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2025 STRATEGY

Better Health for All Through Better Philanthropy

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Introduction

GIH's Journey to a More Just and Equitable Future

To say that 2020 was an unprecedented year is an understatement. Our lives have been forever changed. Numerous cracks in our society were revealed last year, resulting in more people being aware of the relationship between health and social factors such as employment, food, and housing. Although we are still dealing with the pandemic, millions of Americans have been vaccinated, leading many to begin thinking about the future.

At Grantmakers In Health (GIH), we have also been thinking about the future. More specifically, we have been thinking about what we learned during the past year, how health philanthropy is evolving, what it takes to achieve health equity, and what our role can and should be. To that end, we embarked on a journey to develop a strategic plan to guide our work for the next five years. We listened to the field regarding what we do well and where we can improve. We reflected on our values, current events, and the outcomes we want to have. The result is our new strategic plan.

Last year reinforced the need to adapt to changing circumstances; rethink the way we have done business; tackle inequities and the structures that perpetuate them; collaborate with others to address problems; and create more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environments. Through the implementation of our strategic plan, GIH will be applying these lessons to our work in the years ahead to help achieve better health for all through better philanthropy.

Our plan focuses on equity. We've woven equity throughout the key areas of our work as well as the four pillars of the strategy and identified equity impacts. In response to stakeholder feedback and in recognition of the need for systemic change to create sustainability and remove barriers, GIH will seek to educate health funders about the importance of policy and advocacy and connect them with policymakers in key areas. We understand that no one sector can solve the problems we face and will work to expand our reach across philanthropy and foster cross-sector collaborations to advance health equity and maximize health funders' impact.

For nearly 40 years, Grantmakers In Health has been a nonprofit, educational organization dedicated to helping trustees and staff at foundations and corporate giving programs improve the health of all people. We have developed programming, provided technical assistance, and hosted convenings to help funders learn, connect, and grow. That is the core of our being, and as we look to the future, we will look for ways to strengthen our connections to—and support of—myriad health funders. Helping funders learn, connect, and grow also requires us to help the field evolve. Like other sectors, health funders are on a continuum with regards to many issues, including trust-based philanthropy; community engagement and power sharing; health equity and social justice; and diversity, equity, and inclusion. We know there will be challenges in the years ahead, and we are committed to working with health funders to anticipate and overcome them.

We look forward to working with you to realize our shared vision: *Better health for all through better philanthropy.*

Sincerely,



Cara V. James
President and CEO

Executive Summary

Grantmakers In Health (GIH) is a nonprofit, educational organization dedicated to helping foundations and corporate giving programs improve the health of all people. Its mission is to foster communication and collaboration among grantmakers and others, and to help strengthen the grantmaking community's knowledge, skills, and effectiveness.

For nearly 40 years, GIH has been the home for health philanthropy, serving as the primary philanthropy-serving organization (PSO) for over 200 philanthropic organizations with a shared interest in health philanthropy. Its activities include convenings, publishing, education and training, technical assistance, and consultation, conducting studies in the field, and brokering professional relationships and connections. These activities are funded primarily through grants and contributions.

The landscape of philanthropy in general, and health philanthropy specifically, is experiencing a series of shifts that will shape our context in the coming years:

- **diversification of funders,**
- **growing social justice movements,**
- **continuing growth of conversion foundations,**
- **challenges of remote work and digital connection,**
- **increasing competition for funding,**
- **increasing focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion, and**
- **increasing focus on community engagement.**

Within this context, GIH is seen to possess a series of competitive advantages that will support its growth and sustainability in the coming years:

- **leadership and brand reputation as a primary nexus in the health philanthropy space,**
- **diversity of programming,**
- **network value and connections, and**
- **agility as a small organization with new leadership.**

Given the shift in the external environment and the unique capabilities and advantages of GIH, three principal opportunities emerge for GIH's 2025 strategy:

- **elevate GIH's leadership from information to influence,**
- **be the connective tissue to an expanding set of influencers and players, and**
- **develop greater levels of self-directed funding sources.**

With these goals in mind, GIH has developed a 2025 vision and four strategic pillars to support its realization:

- **Vision: Better health for all through better philanthropy**
- **Strategic pillars:**
 - **Valued for our partner-centric approach**
 - **Seen as the hub of health philanthropy**
 - **Known for visionary leadership and influence**
 - **Recognized as a high-performing organization**

While equity has always been part of GIH's mission and values, it has become clear that we cannot achieve our goals without focusing on equity in all aspects of our work, and that doing so will help to magnify our impact. To better represent this focus, we have amended our vision statement to "Better health for all through better philanthropy," clarifying our position that our mission must be visibly centered on equity. Likewise, we will make "Health Equity and Social Justice" our central area of focus and align our issue areas through this lens.

