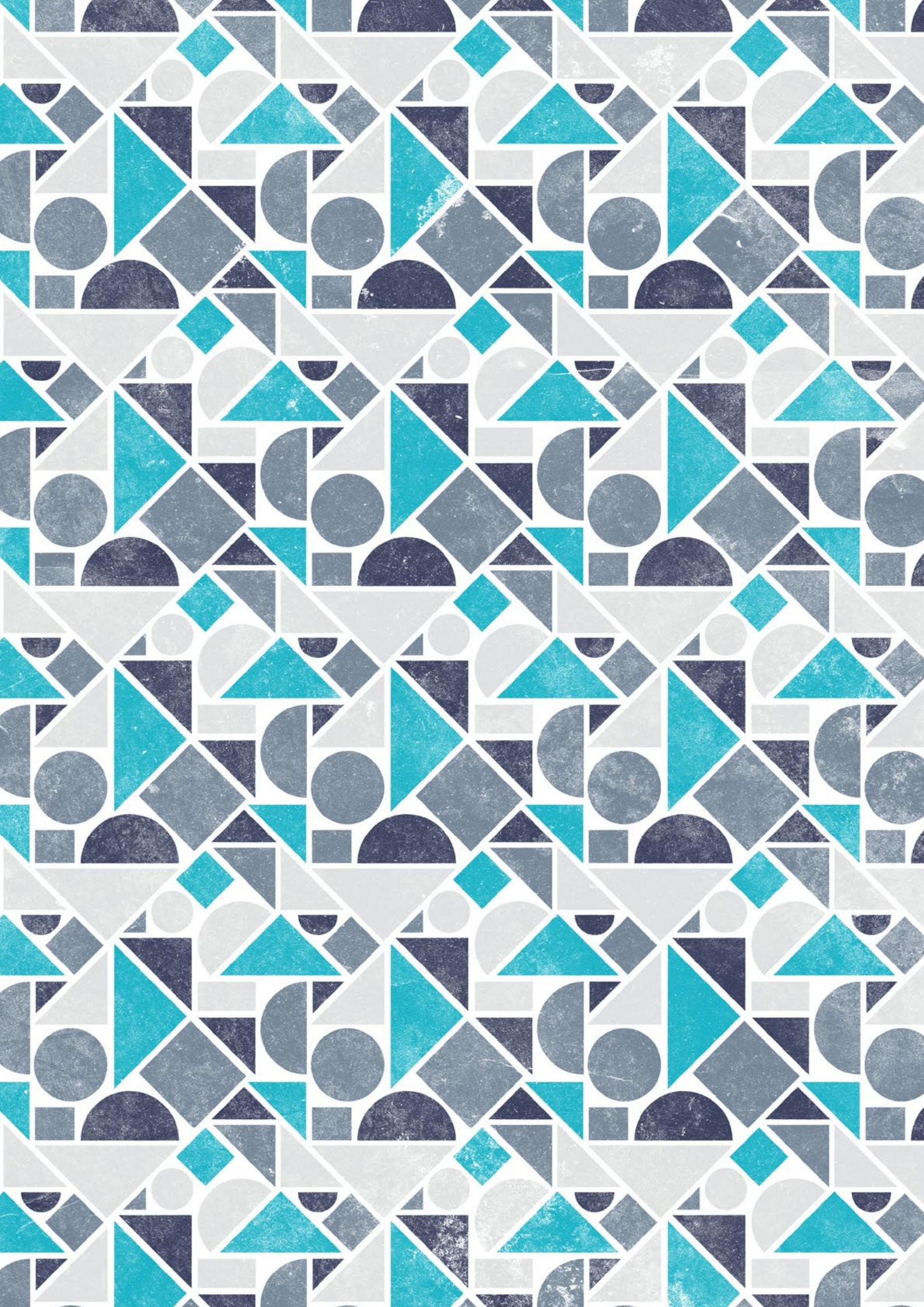




2020 Ariadne Forecast

For European Social Change
and Human Rights Funders





2020 Ariadne Forecast:

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"I hope that European and national policy makers will acknowledge the value of philanthropy for our society and start shaping the enabling environment for civil society and philanthropy in a way that it can reach its full potential."

Max von Abendorth | Executive Director | DAFNE

"There is more than ever a desire from foundations to build bridges across funding silos and to practice intersectionality in their programming."

Annie Hillar | Co-Director
Philanthropy Advancing Women's Human Rights

"What is risk, and who is 'risky'? We can't play it safe anymore, and we need to think outside the box. The future is radical, and we want to be a part of it. Risk can mean different things: risky political decisions from funders or funding in a risky environment. The real risk is that funders don't adapt fast enough."

Julian Corner | Chief Executive | Lankelly Chase

2020 Ariadne Forecast:

■ About Ariadne

Ariadne is a European peer-to-peer network of more than 612 individuals from 154 grantmaking organisations in 22 countries which support social change and human rights. Ariadne helps those using private resources for public good achieve more together than they can alone by linking them to other funders and providing practical tools of support.

Ariadne is a programme of Global Dialogue, a registered charity (1122052) and limited company (5775827) which promotes human rights and social change by supporting innovative and collaborative philanthropy.

▼ Methodology

The Ariadne Forecast is a community created resource that draws on the Ariadne network. Ariadne participants and other friends of the network were asked six questions about trends in their field for 2020. We collected surveys and interviews from members across Europe and held forecast meetings for funders in Amsterdam, Como, London and Paris to discuss and add to the findings. In the end we estimate that around 176 people have had the chance to contribute to the Forecast. While the meetings and discussions at them were private, the final forecast is publicly available for all, as a reflection on the current direction of the sector.

The 2020 Ariadne Forecast report was written by Julie Broome and edited by Debora Guidetti and Hannah Stevens.

Frode Sørensen designed and laid out the report: www.frodedesign.com

Ariadne thanks its members for their financial support.

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Introduction

This year's Forecast felt particularly momentous as we enter not only a new year, but a new decade. What are the challenges that philanthropy will face in the 2020s? What are the opportunities that this new decade will bring? And most importantly, is philanthropy prepared to seize those opportunities in order to meet the coming challenges (many of which are already on our doorstep) head on?

It has become a truism circulated throughout funder meetings that the far-right is far more organised than we, the champions of human rights and social justice, are. That they have been throwing everything they've got at a few key issues, funding at scale a wide range of associations and movements that align with their values without the same demands and procedures that we have placed on organisations we support. These views are expressed with a certain level of fatalism, as if we are condemned by our institutional practices to roll back down the hill like Sisyphus with his rock. But these assessments about the past and present need not limit us in the future. As a community of funders, we have significant resources, an exceptional pool of talent, and a passion for the values we believe in. We also know that many of the solutions we seek are already out there, formulated by those who are most affected by the threats and pressures we all witness but whose voices are not heard. While the challenges are great, we do have what we need to pursue a future in which civil liberties and the human rights of the most vulnerable, including economic and social rights, are protected if we are ready to listen and to act.

From the interviews, surveys, and roundtables we conducted emerges a picture of philanthropy in flux. A recognition that 'business as usual' is no longer fit for purpose alongside fears that real change is too difficult. There is a call for foundations to be bolder, to show more leadership and engage more with the popular movements for change. But as one of our respondents said, 'The real risk is that foundations do nothing.' The next year could be a significant turning point as foundations grapple with what their response to this call will be.

Nothing puts the urgency of these questions into focus like the reports that if governments do not take significant action by 2030, we will fail to keep the rise in global temperature to 1.5 degrees Celsius as laid out in the Paris Agreement. The world is changing around us whether we are prepared for that change or not. The moment to step into a positive role for the future is now. No, private philanthropy cannot do everything, and nor should it, but if the options are to be part of the solution or sit on the sidelines, I hope we will choose to act.

Let's step into this new decade with positivity, making best use of the tools and resources we have as a community. No one can do it alone, but together we can drive innovation, support creativity, and lift up the voices of those who are not often heard by the powerful to help them achieve the solutions they have already started to imagine.

Best wishes,
Julie Broome
Ariadne Director

2020 Ariadne Forecast:

Global



In 2019, while space for civil society in Europe continued to be narrowed, the influence of a conservative civil society funded by the far-right widened, and donors watched as their rhetoric shifted from the fringes to the mainstream.

Although the challenges of the coming year are considerable, donors are prepared to face them head on and are identifying opportunities for

major change within them. As people mobilise around the climate crisis, funders are seeing the potential of these social movements to affect change more widely, and with inequality rising, philanthropy is thinking critically about its past and future roles. While the next twelve months may be rocky, there is hope that we will come out stronger on the other side.



◆ What do you expect to be the most pressing challenge facing your grantees in 2020?

Closing space for civil society

As has been the case for several years, the closing space for civil society tops the list of challenges that donors anticipate will face grantees in 2020. Although the form this challenge takes may vary across geographies and issues, donors working in all parts of the world cited this concern. As social movements gain more momentum, authorities are cracking down on the rights to assembly and association.

"The political (and media) criminalisation of social movements influence the representation of citizens towards those movements, passing off police violence as legitimate intervention. Even pacific strike is not seen as a civic right anymore, but as an abuse to be condemned."
Senior Program Officer | Private Foundation | Spain

The rise of populism

In Western Europe, funders worry about the impact of rising populism on the space for and legitimacy of civil society and philanthropy, while some funders working in Eastern Europe see a growing influence of the church, particularly around women's rights issues. In Croatia, for example, women are being pressured by church-controlled NGOs not to have abortions, sometimes being targeted in shelters for women victims of violence.

"In Eastern Europe, women's rights activists are scared: Ukraine saw last year the campaign, 'kill the feminist...within you'; in Poland and Bulgaria, women's funds are pressured via intimidatory lawsuits to prevent them from operating. Feminists are increasingly under attack."
International Relations Officer | Public Foundation | France

Cross-border philanthropy

The LGBTQI community is similarly under threat, and as attacks on LGBTQI people lead to forced migration (for example, from Chechnya), organisations may find themselves playing new roles for which they are not prepared, as reception points for refugees. This is not work they have funding or training for, and they are scrambling to keep up.

