Philanthropic collaboratives are burgeoning: they currently deploy billions of dollars per year for social change. In Bridgespan Group surveys conducted between 2021 and 2023, collaboratives reported collectively directing $4 billion to $7 billion of funding per year to a variety of grantees. Nearly 70 percent of the collaboratives responding to our 2022 survey cite building measurement and learning capabilities as an especially important way to improve their organizational capacity (see Figure 1, which shows 69% would invest additional capacity-building funding in measurement and learning). Measuring and learning can help collaboratives assess progress toward their goals, understand challenges and correct course, better support grantees and communities, more effectively incorporate equity goals, and mobilize philanthropic resources for the issues they are tackling. But measurement can also go astray—overburdening grantees, eating up grantee resources, focusing on compliance rather than learning, or privileging the concerns of donors over those of grantees and communities. This can be especially challenging when an organization's goals are not easily captured by traditional approaches, such as counting the number of people served. In this article, we shine a light on promising practices for how philanthropic collaboratives can effectively measure, evaluate, and learn in pursuit of greater impact. This article is based on two dozen interviews with collaborative leaders (plus informal conversations with dozens more), donors, grantees, and measurement experts; our survey research over the past three years, including nearly 280 philanthropic collaboratives; a review of publicly available reports from over 50 collaboratives; and a review of philanthropy measurement literature, such as Grantmakers for Effective Organizations' Shifting the Evaluation Paradigm: The Equitable Evaluation Framework and Co-Impact's Learning, Measurement, and Evaluation Guidebook. For this research, we defined collaboratives as entities that either pool or channel resources from multiple donors to nonprofits; we call them "collaboratives" and "collaborative funds" in this report, and occasionally refer to them as "funds" or "platforms" in other publications. Collaboratives serve as intermediaries between philanthropy (institutional funders, family offices, high-net-worth individuals) and nonprofits and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). There are many types of such collaborative funds. They differ in the geographies they serve, the issue areas they focus on, and the ways they work. Some pool funding, while others help coordinate funding decisions across their members. Some include other stakeholders besides funders, such as content experts and local leaders. And, according to our 2022 survey, the great majority provide nonfinancial support, such as capacity building and convening, to grantees and the fields they operate in. Collaboratives are similar to philanthropies in how they measure and learn. They have the opportunity to look across a portfolio of grantees, they can engage constituents and communities in measurement activities, and many tackle the challenge of measuring systems change and other bold social change efforts. But collaboratives also operate in a unique context—sitting at the intersection of donors, grantees, and systems. And because collaboratives must raise funds both for their own operations and the funding they grant to nonprofits and NGOs, they must demonstrate the value of their intermediary position in a way that is rarely required of foundations and individual givers. As such, the most effective measurement and learning approach will build off the collaborative's strategy, reflect its multiplicity of stakeholders, and address the ultimate test—what is happening in the world as a result of the collaborative's work. How can collaboratives navigate this complexity? One core principle cuts across all measurement work, whether philanthropic, nonprofit, or for-profit: start with strategy. As Melissa Howlett, a director at ORS Impact, a social impact strategy and evaluation consultancy, tells us, "It's important to focus evaluation efforts on the things that could produce the biggest moments of learning that might inform your strategy." While grantmaking is often core to a collaborative's strategy, its impact is ideally greater than the sum of its grants and grantees. Collaboratives therefore seek to understand their impact on both grantees and donors. For many, their measurement approach also needs to consider the system or field level, according to a forthcoming publication from Bridgespan on philanthropic collaboratives that includes 2023 survey data. As Figure 2 illustrates (showing 94% focus on individual grantee level, 84% on long-term impact on field/population/system, 79% on portfolio level, 75% on donor level), collaboratives most often think about their impact on an individual grantee level; fewer focus on portfolio-level impact. At least three out of four collaboratives think about their impact in terms of donors as well as systems or fields. Although they view their impact on multiple levels, collaboratives around the world emphasize the need to understand best practices for how to communicate impact within and across these categories. From our experience supporting a range of collaboratives in different parts of the world and interviewing collaborative leaders for this article, we have seen that the

