



Corporate Giving, the Nashville Way

A Guide to Engaging with Nonprofits in the
Middle Tennessee community



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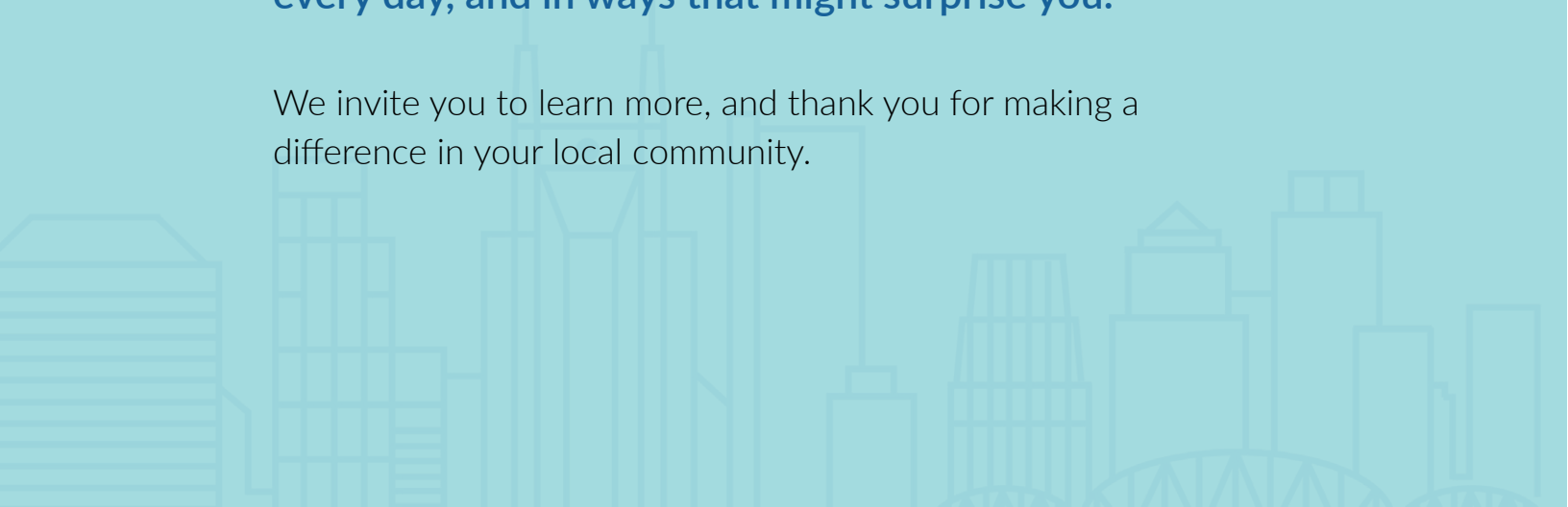
Chalk it up to Volunteer spirit, Southern hospitality, or longstanding Tennessee tradition; Music City thrives, in part, because of the special relationship between its corporate sector and nonprofit community.

From healthcare and tourism to finance and publishing, Nashville's business leaders prioritize local nonprofit involvement as a strategic business tool and a component of company culture. Most importantly, forward-thinking companies seize the opportunity to play an active, impactful role in our rapidly growing and changing region. After all, a healthy and supported local community is good for business, too.

The question isn't IF corporations donate, but how and where they lend support. This guide provides an overview of common and creative ways for companies to engage with nonprofit organizations and initiatives, as well as local examples and resources for getting started.

Nashville-area nonprofits accomplish amazing things every day, and in ways that might surprise you.

We invite you to learn more, and thank you for making a difference in your local community.



Greetings!

One of the many reasons I'm proud to call Nashville home is our community's willingness to work together to solve problems, improve neighborhoods, and build resilient communities. I believe strongly in the vitality of our neighborhoods. My first public appearance after being sworn in as mayor was at the Good Neighbor Day Festival, organized by the nonprofit Neighbor 2 Neighbor.

Our active and diverse nonprofit sector plays a vital role in building healthy neighborhoods and a stable workforce by providing critical services that contribute to economic stability and mobility throughout Nashville.

We know nonprofits cannot do this on their own. As the adage goes, "it takes a village," and your business is an important part of our village. From monetary donations and nonprofit board service to volunteer opportunities, there are many ways your business can support nonprofits in meeting their missions, and I hope you'll join me in that effort.

A strong nonprofit community is key to Nashville continuing to thrive and flourish in the years ahead. We rely on your support to make that happen. Engaging with our community's nonprofit organizations is an essential way to make Nashville an amazing city in which to live, learn, work, and play.