Money transfers from Europe to organisations in other parts of the world, especially the Middle East, are becoming more difficult, which is increasing the burden on international funders and their grantees. Channelling funds to Syria is especially difficult, requiring a series of scrupulously vetted intermediaries and specific checks for terrorist activities. Many NGOs from the region established European headquarters as a result of the conflict but are now facing many difficulties to transfer funds and sustain their activities in-country.

'Uncivil' society

Some funders also note a rise in conservative civil society, sometimes referred to as 'uncivil' society when it involves advocating violence or the repression of rights, funded by the far-right. These organisations are having more impact on public discourse and attacking more progressive civil society on social media. This phenomenon is perhaps most visible in the areas of gender rights, anti-racism, and migration, but it is affecting organisations working on a variety of issues across Europe and globally. Hate speech and online violence are on the rise, and there are concerns that the narratives promoted by the far-right are being increasingly adopted by mainstream politicians.

"The trajectory will continue towards repression of critical voices within semi-authoritarian societies and a climate of impunity for such abuses."

Director of Programmes | Private Foundation | UK

Anti-terror legislation

Anti-terrorism laws and greater transparency measures are also being selectively applied in certain contexts with more activist organisations being targeted.

"Another thing that we see in more and more countries is the effects of anti-terrorism measures becoming more visible. Regulations are applied in ways that don't seem systematic. For example, we see higher transparency requests of some organisations – often local authorities requesting specific partners to be more transparent. There is discretion in how these measures can be applied, but we see these used against those who are more critical."

Secretary | Public Foundation | Germany

The European model

Against this backdrop, European funders are also concerned about the future of Europe and see protecting and strengthening the European model as a challenge for the coming year.

"The model of Europe which works on the basis of cooperation and a sense of solidarity and mutual understanding is under attack from the outside of Europe (Trump, Putin, China, Brazil) but also from the inside (Orban, Salvini, Le Pen). The model on which Europe has worked for the last 30 years is challenged."

Director | Public Foundation | Netherlands

Climate crisis

The climate emergency is also high on the list of challenges facing civil society and philanthropy in 2020, both in terms of their advocacy and their working practices. Foundations across Europe are thinking about how they can respond to the climate crisis, and, inspired by the UK Funder Commitment on Climate Change, are considering creating a European-wide commitment.

Digital Rights

Digitalisation and the impacts of artificial intelligence and algorithmic decision-making are key challenges as we enter a new decade, and organisations are scrambling to respond to the lobbying power of the big tech companies. Many foundations are still coming to terms with the many ways in which digitalisation affects the work that they support and have not yet integrated a digital lens into their work. 2020 could be the year that digital moves from a niche issue on which a small group of foundations have expertise to a mainstream component of broader social change and human rights funding.

Disinformation

Disinformation, the erosion of trust in the media, media independence, and the targeted use of political advertising during elections also pose significant threats, which neither civil society organisations nor funders are yet completely equipped to deal with.

"The recent British elections marked a new low as the governing party engaged in disinformation and targeted attacks on the BBC in the run-up to and immediately after re-election. These trends create an increasingly difficult environment for those seeking to use fact-based arguments to build majority support for action on the grand challenges ahead - most notably climate change. This is an environment in which the far right have learned to flourish and progressives remain on the backfoot."

Director | Donor Collaborative | UK

Access to funding

Many funders are also concerned about a potential lack of funding for certain issues. Some worry that trends in grantmaking towards 'hot' topics mean that other, more established issues will be ignored. Meanwhile, some issues are chronically underfunded, with funders supporting sex work, for example, seeing no change on the horizon and fearing groups will continue to struggle to access mainstream human rights funding.

What opportunities do you see in 2020 that might help your grantees advance their work?

Climate justice movements

The movement around the climate crisis is seen as a real opportunity. Now that people have been mobilised, there might be an opening to take the decisions required to mitigate the crisis. The climate crisis is also now better understood and recognised as a priority by civil society and foundations working across a range of issues.

"I've never seen a movement move so quickly from despair to hope, to people getting on board... Greta has done a huge favour to us all. It's an opportunity not to be missed."

Chief Executive | Philanthropic Network | Belgium

"Growing and broad-based civil society movements are translating into smaller and bigger societal changes; more people everywhere understand the need for just transitions and express their desire for divestment from fossil fuels in the face of climate change. People are making connections between human rights and environmental justice issues."

Executive Director | Public Foundation | UK

"With almost global recognition of climate change, the issue being contested is no longer climate science but solutions and the timetable for action. Here civil society has an enormous role to play in helping governments secure a public mandate for action. Many climate funders we've spoken with think the legitimacy of climate related activism could open the space for civic engagement more broadly - especially in more restrictive contexts."

Director | Donor Collaborative | UK

The growing strength of movements in general is seen as a potential opportunity to be seized in 2020.

"There seems to be more involvement of people who were not politically active in demonstrations – examples are the street demos in different parts of Latin America and the Caribbean, but also the emergence of a movement like Extinction Rebellion. This could support activists if the mobilisation is also accompanied by some kind of human rights education."

Public Foundation | Netherlands

Intersectionality

The willingness of funders to take a more intersectional approach could also help strengthen movements. While foundations are not well designed to be intersectional, many are trying to find new ways of working.

"There is more than ever a desire from foundations to build bridges across funding silos and to practice intersectionality in their programming."

Director | Philanthropic Network | Netherlands

"We are conditioned to work in silos. We need to break down those silos and work in more intersectional ways."

Executive Director | Public Foundation | UK

Collaboration

Interest in collaboration among funders is rising, and they are becoming more sophisticated in how they collaborate. This is creating more opportunities for funders to try to tackle big social problems together.

"Collaboration is progressing in nature and scale and entering a new phase. Now collaboratives start from the outset: a foundation entering a new field starts immediately to look for others actively addressing or interested in the issue and approaches the work with a collaborative mindset."

Executive Director | Philanthropic Organisation | Belgium

A single market for philanthropy

The willingness of European institutions to build a single market for philanthropy is an important opportunity, as in the long term it would allow foundations to make cross-border donations, making it easier for organisations to access grants from outside their own country. The European Philanthropy Manifesto, launched in 2019, was an important step forward that will hopefully open more opportunities in 2020. Similarly, the increased dialogue among European philanthropic institutions is an opportunity that could strengthen the work of European foundations.

"2020 will be a key year for the 'European philanthropy support ecosystem' to move into the next phase and make a real difference. Today the challenge is to prevent silos and mono-stakeholder bubbles and move from individual institutions to vision, cross-sectoral collaboration, and strategic partnerships."

Secretary General | Philanthropic Network | Italy

Whistleblower protection

A new EU directive on whistleblower protection, adopted in 2019 and requiring integration into national law within two years, could open opportunities for better rights protection.

"The transposition phase of the EU directive on whistleblower protection offers opportunities for civil society to continue to shape the legislative agenda in EU member states, particularly relevant in Germany and Spain where there is no comprehensive national legislation on the issue currently."

Senior Programme Officer | Private Foundation | Spain

Women's rights and LGBTQI rights

Funders supporting women's rights and LGBTQI rights see opportunities in the increased visibility of their issues both within funder circles and more generally. The trans and intersex movements are growing and are now more visible and empowered. Unfortunately, they still lack sufficient funding to be able to take advantage of this momentum, but more funders are becoming aware of their work. A forthcoming study of the state of funding for LBQ activists will also help raise more visibility and awareness about this section of the movement. Meanwhile, the launch of the Equality Fund, a global fund bringing together governmental and private funds for women, girls, and trans people, is an encouraging development. The Beijing+25 events in 2020 will also help bring more attention to women's rights.

Resilience While the closing space for civil society is seen as one of the biggest challenges, some funders predict that it might also provide an opportunity for civil society to become stronger.

“As political pressure continues, many will exit the space due to personal safety issues. The most resilient will remain and continue their work despite all challenges. In turn, this will push those that remain in this space to double their efforts and achieve results that will be known to the public. It will have a greater effect on society.”

Director of International Programmes | Private Foundation | Russia



How do you expect your practice as a funder to change in the next twelve months?

Grantees as partners

Some funders anticipate that in 2020 they will work with grantees more as partners, moving away from designing specific calls for proposals and responding more to the needs and ideas generated by the field. Some funders warn that they are witnessing a trend towards the formalisation of internal practices and procedures, driven by governmental donors, and caution private foundations to be wary of creating too much bureaucracy.

Questioning our definition of ‘risk’

In response to some of the challenges facing grantees in a closing-space context, one funder is considering making grants to help grantees purchase property. The hope is that the organisations will have greater security, in all senses, if they own their offices and do not have to rent. Some are calling upon funders to be more political in their funding and to take more risks. One funder anticipates funding ‘more at the margins’, identifying organisations working on tougher issues and receiving less support. Some donors are exploring how they can better protect the rights of peaceful protestors and activists at risk.

“We will be investing more resources in developing infrastructure to secure the right to protest and freedom of assembly and will continue to work to strengthen national and regional mechanisms to protect activists at risk. We will also seek to support less formal organisations like trade unions and social movements.”

Programme Officer | Private Foundation | UK

Advocacy

Some funders are also planning to take a more active advocacy role rather than just grantmaking.

“We will be engaging more operationally in advocating for the issues we care about, all the while seeking to ensure we are acting as a catalyst in the field and not sucking oxygen out of civil society.”

Managing Director | Private Foundation | UK

Many funders are thinking more about the climate crisis, and some intend to highlight the connections between the climate crisis and other issues, such as gender justice. Others are thinking about how work can be carried out differently so that it involves less travel.

One foundation will be reinforcing advocacy efforts at the EU level around the current lack of European funding directed towards women’s funds.

● What political event or sequence of events do you predict will have a substantial effect on your work?

Brexit Brexit, although it has been on the agenda for some time, is finally taking place in 2020, and funders across Europe are bracing themselves. Many see it as a challenge, but some funders in mainland Europe also see it as an opportunity to strengthen European cooperation.