promising practices of some of the collaboratives we've researched could benefit the entire philanthropic sector's measurement and learning practices. This article shares what we have learned, including practical tips for leaders of collaboratives who are seeking to better understand, measure, and communicate the impact of their work. It is organized around three levels of impact—grantee-portfolio, system or field, and donor. Collaboratives collect portfolio-level data and learn from grantees in a variety of ways. The following practices can help you do so equitably across your portfolio: • Start with strategy. Ensure that what you are collecting is aligned with your strategic goals and collect information with learning and improvement in mind. • Focus on the portfolio. Aggregate learning across grantees along different dimensions instead of focusing too much on individual grantees. • Prioritize the grantee experience. Turn the lens on yourself (e.g., your value proposition for grantees) as opposed to individual grantees and selectively gather grantee information to minimize the burden placed on them. Collaboratives commonly focus their measurement on grantees. In our 2022 survey, collaboratives cited collecting grantee feedback and tracking grantee activities and outputs as common methods for measuring impact (see Figure 3, which shows 87% collect feedback from grantees/recipients and 83% track grantee/recipient activities/outputs). Many collaboratives then use these grantee data to tell the story of their impact. But in the impact reports we reviewed, we found that they often focus on a handful of the most compelling stories, rather than taking a step back to assess the portfolio as a whole. In so doing, they miss the chance to illuminate the bigger picture. By focusing on aggregated portfolio data, a collaborative can track its progress toward its own impact goals and the value it has added, rather than just emphasizing the work of its highest-performing grantees. Grantees matter, of course. However, the most important thing a fund can measure and learn about is its own performance, which is in part viewed not through individual grantees but through the full breadth of a portfolio. This is critical information both for a collaborative's leaders and its donors—who will always have a choice as to how much, if any, of their funds they want to give through a collaborative rather than directly to a grantee. There are several ways in which collaboratives aggregate data. These are tied to the impact they seek and the strategies they pursue as they source and support their grantees. A collaborative will often have a strong point of view about the kinds of grantees that are most likely to create and sustain the impact it seeks for the world. For example, it may seek organizational leaders who have lived experience in the communities it works with (i.e., proximate leaders), organizations of a particular size, or those with the potential to sustain change over the longer run. Regularly analyzing its grantee portfolio can help a collaborative identify whether it is achieving its desired grantee mix. Consider the END Fund, which mobilizes resources against neglected tropical diseases—such as parasitic and bacterial infectious diseases like river blindness and diseases caused by intestinal worms—which affect more than 1.65 billion people. "A couple of years ago, our team analyzed the grant portfolio and realized that 80 percent of our dollars were going to international NGOs working with governments to deliver NTD [neglected tropical disease] treatments. To support lasting change, our grantmaking strategy needs to align with country ownership and embedding treatment for diseases of poverty into national health systems," explains Diana Benton Schechter, the fund's COO. "To sustain progress against these diseases, in the last two years we are increasingly granting to governments directly and ensuring governments have the information and expertise they need to make data-based decisions." Other collaboratives monitor portfolio characteristics, such as the percentage of grantees with leaders of color, to ensure their collaboratives are targeting grantees that reflect their communities. The NewSchools Venture Fund—which supports teams of educators and innovators who are reimagining public education so that every student finishes high school prepared to pursue a life full of opportunities, choices, connections, and meaning—is working to open doors for students and leaders of color in education. Across its portfolio, NewSchools tracks mission-aligned metrics, including measures of students' academic growth and social-emotional development; grantees' financial sustainability and diversity, equity, and inclusion practices; and implementation and scale of evidence-based practices. By collecting and acting on these kinds of data, a collaborative can better understand whether its sourcing and diligence process is identifying the organizations and leaders that are key to realizing its strategy and broader impact goals. Grantee feedback can be a powerful way for collaborative funds to understand and improve their value proposition for grantees. It can also help collaboratives more effectively engage grantees in the collaborative's learning process—providing grantees an avenue to share their experiences to improve the work of the collaborative and its overall impact. Soliciting grantee feedback can take many forms. For example, the African Visionary Fund, which is currently working in nine countries to ensure that African NGOs have the resources they need to accelerate

