Giving Outlook Annual Report

Are we headed to a two-tiered giving future?

FOOD INSECURITY EDITION

2025 - 2026

allegiance group + PURSUANT

Concentrated Generosity:

Are We Headed to a Two-Tiered Giving Future?

Food Insecurity organizations face an evolving giving landscape heading into 2026. Predictable performance has generally been restored, but growth is increasingly concentrated among high-dollar donors, while participation from small and mid-level supporters continues to decline. Generational shifts, trust-based grant making, and digital giving trends are reshaping donor expectations — but not evenly across the donor universe. As hunger relief organizations adapt, a core question emerges: Will philanthropy remain broad-based, or continue its drift toward a two-tiered model defined by fewer, larger gifts?

An imbalance between major donors and everyday givers carries long-term risks: reduced revenue stability, weaker community engagement and grassroots influence, and greater uncertainty during moments of economic or political volatility. Recognizing and responding to this shift is essential for building a philanthropic future that combines financial scale with broad-based participation.

Allegiance Group + Pursuant (AGP) offers a strategic plan to enable leaders to understand and thrive during these times by aligning to donor expectations, embracing new patterns of giving, and strengthening strategic agility.

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Introduction

Philanthropy rebounded in 2024, posting its strongest inflation-adjusted growth since 2021. While some viewed the uptick as a welcome return to trendline, others noted growing dependence on high-dollar donors and institutions.

Giving USA[1] reported a 6.3 percent rise in total charitable contributions, but this topline performance masked a more complex story — one of resilience paired with mounting structural concerns. The industry is adapting to new donor preferences, shifting participation patterns, and rising digital expectations. As giving becomes more concentrated, organizations must ask: Is philanthropy entering a new era of unequal participation, or simply evolving to meet donors where they are?

This document explores the forces of change affecting the sector, highlighting where philanthropy is strongest and growing, shifts in donor preferences, and the non-negotiable, omni-channel approach that food insecurity organizations are taking to effectively engage their constituents.

Our analysis leverages insights from recent trends and data, providing an overview of the current state and future direction of philanthropy.

RESILIENCE AND CAUTION

In 2024, the U.S. economy demonstrated resilience. The Federal Reserve held interest rates steady in a tight 4.25–4.50% range,[2] prioritizing inflation management while labor markets remained strong. Consumer demand and spending continued to support growth, though signs of moderation appeared toward year-end.

Overall growth in retail sales and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reflected steady consumption, while inflation eased but stayed above target. A resilient labor market combined with cautious monetary strategy framed a steady but watchful economic environment.

As 2024 closed, uncertainty around 2025 economic policy remained elevated. While inflation had moderated, it stayed above the Federal Reserve's 2% target, complicating the path to potential rate cuts. At the same time, looming trade tensions and the 2024 election outcomes left fiscal and regulatory policy uncertain, reinforcing a climate where companies and consumers alike remained watchful and restrained in long-term planning.

IMPACT ON PHILANTHROPY

In 2024, donor behavior closely mirrored broader consumer sentiment — marked by increased financial confidence, higher discretionary spending, and a growing expectation for engagement.

With the economy showing strong fundamentals, including 3% GDP growth,[3] a 20% surge in the S&P 500,[4] and low unemployment, Americans demonstrated renewed philanthropic intent, particularly at the higher end of the income spectrum. Donors continued shifting toward recurring contributions and digital engagement.

2024 CHARITABLE GIVING

According to Giving USA 2025, total U.S. charitable giving reached **$592.5 billion** in 2024, a **6.3% increase** in current dollars — marking the first inflation-adjusted growth since 2021.

Individual giving rose 8.2% to $392.5 billion, buoyed by strong stock market performance and improved consumer confidence. Mega-gifts (defined as $600 million or more) totaled $11.7 billion, up from $8.1 billion in 2023, underscoring the increasing role of ultra-high-net-worth donors in driving topline giving results.

Corporate giving reached a record $44.4 billion, up 9.1%, driven by strong corporate profits and increased investment in social impact and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)-related initiatives.

