

## **The Basic Message Framework: Communicating the Value of Foundations**

**Framework Theme:** Foundations provide a wealth of solutions for the common wealth.

**Primary Message:** Foundations are the way people give back to their communities in ways that benefit all. They strategically focus giving to more effectively produce results for the public good. Foundations do more than fund essential services—they provide the long-term vision, resources and expertise to solve problems and enhance our quality of life. People giving back to society in the way they choose creates a wealth of solutions for the common wealth.

### **Supporting Messages:**

**Diverse interests produce diverse benefits.**

- *The rationale:* Foundations choose to invest in nonprofit causes that interest them, such as medical research, the arts, economic development, education, poverty and conservation. This creates diverse funding that touches society from bottom to top. The freedom to make strategic investments in effective nonprofit programs helps foundations develop a range of solutions and improvements that benefit all.

**Independent thinking helps solve problems.**

- *The rationale:* Independence from government, business and community politics allow foundations to combine the best ideas for the best solutions.

**Strategic giving that produces results.**

- *The rationale:* Foundations are a way for people to focus giving into strategic investments that produce results. Although foundations give money to charities, they are not charities. Foundations work with nonprofit organizations to correct problems and create enhancements to the quality of life for the benefit of all. They also hold themselves and their nonprofit grantees accountable for making a lasting impact on the public good.

**Collaborating to improve our quality of life.**

- *The rationale:* Foundations collaborate with government, the private sector, nonprofits and communities to identify problems and bring people together to work toward solutions.



**The persistence to get things done.**

- *The rationale:* Most foundations focus on a small number of issues over a long period of time—working to find a vaccine for malaria, finding the best ways to improve education or fight poverty. This persistence is invaluable, especially in a time when people get frustrated with solving complex problems or feel under-resourced to create social enhancements over time.

**We're accountable for producing results.**

- *The rationale:* Like every other donor, foundations have a right to decide where and how much to donate—but that comes with greater accountability for producing results. They must invest a percentage of their endowments in nonprofit organizations and causes, state their expenses—and make sure their nonprofit grantees are being efficient and effective in improving the public good.