A NEW MODEL FOR CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION

What to Learn from Public-Philanthropic Partnerships in California

FREEDMAN
CONSULTING, LLC

Talya Karr
Marcus Ransom
Tashrima Hossain
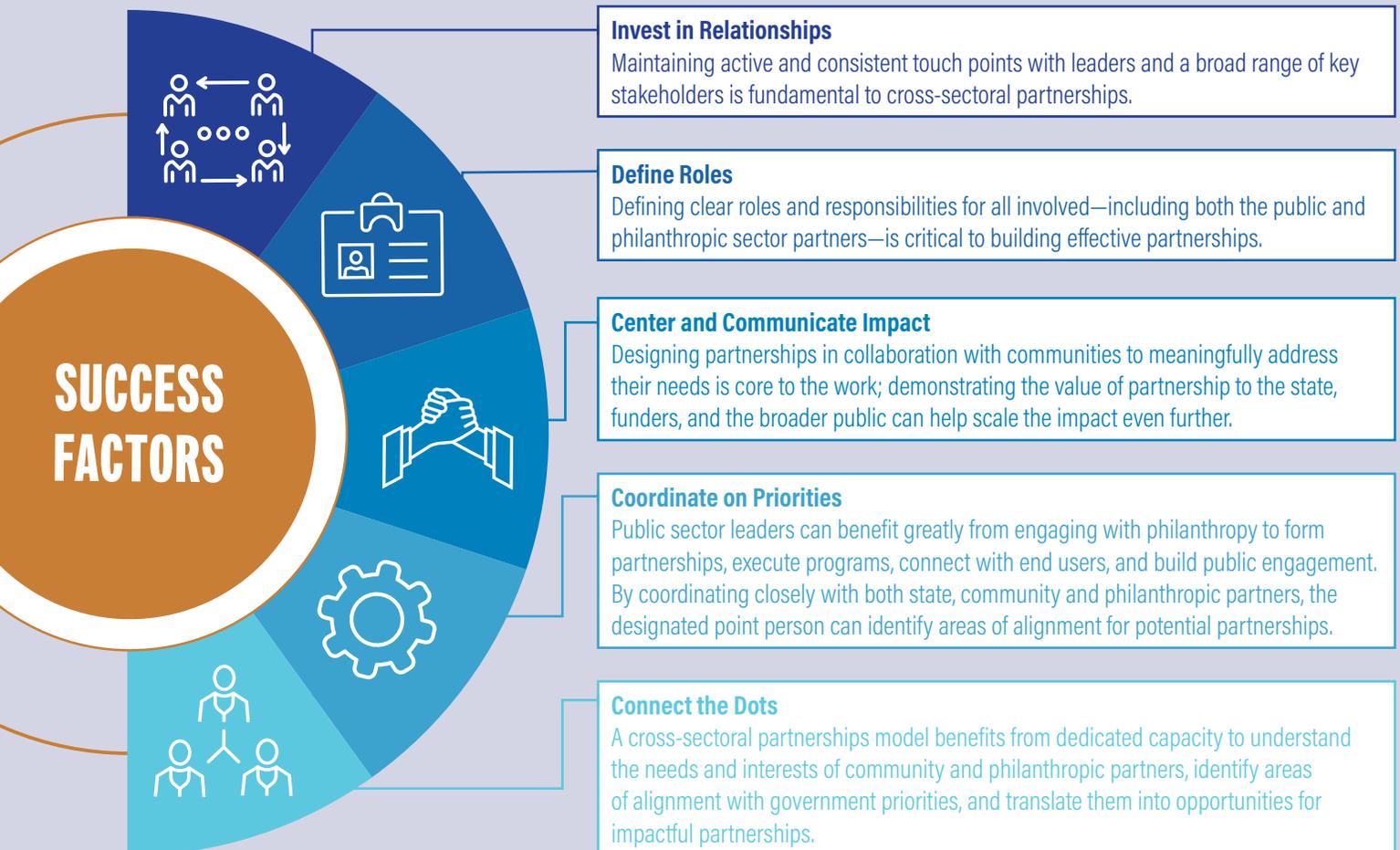Alec Lopata