Elections The presidential elections in the US are on the minds of many foundations, given the impact the Trump presidency has had globally. Having been caught by surprise in 2016, they are now preparing themselves for any outcome.

"The hope is that the backlash against multilateralism and global cooperation will draw back if Trump is defeated. If Trump wins a second term, it's a real challenge. In the long run it also changes institutions and modes of operation at global level and gives an example to similar rulers in other places like Brazil, Hungary, or even the UK."

Director | Public Foundation | Netherlands

Elections will be taking place across Europe in 2020 - Croatia (parliamentary), France (municipal and part of the senate), Greece (presidential), Lithuania (parliamentary), Poland (presidential), Romania (parliamentary), Slovakia (parliamentary) – and with them comes the risk of rising populism. If the European landscape changes significantly as a result of these elections it could have a profound effect on the issues that social change funders are supporting.

"The rise of populism at the national level will affect in a critical way how society values fundamental rights, democratic values, and civic engagement – this will decrease the space for civil society and philanthropy."

Executive Director | Philanthropic Network | Belgium

◀ What issue or field of practice do you think will become more important in 2020?

Climate crisis The climate crisis is widely believed to be the issue that will gain more importance in 2020. Even those funders who acknowledge that they are not working on climate now recognise that it is 'the' issue to be addressed.

Digital rights Digitalisation is an area of growing concern and one that is expected to receive more attention in the coming year. While different funders will be integrating digital into their work in different ways, some are thinking in particular about the ethical dimensions of artificial intelligence and machine learning.

"We will see continued growth of 'AI ethics' and will need to ensure this does not become an exercise in ethics-washing and ensure that accountability (especially of the most powerful) is part of the field's agenda."

Managing Director | Private Foundation | UK

The right to protest In the current context of closing civic space, the right to protest is expected to become a focus for more funders.

"Right to protest is a cross-cutting theme affecting everyone regardless of their issue: from the environment and climate justice, to social justice and the rights of minorities."
Senior Programme Officer | Private Foundation | Spain

"We'll see the interplay of trends over the coming year. As protests grow - particularly on climate change - expect to see more states justifying greater surveillance on- and offline (in the form of facial recognition technologies) on the grounds of security."
Director | Donor Collaborative | UK

Systemic change As inequality rises, foundations are also confronted with the negative impacts of the current economic system and forced to examine their own role in the face of that.

"Do we have to address the fact that the current economic system often works against our purposes? Foundations will have to choose whether to work at the margin of the current system or to address systemic issues."
Chief Executive | Philanthropic Network | Belgium

"What are the systems that we are perpetuating? The big crises are systemic; we have to stop playing around the edges."
Executive Director | Public Foundation | UK

Foundations are also increasingly facing questions about their legitimacy, and there are calls for philanthropy to find ways to democratize further and to decolonise. Discussions about 'shifting the power' in philanthropy, which have been on the table for several years, are expected to gain momentum. Foundations are being urged to move beyond being responsive as funders and to really think about how decisions are made and by whom.

"Foundations have to face the fact that they reproduce colonial patterns."
Senior Programme Advisor | Private Foundation | Germany

"These are difficult questions of power, money, and privilege which will need to be asked. Will this become a larger field? I think so. Foundations will have to become, and are becoming, more political."
Chief Executive | Philanthropic Network | Belgium

Civil Society Organisations Civil society organisations will also face more pressure to demonstrate their social value.

"I believe the CSOs will have to completely change their communication and focus more on those who are not their primary target group. They will need to explain what benefits their work brings to the whole of society. CSOs will have to show they are here for all and start to build their social base of supporters."
Executive Director | Private Foundation | Czechia

Violence against women and girls Violence against women is expected to become a greater concern for foundations in the coming year, as visibility of the issue has increased so much recently. As women are more and more taking to the streets to voice their concerns, there is also a chance that the political participation of women could get more attention.

LGBTQI rights Some funders are concerned about a growing backlash against LGBTQI rights, but one donor predicts that momentum could build for more widespread decriminalisation of homosexuality across the Commonwealth in 2020 following on from an unprecedented number of legal cases filed in 2019.

Impact investing As a practice, impact investing is predicted to become more common.

Impact investing will move out of the sphere of 'hype' to becoming a standard practice that finds its complementary place next to philanthropy in all its forms.
Executive Director | Philanthropic Network | Belgium

What is your greatest hope for 2020, in relation to your work or philanthropy in general?

"I hope that European and national policy makers will acknowledge the value of philanthropy for our society and start shaping the enabling environment for civil society and philanthropy in a way that it can reach its full potential."

Executive Director | Philanthropic Network | Belgium

"That the forces of enlightenment, good governance, and humanity become stronger and create a sensible, attractive voice which brings many people behind them who are currently scattered. Today's world is really an unstable place."

Director | Public Foundation | Netherlands

"I hope the larger philanthropic field will recognise the crucial role of women's funds, which are in direct connection with the field and closer to the needs of women activists who are at the forefront of change. The face of the fight against climate change is a 16-year-old girl!"

International Relations Officer | Public Foundation | France

A US president who is less nationalistic and thinks more about the international order. Plus, recognition that government is not there to fulfil the needs of the rich elites and their companies but all people in society, including global society.

Secretary of Department | Public Foundation | Germany

"I'm hopeful that better focusing on common threats such as the rise of authoritarianism, corporate power, the negative effects of digitalization and AI, and the climate crisis, can help us achieve more impact at scale. Externally, the continuous innovation of new civil society actors is inspiring, and as philanthropy we need to catch up and update our systems to be able to be more nimble and flexible in our response."

Senior Programme Officer | Private Foundation | Spain

"The return of decency and intelligence in leadership, restored faith in democracy, that alternative economic models are proven and adopted, and more feminist leadership in philanthropy."

Division Director | Private Foundation | Spain

"That fewer protests turn violent, so that mobilization can translate into meaningful awareness raising and constructive dialogue leading to policy change, rather than what we see as increased hostility between security forces and the general public who are merely raising their voices over issues that concern them."

Portfolio Lead | Corporate Foundation | Netherlands

"That philanthropy is able to adapt its working methods to responsibly support some of the most exciting new movements working towards securing human rights, addressing inequality and advancing social justice."

Programme Officer | Private Foundation | UK

2020 Ariadne Forecast:

France



Social movements are increasingly active in France, in response to socioeconomic issues such as unemployment and inequality. These movements have the potential to drive change, but often foundations are hesitant to support activists because of the very real risk to their reputations, an issue compounded by the government's recent attempts to repress protests. Further opportunities for democratic engagement

will emerge during the March 2020 municipal elections, but whether these opportunities will be for progressive candidates or those on the right, remains to be seen.

Funders anticipate that the climate crisis will remain at the top of their agendas, and many speak of integrating their work on social change and the environment, breaking down existing silos and demanding meaningful, long-term change.



■ What do you expect to be the most pressing challenge facing your grantees in 2020?

While **social movements** have been increasingly active in France, French funders see the repression of those movements as a growing challenge for the coming year. Protests are on the rise in the face of high unemployment, stark inequality, and a decline in public services. Most have not been violent, but there is a risk that as movements and demonstrations proliferate, some could become violent. At the same time, the state response has been to try to restrain the protests and restrict rights. This combination of factors creates a challenge for social organisations in the coming year. The rise of protest movements also poses a challenge for foundations, who have to balance supporting activists with a potential risk to their own status, and highlights bigger social shifts that foundations need to contend with.

"The emerging movements also respond to a need for participation and meeting places: where are the traditional meeting spaces that connect the middle and popular classes and create a political vision? Is there a role there for foundations?"

Director General | Public Foundation | France

Civil liberties and democratic space, as in other countries, is perceived to be under threat in France. Foundations see a gradual **diminishing of liberties** through many seemingly small administrative, political, or judicial decisions on anti-corruption, tax evasion, anti-terrorism, and security matters. As a result of these decisions, foundations feel pressure to apply increasingly more stringent due diligence measures to organisations before supporting them and are less willing to take risks.

As noted in previous Forecasts, the **reduction of public** funding, and low interest rates, in France poses a real challenge for French organisations. They not only have fewer resources themselves but are also facing greater demand due to the reduction in social services. These financial constraints put them under pressure to pursue other types of funding, such as social bonds, that often don't fit well with their work, are very demanding administratively, and ultimately end up being more expensive for them.

"Associations have to face a double challenge: the loss of resources and the injunction to comply with an entrepreneurial model that goes against their social aims."

Director | Family Foundation | France

Those groups that do set up as social enterprises face another challenge, as to be eligible for philanthropic funds, they need to set up a separate and parallel legal structure. These technical and legal barriers limit what social entrepreneurs are able to achieve. There are also open questions about the evolution of fiscal exemptions and the role of what the government terms *philanthropie à la française*. It is unclear what this really means in practice, and there are concerns that private philanthropy is being pushed to pick up funding for delivery of social services. Overall, there are ongoing questions about what

constitutes the public interest, whether foundations could have a say in such a definition which is currently done by the Ministry of Finances in a way that excludes most advocacy work, and how foundations can support civil society in all its forms.

Mid-sized organisations, in particular, struggle with the lack of public funding, as the large, service-delivery organisations continue to receive support, and smaller groups that serve only their own members can sustain themselves through their members. The mid-sized organisations tend to be more inclusive and participatory but are also deeply dependent on philanthropic funding. This situation could be exacerbated if a reduction of tax incentives for corporate giving gets adopted, a measure which has been suggested but currently seems unlikely to be taken forward.

What opportunities do you see in 2020 that might help your grantees advance their work?

Despite the concerns raised above about the responses to growing protests, the rise of **social movements**, particularly around the **climate crisis**, is seen as a potential opportunity for change. The catalytic potential of these movements is not just a result of their public demonstrations but lies in their efforts to create concrete alternatives. For example, in Oriol, yellow vests have come together to create a cooperative shared garden and through local donations are renovating an old mill to generate power. There are many local-level examples of people working cooperatively to find solutions to environmental and financial challenges. These opportunities for social change need to be better understood by foundations. While movements tend to be horizontal, foundations still operate in very vertical structures.

