

My Dear Fellow Givers,

I am absolutely elated to be working with you as you plan for #GivingTuesday! To give you a splash of context, I have spent the last 17 years creating and iterating on philanthropic resources that I wish I had available when I first embarked on my philanthropic journey as a foundation executive, board member, social entrepreneur, volunteer and philanthropist. My experience stems from founding and leading the following three philanthropy education organizations: Silicon Valley Social Venture Fund, The Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society (Stanford PACS) and LAAF.org. I also serve/have served on the boards of six foundations/grantmaking institutions. And, for the last 16 years, I have had the honor of being a lecturer in philanthropy at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business. Please know that I take the educational element of my 20-year career (yes, I began work when I was five) more seriously than anything else I do. Why? Because each and every one of you has the potential to create meaningful change during your lifetime. My #GivingTuesday resources will allow you to take your giving from transactional to transformational. I created them for all of us who want our giving to have the greatest possible impact.

You are here, reading this letter right now, for countless reasons, but a reason we all share is the calling embedded deep within your being. You cannot live without improving our world. Expressing your generosity makes your heart soar with joy. #GivingTuesday is a global giving day created for channeling our passion to drive positive social change. This November, we are presented with a unique opportunity to approach our philanthropy through a more strategic lens—allowing us to maximize the impact of our philanthropic gifts to address society's most pressing needs. Unlike our for-profit investments in which money matters most, in philanthropy individual lives are at stake. We have a moral imperative to approach #GivingTuesday—and all of our giving—with the utmost fidelity. As you prepare for #GivingTuesday and plan your future giving, I will give you the best of what I have learned about what works, what doesn't, and how we can all improve our giving. While we each approach #GivingTuesday with different viewpoints, beliefs, families, cultures, backgrounds, triumphs and challenges, we are united by our unwavering passion to serve others. Together, we will explore how you can best use your time, resources and exceptional talents to transform the lives of others.

In my book, *[Giving 2.0: Transform Your Giving and Our World](#)*, I define a philanthropist as anyone who gives anything—time, money, experience, skills, networks—in any amount to create a better world. The only thing anyone needs to have to be a philanthropist is generosity. That said, we all want our generosity to translate in the greatest amount of measurable good. Thus, I invite you to couple your generosity with reflection, research and analysis, and you too can be more than merely a giver. You can be a strategic philanthropist—regardless of how much you have to share with others. Because each of you is in a different stage of your philanthropic journey, I have created #GivingTuesday resources in two tracks—the Emerging Philanthropist Track for those who are new to or just beginning to apply the concept of strategic philanthropy and the Seasoned Philanthropist Track for more experienced philanthropists who are looking to evolve and grow their philanthropic strategy. All of the resources you will need to give more meaningfully on #GivingTuesday, as well as additional information on how to take your entire giving portfolio from transactional to transformational, can be found (free of cost to you) at [LAAF.org](#).

Right now, every one of us has the potential to be a high impact philanthropist—and my goal for each of you, is to amplify whatever it is you have to give to create maximum social good. Regardless of where you are in your philanthropic journey, these #GivingTuesday materials will allow you to transform your giving from having momentary meaning to becoming monumentally meaningful—both to you and the organizations and individuals you aspire to serve.

In giving spirit and with excitement about your commitment,

Laura Arrillaga-Andreessen