This document outlines the mission and positioning of GIH, the trends and opportunities of its current context, and its vision for the future. It then details the recommended strategies, resulting impacts, and measures of success. Finally, it outlines the initial workstreams required to set the strategy in motion, and the activation plan to bring its vision of "Better health for all through better philanthropy" to life.

Organizational Background

Grantmakers In Health (GIH) is a nonprofit organization serving trustees and staff of foundations and corporate giving programs working in the field of health philanthropy.

The organization accomplishes its mission through a variety of activities, including convenings, publishing, education and training, technical assistance, and consultation, conducting studies in the field, and brokering professional relationships and connections. These activities are funded primarily through grants and contributions.

Started informally in 1978, GIH has been operating as a 501(c)(3) since 1984. It is funded by over 200 foundations, known as Funding Partners. GIH is governed by a board of directors whose members are largely drawn from the funders it serves as well as individuals from health or other social sectors that can make valuable contributions to the work of GIH. Its staff is based in Washington, DC.

History

As legend has it, GIH began as a conversation among foundation program officers at a Nathan's Famous Hot Dogs restaurant in New Jersey, in 1978. At the time, there was no organization dedicated to the needs and concerns of health funders. The technology of the day—telephones, letters, and written reports—made connecting difficult. It was not easy to find out what other foundations were doing or to share experiences and best practices.

Faced with these challenges, the program officers recognized the need for a national organization that would help create an infrastructure for health philanthropy. From their conversations, GIH took shape as a program of meetings and workshops focused on key health issues for concerned professional staff from private foundations and corporations.

In 1982, GIH's first office opened in New York City. Ten years later, GIH moved to Washington, DC. With the creation of new health care conversion foundations in the late 1980s and early 1990s, GIH grew rapidly. The organization was a critical source of guidance for these new funders, helping them address organizational challenges related to governance, grantmaking, evaluation, and communications. From a handful of initial Funding Partners, GIH grew steadily into the national network its founders envisioned.

Source: "From Nathan's to a National Network: Celebrating GIH's 35th Anniversary" By Faith Mitchell, Posted June 16, 2017 (<https://www.gih.org/category/from-the-president/>)

Legal Structure and Governance

Grantmakers In Health is organized as a New York 501(c)(3) not-for-profit educational institution. It is governed by a board of directors with an executive committee of five officers. New board members are typically drawn from executives and other senior staff of foundations and corporate giving programs working at the local, regional, and national level.

Programming and Activities

To achieve its mission, GIH executes programs and activities in service to its programming charter to support health funders of all sizes and interests to “learn, connect, and grow.”

- **Learn:** Help funders stay on top of current health issues and philanthropic practice through meetings, publications, podcasts, and webinars.
- **Connect:** Help funders communicate, coordinate, and collaborate with one another and with those in other sectors through funder networks, learning communities, e-forums, and partnerships between philanthropy and those who work in intersecting fields.
- **Grow:** Help strengthen the skills of philanthropic executives, staff, and trustees through leadership institutes, workshops on foundation strategy and operations, technical assistance, and peer review.

Funding Partners

GIH Funding Partners are a diverse constituency of over 200 well-informed, well-connected philanthropic organizations with a shared interest in health philanthropy that make annual financial contributions to support GIH’s work.

GIH currently limits Funding Partner status to organizations whose primary function and activity is charitable grantmaking to multiple individuals or organizations. The following types of organizations are eligible to become Funding Partners:

- **Private foundation:** A nongovernmental, nonprofit organization with funds (usually from a single source, such as an individual, family, or corporation) and programs managed by its own trustees or directors, established to maintain or aid social, educational, religious, or other charitable activities, primarily through grantmaking (validation: Form 990-PF).
- **Operating foundation:** A private foundation that uses the bulk of its income to provide charitable services or to run charitable programs of its own (validation: Form 990-PF).
- **Community foundation:** A tax-exempt, nonprofit, independent, publicly supported, philanthropic institution organized and operated primarily as a permanent collection of endowed funds for the long-term benefit of a defined geographic area (validation: Form 990 or Form 1023 and IRS determination letter).

