

Supporter Packet

GEO 2027 Learning Conference
In partnership with Philanthropy Missouri
May 26-27, 2027 | St. Louis, MO

Supporting the GEO 2027 Learning Conference is a way to invest in real change for the philanthropic sector by bringing together more than 500 grantmakers for real-time conversations, presentations and workshops that help transform philanthropic practice and culture.

To learn more or to make a pledge, please contact Development Manager Lauren Gentry at gentry@geofunders.org.



About the Conference

The GEO 2027 Learning Conference brings together philanthropic learning and grantmaking practice and makes spaces for questions about our vision for the world and how we'll get there. How can learning and evaluation help grantmakers stay grounded in intersectional equity while remaining responsive to communities driving change? How do we strengthen these practices so that learning leads to real organizational shifts that communities can feel? How do we prepare ourselves and our organizations to make necessary changes with courage, a willingness to navigate uncertainty, and deeper collaboration with communities? And how can learning functions help us better understand the pace of change, our progress and where we need to adjust?

The 2027 Learning Conference will sit at the intersection of philanthropic practice and learning, preparing us to adapt and deepen our commitment to our values and our communities amid disruption and change. Together, we will convene a space that is equally supportive and challenging, where grantmakers and learning practitioners in the GEO community can listen to and learn from communities, nonprofits and each other on how to change mindsets, improve practices and get unstuck in our efforts to make lasting change and impact.

Why St. Louis?

St. Louis sits at a historic crossroads, shaped by its local history and the broader political context of Missouri and the surrounding region. From the Missouri Compromise and *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, which defined the state's role in national debates over slavery, to the streets of Ferguson, where grief and resilience helped catalyze the modern Movement for Black Lives, this city and region reflect both the profound cost of systemic inequity and the unyielding power of community organizing. Together with the GEO community, we hope to explore the possibilities of learning and evaluation practices informed by history and inspired by new systems for change to take root.

While this year's conference draws deeply on the Midwest's history and the work happening in the region today, we intend to uplift work from across the GEO community along the following themes:

- Practicing Power Fluency
- Equitable Collaboration
- Investing in the Future
- Equitable Leadership and Learning

About Grantmakers for Effective Organizations

GEO is a community of funders committed to transforming philanthropic culture and practice by connecting members to the resources and relationships needed to support thriving nonprofits and communities. We envision courageous grantmakers working in service of nonprofits and communities to create a just, connected and inclusive society where we can all thrive.

About Philanthropy Missouri

PhilMO is a statewide association of funders and philanthropic partners who envision a thriving and equitable Missouri served by a collaborative, purpose-driven and effective philanthropic sector.

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“This is my favorite gathering every single year. I really appreciate GEO's humble, grounded and accountable approach to this work. The content of the conference is solid, but the spirit in which it is offered is beautiful and wonderful to experience.”

—2025 Learning Conference Participant

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Why Support the Conference?

- GEO's Learning Conference offers one of the few dedicated spaces for learning and evaluation practitioners inside grantmaking institutions to connect, compare approaches and learn from one another.
- It uniquely brings together a mix of program staff, CEOs and consultants alongside learning practitioners, creating opportunities to connect learning and evaluation more directly to day-to-day grantmaking decisions and strategies.
- Participants can engage with tangible and relevant examples of how grantmaking organizations are using learning to shift toward more equity-centered, community-driven philanthropic practice that benefits their nonprofit partners.
- GEO conferences are always designed for active exchange — supporting reflection, surfacing new ideas and building relationships that continue to inform learning and prepare organizations for adaptation beyond the conference. Participants will have the chance to join ongoing peer communities, like the Strategic Learners Network, where conversations and relationships can continue to deepen and expand.
- For businesses and vendors, supporting the Learning Conference is an opportunity to build meaningful relationships with philanthropic leaders from across the country, demonstrate a commitment to equity and community impact, and contribute to a gathering that strengthens the philanthropic sector and the host region.

