



Philanthropy New York

2025 Year End Board Report

Before 2025 even began, the staff and board understood and anticipated threats to the vision Philanthropy New York and our members hold. We warned our members of the conditions that could be expected and encouraged them to move money quickly to build nonprofit capacity. The federal actions that followed were breathtaking in their speed and breadth. Executive Orders targeted foundations and nonprofits. By mid-year, Congress was issuing inquiries into local nonprofit human services organizations and grantmaking public charities. Large-scale deployments of immigration agents and National Guard members were sent into major American Cities. While the July 4th tax bill containing provisions to increase taxes on foundations ultimately did not pass, the bill did include some of the largest cuts to Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in U.S. history.

The PNY community is trying to make sense of everything from organizational risk tolerance to mission-aligned strategy and spending policies in light of a vast shift in the role of government and enormous cuts to essential lifesaving programs for the most vulnerable. Throughout PNY's programming, network building, communications and policy work this year, we have sought to help our members focus on their purpose and action in a moment when both foundations and their grantees were experiencing profoundly threatening change. We worked to remain flexible, resilient and to equip ourselves and our members to have courage.

As requested, this report is short and the language simple but it should provide a brief overview of a very long and complicated year.

PNY Adapted

Renewed our strategy:

In early 2025, the Senior Leadership Team undertook work to clarify PNY's current [functional strategy](#). Having a current strategy with clear outcomes and targets was critical for staff to focus, set boundaries, and create manageable workplans in a year when everything felt urgent and important. PNY's three-point strategy can be summarized as:

PNY will champion effective grantmaking and advance meaningful social change by:

- *Influencing its broad base of members to do more effective grantmaking*
- *Amplifying trustworthy messages*
- *Embedding racial equity content and practices in its operations and programming*

One critical aspect of this strategy required that we clearly define “effective” grantmaking:

- We developed [a definition of effectiveness](#) that demonstrates the importance of an equity analysis and power awareness, connecting PNY’s definition of “effective” to our values and Strategic Framework. This definition of effective is not neutral, it is shaped by our values. This definition will guide programmatic choices in 2026.

PNY Responded

We curated “Just in Time” Learning Opportunities:

- Hosted sessions for the COO Roundtable, FFMG and a wide range of funders at our Annual Meeting with Lawyers Alliance of New York to provide legal support to our member networks, helping them understand Executive Orders and other federal changes.
- Produced a rapid response policy webinar to provide real time analysis of the federal tax bill after its passage through the Ways & Means Committee. Alerted our membership to the provisions that would impact philanthropic giving.
- Partnered with colleagues at Chinese American Planning Council (CPC) and Vera Institute for Justice, two New York-based nonprofits who have been directly targeted by federal authorities, to produce a webinar on the financial, legal and leadership challenges nonprofits and foundations can anticipate should they receive an inquiry.
- Provided a [comprehensive advocacy and lobbying workshop](#) with Bolder Advocacy to equip our members with the tools and knowledge they need to confidently engage in advocacy and empower their nonprofit partners to do the same.

We designed programming that supports members to maintain commitments to equity in the face of threats:

- Gathered funders in March for a [strategic conversation](#) with Race Forward and the Philanthropic Initiative for Racial Equity to make sense of early federal Executive Orders and develop strategies that would meet equity goals.
- Hosted [Defending DEI: Philanthropy's Pivotal Role in a Defining Moment](#), in the late Fall, to provide an in-depth overview of the challenges to equity and inclusion work and offered concrete support for maintaining these commitments.

Developed and implemented our first leadership cohort for Trustees:

- Explored mindsets, tools, and practices that contribute to more purposeful and effective board meetings and bolder philanthropic practice. Enrolled 35 trustees and CEO's who participated in five sessions.

Facilitated peer learning communities and provided broad communications to help leaders focus on timely action:

- Hosted 30+ roundtable meetings in which we facilitated sensemaking, tactic and strategy sharing, interrogation of institutional risk, identity and positioning in a crisis.
- Crafted [communications](#) to support members to act with flexibility and courage and ensure they operate in alignment with grantee needs.
- Created and updated [Navigating the Evolving Landscape](#), a resource page for rapid information sharing across the sector.

