



Teaching philanthropy

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The paper focuses on "*student philanthropy*", a learning module that integrates charitable giving within traditional academic courses. Teaching philanthropy allows students to strengthen their involvement within society and better understand the non-profit and philanthropic sector.

The authors evaluate a student philanthropy module at the University of Kent (UK) and reflect on how to ensure its success. Since the module is one of the first of its kind in the UK, it provides key insights at both the local and international levels.

Students who have completed the student philanthropy module more easily recognized their actions as philanthropic and had a better understanding of philanthropic processes, which helped build trust and transparency. This gave them the confidence to become more involved in their community. However, for the module to be successful, it is necessary to safeguard the discussion space and ensure it is as diverse as possible in terms of cultural backgrounds, while also seeking input from a variety of practitioners.

[#StudentPhilanthropy](#) [#Education](#) [#UK](#) [#NewGeneration](#) [#CivicEngagement](#)

Background

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Context



- Student philanthropy **improves students' civic outcomes** by developing a wide range of skills ranging from **collective decision-making, listening to diverse perspectives, awareness of social issues** and **getting involved in social action** to address social issues.
- Past studies have shown that **student philanthropy has long-term effects**. After completing a student philanthropy module, individuals are **more likely to volunteer** and to **serve on boards** than the rest of the population.
- Evidence shows that student philanthropy programs are **transferable to different countries**. Yet, some students benefit more from the programmes than others, mostly female students, older and in helping professions.
- Yet, studies have also raised concerns as programs on civic outcomes, including student philanthropy, sometimes fail to challenge the status quo and do not adopt a critical social justice point of view. Hence, it is **crucial to ensure critical thinking within student philanthropy programs**.

ERNOP Research Note

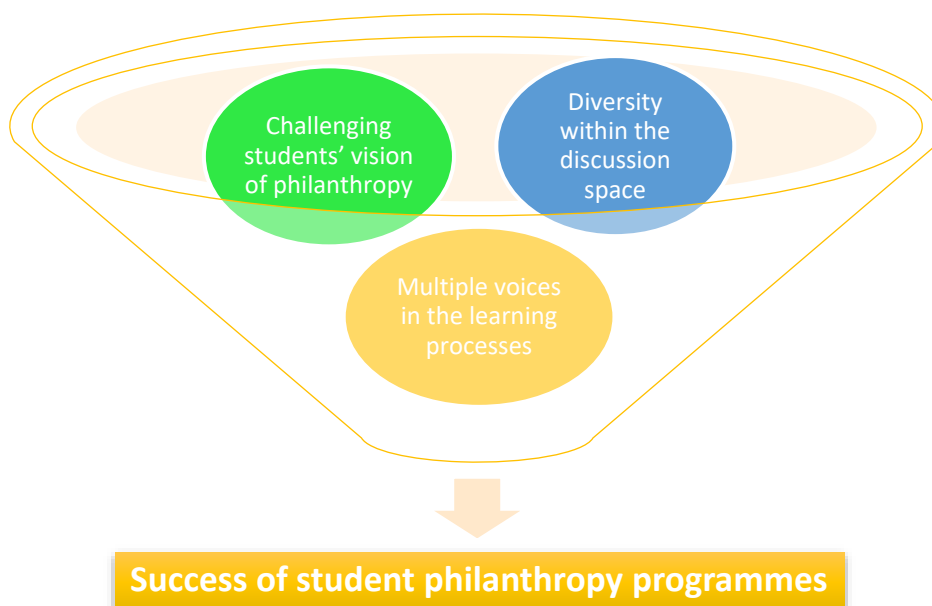
Academic articles on philanthropy through a practitioner lens

Take aways & Learnings



- The study was carried out with fifteen **students** who completed the module. Before, during and after their **participation**, all students completed a “**reflective journal**” on which they commented on the different aspects of the programme. After the module, the authors interviewed the students via four in-depth semi-structured **interviews**.
- The module consisted of eleven lectures on different subjects which were systematically followed by a workshop exercise. The final aim of the programme was for students to collectively make a **real giving decision**. Hence, the module ended with students distributing funding of £1500 to local community organizations.
- Through reflections on the definition of philanthropy, most students realized that they had philanthropic behaviours but did not necessarily recognize it as such. Discussions underlined that **individual definitions of philanthropy highly depended on communities** hence that philanthropy is unseen in some communities.
- Students understood that the **awareness of social issues is interconnected with cultural background**. Moreover, the intervention of different philanthropic practitioners enabled students to build a **deep understanding of institutional processes**, which helped build trust and transparency. Having **a diversity of perspectives around the table gave ground to the final giving decision**.

Figure 1: The three factors essential for the success of student philanthropy programmes.



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