

Narrative Change: Tips & Tools for Grantmakers



THE DAVID & LUCILE

Packard Foundation

To support teams at the Foundation who are thinking about and funding narrative change, the Communications Team engaged the FrameWorks Institute to develop *Guiding Narrative Change: Considerations for the Philanthropic Field*. This report offers grantmakers and communicators practical ways to fund and foster lasting narrative shifts. Read the full report [here](#).

Here are 10 key insights from the report to get you started.

WHAT IT IS



Shaping How Society Thinks

Narrative change shapes public discourse, thinking, and decisions by using recurring patterns of meaning across stories to redefine how an issue or group is perceived.

WHY IT MATTERS



Framing Shapes Action

The way issues are framed shapes how people think, feel, and act, determining which solutions gain public support and drive systems change.

WHEN TO USE



Determine Your End Goal

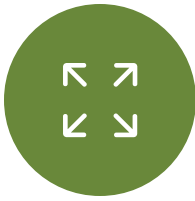
A new narrative shouldn't be your end goal; its impact should be. It can shift mindsets, reshape social norms, and transform systems. Without clear goals, it's difficult to develop, drive, or measure a narrative's success.



Big Issues, Public Interest, and Strong Storytelling

A narrative change strategy makes sense when an issue is broad, salient, suited to storytelling, when existing narratives hinder progress, and when there is a strong network of partners to drive the effort.

HOW TO DO IT



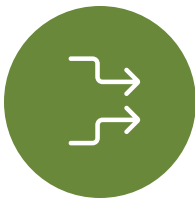
Narrative Change Takes Time and Scale

Narrative change is a long-term, large-scale effort requiring sustained coordination and investment, but when successful, it can reshape public mindsets, policymaking, and social norms with lasting impact.



Plan, Collaborate, and Adapt

Effective narrative change requires early strategic planning, collaboration, and adaptability to navigate uncertainties, align with broader efforts, and ensure sufficient resources for sustained impact.



Avenues for Impact

Successful narrative change requires a multifaceted strategy, combining research, policy advocacy, grassroots organizing, cultural strategy, strategic communications, partnerships, professional learning, and ongoing evaluation.



Find and Fund an Anchor Organization

To drive lasting narrative change, funders should support a central organization with deep expertise, collaborative capacity, a multifaceted strategy, and strong values while prioritizing long-term sustainability—committing to at least a decade of investment.



Progress in Stages

Narrative change is a process that unfolds across long time horizons, starting with an emergent narrative product and ultimately leading to achieving narrative dominance.



Strengthen the Narrative Ecosystem

Sustained impact comes from funding narrative infrastructure—supporting backbone organizations, partnerships, and capacity-building to amplify change over time.

