



PNY Policy Strategy for 2025-2026

Approved by Public Policy Committee and the Board as of 3/28/25.

Philanthropy New York's public policy work engages diverse stakeholders to create the policy conditions that allow our members and their grantees to create a stronger and more equitable society. Facilitating philanthropic participation in public policy and collaboration with the government improves conditions for the region's nonprofits allowing for more impactful and innovative philanthropic investment. PNY's policy efforts aim to ensure that nonprofits and philanthropic institutions are able to operate with the freedom they need to address critical issues and the capacity they need to make meaningful change.

Philanthropy New York's public policy efforts are guided by the belief that local, state, and federal laws and policies should:

- Promote a just and equitable society
- Strengthen nonprofits and
- Support a healthy and sustainable philanthropic sector

The following document assesses the current operating environment, identifies the tools that PNY can access in service to achieving policy and advocacy outcomes, and outlines the criteria and considerations PNY holds in making decisions about how and when to utilize our policy assets.

THE CURRENT LANDSCAPE – Local and Federal

In 2025 and 2026, we anticipate that the nonprofit, philanthropic and corporate sectors will be navigating an uncertain and changing environment.

New York: City & State

As a membership that is centered in the New York metropolitan region, we focus first and foremost on the New York City nonprofit ecosystem. New York City has experienced and continues to grapple with government-sanctioned starvation of the nonprofit sector and its workers, including contracting delays and payment obstructions in addition to inequitable pay for nonprofit workers. In addition, in recent years, New York City's ballot proposals have offered an opportunity for both progressive policymaking, such as setting a living wage standard, as well as centralizing power by amending the City's Charter to limit community input.

In New York City, where the electorate often leans Democrat, the primary elections will offer a strong indicator of the final fall election results. The Mayor and Comptroller have the power to impact systemic contract delays and the City budget.

National/Federal

At the federal level, nonprofits and philanthropic foundations face increasing challenges, including efforts to roll back protection from discrimination based on race, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation, expanded presidential powers, and inquiries from Congress and the Justice Department into charitable activity. Examples include:

- Significant cuts to both federal grantmaking and the federal workforce have shuttered programs and prompted hiring freezes and layoffs throughout the nonprofit sector.
- The introduction of legislation that expands the power of the Treasury to target nonprofits with opposing viewpoints with the threat of revoked legal status and the seizure of assets (e.g., HR 9495).
- An Executive Order directing the Attorney General to scrutinize large foundations on the basis of their commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Rollbacks on race and gender protections (e.g., Affirmative Action, Roe v. Wade) and Executive Orders limiting gender expression.

KEY PRIORITIES – Where We Will Focus Our Efforts

Philanthropy New York's public policy efforts focus on three main areas of interest to the philanthropic sector:

- Advocating for tax and fiscal policies that support principled philanthropic giving and the autonomy of philanthropic institutions to give in ways that fulfill their missions
- Support policies and practices that create and sustain a thriving nonprofit sector and
- Champion public policies that have systemic effects on issues and marginalized communities our members serve

In the current environment, we anticipate responding to the following key priorities as policy issues arise and develop:

- Protecting nonprofit and philanthropic institutions' ability to fulfill their missions, including centering equity and inclusion.



- Strengthening nonprofit capacity through contract reform and streamlined payments for fiscal sustainability.
- Advocating for living wages, particularly for nonprofit workers.
- Expanding nonprofit and community input on legislation and government policies.
- Supporting a fully functioning multi-racial democracy (voting, census).

HOW WE DECIDE - Criteria for Taking Action

To determine the effectiveness of PNY taking action on a particular issue, the PNY staff will use the following guidelines:

Values Alignment:

- Does this issue advance PNY's vision of an equitable, sustainable and democratic society?
- Is it aligned with our organizational values?

Geography:

- How does this issue relate to PNY's unique position in the NYC Metro area?
- What is its impact locally and at state or federal levels?
- Are protections in place in NYC/NYS while the issue remains harmful nationally?

Expertise & Analysis:

- Does PNY have expertise or a root cause analysis on this issue?
- How aligned is our perspective with experts, members, and partners?
- Are we in allyship with organizations advocating for this issue?
- Can PNY's voice add meaningful support?
- Does this impact philanthropic practices where PNY has insight?
- What are the organizational risks to consider?

Tools & Capacity:

- Does PNY have a policy tool to make an impact?
- Are other organizations leading with analysis, and do we share their stance?
- Are members requesting PNY's involvement?
- Is a philanthropic response necessary?
- Does PNY have the credibility and capacity to act effectively?
- How does PNY's current bandwidth affect the choice of action?

OUR CAPACITIES – Tools for Influencing Change

PNY and its membership have invested in the skills, relationships and organizational capacity to attend to policy in the following ways:

- **Convening:** Coordinate issue-based discussions between PNY members and elected or appointed officials to shape policy. *(Audience: PNY members, policymakers)*
- **Communicating:** Provide analysis, insights, and calls to action via WeeklyPhil, Public Policy Corner, and LinkedIn. Issue statements supporting nonprofits and systemic change. *(Audience: PNY members, policymakers, nonprofit allies)*
- **Educating:** Curate programs on legislative impact, guiding members on advocacy and grassroots support. *(Audience: PNY members, legislative staff)*
- **Government Relations:** Foster relationships with local and federal officials to exchange knowledge and shape legislation. Host forums for candidates for office to better understand their position vis a vis nonprofits and contracting. *(Audience: Policymakers, legislators, legislative staff)*
- **Lobbying:** Advocate for or against legislation affecting nonprofits, present testimony, and submit amicus briefs. *(Audience: Policymakers, legislators, legislative staff)*