Thank you for choosing to partner with nonprofits to make your community better!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Cooper". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being more prominent and the last name "Cooper" following in a similar style.

John Cooper
Mayor



Where do you fit in?

With so many local nonprofit organizations serving the Nashville area, companies have many options when it comes to lending support. Whether you choose to make a traditional cash donation to a worthy initiative or get creative with your resources to maximize your impact, your contributions are needed and appreciated.



Networking

Meeting and trading ideas with area nonprofit leaders and like-minded, community-sustaining companies



Financial Investment

Providing direct support through tangible resources



Volunteerism

Pledging time, skill, and expertise where an organization needs it most



Formal Partnerships

Multilevel engagement in a nonprofit's mission



Collective Impact

Joining with other nonprofits, government agencies, and philanthropic organizations to strategize and collaborate around broad community issues

Nonprofit Matchmaking 101

6 questions for companies to consider when choosing a nonprofit to support

Is this mission a good fit?

Seek out organizations with missions that align with your corporate culture, your team's passions, and your company's own mission. If your company's target audience is mothers, for example, then an organization serving children and families could be a great opportunity for a meaningful connection.

How does this organization impact the community?

Make sure you understand how your company's support will be used, and get a clear idea of what the organization actually achieves. Use a resource like [GivingMatters.com](https://givingmatters.com) or download the organization's annual report to review outcomes, financials, and community impact.

Does this organization value equity?

Seek nonprofits that approach their mission with an equity lens; in other words, organizations that value meaningful relationships with (and input from) those they serve. This can mean including a service recipient on their board, engaging service recipients in hands-on roles, or other advisory capacities. Make sure the organization's services are not just transactional, but transformative.

Will my team get behind this?

To successfully fold giving into your company culture, it's important to involve your team in the conversation around which area nonprofits to support. When your team has ownership in the decision, they're more likely to support it passionately, give time and talent freely, and promote your company's involvement proudly.

Can we sustain the gift this organization needs?

When you pledge support to a nonprofit - especially recurring gifts - the organization counts on those resources and plans future budgets and initiatives around them. Make sure that your promises are realistic and your follow-through is reliable, even in the case of an economic downturn or lean year.

Does this partner align with our company's ESG/SDG or CSR goals?

Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG), Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) are ways of representing annual goals tied to a company's business practices. These goals measure a company's impact on the environment, their employees, their industries, and the world around them. Make sure the nonprofits you're supporting can provide the data, measurement, and results your company requires in order to report on its contributions and efforts.





Networking

Networking is the quickest and easiest way to enter Nashville's nonprofit space, and an essential first step toward getting your company involved with a mission that fits.

Our community's nonprofit organizations come in all shapes and sizes. As you're building relationships and evaluating potential partners, seek out nonprofit missions that naturally align with your company's vision and brand position over name recognition and visibility.

Choose Networking when you want to:

- ✓ Build relationships within the nonprofit community
- ✓ Connect with other corporations that share your values and focus
- ✓ Choose which organizations your company should support
- ✓ Create brand visibility for your company as a community-minded supporter
- ✓ Understand how your resources and nonprofit needs align
- ✓ Bring your in-house expertise to the community

How to get started:

- Research nonprofits on the [Giving Matters](#) website, follow organizations on social media, and sign up for newsletters.
- Attend a [networking event or business-sector workshop](#) through Center for Nonprofit Management. Topics include Management and Teaming, Facilitation Techniques, Antiracism and Equity Trainings, Board Development Workshops and many more. Find opportunities [here](#).
- Attend fundraising events

Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce

A nonprofit organization dedicated to creating economic prosperity by facilitating community leadership. The Chamber is Middle Tennessee's largest business federation, representing more than 2,000 member businesses in 10 counties (Davidson, Dickson, Montgomery, Cheatham, Robertson, Wilson, Sumner, Williamson, Rutherford and Maury). Through a wide variety of programs and initiatives, the Chamber works to positively impact the economic vitality and enhance the quality of life in the region, while supporting the growth and prosperity of Chamber-member businesses.

[Learn more here](#) about investing in the success of your business and our community.



Financial Investment

Supporting an organization financially encompasses everything from straightforward monetary donations to company grants, employee giving campaigns, corporate gift matching, and in-kind or pro-bono support. Even resource round-ups like toy drives are a form of Financial Investment.

