

Better Together

Building Effective Relationships and Partnerships A Personal Perspective

Jo Cohen

Three or four months before Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, we started planning. It began as a practice of heart and mind, and over the years became a firm tradition. We brainstormed to create a theme, design, image, and message we wanted to share that year. We printed hundreds of postcards, each one painstakingly handwritten by every member of the team, and sent via snail mail to arrive just in time for the New Year, a triumphant victory in the face of Israel's painfully slow postal system.

As we prepared the New Year's greetings, we updated our mailing lists, adding new partners, grantees, and teachers; people we had met, convened, and worked with over the past year. The list was always expanding, and the process was labor intensive, a significant group effort. It allowed us to reflect and take stock of our relationships, our partnerships and perhaps even our professional achievements over the past year.

Every year we would question the wisdom of sending out hundreds of these handwritten greetings; was it really worth the time it took? But each time we unanimously agreed once again that it indeed was deserving of

the effort. The professional relationships we cultivated were so important and meaningful to the Foundation's work and investing in those relationships was how we showed that we cared.

Over the years, the building and maintenance of those relationships became an integral part of our organizational identity at the Trump Foundation; it helped the Foundation to consistently achieve its goals and it continues to be a central tenet of our work.

The greeting cards are but one small example, but it could be said that every aspect of the Foundation's activities, from the practical to the conceptual, are ultimately underpinned by the quality of its relationships — between members of its own team, with grantees, partners, stakeholders, and decision makers - and over time, the Foundation's mission is served by its ability to successfully manage those relationships.

And so, from its earliest days, as the Trump team contemplated the question of how to effect change, we began to understand that having meaningful, transparent relationships with grantees and partners could be the single most important thing we do.

The protocols and procedures, principles, and habits, which governed our grant-making; from the time we took to respond to emails to the fostering of a web of communication and exchange between partners and grantees, all became an integral part of the Foundation's organizational culture and identity.

We knew it was all about the people: teachers, scholars, and policy makers with whom we collaborated, doing the professional work in their fields. We just had to bring them together, help them articulate their shared passion and mission, and support them in achieving it.

As I started to reflect on the seven years I worked at the Trump Foundation — on the principles, values, and organizational culture we developed, the mistakes we made, the successes we celebrated, and the partners we learned from, I realized that this assignment, as with so many before it, called for a team effort. So, I approached some of my former colleagues, some of whom still work at the Trump Foundation, and others who have since moved on, to reflect together with me on the Foundation's Relationship Management over the past decade.

My first conversation was with Eli Hurvitz, the Executive Director of the Trump Foundation, who brought me back to the intrinsic complexity that philanthropic foundations encounter with all their relationships. "Philanthropy, at its very core, is about the love of people. The word philanthropy comes from two Greek words — *philein*, meaning to love, and *anthropos* (as in anthropology), meaning humankind. Philanthropy means love of humanity. That was, and still is the purpose of what we do," he says. "At the same time, how can this love be accepted as genuine, when philanthropy sees itself as setting the strategy and expecting its partners to deliver and execute, whereas the partner perceives itself as the source of wisdom and knowhow and relates to philanthropy as a stubborn ATM? Is it possible to develop authentic relationships and mutual trust, when this very structure is so instrumental?"

Transparency, Clarity, and Order

The Trump Foundation is a catalytic grant-making foundation, and so works with and through others. As such, the importance of having very clear, close, and effective relationships with the people in the field cannot be underestimated. At the end of the day, the Foundation itself does not provide professional development for teachers to improve their instruction. The Foundation has a very clear strategy, objectives, and measurable goals. But it cannot act on its theory of change nor achieve its ambitious mission alone.

From the outset, therefore, it was clear to us that we would only be able to move the needle if we joined with real partners who shared the vision, and who were already working towards it. These partners would be the ones to implement a joint strategy in the field. So, the decision was made to establish a close relationship with each of our partners based on intimate communication, full transparency, openness, honesty, trust, and mutual respect.