Launched two new projects to support both the nonprofit sector and the philanthropic sector to navigate strategic challenges:

- Serve as the fiscal and programmatic home for the **Clarity Not Certainty** project – helping philanthropic foundations to navigate “strategy” in a moment when shifts in context and law are threatening outcomes funders have worked to achieve.
- Serve as the fiscal and programmatic partner for **Nonprofit GPS**, a collaborative effort to bring strategic financial advice and resources to nonprofit leaders who are trying to scenario plan in an increasingly uncertain funding environment.

Lobbied, advocated and educated on key policy issues at the Federal, State, and City levels:

- Attended Foundations on the Hill to ensure Congress understood the impact of the early threats to the nonprofit and philanthropic sector.
- Coordinated a lobbying response with colleagues from Nonprofit New York, NY Funders Alliance and New York State Council of Nonprofits to send letters to our representatives advocating against new taxes on foundations in the Big, Beautiful Bill and against HR9495.
- Presented testimony to the City Council regarding the city's harmful contracting policies.
- Joined the legislative campaign to reform New York State's prompt contracting laws.
- Developed [programs](#) to educate and inform members around the New York City charter amendments on the ballot in 2025.

Engaged with Jewish institutional funders who felt excluded from PNY's analysis of equity:

- Met with funders to understand their concerns and provide transparency into PNY's leadership structures.

- Created a half day training with Project Shema to build organizational understanding of antisemitism.
- Wrote a [CEO message](#) calling on solidarity and strengthened community in the face of antisemitism and injustice.
- Curated two programs for January 2026 to help members understand the ways that antisemitism is used to undermine democracy and the connections between antisemitism and antiblackness.

PNY Prepared

We built PNY's long term sustainability:

- We reassessed our dues for the first time in 13 years, raising our dues by 15% over the previous year.
- We re-negotiated our lease with the Ford Foundation, resulting in a 38% decrease in our premise expense.
- We expanded our fiscal sponsorship program, doubling the expected revenue in that line and offering our members a way to quickly and easily fund critical collaborative projects.

We assessed and mitigated PNY's risk in a newly hostile environment:

- Assessed the limits, amendments and additional coverage needed through our Directors and Officers policy to ensure that, in the event of a federal inquiry, we will have legal and reputational support.
- Ensured that communications were not partisan, employment documents did not use any illegal mention of race-based hiring, and cohort programming was not at risk for possible Section 1981 litigation. Codified our accounting formula for lobbying expenditures. These risks and mitigation steps were discussed at our annual board retreat.
- Analyzed internal policies including our Conflict of Interest, Whistleblower, Document Retention and Social Media policies.
- Reviewed our fiscal sponsorship contracts and language to ensure that PNY is exercising variance authority and operating the program in compliance with all legal and auditing standards.
- Updated our By-laws and reviewed our Certificate of Incorporation to ensure that nothing in either document could create a legal risk or misalignment with current state and federal rules. We will bring changes to the membership for a vote at the Annual Meeting in 2026.

We prepared our members:

We created a half-day convening in November with more than 50 members to explore alternative operating models for nonprofits.

- The convening helped our members prepare for conversations about mergers, spin-offs, program asset transfers, fiscal sponsorship and multi-entity collaborations. Presenters prepared funders to broach challenging conversations about program operations in a moment when nonprofit leaders are having to develop creative and critical solutions to serious funding shortages.

We hosted a half-day scenario planning session in December with more than 80 members to get ahead of a federal deployment in New York City:

- We brought together representatives from Governor Hochul's office, Democracy Fund, the New York Immigration Coalition, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest, and resiliency experts from Human Services Council for a tabletop scenario planning meeting to better prepare for both individual and collective responses around possible federal enforcement actions in New York City.

This year provided our members with opportunities to challenge the conventional wisdom that underpins much of our philanthropic practice and adapt new ways of working to fulfill philanthropic purpose. We look forward to continuing to support grantmakers and trustees to grapple with critical questions and take decisive action in 2026.

Thank you all for the opportunities you made possible through your connections, your funding, your ambassadorship and your creativity. It has been a pleasure to work with you in this incredibly challenging time, and I look forward to the year ahead.