To maximize your donation's impact, find out what kind of support the organization needs most. Many nonprofits receive grant funding for specific programs, but general operating funds can be much harder to come by - and those vital dollars "keep the lights on," so to speak. Unrestricted support helps nonprofits retain talented staff, ensure building safety, meet immediate resource gaps, and so much more.

Choose Financial Investment when you want to:

- ✓ Generate visibility for your company (event or initiative sponsorships, etc.)
- ✓ Support the hardworking staff who are creating and delivering services in the community
- ✓ Support a specific mission with minimal time investment
- ✓ Easily assign your company's giving budget

How to get started:

- Research missions that align with your business philosophy, audience, or internal culture ([Giving Matters](#) is a great resource)
- Find out about needs by subscribing to various nonprofit newsletters and following them on social media
- Reach out directly to the executive director, development staff, or a board member to determine pressing or ongoing resource needs



United Way (UW)

Partners with nonprofit and government agencies, volunteers and the business community to break the cycle of poverty; give every child an equal chance to learn and succeed; build strong, healthy communities; and meet our neighbors' basic needs. UW connects employees to the community through education, volunteering, giving and affinity groups, creating opportunities to boost employee satisfaction and build a stronger community. United Way has partnered with Salesforce.org to create the next generation employee engagement and philanthropy platform, connecting employees with causes they are passionate about and delivering data on companies' philanthropic efforts.

To learn more and get involved: unitedwaynashville.org

Middle Tennessee Donor Forum (MTDF)

A membership organization that provides support in the form of educational programs and networking opportunities for members of the Middle Tennessee philanthropic community. Members gain knowledge of broad community challenges and best practices to ensure charitable giving programs are impactful. MTDF also offers opportunities for collaborative funding around community issues like affordable housing, education and homelessness. Whether your organization is just learning about the Nashville community or you already have an established foundation, MTDF can help you gain the tools to ensure your program will have maximum impact.

To learn more, [email Kim Carpenter Drake](#) or call (615) 497-7292.

“As a leading company in Middle Tennessee, we have the unique opportunity—and responsibility—to make our community stronger, safer and healthier. The United Way has been a key partner in this endeavor for more than 25 years and has helped us make a significant impact on the city and its residents. We are confident that with United Way qualified agencies and our teammates, Bridgestone can continue to help build a better Nashville.”

Gordon Knapp, CEO and President, Bridgestone Americas



Volunteering

Volunteering is not only one of the most direct ways to support an organization, it's also a proven way to make a positive impact on your company culture at the same time.

As you evaluate volunteer opportunities, look for organized, specific calls for volunteers: trail cleanup days, teams to help build wheelchair ramps, or working with staff event or advisory committees. To make the most meaningful impact, collaborate with the organization around a specific need and how your company or team can pitch in to meet it, rather than tasking the organization with finding a place for you to plug in. The more detailed the plan, the more help your group will be. Sometimes the most valuable donation is the simple gift of time and energy.

Choose Volunteerism when you want to:

- ☒ Create visibility through community engagement
- ☒ Boost a nonprofit's on-the-ground capacity
- ☒ Experience an organization's impact directly
- ☒ Maximize your impact with limited financial resources
- ☒ Increase employee engagement and retention
- ☒ Build community involvement into your company culture

How to get started:

- Research nonprofit organizations on [Giving Matters](#), follow them on social media, sign up for newsletters.
- Determine what's realistic: how often do you or your team want to volunteer? What schedule and frequency can you promise?
- Find organized calls for volunteers: classroom volunteers, food banks, neighborhood resource centers, etc.
- Ask about the organization's volunteer requirements. Some require background checks, specific paperwork, or other steps to take before getting involved.

"After partnering with Hands on Nashville on many corporate service projects, I can confidently say that Hands On Nashville executes at an incredible level. In every project, their team provides active communication, detailed project organization and treats our volunteers with exceptional customer service. Their outstanding team makes large-scale service projects easy to organize and most importantly, a fun and meaningful experience for everyone involved."

Susannah Berry, Corporate Social Responsibility Manager at Jackson

Hands on Nashville (HON)

supports 140-plus area nonprofits, schools, and other civic organizations, and serves as a one-stop resource for connecting individuals and groups with a wide range of volunteer opportunities in our community.

For corporate groups

HON's Corporate Partner Program creates customized days of service for companies, specially tailored to the size, interests, and budget of each group. HON manages all project planning, supply procurement, and day-of management to support both the community partner and corporate client.

For individuals or smaller groups

HON's Volunteer Opportunity Calendar makes it easy for to find opportunities and events that are scheduled for a specific day and time.