"Excellent working relations, listening ears, openness, availability, sensitivity for the situation, and an ability to make the necessary changes in the course of the actions."
(GPR, 2018)¹

One of the Trump team members responsible for establishing many of the initial relationships with grantees, was Dr. Tammy Eisenmann, who was Program Director between 2011-2017. According to Tammy, one of the preliminary principles of our relationship management was clarity.

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"We wanted relationships to be clear, so we laid out distinct and defined stages of grant-making and were clear about which stage the program was at. We believed that we should have a very transparent rationale, and all team members, from the finance director to the administrative assistant, should know how to clearly explain what we do, and why we do it.

Tammy is a strong proponent of structure in relationships: "The standards created order. We could explain them, and with them, we could be fair and equal with everyone. They were untouchable — we decided not to compromise on those standards, and this gave us a quiet confidence in the relationships we built. We made a conscious effort to speak as equals with our grantees and came to understand that this is a rare thing in philanthropy. However, it very much characterized the Trump Foundation. We never received negative feedback about our openness and honesty.

We believed that transparency with grantees directly impacts success. It is often the case that grantees might be reluctant to share difficulties, not disclosing the challenges they are facing, and the gaps between the intended work-plan and reality. If the relationship is founded on self-promotion and overpromising, the grant-maker will only know that there is a problem when it is too late. Our desire was to be in the same 'boat' as our grantees and to do what's necessary to build a close relationship."

Transparency is a central tenet of the Foundation, and this is expressed in all aspects of its work. Unusually for a philanthropic foundation in Israel, all details of the grants — including the sums granted — are listed on the publicly-accessible website, including full details of every program. When the Foundation

moved to new offices in 2015, the premises were designed to embody the concepts of transparency and openness, with glass walls in offices and meeting rooms, and central open spaces.

"The Foundation defined clear objectives, which were continually monitored in cooperation with us, while making adjustments to best achieve the objectives. The relationship is excellent, the Foundation provides strong and supportive backing, and knows how to encourage and empower us toward achieving the goals."

(GPR, 2016)

"[We felt we had a] quality discourse and relationship, honest and direct, between colleagues working together toward a common objective."

(GPR, 2016)

"We are very straightforward and do not cut corners," says Revital Drori, Program Director since 2019. Over her years at the Foundation, Revital has worked with local authorities and school networks, building essential relationships with them and between them, which enable the Foundation to carry out its work more effectively. "What we demand of ourselves we will demand of others as well. In the payment requests and reporting, we respect what the applicant wrote, and we will address every comma and period.

We may be seen as rigid, but it is a rigidity that stems from integrity." Both Tammy and Revital reflected on the tension that arose at times between the strict grant conditions and the trust shared between the Foundation and its partners. Indeed, this tension did lead to a number of charged exchanges over the years, but these were accepted as part and parcel of an open, honest arrangement, and mutual respect has preserved these relationships over time.

Revital describes interactions with grantees as professional conversations about content, challenges, and future steps. "Discourse with grantees is characterized by openness and sharing challenges. Even when it comes to payment requests, we make great efforts so that the discourse is not just about money, because the goal is not to punish or catch where someone may have failed, but to learn from it. Conversations are conducted with full transparency and mutual respect; I have no problem calling a partner and telling them that I was wrong about something. Similarly, I expect them to call me too and be honest with me."

We would learn from a comprehensive survey of grantees and partners (Grantee Perception Report) conducted from 2014 onwards, that there are those who experience the Foundation's staff as too bureaucratic, rigidly conforming to the work plan without taking into consideration the natural gaps between planning and execution. A few grantees felt they were being "punished" for lack of outcomes.

"Sometimes there is a feeling that the Foundation expects the partners to be 'contractors' executing a very specific approach set by the Foundation. This expectation is not in line with the interests

of partners wishing to generate new knowledge and original programs and who face a host of conflicting demands from their own organizations."