Foundation giving also grew, hitting $109.8 billion, sustaining levels above $100 billion for the third consecutive year.

In contrast, **bequest giving** declined slightly to $45.8 billion, down 1.6% in current dollars.

Giving to key sectors varied significantly. The strongest growth was seen in:

- Public-society benefit organizations (+19.5%)
- International affairs (+17.7%)
- Education (+13.2%)

Meanwhile, religious giving grew just 1.9%, resulting in a slight real-dollar decline. This uneven sector performance reflects shifting donor priorities, with increased interest in global challenges, equity, and civic engagement.

GIVING TRENDS IN FOOD INSECURITY: FLAT SUPPORT AMID RISING NEED[5]

In 2024, food banks and hunger relief organizations continued to operate under significant pressure. While total U.S. charitable giving rose 6.3% in current dollars, contributions to hunger-focused nonprofits did not keep pace with rising demand. Feeding America reported that more than 44 million people in the U.S. relied on food assistance last year — up from 38 million pre-pandemic — and 14.3% of U.S. households experienced food insecurity, a sharp increase from 10.2% in 2021 (Feeding America, USDA). The disconnect between need and philanthropic support has placed added strain on local food banks, which continue to shoulder the burden of closing the hunger gap in their communities.

Overall giving to food banks has been relatively flat year-over-year, with much of that drop attributed to a slowdown in one-time gifts and a reduction in new donor acquisition. At the same time, recurring giving has shown promise as in other sectors, underscoring the importance of sustaining donors. Despite strong

community support during crisis moments, many food banks continue to rely heavily on episodic fundraising, particularly in the last quarter of the year, rather than building long-term donor relationships.

As in other sectors, large institutional and corporate donors have become increasingly important in stabilizing food bank budgets, contributing a disproportionate share of total revenue. While these partnerships are vital, engagement among everyday supporters remains fragile.

> "Heading into 2026, Food Banks need to take on the growing imbalance in giving by **building stronger mid-level** and **monthly donor programs**, **improving retention**, and **shifting from short-term fundraising pushes to more consistent, long-term engagement in an omni-channel fashion**. Food insecurity isn't a temporary issue — and our fundraising strategies shouldn't be either."
>
> *— Liz Lowe, VP Client Relationships, AGP*

STRUCTURAL STRAIN

While topline giving improved in 2024, underlying participation metrics are showing that philanthropy is under stress. The broad base of everyday donors continued to erode, reflecting the widening gap between philanthropic intent and participation at lower giving tiers.

According to the Fundraising Effectiveness Project (FEP),[6] overall fundraising dollars grew 3.5% in 2024, but the number of donors declined by 4.5% and donor retention fell by 2.6%. The decline was most pronounced among micro-donors (gifts under $100), which dropped nearly 9%, reflecting cost-of-living pressures and ongoing donor fatigue in the middle and lower tiers.

The Giving Institute Generosity Commission's recent *Generosity Report* [7] recognizes this concern and has responded. The report calls attention to the steep decline in household giving participation and is working to renew focus on restoring broad-based generosity. Understanding this shift — and addressing its root causes — is critical to planning for a future that values financial scale and civic breadth.

Digital performance data from the M+R Benchmarks report provides additional nuance. **According to the 2025 study,[8] revenue from one-time online gifts was flat year-over-year, and fundraising email response rates dropped 16%, to just 0.07%.** Meanwhile, email fundraising revenue declined 7%, even as list sizes grew by 7%, suggesting decreased engagement per contact. These trends point to a digital donor base that is less responsive and harder to activate — particularly among smaller and less committed supporters.

ARE WE HEADED TO A TWO-TIERED GIVING FUTURE?