- **Corporate giving program:** A grantmaking program established and administered within a profit-making company. Gifts and grants go directly to charitable organizations from the corporation (validation: annual report and general giving guidelines of parent company).
- **Company/corporate foundation:** A private foundation that derives its grantmaking funds primarily from the contributions of a profit-making business. A corporate foundation is a separate, legal organization from the donor company and is subject to the same rules and regulations as other private foundations. Gifts and grants are usually made on a broad basis although not without regard for business interests of the corporation (validation: Form 990-PF or Form 1023 and IRS determination letter).
- **Public foundation:** A tax-exempt, nonprofit, independent organization that receives its assets from multiple sources, which may include private foundations, individuals, government agencies, and fees for services. Although public foundations may provide direct charitable services to the public as other nonprofits do, their primary focus is on grantmaking. To qualify as a GIH Funding Partner, at least 50 percent of the operating budget of a public foundation must be for grants. These grants may not include awards to affiliate chapters or organizations (validation: Form 990 or Form 1023 and IRS determination letter).
- **Bank, trust company, donor service:** For-profit companies that manage philanthropic funds. In addition to providing legal and fiduciary support, these professional organizations counsel clients on the formation of charitable entities and can serve as trustees in managing the implementation of grantmaking programs. The fund itself is only eligible to become a Funding Partner, not the for-profit management firm. Staff from the managing organization who function as staff of the fund are eligible to receive Funding Partner benefits (validation: verification in writing of the professional firm's activities in managing the charitable trust or foundation and the size of the fund's assets).
- **Government agencies:** Federal and state government agencies that fund GIH projects and programs (validation: signed notice of grant award or signed cooperative agreement for each project).

Mission & Values

GIH is guided by a clear mission, vision, and set of values.

Mission

Grantmakers In Health is a nonprofit, educational organization dedicated to helping foundations and corporate giving programs improve the health of all people. Its mission is to foster communication and collaboration among grantmakers and others, and to help strengthen the grantmaking community's knowledge, skills, and effectiveness.

Vision

Grantmakers In Health's vision is "Better health through better philanthropy."

Note: In recognition of its commitment to health equity, GIH is changing its vision statement to "Better health *for all* through better philanthropy" with this strategic plan. See "2025 Strategy."

Values

GIH has developed and published its statement of ethics and values, as follows:

We are committed to evidence-informed practice and work to promote discussion, questioning, and lively debate within the field. We strive to be a learning organization, focused on excellence and equity, and to build learning communities within health philanthropy. We believe strongly in collaboration and, when we work with others, do so with respect and candor. Our ethics and values inform our work and guide how we conduct ourselves. We promote these values through our programming and in our involvement with Funding Partners, and they are reflected in our internal policies and procedures.

- **Integrity, transparency, and fiscal responsibility**

We are committed to acting honestly and transparently, in accordance with internal policies and external laws and regulations; to using our resources wisely and providing accurate public disclosure of our finances; and to taking responsibility for our actions and avoiding potential conflicts of interest.

- **Excellence**

We aim to be the best in our work, ideas, and services.

- **Respect**

We are committed to treating the people and organizations with whom we work with fairness, dignity, and respect, and recognizing and appreciating the achievements and contributions of all. We believe in listening to, and learning from, communities.

- **Responsiveness and innovation**

We commit to being responsive and accessible to the grantmakers and others we serve, and strive to be visionary, proactive, innovative, and creative in all we do.

- **Collaboration**

We support systemic change and accordingly value collaboration with other sectors that affect health.

- **Diversity, equity, and inclusion**

We are committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in our programming, personnel and employment practices, and governance. Diversity is a fundamental element of social justice and is integral to our mission. Diverse voices and viewpoints deepen our understanding of differences in health outcomes and health care delivery and strengthen our ability to fashion just solutions. GIH uses the term “diversity” broadly, to encompass differences in the attributes of both individuals (such as ability, age, faith, gender identity and expression, geographic location, immigration status, income, language, life experience, marital status, medical condition, national origin, political ideology, professional skills, race/ethnicity, or sexual orientation) and organizations (foundations and giving programs of differing sizes, missions, geographic locations, and approaches to grantmaking).