(GPR, 2020)

Clearly, it is about much more than just being nice. "No trajectory would have changed course in real life if we just gave money in response to grant applications and practiced a "feel good philanthropy," notes Eli. "We aimed to catalyze a change that was very different to the direction our partners were heading. We could have tried to exert indirect influence, but we chose to be clear and transparent about our plans, direction and intention. We brought everyone on board to jointly articulate measurable impact goals on a national scale."

Trust and Respect

What underlies transparency in grantee-funder relationships is trust and respect. The Foundation's organizational culture has always revered professionalism and excellent professional abilities. That is why from an early stage we made sure to work with teachers as advisors, committee members, and involve them in the Foundation's activities and decisions in a number of ways. The Foundation aimed to empower them, shine a light on exceptional teachers, and help them experience appreciation and acknowledgement for their work.

I recall that teachers were often surprised by the respect given to them by the Foundation, and by senior officials working with the Foundation - they felt seen and heard. The program team learned their language, consulted with them, and honored their status.

Teachers are modest, and initially, some seemed to undervalue themselves and their professional contribution. In 2012, we established the Trump Master Teacher Award, which recognizes outstanding teachers and publicizes the fact of their award, garnering acclaim for the teaching profession as a whole. When we launched the Award, whose prize is 100,000 NIS, several excellent teachers expressed their opinion that the prize amount was too high for the teaching profession.

We saw it differently. "From the outset, we perceived that in order to achieve what we envisioned, someone else would need to make it happen. So, we listened to them explaining their own narrative, we respected them, and we supported them," said Tammy.

We tried to ensure that the Foundation's actions and decisions were informed by teachers, and as such we could remain close to practice, as an involved and connected funder. This helped build trust and respect. Over the years, the Foundation has hosted numerous meetings, seminars and workshops dedicated to honoring, listening to and learning from its partners: teachers, academics, teacher-trainers and government officials. The program team would frequently consult with teachers on potential programs and peer-review became an essential part of the grant-making process.

Over the years, the Foundation has taken partners on study tours abroad and hosted encounters in Israel with leading visiting academics and practitioners. In 2013, we founded a National Teachers Day, which is celebrated every year across the country, as if it had always been so, and in 2014, we established "It's Time for Education," the digital education magazine, by teachers for teachers, which achieved a large online readership. Teachers are majority members of the Foundation's Advisory Board and comprise all members of the selection committee for the Trump Master Teachers Award.

Grantee Perception Reports and Ongoing Reflection

It was and continues to be important to the Foundation team that we continually review and evaluate our practice, through seeking to know what grantees and partners think about the Foundation's activities, relationships, and shared strategy.

In 2014, less than three years after it was established, the Foundation engaged the Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) to perform a Grantee Perception Report (GPR), a comprehensive survey among its grantees and partners. The GPR provides an in-depth analysis of how partners perceive the Foundation's philanthropic endeavors. It is repeated every two years, in preparation for the Foundation's biennial Advisory Council. The results are thoroughly analyzed, shared with the public and continue to inform the Foundation's work and evolving relationships.

CEP notes that strong funder-grantee relationships — defined by high quality interactions and clear and consistent foundation communications — are critical to high-performing funders. Grantees who have strong relationships with their funders perceive those funders to have significantly greater impact on their organizations, communities, and fields. Unsurprisingly, they found that the strongest predictor of the strength of the funder-grantee relationships is high transparency on the part of the foundation.

As early as 2014, the Trump Foundation's GPR revealed that the Foundation's relationships with its partners was one of its greatest strengths. Unusually, the Trump Foundation received higher ratings than 99 percent of funders in CEP's global dataset for the overall strength of its relationships with grantees and was rated very highly by grantees for the

fairness of their treatment by the Foundation and their comfort in approaching us if a problem arose. The Foundation also received strong ratings from partners for "approaching the relationship with respect," "respecting partners' expertise in their area of focus," and "trusting partners to carry out the work specified in the partnership."

Many of our partners described their interactions with the Foundation with praise, emphasizing the staff's "professionalism," "openness," and "ability to cooperate." However, it seems that this high level slightly declined over the years. In the most recent GPR, conducted in 2020, CEP found that grantees were less positive towards their relationships with the Foundation than in previous years. They reported experiencing more pressure to modify their organizational priorities during the selection process.

