

# Giving in Maine 2022 & 2023

Based on the latest FY2020 and FY2021 data



## Executive Summary

We are pleased to present, delayed due to IRS reporting and a full report redesign, our 2022 and 2023 Foundation Giving in Maine Reports – an analysis of giving in Maine during FY2020 and FY2021 which can be described as two of the most turbulent years in our lifetimes. This report covers the onset and long-term impacts from COVID-19, the racial awakening and reckoning following the disproportionate number of killings of Black individuals by the police, and the beginning of exceptional levels of inflation not seen since the 1980s.

These reports attempt to peel back the curtain on what happened during those two years within the foundation giving context. During this time Maine Philanthropy Center convened funders to share information about what was happening on state and sector levels. We worked with our partners at the Maine Association of Nonprofits to advocate for ARPA dollars for nonprofits. And we encouraged funder members to adopt or lean into flexible, trust-based practices: give unrestricted dollars, amend existing restricted grants to be unrestricted, connect with their grantees to provide additional support, give more than the 5 percent mandated payout rate, and commit to multi-year grants.

The story the data tells is mixed – foundations met the moment in 2020, moving resources at an unprecedented level, and then pulled back in 2021 to 2019 giving levels when we adjust for inflation. We recognize that philanthropic giving represents only one type of resourcing for nonprofits and communities. During this time, extraordinary state and federal investments buoyed individuals and communities, and individuals played an important role in meeting community need through donations and mutual aid support. While there is so much that our data cannot tell us, here is what we can say about foundation giving during the first two years of the COVID-19 pandemic.



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- ▶ In 2020, there was a national surge in foundation giving and Maine's giving matched this trend. According to *Giving USA 2021*, national foundation giving rose 17 percent. In Maine, we saw a 21 percent increase from foundations based or reporting in Maine.
- ▶ Donor-advised fund (DAF) giving from Maine-based DAF sponsors exploded in 2020. DAFs, primarily mobilized by the Maine Community Foundation, gave unprecedented dollars – increasing year over year by 75 percent.
- ▶ In 2021, despite a strong stock market and continued heightened need due to the uneven vaccine rollout and consumer prices increasing at a rapid rate, we saw cutbacks in philanthropic giving levels. Giving by Maine-based or Maine-reporting foundations decreased 12 percent during this time, while nationally giving rose just over 3 percent (*Giving USA 2022*). When adjusted for inflation Maine's foundation giving dropped down to 2019 levels.

As we've frequently heard from our nonprofit members, unrestricted general operating support distributed at the height of the pandemic – partnered with a sense of care, trust, and urgency – allowed nonprofits to be more effective and responsive in their own work. Supporting nonprofits in this way going forward will move us towards the equitable, just, and vibrant Maine we all want.