

The Philadelphia Foundation: 98+ Years of Endless Possibilities

On Dec. 20, 1918, The Philadelphia Foundation (TPF) was established as a charitable trust to administer community-based philanthropy. For 98+ years, TPF has been a trusted partner connecting people who care with causes that matter.

In the process, we've awarded well over \$250,000,000 – a quarter of a billion dollars – in grants and scholarships to community organizations striving to make the world a better place. We've established a solid reputation as a regional leader by advancing change, addressing issues of importance and forging meaningful relationships. We call our vision The Power of Endless Possibilities™ – the power to succeed, to thrive, to help one another.

1918: One of the oldest community foundations in the world, and the oldest foundation in the Philadelphia region, TPF is founded to help caring people achieve their charitable dreams.

1920: Rachel L. Coles becomes our first donor with a bequest of \$626.56, which is distributed among six hospitals.

1924: James A. Develin, Jr., establishes our first fund, which today continues to benefit the YMCA of Philadelphia and Vicinity with thousands of dollars in grants.

1948: The first grant is made to an African American organization: \$3,916 to Mercy-Douglass Hospital.

1958: Five additional banks join the Fidelity-Philadelphia Trust Co. as trustees of what are now \$3.3 million in assets.

1959: TPF awards grants that advance the career of young pianist Andre Watts.

1960s: TPF is an early leader in using philanthropy to effect social change.

1961: Sidney N. Repplier is named Director, leading TPF for more than two decades.

1967: The Clyde P. & Katherine B. Alexander Memorial Fund becomes the first of what are today 87 funds specifically benefiting the African American community.

1968: The Hon. A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr., – noted author, civil rights advocate, federal judge and legal scholar – is the first African American to serve on the Distribution Committee.

1969: Frances B. Rauch becomes the first woman to serve on the Distribution Committee.

1974: \$101,605 in Human Rights and Justice grants are awarded “to bring hope and dignity to the powerless.”

1975: The first of many pioneering grants are awarded to organizations serving the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities.



Richard K. Bennett,
first paid Director,
1958.



Grants in 1963
assisted refugees
fleeing the
Communist
regime in Cuba.



Carrolle Fair
Perry named
first woman
and first African
American
Director, 1991.

1983: Our Empowerment Criteria are adopted, giving funding priority to grassroots organizations that emphasize community self-management.

1985: The Philadelphia Foundation identifies the resettlement of Southeast Asian refugees in the region as an emerging critical need.

1986: The Philadelphia Foundation is the area's primary private funder of AIDS programs.

1995: The Ford Foundation awards TPF \$100,000 to strategize philanthropic outreach to minority communities.

1997: The Asian American Fund, unique in the community foundation field, is established.

1998: R. Andrew Swinney is named President.

1999: The Community Art Gallery connects emerging artists with patrons.

2001: The Fund for Children is established through the Phillies' and the Eagles' \$60 million commitment to help Philadelphia's youth.

2004: A three-year initiative helps the Delaware Valley Legacy Fund advance philanthropy in the LGBT community.

2010: In response to the earthquake in Haiti, two funds are established to aid the victims, continuing a tradition of addressing regional, national and international crises.

2015: The Board appoints Pedro A. Ramos as President and CEO. An attorney and civic leader, he is the first Latino to lead the organization.

Philanthropist H.F. “Gerry” Lenfest creates the Institute for Journalism in New Media at TPF.

2016: A strategy for TPF's Second Century is adopted by our Board of Managers.



In 1993, the
Foundation received
nearly \$600,000
from the 200-year-old
estate of Benjamin
Franklin. The funds
are used for vocational
arts scholarships.



In 2002, six-year-
old Alexandra Scott
launches Alex's
Lemonade Stand Fund,
which soon becomes
a national campaign
to find a cure for
childhood cancer.



Pedro A. Ramos,
President/CEO