"We suffer from a second album syndrome," says Eli. "After the first success with the five units in high school, we felt the pressure to prove that the initial success was not coincidental. Our pressure to achieve a second success affects our grantees and partners."

Tammy explains how she perceives the changing relationships over time: "At the beginning, we came to learn from teachers — at a certain point this approach inverted — we had acquired knowledge and expertise and our appetite and confidence grew. Our knowledge of systems and projects and their components was also deeper and better. We knew how things really operate and how to catalyze change. We were sufficiently established so that we knew what we were doing but the grantees and partners felt the change; we started to tell people what to do."

Revital sees this transition as natural, "As time went on and we gained more

experience, we had a better understanding of what we wanted. Moreover, one cannot ignore the fact that when the Foundation started it was the new "player" in the field, bringing a somewhat fresh approach to its veteran partners. This fact alone provided the Foundation a grace period, which faded as time went by. It was a huge challenge for us, the Foundation's current team, to maintain the high results the first team received in the first GPR, but it was, in fact, a mission impossible; from a near-perfect score, you can only go down."

"The Foundation has a very clear roadmap...sometimes, there is a sense of rigidity and a lack of flexibility in the way they look at goals, as well as the broader environment from which such goals are to be achieved."

(GPR, 2018)

"We saw a significant rigidity in their work with us and an excessive attention to detail that did not always seem relevant to us."

(GPR, 2018)

Mobilizing, Convening and Networking

As is natural in the life cycle of a spend-down foundation, we gave a lot of thought to sustainability, and carefully watched and learned from the sunseting of other spend-down foundations.

From early on, this helped cultivate an awareness that non-monetary support, especially convening and networking, is an important way in which the Foundation can utilize the relationships we build to contribute to the professional community.

Initially, the need arose to establish a community of grantee partners. Admittedly, these were people who mostly already knew one other, certainly those who came from overlapping worlds. But we frequently found that academics didn't know practitioners or decision makers and vice versa. In the early years, the goal was to create opportunities for different players to meet and deepen their acquaintance. Indeed, the first meeting between approximately 20 grantees took place in the format of guided peer-to-peer discussions in concentric circles, in a way that allowed them to chat, exchange ideas with one other and left them with a taste for more. People came away enthused.

"We understood that our success was one hundred percent dependent on them," says Tammy. "It wasn't easy because we couldn't control it. At the beginning it was very worrying. We thought, what added value can we give them, to senior academics, for example? They are seasoned professionals — they felt it too."

In the 2014 GPR, two-thirds of the Foundation's beneficiaries said that in addition to the financial grant, they benefitted from help given by the Foundation in getting to know the leading institutions in their field and working with them. About one-half of grantees benefitted from consultation in their fields of endeavor. Some 61 percent of Foundation partners reported participating in at least one conference initiated by the Foundation. The survey further showed that conference participation, day-long seminars, and forums for exchanging knowledge and

information between professionals were viewed as particularly helpful.

We therefore decided to significantly increase the Foundation's role as convener, i.e., to act as a facilitator of connections, working relations, and cooperative ventures, not only between the Foundation and its partners, but also — and especially — among the partners themselves. As part of the implementation of this objective, the Foundation moved its offices to premises appropriately equipped to allow partners to meet, run seminars and hold workshops and conferences (Magnat, 2016, p. 4).

"The Trump Foundation is a pioneer and a leading player in the public debate on math education in Israel. It devotes a great deal of time and resources, encourages the creation of collaborative efforts and promotes the professional development of math teachers."

(GPR, 2020)

Recognizing our ability to enlist different partners towards a shared goal, we also launched a "network clustering program," allowing institutions running similar programs in different locations to learn from one another and pool resources. The Foundation provided a non-competitive environment which encouraged knowledge-sharing and cooperation, and participants noted that the Foundation's help in networking was extremely useful. We received positive recognition for playing this role, and were asked to continue strengthening our presence as a convener (Refaeli-Hirsh, 2016, p. 2).