"There is a socio-cultural effervescence at the moment: it is very important that the foundations listen to these new initiatives bubbling up so that they can help them to emerge."

Director | Family Foundation | France

"The question of participation is increasingly important, in part related to the yellow vest crisis, which increased awareness of the need to do more across the board to involve people in discussions that affect them."

Head of Department | Public Foundation | France

Moreover, there need to be better connections between these movements and more traditional organisations. There are opportunities for strengthening these links as movements grow. However, some foundations are cautious about developing stronger links to movements because of the risk of violence at protests and street demonstrations.

"The underpinning question is how to support and promote a full democratic expression but with a non-violent approach?"

Director General | Public Foundation | France

The **#MeToo** movement has made violence against women more visible, and this is creating opportunities for mobilizing support. The greater attention the issue is receiving also opens opportunity for advocacy to have a greater impact, as policymakers are more receptive. For example, President Macron has made violence against women the 'great cause' of his presidential term. The Generation Equality Forum, taking place in Paris in July 2020 as part of the Beijing+25 commemorations, will also bring more of a spotlight on women's rights and ending violence against women.

How do you expect your practice as a funder to change in the next twelve months?

French funders are thinking more about how to encourage **collaboration**, both among the organisations that they support and between those organisations and people working in other sectors, including researchers and policymakers. There is an interest in strengthening the work of organisations by encouraging them to think about the roles that each of them can play in progressing change. Some foundations are also thinking about what it means to support real systems change and what the implications of that approach are for the philanthropic sector as a whole. Not every foundation can support everything, but if foundations focus more on tackling the root causes of social problems and act collaboratively, they may be able to achieve more.

For some funders, this also means moving away from a project-based approach and developing a longer term vision. They are becoming more proactive and shifting their funding priorities in line with a social change agenda.

Some funders are also moving towards integrating the climate crisis and environmental issues across other programmes and encouraging grantees to consider the environment in their operations. For instance, they are exploring offering grantees additional funding to comply with certain environmental criteria.

Venture philanthropy is also on the horizon for at least one foundation, which is looking at how to encourage other funders to consider different forms of philanthropic giving.

What political event or sequence of events do you predict will have a substantial effect on your work?

France will hold **municipal elections** in March, which could provide opportunities for more local-level democratic engagement. The runoff could again end-up being between candidates from En Marche and those from extreme right parties, but in general there is a sense that the potential for action is greater at the local than at the national level, and there will be a lot of attention on potential citizen actions in the run-up to the elections. Should the National Front start to gain more ground at the municipal level, gain a stronger influence on the partial renewal of the Senate, and eventually come into power, foundations are unsure how they should react and what their role should be.

The spread of far-right ideas could also have a significant impact, particularly for organisations working on migration. Fake news about migration and Islamophobic content continues to circulate, and it can be difficult to counteract these ideas once they take root in society.

There is some concern that Franco-German relations and **relations with the EU** could deteriorate, especially if the government drifts in a nationalist-populist direction during the local elections. If relations with the EU weaken, it could also mean that French organisations will be less influential at the EU level.

▲ What issue or field of practice do you think will become more important in 2020?

Climate issues are predicted to become more important in 2020 as more people recognise that action needs to be taken. The greater focus on addressing the climate crisis could also open paths for progress on transport and land use planning. There are questions around the sustainability of large cities and the lack of attention to the needs of rural areas, and some funders think these questions could start to become more pressing in the coming year. The tension between economic development, including energy poverty, and environmental protection will also be a key topic for foundations as they think about how to respond to the climate crisis. The climate crisis raises fundamental questions about the kind of society we want to live in, and this is a moment when foundations need to grapple with those questions.

Digitalisation is an issue of growing importance among French funders. Some funders see a need for greater links between academia and philanthropy to help give foundations the tools to adequately understand and respond to the opportunities and threats posed by digitalisation.

Mental health will become more of a focus for some funders. Whereas this issue has been chronically under-funded in the past, the greater openness to speak about mental health in recent years means there are opportunities to raise awareness, fundraise, and mobilise people. Similarly, 2020 may be the time to raise more discussion on **social isolation and loneliness**. The lack of networks of support has come up through the grievances of the yellow vests, and this could be a good moment for foundations to try to address it.

What is your greatest hope for 2020, in relation to your work or philanthropy in general?

Several funders are hopeful about the growing **convergence of the social and ecological movements** and the emergence of demands that reflect more sweeping, long-term change. They hope that this might lead to greater action not only in France but also on the European level.

"We hope for a burst of European integration in the direction of a transition conforming to the Kyoto Protocol."

Director | Private Foundation | France

Many foundations are also hopeful that 2020 could be a year when foundations at the national and European levels collaborate more and even support joint projects.

"Efforts of coordination are needed at the level of objective-setting, strategy, and implementation for more impact."

International Programme Manager | Corporate Foundation | France

There are also hopes that there will be a **new legal framework for philanthropy** in France as the result of a parliamentary report currently underway. It is hoped that legal reform will bring more accountability and transparency to the sector.

"Philanthropy has been less open to transparency, but as a privatization of part of the state's action it has a duty of accountability, control, and transparency to be responsible for the impact of the actions it supports."

International Programme Manager | Corporate Foundation | France

Some funders also hope that more foundations will support an ongoing campaign against **tax evasion** and help bring more attention to the issue.

2020 Ariadne Forecast:

Germany



The rise of the far-right is one of the biggest threats facing organisations in Germany in 2020, with organisations working on issues such as anti-racism and the refugee crisis subject to intolerance and violence, as well as, through the election of right-wing parties to parliament, further financial and legal restrictions.

Funders are increasingly engaged in collaborating across sectors to resist this political

turn to the right and are looking to support frontline organisations in becoming more resilient through capacity building and core support. Will 2020 see the development of the nascent 'transformative philanthropy' movement, whereby grantmakers reflect on how their work reflects their values and lay the groundwork for a new generation of philanthropic leaders?



● What do you expect to be the most pressing challenges facing your grantees in 2020?

The top concern raised by German donors was the **rise of the far-right**, particularly in East Germany. The far-right is becoming more visible, and as a result anti-Semitism is also becoming more visible, and violence against those working on anti-racism and refugees is increasing. The challenges posed by these rising threats on the one hand and limited funding on the other mean that organisations in East Germany, in particular, are struggling to recruit and retain staff.

Across Germany, charitable organisations are finding it difficult to get core funding, with many foundations only offering project support. This is a particular challenge for small organisations. Also, much of the funding for democracy-related work in Germany comes from the government, which has increasingly restrictive eligibility requirements, making funding for human rights work difficult for many organisations to access. Some observers were also concerned that funding trends among foundations, with certain topics coming into fashion for a period of time, could leave some organisations without adequate support.

Organisations working on gender equality or **gender justice** face particular funding challenges. In a recent survey of German foundations carried out by the German Association of Foundations, only 18% responded that they support projects focused on women and girls or gender justice. In 2019 there was an effort to get German foundations to adopt a resolution committing themselves to implement gender equity and strengthen diversity, but the resolution was weakened before adoption.

At the same time, registering as an association is becoming more difficult, and more and more organisations are losing their privileges due to an **unclear legal situation**. There is a specific list of what is deemed to be for the common good of society, and if the tax authorities cannot link the activities of an organisation to that list, they will lose their tax exemption. There is a lack of clarity around what constitutes political education, which is permitted, versus political campaigning, which is not, and it is this distinction on which most of the decisions turn. However, funders report that the decisions appear to be politically motivated, as in the recent case of an anti-fascist organisation that had its status repealed for alleged extremism. The largest and most visible organisations to be affected thus far are Attac and Campact, but smaller organisations are now also being targeted.

Finally, **low interest rates** could affect the funding available from foundations.

What opportunities do you see in 2020 that might help your grantees advance their work?

The growing strength and visibility of **social movements** is seen as a real opportunity for partners to advance their work. The climate strikes, Fridays for Future, is held up as an example of how movements can really set an agenda and put pressure on policymakers nationally and internationally. It's not only having a political influence but also contributing to the perception of climate change in wider society; more people are changing their habits and reflecting on their own contributions to the environment. This phenomenon is not limited to the environment, however; more people are recognising that there are threats to democracy and are ready to defend it. There is a readiness for activism that groups could take advantage of.

These movements are also demonstrating the impact that individuals in civil society can have, especially through the use of **social media**. Although there are negative sides to social media, some donors are seeing and trying to harness the opportunities that social media can provide. For example, some funders have supported a new YouTube series that tries to communicate about social issues with a young, online audience in a fresh and entertaining way. The arts in general present an opportunity to reach a wider and different audience. Some funders predict that there could be backlash to the unilateralism that has pervaded the past several years and that there will be more of a recognition of the need to international and cross-border work.

Many funders also see opportunity in growing recognition of the need for **collaboration**. There is more appetite for working together and hope that this heightened solidarity will facilitate solutions to the most pressing challenges.

"Networking! We have to bring together activists for empowerment, sharing and caring - and political strategies."

Deputy Director | Public Foundation | Germany

"There is increased awareness of the need for collaboration in solving global challenges."

Private Foundation | Germany

How do you expect your practice as a funder to change in the next 12 months?

In light of the challenges facing organisations right now, some funders are thinking more about resilience and **capacity-building**, trying to find ways to help their partners counter these threats. For example, they are thinking more about developing the advocacy and communications skills of their partners.

Some donors are also trying to reach outside their bubbles and have more exchanges with those working in different sectors and those who have different views and opinions. In an effort to tackle the most difficult social issues, they recognise that they will need to build alliances with others outside of their usual spheres. They are also looking for ways to make their grant-making processes more inclusive.

Core support, while not a new practice for the funders we spoke with, was emphasised as a continuing need and of particular importance in the current context.

There is also more reflection among German donors on **legitimacy and governance** issues. A group of donors interested in cultivating 'transformative philanthropy' came together in 2019 and have been asking themselves tough questions about how their work reflects their values. For some funders, this means thinking about how to bring on a new generation of philanthropic leaders.