For tech sector volunteers

HON's GeekCause matches Nashville's most talented techies with community partners in need of their services, providing a low-cost platform for agencies to solve tech-based challenges through the support of skilled volunteers.

For future board members

HON partners with CNM to prepare and help place professionals who are interested in serving on a nonprofit's board of directors. Participants learn about the legal, ethical, and operational responsibilities of serving on a board and have the opportunity to be placed with a nonprofit.

What's the difference?

Volunteer Contributions

Donated time and knowledge from individuals who would not normally charge for the service provided

May be tax deductible (for example, donating paid employees' time during the work day)

Example: a corporate group helping clean up a playground for an afterschool program

Pro Bono Services

Gift of professional services for which the donor would typically be paid a set fee.

Expenses incurred may be partially tax deductible; donated services typically are not

Example: a legal professional donating legal counsel to a domestic violence nonprofit

In-Kind Gifts

A non-cash contribution that can be valued in monetary terms.

Tax deductible as a charitable contribution; nonprofits must report in-kind contributions as revenue.

Example: a restaurant supply company donating an oven to a homeless shelter.



Collaboration: Formal Partnerships

A formal partnership is a big-picture promise of support which involves all three T's: time, talent, and treasure. Partnership might involve serving on a board of directors and contributing financially while also providing ongoing volunteer support and engaging with an organization in a deeper way.

A formal corporate partner plays an important role in an organization's internal operations, helping to plan, support, and execute programs and initiatives. Partnership can be a lifeline for nonprofits, allowing them to draw on a company's expertise and stability to free up the internal resources they need to serve our community well.

Choose Partnership when you want to:

- ✓ Deepen ties with an organization and/or the community it serves
- ✓ Align with a specific mission
- ✓ Show the long term impact of your community engagement strategy
- ✓ Engage your team in a deeper, longer-term commitment to a specific mission

How to get started:

- Engage with a nonprofit through volunteering or financial investment and get to know their needs
- Work with that nonprofit to identify partnership opportunities
- Take advantage of Center for Nonprofit Management's Board Training Opportunities
- Encourage employees to participate in the Young Leaders Council, which trains individuals on board service, including a year-long internship on the board of a community-based nonprofit

PENCIL

The premier organization linking community resources to Metro Nashville Public Schools. From providing necessary school supplies to mentoring in classrooms, PENCIL ensures that teachers have what they need to teach and students have what they need to learn. Through PENCIL Partners, PENCIL works with businesses to create an engaged and excited student pipeline interested in their industry through internships and job shadowing.

PENCILforSchools.org

"PENCIL is the cornerstone of the work of the Academies of Nashville—they provide experiential learning for our students to make the phrase 'you have to see it to be it' come alive."

Donna Gilley, Director of the Academies of Nashville



Collective Impact

Collective Impact is an ambitious, cross-sector way of tackling complex community issues such as affordable housing, college and career readiness, stroke prevention, and health inequities— broad, population-level issues that one organization can't solve alone.

Engaging with Collective Impact is a formal partnership with a longer-term focus, reaching beyond just one organization. The Collective Impact model engages companies to work alongside Nashville's nonprofit, government, and philanthropic communities to co-create solutions designed to achieve results in the decades to come. Community impact strategies include policy change, an intentional focus on systemic inequity, and a continuous, data-driven learning mindset.

Choose Collective Impact when you want to:

- ✓ Actively address the root causes of our community's most challenging issues
- ✓ Take on a significant time, financial, and resource commitment
- ✓ See a long-term return on your investment: create community change around an issue that will impact the future of your business (creating a more educated workforce, for example)

How to get started:

- Explore Center for Nonprofit Management's [Collective Impact Accelerator](#)

Center for Nonprofit Management

The local hub for Collective Impact, offering workshops and cohort learning programs, consulting and technical assistance, and an array of resources for individuals, organizations and cross-sector initiatives to hone their knowledge and skills to implement this work effectively. Find curated resources [here](#).

To learn more about the framework or about Collective Impact initiatives in the area, contact the [Director of Community Impact](#) at 615-259-0100.

cnm.org

Resources

About Our Community



Center for Nonprofit Management

Curated selection of resources for and about the nonprofit sector, including where to find the latest local data on a variety of topics.

cnm.org

Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce

nashvillechamber.com

Nashville LGBT Chamber of Commerce

nashvillelgbtchamber.org

Nashville Black Chamber of Commerce

nashblackchamber.com

Nashville Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

nahcc.weebly.com

Mayor's Office

Metro Social Services

nashville.gov/Social-Services/Strategic-Planning-and-Research/Publications.aspx

Nashville Next

A plan created by Nashvillians to guide how and where our community grows through 2040.

nashville.gov/Government/NashvilleNext.aspx

Promise Zones

High poverty communities where the federal government partners with local leaders to increase economic activity, improve educational opportunities, leverage private investment, reduce violent crime, enhance public health and address other priorities identified by the community.

nashville.gov/Mayors-Office/Promise-Zone/Basics.aspx

Corporate Social Responsibility



What Is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)?