September 2021

INTRODUCTION

Like so many states across the nation, California has risen to the occasion to address an unprecedented series of challenges over the past two years. To find innovative solutions that meaningfully address community needs and meet this unique moment, **California has developed a dedicated, statewide public-private partnership model that has yielded $4 billion in matching investment and tapped the best of both sectors.**
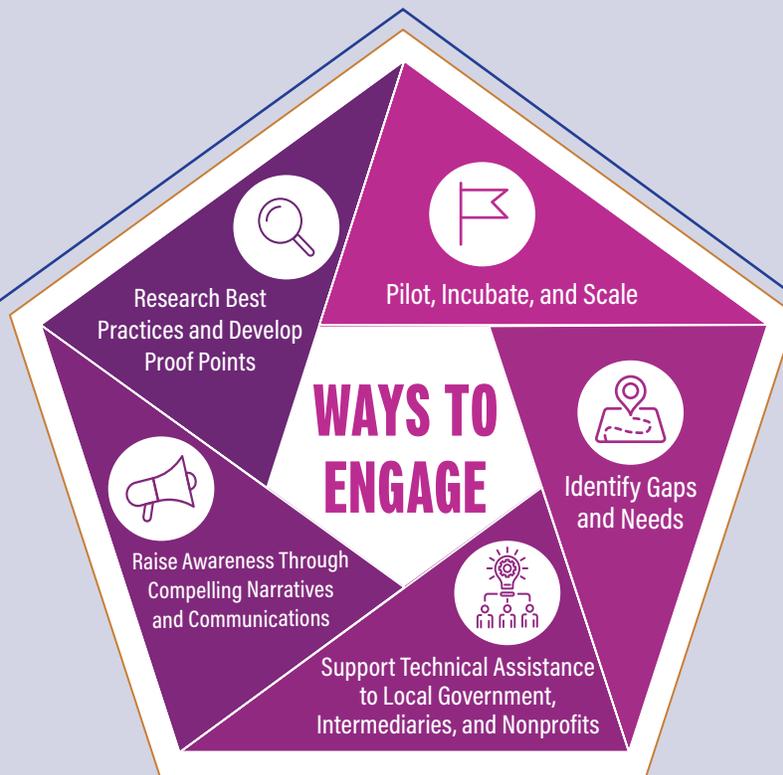
Since the beginning of California Governor Gavin Newsom's administration, Freedman Consulting has worked directly with state government, notably the Governor's Senior Advisor on Social Innovation, and state and national philanthropic leaders to build a new model for partnership development that is forward-looking, dynamic, community-centered, and impactful.

Our work has illuminated the significant value of such a model: since this effort began in 2019 thanks to the support of Governor Newsom and his commitment to partnering with other sectors, over 250 partners have invested $4 billion, complementing over $10.2 billion in public funding.

These 44 public-private partnerships cover a wide range of issue areas, including COVID-19 response and relief, housing and homelessness, criminal justice, climate change, domestic violence, immigration, food insecurity, education, and jobs and the economy. Collectively, the partnerships demonstrate the scale of impact possible by coalescing resources and expertise across both the public and philanthropic sectors.

Through this new partnership development model, the State of California has been able to increase engagement with the private and nonprofits sectors, hear directly from community members, leverage untapped opportunities to develop transformative partnerships, and complement the work of the Governor's office to address the state's most pressing challenges. This report, *A New Model for Cross-Sector Collaboration: What to Learn from Public-Philanthropic Partnerships in California,* highlights five success factors for partnership development and five ways to engage, each with unique roles for philanthropy and government.

SUCCESS FACTORS

Invest in Relationships
Maintaining active and consistent touch points with leaders and a broad range of key stakeholders is fundamental to cross-sectoral partnerships.

Define Roles
Defining clear roles and responsibilities for all involved—including both the public and philanthropic sector partners—is critical to building effective partnerships.

Center and Communicate Impact
Designing partnerships in collaboration with communities to meaningfully address their needs is core to the work; demonstrating the value of partnership to the state, funders, and the broader public can help scale the impact even further.

Coordinate on Priorities
Public sector leaders can benefit greatly from engaging with philanthropy to form partnerships, execute programs, connect with end users, and build public engagement. By coordinating closely with both state, community and philanthropic partners, the designated point person can identify areas of alignment for potential partnerships.

Connect the Dots
A cross-sectoral partnerships model benefits from dedicated capacity to understand the needs and interests of community and philanthropic partners, identify areas of alignment with government priorities, and translate them into opportunities for impactful partnerships.

WAYS TO ENGAGE

- Research Best Practices and Develop Proof Points
- Pilot, Incubate, and Scale
- Identify Gaps and Needs
- Support Technical Assistance to Local Government, Intermediaries, and Nonprofits
- Raise Awareness Through Compelling Narratives and Communications

While every state is unique, we believe that the model we developed and use in California is replicable across the nation, and hope that the best practices we have generated can expand its impact.

This report relies on the experience and insights we have garnered over almost three years of close work on this effort. It provides context on partnership funding models, key roles for philanthropy and government, and lessons and best practices for funders and public officials that may be interested in replicating this model in other states. And while the lessons are most directly applicable at the state level, they can easily translate to other levels of government.

California is not the first place to pilot a cross-sectoral partnership model, and we are grateful to those who pioneered this type of collaboration, including the Governor's Office of Foundation Liaison in Michigan, Office of the Newark Philanthropic Liaison in New Jersey, Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, and Los Angeles Center for Strategic Partnerships. Each entity has a slightly different structure—ranging from a formal government liaison funded by philanthropy to a designated coordinator embedded in county government—and together they demonstrate how impactful this collaboration can be in a range of settings.

Finally, we would stress four key prerequisites for success in replicating a partnership development model:

1. An interested philanthropic community in the state
2. Willing government leaders
3. A designated internal partnerships liaison (e.g., a Senior Advisor)
4. A team of support (internal or external)