their impact, asks grantees for feedback about its own sourcing and diligence process—like the number of documents it requests and the way it describes funding criteria during the application process. It uses what it learns to reduce the burden on potential grantees and identify barriers that might hinder prospective grantees from applying. Collaboratives can also learn from grantees about which nonfinancial support they value most and if such support meets grantees' needs. The majority of collaboratives that responded to our survey provide nonfinancial support like technical assistance, coaching and leadership development, or donor introductions to their grantees (see Figure 4, which shows 69% offer Technical assistance, 61% Coaching and leadership development, 60% Donor introductions). One example is the Global Greengrants Fund, which, since 1993, has supported grassroots-led efforts across the globe to protect the planet and the rights of Indigenous people. Its typical grantee is small; for some, Global Greengrants provides their first-ever grant. In its grantee surveys, which are conducted every three years, it asks questions about the impact of the funding and the value of the nonfinancial support it provides. It also tries to understand the challenges grantees are facing. In a recent survey, for example, 48 percent of grantees reported facing some restrictions or threats in their work—the most common being surveillance, limits on their activities, and public stigmatization by officials or the media. The collaborative didn't stumble on this information accidentally; it learned by listening to grantees' reports about restrictions and threats. By putting a specific question in the survey, it could get the hard data and focus on ensuring that its way of working would support the safety and security of its advisors and grantees. Recognizing that outcomes are likely to differ significantly across grantees, some collaboratives work with their grantees to set individual targets. Then, the collaboratives assess progress toward those targets in aggregate. Blue Meridian Partners, which has pooled over $4 billion to date toward solutions focused on young people and families living in poverty, works with grantees in this way. "The North Star is clear," says Meg Long, Blue Meridian's managing director for learning, evaluation, and measurement. "Our measures relate to our mission of economic and social mobility, to transform the life trajectories of young people and families in poverty." But given the variety of grantees it funds (in areas such as foster care, youth employment, and reproductive health) and the wide range of outcomes that grantees are working to achieve, Blue Meridian can't use common outcome metrics across its portfolios. Instead, Blue Meridian collaborates with its grantees on specific goals. Each grantee works with Blue Meridian to identify milestones around participant- or population-level outcomes, sustainability, and organizational capacity that they believe are achievable with the fund's investment. "These milestones have to be owned by the organizations we invest in," says Long. "Their leaders know what's needed for the organization to achieve the goals they have set for themselves within their scale plans." While Blue Meridian doesn't use common metrics, it does analyze overall performance across its grantee portfolios to understand the extent to which grantees are achieving their targets. "We remind ourselves and our investors that making investments in so many different organizations over the course of a decade has a lot of intricacy and divergent approaches," says Long. "We're not going to be able to package that up neatly. But we can say some important things—for example, that 97 percent of our investees are advancing toward their milestones in a positive direction—and then provide examples of illustrative population level reach and impact." On the other hand, some collaboratives fund grantees that work on a clearly defined, shared outcome goal. In such cases, it may be possible to use shared outcome metrics across grantees to understand portfolio-level impact. The Freedom Fund is one of these collaboratives. Founded in 2014, this global collaborative seeks to prevent and end modern slavery around the world, including forced labor trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children. "The work happens through individual grantees, but impact also needs to be measured by clustering the individual efforts," explains Freedom Fund CEO Nick Grono. As part of the grant reporting process, each grantee agrees to collect a few common data points. "Very early on," Grono says, "we started measuring these direct and indirect impacts—people liberated from slavery, kids back in school, people connected to government benefits, and how much it costs to create change." These common metrics are structured in a way to allow the work of the Freedom Fund to be clearly linked to each outcome, to compare costs across projects, and to assess value for money. Grono also tells us that as the Freedom Fund focuses more on system change, it has gone on to use additional measurement approaches. (For more on this, see "Measuring Impact on Systems and Fields," page 11.) Another example of tracking shared metrics—but at an organizational level—is the strategy that Blood:Water employs. Blood: Water supports grassroots organizations in Africa to respond to the linked HIV and water crises on the continent. Nadia Kist, Blood: Water's director of Africa partnerships, explains how the organization funds grantees for eight years, in four two-year cycles. While