On the next page, we explore two distinct perspectives, each backed by data and conviction about where philanthropy is headed next.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Fewer Big Donors

"Philanthropy is consolidating with fewer donors and bigger checks"

Mega-Donors Are Accounting for a Growing Share of Total Giving
Twenty-six mega-gifts of $600 million or more totaled $11.7 billion in 2024, a 44% increase over 2023 and nearly 3% of all individual giving.
Source: Giving USA 2025

Small Donor Participation Continues to Decline
Micro-donors (gifts under $100) declined by 8.8% in 2024, while overall donor counts dropped 4.5% despite growth in total dollars raised.
Source: Fundraising Effectiveness Project, Q4 2024

Revenue Is Increasingly Concentrated Among the Top 1% of Donors
At many organizations, the top 1% of donors now contribute more than 70% of total revenue, driving reliance on major and planned gifts.
Source: CCS Philanthropy Pulse Survey, 2024

Many Everyday Givers

"The giving base is vibrant and evolving"

Broad-Based Giving Remains an Enduring Pillar Alongside Major Gifts
Mass giving and major gifts have been a historic hallmark of American philanthropy. Small and mid-level donors have contributed a meaningful share of total giving over decades.
Source: Giving USA historical data (multi-decade trends)

The Grassroots Giving Model Is Alive and Growing in Politics
Small-dollar political donations (under $200) comprised over 20% of all federal campaign contributions in 2024, demonstrating the scale and influence of broad-based engagement.
Source: Federal Election Commission, 2024 cycle

Digital Tools Are Enabling Easier Entry Points for New Donors
In 2024, 45% of online donors gave via mobile, supported by round-up apps, creator-led campaigns, and platforms like Venmo and text-to-give — expanding access across generations.
Source: M+R Benchmarks 2024

What future are you preparing for?

FORWARD

As we look ahead, the philanthropic sector must continue to adapt to these evolving trends. Strategic planning, leveraging technology, and remaining audience focused will be key to sustaining and growing philanthropic efforts.

This whitepaper aims to provide a roadmap for navigating these changes, ensuring that philanthropy remains a robust and adaptive force for social good. By embracing these strategies, philanthropic organizations, like food banks, can continue to thrive and make a meaningful impact in an ever-changing world.

Observing Change[9]

GIVING OVERALL

The AGP Giving Outlook highlights many of the very best sources of nonprofit benchmark data — for overall fundraising, direct response, and omni-channel programs, with insights by sector — along with perspectives on growth and innovation.

We have compiled a recap of philanthropy's path in 2024, as well as perspectives on the most available data at hand. We hope you'll find yourself within this data, and we welcome discussion to take you where you want to go.

In 2024, total philanthropic giving in the U.S. reached an estimated $592.5 billion, an increase of 6.3% in current dollars. Strong equity markets, stable GDP growth, and consistent consumer spending underpinned this performance — contributing to the first inflation-adjusted growth in giving since 2021.

This new total set another record in current-dollar terms and critically-outpaced inflation, signaling renewed momentum across the sector. Importantly, giving in 2024 remained above pre-pandemic levels in real dollars, reflecting a recalibrated but resilient philanthropic environment.

Key economic factors influencing giving in 2024 included:

- Moderating inflation, which eased to around 3%, supported improved consumer confidence and steadier discretionary spending.
- Flat but elevated interest rates kept borrowing costs high but did not significantly constrain donor behavior.
- A 20% surge in the S&P 500 boosted asset-based giving, particularly among high-net-worth individuals.
- Record corporate profits — especially in technology, financial services, and healthcare — drove strong corporate philanthropy, which grew 9.1% to $44.4 billion.

At AGP, we continue to emphasize the value of multi-year planning in a fast-changing fundraising environment. While annual budgets are essential, long-term growth stems from sustained strategic investment in donor engagement, technology, and program innovation. Looking at both short-term indicators and multi-year performance is essential to building a durable development strategy.

In the following sections, we will explore the contours of 2024 giving — by sector, source, and channel — while anchoring these trends in the broader shifts that will shape the road ahead.

GIVING BY SECTOR

Giving by sector in 2024 reflected a year of broad growth across the philanthropic landscape, with nearly all major categories tracked by Giving USA showing positive momentum.

