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Instruction Manual



GIVING GAMES



Introduction

The **Giving Games Instruction Manual** is designed to provide our network of facilitators with guidance on how to run successful Giving Games. It captures many of the lessons we have collected from hundreds of Giving Games and feedback from facilitators all over the world. As we learn more we will add it to the Instruction Manual. Your reports after the Giving Games are essential to this process. We have designed the Instruction Manual so it fits your needs. You can read the Summary for a quick overview of the key takeaways, use the Table of Contents to find an answer to a specific question, or read the manual start to finish to understand each step in the Giving Game process and how they relate to each other.

Your key contact point for all enquiries about Giving Games is Kathryn Mecrow-Flynn. You can reach her here <kathryn.mecrow@thelifeyoucansave.org>.

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Summary

1. **Define your aims and objectives:** You will want to discuss with participants core concepts and provide them with resources they can use to practice high impact philanthropy. You are also likely to have other goals related to your specific circumstances. The more explicit you can be in defining the outcomes you want to see, the more likely your Giving Game will be to produce those outcomes.
2. **Tailor your Giving Game to the audience:** We provide ready-to-go materials for a Giving Game design we've found works well with most audiences. If you choose to customize it, only do so if it makes sense for your audience. For example, if participants are members of a student entrepreneurship club, you may wish to feature charities that promote economic empowerment. If you decide not to use the ready-to-go materials, be sure to review our tips on customizing your Giving Game and selecting appropriate charities. If you are running a Giving Game sponsored by The Life You Can Save, please reach out to us before running a customized Giving Game.
3. **The Life You Can Save may be able to sponsor your Giving Game:** Giving Games prioritize sponsoring events that have a clear vision of how a Giving Game can generate value. Frequently, but not exclusively, this is through the introductory-level promotion of high impact philanthropy and effective nonprofits.
4. **Prepare ahead of time:** Practice what you plan on saying to the participants, and try to anticipate questions they might raise. Giving Games are happy to work with you in the run-up to your Giving Game.
5. **Don't forget your end ask:** The standard Giving Game ask is to direct people to check out The Life You Can Save, Giving Games, and our resources. The Giving Game highlights to people the complexities and opportunities in high impact philanthropy so

we want to prioritize introducing them to tools that can help. You can make additional end asks depending on the context, for example [One For The World \(OFTW\)](#) Giving Games Platforms feature an opportunity to redirect to the pledge information sites.

6. **Survey administration is essential in all sponsored Giving Games:** Every sponsored Giving Game should use our [Giving Games Platform](#) and we would be grateful if anyone using our model generally can assist us to track our impact. We can assist you in any aspect of setting up the [Giving Games Platform](#) and are happy to provide customised options. [Instructions can be found in our resource library.](#)
7. **Treat participants with respect:** You are responsible for making sure the participants are treated with respect during the Giving Game. Encouraging people to challenge their own thinking is fine, but it should be done in a way that isn't hostile or overly confrontational. We suggest reviewing our tips for moderating the discussion and responses to concerns participants might raise.
8. **Structure the voting strategically:** Voting is managed through our [Giving Games Platform](#). We added a preliminary vote at the beginning of the Giving Game, when participants have only heard a brief "fundraising style" pitch on the non-profits. This provides us with further evidence on the impact of Giving Games on the donation choices of participants. It also allows participants to monitor changes in their attitudes. Before and after voting is not applicable for Speed Giving Games. For these games, it's important to structure the voting so people can't see how previous participants have voted, otherwise, they are likely to vote for the least popular charity "to be fair." If people vote by putting a chip in a jar, make sure the jars aren't clear.
9. **Take advantage of ready-made Giving Game materials:** [Our Giving Game resource library has comprehensive materials for well-tested Giving Games.](#) The resource library also includes presentations about a variety of specific charities. If you make your own materials instead of using what's provided, be sure to spend roughly the same amount of time presenting each charity so that one doesn't appear to be the favorite.
10. **During group discussions:** Break into smaller groups if possible. We recommend breaking up into smaller discussion groups if there are more than ten participants. Groups of five people work very well. Smaller groups will allow each person to be more engaged in the discussion. If you want, you can have people switch groups to hear new perspectives midway through the discussion.
11. **After your Giving Game, fill out a post-game report on the [Giving Games Administration Platform](#):** These reports help us collect data and feedback in a standardized way. This is really important to us and we appreciate your help! If The Life You Can Save sponsors your Game, this report is also how you tell us which donation to make.