"We will have new staff members, and the "old" leaders are preparing their handover to the next generation. It will be a challenge to balance the experiences and knowledge in the organisation with new ideas and future changes."

Deputy Director | Public Foundation | Germany

Finally, **impact investing** is on the minds of more German donors. One foundation is looking at setting up a 'rainbow lens' investment fund to better support LGBTQI rights. In general, there is an interest in how foundations can better align their investments with their grant-making to have a greater overall impact.

What political event or sequence of events do you predict will have a substantial effect on your work?

The election of right-wing parties to parliament is a real concern for many donors. The presence of far-right politicians in mainstream politics has shifted the political discourse to the right and normalised views that previously would have been seen as extreme. Funders recognise a need to work against this normalisation.

Germany will take over presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2020, which could bring renewed focus to European issues. This could be an advocacy opportunity for some organisations.

The law on recognition of NGOs is under review, and conservative forces are gaining ground and may succeed in making it more restrictive. This could make things more difficult for civil society in Germany.

For those funders who receive support from the state, there is a concern that they, as well as their partners, will see a **reduction in public funding**, particularly if a new, more conservative government comes in.

► What issue or practice do you think will become more important in 2020?

The **climate crisis** is predicted to be the top issue of rising importance in 2020. Even those foundations that do not have climate as a focus are thinking about how they can integrate it into their existing work. Foundations are also thinking more about how they can 'do no harm' to the climate through their operations and internal practices.

"The issue is climate change. It's not our issue, but it is *the* issue for foundations and philanthropy. It should be central to every activity."

Senior Programme Advisor | Private Foundation | Germany

Strengthening democracy is also a key concern for 2020. Some foundations are thinking not only about how to 'get out the vote' but also about the demographics of how people are voting. In some parts of East Germany, for example, data show that young males are the primary demographic voting for right-wing parties, suggesting foundations could concentrate more on understanding and working with them.

Social inequalities will continue to be a significant focus, with rent increases and urban development big topics at the moment.

In light of the attacks on civil society organisations, there is a growing discussion about the role of foundations in countering these attacks. Most foundations have been working on a responsive basis, but some are starting to think anew. There is an increasing sense among foundations that they need to use their resources to do more and be more proactive.

Some funders also think that in 2020 foundations will be brought to task more for **reproducing colonial patterns**. This is also tied to the rise of conservative forces: pressure on people of colour is increasing, and they are pushing back more.

"Colonialism could be considered to be in philanthropy's DNA. Pushback is on the rise and we need to be very cautious and respectful."

Senior Programme Advisor | Private Foundation | Germany

Digital discussions around artificial intelligence, algorithms, and **digital rights** will become more important and become more visible in more fields. The links between digitisation and social security will be highlighted more, thanks to the work of UN Special Rapporteurs who have brought these problems to international attention. Some foundations think more could be done to strengthen digital awareness and understanding in the human rights field, and they are surprised that foundations have not been quicker to pick up the topic as a priority.

☾ What is your greatest hope for 2020, in relation to your work or philanthropy in general?

German funders expressed hope that civil society will become more valued, by people and by government, not only for the services they provide but for the advocacy they conduct. This hope was also extended to include more appreciation for philanthropy and its potential impact. They also hope that the civil society sector itself will come together and show strength in unity.

"I hope for a strong movement of civil society and strong demonstrations of solidarity and for change."

Senior Project Manager | Private Foundation | Germany

"We hope for more collaboration and less competition within the sector between grantees, as well as funders."

Private Foundation | Germany

Some funders also hope that 2020 will kick off a process of deep change.

"I hope that we succeed in initiating urgently needed systems change."

Senior Vice President | Private Foundation | Germany

Funders also hope that foundations will find ways of **looking differently at impact measurement** – finding truly qualitative approaches – and strengthen bottom-up approaches in philanthropy. These funders are looking for real cooperation between philanthropy and partners. They also hope that more foundations will adopt participatory grant-making processes.

"My hope is that everyone will give core, flexible, multi-year support! People need this to be able to follow their own agendas. Another hope is intersectionality: funders are more aware that issues are interconnected, but we still fund in silos. I hope more funders will develop awareness of the different categories of marginalisation and discrimination and become more aware that the way we structure things is not the way reality works."

Senior Programme Advisor | Private Foundation | Germany

"My greatest hope would be a generational shift. I can see a significant number of people thinking differently about philanthropic engagement. This could result in work on neglected topics and investment that is more international, more collective. It may not happen this year, but it's about to happen."

Secretary General | Philanthropy Network | Germany

2020 Ariadne Forecast:

Italy



Cash-strapped Italian civil society organisations continue to be squeezed by closing civic space. Those focused on social justice issues such as migration are feeling the full force of the delegitimization campaign led by populist politicians, as intolerance continues to grow.

A response to this rising populism and xenophobia, however, has been the formation of social movements led by young people, with whom civil society organisations are encouraged to build alliances and promote innovative solutions. There are hopes that philanthropy will be able to seize this opportunity to promote human rights and address rising inequality across the country.



◆ What do you expect to be the most pressing challenge facing your grantees in 2020?

One of the greatest challenges facing Italian organisations in 2020 is access to adequate funding. Economic stagnation continues in Italy, affecting the available resources of foundations, and in turn foundations are cutting back on their own grant-making. One way in which foundations are trying to manage with limited resources is by limiting funding to project-based support. However, this leaves Italian organisations in a difficult situation, as it means that they cannot cover their basic operating costs. There is a culture component to this dynamic, as well, as the charitable sector is seen through the prism of volunteerism and expected to function with very little despite trying to meet a high demand for services.

"Italian civil society organisations are starving. Two false myths combined – non-profits should cost very little and all funding must be allocated to activities and projects – are strangling them and reducing their capacity to be resilient, bold, and influential."

Secretary General | Philanthropic Network | Italy

"We need to rethink the concept of sustainability, which in Italy is often understood only in economic terms. It must be rethought and applied not in a market logic but instead in terms of whether projects and programmes bring changes that remain in the long term."

Director | Public Foundation | Italy

The state is also not a reliable source of income for those providing social services.

"The state is retreating from many issues, and there is a real need for intervention on other issues. This is a big change from a world in which services are paid for by the state to one in which the state no longer pays, or pays less, and social cooperatives must maintain quality at a lower cost."

Head of Institutional Affairs | Banking Foundation | Italy

Inequality is also continuing to grow in Italy, partly as a result of the economic situation but also because of disparities around geography, age, and gender. Social justice organisations will need to revise their approach to fully address this challenge.

"Policies and measures to reduce inequalities should take the complexity of inequality into account, act in a more integrated way, and take systemic and long-term perspectives in which public institutions and not-for-profit organisations work together."

Head of Social Policy | Private Foundation | Italy

The closing space for civil society, as in the rest of Europe (and globally), is felt by Italian organisations and will be an ongoing challenge for them in 2020. Organisations working on social issues, especially those working on migration, face a campaign of delegitimization backed by populist politicians. It will be a challenge for them to rebuild public trust and

re-instil social justice and solidarity as shared values across society. There is a sense that intolerance is growing across all of Italian society.

"Hate propaganda and populism in Italy has been increasing at an alarming rate. Civil society organisations have been under attack, and their reputation has been compromised through a paradoxical and aggressive narrative according to which people and organisations working for solidarity and social goals are banned and their role has become controversial."

Head of Social Policy | Private Foundation | Italy

"Hate is a civic and cultural emergency in Italy, and even more worrisome is the indifference around it."

Head of Institutional Partnerships | Private Foundation | Italy

"In Italy, the far-right has already shown itself. The beast is out of the closet: it's time to be bold and stand behind our messages and beliefs."

Board Member | Private Foundation | Italy

Democratic participation, particularly among the younger generation, is also a major challenge for Italian organisations as they enter the new decade, and trust in institutions remains low. This is an issue that the non-profit sector will be trying to tackle but on which it currently lacks strength.

What opportunities do you see in 2020 that might help your grantees advance their work?

There are opportunities for philanthropy to work more closely with the corporate sector to address social issues, as there is now more consumer pressure on companies to think about more than profit and to have a positive impact in society.

"Companies do not have to worry only about shareholders, but also stakeholders."

Head of Institutional Affairs | Banking Foundation | Italy

This shift could result in more money being available for social causes, but civil society organisations need to be ready to seize the opportunity by being prepared to accept support beyond traditional grants. Other financial tools could become more common as the corporate sector becomes more engaged.

The sustainable development goals and the 2030 agenda provide an opportunity to develop common language and goals among organisations, to step up efforts and achieve results within the defined timeline.

As in other parts of Europe, social movements led by young people are an opportunity to build more public support for social justice issues. Civil society organisations should use this opportunity to develop more alliances and to promote the innovative solutions that younger generations are bringing to these issues.

"Italian youth-driven movements, recently launched to shake up the country's politics and counter xenophobia and populism, could constitute important new allies for civil society in their common fight to reverse Italy's political paradigm and boost narratives promoting democratic and social values and social justice."

Head of Social Policy | Private Foundation | Italy

There are also concerns, however, that rates of poverty among Italian youth are high and that many children drop off school or are not being educated to an adequate standard.

Therefore, in order to really seize the opportunity presented by the younger generation, foundations need to invest in young people's futures.

The planning phase for the next European Commission budget provides an opportunity for European and Italian social change organisations to work together and develop a common agenda for fighting inequality, supporting human and civil rights, promoting the democratic participation of citizens, and building an environment conducive to peace and solidarity.

Legal reform of the non-profit sector, which was launched three years ago, will hopefully become operational in 2020, strengthening the transparency of the sector via the single national register for all non-profit organisations and establishing a specific role for national networks.

The professionalisation of foundations, especially family foundations, could also be an opportunity that could result in money being spent in a more strategic and impactful way.

How do you expect your practice as a funder to change in the next twelve months?