While the overall increase in charitable contributions is encouraging, the specific areas where giving grew the most reveal deeper shifts in donor priorities. The greatest growth came from:

- Public-society benefit organizations (+19.5%)
- International affairs (+17.7%)
- Education (+13.2%)

While religious giving saw a modest 1.9% increase, it slightly declined in real terms. These trends reflect rising donor interest in global issues, civic participation, and long-term social impact — indicators of a donor base that is both evolving and recalibrating its priorities.

Note that unallocated giving was negative $38.60 billion in 2024, reflecting the mismatch between reported giving by donors and revenue received by organizations. This discrepancy often results from timing differences, such as when donors claim deductions in one year, but organizations receive or record the gift in another, especially in cases involving Donor-Advised Funds (DAFs), multi-year pledges or carryover deductions.

Contributions by Recipient Organization, 2015 to 2024

Total change (%) year-over-year in current dollars

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
OVERALL	5.0	5.1	8.2	1.6	0.6	10.3	16.1	-2.0	2.2	**6.3**
Religion	2.8	3.9	1.0	0.3	2.5	0.4	5.9	4.4	0.9	**1.9**
Education	7.7	0.7	5.0	4.6	5.8	-2.3	14.2	14.1	-1.6	**13.2**
Human Services	7.2	4.4	7.8	8.7	2.0	19.7	12.9	7.2	2.5	**5.0**
Health	3.6	10.5	1.4	6.4	-2.6	10.1	13.7	4.7	10.4	**5.0**
Public-Society Benefit	5.7	13.2	11.4	8.9	3.3	21.6	32.1	-8.8	-1.5	**19.5**
Arts, Culture, Humanities	11.0	-3.0	5.7	4.4	4.5	-2.5	8.5	9.7	0.1	**9.5**
International Affairs	15.9	-7.5	16.4	-4.5	2.3	9.9	44.9	-24.4	1.6	**17.7**
Environment/ Animals	10.9	6.0	6.5	10.1	0.8	13.3	20.4	8.7	1.2	**7.7**
Foundations	-15.3	1.3	29.4	4.7	-14.8	57.3	37.1	-24.0	-0.1	**0.5**

Religion

Giving to religious organizations grew by 3.1% from 2022, totaling $145.81 billion in 2023.

- Giving to the religion sector composed 23% of all donations received by charities in 2024. The sector is defined as giving to congregations, missions, religious media, and other related organizations.
- Giving grew 1.9% in current dollars from 2023, totaling an estimated $146.54 billion.
- There was no clear pattern among religious organizations, as some churches saw increases in charitable contributions, while others noted a slight decline. What was common was that the movement in contributions, whether an increment or decline, was very slight.

Education

Contributions to education organizations grew by 13.2% between 2023 and 2024, to $88.32 billion.

- Giving to education amounted to 14% of total giving in 2024, making it the third-largest sector.
- Universities struggled to protect free speech for students and faculty while also trying to appease mega-donors concerned about antisemitism.

Human Services

Giving to human services organizations increased by 5% in 2024, totaling an estimated $91.15 billion.

- Contributions to the human services sector represented 14% of all donations received by charities.
- Giving to human services was driven by disaster response, major gifts, and year-end momentum. For the second year in a row, giving to human services increased and has overtaken higher education as the second-leading sector with respect to total contributions.
- While the giving ecosystem for the human services sector in 2024 was supportive, it was also strained due to rising demand for services and workforce shortages in social assistance roles. Additionally, demand for human services, especially housing, mental health, and food assistance, is increasing faster than the fundraising needed to support it.

Health

Giving to health organizations increased by 5% in 2024, totaling an estimated $60.51 billion.

- Contributions to the health sector composed 10% of all donations received by charities in 2024.
- The sector experienced 15.9% growth from 2022 to 2024, outpacing overall giving. Mega-giving to health remains strong. Although mega-gifts increased just slightly from 2023 to 2024, total mega-giving from 2021 to 2024 was sustained at levels 150% greater than from 2017 to 2020.
- Major gifts and targeted funding drove the momentum, with substantial support going to mental health, cancer care, and maternal health initiatives. Academic medical centers and large health systems performed especially well, benefiting from strong infrastructure and donor engagement, while smaller nonprofits faced challenges with donor acquisition and retention.