12. **Be a good brand ambassador for The Life You Can Save:** By facilitating a Giving Game, you commit to representing The Life You Can Save's brand accurately and respectfully. This includes being respectful and aware of how you depict people and regions affected by poverty- these [guidelines](#) provide good advice on how to do this.

Funding your Giving Game

Sponsorship from The Life You Can Save

We often get inquiries from people who want to run a Giving Game but aren't sure how to pay for the donation. The Life You Can Save can generally provide sponsorship for Giving Games, as long as they meet the following requirements:

1. At least a 1/3 ratio of the featured charities must be from [The Life You Can Save's recommended list](#).
2. All featured charities must be tax-deductible in the US.¹ We can occasionally make exceptions for this requirement. To see if that is possible in your case please include a brief description of what you'd like to do in your application for funding.
3. You are required to help us collect evidence on our impact, feedback, and conduct post-game follow-up via one of the following options:
 - **For speed Giving Games:** You are required to circulate and solicit email addresses for The Life You Can Save and Giving Games mailing list and your group's mailing list if applicable. We have a [paper form](#) template here. You can also link people to the [Giving Games Newsletter](#) and [The Life You Can Save Newsletter](#).
 - **For Giving Game workshops:** Please administer the Giving Games Platform during your Giving Game. This option requires that people have a way to access the online survey and five to ten minutes to complete it. You should make sure you have a stable internet connection and printed copies as back-up, if applicable.
4. We strongly suggest you direct people to The Life You Can Save and as part of your end ask for additional resources on giving effectively. You can propose other actions as applicable.
5. You must fill out a post-game report afterwards to provide the feedback that helps us improve future Giving Games.

¹ We'd rather not have this limitation in place, it is just the result of the structure we use to disperse donations to the winning charities. All of The Life You Can Save's recommended charities are tax-deductible in the US except for the Fred Hollows Foundation. You can check whether an organization meets this requirement by searching for it [here](#); if you can find the charity, it's okay. We can also accommodate charities that are tax-deductible in the US through fiscal sponsorship arrangements (e.g. GiveWell regranting to SCI).

6. You are required to be respectful to the participants and be a good ambassador for The Life You Can Save and its values.
7. You are required to review the summary of this document which provides a quick overview of best practices

To request sponsorship and complete a post-game report, please use the [Giving Games Administration Platform](#).

Sponsoring a Giving Game

Support from donors is critical for our philanthropy education efforts! You can make a donation to provide Giving Game sponsorship [here](#). Sponsoring Giving Games offers an exciting opportunity to multiply your impact. All of your money will end up in the hands of outstanding charities, but by letting others donate your money and learn in the process, you help influence how they give in the future. Donations to this donor advised fund are tax-deductible in the US, and will be used to sponsor Giving Games around the world.

How much money should the participants donate?

The Life You Can Save generally provides \$10 per person if the participants are college students, and \$20 or more per person for older or professional audiences. This assumes a 60+ minute Game, for a 30 minute Game we'd cut these levels in half.

These are just rough guidelines that you can adjust to your particular circumstances. Note that The Life You Can Save is willing to provide larger amounts for particularly high value Games, and we strongly encourage other sponsors to do the same.

Designing your Giving Game

[We offer comprehensive and well-tested materials for a "ready to run" Giving Game](#). Using these materials or tweaking them to suit your needs will vastly simplify the process of designing your Giving Game. Designing your Giving Game can be an iterative process. As you get more specifics about who your audience will be and how much time you have, you may need to revisit your ideas about which charities to use or other elements of the design. This section walks you through each aspect of the process.