grantees may have different programmatic goals, Blood:Water uses a common framework across grantees to evaluate progress at the end of the eight-year relationship. The framework assesses whether organizations are more financially viable and have a greater degree of autonomy, among other organizational health outcomes, Kist says. "This allows us to have a quantitative measure to track the impact of organizational strengthening as partners move towards operational sustainability." Whether the common metrics are programmatic or organizational, this allows the collaborative to have a perspective on what "success" looks like and to work with grantees to demonstrate progress. Collaboratives, unlike foundations or individual givers, must balance their own learning needs alongside those of multiple grantees and donors, which presents its own challenges. "We need to be flexible in how we ask for information," says Laura García, president and CEO of Global Greengrants. "Philanthropy has exhibited some bad practices in how it extracts information or what it imposes on grantees. For many grantees established in countries where extractive forms of philanthropy dominate, receiving money from somewhere can be really scary." A senior leader of one African NGO underlines the cost of providing information to funders. "Sometimes we collect information on specific indicators, and after we report to the funder, we receive feedback to collect new indicators," says this leader. "When they introduce their own measurement systems, we need to learn how to use them. So we have to use different systems within the organization depending on the funder." Kist of Blood: Water agrees that centering grantees' monitoring needs and concerns is critical, yet she also worries that the pendulum could swing too far away from impact measurement. "I don't want the philanthropic community to throw the baby out with the bathwater. For example, I believe we can still offer trust-based grantmaking while also having reporting requirements that mutually support partner impact monitoring and storytelling." It's a delicate balancing act. Several collaboratives center grantees in their evaluation practices while acknowledging that challenges remain. They are working to measure and learn in ways that don't overburden grantees, that are designed around the knowledge and experience of their grantee communities, and that address power dynamics with funders. For example, Linda Kamau, executive director and founder of AkiraChix, an African Visionary Fund grantee that runs a technology training program for girls and young women in East Africa, praises the kind of open-ended grantee survey that the African Visionary Fund uses. "That kind of survey is a better way to collect data from us than a typical progress report with a specific template. It lets us give feedback on our program and tell the fund how they can improve their program offerings. We get to decide how to share this information. Sometimes it's best to provide numbers. Or we can respond with a video, which can be a better way than writing to present qualitative information." At a minimum, collaboratives can reduce the burden of reporting while keeping the lines of communication and learning open. As they build these measurement approaches, collaboratives can help grantees and the fields in which they work by sharing back what they are learning. "We've consistently measured key outcome and impact metrics since at least 2015," says Jason Atwood, director of research and learning at NewSchools Venture Fund. Atwood emphasizes the importance of engaging in the discovery and meaning-making process with the people and the organizations that provide you with data. "Insight generation is a collaborative experience. It's important to understand and explain what matters for various stakeholders and to help make research relevant to those we serve and work with." For example, NewSchools produces practitioner-oriented insight briefs that inform and inspire school leaders about how to embrace and implement an expanded definition of school success, including a discovery that when students' social and emotional needs were met within a positive school culture, it served as a protective factor against pandemic-era learning loss. Collaboratives often strive to build movements and change systems as part of their work. There are specific measurement, evaluation, and learning practices that can help. • Develop a goal based on what the system needs most. Map the ecosystem, define your overarching goals, and pinpoint your collaborative's distinctive contributions to the ecosystem. • Identify milestones and shorter-term progress indicators that can help you track interim progress toward that goal. • Be prepared to adapt and evolve your approach, including your strategy and your measurement, as conditions change. A healthy field—that is, a set of individuals and organizations working to address a common social issue or problem—has a robust funding network that supports individual learning and innovation; connects grantees, funders, and other stakeholders; and commits to continued transformation over the long term. Given their position between donors and doers, collaboratives play important roles in building fields and systems and in developing practices for measuring systems change. Almost two-thirds of the collaboratives responding to our 2022 survey reported that they work on systems change, field building, or movement building. That doesn't mean they always focus on systems change; rather, it means their work

