



JUST GIVING 2014

Towards an Ecological and Socially Just Transition to the Next Economy

“Something new and important is happening in our community. Philanthropy is at the cusp of a new wave of thinking about the need for a Just Transition. EDGE is at the heart of that process. Join us in leading the way and building a movement.” ~ Terry Odendahl, ED of Global Greengrants Fund & Conference Co-chair.

On April 29 - May 1, more than 230 donors, movement leaders, and activists came together in Berkeley for EDGE Funders Alliance’s most significant convening yet.

The 2014 Just Giving conference was a critical moment in philanthropy - highlighting the linked and systemic nature of the social, economic, and ecological crises in our world today; and connecting them with broader campaigns and ongoing alternatives in the emerging movement for a just transition.

At its heart, Just Giving's purpose was to enhance philanthropy's capacity to confront and address profound systemic challenges - not through symptom alleviation, but deeper, far-reaching strategies that put people, movements, and the environment first.

For three days, donors and allies engaged in a strong process of ownership through a series of "community dialogues" which allowed participants to grapple with key questions,

and ask what philanthropy can do to support the movement.

The voices of activists and experts resonated throughout three compelling and moving plenaries which offered rousing words on the most salient issues facing our planet. More powerfully, the plenaries, workshops, and dialogue spaces converged to coherently convey the linked nature of those issues - that the struggle for economic justice is inexorably linked to the very real and critically pressing risk of disastrous climate change.

“What we are fighting for is our revolutionary imagination and the belief that ordinary people are part of that change.” ~Maria Poblet Executive Director, Causa Justa/Just Cause.

In Anonymous Surveys, Funders Agreed or Strongly Agreed with the Following:

Participation reinforced or strengthened my view that the social, ecological and economic crises we face are interconnected, and systemic in nature. 95%

Participation reinforced or strengthened my view that progressive philanthropy should seek to address root causes of these crises. 96%

An ecological and socially 'just transition' to a new/next economy is a useful way to think of the social transformations needed. 88%



Creating a Movement Within Philanthropy

"Out of the silos and into the struggle: it's time for philanthropy to get its hands dirty."

Select Comments from Foundation Representatives:

Really, the very best philanthropy event I've attended.

So inspiring to have this special combination of thinkers, funders and activists together.

Excellent plenaries and workshops. Really appreciated the depth of political analysis and thinking about solutions, including a good number of voices from social movement leaders both in the US and around the world.

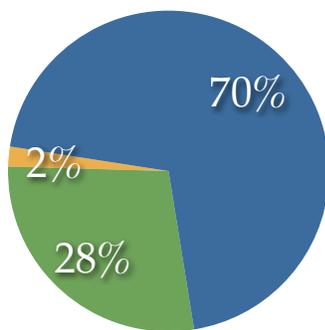
I thought everybody left inspired and with a better idea of what a "just transition" looks like.

One of the best funder conferences I have attended. The theme was exciting, cutting-edge and thought provoking. It played in really well with the sessions. The plenaries were rousing and inspiring.



Are those of us on the edge, ready for the center to move towards us? ~Cara Mertes, Ford Foundation

I am glad I attended the conference, as what I learned and experienced there will be useful to me in my work:



- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Engagement Labs and strategy spaces at Just Giving allowed funders to tackle a range of current issues and challenges, while also identifying touch-points, opportunities, and vibrant new approaches for achieving a truly just world.

Participant-led sessions grounded the possibilities of system change through examples of concrete, ongoing alternatives that support transition to more sustainable and equitable models of society and economy. The sessions were the highest rated aspect of this year's conference, with 68% of respondents rating them as "excellent" and 30% as "good."

A paradigm shift is urgently needed to address the structural causes of injustice and poverty. Yet profound ecological, social and economic reforms towards systemic change are slow in coming. What was clear at Just Giving 2014 was that the rethinking has started - philanthropy is questioning old models, creating some windows for change, and envisioning alternatives.

As noted by Conference Co-chair Ken Wilson (Executive Director of The Christensen Fund) on the final conference plenary, "the just transition is happening and it is taking place in the decomposing matter of a decaying system. In that very process philanthropy itself will be transformed, requiring its own composting plan to release better nutrients into the wider system."

For EDGE, Just Giving 2014 was a powerful and important step in our journey towards bringing about transformational change; and for stimulating an honest, critical, and generative discussion within our network of passionately engaged, progressive donors.

How We Live (H*WL)

A [short film](#) produced by EDGE Funders with Kontent Films helped frame our conversation along "A Journey Towards a Just Transition."



More About Just Giving 2014