding dynamics of Twitter and Facebook make the latter platform more likely to enable successful charity fundraising. Combining IndieGoGo data with Twitter and Facebook media sharing activities, the researchers tracked the progress of 223 crowdfunding campaigns (both charitable and non-charitable) over a span of thirty days. Assessing the relationship between social media sharing and financial contributions, the authors find a stronger relationship between Facebook sharing and public good contributions than with sharing on Twitter. The authors theorize that Facebook is more effective for public good crowdfunding as its networking mechanisms are more suited to support normative behavior. This finding connects back to the previous discussion on social networks and trust in section II.1.9.

Charitable Giving and Social Contagion in Online Networks, Lacetera, Macis, or Mele (2016)

This study found negative implications for the long-term effectiveness of social media networking in developing sustained giving behaviors across online communities. The researchers employ individual-level longitudinal data and evidence from a social media application called HelpAttack! that broadcasts donor activity related to a charitable campaign. While the authors find that broadcasting donations is positively associated with donations, their analysis suggests this association is due more to network homophily (i.e. individuals in the network share pre-existing giving attributes) than due to contagion effects. It should be noted that the study is limited to one campaign, and donor broadcasts in that campaign reached approximately 6.4 million users yet only generated 30 donations.

The Impact of Social Information in Crowdfunding Campaigns, Van Teunenbroek and Bekkers (2017)

A similar negative finding is found in this project, which employs a large natural field experiment (n=23,676) among visitors to a crowdfunding platform for independent artists and nonprofits in the arts and cultural sector. When visiting the project's website, individuals were exposed to information relating to the average donation of previous donors. Those who were exposed to this information were not found to be more likely to donate than those who were not exposed. However, exposure to social information did increase the likelihood of donors to give higher amounts.

Legitimacy Work: Invisible Work in Philanthropic Crowdfunding, Anaka and Voida (2016)

Employing qualitative interviews and ethnographic analysis of philanthropic crowdfunding, this research examines behind-the-scenes activities involved in creating successful crowdfunding platforms. It examines the functions of fundraisers, stakeholders, and organizations in legitimizing and supporting the acceptance of technological platforms as means to collect donations. The study suggests that platform accountability and donor trust in technology are important elements in effective crowdfunding.
#GivingTuesday reflects the most recent transformations in contemporary charitable giving. Part III is composed of two sections. The first section reviews existing research using #GivingTuesday data. The second section details innovative cases that, similar to #GivingTuesday, provide insight into the changing nature of giving.
III.1 #GivingTuesday Data Analyses

III.1.1 A FIELD EXPERIMENT ON INTERTEMPORAL CHARITABLE GIVING

The researchers partnered with nine nonprofit organizations participating in #GivingTuesday to analyze emailed match offers to 39,000 potential donors. The research sought to assess how providing early discounted match offers may affect #GivingTuesday donations. Potential donors were randomized to receive a time-limited match of 80%, 100%, or 120% two or four weeks prior to the event. The field experiment finds that early offers significantly increased donation rates and amounts, without negatively affecting donations received on #GivingTuesday itself. The implication of the research is that lowering the price of giving in weeks prior to #GivingTuesday can bring in new donors and increase total donation amounts (Castillo, Petrie, and Wardell 2017).

III.1.2 BLOOMERANG ANALYSIS OF EMAILED DONATION APPEALS

Steven Shattuck of Bloomerang provides a short descriptive analysis of the email solicitations he received for #GivingTuesday. He finds the number of solicitations has more than doubled between 2016 (n=40) and 2017 (n=83). He notes that few organizations segment donors in their appeals or refer to past giving activities (7/83). He also found that very few organizations made an appeal to donate for reasons other than the fact it was #GivingTuesday. Shattuck's analysis indicates a need for continued research on communication and solicitation strategies of organizations partaking in the #GivingTuesday campaign.