An idea promoted by at least one funder is the creation of a social impact fund, which will bring together philanthropic funds with other types of investment funding. Some foundations are also thinking about the other types of tools available to foundations, such as impact investing.

Some funders are also taking a more proactive approach to their funding rather than relying strictly on calls for proposals. This shift is in part motivated by a desire to see grantees cooperate better rather than be forced to compete with one another. Some foundations are actively accompanying their grantees through the design process and helping the organisations find ways to integrate their work in a participatory way. There is also interest in exploring participatory grant-making.

There is a growing focus on building trust between foundations and the organisations they support. Italian funders are challenging themselves to truly empower organisations to do the work they need to do.

"Ask yourself: do you believe in the organisation or not? Because if you do, do not restrict your support!"

Board Member | Private Foundation | Italy

Foundations are thinking more about how to build the capacity of the civil society sector and support organisations to play a more active advocacy role. While organisations may have a vision for social change or human rights, they need support to be able to better promote and realise that vision. Funders are also gravitating more towards community-level work, seeing the grassroots as the most fertile ground for social change.

"The secret lies in the small supportive communities that can create a sense of belonging; we need social innovation in a broad sense also at community level."

Head of Institutional Affairs | Banking Foundation | Italy

Some foundations are thinking more about big data and how it could benefit their work across a range of issues. There is interest in data to help not only set strategies and priorities but also to define meaningful indicators of impact.

Violence against women is a topic that some funders are starting to think about more, as recent data show a worrisome rise in the cases of violence against women and girls.

● What political event or sequence of events do you predict will have a substantial effect on your work?

The political divisions and extremism present in Italy are a relevant context for social change funders, who are concerned with how to promote more solidarity and social cohesion.

The constant changes of government in Italy make it difficult for foundations and their grantees to plan.

“With the various changes of government, the new ones tend to make a clean sweep of what was done by the previous policy makers, and our role is to recall the non-partisan aspect of the interventions.”

Head of Institutional Affairs | Banking Foundation | Italy

“Italian policies are very often based on a short-term planning exercise, which risks hindering structural and long-term perspectives to fight inequalities, thus decreasing their impact.”

Head of Social Policy | Private Foundation | Italy

Some funders are concerned that taxation on foundations could increase again and that there could be a political effort to control how foundations, particularly banking foundations, spend their money. In the face of public opinion questioning the legitimacy of private philanthropy, foundations will also need to think more carefully about how they manage their endowments.

There are also concerns that fears around immigration will continue to be stoked by populist politicians, leading to even greater social tensions. Funders are predicting that migration flows will continue unabated as the Middle East remains unstable.

Some funders are expecting that in the face of universal issues such as climate change, philanthropy will need to shift its focus to identifying innovative solutions to these problems.

● What issue or field of practice do you think will become more important in 2020?

Environmental sustainability is a priority issue in Italy, as it is elsewhere in 2020, and Italian foundations are highlighting the interconnections between climate change, inequality, and human rights protection.

There is also more focus on mobilising informal networks of citizens within their local communities, and more foundations are thinking about how they can partner with communities in their work.

The Sustainable Development Goals are also likely to become a reference framework for more foundations in the coming year.

Funders are thinking more about communications, both their own and their grantees', and recognising that a communication strategy is central to any efforts to achieve change. Arts and culture as a mechanism for social change is likely to get more attention as foundations look for creative ways to engage people.

"Democratic values and democratic participation need imagination, and arts and culture do have a major role to play in addressing populism, racism, xenophobia, and inequality."

Secretary General | Philanthropic Network | Italy

Elder care and the rights of the elderly may also become more important in the context of an ageing population.

Impact investment and support for social enterprises are predicted to become more important practices among foundations.

■ What is your greatest hope for 2020, in relation to your work or philanthropy in general?

Italian funders hope that 2020 is the year that they really learn to collaborate effectively.

"I hope that in 2020 we will fully recognise the potential of collaboration. Even though it is a simple concept, we must acknowledge the importance of working with new allies, testing innovative solutions, trusting the expertise of others, and above all the need to have all parts of the ecosystem contributing in a collaborative spirit."

Secretary General | Private Foundation | Italy

They also hope that philanthropy will become more risk-taking and develop a longer-term vision.

Foundations hope that Italian civil society will fulfil its potential to shape public policies with their support and that a greater sense of solidarity will develop among citizens.

"I hope that the Italian philanthropic sector can continue to have a very important role in supporting civil society and citizens' movements to ensure democratic dialogue and guarantee the protection of human rights and the promotion of social change and cohesion."

Head of Social Policy | Private Foundation | Italy

"Philanthropy will be among the guardians of participation, democracy, and pluralism."

Board Member | Private Foundation | Italy

One hope for the Italian philanthropic sector is that it will become more diverse.

"My greatest hope for 2020 is for a new law in Italy to oblige foundations to have more diversity in their boards: having more women, more young people, and different backgrounds and lived experiences."

Secretary General | Philanthropic Network | Italy

2020 Ariadne Forecast:

The Netherlands



Dutch donors are viewing digital space as a source of challenges for 2020, as the closure of civil society space plays out online through attacks on grantees by the alt-right and the mainstream media, and as the spread of fake news leaves people unable to differentiate between legitimate and illegitimate sources of information.

Faced with issues such as the protection of digital rights and the climate crisis, funders expect to ramp up efforts to build collaboration and solidarity, and to put the communities they seek to help at the heart of their decision-making, through mechanisms such as community- or activist-led funds.



What do you expect to be the most pressing challenges facing your grantees in 2020?

The **closing space for civil society** was among the top concerns identified by Dutch donors going into 2020. Some donors noted physical and digital attacks on grantees, particularly those working in the anti-racism field. The alt-right has been leading smear campaigns against activists, which started online but have been picked up by mainstream media and which link the work of organisations to particular funders such as Soros. These attacks make foundations more hesitant to support 'controversial' issues. Some funders also see a risk that **anti-terrorism laws** and **artificial intelligence** will be used to close the space for civil society, domestically and across Europe.

Populism and a **lack of trust in institutions** are also concerns for donors. The spread of **fake news** is now so pervasive that many people struggle to differentiate between illegitimate and authoritative sources, and this is predicted to only continue and worsen. There is also a fear that more common ground will be lost between different parts of society, as fragmentation along class lines deepens and the trend towards polarisation continues. Organisations will be faced even more urgently with the question of how to connect with the 'moveable middle.'

"We need to look for inclusive narratives that work for the silent middle. This thinking has been going on for years, but there is still very divisive language being used by both sides...It is time to deploy at larger scale the piloted practices on inclusive narratives."

Managing Director | Private Foundation | Netherlands

Digitalisation is a challenge increasingly on the minds of Dutch funders. They are seeing a wide range of challenges from digital security to data rights issues and the growing corporate power of tech companies.

Funding will also continue to be a challenge for Dutch organisations. Public donations are not as reliable as they once were, making it difficult for organisations to plan on stable revenue. At the same time, endowed foundations are struggling to keep their spending up as a result of low rates of return on investments. There has been a rise in other funding models, such as social investment, venture philanthropy, and loans, but these are not always suitable for social change and human rights organisations. This means that foundations need to really think about where their grant funding can make a real difference.

Finally, the **climate crisis** will be an important challenge in 2020 and beyond and will affect how some organisations work. Some funders have made the call to see climate through a social justice lens so as not to allow it to divert support from ongoing struggles, but rather become an urgent reason to support those struggles.

What opportunities do you see in 2020 that might help your grantees advance their work?

Some funders see an opportunity in the fact that awareness about challenges and the need for change is so high. There is a greater demand from the public, but also higher levels of awareness and understanding among donors of the threats posed by the closing space for civil society, and the need to take action. There is also more appetite for **collaboration** among donors in the face of issues that are too large for any foundation to solve alone.

The climate crisis is one such issue: while it poses a challenge it also provides an opportunity to bring foundations together and to connect better with a wider range of people. Opportunities are also expected in 2020 for making more policy advances on climate and opening discussions on **a just economic transition to support climate solutions**.

“There is a clear opportunity with the new agenda of the European Commission to push for what the EC call a ‘green deal’, but the big risk is about how to make a transition to a circular, carbon neutral economy that is also a just transition dividing the burden fairly across society... Public pressure by groups feeling negatively affected can open political routes to solutions which were not yet on the table or which were avoided.”

Managing Director | Private Foundation | Netherlands

Some funders see an opportunity in the increasing discussions about the impact of the digitalisation of society. While algorithmic decision-making poses significant concerns with its replication (and amplification) of existing bias, the fact that we are now having these conversations opens an opportunity to address the underlying bias and discrimination. Digitisation has laid these issues bare, and there is now an opportunity to confront them head-on. Some funders that work on digital issues are starting to see themselves as rights-based funders in recognition of the impact digitisation is having on democracy.

How do you expect your practice as a funder to change in the next twelve months?

A number of Dutch donors are expecting to focus more on **building collaboration solidarity** both among their grantees and between foundations and NGOs in 2020. Some anticipate playing a facilitation role while others also plan to go beyond this, providing more holistic support in the form of long-term, institutional support and support for field-building efforts. There is also an interest in supporting organisations through **capacity-building**, developing their technical, communications, and fundraising skills.

Funders addressing the impacts of digitisation foresee more collaboration with a wider range of actors, including government, media, academics, and corporates. They worry that working only with civil society will not be sufficient to address the scale of the challenges given the widespread nature of digitisation.

Some donors also plan to take a more proactive approach to their funding. For some this means getting involved in project design themselves, and for others it means funding with a more targeted goal in mind. **Listening more to grantees** was also mentioned as a priority by one foundation.

Other donors are interested in **creating or supporting community-based funds**, as those in communities know where the greatest needs are and are best placed to decide on the allocation of funds. Dutch foundations are opening up more to the idea of participatory

grantmaking processes and being more community-led, but for some it is a long process and raises questions around how best to manage power dynamics. There is a wide spectrum of experiences and opportunities for funders to learn from one another.

The climate crisis is also affecting donors' planning on an operational level. **Some donors expect to travel less in 2020**, even if it means going to fewer conferences, because they recognise the need to keep their carbon emissions low.