includes changing the narrative, conducting policy or advocacy, building fields and movements, or other modes of pursuing population-level impact through changing entrenched systems. Thus, many collaboratives try to incorporate systems-change goals into their measurement approaches. Measuring systems and field change is difficult for philanthropies and NGOs alike, however, as such change often outlasts individual grant commitments. There is growing literature on the challenges and opportunities of such measurement. Few leaders we interviewed claimed to have cracked the case. Measuring progress toward system-change goals, though sometimes messy, is possible. The key elements are developing a North Star (or Southern Cross, for those whose guiding stars are in the Southern Hemisphere)—that is, an overarching goal—based on a clear map of the system; identifying the biggest milestones for change and tracking progress toward them incrementally over shorter time periods; and adapting the collaborative's strategy, milestones, and methods based on what it learns. To build a field, as our past research has highlighted, it is important to assess the field's characteristics, such as its actors, knowledge, resources, and infrastructure. That mapping helps all actors in the ecosystem come together around a field-level agenda—which serves as an overarching guide for each actor to define how it can advance the field and determine its own North Star. The Pop Culture Collaborative's mission is to organize and deploy financial and other resources to support the pop culture narrative change field—led by and centering people of color, immigrants, refugees, Muslims, and Indigenous peoples, especially those who are women, queer, transgender, nonbinary, and/or disabled—to transform narratives and build narrative power at scale. This mission is in service of its North Star: to support the field so the majority of Americans, including our icons and leaders, identify and/or behave as pluralists. "How we measure impact and success is the burning hot topic among those currently funding or exploring the funding of narrative change," says Tracy Van Slyke, the collaborative's chief strategy officer, noting that the pop culture narrative change field is relatively new and rapidly evolving. "Everyone comes from different starting points and with a range of strategies to impact narrative change. There's not one set of metrics, because it's not all the same work." To support both its field members and philanthropic partners, the Pop Culture Collaborative funded and partnered with the Media Impact Project (MIP) at the University of Southern California's Norman Lear Center to lead the development of a multipronged field and funder learning impact system. The first step: mapping the field. MIP surveyed 93 organizations in order to set a baseline for understanding the connectivity and strength of the field, and its evolving relationships. In the resulting report, Connections & Accomplishments, respondents reported working on pop culture and narrative change between three and 10 years and identified top issues they worked on as racial justice, immigrant rights, and gender. In addition, the survey found many field members indicated that partnerships had increased their abilities. About one-third of respondents noted their field relationships provided learning and evaluation support, while more than one-quarter desired this in future partnerships. The collaborative plans to invest in the development of a regular survey, using the initial report as a baseline, to track changes in the field over time. This work will help the collaborative not only to understand its own role in the field but also work with others to design the best metrics for gauging future progress. Freedom Fund, which uses a set of common metrics across its grantee portfolio to assess performance toward preventing and ending modern slavery, is using a different approach to research and mapping. "Our ultimate goal is to influence others to fund grassroots organizations and dismantle the systems that allow slavery to exist and thrive," explains CEO Grono. The fund is therefore researching the prevalence of slavery in its countries and regions of focus so it can track these goals over time. It has supported nine studies so far. The data from these studies can serve as a baseline against which future progress can be measured. Grono notes that, while these prevalence studies do not allow the Freedom Fund to directly track its own contribution to change, they nevertheless constitute a major aspect of the effort, allowing the fund and others working to end slavery around the globe to assess how they are doing collectively. Collaboratives often pursue social change that will require a long time to achieve. But there are still short-term milestones that they can track to assess progress against the long-term commitment. "This kind of work is very longitudinal. It's not, 'Here's the campaign and now we're done," says the Pop Culture Collaborative's Van Slyke, who emphasizes the importance of evaluating individual grantees' goals and outcomes, as well as tracking how the system and/or field is changing over time. Often, this means looking beyond the fund's individual grantees to changes they are working to achieve in the field. "As one of our funders said, 'Why should we be measuring the drop if we're trying to change the ocean?" adds Van Slyke. "So we need to look at who is building power within these industries, what are the new entry points for storytellers, how are hiring systems changing, and what are the cultural dynamics within writers'