Public-Society Benefit

Contributions to the public-society benefit sector increased 19.5% to an estimated $66.84 billion in 2024.

- The total amount contributed to the public-society benefit sector in 2024 reached its second highest inflation-adjusted value ever.
- Giving to public-society benefit organizations amounted to 11% of total giving in 2024.
- Giving to public-society benefit organizations increased in 2024 spurred by global and societal issues and conflicts, including environmental disasters, humanitarian crises, racial justice issues, LGBTQ+ rights, voting rights, and women's reproductive rights.

Arts, Culture, & Humanities

Charitable giving to arts, culture, and humanities organizations grew by 9.5% in 2024, reaching a record high of $25.13 billion.

- Giving to the arts, culture, and humanities sector amounted to 4% of total giving in 2024.
- The size of gifts from individuals rose, while the number of gifts declined. Major gifts and capital campaigns played an outsized role in 2024, with seven- and eight-figure gifts driving a sharp increase in total capital support. These high-impact contributions often supported endowments, capital campaigns, and infrastructure.
- Fundraising performance contrasted across different types of arts organizations, with museums generally reporting stable or increased giving compared with 2019. Museums saw stable or growing individual donations, while performing arts organizations, especially theaters and opera companies, faced declines in attendance and mixed fundraising results.

International Affairs

International affairs is one of three sectors to experience double-digit growth in current dollars in 2024.

- Giving to international affairs increased by 17.7%. However, major gifts of $1 million or more to this sector declined between 2023 and 2024, though modest recurring giving increased.
- Contributions to the international affairs sector comprised 6 percent of total giving in 2024.
- Disaster relief and humanitarian aid were major concerns for the sector in 2024. Major commitments were dedicated to crises in Gaza and Ukraine. The sector received considerable investments in other international causes, such as health, economic prosperity, data and artificial intelligence, women's health, and workforce participation.

Environment/ Animals

Contributions to the environment and animals sector reached an all-time high of $21.57 billion in 2024, growing by 7.7% from 2023.

- Giving to the environment and animals sector amounted to 3% of total giving in 2024.
- According to Blackbaud Institute's Trends in Giving, overall giving to environmental and animal welfare organizations outpaced the average rate considerably (6.4% compared with the 1.9% average) from 2023 to 2024.

Foundations

Giving to foundations amounted to 11% of total giving in 2024.

- Year-to-year shifts in foundations’ charitable receipts can often be attributed to the difference in large gifts received from year to year.
- Mega-donors continue to influence the philanthropic landscape, making substantial contributions to foundations. Many are turning to collaborative funding approaches, and new initiatives geared toward women demonstrate a substantial shift toward gender-focused philanthropy.

GIVING BY SOURCE

Individuals

Giving by individuals remained the largest source of philanthropic contributions, accounting for 66% of total giving in 2024. This represents quite a rebound with an 8.2% increase over 2023, with contributions totaling an estimated $392.0 billion. Over the last five years, individual giving has grown at an average annualized rate of approximately 4.5% in current dollars.

Favorable economic conditions — including rising personal income, GDP growth, and a strong stock market — were key drivers of the growth in individual giving. However, persistent inflation and cost-of-living pressures continued to create financial headwinds for many households.

Charitable giving by individuals and households typically aligns with trends in disposable personal income. In 2024, disposable personal income increased by 6.4%, compared to 2023. Broader measures of wealth also improved — personal income rose 4.9% in current dollars, and the S&P 500 increased 24.2%, or 19.3% in real terms, supporting asset-based giving and donor confidence.

Despite growth in total giving, participation remains concentrated among fewer households than in previous decades. The Philanthropy Panel Study[10] from the Indiana University's Lilly Family School of Philanthropy reports that only 50% of U.S. households gave to charity in 2018, the latest year available, down from 66% in 2000.