Environmental Scan

As we prepared the 2025 strategy, a series of interviews was conducted with key GIH stakeholders, including representatives from Funding Partners, the Board of Directors, and staff, in order to understand the current state of the contextual environment and emerging trends and opportunities that might impact GIH's future. The following emergent themes shaped our thinking and recommendations:

Changing Landscape of Philanthropy

The landscape of philanthropy in general, and health philanthropy specifically, is experiencing a series of shifts that will shape our context in the coming years:

- **Diversifying of funders:**
The world of philanthropy is expanding, with growth beyond traditional grantmaking organizations—largely foundations and corporate giving programs—to include donor-advised funds (DAFs), socially responsible investing through benefit corporations and limited-liability corporations (LLCs), and the rise of individual “super-donors.”
- **Growing social justice movements:**
The blossoming of social justice movements in recent years has led to a growth in funder affinity groups that aim to accelerate social change through new philanthropic models and organized change philanthropy. These groups tend to promote funding issue-oriented ecosystems of nonprofits and social justice organizations, largely at the grassroots level.
- **Continuing growth of conversion foundations:**
Merger and acquisition activity in the health care arena will likely continue to support the creation of new conversion foundations (or health legacy foundations), continuing to expand the pool of potential Funding Partners for GIH.
- **Changing (or challenging) work environments:**
The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the necessity to pivot traditionally in-person events and programming to digital platforms, creating added burden on organizations like GIH that rely on convenings and events as a pillar of their programming. It is broadly assumed that post-pandemic, remote work and digital connection will remain a reality for a large portion of organizations as digital transformation and the emerging hybrid workforce model become entrenched and adopted for the long-term.
- **Increasing competition for funding:**
With the expansion of new funders and philanthropy support organizations in the health philanthropy landscape, and increasing demands for comparative impact measurement, health funders seek greater transparency into financial data, measurement of outcomes, and proven returns on investments, raising the bar for organizations like GIH to demonstrate value to its funders.

- **Increasing focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion:**

While always a focus of GIH, events of the past year have heightened awareness of the need to have more diverse voices represented and respected across all levels of our organizations and the need to increase support for organizations led by and serving people of color and programs and initiatives that support under-resourced communities.

- **Increasing focus on community engagement:**

Funders have increased their attention to grassroots programming and grantmaking at the community level to help communities take control over the factors that shape their lives and their health. They have also increased efforts to expand trust-based philanthropy and recognize the expertise that communities have about their challenges and potential solutions.

GIH's Competitive Advantages

Within this context, GIH is seen as possessing a series of competitive advantages that will support its growth and sustainability in the coming years:

- **Leadership and brand reputation as a primary nexus in the health philanthropy space:**

GIH holds an established position as the “big tent” for health philanthropy, with a reputation as the organization that unites the principal funders in the space through its meetings, events, thought leadership, and networking opportunities.

- **Diversity of programming:**

Over its more than 30 years of operations, GIH has developed a broad base of expertise and programming to support its program charter to help health philanthropy “learn, connect, and grow,” creating a distinct advantage with the breadth and depth of its thought leadership and industry knowledge.

- **Network value and connections:**

With over 200 Funding Partner organizations and a board comprised of industry leaders, GIH has unsurpassed access to the key protagonists in health philanthropy, and the ability to leverage and connect leaders around targeted issues of shared interest.

- **Agility as a small organization with new leadership:**

While the changing landscape of philanthropy and the COVID-19 crisis could present challenges, GIH's lean organizational structure, the transition to a new President and CEO, and the creation of a new vision and strategic plan all combine to create an opportunity to quickly align to the emerging changes in the external environment and accelerate a new path forward.

Resulting Opportunities

Given the shift in the external environment and the unique capabilities and advantages of GIH, four principal opportunities emerge for GIH's 2025 strategy:

- **Elevate leadership from information to influence:**
GIH can increase its impact and perceived value in the field of health philanthropy by building upon its existing program strength and advocating on behalf of shared issues of interest among its Funding Partners. GIH is in a unique position to influence funders and other fields, potentially leading to policy change and investment in issues of shared interest.
- **Be the connective tissue to an expanding set of influencers and players:**
GIH can broaden its impact by creating an inclusive environment to convene new funders and participants in health philanthropy. GIH is already seen as the primary convener in the space and can expand its reach and influence by broadening its partner base.
- **Develop greater levels of self-directed funding sustainability:**
GIH can build greater self-sufficiency and the ability to direct its activities to targeted areas of investment by strengthening its revenue model, endowment, unrestricted funding sources, and value-proposition for Funding Partners.
- **Increase GIH's focus and impact in areas of health equity and social justice:**
As a core value of GIH, the organization is uniquely positioned to advance health equity and social justice through its programming, issue area leadership, and influence among the ecosystem of health philanthropy.