III.1.3 WPI GENDER DIFFERENCES IN #GIVINGTUESDAY PARTICIPATION

The Women's Philanthropic Institute (WPI) assesses #GivingTuesday participation to understand the role gender plays in shaping the ways men and women give. The WPI analyzed donation records on Charity Navigator between October 2015 and August 2017. Excluding data from faith-based organizations, WPI gathered information on organizations receiving #GivingTuesday donations, as well as the sociodemographic identity of donors. They find that, while donation levels and amounts for women and men both sharply rise on #GivingTuesday, women participate in greater numbers than men. Moreover, WPI also found that women increased their donations to health and education organizations relative to the rest of the year.

III.1.4 DATAKIND #GIVINGTUESDAY INSIGHT REPORT

In partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and #GivingTuesday, DataKind's #GivingTuesday DataDive in March 2017 engaged over 100 volunteer data scientists and technologists to assess the datasets of 36 corporate and nonprofit data providers. The collaborative research effort has assessed the effects of #GivingTuesday on year-round charitable giving, as well as the use and efficacy of #GivingTuesday social media storytelling. The report also documents the organizational characteristics of nonprofits participating in the event. The analysis found that only 5% of donors in the database gave prior to #GivingTuesday and that average individual donations increased from $160 to $284 in the

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22 An Analysis of 83 #GivingTuesday 2017 Email Appeals: https://bloomerang.co/blog/an-analysis-of-83-givingtuesday-2017-email-appeals/
23 Gender Differences in #GivingTuesday Participation: https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/handle/1805/14782
period afterward. This indicates #GivingTuesday “may be positively changing giving behaviors (e.g., recurring gifts, increased donations) beyond just motivating donors to give on the day itself”.

III.1.5 CLASSY #GIVINGTUESDAY PLATFORM DATA ANALYSIS

Analyzing transaction data of donations made through their online platform, Classy tracked donor activity on #GivingTuesday. They compared #GivingTuesday donor volumes to normal period donations (year-round donations), as well as to activity taking place on December 31st and during disaster relief campaigns. They found a drastic spike in average donor activity in the month surrounding #GivingTuesday, including higher growth in number of donations and website visits than end-of-the-year giving. #GivingTuesday was found to bring in twice as many new donors to Classy's platform than December 31. Further, they found that new donors on #GivingTuesday were 10 to 15 percent more likely than new donors on December 31 to give again at a later date.

III.1.6 BLACKBAUD #GIVINGTUESDAY TRENDS

As a founding partner of #GivingTuesday, Blackbaud has been tracking online giving trends since its inception. The report includes giving data from more than 4,300 organizations representing $55.6 million in online #GivingTuesday donations since 2012 and provides analysis of giving activity over time and by sector. Five key findings: 1) #GivingTuesday has had double-digit growth in online donations for each year since 2012; 2) Large organizations receive most donations, though recent trends suggest more donations going to medium-size organizations; 3) Faith-based organizations receive the largest portion of donations (21%); 4) Average donation amounts top $150; 5) 17% of donor form views come through mobile devices.

III.2 New Collective Giving Initiatives

New digital platforms and channels are creating new opportunities for the nonprofit sector. The initiatives profiled here reflect new organizational and associational approaches to generating and shaping collective generosity. Notably, these initiatives have movement-like aspects - similar to #GivingTuesday. They suggest an increasing need to understand the overlaps and differences between charitable giving and other types of mobilized civic or political participation.

III.2.1 #BELLLETSTALK

Since 2011, #BellLetsTalk has been an annual campaign and fundraiser for the promotion of mental health awareness and education. While the event may be seen as traditional cause-related marketing, it is significant in terms of its reach, effective social media use, and political importance in initiating dialogue on mental health issues in Canada (and increasingly the US). The campaign is centered on the #BellLetsTalk hashtag, which users invoke to share personal stories of mental health struggle and acknowledge ongoing social stigma. With each use of the hashtag on Twitter, Bell pledges 5 cents to mental health charity (totalling $6,919,199 for the 2018 event). The

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25 New Data Reveals #GivingTuesday Is a Goldmine of New Donors: https://www.classy.org/blog/giving-tuesday-data-reveals-new-donors/


27 Bell Let’s Talk: https://letstalk.bell.ca/en/
day is also an opportunity for mental health nonprofits to fundraise and reach donors. The initiative's significance is also evident in its public endorsement by the Canadian government, which used the 2018 event to promote mental health awareness for veterans and personnel of the Canadian Armed Forces.