By creating meaningful connections, even when the context was complex, sensitive and sometimes competitive, we found that the Foundation could really add value. The team worked to create networks that allowed partners to continue to learn, grow, and act together. Networks were cultivated to create a feeling of allegiance among members and a willingness to support the network as a whole. As the Foundation invested in the networks and convening, being an active member of the network became highly personal and valued. These networks helped construct relationships rooted in trust and connection and allowed us to engage far beyond the instrumentality of the grantee-funder relationship.

In one of our earlier networking events, we wanted to introduce different grantees and partners to one another, to encourage them to talk, share ideas and delve beneath the surface, beyond their first professional encounter. We decided to borrow from the concept of speed-dating, rotating between different partners with guided conversation topics. We were nervous about departing from the traditional format of lectures and mingling, but this activity and other quirky ways we found to break the ice at various gatherings helped people connect.

Our program officers would encourage those connections, bringing together groups of partners to consult on various issues, or disseminating articles among them, encouraging discussion and dialogue, and the sharing of successes and lessons learned. The program team continually and actively cultivated this exchange over time and continues to do so today.

Joint study tours of education systems abroad are an additional tool intended to connect between partners. "The very act of going out into an adventure, a shared

experience of coping together in a place that is new to all of us — connects us. Some of the partners even became friends," says Revital. Evaluation reports showed that those who participated in a significant activity — such as a study visit, overnight seminar, or organizing a common conference — developed a greater sense of ownership and felt more connected, obligated, and satisfied by the convening experience (Refaeli-Hirsh, p. 3).

Another method was the use of a "marketplace," as a concept and practice to help partners exchange information and create collaboration. Every year, the Foundation holds an annual event with the theme of an Exchange Fair or market (called Shuk 5 and later on Shuk 15). This is a forum for operators and developers to meet, network, and present their programs and processes to one another. The format enables the sometimes-disparate worlds of research and development from universities, and operators from local authorities, school networks, and regional districts, to directly purchase from one another. These meetings have gained great momentum and popularity among the grant recipients and Foundation partners.

In 2016, the GPR Survey showed that 40 percent of grantees reported that in addition to the financial grant, they also received invitations to encounters and discussions with professionals and colleagues and were provided with information relevant to their fields. Some 85 percent of survey participants — a higher percentage than in the past — participated in at least one event initiated by the Foundation in which grantees and partners were brought together, in a workshop, a professional conference, or a group discussion (Magnat, 2016, p. 7).

The place and positioning of the Foundation also changed over the course of the convening process — there were stages where we led,

hosted, and set the agenda, and then later, for the sake of sustainability, we wanted our partners to lead, so we took a step back.

When the Foundation embarked on its second strategic phase in 2018 and shifted its focus to middle school, we already knew the power of convening and it was assigned a pivotal role in the realization of this strategy. In 2020, the GPR showed that the Trump Foundation continued to provide an above average proportion of its grantees with intensive field-focused or comprehensive forms of non-monetary assistance (33 percent of the Foundation's grantees reported receiving intensive non-monetary support in 2020 versus 17 percent at the median funder).

These grantees rate the Trump Foundation significantly more positively on the extent to which it is advancing knowledge in their fields, its impact on their local community, and the clarity of the Foundation's communications. As in 2018, 2020 grantees who report receiving non-monetary support most often accessed collaboration support (55 percent), introductions to field leaders (45 percent), and seminars/forums/convenings (43 percent). Markedly, nearly a third of the grantees who reported receiving support beyond the grant, representing a larger proportion than in the past and more than for the typical funder, reported receiving communications/marketing/publicity assistance from the foundation (GPR, 2020, p. 6).

Building the Foundation Team

In any organization, relationship management is an intentional effort, a result of policy and procedure, but also depends to an extent on the organization's human capital and interpersonal skills. The Trump Foundation

staff is highly committed to change, and by nature, many of the staff members are productive, proactive, and analytical.