The ability to leverage billions of dollars in public and private investment and find more innovative, effective ways to support communities and help the people of California has been invigorating, eye-opening, and truly meaningful. We hope that the learning from Freedman Consulting's efforts to develop a new model for building public-private partnerships in California can offer helpful guidance for those seeking to develop their own initiatives.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. OVERVIEW OF THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC-PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERSHIPS MODEL
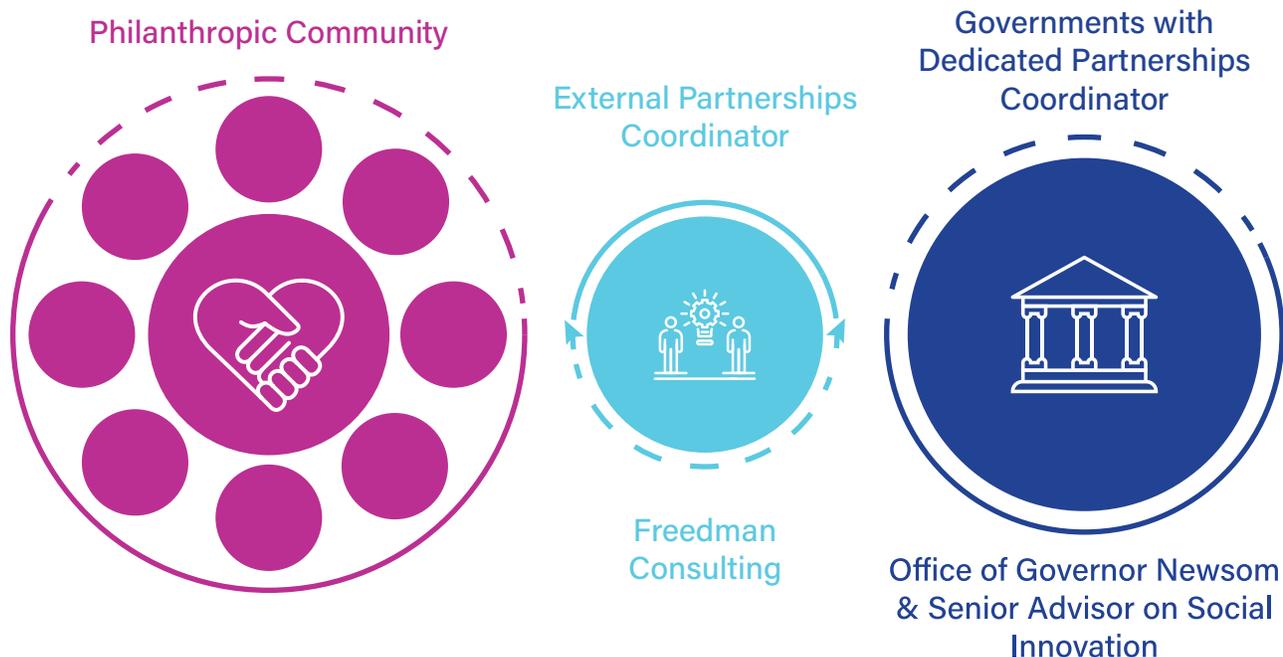
Background

The California partnerships model is designed to support the development of strategic public-private partnerships among business, nonprofits, and philanthropy in the state. The project was originally conceived in late 2018 following multiple conversations between Freedman Consulting, LLC, public sector partners including key incoming and transition officials for Governor Newsom's administration, and philanthropic leaders who recognized an opportunity for more strategic engagement between the state government and philanthropy.

The model set out to align efforts across sectors and develop transformative partnerships to address some of the state's most pressing challenges in new and innovative ways. To help achieve these goals, Governor Gavin Newsom appointed Kathleen Kelly Janus as the state's first ever Senior Advisor on Social Innovation in June 2019. Supporting this partnership model has allowed the state to actively engage California's diverse philanthropic community and ensure the private sector's flexible capital, community relationships, convening power, and other resources are leveraged in service of a more prosperous and equitable California.

Structure

The Senior Advisor on Social Innovation serves as the key point of contact for developing partnerships on behalf of the Governor's Office. The position is on the cabinet team and works closely with other senior staff and agency secretaries to ensure that the partnership development is aligned with the administration's policy priorities.

The philanthropic community in California is integral to this model's mission and work. The Senior Advisor closely coordinates with Philanthropy California, a statewide alliance between Northern and Southern California Grantmakers and Catalyst of San Diego and Imperial Counties. Their combined membership includes over 600 California-based foundations, corporate funders, philanthropic individuals and families, giving circles, and government agencies. Philanthropy California was instrumental in the

Philanthropic Community

External Partnerships Coordinator

Governments with Dedicated Partnerships Coordinator

Freedman Consulting

Office of Governor Newsom & Senior Advisor on Social Innovation

early stages of developing this model and in supporting the establishment of the Senior Advisor's role, and is a close partner in facilitating convenings, sharing learnings, and coordinating on opportunities to engage effectively with its wide network.

Partnership with community leaders and community-based organizations (CBOs) is also critical to ensuring that partnerships are equitable and responsive to local needs. The Senior Advisor works closely with the League of California Community Foundations to engage in regular convenings with CBOs, and meets regularly with communities throughout the state in the development and implementation of partnerships.

A key component of this partnership development model is an external team that provides support to the Senior Advisor in a non-governmental capacity. Freedman Consulting is a strategic and policy consulting firm based in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco, CA, that serves in this role. Our firm is funded by philanthropy to provide research, strategic advising, operations, and communications support to assist in partnership development; our focus is on coordination with the philanthropic community, though our partnership work also includes other parts of the private sector. Freedman Consulting works closely with the Senior Advisor to foster connections between state leaders and philanthropic funders in order to exchange ideas, collaborate, and form partnerships on areas of mutual interest.

