

Joffe Charitable Trust, Strategy 2020 - 2025

13th February 2020

1. Introduction

This document presents the Joffe Charitable Trust's updated strategy for the period 2020 – 2025. It was approved by the board on 24th Jan 2020.

Our overall approach will be to build on the strategic framework and foundations put in place during 2019. We will continue the same “funder+” approach focused on the same two focus areas, described below. We will continue to be guided by the principles that our founder, Joel Joffe, worked by:

- Inspiring others: the Trust encourages individuals to believe in themselves and do more for public benefit.
- Effectiveness: the Trust supports work that has realistic potential to make a significant difference to people in poverty.
- Leadership: the Trust works with and encourages leaders who have the potential to achieve great results.
- Distinctiveness: the Trust uses its assets to make a distinct contribution to wider efforts.
- Flexibility: the Trust considers how it can achieve the most impact and adapts its approach accordingly.

2. Mission, focus areas and objectives

We have updated our mission statement to read:

We support civil society leaders to build a fairer world, with opportunity for all. We encourage people to do as much as possible to realise human rights and reduce poverty in lower income countries. We particularly focus on tackling the systemic causes of poverty.

Our two focus areas are:

- a) Fighting corruption and promoting tax justice
- b) Building stronger not-for-profit organisations

Within these, we have set the following objectives for the five years 2020 - 2025:

- To work with civil society leaders to build effective movements that position the UK as a leading positive influence in the fields of global tax justice and financial integrity.
- To support new and existing civil society leaders to build effective and sustainable non-profit organisations that strengthen partnership between the UK and lower income countries and tackle the causes of poverty.

We believe these objectives enable us to make the maximum contribution from our limited resources. They build on our history and strengths. They both have the potential to achieve disproportionate impact.

The objectives position us to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG 16 on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions and SDG 17 on Global Partnerships, including the targets to:

- Significantly reduce illicit financial flows,
- Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms,
- Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions,
- Strengthen domestic resource mobilisation.

As a UK registered charity, we are regulated by the Charity Commission and work within their guidance and the relevant legal framework. We pursue the following charitable purposes defined by the 2011 Charities Act: the prevention or relief of poverty, the advancement of citizenship and human rights, the promotion of the sound administration of the law, the promotion of ethical standards of conduct and compliance with the law in the public and private sectors, and other relevant purposes.

Focus Area 1: Fighting corruption and promoting tax justice

We support work that fights corruption and promotes tax justice in order to build fairer economies and governments that work in the interests of all citizens, in particular the marginalised and poorest.

We recognise that these issues are global with substantial links between people and policies in higher and lower income countries. Capital is internationally mobile, while legal frameworks are nationally bounded and enforced. The UK plays an influential global role as an international financial centre with its own unique history. While the UK enables a great deal of good in the world, it also enables substantial illicit financial flows, corruption and tax abuse. The UK has the potential to play a leading positive role globally. This could be achieved in three ways: (a) reducing the flow of illicit funds that come through the UK and are enabled by UK advisors, (b) setting examples and standards for positive reform domestically, that could have international application and (c) playing an active and globally responsible role in international institutions and processes.

In order to achieve this, we support work in areas such as ending the use of anonymous shell companies, enhancing transparency and investigations, strengthening enforcement, reforming the taxation of multinational companies & private wealth, and tackling tax avoidance & evasion.

Civil society has a crucial role to play in promoting this agenda, using the full range of approaches to drive change such as: generating knowledge, policy advocacy, public campaigning & communications, technical support, strategic coordination and others.

Tax lies at the heart of the social contract between citizen and state, mediated through the government. Some well organised and wealthy actors vigorously oppose the agenda outlined above. Astute approaches will be required to engage effectively with all major stakeholders and decision makers, including government. This links closely to work to address political corruption and ensure that the political process itself is as fair as possible and operates in the public interest, rather than being unduly influenced by private interests.

No single civil society organisation will achieve success on its own. Progress will come from building effective coalitions and sustained effort that can take advantage of specific moments for progress.

We will work with civil society leaders to build the long term capacities, organisations and alliances required for success. We will fund individual organisations that meet our criteria (and charitable purposes), in order to become stronger, more effective and more sustainable. We will maintain a light touch strategic dialogue with them, recognising the inherent power imbalance that results from our role as a donor and not taking up too much of their time.

We will fund coordinating work that helps develop shared strategies and effective alliances, including with wider movements such as the economic, social, and climate justice movements. We will actively encourage coordination and collaboration among organisations working on corruption and tax abuse, including donors.

We will work with others to mobilise additional resources for this work, including engaging with the large US foundations which are so significant in this landscape. This could potentially include participating in US-based donor coordination activities, such as the Transparency and Accountability Initiative.

We will continue to develop our network and analysis of the fields, and convene strategic meetings where they add value to collective efforts.

Focus Area 2: Building stronger not-for-profit organisations

We believe that small groups of committed people can have a disproportionate impact on realising human rights and reducing poverty. The Trust has a long history of supporting people to do extraordinary work, including setting up new organisations that tackle many aspects of global justice. This has often included encouraging people to have the self belief to start new initiatives.

We believe that most social change needs sustained effort, based on long term relationships and a deep understanding of the issues and stakeholders involved. So we help people turn their ideas into effective organisations. We support new and existing leaders to create organisations that combine external impact and organisational sustainability.

