

Supporting a Corporate Philanthropic Fund



How we applied our expertise to support the expanding mission of Autodesk Foundation

Autodesk Foundation's mission is to support the design and creation of innovative solutions to the world's most pressing social and environmental challenges. Historically, they accomplished this through traditional grant making and the donation of software, training and industry expertise.

The Foundation sought to go beyond the traditional approaches to philanthropy and bring the same level of innovation to their work that they were seeking from their grantees. Their expanded vision included making direct early-stage impact investments, grants to support charities located outside of the United States, and supporting the charitable activities of for-profit entities.

The Autodesk Foundation's current experience had been that to try anything outside of traditional grant making to nonprofits was very time-consuming for both them and the recipients. More often than not, their efforts were severely delayed and ended in frustration. They needed a philanthropic partner who could evolve with them and efficiently facilitate a wide array of transactions that met their unique approach to philanthropy.

The Solution:

Our first step was to develop a clear understanding of Autodesk Foundation's vision and objectives. Autodesk established a donor advised fund with ImpactAssets in 2017 to test whether we could deliver on our promise to provide an efficient and effective philanthropic vehicle for their capital.

The first recommendation was to execute an Expenditure Responsibility Grant to Factor[e], a public benefit corporation, for its charitable activities. Factor[e] supports entrepreneurs and new technologies that aim to ensure universal access to energy, especially for those who live outside governmental infrastructure or at the base of the economic pyramid.

For every recommendation, whether for a grant, an impact investment, or an expenditure responsibility grant, the information and effort from our clients is minimal and very similar. We ask our clients to provide information such as the name and contact information for the entity receiving the funds, the amount to be sent, and the social or environmental impact of the organization.

Once the recommendation is made, the client's work is done and ImpactAssets takes care of everything else for the life of that investment or grant, including:

- Reviewing the charitable status or impact focus of the receiving entity.
- Ensuring that all financial transactions are in compliance with current law.
- Completing grant agreements and monitoring compliance.
- Executing and serving as custody agent for investments.
- Monitoring impact and financial performance for impact investments
- Managing servicing and investment/grant actions.
- Collecting and distributing reporting.

The Results:

Through the ImpactAssets Giving Fund, Autodesk Foundation has deployed nearly \$2 million in support of its Mission.

Some of the transactions include:

- An impact investment in Closed Loop Ventures which supports advanced recycling technologies and services related to the circular economy.
- An international grant to the Kenya Climate Innovation Center to accelerate the development, deployment, and transfer of locally relevant climate and clean energy technologies.
- Additional grants to organizations such as WeRobotics which localizes appropriate robotics skills and solutions to accelerate the positive impact of social good projects in low-income countries, and Village Capital, which hosted a forum on the use of Automation and AI for Good.

ABOUT IMPACTASSETS

ImpactAssets is a nonprofit financial services firm that increases the flow of capital into investments delivering financial, social and environmental returns.

ABOUT THE GIVING FUND

The Giving Fund is an innovative donor advised fund that empowers donors to increase the impact of their giving by combining it with strategic sustainable and responsible investing to build a sophisticated philanthropic endowment. Donors recommend how The Giving Fund's assets are invested across a range of leading impact investment options including community investment, turn-key portfolios, private debt and equity funds, seed venture and custom investments. The Giving Fund currently has \$424M in total assets