Foundations

Giving by foundations continued to represent a significant share of total giving. **In 2024, foundation giving reached an estimated $109.8 billion, an increase of 5.9% from the prior year, accounting for 19% of total contributions.** This marks the third consecutive year of foundation giving exceeding $100 billion.

Bequest

Bequest giving, which reflects contributions through wills and estate planning, totaled an estimated $43.6 billion in 2024. This represents a modest increase of 2.2% in current dollars. **Bequests accounted for approximately 7% of total giving, underscoring the ongoing relevance of legacy giving.** While Giving USA reports individual and bequest giving as separate categories, both forms originate from personal donor intent and long-term philanthropic planning.

Corporations

Corporate giving also saw meaningful growth in 2024, increasing by 9.1% to reach an estimated $44.4 billion. Corporate giving made up 7% of total charitable contributions, and includes both cash and in-kind donations, as well as gifts and grants through corporate foundations.

Corporate giving trends varied significantly by industry. For instance, giving by technology and communications firms declined slightly, while contributions from the healthcare and financial services sectors increased. Corporate priorities for nonprofit sectors also shifted, with companies increasingly aligning donations with Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) goals, workforce development, and community health initiatives. Understanding these sector-level dynamics remains critical when cultivating corporate partnerships.

GIVING ONLINE[11]

Digital consumer behavior is mature. **Today, mobile devices account for over 65% of all e-commerce orders, 5 billion people use social media, and more than 69% of the global population is online.**

This digital adoption has reshaped philanthropy, but growth rates have slowed. Online revenue grew by 2% in 2024, rebounding modestly after a 1% decline in 2023. One-time gifts stabilized year-over-year, while monthly giving increased 5%, now representing 31% of online revenue. The digital landscape has changed from pandemic-era acceleration into a phase of stabilization and optimization.

These shifts in digital behavior are reflected best in M+R 2025 Benchmarks, providing a detailed view of how organizations adapted to this maturing online environment:

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

- Online revenue growth: Up 2% in 2024. One-time gifts are flat year-over-year. Monthly giving boosted by 5%, now accounting for 31% of online revenue.
- Direct mail relationship: Nonprofits in the M+R study raised 78 cents in direct mail for each $1 raised online. Direct mail revenue increased by 3%.
- DAF growth: Donor-advised fund giving online rose 6%, averaging $0.13 DAF revenue per $1 of online revenue.

EMAIL

- Email list growth slowed to 3% in 2024, while email revenue declined about 10–11%.
- For every 1,000 fundraising emails sent, nonprofits raised just $58 — a 10% decrease from 2023.

ADVERTISING

- Digital ad spend increased by 11%, representing $0.12-0.14 in ads for every dollar raised online.
- Connected TV advertising rose 84%, making up 15% of digital fundraising budgets. Search ads delivered the highest ROAS ($2.70).

SOCIAL MEDIA & INFLUENCER ENGAGEMENT

- TikTok follower counts grew 37%, the fastest growth among social platforms.
- 52% of nonprofits partnered with influencers in 2024. 60% of those paid for fundraising campaigns, 65% for advocacy, and 77% for storytelling/persuasion formats.

MOBILE MESSAGING (SMS)

- Mobile subscriber lists rose 5–8%, with 158 mobile subscribers per 1,000 email contacts on average.
- SMS revenue generated $92 per 1,000 messages sent, grew 14%, and accounted for 0.3–0.4% of online revenue.

Despite the tapering growth, **omni-channel programs remain essential**. Monthly sustainer programs that are primarily digital continue to drive revenue and stability, while direct mail, DAFs, and paid media offer complementary lift. **Organizations that combine emerging tools like SMS and influencer outreach with tested channels like email and search advertising are best positioned to compete.**

While AI is already embedded in many nonprofits' workflows, particularly for content creation and messaging, its full potential for donor personalization has yet to emerge. By 2026, organizations will begin to segment giving behavior in real time and execute truly one-to-one campaigns at scale, signaling a major shift in how donor relationships are managed.