Impact

To date, the California partnerships model has helped leverage philanthropic support to advance progress on a wide range of important issues, including homelessness, COVID-19 testing and vaccines, the future of work, and re-entry support for formerly incarcerated people. These partnerships have helped over 250,000 California students receive devices or hotspots to enable distance learning, enabled 22 food banks to receive 200,000 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables, provided safe shelter to 36,000 Californians during COVID-19, created 6,000 affordable housing units, and enabled 435 community-based organizations to conduct COVID-19 vaccine outreach in vulnerable communities.

In addition, the model has enabled convenings to facilitate discussion between philanthropic partners, highlight partnership opportunities, and encourage the state and philanthropy to further engage on key issues. Over the past three years, the Senior Advisor has hosted dozens of in person and virtual convenings to advance the policy priorities of the Governor, including key efforts such as the state's Regions Rise Together initiative, the Future of Work Commission, the Master Plan for Early Learning and Care, the Master Plan on Aging, and the High Road Transition Roadmap for a just climate future. These events expand the reach of conventional engagement and develop connections to foster public-private partnership.

II. SUCCESS FACTORS

Through nearly three years of partnership development, we have identified and honed a set of best practices that have enabled the success of this model. These success factors speak to the collaboration that is at the core of partnership development, and include examples of how we have applied them throughout our efforts.

1. Invest in Relationships

Relationships are the bedrock of any successful partnership, and devoting the capacity and time to develop and maintain strong working relationships with key stakeholders is fundamental to a cross-sectoral partnerships model.

A critical component of these efforts is communication and ensuring the public sector engages with a wide range of stakeholders, from government employees to community providers, civic leaders, private sector leaders, and others.

Additionally, grounding collaborations in an understanding of partners' priorities and community needs—derived from deep listening and trusted relationships—is a best practice for developing impactful partnerships.
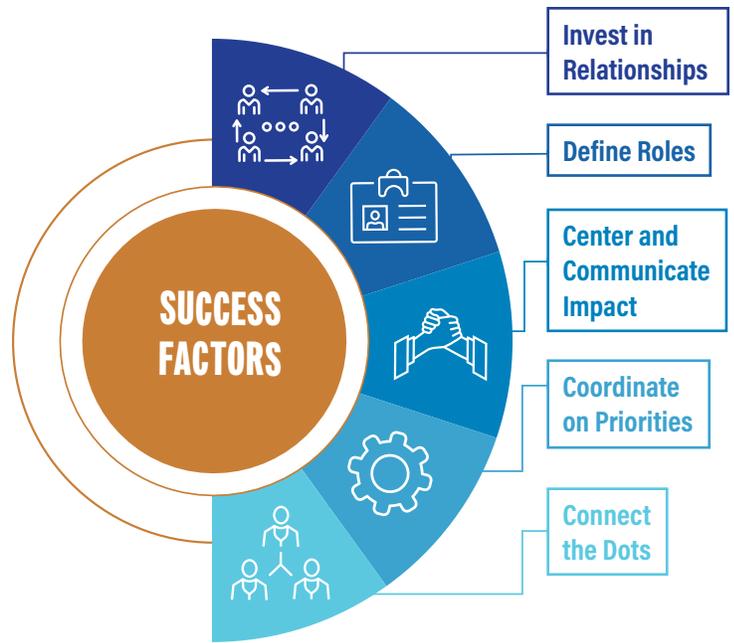
A few specifics to consider when developing such critical relationships include:

- **Take Time To Understand Community and Regional Needs:** Effective partnerships respond to community needs and require a sophisticated understanding of concerns on the ground, philanthropy's role in the community, and how this aligns with the government's strategic policy priorities.

- This can be accomplished by holding listening sessions, calls, and virtual convenings, especially in early stages of model development. This shows not only that the government is committed to engaging in partnership, but also demonstrates its commitment to listening and understanding community perspectives. This is an ongoing process that requires continual engagement as circumstances and regional needs evolve.

Partnership Example

During her first six months, the Senior Advisor completed a 15-city "border-to-border" listening tour, visited over 80 organizations, and convened with over 750 nonprofit, philanthropic and business leaders across California.

- **Communicate Regularly with External Partners:** Maintaining regular communication to keep partners informed about recent developments and upcoming opportunities helps funders feel engaged and is a useful tool to source

SUCCESS FACTORS

- Invest in Relationships
- Define Roles
- Center and Communicate Impact
- Coordinate on Priorities
- Connect the Dots

A Note on Process and Design

Partnership development is not linear; it is iterative and extremely collaborative. Designing a collaboration that aligns with the interests of all parties and generates an impact that is greater than the sum of its parts requires both innovation and time. The partnerships developed through the California model—highlighted in this report as examples of our learnings and best practices—are flexible by design in both scope and structure.

feedback from the field. While the frequency of outreach and target audience will vary based on context, maintaining a steady cadence of communication helps build trust and buy-in for partnership development.

> **Partnership Example**
>
> The Senior Advisor sends a Quarterly Update to over 500 partners to keep them apprised of the latest developments in the state, highlight potential opportunities, and promote upcoming events or speaking engagements.

- **Establish Nimble Stakeholder Groups:** By establishing formalized, yet flexible stakeholder structures, the state and philanthropic organizations can partner in a variety of ways to advance state priorities. These groups may be composed of representatives from the state, philanthropic leaders, and other key stakeholders, depending on the purpose of the group. In California, groups convene multiple times per year to discuss needs across varying sectors and determine the most effective ways to partner.