◀ What political event or sequence of events do you predict will have a substantial effect on your work?

Dutch donors are concerned about a **pending law on transparency** that some feel threatens the legitimacy of philanthropy. While transparency in and of itself is lauded as an aim, some fear that the way the law is framed and the context in which it is being discussed (having originated from a concern about foreign funding for mosques) mean that it might have a chilling effect on foundations. The government has revised its draft in response to these concerns, but it is an issue to watch for 2020.

"Indeed, foundations can be more transparent, but it started on the wrong premise, and this is happening in the context of government wanting to keep closer control of civil society organisations. In the context of the media using a 'guilt by association' framing, this can also scare off foundations from funding more activist, controversial, or 'political' issues."

Programme Manager | Private Foundation | Netherlands

The political impact of large-scale mobilising is expected to be felt more in 2020, as it seems to bear results and demonstrations continue to spread beyond the usual actors to include teachers, farmers, and other workers.

In late 2020, preparations will begin for the March 2021 **Dutch parliamentary elections**, which could start to impact the issues foundations are supporting.

🌅 What issue or field of practice do you think will become more important in 2020?

The climate crisis is a growing concern for Dutch donors and one that is likely to become even more important from 2020.

Protection of digital rights is becoming more urgent for donors as they increasingly recognise the power that big tech wields, the widespread surveillance that it conducts, and the myriad ways in which algorithmic decision-making impacts our lives and infringes on rights.

"Now we see the downside of the power of the big digital platforms and corporations and more democratic governance is needed."

Director | Private Foundation | Netherlands

"There is an increasing tendency towards surveillance also in democratic Europe, and we will see more examples of how AI can go wrong, also in European contexts (not only in China): this will bring an increased awareness and resistance."

Managing Director | Private Foundation | Netherlands

The ongoing challenge of fake news and disinformation is also predicted to grow in 2020, as those generating disinformation become more sophisticated. The role that social media and trolls are having on elections will also become more important as we enter a year with a US presidential election.

"The challenge brought by disinformation and deep fakes is going to increase. It's the beginning of an information race. How will verification and validation models emerge to protect ourselves from cheap ways to fake everything?"

Managing Director | Private Foundation | Netherlands

The need to strengthen a **European identity and cooperation** among countries within the European project will also become more important in the coming year, as nationalism continues to rise.

In terms of practices, Dutch donors anticipate that **intersectional and cross-sectoral movements** will gain importance as more people take to the streets for change. Strategic litigation as a tool for change is also becoming of greater interest to donors.

Community- or activist-led funds will become more popular as donors look for local mechanisms to support change. Some funders are also thinking more about impact investing, loans, and taking a funder-plus approach.

● What is your greatest hope for 2020, in relation to your work or philanthropy in general?

Dutch donors hope for more solidarity and cooperation between people and organisations, between foundations and organisations, and among foundations. They hope the foundations will speak up more about the issues they care about, and that we will have a stronger philanthropic sector in Europe. They also hope to reclaim the civic space that has been threatened.

"I hope that we are able to safeguard democratic values and with this the space for civil society and philanthropy alike to address the most pressing social and environmental issues."

Director of Programmes | Private Foundation | Netherlands

There is hope that the movements taking to the street will help shift public discourse and that real political change will come that will make it possible to re-establish trust in institutions.

"If we don't make change happen in the next two years we're screwed: the urgency will enable conversations that were not possible before. If it's so urgent we cannot limit ourselves to protest, we need to bring concrete proposals to the table and state clearly what we can do differently tomorrow."

Director | Public Foundation | Netherlands

2020 Ariadne Forecast:

UK



UK funders fear that Brexit will continue to dominate and question whether there is the energy or appetite to pursue the need for democratic reform this debate continues to highlight. The Human Rights Act is arguably more at risk than ever, as a result of the UK's departure from the EU and the 2019 General Election, and poverty, inequality, and polarisation are on the rise.

However, funders are increasingly calling on their peers to question 'risk,' be bold and 'shift the power.' This has transpired in commitments to fund social movements, explore participatory methods of decision-making, and elevate the importance of lived experience, diversity, and equity. Nowhere is this more evident than in the context of the climate crisis lens that grantmakers are beginning to take to their work.



What do you expect to be the most pressing challenge facing your grantees in 2020?

At this time last year, Brexit was anticipated to take place in 2019, and there was an expectation that the UK would enter 2020 with some greater clarity on the terms of its withdrawal from the EU. With Brexit now pushed into 2020, the uncertainty continues to be an issue for funders and for civil society, even as they try to look beyond Brexit to the other issues on the horizon. While there is appetite to move past Brexit, donors are expecting to see a reduced space for policy development on issues that are not Brexit-related. While the services that organisations provide are likely to remain in high demand, especially in a context of rising poverty and inequality, there are fears that their efforts for real social change will be frustrated by a policy landscape that is fragmented and consumed with Brexit. Furthermore, there is a recognition that even after a political agreement on Brexit, there will be a huge amount of work to do and that Brexit will continue to dominate.

"Brexit has taken up all the bandwidth in recent years, and we don't think that's going to dissipate next year just because Brexit is 'done'."

Chief Executive | Private Foundation | UK

While polarisation around Brexit is an issue across the UK, it has particular implications in Northern Ireland, where it threatens to undermine peace. Brexit is having a massive impact on community relations and governance in Northern Ireland, unpicking consensus around political institutions and constitutional questions and making it difficult to progress work on conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

"In Northern Ireland, the border was irrelevant and Brexit makes it relevant again."

Director | Philanthropic Organisation | UK

The Brexit debates over the past few years have also highlighted that the UK political system is in need of reform. These reforms range from the way decisions are taken regarding who governs the country and voter registration issues to how the system functions once a government is in power. Disenfranchisement is a significant concern, primarily the disenfranchisement of young people, renters, BAME people, travellers, the homeless, and women victims of domestic violence. Funders also see a need for greater accountability of the government and more diversity among elected representatives. Fostering a more democratic culture is also a challenge – how can funders and other groups encourage more participation in democracy and build a more collaborative culture?

UK donors report that their grantees are dealing with a more hostile environment than previously as more issues become highly politicised. The migration sector, for example, is struggling to cope with the polarisation fuelled by the growth of the far right and increased tendency towards 'othering'.

"There is the potential of a populist backlash, particularly in terms of overt racism, sexism and Islamophobia."

Programme Manager | Private Foundation | UK

In this politicised context, grantees are struggling with how to engage in public discussions: how can groups influence public narrative when everything is seen in intensely party political frames? Organisations that are minority-ethnic-led or working on issues like refugee and asylum rights are experiencing much higher levels of fear and threats, and some funders are concerned about the personal safety of these activists. More donors are also recognising the scale of organising by networks on the right and the degree to which those networks have co-opted institutions of power. These donors are calling for progressive donors and their grantees to think bigger and longer term in promoting the issues they care about and not to shy away from political issues.

"We need to be more politically engaged, bigger in our thinking, and quicker to realise that powerful people disagree with us. We need to organise accordingly and develop a much stronger sense of collaboration around the things we hold dear, or we risk wasting time and money."

Director | Private Foundation | UK

Migration remains a concern for many UK donors, as they recognise the potential increased numbers of migrants that climate change is likely to bring. The impacts of the 'hostile environment' policy will also continue to be felt and create problems for organisations trying to support those who may be living under the radar and be afraid to report abuse or exploitation or to seek assistance. 2020 may also see increased internal migration in the UK as a result of repeated flooding, leading to a new set of challenges for assistance organisations.

Funders working with grassroots organisations are also concerned about capacity within the sector. Organisations which are themselves not skilled fundraisers also disagree about the best approaches to take and struggle to collaborate and work together effectively. There is a need to build leadership capacity to help these groups take on the challenges of 2020. Finally, the economic situation is likely to create its own challenges in 2020. The exchange rate is already causing problems for some funders as it means that grantees working in other currencies are getting less money. Even for donors working solely with the UK, though, there are concerns that there could be less money available as a result of a recession. For organisations reliant on EU funding, the impending loss of such funds also presents new challenges and constraints.

What opportunities do you see in 2020 that might help your grantees advance their work?

The growing focus on the climate crisis, helped to the fore in the UK by the youth strikes and the protests led by Extinction Rebellion, has created a momentum that many donors are seeing as an opportunity to finally address the causes and impacts of climate change. There is a feeling that climate has risen up the political agenda, and with the UK hosting the Conference of Parties (COP) meeting in November 2020, there is an opportunity for the climate sector to continue to push the need for political solutions to centre stage. Because climate activists are also asking questions about the type of governance needed in order to address the climate crisis, it opens up space for discussions about political reform.

There is an interest in moving beyond the current polarised context and creating more shared understanding, which some donors see as a real opportunity that could be developed in

2020. Donors are keen to see more collaboration, both among themselves and among their grantees, which could bring greater strength to social change efforts. They also express a willingness to explore new approaches that would open new opportunities.

“There is also a keenness to explore other, more radical ways of expression and engagement. As such, both funders and grantees are more open to movement methodologies and grassroots activism.”

Programme Manager | Private Foundation | UK

Brexit, while primarily seen as a challenge, also presents certain opportunities to revisit current structures. For example, in the Northern Irish and Scottish contexts, there is now an opportunity to rethink constitutional futures. The threat of the breakup of the union is itself an opportunity for reform, as it opens up debates around English devolution, for example.

The heightened awareness among funders of the importance of lived experience and of diversity and equity within the philanthropic sector also represents an opportunity for change that some funders anticipate could develop in 2020.

“Like many sectors, the last few years have disrupted philanthropy and precipitated great reflection on how foundations need to transform. Whether the high-profile critiques of Edgar Villanueva and Anand Giridharadas, the ‘Shift the Power’ agenda or the Association of Charitable Foundations’ ‘Stronger Foundations’ initiative, change is in the air. If this does translate into practical and meaningful change, then that will surely benefit grantee organisations.”

