

# KEEPING UP THE MOMENTUM

You have joined or established a giving circle. Now what? How do you keep members engaged and ensure your giving circle continues to thrive? Read on for key lessons compiled from many conversations with giving circle founders and members.

## KEEP MEMBERS ENGAGED

Ensure that your members are **continually engaged and learning**. Learning about organizations in the community doing good work and connecting with other like-minded individuals who want to make a meaningful impact can be key for member retention.

**Involve your members in the grant-making process.** Being part of the grant-making process connects members to the mission, the issues, and one another. Those who are involved will feel a sense of pride in their participation and are more likely to remain.

## COMMUNICATE REGULARLY

It is critical to **communicate with members on a regular basis**. While you may opt to put in place a grant-making process and choose to host only one annual meeting, it will be beneficial to stay connected to members throughout the year. This can be done through newsletters, e-blasts, personal contact, etc. Ultimately, there are various ways you can communicate with members – what works will depend on the interests, needs, geography and demographics of your members.

**Celebrate!** Honour and applaud your granting impact and the members of your circle who have given their time and treasure throughout the year.

## REFLECT AND BE FLEXIBLE

As your giving circle evolves, understand that your **goals and mission can change over time**, as existing and/or new members wish to try new approaches. Research on giving circles in the United States suggests that giving circles that have lasted five years or more “have survived by adapting their priorities and offerings” and they had a “flexible structure”. Regularly check in with members to see how they are doing, whether they are still enjoying being part of the giving circle, whether it is truly maximizing people’s impact, and whether you need to change any structures or approaches. Perhaps you need to plan more events, change your leadership structure, or adjust your grant-making process.

In summary, make sure members benefit from the giving circle, whether that is in networking opportunities, increasing social ties, or a renewed feeling of purpose and agency.

Find more resources to start your own giving circle on our website.