Eli recalls that when he recruited team members to the Foundation he deliberately employed the PAEI Management Model, developed by Dr. Ichak Adizes, which categorizes people into one of four roles: Producer, Administrator, Entrepreneur, and Integrator. Adizes notes that no individual manager can meet all the needs of their organization, and that effective management requires a team of leaders who together can handle the most complex challenges and issues.

"We saw ourselves as service providers," said Tammy, who, together with other early Foundation team members, established much of the organizational culture around interacting with grantees. "I wouldn't go to sleep until I had replied to all the mails from grantees... We committed to answering within 24 hours and we did it. If we couldn't reply, we wrote to say when we would be able to reply. We worked very hard to earn the trust of our partners and tried to act with a great amount of professional respect for the grantees we worked with."

The Foundation's team invested a lot of time and effort in post-grant follow up and guidance — assisting the partners in writing a workplan, thoroughly reading their payment requests and evaluation reports and replying with comments and questions. The expression of interest was genuine, and it was important to acknowledge the value of the time the partners invested in writing reports for payment requests. There was also an emphasis on sharing ideas between grantees, allowing a natural form of cross-pollination. These practices became common among the expanding Foundation team over the years and across different departments. Part of the craft we fostered at the Foundation was the care, time and attention dedicated

to the post-grant system — the relationship with the grantee develops and deepens as we support their work and take a vested interest in the outcomes and outputs of their programs. The program team remains in regular contact with grantees, beyond the reporting requirements they fulfill for grant payments. It is a personal and professional connection that strengthens over time.

As the Foundation team grew and new team members were recruited, we tried to choose people who would uphold those values and characteristics in the existing relationships that they would inherit. The GPRs of 2014 and 2018 show that these efforts were felt, as many respondents described Foundation staff as "very professional," "pleasant" and "always available." Some respondents also praised the Foundation's "excellent communication" and noted how it "communicates the messages and goals clearly."

We cannot deny the utilitarian aspect of this behavior. Tammy is honest about how this effort was connected to our desire to succeed, and the relationships in this sense, are also instrumental. Eli connects this with the fact that Trump is a spend-down foundation. Once the Foundation has completed its mission, the ones who will continue to carry the agenda to promote excellence in mathematics and science will be its partners. For this reason, it was crucial to maintain a strong relationship with them and between them from the very beginning

Relationships and the Israeli Context

When discussing relationships, Eli reflected on Israelis' unique character. "We quickly discovered that no one wakes up in Israel to fulfil someone else's dream.

In other places, you find people aligned behind top-down policies — it's a matter of culture. But Israelis are critical and analytical, and they ask, "why?" If they were not included in the process, if they have no sense of belonging or affiliation, then it is not their dream. Israel is a DIY society of pioneers — everyone needs to have their own sense of ownership.

We wanted to reason with the grantees, but also to open and touch their hearts; to make them feel part of something larger than their own efforts. We understood the central place of emotional identity and connection from the beginning.

From an early stage, we understood that we want our dream to become everyone's dream. And pretty quickly, we knew that we needed teachers with us. We visited Educators for Excellence in NYC and they asked us what the teachers were saying about our plan, our theory of change. We were all about teachers and teaching but at this very early stage, there were none around the table. We understood our mistake and fixed that very quickly. Teachers need to have a place at the table. They are part of the solution not the problem. And we needed to bring them on board with the vision."

Much of our time is therefore invested in these efforts to communicate, develop and nurture the joint vision not only with grantees but with government officials, change-makers, and stakeholders. Relationships are informal where appropriate, and in many cases even close.

Revital agrees with Eli about owning the dream. "It is important to find the place where it connects with our partners' worldview. Finding that point of connection is key. When we introduced the new strategy in 2018, the Foundation moved its focus to strengthening the base of excellence in mathematics and science to middle schools.

