

# Giving Pledge FAQ

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## What is the Giving Pledge?

- The Giving Pledge is an effort to help address society's most pressing problems by inviting the wealthiest American families and individuals to commit to giving more than half of their wealth to philanthropy or charitable causes either during their lifetime or after their death.

## Who can pledge?

- The Giving Pledge is specifically focused on billionaires or those who would be billionaires if not for their giving.
- The idea takes its inspiration from efforts in the past and at present that encourage and recognize givers of all financial means and backgrounds. We are inspired by the example set by millions of Americans who give generously (and often at great personal sacrifice) to make the world a better place.
- At first, the focus will be on the wealthiest families and individuals in the United States, but the effort may eventually extend worldwide.

## Why a pledge?

- We hope that a group coming forward to be explicit about their intentions for giving the majority of their wealth away will help:
  - Inspire conversations, discussions, and action, not just about how much but also for what purposes / to what end; and
  - Bring together those committed to this kind of giving to exchange knowledge on how to do this in the best possible way.
- We live in an exciting time for philanthropy where innovative approaches and advances in technology have redefined what's possible. Grassroots movements are proving every day how a single individual, regardless of wealth, can make a lasting impact on the lives of others.

## Why go public with a pledge?

- The goal is to talk about giving in an open way and create an atmosphere that can draw more people into philanthropy.

## How does the Giving Pledge work?

- Each family or individual who chooses to pledge will make this statement publicly, along with a statement explaining their decision to pledge.
- At an annual event, those who take the pledge will come together to share ideas and learn from each other.

## What will people pledge to?

- The pledge does not involve pooling money or supporting a particular set of causes or organizations. The pledge asks only that the individual give the majority of their wealth to philanthropic causes or charitable organizations either before or after their death.

- The pledge does not solicit support for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation or any other specific cause or organization. The pledge encourages signatories to find their own unique ways to give that inspire them personally and benefit society.

### **Will the Giving Pledge grant money to organizations?**

- Not directly. Each person who takes the Giving Pledge makes an individual decision about which particular causes or organizations they wish to support.

### **How much should people give?**

- Each family will decide that for themselves. This pledge asks for a commitment of a majority. Many have and will continue to exceed it.

### **Once someone pledges, how will you make sure they follow through?**

- The pledge is a moral commitment to give, not a legal contract.

### **How did the idea come about?**

- The idea of the Giving Pledge came from many great conversations that Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett had with philanthropists in the U.S. and abroad. With their ideas and input, this idea developed into the Giving Pledge.

### **How long will the pledge last?**

- Our hope is that the effort will continue for generations to come.

### **Will the pledge be international?**

- For now, the focus is on the wealthiest families and individuals in the United States. There have been enthusiastic responses to the Giving Pledge around the world. Buffett and the Gateses have begun conversations with billionaires from other countries to learn about their philanthropy efforts and discuss what has worked in those countries.

### **What is happening in China and India?**

- The Gateses and Buffett have met with many of China's and India's wealthiest business and philanthropy leaders, exchanged ideas and best practices about how to make the greatest impact with philanthropy, and heard about successful examples of philanthropy in each country. In turn, they also shared examples of what they have learned as American philanthropists. They hope to continue this dialogue with others interested in furthering the discussion about giving and philanthropy.

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