> **Partnership Example**
>
> In California, stakeholder groups of philanthropic leaders convened by the Governor's office help advance broader goals around housing and economic development. These State of California Philanthropy CEO working groups are designed to regularly coalesce key stakeholders, facilitate conversation around potential public-philanthropic partnerships and progress against goals, and identify key opportunities moving forward. For example, the Housing and Homelessness Working Group developed and expanded the Homekey Partnership Fund to provide ongoing support for Homekey, a transformative state initiative to acquire and convert properties such as hotels into affordable housing for low-income Californians. Similarly, the Jobs and the Economy Philanthropic Working Group is launching a fund to support California's High Road Training Partnerships (HRTP) program, which supports communities across California in creating equitable and high-quality jobs.

- **Engage Diverse Forms of Funders and Partners:** In addition to engaging larger state and national funders, it is also important to steward relationships and actively maintain communication with diverse sets of funders and potential partners. These may include but are not limited to:

  - **Community foundations** often have a deeper understanding of community needs and challenges, engage deeply in regional economic development and other planning efforts, and can serve as trusted partners for place-based work.

  - **Corporations** bring unique value for partnership by amplifying messages from the state, providing resources (e.g., technical assistance, products, services, financial support) to drive state priorities, and leveraging expertise to improve government's efficacy.

  - **Program-level staff** across sectors have the issue area expertise needed to develop the more detailed elements of partnerships.

> **Partnership in a Virtual Environment**
>
> The pivot to the virtual environment during COVID-19 expanded opportunities to engage directly with more foundations, partners, and community members across the state, and will likely continue to be a valuable facet of partner engagement in the future.

- **Create Forums for Philanthropy to Engage with Government:** Larger forums for philanthropy and government representatives to engage with each other directly can help build the relationships and foster the exchange of ideas crucial to partnership development. Such convenings can be held at strategic points in the year to announce upcoming partnerships between philanthropy and the state, allow funders to engage directly with agency leaders and other cabinet-level officials, celebrate accomplishments, and reaffirm the state's commitment to partnership.

  While it is valuable to create forums for funders to engage with the government, it is also important to keep the partnerships model separate from the political aspects of an administration's work, including by building relationships

with non-political, civil service agency staff. This facilitates greater sustainability of strong public-private partnerships across administrations.

> **Partnership Example**
>
> In January 2020, the Senior Advisor hosted the first-ever Sacramento Philanthropy Summit with 50 foundation CEOs in conversation with the Governor and policy leaders. The discussion centered on key priority areas, including housing and homelessness, jobs and the economy, early childhood, climate, criminal justice, and Regions Rise Together. The summit aimed to establish relationships and create connections between philanthropic leaders and the Governor's senior policy team, as well as to catalyze new ideas for public-philanthropic partnerships to pursue collectively.

2. Define Roles

Defining clear roles and aligning on approaches are key to building effective partnerships. Public-philanthropic partnerships can benefit from clear parameters around engagement with external partners, as well as collaboration with internal partners to ensure strategic alignment.

- **Diagnose and Align Internally:** Before engaging with external partners on a partnership opportunity, it is important to coordinate with the internal government team to ensure (1) the state is proposing, or has already invested in, a specific program; (2) that there is a clear need or outstanding gap the program is seeking to fill; (3) philanthropy or another private sector partner is the appropriate partner to close this gap; (4) there is clear understanding of the specific type of support needed to fill the gap (i.e., financial or in-kind support); and (5) that seeking external partners strategically fits into the government's long-term priorities.

- **Set the Stage:** Steps the state can take to ensure the right conditions are in place for a successful partnership may include:

    i. identifying potential funders whose current funding priorities are aligned;
    ii. understanding the existing philanthropic infrastructure that would contribute to the partnership (e.g., pooled funding, aligned funding, direct individual grantmaking, in-kind contributions);
    iii. having an "anchor funder" or group of funders that is willing to commit seed funding to demonstrate buy-in and attract additional funders;
    iv. identifying an intermediary organization that can serve as a coordinating hub to house a pooled fund and disburse resources to target recipients; and
    v. ensuring the opportunity at hand does not conflict with or detract from previously presented partnership opportunities.[1]

> **Partnership Example**
>
> In August 2020, California launched Returning Home Well, a $30 million public-private partnership to support safe and healthy reentry for recently released incarcerated individuals and curb the impact of COVID-19 on prison populations. The state announced an initial commitment of $15 million, which was matched by philanthropic contributions for a total of $30 million. As a pooled fund, Returning Home Well allowed funders, such as Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Rosenberg Foundation, and The California Endowment, to direct resources through the Amity Foundation. In this partnership, Rosenberg Foundation was a key champion in soliciting and coordinating philanthropic funders. The Amity Foundation then distributed funds to its network of over 100 partner organizations to support direct services, including housing, healthcare, treatment, transportation, direct assistance, and employment support.

---

1   Criteria 3 and 4 are more specific to pooled funds, further described in section IV.

- **Use Time-Bound Commitments:** From the outset, partnerships should have clear start and end dates to ensure all parties are aligned on expectations. For example, a three-year pilot for a particular initiative would offer philanthropic funders a clear sense of the duration of funding needs, allowing them to plan support accordingly, stay accountable to funding goals, and measure impact effectively.