Goal Setting

The first step in designing your Giving Game is defining what you're trying to accomplish. The specific takeaways you'll want participants to get from the experience will depend on your particular audience and circumstances. The goals you define will help guide the rest of the design process. Your goals may include things like:

- Communicating specific ideas to the audience
- Providing an environment for the participants to explore their values
- Specific voting outcomes
- Participants engaging in follow-up behavior after the Giving Game

Planning a timeline

As you plan your Giving Game, you'll want to develop a timeline to help you allocate your time budget. You can use the sample timeline below as a template. Remember to allow some buffer throughout the process to account for things like people filtering in late

Sample Timeline for 75 Minute GG (featuring Playpumps, GiveDirectly and Against Malaria Foundation):

- Introduction to the Giving Game and pre-survey (5 minutes)
- Preliminary fundraising pitches and vote (5 minutes)
- Section 1: The value of "Impactful" Giving (10 minutes)
- Playpumps and "What could Playpumps have done differently?" (5 minutes)
- The value of "Intentional" Giving (10 minutes)
- Charity 2 and 3 (10 minutes)
- The Value of "Informed" Giving (10 minutes)
- Group Discussion (10 minutes)
- Complete post survey, view Airtable and Announce Winner (5 minutes)
- Recap, Q&A debrief, and end-game asks (5 minutes)

How to find participants for your Giving Game

You need people to participate in your Giving Game, but where can you find them? Different sorts of facilitators have access to different audiences, so we've organized our advice accordingly. [You can see promotional materials in the resource library.](#)

Advice for groups or individuals promoting effective giving

Giving Games are currently experimenting with the hypothesis that we can have the most impact if we focus on introductory audiences. To this end, we will be directing much of our efforts on sponsoring and supporting Giving Games that can demonstrate i) An audience with relatively little exposure to our core ideas and ii) Scalable models for Giving Games that can reach many people and redirect them to more detailed materials or groups, for example One For the World (OFTW) and The Life You Can Save.

You can run a Giving Game with friends or family, groups you're a part of, or reach out to local groups. You can also use a Giving Game as a way to find members for a new group you're starting.

- Friends and family

- Your church group (see [here](#) for materials you can use to run a Giving Game with a religious group)
- Your book club
- A local secular, skeptic, or humanist group
 - Two umbrella groups, the [Secular Student Alliance](#) and the United Coalition of Reason, each recommend Giving Games as an activity for their affiliate groups. You can find a customized Giving Game for secular audiences via the link at the bottom of [this page](#), and a list of SSA and COR affiliate groups you can approach [here](#) and [here](#) respectively.
- Your employer
- A local Unitarian Universalist congregation
 - The Unitarian Universalist Association includes Giving Games as one of the ways their 1000+ member congregations can engage with questions about giving. You can approach a [local congregation](#) and offer to help run a [Giving Game that's customized for UU audiences](#).
- Local organizations (e.g. Rotary Club, League of Women Voters, etc.)

Advice for student groups

Campuses offer numerous opportunities to find Giving Game participants. You can use the groups below as the sole audience for your Giving Game, or you can use them to help promote a Giving Game that's open to the public.

- Student organizations sympathetic to doing good (e.g. a social justice organization), that might find the experience interesting (e.g. a debate club), or whose members might have an high capacity for future giving (e.g. an investment club)
- Student organizations you're a member of (these don't have to be related to charity- the first ever Giving Game was conducted with a facilitator's a cappella group.)
- Greek Life organizations often have a long-standing interest in philanthropy. We have [advice, instructions and materials](#) customized for Giving Games with Greek organizations.
- Ask teachers to incorporate a Giving Game into their classes. Relevant subject areas include Philosophy, Psychology, Economics, Decision Theory, Health.
- A campus religious group (see [here](#) for materials you can use to run a Giving Game with a religious group)
- Run a Speed Giving Game at your Student Activities Fair to stand out from other organizations and attract new members.
- Friends, roommates, or people who live in your dorm
- A local secular, skeptic, or humanist group
 - Two umbrella groups, the [Secular Student Alliance](#) and the United Coalition of Reason, each recommend Giving Games as an activity for their affiliate groups. You can find a customized Giving Game for secular audiences via the link at the

bottom of [this page](#), and a list of SSA and COR affiliate groups you can approach [here](#) and [here](#) respectively.