rooms." Tension often emerges when trying to separate a collaborative's specific contribution to a field from all that is happening in the system it is working to influence. It takes many actors working together to achieve large-scale, enduring social change. So, while a collaborative might hope to identify and spotlight its own impact, realistically, it might be better able to describe its work alongside that of others and the progress of the field or system overall. In our view, this is fine—and reflects the reality of working on systems change. Collaboratives can contribute to system or field change without needing to claim attribution, because one of the special roles collaboratives can play is to harmonize multiple actors around a common purpose. Milestones and indicators of progress may change as an ecosystem evolves and as the collaborative or others in the field learn more. So should measurement. This underlines the importance of learning both from a collaborative's own work and from the evolving dynamics within the ecosystem. For example, the END Fund, which focuses on neglected tropical diseases, has long tracked its progress using key metrics across its grantees—especially the number of people treated and the cost of providing those treatments. But today, the fund is honing its perspective on metrics as it sharpens its focus on eliminating disease—and as disease control and elimination goals draw nearer. "It used to be that we measured the cost of each treatment delivered. We wanted to bring this cost down below 50 cents per person through efficient partnerships, and we liked seeing high treatment numbers because it meant we were supporting the work we needed to support and increasing communities' access to NTD treatments," explains COO Schechter. But after many years of investment, now many countries are getting closer to disease elimination goals, changing the meaning of those standard metrics. "When we make progress in ending disease, then the number of treatments goes down and the cost of targeted final treatment programs and more complex interventions will likely go up. What the sector needs from the END Fund also shifts from a matter of scaling treatment to a more holistic view of what it takes to support countries to achieve and then sustain elimination goals. As our strategy has changed, our impact metrics have to change as well." As intermediaries between donors and doers, collaboratives have influence not just on their grantees but also on the philanthropy community. Thus, your collaborative's measurement, evaluation, and learning practices can also consider how you engage funders: • Communicate the full breadth of the value you provide for donors, given that your collaborative supports donors in a multitude of ways. • Capture the impact you have on donor behavior at large, as collaboratives can often inspire new and different ways of giving. The collaborative leaders we interviewed put a lot of thought into how they communicate their impact to donors. Yet many collaboratives actually underinvest in measuring their impact on donors. One common metric that collaboratives report is the money they mobilize and put to work—money that may not go to grantees' efforts or might move in less-coordinated ways without the collaborative. Indeed, in our review of over 50 collaborative impact reports, almost all collaboratives indicated the amount of money they themselves have mobilized. It's one good way to communicate the value of the collaborative to donors. But another important, and often underreported, element is the impact collaboratives have on donors—and on the philanthropy ecosystem itself. It was much rarer (less than a quarter of reports) for collaboratives to name the impact they have had on donor behavior. Here are several ways that collaboratives can both report on their value and influence donor behavior. As noted earlier, when donors choose to fund collaboratives rather than grantees directly, it is because they perceive collaboratives to provide a unique value proposition. While their specific activities will vary based on each collaborative's strategy, benefits for donors may include the opportunity to give through an intermediary that is more proximate to the issue/community, the efficiency gains from outsourcing grantmaking activities, the ability to access expertise in sectors that are unfamiliar to the donor, and the opportunities for donors to engage with and learn from one another. The only way for collaboratives to know if they are achieving their value proposition is to identify these benefits as core to their strategies and to assess whether they are delivering them. And the only way for donors to know if collaboratives are delivering that value is for collaboratives to measure and communicate it. Consider the AVPN, a social investment network that works to increase the flow of capital toward impact in Asia, including pooling funds to achieve progress toward the UN Sustainable Development Goals. As Kavita Tatwadi, senior manager of insights (IME) at AVPN, explains, "Across Asia, funders often operate in silos, lacking access to a robust pipeline of high-impact organizations. AVPN serves as a critical platform, uniting these stakeholders to foster meaningful collaborative strategies." For example, AVPN proactively shares portfolio-specific theories of change with potential donors, enabling them to define and align their goals even before joining, alongside regular updates on funding recipients and the ensuing impact. This ensures ongoing transparency and informed decision making. For some