III.2.2 GROUNDSWELL COMMUNITY JUSTICE TRUST FUND28

Based in Toronto, Groundswell blends traditional charity and social activism outside the mainstream. The community trust is volunteer-run and is not a registered nonprofit. Nonetheless, it operates much as a foundation would in receiving funds from private donors, which are dispersed as grants to activist groups involved in social justice causes. Groundswell promotes its role as broker and infrastructure builder within Canada’s community activist sphere. It connects donors and supporters of political causes to small-scale organizations and initiatives that may otherwise receive little attention in the nonprofit sector.

III.2.3 THE BEEHIVE COLLECTIVE29

Established in 2008, The Beehive Collective is an example of a giving circle that sustains a local culture of giving in Raleigh, North Carolina. Members commit to providing half of one percent of their annual income to a collective pool. Each year, the Beehive provides one large grant (above $20,000) and one small grant to local nonprofit initiatives. Although both men and women comprise its membership, the Beehive is committed to fostering women’s leadership and its board is exclusively reserved for women. Besides fundraising, the Beehive engages in educational and community networking activities such as its Kick Ass Ladies Club.

28 Groundswell Community Justice Trust Fund: https://groundswellfund.ca/
29 The Beehive Collective: http://www.thebeehivecollective.org/
III.2.4 MOVEMBER\textsuperscript{30}

Movember is an annual global November event that invites men to grow moustaches to promote awareness and charity for issues related to men’s health, such as prostate cancer, testicular cancer, and men’s suicide. Beginning in Australia in 2003, the event spawned the registered charity Movember Foundation in 2006, which has raised $580 million in charitable donations. Since 2011, Canadians have been the largest contributors to the event. Movember is notable for its creative use of ‘conspicuous consumption’ and personalization of charitable participation. The playful and performative aspect of growing a moustache enables donors to self-experiment and express themselves as participants in the movement, outside of its core fundraising purpose. Section II.2.7 of this review discusses literature on the participatory components of collective giving.

\textsuperscript{30} Movember: https://ca.movember.com/

III.2.5 THE EFFECTIVE ALTRUISM MOVEMENT\textsuperscript{31}

Effective Altruism (EA) is a rationalist and philosophic-driven movement that advocates donors to apply evidenced-based logic to their charitable decision-making. Unlike other initiatives noted here, its collective values are neither cause-specific nor identity-based. Nor like #GivingTuesday, does EA seek to benefit the charitable sector as a whole. Rather, the movement stresses the use of high-quality evidence and impartial decision-making standards in distinguishing useful and just charity from less effective charity. The EA movement is internationally represented through various nonprofit organizations, such as 80,000 Hours and GiveWell, bi-annual global conferences, and localized and informal communities. Although the movement champions cause-neutrality, it most often prioritizes issues relevant to global poverty alleviation, animal welfare, and lowering the risk of broad-based human catastrophe.

\textsuperscript{31} Effective Altruism: https://www.effectivealtruism.org/
This review began with the claim that ‘#GivingTuesday is more than a moment, it’s a movement’, a sentiment frequently voiced by its participants and stakeholders. The objectives of this movement are broad—creating more engagement and participation in the nonprofit sector—with giving as an important participatory activity and focus.

To that end, understanding why we give - and the associated mechanisms, triggers, and motivations - is an essential part of the initiative. The sector - including practitioners and service providers - needs this understanding to engage donors, thereby driving and expanding the movement. The continuing growth and emergence of digital practices and platforms is further underlining this need - as new forums and channels mean new opportunities and places for engaging donors.

This literature review is part of these efforts to develop a better, shared understanding of giving - and increase its application. We synthesized research from many domains and disciplines, to both provide a starting point for new research, and enable knowledge transfer from academia to the sector.

