



Frequently Asked Questions

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Key Definitions

Fund: A named pool of money that has a specific and predetermined philanthropic purpose, along with discrete means of fulfilling that purpose and tracking related activity.

Gift: We refer to contributions that you make to your fund (or any other fund, including Stonewall’s Operating Fund) as a gift.

Grant: Financial contributions Stonewall pays directly to our grantee partners from any of our funds.

Fund Partner (or Advisor): That’s you! Or anyone else who establishes or otherwise has formal advisory privileges on a fund at Stonewall.

Grantee Partner: The projects and organizations we fund, either through Stonewall’s discretionary grantmaking or through advised grants from our fund partners.

DAF: Donor-advised fund, the most common fund type at Stonewall, which stands out due to its convenience and flexibility.



Planning Your Philanthropy

Why should I house my fund at Stonewall?

Stonewall is flexible, efficient, and community-based: when you call or email us, you're assured of connecting directly with someone who not only knows you, but also your philanthropic interests and goals. If you're interested, we'll also have ideas on how to best channel your giving to advance those goals. Our team is proactive, knowledgeable, and passionate about our work in ways you won't necessarily find at larger organizations.

Your initial gift will grow: funds are invested in a socially responsible manner that minimizes management fees without sacrificing earning potential. Stonewall is proud to partner with Trillium Asset Management to ensure your philanthropic dollars will work harder in order to do more good.

Additionally, you know that your fees aren't going to a corporate profit pool: they're reinvested to support critical, grassroots, capacity building work. They help us provide technical assistance to dozens of LGBTQ community organizations every year, and fuel our work to make not only New York City, but also our communities nationwide safer and more vibrant places for all LGBTQ people.

As a bonus, keeping your fund at Stonewall sends a message that you are a believer in and supporter of our mission and of the work we do at the intersection of LGBTQ liberation and racial justice.

What kind of fund should I open?

Stonewall staff will work with you to determine what type of fund will work best for your philanthropic goals. We will take a number of factors into account, with focus on the scale of your anticipated grantmaking, the type of organizations, projects, or individuals you'd like to support, and what processes and tools are needed in order to identify grant recipients. Donor-advised funds work best for fund partners who wish to make recommendations for grants to organizations at their own pace and discretion. Field of interest funds may work better for fund partners wishing to support certain causes with guidance or leadership from Stonewall staff. Designated funds could serve to provide consistent, sustained support for specific organizations as determined by the fund partner.



Setting Up Your Fund

What is your minimum to open a fund?

Most fund types, including donor-advised funds, field of interest funds, and designated funds, require a minimum \$5,000 gift to open. Specialized funds that have a dedicated application or vetting process designed by Stonewall generally start at a \$50,000 opening gift. We'll work with you to figure out which option makes the most sense to meet your goals.

Can I endow my fund?

Yes! Endowment is an option for any fund with a balance of \$30,000 or more, as long as earnings will cover projected grantmaking. Endowments are ideal for donors who would like their funds to exist in perpetuity and are a good option for those looking to establish a legacy of grantmaking.

Do I have to make the initial gift up front when setting up a fund or can I make payments?

All funds must be fully capitalized before any grantmaking activities can take place. We can work with you to establish your fund on a limited timeline if you need a month or two to make the initial contributions.



My employer has a matching gift program. May I use that to help bolster my fund?

Of course! Employer matches are welcome and many fund partners take advantage of them. Just be sure to check with your employer about their program's eligibility requirements prior to making your own gift.

Once I establish my fund, how soon is it available for grantmaking?

You can begin making grant recommendations as soon as your fund is fully capitalized. Stonewall Community Foundation processes grant recommendations on a rolling three-week cycle: your generosity will be felt by the organizations you support in less than a month, most of the time.

In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all grantmaking went paperless. Please note that this may add a few days to the process for first-time grantee partners, depending on their response time when contacted for ACH information.

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Using Your Fund

How can I use my fund (and how can't I)?

For the most part, your fund can be used to make grants to any 501(c)(3) non-profit organization you choose for general operating or program-specific gifts, depending on the type of fund and the parameters outlined in the initial Fund Agreement.

Donor-advised funds (DAFs) cannot be used to fulfill pledges, to support political candidates or parties, or to cover the costs of anything for which you'd receive a valued benefit. For example, you could not use your DAF to purchase tickets to an organization's gala, or a silent auction item, though you could use it at a gala to make an additional donation, for which you receive no benefit.

A grant from your DAF cannot be directly made for a specific individual's benefit (salary line, scholarship or tuition payments). Fund partners wishing to make scholarships must set up a specialized scholarship fund.

How do I make grants from my fund?

How do I add to my fund?

How do I check my fund history or current balance?

Grants, gifts, balances, and reports are all handled through our Fund Partner Portal and are easy to use. Staff are available for training and questions on the use of the Portal.



Fees and Finances

What fees does Stonewall assess and how?

An annual support fee, transferred directly from the fund, is to be paid to Stonewall in accordance with our then-current administrative policy. Support fees are determined by the level of service required to administer the fund, as well as by the amount of assets in the fund, and are initially set at the time the Fund Agreement is signed. Support fees are assessed annually based on a percentage of the fund's year-end balance. For DAFs and like funds, fees generally range from 0.50% – 1.25%, depending on the year-end fund balance and what gifts have been made to support Stonewall's Operating Fund. For specialized funds, fees start at 2% of the year-end fund balance, with a minimum of \$2,500 annually.

An additional \$250 fee applies to any fund that does not make a grant within the calendar year. This fee is transferred directly into our general grantmaking fund and helps ensure that all of Stonewall's funds and fund partners are actively part of the amazing annual work that serves our community.

Any unique expenses specific to the operation of a fund are to be paid from the assets of the fund, and other fees may apply under special circumstances. The most common are fees assessed for any gifts made to a fund via credit card. Other expenses may include costs associated with printing or mailing that go beyond normal administrative needs, or legal fees related to complex gifts (such as transfers of private stock or property).

Please note that Stonewall reserves the right to modify its policies regarding fees or minimums at any time and is committed to being transparent about any such changes.



How and where will my Fund be invested?

Beginning in 2020, SCF invests its funds with Trillium Asset Management, the nation's oldest investment advisor exclusively focused on sustainable and responsible investing. Trillium combines investment performance, along with environmental and social impact, into well-diversified investment portfolios, and lobbies the companies it invests in to move toward ethical employment and business practices.

We offer four different levels of pooled investing for our fund partners, which are designed based on balance and frequency of grantmaking. See our Investment Options Download for more detail on Trillium and investment pools available to our fund partners.

Have other questions? We're happy to answer them!

Please contact Michael Jones at (212) 457-1342 or Michael.jones@stonewallfoundation.org