collaboratives, donor education is an explicit part of the value proposition. For example, the Pop Culture Collaborative sees itself as both a funder and a learning partner for philanthropy about the field, bringing donors along as it builds a comparatively new field. "We're trying to figure out where donors are starting in terms of their understanding of pop culture narrative as social change," says Van Slyke. "We want to help them learn about the field, to become passionate about it, to the point where they're putting together a grantmaking strategy within their own organization. Having a strategy and the ability to create learning tools and immersive spaces with philanthropic partners is an important part of what we do." At the same time, connecting donors to the work of grantees requires a delicate balance—which recognizes the danger of overburdening grantees and the power imbalance with donors. "We sometimes arrange trips for them to meet our advisors and grantees and see the communities where the work is taking place," says García of Global Greengrants. "We'd like to create a personal relationship with our work, but we don't want to be extractive or impose on grantees, so we're very careful about what we ask of them." Global Greengrants, working with the Prospera International Network of Women's Funds (another collaborative), also facilitates a learning community on gender and environmental justice with program officers from two dozen private foundations. Some collaboratives invest in donor-education efforts beyond the funding—thus, they have the potential to change aspects of donor behavior in their philanthropy at large. For example, they may support donors to give over longer time horizons or with fewer restrictions. Or they may suggest more funds flow to less-common giving pathways associated with systems change, such as shifting narratives. Engaging donors in this way can also help the increasing number of newer donors who are hesitant to launch their own foundations with large teams and extensively defined strategies. A collaborative—or network of collaboratives—can efficiently perform that role incorporating a shared strategy among funders. And measurement, evaluation, and learning play a central role in assuring funders that the strategy is sound and is evolving with the times. Some collaboratives also seek to increase the volume of donor funding. For example, the Collaborative for Gender + Reproductive Equity (CGRE), founded in 2018, has as part of its mission to bring new funding to advance gender and reproductive equity in the United States. Its metrics include whether it has brought new funders and new money into the collaborative itself and the wider field; whether funders are seeking guidance from CGRE to deepen their individual or institutional funding and engagement in gender and reproductive equity, and whether CGRE donors advocate for more funding in the gender and reproductive equity space within their own foundations and with other funders. In the case of the Freedom Fund, Grono says, "From early on we've been able to mobilize capital, but we also know our ultimate impact is to influence others about funding grassroots [efforts] and driving systems change." Freedom Fund does this by sharing due diligence analyses and grantee reports so donors can fund organizations directly, as well as through using a donor-communication strategy on the most effective ways to drive change. Similarly, the African Visionary Fund seeks to increase the flow of funding to local NGOs in Africa by bridging between donors and grantees. "We track when we've been able to connect donors to our grantees, and we ask grantees whether we've been able to help them advance funding relationships," says Co-CEO Atti Worku. It's a role that grantees appreciate. Kamau of the NGO AkiraChix underlines the importance of NGOs being able to engage donors directly and the role that collaboratives can play in facilitating this: "It is good to get money through a fund," she says, "but if we can connect with donors, we have the opportunity to unlock additional resources." Kamau notes that the African Visionary Fund "opens a lot of doors for us in terms of connecting to donors. We can see that is part of the goal they are trying to achieve." The African Visionary Fund also seeks to change the flow of capital through its advocacy. "We can be a loud voice on how things need to change," says Worku. "We can say things to funders that local NGOs might be nervous to say given power dynamics." This impact of advocacy work can be a challenge to track, but the collaborative is trying to learn all it can. "Last year," Worku says, "we got invited to talk to a funder who was still not giving money to local NGOs. They wanted to have a conversation about equity and about funding proximate leaders. That helped bring about a big shift in their strategy. So we want to interview one of their team members and learn more about how that shift came about." While none of the funder collaboratives we've highlighted would say they have their measurement approaches fully figured out, they have all designed, piloted, and implemented methods that ultimately allow them—and their key stakeholders—to understand their value and impact. Philanthropic collaboratives are moving greater and greater resources toward social change. Thoughtful, equity-centered measurement tools and frameworks can help these collaboratives unlock even more funding, continuously learn and improve, and provide high-

impact support in service of people and the planet. We hope these insights can help all stakeholders of collaboratives—the collaboratives, donors, grantees, and relevant communities and systems—continue to engage in thoughtful learning and reflection.