- A local Unitarian Universalist congregation
 - The Unitarian Universalist Association includes Giving Games as one of the ways their 1000+ member congregations can engage with questions about giving. You can approach a [local congregation](#) and offer to help run a [Giving Game that's customized for UU audiences](#).

Advice for educators

Giving Games can be incorporated into classes in numerous subject areas including Philosophy, Psychology, Economics, and Health (and we're always open to creative ideas to apply Giving Games in new areas). We recommend you check out the Giving Game Resources on Nicole Sutton's Accounting project. Some of the concepts Giving Games can be used to explore:

- Ethics
- Opportunity cost
- Utilitarianism
- Cognitive biases
- Global health
- Medical ethics
- Optimization
- Public policy
- Decision Theory
- Group dynamics
- Global development

Advice for employers

A workplace Giving Game is a great way to provide your employees with a fun experience with a positive social impact. Workplace applications include:

- Team building exercises
- CSR workshops
- Activity for a day devoted to charity or social impact
- Allow employees to determine where the company's charitable contributions are given
- Exercise to allow employees to determine where the company's pro bono work should be allocated
- Identify a charity that resonates with employees for long-term relationship
- Unofficial activity for interested co-workers

Advice for school administrators

Options for using Giving Games in school programming outside of the classroom include:

- New student orientation programs
- Residential life programs
- Incorporation into lecture or lecture series
- Opportunity for honors students and/or student leadership

We recommend you check out the Giving Game Resources on the Charity Elections project.

Finding participants for Speed Giving Games

To find participants for a Speed Giving Game, set up a table in a high-traffic area and ask passerby “Do you want to donate someone else’s money to charity?” This has proven to be the most successful “opening line”. Examples of high traffic areas you can use:

- University dining hall
- Student center
- Student activities fair
- Public park

Creating an Introduction for your Giving Game

We offer comprehensive and well-tested materials for a “ready to run” Giving Game that include an introductory presentation. Using these materials or tweaking them to suit your needs will vastly simplify the creating an introduction for your Giving Game.

The basics

You’ll want to start your Giving Game by welcoming the participants and giving a brief introduction to the session. You’ll want to explain what they’ll be doing (choosing which charity to give to). You will also want to ask participants to complete the first question on the Giving Games Platform. In general, you’ll want your introduction to accomplish the following things:

- Welcome the participants
- Explain the premise of the Giving Game
- Complete the first question on Giving Games Platform on attitudes to charitable giving.

The specifics of your introduction should depend on the particulars of your Giving Game.

Additional Helpful resources

- Suggested Exercise: Test your charity intuition; Many people think that donors don’t need to inform themselves because they can use common sense and intuition to identify which programs work. A great way to show them how hard this can be is to run a quick

[interactive Quiz testing people's intuition about which programs work](#) (alternative quiz discussing other interventions [here](#)).

Video Resources

You can incorporate videos into your Introduction in a variety of ways. You can have a longer video serve as the bulk of your introduction, or use a shorter video to elaborate a specific point in your own presentation. We've collected a library of video resources covering numerous topics related to effective giving.