- **Build in Flexibility:** Although clear partnership roles and parameters are critical, it is also important to adopt a flexible approach and embrace natural shifts in partnerships over time—especially given the constantly evolving political, economic, and social landscape. Similarly, it is important to remain open to exploring new bodies of work that might not initially seem like the right fit. In contrast to the massive budgetary shortfalls that states across the nation faced in 2020, many states now have significant surpluses as a result of tax revenues, federal support, a rebounding economy, and a strong stock market.[2] This changes the context under which partnerships may be developed, presenting an opportunity for more proactive and sustainable partnerships in addition to ones that respond to short-term needs.

> **Partnership Example**
>
> In the wake of the U.S. withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan, the collapse of the Afghan government, and the Taliban's takeover, Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees (GCIR) expanded the scope of the Dignity for Families Fund to support Afghan asylees. In its original conception, this $20 million fund was designed to help migrant families and unaccompanied children at the U.S.-Mexico border receive urgent humanitarian relief and assistance as they request asylum and resettle in communities throughout the state. The expanded scope of support for Afghan asylees may take the form of housing or cash assistance, wraparound services, and more.

3. Center and Communicate Impact

The animating factor for partnerships is the need to address a societal challenge by combining the unique strengths, abilities, and resources of both public and private sector actors. Centering these challenges and elevating voices from communities most impacted is critical for meaningful partnership development. From there, communicating key successes to the broader public helps build public support for partnerships and enables additional impact.

- **Center Communities:** Supporting communities and advancing equitable outcomes is at the core of this partnership model. Ensuring that we are listening and responding to community needs—whether by providing job training, cash assistance, shelter, or other critical support—drives the development of every partnership. Centering the ways a collaboration will allow communities to test new ideas, better leverage state funding, and meaningfully improve lives, and finding ways to scale that impact as much as possible, is the guiding principle of this work.

> **Partnership Example**
>
> In September 2021, as California faces historic drought that disproportionately impacts rural and inland communities, especially those of color, the Governor's office hosted a listening session with community-based organizations (CBOs) to better understand key community challenges and gaps in addressing the drought emergency and longer-term water resilience. The needs identified from this session, which include capacity building, climate resilience planning, local advocacy and civic engagement, interregional water relief coordination, and drought education (among others) will directly inform a public-philanthropic water resilience fund that is currently under development with the Water Foundation.

- **Measure for Accountability:** Documenting the impact of partnerships is critical for accountability and understanding of what works. Evaluation can be a significant level of effort and approaches vary widely depending on the partners and goals of the effort, but should be incorporated in some way into every partnership. Example metrics that have been useful to the California model include: gross number of corporate and philanthropic dollars contributed, number

---

2   https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/25/business/economy/republicans-biden-infrastructure-federal-aid.html

of state agencies and departments engaged, number of corporate and philanthropic partners involved, and size of population impacted.

> **Partnership Example**
>
> In November 2020, Governor Newsom issued the first-ever Social Innovation Impact Report, which highlights the $3.9 billion in corporate and philanthropic partnerships developed up to that point in the Senior Advisor's tenure. Many of the partnerships highlighted were fundamental to the state's COVID-19 response and included impact metrics for various partnerships, including a cash assistance fund for undocumented populations, an initiative to provide housing and social services for formerly incarcerated individuals, and a partnership to close the digital divide by providing thousands of laptop and hotspots to students.

- **Communicate to Elevate Impact:** Providing formal and informal updates to the public via press, social media, and other announcements raises awareness of partnerships underway and generates additional support that ultimately leads to greater impact.

> **Partnership Example**
>
> The Office of Governor Gavin Newsom regularly utilizes the Governor's Online Newsroom as well as social media to announce partnerships, provide updates on partnership development, and recognize key partners and their contributions.

4. Coordinate on Priorities

The development of public-philanthropic partnerships is inextricably linked to the Governor's priorities, the legislature's decisions, and the government's spending and appropriations decisions. Agency directors and staff are tasked with launching new programs, appropriately disbursing government funds, and executing on the Governor's overall mandate and strategic priorities. Oftentimes, agency directors can benefit greatly from engaging with the private sector and philanthropy to form partnerships, execute programs, connect with customers and end users, and build public engagement and buy-in. The designated point person on partnerships plays a key role in understanding the Administration's priorities and identifying areas for cross-sectoral partnerships to amplify impact.

- **Have a Seat at the Table:** Similar to any other agency position at the city, state, or federal level, having a direct line of communication and reporting responsibilities to executive leadership conveys the importance of the position while streamlining the advisory, information sharing, and communication processes. State agency directors and senior advisors often report directly to the Governor. Positioning the Senior Advisor role at the same level allows for the executive liaising function required to efficiently coordinate public-philanthropic partnerships on behalf of the state.

- **Closely Coordinate with Agency Partners:** Having a seat at the table will not only allow the point person on partnerships to build close relationships with agency directors, but also to remain apprised of key legislative actions, policy developments, and agency programs. This structure lends itself to a reciprocal communication process in which the point person can remain up to speed on government actions, inform external partners of new developments, connect external partners with agency leaders, and understand public-philanthropic partnership opportunities.