The following strategy supports the realization of the aforementioned goals.

2025 Strategy

Over the course of 10 months, GIH leveraged an inclusive process of stakeholder engagement—including representation from GIH’s board, staff, and Funding Partners—to develop a 2025 vision for the evolution of GIH and a supporting strategy to guide its realization.

The 2025 vision is summarized in the following vision map, a one-page document that depicts:

- the 2025 vision,
- the resulting impacts and success indicators, and
- the four strategic pillars of the strategy.

This visualization serves as the primary communication vehicle to disseminate the strategy and guide decisionmaking through the period of execution leading to 2025.



OUR 2025 STRATEGY
5-Year Plan

OUR VISION
Better health for all through better philanthropy

Co-created with XPLANE®

ISSUE AREAS

Access & Quality

Community Engagement & Empowerment

Health Equity & Social Justice

Philanthropic Growth & Impact

Population Health

Identify Funding Partner needs and priorities



Strengthen expertise in issue areas and leadership areas



Develop innovative and agile programming



Leverage data analytics to better understand health philanthropy



Strengthen feedback mechanisms to improve customer service and GIH's impact on health philanthropy



Identify and foster opportunities for cross-sector engagement and collaboration



VALUED FOR OUR PARTNER-CENTRIC APPROACH
Strengthen our value proposition for Funding Partners



SEEN AS THE HUB OF HEALTH PHILANTHROPY
Act as the bridge that connects the world of health philanthropy and connects the world to health funders



STRATEGIC PILLARS

KEY ACTIONS

KEY ACTIONS

Align structure, talent, and skills to support strategic goals and organizational values



RECOGNIZED AS A HIGH-PERFORMING ORGANIZATION
Prioritize operational excellence and culture



KNOWN FOR VISIONARY LEADERSHIP & INFLUENCE
Influence advocacy, policy, and funding in targeted areas



Evolve our business model to support growth and sustainability



Identify selection process for issuing statements



Develop topic-specific strategies to achieve objectives in health equity and social justice



Maintain a culture of excellence, inclusivity, and continuous learning



DESIRED IMPACTS

Measure and monitor Impact



LEADERSHIP

"We will influence policy and funding change in areas of targeted interest"

CATALYST

"GIH is seen as the place that has the "finger on the pulse" and connects the world of health philanthropy"

VALUE PROPOSITION

"We will strengthen our value proposition for partners, leading to increased retention and growth"

OPERATIONS

"GIH is seen as an agile, sustainable, and growing organization: financially, structurally, and culturally"

COLLABORATION

"Cross-sector collaboration with health philanthropy funders"

EQUITY

"Health funders: health equity remains a priority, disparities are improving, and health philanthropy is more reflective of our society"

"GIH is seen as a leader in health equity and has a culture of inclusivity"

THE KEY TENETS AND DETAILED RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE VISION AND STRATEGY ARE OUTLINED BELOW:

Vision

GIH has always been committed to the betterment of health outcomes through the betterment of health philanthropy, by supporting the ecosystem of health funders with investment in helping them to learn, connecting them to magnify their impact, and supporting their growth to scale the systemic impact of the field.

GIH seeks to build upon that heritage by making explicit its commitment to health equity for all people, eliminating the disparities that exist in our society and especially its most vulnerable populations, and inclusion of diverse populations and perspectives.

Towards that end, GIH is modifying its vision statement to:

“Better health *for all* through better philanthropy”

Issue Areas

Currently, GIH focuses on 12 issue areas, each of which is in service to this vision. While the 12 areas allow many Funding Partners to explicitly see themselves in GIH’s work, it comes at a cost.

First, with limited staff and resources the focus on so many issue areas stretches the organization’s ability to cover each with the same level of depth and expertise and limits its ability to effect change in a given area.

Second, such a defined focus limits GIH’s ability to be agile and responsive to emerging needs in the field of health philanthropy and the focused interest areas of its partners.

Based on prior experience consolidating the number of issue areas and then expanding them again, it has become clear to GIH that the benefits of a smaller set of issue areas outweigh the costs. While many funders wish to see their priorities highlighted as primary issue areas, GIH has learned that it can better effect change and increase its organizational impact by focusing more deeply on a smaller set of issues that are inclusive of the breadth of funder priorities.