Europe Director | International Foundation | UK



How do you expect your practice as a funder to change in the next 12 months?

The emphasis in 2020 will be on working together and learning from one another. Some donors are interested in creating opportunities for their grantees from across different themes, issues, and geographies to learn from each other. Recognising that the far-right has had success organising across broad coalitions, they want to enable progressives to work together. There is a desire to be more intentional about creating opportunities for exchanges and helping those involved in progressive social change be better about what they do. Part of the focus is on helping activists to take stock and develop a longer term vision and strategy. One funder even spoke of setting up a centre to embed learning in one place as a resource that could empower both activists and funders. Some funders expressed that philanthropy can no longer be purely reactive; the field needs to shift to being more strategic and intentional. Donors themselves also anticipate becoming more collaborative and trying to bring more peer funders into their work. They hope that working together might encourage some funders to be bolder and take more risks in funding issues that they have typically been hesitant around, such as campaigning and democratic participation. There is a sense that our societal structures are at an inflection point and that if foundations want to influence the future they need to step up and challenge their own risk threshold.

“What is risk, and who is ‘risky’? We can’t play it safe anymore, and we need to think outside the box. The future is radical, and we want to be a part of it. Risk can mean different things: risky political decisions from funders or funding in a risky environment. The real risk is that funders don’t adapt fast enough.”

Chief Executive Officer | Private Foundation | UK

Supporting movements, which has been of growing interest among UK funders for a few years, continues to be a shift that many donors are making. Some funders have been scoping out how they can support movements more effectively and considering whether they need to dedicate funds specifically for that purpose. This is partly being driven by a sense that there is reduced scope for significant change through traditional policy advocacy routes and that longer term change will be the result of movements that are rooted in the needs and struggles people face in their communities.

Attention to participatory methods of decision-making is also likely to grow in 2020. As foundations think more about civic participation and challenge the power structures that exist in wider society, they are also provoked to consider how their own processes could be more inclusive and democratic. There is a call among funders to model such practices themselves.

“How we do things is as important as what we do.”
Chief Executive Officer | Private Foundation | UK

Funders will also continue developing efforts to build narratives and engage in strategic communications. Work that has been done to date on attitudinal polling and developing counter-narratives is an important starting point on which donors hope to build.

Some funders will be thinking more about how they can contribute to the sustainability of their grantees, including helping organisations build reserve funds, providing more core support, and making more multi-year grants. Funders are also expecting to put more emphasis on involving those with lived experience in their work and finding ways of transferring some power and responsibilities for grant-making to the communities with which they work.

▲ What political event or sequence of events do you predict will have a substantial effect on your work?

As already noted, Brexit is expected to be the political event with the greatest impact in the UK. The related questions around the future of the union are also expected to be significant in 2020, with potential moves towards independence in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Such developments could have real implications for civil society and funders working across a broad range of issues.

The effects of the General Election in December 2019 will also start to be fully felt in 2020. On the one hand, funders welcome any sense of certainty about what the next five years may hold, but there are also concerns about what a Conservative government might mean for social justice and human rights issues. Some funders fear that the Human Rights Act could come under threat yet again.

What issue or field of practice do you think will become more important in 2020?

Climate change will become more important in 2020, including questions around climate justice and whose voices are and are not being heard. More environmental protests are expected, and with them a potential erosion of the rights to protest and campaign. Some donors see a real risk that there will be ways in which space for campaign and protest will be constrained further.

Efforts to influence the public narrative will become more important as donors try to tackle the growing polarisation of opinions and the current tendency for people to adopt more extreme positions. This is in part due to a lack of confidence in party politics and state, but part of it is a result of a decline of values in public life. While there has been more focus on strategic communications, it's important to articulate and reassert shared values. The urban/rural divide and intergenerational divide are both important in this context – it's important to pay more attention to who's left behind and not at the table, and these questions could receive more attention in 2020.

"How do you communicate with people who don't agree with you? How do you reach the middle? How do you engage with that constituency? What is it that moves that group of people?"

Director | Philanthropic Organisation | UK

Donors are divided on the question of the attention that democratic reform will receive in 2020 despite an agreement that it should be on the agenda. Some believe that there will finally be momentum to address it in the aftermath of Brexit while others remain sceptical that the commitment will be there.

"I much more hesitantly wonder about democratic reform. Is there appetite? Does it capture people's imagination in a way that would push it forward? I'm not sure it will gain traction despite everything."

Chief Executive | Private Foundation | UK

Data rights and digital inclusion are also predicted to be of growing concern in 2020, particularly the use of automated decision-making by government, which raises concerns about the rights of data subjects.

Some funders also anticipate that racial equality will become more of a focus in 2020, in particular the need to adequately resource communities of colour to advocate for themselves.

◆ What is your greatest hope for 2020, in relation to your work or philanthropy in general?

Many UK funders expressed hope that foundations would seize the opportunity to become more strategic, forward-thinking, and brave and that the field could be strengthened by greater collaboration.

"I hope people begin to take a longer term view and begin to look more at trends. That they really take stock of where we are headed and try to be more strategic about where levers are to turn that in a better direction."

Director | Philanthropic Organisation | UK

"I hope we can sustain the space for our grantees in a meaningful way. Big wins are unrealistic, but we're doing what we can to sustain space through funding and other forms of support. It's modest but important."

Chief Executive | Private Foundation | UK

"I hope we get bolder about influence and campaigning and that we start collaborating more between campaigners and funders themselves."

Chief Executive | Private Foundation | UK

"I hope there is a step-change in strategic thinking and coordination among liberal-minded donors to actively promote and defend liberal values in a practical way and defeat right-wing civil society. We need to step up because we're not doing it. The opposition is doing it."

Director | Private Foundation | UK

"We hope philanthropies will start abandoning their neutral safe zones to speak out on their peers' work and actions."

Private Foundation | UK

Funders also called for transition of leadership across philanthropy, hoping to see the torch passed to a next generation of leaders and more leaders of colour in the field. They also hope to see more diversity, equity and inclusion across the philanthropic sector.

"That we have open and honest conversations about the neo-colonial structures that continue to underpin the philanthropic world and about how these relate to philanthropic values of equity, dignity, fairness, mutuality, and respect."

Programme Manager | Private Foundation | UK

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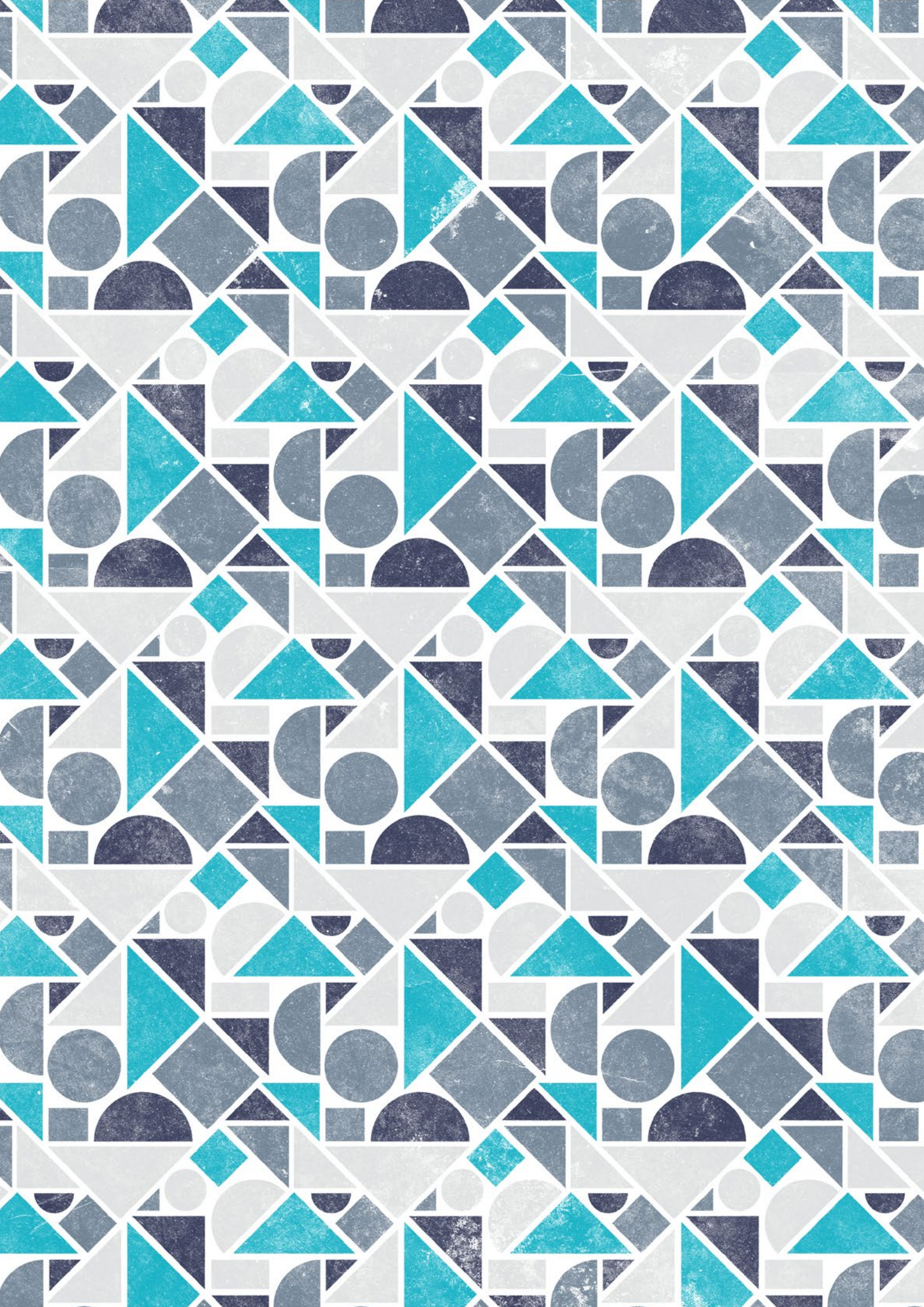
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