Looking Ahead

Heading into 2026, fundraisers are navigating a sector that has regained its footing but remains under structural strain. The headline numbers signal resilience — economic growth, rising charitable totals, and renewed digital activity — but beneath the surface, participation remains uneven.

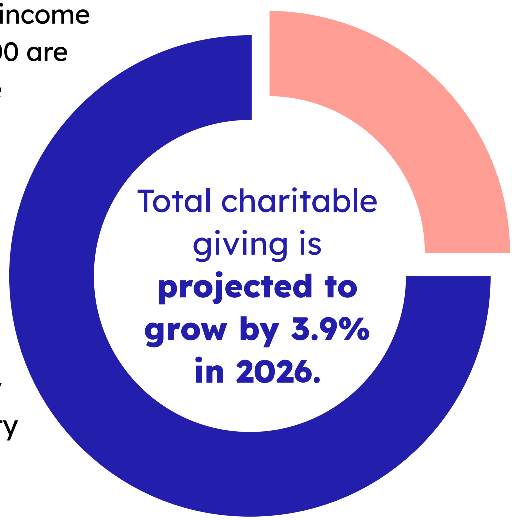
High-net-worth donors continue to propel overall growth, while engagement from small and mid-level donors declines. This divergence reflects the broader shifts outlined throughout this report: A philanthropic landscape shaped by new technologies, evolving donor expectations, and intensified pressure on food insecurity organizations to do more with less.

As planning turns toward the future, leaders must confront a defining challenge — ensuring that philanthropy remains broad-based, inclusive, and sustainable in the face of growing concentration.

OVERALL GROWTH

Based on modeling from the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, total charitable giving is projected to grow by 3.9% in 2026, following a 4.2% increase in 2024 and a 3.6% increase in 2025. This trend positions giving above the 10-, 25-, and 40-year historical averages, reflecting broad sector resilience.

Continued strength in personal income and modest gains in the S&P 500 are expected to positively influence giving behavior. As foundation giving often lags stock market performance by one to three years, strong market returns in 2023 and 2024 may fuel institutional giving in 2026. However, persistent inflation and interest rate pressures may continue to affect donor liquidity and nonprofit operating costs.



GIVING BY INDIVIDUALS

Giving by individuals and households is projected to increase by 3.4% in 2026, continuing a trajectory of modest growth following a 2.6% gain in 2024 and 3.1% in 2025. This projection remains slightly below the total giving forecast, highlighting the increasing role of institutional, corporate, and mega-donors in driving topline revenue.

Donor behavior remains segmented across income, age, and engagement levels. Core giving continues to come from older, wealthier households, reinforcing the need to retain traditional donors who prioritize loyalty, mission alignment, and planned giving. However, engaging the next generation will require new approaches. Younger donors are less likely to identify with traditional philanthropic constructs and more likely to seek impact through value-driven commerce, peer-driven campaigns, and transparency around the use of funds. For many, philanthropy looks like a round-up app, a creator-led TikTok fundraiser, or buying a product that delivers visible social value. Stewardship expectations have shifted as well — instant confirmation, real-time updates, and proof of impact now matter more than tax receipts or legacy recognition. Hunger relief organizations must reconcile these diverging expectations by delivering segmented experiences that sustain the loyalty of long-time donors while cultivating relevance for a rising generation that gives differently.

While overall conditions support growth, fundraisers should remain vigilant, as always. Effective fundraising in 2026 will require data-informed segmentation, clear value communication, and an integrated approach to both retention and acquisition.

Imperatives for Adapting

What future are you preparing for? One driven by fewer, bigger donors? One driven by everyday supporters?

Or a future that is driven by both? Success hinges on understanding today's supporters more deeply, adapting strategy with agility, and aligning investments to long-term value. AGP offers a set of tools and frameworks designed to help fundraisers meet this moment — by unlocking donor insight, forecasting outcomes, and activating more meaningful experiences.