To deliver upon its vision, and the emergent goal to increase its participation, leadership, and influence, GIH will promote programming, advocacy, and thought leadership in five principal issue areas:

- **Access & quality:**

One of the most important strategies for improving health is to make health care services more available and affordable. Access to health care includes several components: coverage, the availability of health services, the ability to get care when needed, and the existence of an able and culturally competent workforce. The quality of the services received is equally important. The World Health Organization defines quality of care as

“the extent to which health care services provided to individuals and patient populations improve desired health outcomes. In order to achieve this, health care must be safe, effective, timely, efficient, equitable and people-centered.” It is also crucial to improve the quality of health services to promote better health outcomes. GIH’s work in this area covers topics such as health coverage, the safety net, and workforce development.

- **Community engagement & empowerment:**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention refers to community engagement as “the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the wellbeing of those people. It often involves partnerships and coalitions that help mobilize resources and influence systems, change relationships among partners, and serve as catalysts for changing policies, programs, and practices.” Meaningful engagement enables communities to increase their control over the factors and decisions that shape their lives and their health, making health improvement efforts more relevant and effective. GIH’s work in this area showcases philanthropic efforts that are community-centered, community-driven, and community-led, and encourages efforts to share decisionmaking authority and power.

- **Health equity & social justice:**

Ensuring that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to achieve their highest level of health requires removing structural obstacles that prevent or inhibit equitable access and participation in society such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences. GIH’s work in this area explores the partnerships, programs, and policy changes necessary to eliminate disparities; address the social determinants of health; and institutionalize internal diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. It also includes applying a health equity lens to the work across all issue areas.

- **Philanthropic growth & impact:**

Identifying, disseminating, and supporting best practices in the ongoing operations of health funding organizations enhances philanthropy’s effectiveness and its ability to generate measurable social and environmental good. GIH’s work in this area addresses challenges related to governance, grantmaking, evaluation, communications, as well as the myriad ways health funders are advancing diverse public policy, advocacy, and civic engagement goals.

- **Population health:**

Population health refers to the health outcomes of a group of individuals, including the distribution of such outcomes within the group. Improving the health outcomes of a group of individuals—whether defined by age, geography, or other factors—requires a broad vision, upstream approaches, and cross-sector collaboration. GIH’s work in this area focuses on public health, prevention, and the mobilization of multiple disciplines to improve health for all.

By consolidating GIH’s focus to these five issue areas, the organization can become more responsive to the changing issues and needs within each, develop greater expertise and reach, and be more agile in addressing emergent issues in the future.

Strategic Pillars

To realize its vision and make progress in the key areas of action required to reposition itself appropriately, GIH has identified four pillars of work for its 2025 strategy:

- **Valued for our partner-centric approach:**
Strengthen our value proposition for Funding Partners by orienting our thought leadership, programming, and investments to best meet the current needs of our partners in health philanthropy, and anticipate their needs in the future, ensuring our relevance and value.
- **Seen as the hub of health philanthropy:**
Build upon our strength at the center of health philanthropy to act as the bridge that connects the world of health philanthropy and become the “go to” place for funders and others to learn what health philanthropy is doing and ways to collaborate to improve health.
- **Known for visionary leadership and influence:**
Take a more active role in defining the key issues that will advance health and support health philanthropy with the thought leadership and programming to make lasting, measurable impact by influencing advocacy, policy, and funding in targeted areas.
- **Recognized as a high-performing organization:**
Prioritize operational excellence and an inclusive culture and continuously evaluate and refine operational capacities to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead. Invest in internal systems that improve GIH’s efficiency and effectiveness and reflect the organization’s values.

Desired Impacts

To make the plan actionable and to clearly articulate the measures of success, GIH defined a series of impact statements that outline the desired outcomes of its 2025 vision, as follows:

- **Leadership**
GIH will influence policy and funding changes in our targeted areas of interest.
- **Catalyst**
GIH will be seen as the organization with its “finger on the pulse” that connects the world of health philanthropy.
- **Value proposition**
GIH will strengthen our value proposition for partners, leading to increased retention and growth.
- **Operations**
GIH will be seen as an agile, sustainable, and growing organization: financially, structurally, and culturally.
- **Collaboration**
GIH will foster collaboration both within philanthropy and between sectors.
- **Equity**
GIH will be seen as a leader in health equity with a culture of inclusivity. In 2025, health equity will remain a priority for funders, there will be fewer disparities, and health philanthropy will better reflect the diversity of our society.

Each of the strategic pillars contributes to the advancement of one or more of these impact areas, collectively advancing GIH’s cumulative impact as an organization.