- **Introductions to high impact philanthropy**
 - Peter Singer's TED Talk: [The Why and How of Effective Altruism](#) [Note: Subtitles are available in 31 languages]
 - Beth Barnes' TEDx Talk: [Effective Altruism](#)
- **Effective Giving**
 - Kat Rosqueta TEDx Talk: [Amplify the Money You Give](#)
 - Dan Palotta TED Talk: [The Way We Think About Charity is Dead Wrong](#)
 - Katherine Fulton TED Talk: [You are the Future of Philanthropy](#)
 - [Expert Philanthropy Insight Videos](#). These short (2-3 minute) videos share philanthropy experts' thoughts on specific issues including Non-Profit Evaluation (Elie Hassenfeld, GiveWell co-founder), Philanthropy and Technology (Lucy Bernholz, Visiting Scholar Stanford PACS), and Social Entrepreneurship (Leila Janah, founder and CEO of Samasource)

Picking the featured charities

Deciding how many charities to feature

We suggest using 2-4 charities as a rule of thumb for a Giving Game lasting 60-90 minutes. If you have 50 minutes or less, you should probably only feature two charities to conserve time. If your Game is particularly long or will stretch over multiple sessions, more than four charities is fine. If you expect participants to quickly dismiss one or more options, you should be sure to have enough viable options available to produce a compelling discussion.

Deciding which charities to feature

You're free to feature whichever charities you like in your Giving Game, though as a reminder, there are [some restrictions](#) if The Life You Can Save is sponsoring your Giving Game. If you're unsure which charities to use and want to use a choice set that's worked well in a lot of different circumstances, we suggest featuring [Against Malaria Foundation](#), [GiveDirectly](#) and PlayPumps International.

Many of the topics the discussion will cover are driven by which charities are featured. So facilitators who want to highlight certain issues should think carefully about which charities would best do so. When GiveDirectly (which offers unrestricted cash grants to people in extreme poverty) is a featured charity, discussions typically touch on the role of international development. Similarly, if Innovations for Poverty Action (which conducts research into which interventions actually help the poor) is involved, expect to discuss the trade-offs between short vs. long-term help and direct vs. indirect aid.

We have found featuring a less effective charity that looks good on the label but has been proven to be less effective to encourage participants to see the values in an evidence-based approach. We use PlayPumps to fit this use-case. A sample text is as follows;

PlayPumps; "Playpumps was an international development initiative that gained a huge amount of traction in the early 2000s. It was the recipient of the World Bank Development Marketplace Award and at the Clinton Global Initiative ceremony, donors pledged \$16.4 million to install more PlayPumps across Africa. Playpumps were designed to alleviate two problems in the target communities; a lack of playground equipment for children and difficulties accessing water. So how did it work? Well, as children played on the roundabout or merry-go-round, water was pumped from an underground water source to an overhead tank where it could be drawn upon by users through the operation of a hand pump. On the side of the overhead tank, PlayPumps stated they would display advertising material and health messages which would help to pay for the maintenance of the equipment. Sounds good right? So, seeing the buzz around playpumps, UNICEF decided to investigate further and in 2007 published a report on their findings. Their report found a number of serious problems with the operationalization of the idea. Most critically to the design of the initiative, it didn't operate like normal playground equipment, the amount of momentum needed to pump water into an overhead tank was huge and once the merry-go-round started spinning it was very difficult to make it stop. This led to cases of children becoming motion sick or being injured. Fundamentally, it meant that children didn't want to play on the equipment, an aspect that was critical to the design. Some beneficiaries reported cases of children being paid to operate the equipment and when children were not available the burden of labor falling to women in the community. Additionally to that, beneficiaries reported the equipment would break down and PlayPumps lacked the monitoring to respond in such cases. Beneficiaries stated that they preferred the hand pump alone, which was 5X better at pumping water than the PlayPump and much more cost effective. In some cases, PlayPumps had removed this preferred equipment to install their own Play Pump. UNICEF concluded that these issues were in urgent need of being addressed. So, applying what we have considered this morning, what could PlayPumps have done differently?"

We do not recommend using current charities that are popular or locally focused. It is hard to judge the experiences of an audience and steers towards unnecessary contention.

Choosing or Designing Your Charity Presentations

Our [resource library](#) has powerpoint presentations for a number of recommended charities. These can be shortened or supplemented to fit your time and needs. You can use these materials as a template if you need to create a presentation for another charity. Try to present a similar amount of information about each charity: if you talk for 10 minutes about one organization and 1 minute talking about another, participants won't view it as a "fair fight".