1

IMPERATIVE ONE:

Decode what drives your donors

Understanding donor motivations is no longer optional — it is fundamental to building resilient fundraising. The AGP GivingDNA platform helps fundraisers uncover what truly drives giving behavior, combining real-time file analysis with behavioral segmentation and predictive modeling. It empowers teams to prioritize audiences for growth, identify overlooked value, and target communications based on how donors think and give — not just what they've done in the past. **With GivingDNA, you can translate data into strategy and strategy into measurable growth.**

Learn more: www.givingdna.com

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IMPERATIVE TWO:

Go deeper into donor mindset and motivation

Donors give for many reasons — honoring a loved one, supporting a friend's fundraiser, responding to a compelling story, or advancing a cause that reflects their values. While demographics such as age and generational cohort offer useful signals, they rarely reveal the underlying motivations that drive lasting support. Our mindset segmentation methodology goes beyond traditional audience segmentation to uncover the "why" behind donor actions. We combine qualitative insight with quantitative rigor to build actionable audience profiles rooted in philanthropic mindset, communication preferences, and brand perception. **These insights empower organizations to tailor stewardship donor journeys, for instance, for an audience that cares more about real-time updates and proof of impact over tax receipts and legacy recognition alone.**

3 IMPERATIVE THREE:
Model investment scenarios before you commit

Strategic planning requires more than historical benchmarks — it demands forward-looking insight. **Our Fundraising Opportunity Forecast Tool enables development teams to model potential outcomes based on key levers like acquisition spend, retention strategy, and channel allocation.** What would it look like if we pulled acquisition investment for the year? What impact would an elevated stewardship campaign have on our program next year? By inputting current program metrics and investment goals, development teams can compare strategy scenarios that are under consideration and align budget decisions with revenue impact — before making costly commitments. It's a smarter way to plan for growth and navigate uncertainty, and we can help you to explore options with this tool.

Learn more: https://allegiancegroup.typeform.com/to/DPDT17Sb

4 IMPERATIVE FOUR:
Design the journey your donors deserve

A meaningful donor experience doesn't happen by chance — it must be designed with intention. **Through Constituent Experience Design & Journey Activation, our team will identify priority audiences and then facilitate structured journey mapping workshops to help food insecurity organizations build personalized pathways for those individuals.** Together, we map motivations, emotional touchpoints, and engagement gaps — then translate insights into actionable journey frameworks. The result is a prioritized roadmap for enhancement that elevates every phase of the donor experience and drives measurable improvement in retention, engagement, and lifetime value.

These imperatives are not just strategic concepts — they are operational levers. Together, they equip fundraisers to move with greater confidence and clarity, regardless of where they sit on the curve of change. **Let us know how AGP can help you build what's next.**

ENDNOTES

1 https://www.givingusa.org/

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About Allegiance Group + Pursuant

At AGP, we help nonprofits turn missions into movements — and supporters into passionate champions.

We're a strategic partner to mission-driven teams who want more than short-term wins. Our work blends insight and creativity to strengthen what matters most: deeper connection, lasting loyalty, and the resources to power your mission.

We've walked in your shoes. We understand the complexity nonprofits face — because we've lived it. That experience grounds our approach in authenticity, humility, and deep respect for your work.

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From donor journeys to brand storytelling, direct mail to digital engagement, and data to design — we bring both intelligence and heart to help you grow what matters.

Whether you're looking to inspire action, modernize your strategy, or simply cut through the noise — we will meet you where you are and build from there.

This isn't just fundraising. It's not just marketing.

It's how powerful missions **take root, gain momentum,** and **grow**.

Choose Allegiance Group + Pursuant for Strategy & Consulting, Direct Mail, Web Design & Development, Digital Marketing, Advocacy, Membership Acquisition & Retention, Donation Platforms, Loyalty Programs, and more. Our clients feed the hungry, heal the sick, nourish souls, enrich lives, care for animals, and build minds. You have an important goal, and we're thrilled to leverage our blend of data, technology, and award-winning creative to get you there.

CONTACT US

We'd love to connect to learn more about your mission and the goals we can help you achieve.

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