As a supporter of the GEO 2027 Learning Conference, you are helping to:

- Advance the field by investing in thought leadership, innovative ideas and shared learning that inspire action across philanthropy.
- Cultivate community through peer networking events, social events, welcome receptions and lounge spaces.
- Ensure equitable compensation for all speakers and talent.
- Foster accessibility through the use of technology, interpretation and more.
- Support participant well-being and learning through healing spaces, active hours and off-site excursions.
- Support direct costs associated with hosting a conference, including the venue, AV, food and beverage, furniture rentals, registration supplies, marketing and more.

Participants reflect a mix of roles across grantmaking organizations. At our 2025 Learning Conference, participants included:

27%	Evaluation / Learning Staff
24%	CEO / President / Executive Directors
20%	Program Staff / Officers
12%	Other Executive Staff
8%	Grants Management Staff
3%	Communications Staff
1%	Trustees / Board Members
5%	And more!

50%

of participants are first-time participants

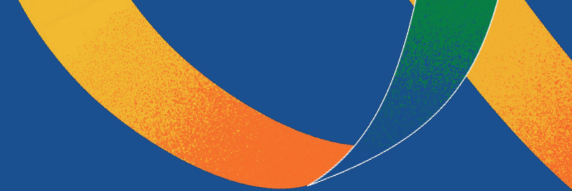
60–80%

are GEO members

Programming Includes:

Short Talks
Plenary Sessions
Breakout Sessions
Spark Conversations
Community Events
Active Hours
Mindfulness Moments
Welcome Reception / Happy Hour





Support Your Way

Gifts at all levels are welcome!

We encourage interested supporters to give at the level that feels most appropriate based on your organization's giving priorities, financial capacity and trust in GEO as an organization. We know that traditional, hierarchical sponsorship models can not only feel transactional, but that they can also unintentionally perpetuate power imbalances relating to differences in giving amounts. We recognize that though our supporters have different giving capacities, we all share a common desire to help the sector transform philanthropic practice and culture. Gifts at all levels work toward that goal and deserve to be recognized as such.

All conference supporters contributing at least \$2,500 will be recognized alphabetically for their contributions in print and online materials, including but not limited to, the GEO conference webpage, on-site signage, printed program book and conference app, and at key sessions throughout the event. **All conference supporters contributing at least \$8,000 will also receive a code for a complimentary registration as a token of our gratitude.**

Additional Ways to Support

For our 2027 conference, we are introducing a limited number of additional support options. Supporting a conference element is an opportunity for supporters to demonstrate organizational values by directly supporting convening, technology, accessibility and more. These supporters will be acknowledged in a dedicated section in print and online materials and on a dedicated slide in the ballroom loop, in the order listed below, as well as included among the general conference supporters in alphabetical order. Supporters of the conference elements below will be provided a code for a complimentary registration as a token of our gratitude. Please note that supporting a conference element does not confer any responsibility for planning that element of the conference.

Community & Connection

CEO & Trustee Reception – \$30,000

This reception for CEOs and trustees provides an intimate and confidential space for CEOs and trustees at the Learning Conference to connect with others in similar roles. Food and refreshments are provided. The CEO & Trustee Reception Sponsor will be acknowledged in the reception remarks.

Early Arrivers Reception – \$25,000

This reception is offered the evening before the conference begins, recognizing that many participants will arrive ahead of the Monday morning start. It provides a time for participants to check in for the conference and begin connecting with peers right away. Food and refreshments are provided.

Emergent Spaces – \$15,000

Informal relationship building is the connective tissue of conferences and where some of the most critical connections, collaboration and learning happen. As an Emergent Spaces Sponsor, you support our Community Event spaces, lounge, snack breaks and resting areas, fostering connections between participants.

Welcome Reception – \$100,000

Our Welcome Reception provides a space for participants to gather on the first evening of the conference. Refreshments, beverages and music are provided to create an evening of community and fun. The Welcome Reception Sponsor will be acknowledged in GEO's remarks during the Opening Plenary.