Key Actions

To achieve these impacts, GIH has defined a set of core strategies, or strategic pillars. Each strategic pillar is mapped directly to one or more of the desired impact areas, and has a corresponding action plan for the term of this strategic plan. Each strategic pillar also has a set of success indicators to be used to measure progress.

Strategic Pillars

PILLAR 1: VALUED FOR OUR PARTNER-CENTRIC APPROACH

By focusing on this area, GIH will strengthen our value proposition for Funding Partners by orienting our thought-leadership, programming, and investments to best meet the current needs of our Funding Partners in health philanthropy and anticipate their needs in the future, ensuring our relevance and value.

This will require mindful development of improved feedback loops with partners to better identify current and emerging needs and common themes across Funding Partners, and to incorporate those insights into GIH's programming and support.

IMPACT AREA

Value proposition:

GIH will strengthen our value proposition for partners, leading to increased retention and growth.

KEY ACTIONS

1. Identify Funding Partners' needs and priorities:

Include both current Funding Partners and new partners, develop a program to understand partner needs and wants, and prioritize annual "partner priorities" to improve partner value proposition.

2. Develop innovative and agile programming:

Leverage insights from Funding Partners to inform the development of new programming and improvement of existing programming in support of changing needs and opportunities.

3. Strengthen feedback mechanisms to improve customer service and GIH's impact on health philanthropy:

Develop standard approaches to gathering feedback, as well as a governance mechanism to translate the feedback into action. Specific activities include:

- **Create formal feedback loops and partner satisfaction measurement:**
Create a set of formal feedback loops, including partner satisfaction surveys and qualitative listening processes, to solicit ongoing partner feedback on what's working and what can be improved.
- **Develop partner insights committee:**
Create a staff-led working team to periodically review Funding Partner feedback and insights, consolidate common themes, and recommend actions to improve programming and Funding Partner service.

PILLAR 2: SEEN AS THE HUB OF HEALTH PHILANTHROPY

Build upon our bird's eye view of health philanthropy to be the “go to” source for funders and others to learn what health philanthropy is doing and ways to collaborate to improve health.

IMPACT AREAS

- **Catalyst:**
GIH will be seen as the organization with its “finger on the pulse” that connects the world of health philanthropy.
- **Collaboration:**
GIH will foster collaboration within health philanthropy and between sectors.

KEY ACTIONS

1. **Strengthen dialogue and feedback loops with funders and other stakeholders to reinforce expertise in issue areas targeted interest areas:**
Coordinate closely with Funding Partners and subject matter experts in targeted areas to develop annual interest area content and programming strategies.
2. **Leverage data analytics to better understand health philanthropy:**
Augment existing mechanisms with investments in data analytics to spot emerging trends and inform programming investments across the organization and within targeted interest areas.
3. **Identify and foster opportunities for cross-sector engagement and collaboration:**
Through data analytics and staff-led opportunity identification, support the networking and connection of philanthropy-serving organizations around issues of common interest to accelerate impact in targeted areas.

PILLAR 3: KNOWN FOR VISIONARY LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE

We will take a more active role in defining the key issues that will advance health, and support health philanthropy with the thought leadership and programming to make lasting, measurable impact by influencing advocacy, policy, and funding in targeted areas.

Insights gathered from Funding Partners, board and staff consistently support the potential for GIH to advance its mission more effectively by proactively using its voice to support systemic change and influence policy through the issuing of statements and the development of targeted thought leadership that shift the conversations to advance health equity and social justice.

IMPACT AREAS

- **Leadership:**

GIH will influence policy and funding changes in our targeted area of interest: health equity and social justice.

- **Equity:**

GIH will be seen as a leader in health equity with a culture of inclusivity. Health equity will remain a priority for funders, there will be fewer disparities, and health philanthropy will better reflect the diversity of our society.

KEY ACTIONS

1. **Develop a policy agenda, which includes annual topic-specific strategies to achieve objectives in health equity and social justice:**

GIH will develop annual strategies (informed by partners as described above) for the advancement of targeted goals in each issue area. Strategies will include annual objectives and success measures, programming recommendations, community and Funding Partner outreach, and data and evaluation.

2. **Identify specific tactics for achieving our targeted goals, to include issuing public statements:**

Define and document a formal process for determining if, when, and how GIH will issue a statement. Opportunities could be internally or externally driven such as requests to sign on to joint statements.