When giving overviews of the charities, you're trying to strike a balance between providing the information people will want to make their decision and not overwhelming people with too much to think about. Providing handouts of the information makes things easier, since people don't have to focus on keeping notes. [We recommend using The Life You Can Save's recommended charity information sheets](#). It can also be helpful to pause and answer questions during or after the overview. If you don't know the answer to someone's question that's okay- just say so.

Choosing a voting structure

Some Giving Games use a winner-take-all voting system, while others distribute the money proportional to the votes. We've had success using both models. While the voting structure is flexible, it should require the participants to choose their preferred charity. Some people will invariably find it hard to choose and will prefer to split the money evenly. Since a key goal is for participants to reflect deeply on their priorities and on trade-offs, we recommend against offering such an option. Our Giving Games Platform offers a preliminary vote and proportional or winner takes all voting. If you would like to include a different voting style, please get in touch.

Structure	Pros	Cons
Winner take all	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drives home point about maximizing impact and opportunity cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supporters of losing charities can feel disempowered
Proportional	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maximizes people's agency• Any charity with support can get \$	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion can be less vigorous

Selecting your end-game asks

Once the winner has been announced, a Giving Game isn't over. Arguably, the most important part will still lie ahead: the "End-game Ask". The idea is simple: you don't want to let the Giving

Game end without asking participants to do one or more things that'll encourage them to be better givers. There's no better time to ask. The participants will likely be in a positive state of mind- after all, they'll have just given to charity at no personal cost. And they'll hopefully have a heightened awareness of the importance of effective giving. Indeed, we conducted a randomly controlled laboratory experiment that strongly suggests the Giving Game model dramatically increases people's willingness to accept pro-social requests.

We strongly suggest you direct people to The Life You Can Save and as part of your end ask for additional resources on giving effectively. However, you can propose other actions as applicable. You may wish to;

1. Invite anyone who'd like to learn more about the topics addressed in the Giving Game to come up and talk afterwards. You can chat with them after the Game, schedule a time to talk later, or ideally both.
2. Invite people to upcoming talks, events, or local groups related to effective giving.

Incorporating these End-game Asks (and/or your own ideas) is one of the best ways to improve the efficacy of your Giving Game. You'll be giving the participants the opportunity and the tools they need to form a long-term interest in better giving. Once you've offered people the chance to engage more deeply, you'll want to conclude the Giving Game by thanking people for their participation and providing a synthesis of the key issues discussed by the group.

Preparing for your Giving Game

Pre-Game Checklist

To get ready for your Giving Game, be sure to follow these simple steps.

1. Make sure you have a time and place scheduled to hold the Giving Game, and that the participants are aware. Be prepared to show up early to setup.
2. Plan out how you want to spend the time you have allocated for your Giving Game. You can use the Sample Timeline as a guide.
3. Practice what you intend to say to the participants. If there are multiple facilitators, make sure you're in agreement on who is doing what. A little bit of preparation goes a long way- you'll be much more engaging if you sound natural when presenting the information instead of reading directly from a script or making it up as you go along.
4. Check to be sure the logistics are all in order. You will need a projector and Wifi; make sure those will be available. If you're planning on having the participants break into small discussion groups, make sure the seating will accommodate that.
5. Read through our list of concerns that could get raised during your Giving Game and our suggested responses. Think about whether the structure of your Game is likely to elicit any of these concerns and plan accordingly.

Tips for moderating the discussion

You can find a list of questions participants may wish to consider on the Resources Page of the Giving Games website. Below is a list of tips to help you facilitate the discussion. Like most aspects of Giving Games, you can tailor your role as moderator.