Participation & Well-Being

Accessibility – \$50,000

Supporting accessibility helps us to provide services like closed captioning, CART services and interpretation to support language justice. Other accessibility measures include a conference app that supports screen readers and voice over features, on-demand mobility aids, attention to individual dietary needs, the availability of masks and training for all session designers on making sessions accessible.

Speaker Assistance – \$30,000

The Speaker Assistance Program helps non-grantmaking nonprofit and community leaders who are speaking at our conference to attend the full conference. Support includes a complimentary registration to attend the conference, lodging and potentially a travel stipend depending on the speaker's needs. Supporting SAP helps ensure that financial need is not a barrier for speaker participation.

Wellness – \$25,000

This includes support of wellness spaces like our Reflection and Prayer Room and Nursing Parent Room, as well as support of our Active Hours. Active Hours at recent conferences have included yoga sessions, walking tours, community runs and more.

Wi-Fi/Technology – \$75,000

Support our technology needs to help participants access conference resources, participate fully in sessions through tools such as closed captioning, connect with one another and stay informed throughout the event. The Wi-Fi Sponsor will have their support acknowledged where we share Wi-Fi information as well as in the acknowledgments indicated above.

If you are interested in supporting the GEO 2027 Learning Conference, please email Development Manager Lauren Gentry at gentry@geofunders.org with the following:

- Organization
- Contact (Name, Email, Title)
- For general conference support, please indicate a giving amount
- To support a specific conference element, please indicate which element of the conference you'd like to support:

Community & Connection

- CEO & Trustee Reception – \$30,000
- Early Arrivers Reception – \$25,000
- Emergent Spaces – \$15,000
- Welcome Reception – \$100,000

Participation & Well-Being

- Accessibility – \$50,000
- Speaker Assistance – \$30,000
- Wellness – \$25,000
- Wi-Fi/Technology – \$75,000

General Conference Support

Indicate the amount you would like to give.

For payment by check, please make your check payable to Grantmakers for Effective Organizations and, beginning November 1, mail it to GEO, 1400 K Street NW, Suite 1025, Washington, DC 20005. For direct deposits, GEO banking information will be provided by request. If a sponsorship or grant application must be completed, please send the application directly to Lauren Gentry at gentry@geofunders.org.

Questions and Answers

Is there a minimum sponsor level?

We appreciate support at all levels! However, we are only able to include supporters contributing at least \$2,500 in our acknowledgment materials.

Do I receive a complimentary ticket as a member of the Host Committee?

No, Host Committee members do not receive a complimentary ticket. However, most Host Committee organizations are also conference supporters, which means your organization may receive a promotional code good for one complimentary registration, depending on the level of support.

How many complimentary tickets will I receive as a supporter?

Each organization that makes a commitment of at least \$8,000 will receive a promotional code good for one complimentary registration as a small token of our gratitude for their support. The fair market value of the complimentary registration is equal to the regular non-member registration rate.

All supporters contributing at least \$2,500 will also receive access to our membership pricing and early bird registration period regardless of their current membership status.

Where is the list of benefits for each sponsor level?

All conference supporters contributing at least \$2,500 will be recognized alphabetically for their contributions in print and online materials, including but not limited to, the GEO conference webpage, on-site signage, printed program book and conference app, and at key sessions throughout the event.

Supporters of a conference element will receive additional acknowledgment in a dedicated section in print and online materials and on a dedicated slide in the ballroom loop.

All conference supporters contributing at least \$8,000 will also receive a code for a complimentary registration as a token of our gratitude. If you have specific interests or needs that you would like to discuss as it relates to supporting the conference, please contact us directly at gentry@geofunders.org.

Are supporters provided exhibition space?

No, GEO conferences do not have exhibitors and also uphold a strict non-solicitation policy. We encourage supporters who are looking to increase their visibility to submit a community building event, which is an opportunity open to all conference registrants upon completion of their registration. These informal events, which are subject to available space, are a great place for networking or for presenting information. All community building events are listed in the conference app and also shared in our conference marketing.