- Develop and utilize a decision framework to evaluate and select issues that fit predefined criteria for GIH support.

3. **Apply an “equity lens” across issue areas:**

The resulting issue area strategies will be reviewed to ensure all issue area content strategies align with GIH overall health equity and social justice priorities.

4. **Measure and monitor impact:**

The success indicators listed below will be measured and reported periodically. GIH will develop a system to gather the relevant data to measure each indicator, collect and synthesize the data, and report to the Board of Directors in an agreed-upon periodic cycle. Results will be shared publicly in an annual report.

PILLAR 4: RECOGNIZED AS A HIGH-PERFORMING ORGANIZATION

GIH will prioritize operational excellence and an inclusive culture. GIH will continuously evaluate and refine its operational capacities to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead, invest in internal systems that improve GIH's efficiency and effectiveness, evolve its revenue model to ensure ongoing sustainability, and conduct itself as a role model of its values.

IMPACT AREA

- **Operations:**

GIH will be seen as an agile, sustainable, and growing organization: financially, structurally, and culturally. GIH will be seen as a leader in health equity with a culture of inclusivity.

KEY ACTIONS

- **Align structure, talent, and skills to support strategic goals and organizational values:**

Invest in needed positions to augment our existing staff capabilities and support the teams' ongoing growth and development. Specific areas of focus:

- Reinforce development function to support issue-focused grants and capital campaign needs, communications function to support partner and external communications, and office management and administrative support to support back-office operational needs to better leverage leadership and existing staff.
- Invest in cross-training and succession planning to increase capabilities and mitigate risks of over-dependence on singular roles.
- Conduct IT systems audit for software and technology to support employee productivity and data analytics capabilities.

- **Evolve business model to support sustainability and growth:**

Invest in development and Funding Partner programs to increase revenue and grow unrestricted funding. Specific actions detailed in "revenue strategy" area below, including:

- Expand the Funding Partner eligibility criteria and quantity of Funding Partners.
- Expand development efforts to increase issue-specific funding and sponsorship.
- Increase unrestricted funding for general operating support.
- Grow the endowment through a capital campaign.

- **Maintain a culture of excellence, inclusivity, and continuous learning:**

Implement measures to increase employee engagement, scale productivity, and measure and improve outcomes. Specifically:

- Implement an annual survey such as the "Great Place to Work for All" survey (facilitated by the Great Place to Work Institute) to measure employee engagement, trust, and inclusivity and identify areas of potential improvement.

- Invest in creating a “culture of development” to build skills in funder and donor cultivation to spread practices and processes across the entire organization.
- Utilize survey to measure culture and inclusivity.
- **Monitor progress and adjust as needed:**
Establish a GIH key performance indicator (KPI) dashboard to measure key operational metrics, including revenue growth, operating leverage ratio, reserves ratio, unrestricted funding growth, GPTW score, and targeted areas of partner and issues impact.

Periodic review of the dashboard and the workstreams underway as well as stakeholder feedback will guide the next set of required actions and provide critical inputs to each subsequent planning and budgeting cycle.

Conclusion

Strategic plans and the strategies within them are always a product of the moment in which they were created, and as such they run the risk of becoming obsolete with changing circumstances and the shifting context of unknown future events. The objective of the GIH 2025 vision is to be future focused to mitigate this risk by creating a more agile approach that can adapt to change in the coming years.

By establishing a clear vision of where we want to be in 2025, and the impacts and outcomes we expect, we have set a clear destination for ourselves. We have defined where we want to go, and how we'll measure success, and this provides us with a durable anchor for our annual planning with Funding Partners, allowing us to accelerate or course correct as needed and as changing circumstances allow. But the vision is clear and should not change significantly.

By establishing strategic pillars, and measures of success within them, we have created guidelines for the areas of investment, and defined the levers we will use to reach our vision. In any given year we may invest more heavily in one or another, but collectively these four strategic pillars should define the primary areas of investment and the workstreams that we elect to pursue in each planning cycle.

By establishing a dashboard of key performance indicators, we will know where we are in the journey towards our vision, and where we need to invest next to continue our progress forward.

On an annual basis, given the current circumstances, context, and resources available, and based on our measured progress towards our goals, we will plan the specific workstreams and initiatives that are appropriate for that period to move us forward—within our strategic pillars and towards our 2025 vision.

Together, this strategy will provide us a specific, yet agile, strategic planning approach to enable our success in realizing our vision of “Better health for all through better philanthropy.”