

Charles A. McDonald

Social Impact Technology Leader | Philanthropy Strategist

charles@actualizeimpact.com (843) 735-8043 [linkedin.com/in/charlesamcdonald](https://www.linkedin.com/in/charlesamcdonald)

Bridging technology and trust-based philanthropy to transform how \$100M+ reaches communities. Developer of 20+ AI-powered tools that honor human wisdom while scaling innovation. Trusted advisor to institutions including Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Kaiser Permanente, and Camelback Ventures. Recognized for turning aspirational visions into action with lasting impact.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Actualize Impact, LLC - Founder and Principal

2021 – current | National

- Designed and facilitated trust-based philanthropy programs for 100+ funders, resulting in \$42M increase in unrestricted funding and 65% average reduction in application requirements for community-based grantees
- Provided strategic consulting to major institutions including Chan Zuckerberg Initiative (\$100M+ portfolio development), Federal Reserve Bank, St. Louis (racial equity assessment), and Kaiser Permanente (national union negotiations)
- Developed AI-powered social impact applications creating assessment tools and decision-making frameworks that streamline operations and amplify community impact
- Led multi-month learning cohorts and advocacy campaigns for organizations including Charter School Growth Fund, The City Fund, The Mind Trust, and Camelback Ventures, centering community voice and racial equity

Community Engagement Partners - Founder and Co-CEO

May 2018 – July 2025 | National

- Secured \$8M to establish local alliances of Black Community Innovators across multiple states
- Orchestrated seven-figure investments for community-centered education initiatives like The My Village Project in partnership with Walton Family Foundation
- Incubated and seeded TABLE, Cincinnati. The city's first Black-led community innovation hub, helping them secure two, six-figure investments from national funders
- Guided local and national philanthropic organizations in directing over \$100M in investments to grassroots community organizations, with 85% going to women and people-of-color-led initiatives

Education Cities - Senior Fellow

November 2016 - May 2018 | National

- Led engagement strategy projects creating 25,000 high-quality educational seats in two cities

- Secured \$7.5M+ for local advocacy efforts across 11 cities
- Developed a community engagement theory of action and signature tools for 24 member organizations, driving deeper collaboration and strategic focus across the network

Teach For America - Senior Managing Director

April 2013 - November 2016 | Charleston, SC

- Raised \$4.2 million for educational initiatives in South Carolina in year one and secured \$3M annually from the state's Education Oversight Committee
- Recruited and placed over 350 teachers, impacting 21,000 students across 14 districts while cultivating the most diverse teaching cohort (50% people of color, 43% from low-income backgrounds)
- Directed media strategy, surpassing goals for positive press and achieving zero negative media coverage

Education Pioneers - Program Manager

October 2011 - April 2013 | Boston, MA

- Led recruitment and placement strategies for Graduate School Fellowships, achieving the most diverse cohort in Greater Boston's history (52% people of color)

EDUCATION

Pahara-Aspen Education Fellowship – Alumnus

2016

- Inaugurated in 2007 through a collaboration of two Henry Crown Fellows, this program offers high potential leaders who are reimagining public education an opportunity to broaden their perspectives, build networks of like-minded change agents, and hone their skills in values-based leadership to improve US public education.

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities - Bachelor of Arts, Political Science

May 2005 | Minneapolis, MN

SKILLS

- Technical Development: Drizzle ORM, GitHub, Jupyter, MongoDB, Neo4j, Neon Serverless, Next.js 15, NumPy, pandas, PostgreSQL, Prisma ORM, Pydantic v2, Python, React 19, Redis, Supabase, TypeScript
- AI/ML Tools: Anthropic API, Circuit-Tracer, Context Engineering, Deep Learning, Hugging Face, LLM Alignment, LLM Governance, LLM Interpretability, LLM Prompting, LLM Research, LLM Safety, Machine Learning, Neuronpedia, NNsight, pprag, Vercel AI SDK, Voyageai
- Product & UX: Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign, API Development & Integration, Data-Driven Interfaces, UI/UX Design
- Strategy & Leadership: Change Management, Executive Advisory, Fundraising Strategy, Program Development, Strategic Planning
- Social Impact: Advocacy & Organizing Campaigns, AI for Social Good, Community-Centered Tech, Cross-Sector Coalitions, Trust-Based Philanthropy