PNY Strategy, Outcomes, and Targets

Strategy:

A. Influencing its broad base of members to do more effective grantmaking

Strategic Outcome:

A1. PNY has a large and engaged broad-based membership

Targets:

A.1.1 PNY has engaged 30% of individual members in PNY activities

A.1.2 PNY has engaged 70% of CEOs of member organizations to build trust and relationship

A.1.3 PNY has maintained a membership of 265 - 270 institutional members

A.1.4 At least 60% of member organizations have at least one staff member or trustee connected to a PNY group (network, working group, roundtable, etc.)

A.1.5 PNY staff and board are equipped and deployed to engage with members as ambassadors for PNY

A.2 PNY consistently exposes members to more effective grantmaking practices

Targets:

A.2.1 PNY develops a shared definition of "effective grantmaking" practices that guides org-wide decision making and design around funder programming.

A.2.2 One-third of PNY programming offers funders an analysis around issues of inequity and injustice in NY

A.2.3 PNY will prioritize 2-4 specific effective grantmaking practices that will be amplified through learning, member engagement and communications

A.2.4 PNY will offer funders 1-2 opportunities per quarter to practice specific grantmaking skills

A.3 PNY convenes to create space for collective thought, strategies and action

Targets:

A.3.1 PNY has engaged members to uphold commitments to equity in their grantmaking

A.3.2 PNY has engaged trustees of at least 30 member institutions in collective learning on purpose-driven board governance

A.3.3 PNY offers 1-2 programs that build personal leadership strategies for action

B. Amplifying trustworthy messages

Strategic Outcome:

B.1 PNY members learn about, and practice, public policy advocacy

Targets:

B.1.1 PNY will provide learning opportunities for members that equip members to engage in policy work

B.1.2 PNY will provide 12-15 opportunities for members to practice policy advocacy to address conditions that prevent effective grantmaking

B.2 PNY communications strengthen members' trust in PNY

Targets:

B.2.1 PNY will communicate about our impact internally and externally

B.2.2 PNY will communicate our leadership and support for organizational change and policy advocacy

B.2.3 PNY will amplify trustworthy messages around effective grantmaking and collective action from members and field partners

C. Embedding racial equity content and practices in its operations and programming

Strategic Outcome:

C1: PNY exposes members to racial equity and power-aware practices in programming

Targets:

C.1.1 70% of PNY programs have at least 1 learning objective related to racial equity and/or power in the sector

C.2 PNY equips board and staff with the knowledge and skills to embed racial equity into their roles and work

Targets:

C2.1 - PNY provides Board and staff an opportunity to strengthen their racial equity practice annually.

C2.2 - PNY Board Committees establish commitments to advance racial equity through their committee work.

C2.3 - New staff receive an orientation on the frameworks and skills PNY uses to embed racial equity within its work.

C3. PNY establishes organizational policies, processes, practices that embed racial equity into its operations

Targets:

C.3.1. PNY staff will adopt a set of internal working agreements for greater accountability

C.3.2. PNY focuses on integrating and improving 2-3 existing policy, process, practices changes

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“Effective grantmaking” practices are defined by:

- **SYSTEM:** A reparative (rather than charity) mindset, that acknowledges that philanthropy is a product of historical and current extractive systems and aims to seek repair. This is exemplified by:
 - Financial decisions that seek to redistribute resources to communities impacted by extractive origins of philanthropic wealth
 - Accountability practices (defined by acknowledging mistakes, repairing harm, and committing to act differently in the future)
 - *Holding a shared affirmative vision of a just and inclusive society*

- **ORG:** A leveraging of philanthropic power, influence, and resources toward more equitable outcomes (internal and external). This is exemplified by:
 - Philanthropic strategy that seeks to address structural root causes of problems rather than symptoms
 - *Decision making structures and practices that redistributes power internally within institutions and externally with nonprofit partners and impacted communities.*
 - Leveraging knowledge, influence, and networks to advocate for more equitable outcomes in public policy decisions
 - More equitable operational practices in core functions, including internal hiring practices, vendor selections, HR decisions

- **ROLE/SELF:** A recognition of personal power and sphere of influence, and community mindset. This is exemplified by:
 - *Centering and strengthening relationships across an ecosystem of stakeholders in service to building and earning trust.*
 - Questioning long-held assumptions and learning in service to taking new actions
 - Contributing to an active learning and practice community

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