> **Partnership Example**
>
> In support of the Master Plan for Early Learning and Care, the Governor announced $2.9 million in public-private partnership funding in December 2020. This partnership development process required regular and close coordination with the Department of Social Services, Health and Human Services, and the Senior Policy Advisor for Early Childhood in the Office of the Governor, among others, to identify agency needs and gaps, identify and reach out to the appropriate partners, and ensure each partnership was in service of the broader Master Plan goals.

- **Amplify Agency and Commission Initiatives Through Partnership:** When a governor appropriates funds or signs an executive order to launch special initiatives or programs, government agencies often form partnerships with the private and philanthropic sectors to fill in capacity, research, funding, and human capital gaps in order to successfully

deliver these programs. By working closely with agency directors and staying apprised of the pipeline, the point person on partnerships can seize opportunities to galvanize funders and support agency programs.

Partnership Example

In 2019, Governor Gavin Newsom's budget allocated $5 million to develop a California Master Plan for Early Learning and Care, which would provide a roadmap for the state to improve its early childhood education and care system. In 2020, the Senior Advisor worked closely with senior cabinet officials and partners from the Department of Social Services, Health and Human Services, and private sector research partners on developing strategic partnerships. This included hosting a webinar on the Master Plan in collaboration with Philanthropy California and resulted in $2.9 million in funding to support the Master Plan (released in December 2020).

5. Connect the Dots

A cross-sectoral partnerships model benefits from dedicated capacity from both within and outside of an administration. Freedman Consulting has provided that external support in California, engaging with both philanthropy and the Governor's Office on a day-to-day basis. Through this close and ongoing coordination, the team is able to understand the needs and interests of philanthropy, identify areas of alignment, and translate them into opportunities for impactful partnerships.

- **Dedicate the Capacity:** Having a key point person within the government who serves as a single point of coordination on partnerships benefits both internal and external aspects of partnership development.

  - It is valuable to have a designated leader on partnerships within the government who can coordinate across agencies on new ideas and ongoing developments, and ensure that partnerships fit into the larger policy goals of the administration.

  - Externally, this structure allows the designated partnerships leader to serve as the key point person that manages and communicates the broader narrative and impact of partnerships.

- **Engage Strategically:** Dedicated capacity for partnership development enables both rapid-response coordination and longer-term strategy. The external team dedicated to partnership development brings insight from both philanthropy and the public sector, and can facilitate strategic conversations, goal-setting, and approaches to achieve desired outcomes.

Partnership Example

The Freedman Consulting team strategically engages philanthropy in an ongoing manner, including through discussion on priority areas of interest, outreach on specific partnership opportunities, and convenings on key topics. Identifying and understanding emerging areas of interest enables the team to serve as an effective liaison that conveys the needs of the philanthropic sector and translates them into meaningful opportunities with the government.

Partnership Example

The team conducts a quarterly strategy session with the Senior Advisor to reflect on progress, identify lessons learned, and define strategic priorities for the next quarter. These sessions enable the team to maintain focus on long-term goals, elevate priority areas for partnership, and identify specific approaches (e.g., engaging new partners, codifying best practices, communicating strategically) to achieve objectives.

III. WAYS TO ENGAGE

There are numerous ways for philanthropy and government to fill critical gaps to optimize the impact of larger programs and better serve community needs. Philanthropy can supplement government efforts or serve as a collaborative partner in shared initiatives, as well as plug in where the public sector needs support in piloting innovative solutions or developing proof points. In addition, philanthropy can support capacity-building and provide expertise to conduct strategic planning related to long-term state investments, innovate to achieve systems change, and analyze regional needs.

This section describes five ways that both philanthropy and government can engage in partnership. These levers for change—some of which are common roles for philanthropy—have distinct roles for each sector, and have proven to be particularly effective in the context of this partnership model. We hope that the examples in this section serve to bring these roles to life and spur further ideas for impactful change.

WAYS TO ENGAGE

Research Best Practices and Develop Proof Points

Pilot, Incubate, and Scale

Identify Gaps and Needs

Support Technical Assistance to Local Government, Intermediaries, and Nonprofits

Raise Awareness Through Compelling Narratives and Communications

1. Pilot, Incubate, and Scale

Philanthropy is well-positioned and adept at supporting programs that incubate new ideas, test interventions, and pilot innovative solutions. Philanthropic support for new pilots and incubations can unlock the government's ability to innovatively address widespread issues at scale.

Partnership Example

In 2020, the California state government, California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), Enterprise Community Partners, and dozens of philanthropic organizations partnered to launch Homekey, a transformative state initiative to acquire and convert hotels and motels into affordable housing for low-income Californians during the COVID-19 pandemic. This first-of-its-kind model was made possible by philanthropic support for the acquisition and rehabilitation of thousands of additional housing units that could serve people experiencing homelessness.

2. Identify Gaps and Needs

In designing programs to support local communities, it is important to understand which support systems exist in that community, which gaps need to be filled, and which resources might make the program successful; this is true in the context of constrained budgets, as well as those of increased state and federal spending. In cases where government agencies lack in-house capacity, philanthropy can support this local, regional, or larger-scale mapping and analysis.