- Your most important responsibility in facilitating the discussion is to treat the participants with respect and to ensure that they are respectful to each other.
- If participants break into small discussion groups, you can float between groups and/or have people call you over with questions.
- Make sure everyone who wants to participate in the discussion has a chance. If certain people are dominating the conversation, break in and ask other people what they think.
- You may get asked a question you don't know the answer to—even if you try to anticipate potential questions beforehand. "I don't know" is a perfectly acceptable answer! If you want, you can have a computer available to do follow up research on the fly (but remember it's possible the information you're looking for simply doesn't exist).
- You probably won't need to do much to stimulate conversation—the participants generally have plenty to say. If you need to get things started, just ask if anyone has any initial thoughts or impressions on where to give or how to think about the choice.
- If the conversation goes off on a tangent, help steer it back on track. In the unlikely case that the discussion dies down, you can jumpstart it by asking a leading question. The question can either be practical (about the specifics of the featured charities) or conceptual (about the frameworks that should guide this choice).

Concerns that may be raised during the Giving Game

We have compiled a list of the most common issues that come up along with tips for addressing them.

Participants feel like they don't have enough information to make a decision.

Don't worry if someone raises this concern- it's a good sign if people are actively seeking more information to guide their giving decisions! You definitely want to encourage this mindset.

Suggested solutions:

- Having laptops available so people can conduct further research online
- Emphasizing importance of informed giving and contrasting participants' desire for information with typical donors (most donors do no research)
- Discussing resources donors can use to find high quality information ([The Life You Can Save](#) for example.)
- Explaining that the data donors want often doesn't exist, but better giving can incentivize charities to create it

Participants feel like they don't have enough time to make a decision.

Again, it's a good thing if people want to put more time and thought into their giving. Acknowledge that the time constraint in the Giving Game is a practical necessity, and encourage them to take plenty of time in researching and reflecting on their personal giving decisions.

Someone has a principled objection to participating

This doesn't happen often, but it can happen. If for whatever reason someone doesn't want to give to either charity, don't force them- just let them abstain.

Participants don't want to choose

This is totally understandable- people like all the charities want to help each of them. Acknowledge this, but hold firm and make people choose an option. Remind people that nobody can give as much as they want to as many causes as they want- it's important to prioritize. If you feel it's appropriate, you can also encourage people to donate some of their own money to one or all of the charities. This also highlights the concept of opportunity cost. If you wish you can use proportional voting when designing your Giving Game.

People argue that giving is totally individual, and nobody has a right to comment on anyone else's giving

Remind people that in countries (like the US) where giving is tax-deductible charitable donations aren't just a matter of personal choice, they're also a matter of public policy. If someone makes a gift to charity, they pay a lower tax bill even if that gift has little or no social impact. Our laws incentivize certain behaviors, and it's up for debate whether those are the behaviors we want our society to incentivize.

Participants want more (or different) charities to be eligible

This could be anything from "I really like Charity X. Why can't we give to them?" to "Why are all the charities doing direct economic empowerment interventions? Why not include an organization working on systemic change to benefit to same populations?"

You can explain that the Giving Game this artificial constraint built in to allow for a deeper and focused discussion; there are around a million charities in the US and an open discussion wouldn't be very productive. Emphasize that people are obviously free to consider any charity they want in their own giving, and that the Giving Game structure is not meant to suggest that there are only a handful of good charities out there. When relevant, you can direct people who show interest in other areas you want to encourage toward additional resources.

After your Giving Game

Post-game report

You must fill out a post-game report. The Life You Can Save requires this for Games we sponsor but we implore you to submit the form even if someone else provided sponsorship. Post-game

reports allow us to systematically collect standardized data about different Giving Games to improve our processes and methodology.

Donations logistics

Once the participants have decided where to donate, whoever sponsored the Game needs to make the appropriate donation.

When The Life You Can Save sponsors Games, we make the donations using the instructions submitted through the Giving Games Administrative Platform [post-game report](#). We typically make the donations through a Donor Advised Fund, which provides a source of independent record keeping. We will forward you a confirmation of the donation once we receive it and you are free to share it with the participants so they know the donation was made. Giving Games make donations on a quarterly basis. Since we often feature the same charities in multiple Giving Games, this allows us to aggregate donations and reduce operational work for The Life You Can Save and the charities involved.

Still have questions?

Please get in touch with Kathryn Mecrow-Flynn at kathryn.mecrow@thelifeyoucan-save.org.