But this is still a starting point - further work and research is needed. More research will generate more insights, which will enable new and better practice - enabling the #GivingTuesday movement to grow and increase its impact. To conclude the literature review, we describe two areas for continuing this work:

• Research gaps and opportunities
• Knowledge transfer needs
Research Gaps and Opportunities

As Section II.1 of this review suggests, the great majority of past scholarship on giving is concerned with how altruism arises at the level of individual donors. Individualistic models implicitly seek to uncover secrets of basic altruistic impulses that seemingly lie inside the human heart. The basic argument is that if fundraisers can just learn the right solicitation recipe - the right messaging, the right incentives, the right emotional triggers, for the right donor profile - than individuals will respond with due charitable kindness and open their pocketbooks.

It is far less common to see, and study, giving as something that is created, cultivated, and implemented by concerted and collective efforts. Even though altruism is often thought of as ‘giving back to the community’, in much research ‘the community’ is taken to be a passive recipient of individual generosity. This notion is difficult to square with a movement like #GivingTuesday, which mobilizes and engages donors through community-driven action.

Consequently, there is a need to understand the impacts, challenges, and possibilities of #GivingTuesday from a relational and movement-oriented perspective. #GivingTuesday outcomes can certainly be observed in terms of individual aggregate behavior (e.g. donations received, raising awareness, or increasing likelihood for repeat donations, etc.), but it is impossible to understand how the movement grows and transforms behavior without observing its collective and processual aspects. This means scrutinizing its organizational, cultural, campaign, and participatory components - i.e., how #GivingTuesday parts connect as a whole.

By improving knowledge of how #GivingTuesday engages collective actions (not only monetary contributions), and how these actions might vary across place and time, there can be better understanding of the possibilities and barriers existing for movement growth. To that end, four potential areas for future #GivingTuesday research are discussed below.

1. Organizational innovations
2. Generosity cycles, timing, and targeting
3. Participatory giving, framing, and donor identity-making
4. Online giving and connective action

1. Organizational innovations

Section II.1.10 of this review discusses the notion of ‘altruism as an organizational problem’. A relational view stresses the primary role of social ties in shaping giving practices. As noted, the strongest predictor of an individual donating to charity is someone asking them to donate. Meanwhile, the strongest predictor of an individual joining a movement is having a social connection with someone already participating in the movement (McAdam 1993). These findings suggest that relationships - groups, communities, networks, and organizations - hold precedence over donor values and individual preferences as the most critical factor determining participation.

Research is needed to understand how #GivingTuesday creates new relationships between fundraisers and donors, and alters existing ones: What new kinds of giving collectives and networks have emerged from the event? How is action mobilized through communities? How is
local action linked to national and global action? Does #GivingTuesday have more success for certain types of nonprofits than others? How are #GivingTuesday partnerships and coalitions among nonprofits undertaken? How do these partnerships vary by sector, organizational type, and locality? Further, there is need for comparative analysis with other movement-styled giving initiatives (as those summarized in Section III.2).

2. Generosity cycles, timing, and targeting

Research is needed to understand how #GivingTuesday campaigns and giving unfolds around the day of giving. Section II.2.6 discusses notions of generosity cycles and giving regimes: i.e., that fundraising campaigns unfold over time and are shaped by local contexts. Research can focus on how #GivingTuesday campaigns are mobilized leading up to, during, and after the day of giving. Section III.1 highlights a study (Castillo, Petrie, and Wardell 2017) that measures timing effects of #GivingTuesday solicitation asks and another (Van Teunenbroek and Bekker 2017) that suggests how a crowdfunding cycle moves through a social network, from committed donors with strong ties to an issue to bystanders with weaker connections.

Future research might examine how different donor populations (e.g. committed, habitually-switching, and new givers) are differently engaged over the course of a #GivingTuesday campaign - from lead up to peak engagement to aftermath. Is it more opportune to target certain types of donors (e.g. market segment) prior to the event? How does a #GivingTuesday fundraising campaign compare to other kinds of fundraising campaigns (whether planned or emergency-driven) which nonprofits participate in?

3. Participatory giving, framing, and donor identity-making

Increased understanding is needed on the non-financial aspects of donor participation in the #GivingTuesday movement. DataKind’s #GivingTuesday Insight Report (see Section III.1) provides an interesting analysis of #MyGivingStory campaigns during #GivingTuesday. #MyGivingStory is a contest that invites participants to publish an account of why they contribute time and money to make a difference. Participants can win prizes for submitting their story. DataKind’s content analysis of #MyGivingStory submissions highlights both characteristics of those who have participated in the initiative, as well as the components of effective storytelling.