Some of our partners admitted to us that it was not something they believed in or saw as one of their goals; but gradually, as we combined forces to launch study tours, convene conferences and engage deeply with the theory that lies at the heart of the Foundations' strategy, they discovered and embraced the elements that fit their agenda. Our partners are the best professionals in the field and we knew that if they were on board with the goals, they would promote them with all their talents and resources."

Relationships and Impact

"The Foundation's goals were instrumental in developing a culture of excellence in schools, especially in the study of mathematics and physics."
(GPR, 2018)

Selecting the Trump Foundation's partners, especially the grant recipients, required a great deal of thought and much discernment, and was informed by a conscious effort to maximize alignment of its values and institutional DNA with those of its partners. This was the result, perhaps, of our self-conception as temporary scaffolding that supports a building for a fixed period of time. Once the scaffolding is removed, however, the building must be able to stand on its own (Magnat, 2016, p. 2).

In 2018, the Foundation reached the first of its targets, when the number of students taking the five-unit matriculation examination in mathematics doubled, even earlier than expected. This goal was achieved thanks to great effort by all the partners and received broad public support, especially

since the then-Education Minister Naftali Bennett had declared it a national goal. In the same year, the Grantee Perception Report revealed that the Foundation had a high impact at the government level, and a high impact on the specific field of mathematics and science education. However, its impact on grantee organizations was still low. While some of the team members may have been frustrated by this outcome, we were not necessarily surprised by it. According to Revital, the Foundation did not influence the organizations it worked with (according to the GPR) because it did not focus on this task. "We were overestimating our influence to think that we could or should," she says.

Over the years we see in the GPR results that our team changed but our DNA remains the same. Our relationships are our philanthropy, in that they manifest our values and determine the success of our strategies," says Eli. Indeed, the Foundation excels in its clarity, non-monetary assistance, impact on public policy, and transparency. The GPR describes the Foundation less favorably in terms of its impact on organizations, flexibility, and asserting high levels of pressure. The Foundation is perceived as achieving high impact on public policy, but low impact on the organizations with which it partners.

"The Foundation has justifiably gained a great reputation in the field of cultivating excellence in math and science, both as a think-tank and on the ground. The Foundation has a long-lasting impact on decision-makers at all levels in this field."
(GPR, 2020)

"The day-to-day work with the Foundation has always been effective and advancing. Considering all the questions asked..., the Foundation can be rated as having a significant and positive impact. At the same time, however, there are a number of things that can be improved. More than once I have seen that there is not much flexibility in the Foundation's answers to the unique needs of the local authority.... More often than not, the Foundation demanded changes during the process, changes that prevented the completion of ongoing processes, which were therefore interrupted or halted."
(GPR, 2020)

Eli responds to the challenge of these criticisms with a broad perspective. "The GPR helps us to see that there is a tradeoff between our relationships and our *raison d'être* as a strategic foundation whose goal is to move the needle. We are here to catalyze change and it has been a successful endeavor so far, but success can be as problematic as failure. It comes at a price; you think it is all-encompassing, but it isn't." Reflecting on the reported weaknesses, there are two relevant points to remember. Firstly, not to forget the starting point. The Foundation selects strong organizations as partners, to promote maximum impact in a short time frame. For many of the larger partners, such as universities and colleges, the promotion of math and science is only one of their priorities and programs, each with its own managers. The Foundation

works closely with the person responsible for that field but is not looking to impact the overall organization. This is certainly the case in academia and local authorities where, with others, Trump was able to have more influence on the conduct of the network. The second point is the identification and attribution of credit. It takes time for partners to realize that they have begun to work differently, a process that can take years. When they do eventually notice the change, they may not recognize where the impetus originated. There's something good about that because it means they are taking ownership of the change.

For the Foundation, the true success-drivers are its partners, the people in the field, and as such, the credit is truly theirs. ■

* Jo left the Trump Foundation team in 2018 and still receives a handwritten Rosh Hashanah greeting every year from her former colleagues.

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¹ All quotes are anonymous quotes from grantees, taken from Grantee Perception Reports [GPR] conducted by the Center for Effective Philanthropy every other year with all partners and grantees of the Trump Foundation.