



**Philanthropy New York**  
**Speaker Honorarium Pilot Policy**  
**April 2023**

When designing programs, Philanthropy New York is intentional about whom we invite to speak and serve in leadership roles within the PNY community. We prioritize people whose identities may have traditionally placed them further from institutional and structural power and closer to the issues we seek to illuminate in conversations with our member community. By doing so, we aim to amplify the voices of those who are under-resourced and intimately connected to the issues we aim to address in our discussions with our member community. Through this intentional approach, PNY seeks to foster greater inclusivity, diversity, and equity in our programs and ensure that the perspectives of under-resourced communities are prominently represented and heard.

Historically, Philanthropy New York has not provided compensation to speakers. We recognize that this policy contributed to patterns of uncompensated knowledge extraction in philanthropy, and that we work within the context of inequitable compensation structures that have a disproportionate impact on communities of color. We have developed and begun implementing a pilot speaker honorarium policy to begin to address these dynamics as part of our organizational journey towards becoming an anti-racist organization.

Policy:

Our intention with this policy is to prioritize providing a speaker honorarium to individuals and organizations who have traditionally not been resourced for their labor. This summary provides an overview of the more complex decision tree (below) that we have developed to determine speaker honorarium eligibility.

The policy opens a dialogue around honorarium using a line of inquiry that begins by identifying the speaker's role within the Philanthropy New York community.

If the speaker is employed by a foundation, either as a member of the PNY community or a peer from a foundation or giving program, we have decided *not* to provide an honorarium. Generally speaking, foundation staff time is resourced, and we believe that their contribution as a PNY speaker is aligned with and an extension of PNY's value of community – one that learns from and with each other.

In our programming, we also engage speakers from a range of other institutions, such as:

- Nonprofit employees and clients
- Research partners
- Consultants
- Academics and writers
- Performers
- Staff and leadership of Philanthropy Serving Organizations

For speakers who hold the above roles and affiliations, our intention is to share power and decision-making about whether or not Philanthropy New York provides a speaker honorarium based on a set of questions. This requires a conversation to test assumptions and gain clarity around the benefits of the speaking opportunity. Therefore, if the speaker is not a foundation staff member, we engage the speaker in a series of questions designed to better understand whether or not the speaker receives adequate



benefit (e.g., in the form of promotion of services, etc.) from speaking at PNY, or we are asking for time that would not otherwise be spent engaging with our membership and/or is uncompensated. We ask speakers to consider how their work is or is not already resourced. Some speakers are being resourced to disseminate their work and benefit from presenting at Philanthropy New York, for example:

- Staff from organizations who receive funding to resource external partnership work
- Consultants with budget lines for business development
- Researchers with funding to disseminate a report
- Academics with university grants that support speaking engagements
- Academics or writers who need access to philanthropic connections to fundraise for an academic center or project

In cases where a speaker is resourced or has sought a speaking opportunity at Philanthropy New York to provide meaningful access to funders in a form that is beneficial to their work, PNY may ask the speaker or the speaker may decide not to take an honorarium. In cases where a speaker has been asked to provide wisdom, knowledge, and experience, and speaking at PNY does not provide meaningful benefit to them or their organization (or they determine that the benefit is not proportional to the labor required of the commitment), PNY will provide an honorarium in recognition of their gift of time and talent.

Assessment:

In alignment with our value of learning, we are approaching this honorarium policy as a year-long pilot. As we deploy the policy, we will seek feedback to evolve and improve both the content and our implementation. For questions, comments, and feedback, please contact Yi-Ching Lin, VP of Learning, at [ylin@philanthropynewyork.org](mailto:ylin@philanthropynewyork.org).

### Is PNY Offering Honorarium?

(EXTERNAL)

Historically, PNY has not provided an honorarium to speakers. We recognize that by not doing so, we have been contributing to patterns of uncompensated knowledge extraction in philanthropy, while existing in a society that is steeped in inequitable structures that have a disproportionate impact on communities of color.

We have developed a working speaker honorarium model. The driving intention for our philosophy is to align our spending and partnerships with our desire to operationalize our racial equity commitments. We hope that by sharing our intention with all those who share their knowledge and experiences with us, we can collaborate in honorarium decisions that align with our commitments.