More research is needed to understand the impact of these kinds of participatory initiatives - both for those contributing to them and for audiences. What are the emotional and identity-based outcomes for contributing a #MyGivingStory? Do participants feel more connected to the #GivingTuesday cause? How effective are such stories for their audiences? Can links be made between organizations named in a story and increased donations? What other examples of identity-making through #GivingTuesday initiatives exist? How do organizations mobilize participation beyond financial contribution? How is personal altruism and involvement with #GivingTuesday made conspicuous for others to see? How are the personal issues, causes, and concerns of prospective donors enrolled through #GivingTuesday message framing by organizations?

4. Online giving and connective action

Lastly, research must continue to focus on the shifting nature of online giving. Knowledge must go
beyond simply tracking the growth of online giving, to better understand how altruism is cultivated, performed, and diffused through new web-based tools and social media. Though section II.3 demonstrates early research in this field, it is but the start of developing a corpus of knowledge the possibilities and constraints connective and web-mediated altruism.

Neither a naive optimism nor an aloof cynicism is warranted in assessing how new online practices are reshaping the contemporary nature of giving: only cold-eyed awareness that the utility of digital innovation comes down to how people understand online tools and conventions, and how they put them to use. In that vein, the research of Castillo, Petrie, and Wardell (2014; 2017) and Van Tuenenbroek and Bekkers (2017), which applies and tests existing theories of giving within new online contexts, are exemplary models to follow.

The body of past research on giving provides a rich source of questions and themes to guide innovative analysis of digitally connected altruism. It is for researchers to determine where existing explanations for charitable giving still fit with what happens online and where new theories are needed.

**Knowledge Transfer Needs**

Encouraging and enabling more research is necessary - but effective dissemination of the resulting research findings is required in order to ideas to realize the potential impacts of more research. The insights from that research need to be applied by the sector in order to have the intended effects - of increasing charitable giving and participation. Furthermore, this topic is being explored within disciplines and domains - but requires multidisciplinary approaches to develop a complete understanding. To that end, we see three potential areas to improve knowledge transfer between the sector and academia, as well as within academia itself:

5. Improved discoverability and access to relevant research
6. Prioritization and mobilization of grey literature
7. Increased collaboration and partnerships

**1.1. Improved discoverability and access to relevant research**

Because this topic spans many domains and disciplines, more sharing and discovery of related research across those borders is essential. By ensuring that resources on the topic can transcend the walls between disciplines - through specific strategies and interventions related to discoverability and access - academic researchers will be able to enrich their work with insight from other fields and create a more complete understanding of this area.

**2. Prioritization and mobilization of grey literature**

As digital platforms and technology become more implicated in fundraising, giving, and collective action, the data produced offers new opportunities for research (as evidenced by the #GivingTuesday Data Collaborative itself). Furthermore, this is also reducing the barriers for platforms and providers themselves to analyze the sector. Each technology company has an incentive to learn about best practices on their platform, and access to rich datasets and skills to leverage those. As this continues, more grey literature will continue to emerge on the subject of giving. Ensuring that this research is made discoverable and accessible to other practitioners and back to researchers will enhance the quality and quantity of research on this topic.
3. Increased collaboration and partnerships

As we state above, the desired impact of this research is dependent on the application of the resulting insights. Practitioners and service providers need to learn from and apply the results of the research to their work, in order to engage donors and encourage more giving. To that end, research that is anchored in the needs and priorities of practitioners will enable more applications - and developing those connections is a necessary steps in developing those shared research priorities. Researchers, service providers, and practitioners should be seeking out those partnerships to develop useful and actionable insights.

Conclusion

As #GivingTuesday continues to grow, it represents significant opportunities for new research, new insights, and new collaborations. This movement is dependent on both the creation of new knowledge, and its mobilization and application. We look forward to seeing the impacts of more relevant data from the #GivingTuesday Data Collaborative, more research on this topic, and more collaborations and partnerships.
Bibliography


