



Giving Circle Reflection Tool

The end of a giving circle grant cycle is a time to both celebrate and reflect on the work you've done together. Use this tool to help you understand your impact, adjust your process and strengthen your circle as it moves into its next cycle.

Below are some questions and tips to sort out what went well, what could be improved, and what you and your members took away from the process. Select which questions are best for you and feel free to add your own.

Three ways to reflect using this tool:

Reflect with co-leaders

Not sure how to think about what the next round of grantmaking could look like?
Want to deepen your activities in a particular area?

Gather your co-leaders and use this resource to guide your discussion.

Debrief with circle members

Find out what your members thought of their giving circle experience.

Have a group conversation with circle members or adapt the questions below to create a member survey.

Showcase value to your organization's leadership

Want to keep key stakeholders in the loop and demonstrate the value of your giving circle to your host organization?

Uncover the less obvious impacts and benefits of your circle on the organization and present them persuasively.

Reflect with your co-leaders

Membership & Group Dynamics

Are there members that seemed particularly excited and want get involved in deeper ways? Who and how?

What new experiences might you offer to members next year?

How was the energy during the meetings? What were the low or high points?

Did anyone dominate discussions? If so, how might you address this in the future?

Did you encounter any challenges with facilitating the group's meetings, and if so, how might you address these in the next cycle?

Do you think you had the right number of meetings?

Did the structure of your meetings work for your group? If not, how can you change them?

Did the group have enough fun?

Grants & Giving

Overall, how do you feel the grantmaking process went?

What surprised you about the grantmaking process?

Did the giving circle's grants match the values you decided on in the beginning of the process? Why or why not?

Do you feel like your grantmaking process was "right-sized" to reflect the amount of funds your circle planned to allocate? In other words, were your expectations of grant applicants fair in light of the amount of funds they might receive?

Will you stay in touch with the circle's grantees? If so, how?

Have you checked in with your grant applicants and/or recipients about how the grantmaking process was for them?

Jewish Wisdom & Experience

Did the giving circle serve as a vehicle for Jewish experiences for members? How?

Do you feel like your group was able to access Jewish ideas, values and wisdom that inspired its giving?

How might your circle explore its Jewish elements more deeply in the next grant cycle?

Logistics

What time of day is best to hold the giving circle? What day is best?

Which topic(s) do you wish your circle could have spent more time discussing?

Which topic(s) do you think your giving circle can spend less time discussing, or avoid during your next cycle?

Debrief with circle members

Membership & Group Dynamics

How connected do you feel to your fellow members?

Would you like to spend more time with your fellow members outside of giving circle meetings?

What was it like to work together as a group to make decisions?

Grants & Giving

What have you learned about giving and philanthropy through this process?

Do you feel more knowledgeable about the issue area(s) on which our giving circle focused its grantmaking?

Did you learn about new organizations or projects that you didn't know about before?

Do you feel that you had enough information to make your decisions? If not — how would you go about getting more?

Are you excited about the grants the circle gave? Why or why not?

How was this giving experience different from other times you've given?

What are you doing differently in your giving now as a result of your giving circle experience?

Jewish Wisdom & Experiences

Was your participation in the giving circle a meaningful way to connect to Jewish life or ideas?

Would you like to explore Jewish ideas and wisdom related to giving more deeply during the next cycle?

Did this giving circle connect you to Jewish issues and/or organizations in new ways? How?

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Showcase value to your organization's leadership

After you've reflected with co-leaders and circle members, think about how you want to present this information to your organization's leadership, if applicable. Below you will find some ideas to consider when preparing to present your key takeaways and outcomes within your organization.

Share key findings with your direct supervisor and department leaders. They'll be interested in your giving circle's learnings and outcomes and may be able to serve as advocates for your giving circle.

Share key findings across departments. Departments you collaborate with closely and individuals who have expressed interest in your circle in the past may be especially interested.

Think about the value this giving circle adds to your organization. Does it enable you to reach new audiences? Build a culture of philanthropy? Educate key stakeholders about mission-aligned issues? Engage potential future board or committee members? Make sure to address how the giving circle contributes to the organization and how the outcomes align with your organization's mission and values.

Make an infographic or other visual representation of the giving circle's outcomes and/or contributions to the organization. Some giving circle statistics, including how much money was granted in total and how many members took part, really pop when communicated in a visual format.

For more information about communicating the results of your giving circle, check out the [Schusterman Foundation's Data Playbook](http://www.schusterman.org/playbooks/data/) (www.schusterman.org/playbooks/data/).

Need advice on how to strengthen your giving circle? Amplifier can help. Reach out to us at Hello@AmplifierGiving.org to brainstorm solutions and get connected to other leaders in the giving circle community.