Partnership Example

Building on the Office of Planning and Research's Regions Rise Together initiative, Philanthropy California, the Sierra Health Foundation, and other state and local funders supported the Philanthropic Case for Inland California, a 2020 study conducted by the UC Riverside Center For Social Innovation and Freedman Consulting. The study aimed to map regional economic data, disparities, and investment opportunities in Inland California in order to understand diverse regional needs and lift up recommendations for funders and state government. This effort jumpstarted an ongoing collaboration between the public and private sectors to increase focus on the region, and created a model for investment in Inland California and other under-resourced areas.

Partnership Example

When schools shut down due to COVID-19 in March 2020, the digital divide in California became clear. One in five California students lacked the resources to continue their education from home, due to a lack of connectivity and/or a device. The Department of Education and Californians Dedicated to Education Foundation (CDE) formed the Bridging the Digital Divide Fund (BDD), through which they raised over $18 million in philanthropic capital and leveraged over $5 billion in state funds to close the digital divide in California. This coordinated investment tackled a gap that became apparent during the pandemic, reaching 97% of counties and distributing 75k computing devices and 101k hotspots to students in need.

3. Support Technical Assistance to Local Government, Intermediaries, and Nonprofits

Technical assistance (TA) is a wide-ranging and powerful tool that can support local government, intermediaries, or nonprofits, and ultimately facilitate more scaled impact. Many community organizations have limited resources or staff to execute on their missions, and philanthropy can support TA to help these organizations with a wide range of needs, from capacity-building to specific subject matter expertise. In this time of increased funding for public programs, TA can also help local organizations access public sector funding, and in turn, promote equitable implementation of state and federal funding in communities.

As part of a partnership, TA can take the form of targeted support to individual grantees or scaled support across multiple grantees, and may broadly include but is not limited to: (1) leadership development; (2) managerial or organizational support; (3) programmatic support; (4) fundraising and donor relations; (5) asset mapping and strategic planning; and (6) capacity building. Other examples of TA include tools and products (e.g., webinars, quick guides, case studies, or other resources), on-call assistance for specific needs, or a peer learning cohort, which offers networked opportunities to share promising practices and common pitfalls.

Funding Types

While multiple funding vehicles can be leveraged in a public-private partnership, a key part of the partnership process is determining which vehicle is most appropriate or conducive to its success. Three common types of public-private partnerships funding structures are pooled funding, aligned funding, and in-kind contributions to supplement state efforts. Which type is best suited for a particular partnership will be determined in part by the issue, the number of funders involved, the specific needs from the government entity, and more. For example, when a large number of funders are interested in providing unrestricted resources to support or augment a government initiative, standing up a pooled fund through a trusted fiscal intermediary may be ideal. In other cases, when smaller groups of donors are interested in a discrete partnership opportunity, it may be worth exploring aligned funding or in-kind contributions to supplement state efforts.

Partnership Example

California's High Road Training Partnerships (HRTP) Program, run by the state Workforce Development Board, supports high-quality jobs by funding collaborative partnerships between private employers, local community-based organizations, and labor. The HRTP program is supported by a team of technical assistance consultants who help document promising practices, conduct an evaluation to document the HRTP model, and provide technical assistance. This enables the state to support forming high road training partnerships, and helps local communities build capacity to access and implement state funds toward HRTP projects.

4. Raise Awareness Through Compelling Narratives and Communications

Effective communications campaigns are an important part of the ecosystem surrounding any successful public program, and philanthropy can enable the government to communicate in a manner that is clear and accessible to the public. Philanthropy and private sector partners can help lift up the urgency of the issue a program is trying to solve, build political support among relevant constituencies and hold the state accountable to the goals of the program. This can include advocacy, but also expands far beyond it and encompasses broad storytelling and communications. Lifting up best practices and lessons learned

from the program through an effective communications campaign supported by philanthropy can also be an important avenue for partnership and cooperation between government and the private sector.

Partnership Example

In July 2020, Governor Newsom announced the "Wear A Mask" public awareness campaign encouraging Californians to use face coverings, a continuation of the "Your Actions Save Lives" campaign that promoted critical public health messaging throughout the pandemic. The campaign raised more than $10.75 million in cash and $27 million in in-kind partnerships with multimedia organizations and members of the Governor's Task Force on Business and Jobs recovery. Funding partners included the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, The Skoll Foundation, Rick Caruso, Tom Steyer, the CDC Foundation, and Sierra Health Foundation.

5. Research Best Practices and Develop Proof Points

Evaluating programs and identifying best practices are common roles for philanthropy. This extends to partnerships, where philanthropy can partner with the public sector to measure impact and evaluate program effectiveness. By researching best practices and developing proof points, public-philanthropic partnerships can foster an open exchange of ideas, improve evidence assessment, identify opportunities, and build trust between organizations.

Sharing the data from these efforts supports ongoing learning and program improvement. Data can serve as an asset to the public and philanthropic sectors, allowing partners to better understand problems and develop more efficient, effective solutions.

Partnership Example

The Future of Work Commission aims to develop a new social compact for California workers, based on an expansive vision for economic equity that presents work and jobs as the starting point. With a focus on researching best practices and developing proof points, the Commission's primary mission is to study, understand, analyze, and make recommendations regarding the kinds of jobs Californians will have in the future, methods of promoting better job quality, and the best way to preserve good jobs. The partnership between government and various leaders across sectors—technology, labor, business, education, and venture capital—has been critical to California's efforts toward economic equity in the state.

Each of these roles of philanthropy are distinct and useful in their own right, but are often interconnected and supported simultaneously within an effective partnership.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS