

Navigating tax reform


By now, you've heard a lot about tax reform: The 2018 tax reform bill affects tax brackets, standard deductions, and many other aspects of our tax code. You've probably also heard that it has the potential to affect philanthropy in a big way.

While the full and true impact of tax reform must be analyzed in the months and years ahead, there are some things you can do *now* to increase your organization's fundraising competitiveness:

- *Strengthen your case statement.* While tax considerations may influence giving to some degree, people ultimately give to causes they care about. Your organization does important work and achieves great results. Make sure your donors and potential donors know about it! Now more than ever, it's important that your messaging shows how contributions matter — and how they make a difference to the people you serve. Use storytelling, along with concrete data, to show the impact of philanthropic support. And clearly lay out what still needs to be achieved, of course. The more personalized you can make your communications, the better.
- *Connect with donors.* Donors who feel valued are more likely to support your organization, regardless of whether their gift qualifies for a tax break. Analyze your stewardship strategies — and practice gratitude. How often does your development team call your top 10 donors? How do you thank and retain new donors? There's no substitute for personal connection.
- *Upgrade your major gifts program.* While all donors are important, remember that those with the greatest personal wealth will enjoy a slightly larger tax cut, along with increases in estate and gift tax exemption limits. It may be time to revisit your major gifts program to be sure you're channeling your outreach, communications and stewardship activities appropriately.
- *Market tax-preferred gift vehicles.* Some gift vehicles will continue to provide benefits when it comes to taxes. For example, a donor might be better advised to make their gift using appreciated stock versus cash, in order to avoid capital gains tax. By designating all/part of the required minimum distribution from their qualified retirement account, donors age 70 1/2 and above will reduce their tax burden. Analyze your organization's ability to accommodate non-cash and planned gifts and update your marketing efforts to educate your donors about available options for their support.

For further reading on recent tax law changes and how they may affect your nonprofit, we recommend these excellent resources:

- [How to Approach Fundraising in 2018](#)
- [Lilly School Projects Giving Hike, Just Not In Traditional Methods](#)
- [CGC Disappointed Congress Fails to Enact Universal Charitable Deduction in Reform: Vows to Continue Push in 2018](#)
- [Tips for Giving After the Tax Bill](#)

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- [Tax Reform: What the Law Will Be in 2018](#)

To learn how Thurlow/Associates can help you navigate the new tax landscape, contact us for a no-cost consultation. You can reach us at (310) 675-6497 or at hello@thurlowassociates.com.

Join Social Venture Partners Los Angeles (SVPLA) for their 10th Anniversary Fast Pitch Showcase & Celebration!

Thurlow/Associates is proud to support the Fast Pitch program again in 2018.

Fast Pitch trains nonprofit leaders to powerfully communicate their story, and connects them with leaders in the business, philanthropic and nonprofit communities, who help them achieve their goals. The program culminates in the Social Innovation Fast Pitch & Showcase, where finalists make three-minute pitches to a panel of judges and an audience, competing to win awards totaling more than \$40,000 for their organizations. Following the program, the audience and participants meet and connect during a showcase reception.

Our firm's principal, Victoria Thurlow, recently became a SVPLA partner, and our managing senior associate, Amber Ginsberg, serves as a Fast Pitch coach. Several of our clients are alumni of this inspirational program.

Fast Pitch Showcase & Celebration will be held on March 22, 2018, at the Wilshire Ebell Theater. To be a part of this exciting event, [click here for tickets!](#)