We recognise that there is no blue print for starting up new organisations and that running a small non-profit is very demanding. However, there is a wealth of

experience to build from. We support leaders to build effective organisations, learning and adapting as they go, including by developing new skills and analysis from their experience. Where appropriate, we support organisations to work together and merge where this will generate improved efficiency or impact.

We will continue to support people to (a) start up new non-profit organisations, when we are convinced of the value they could achieve, and (b) move small non-profit organisations (with an annual income of up to £1.5m) up to a greater level of impact and / or sustainability.

We will support initiatives that increase diversity in the UK non-profit sector, with leadership from minority groups including diaspora groups. We believe this has the potential to reduce division and polarisation within the UK. It can also influence civil society relationships between the UK and lower income countries, strengthening mutual understanding and partnership while moving away from paternalistic charity.

We will provide flexible grants that can be used for back office activities such as operational management, fundraising and developing strategy. We will act as a sympathetic sounding board on strategic issues, where that is helpful. We will help identify other donors and introduce people to them. We will convene people running similar organisations for mutual support and focused workshops on areas such as fundraising, performance management and governance. We will collaborate with other donors and initiatives that support and strengthen small UK non-profit organisations, with the aim of strengthening resources for the sector as a whole.

3. Grants

Our major activity will continue to be making grants in our two focus areas.

We will make grants that are as unrestricted as possible for up to £30k per year, for up to three years. We expect to make approximately 20 - 25 new grants in each year. Each grant will be shaped in ways that are appropriate for the specific circumstances of the grantee.

We will continue our personal approach to grant-making, investing in getting to know grantees and encouraging them on a personal level. We will provide applicants and grantees with a simple, positive and encouraging experience of working with us, in line with our principles. We will provide grantees with timely feedback on the reports we receive, demonstrating an engagement with the issues and support for the individuals involved.

Grant decisions will normally be made at three board meetings throughout the year. In exceptional circumstances, grants may be made in between board meetings, in line with our existing policies. We do not envisage any significant change in our [grants processes or our grant-making criteria](#). We will continue to reserve our funding for initiatives that have high potential and are hard to fund, where our funding can make a real difference.

We expect that the vast majority of organisations we fund will be based in the UK, including all grants made under Focus Area 2. This allows us to build relationships with grantees and make better grant decisions, based on a better understanding of their context.

We recognise that there is scope for civil society to improve how it works in the UK in order to tackle social polarisation and enhance inclusion and opportunity across the country. We will contribute to these wider efforts, including by encouraging grantees to enhance their diversity, equity and inclusion.

We will look for appropriate opportunities to fund work that brings organisations together, so they achieve more collectively and can learn from each other.

4. Convening

We will continue to convene events where there is clear potential to add value through collective action and alignment with our mission and focus areas.

We will build on our two-day residential strategic retreat for UK civil society leaders in the fields of tax justice and corruption. We will also run a small number of capacity building workshops for small non-profits with a focus on areas such as: fundraising, governance, strategy and monitoring.

We will work with others to keep costs and participants' time commitments low. We will also respond flexibly to new circumstances as they arise, potentially convening additional events if necessary.

5. Additional support

We recognise that the UK's new government and Brexit create significant uncertainty for UK civil society organisations working in our focus areas. Where appropriate, we will work with civil society leaders to help identify opportunities and mitigate threats through collective action.

As discussed above, we will build on our position as the most engaged UK donor in the fields of tax and corruption. Our strategic retreat will generate an agenda for collective action, in pursuit of our first objective. We will follow up this agenda, encouraging and facilitating key actors to turn plans into progress. This is expected to include: supporting on-going dialogue and coordination mechanisms, one-to-one strategic dialogue with key organisations, helping co-develop plans for additional capacity that are identified as a priority and encouraging other donors to get more involved.

We will continue to encourage the individuals involved in running organisations supported through Focus Area 2. We will provide strategic advice to grantees and appropriate applicants, including commenting on draft plans and funding applications. In addition, we will signpost carefully selected sources of capacity

building support, with a secondary aim of strengthening this market for the sector as a whole.

We will promote grantees' work and support carefully selected campaigns that align with our mission. We will continue to build relationships with donors working in related areas and look for opportunities to leverage our work by collaborating with them.

6. South Africa

We will work with the Canon Collins ELA Trust on the Joel Joffe Scholarship scheme. We expect to review progress and adapt the scheme in the light of any lessons. We will help the scholars understand more about Joel's legacy and inspire them to take it on and breathe new life into it.

We will maintain our historical links to South Africa and consider making a small number of grants to South African organisations, where we can assure ourselves that they would be high quality. This is likely to be in Focus Area 1. We believe this would have the benefit of strengthening our international outlook and helping identify international linkages in the fields of corruption and tax justice.

7. Operational arrangements

We will continue to run as a lean organisation, with no significant changes to our operational or staffing arrangements. We will publish our grants data to the 360 Giving standard. We will collect and publish feedback on our work from our grantees and other stakeholders.

Our total operational budget is expected to be approximately £1m per year, with 75-80% of that spent on grant payments. We expect to spend into our capital assets at the rate of about £350k per year, putting us on course to spend out the Trust's assets over approximately 15 – 20 years. We will review our actual assets and our strategy when we approach the final phase of the Trust's work. We will invest our assets in ways that are consistent with our purpose and meet our financial requirements.