An evolving business practice that incorporates sustainable development into a company's business model. It has a positive impact on social, economic and environmental factors. In today's socially conscious environment, employees and customers place a premium on working for and spending their money with businesses that prioritize CSR.

businessnewsdaily.com/4679-corporate-social-responsibility.html

Association of Corporate Citizenship Professionals

Membership program with benchmarking, learning, networking and recognition components with a general CSR lens

accprof.org

Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship

Provides research, executive education, expert insights and tools, and networking opportunities to align corporate citizenship objectives and business goals to create a more sustainable and prosperous future for all.

ccc.bc.edu

Engage for Good

Learn best practices, tips and trends as well as connect with others focused on engaging consumers and/or employees around social issues

engageforgood.com

Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose

CEO-led coalition providing benchmarking, learning and case studies with a general CSR lens

cecp.co

U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Corporate Citizenship Center

Reports, industry tracking, learning, recognition with a general CSR lens

uschamberfoundation.org/corporate-citizenship-center

Points of Light Corporate Service Council

Resources to create a new employee engagement program, engage employees in service around the world, learn sound citizenship strategies, network with other leading companies, and gain visibility for leadership and excellence.

pointsoflight.org/for-corporations

Networking

Leadership Nashville

Builds channels of communication between established leaders, connects these leaders with community issues, and equips participants with insights not solutions.

leadershipnashville.org

Nashville Emerging Leaders

An 11-week leadership training program designed to support young professionals by connecting them other leaders in the community, deepen self-exploration, and intentional team-building.

nashvilleemergingleaders.com

United Way of Metropolitan Nashville

Tour the area and learn about nonprofits with other leaders in the community

unitedwaynashville.org/events

cityCURRENT

A privately-funded catalyst for the midsouth and middle Tennessee powered by Lipscomb & Pitts Insurance. A team of more than 100 partner companies that provide funds to host over 150 free events each year, along with an array of positive-oriented media and philanthropic initiatives to enrich, engage, and impact the community.

citycurrent.com

Volunteerism

Hands on Nashville

A one-stop resource for connecting individuals and groups with a wide range of volunteer opportunities in our community.

hon.org

United Way of Metropolitan Nashville

Offering a range of volunteer opportunities including volunteering with your family, coworkers, or on your own.

unitedwaynashville.org/volunteer

Young Leaders Council

Trains diverse, committed individuals to effectively participate on the boards of nonprofit organizations and make a difference in the community by replenishing the volunteer leadership base.

youngleaderscouncil.org

BoardSource

Tools and news for nonprofit board members.

boardsource.org

What Every Board Member Should Know

A guidebook prepared as a reference tool for board members of Tennessee nonprofit organizations that describes rights, duties, and common issues.

cnm.org/CNMMembership/Links/What-Every-Board-Member-Should-Know-2019-edition.pdf

Additional governance resources and workshops

cnm.org/cnmmembership/Links.aspx

Financial Investment

GivingMatters

High-quality, comprehensive database about more than 1,800 Middle Tennessee nonprofits at your fingertips.

givingmatters.civicore.com

Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee

Promote and facilitates giving in Middle Tennessee and beyond. CFMT accepts gifts of any size from anyone at any time and empowers individuals, families, companies, nonprofits, and communities to respond to needs and opportunities that matter.

cfmt.org

Collective Impact

Collective Impact

Large-scale social change requires broad cross-sector coordination, yet the social sector remains focused on the isolated intervention of individual organizations.

ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact

Channeling Change: Making Collective Impact Work

This follow-up on the popular “Collective Impact” article provides updated, in-depth guidance.

ssir.org/articles/entry/channeling_change_making_collective_impact_work

Collective Impact Forum

A place for those practicing collective impact to find the tools, resources, and advice they need.

collectiveimpactforum.org

FSG

Helps organizations find new ways to achieve real results against society’s toughest challenges, combining practical advice with unconventional thinking to create a more equitable and sustainable future.

fsg.org/areas-of-focus/collective-impact

Thank you for making a difference
in your local community.

