Charles A. McDonald

Social Impact Technology Leader | Equity-Driven Philanthropy Strategist

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Social impact technology leader with a proven record of building 20+ AI-powered tools to advance racial equity, trust-based philanthropy, and community funding access. Trusted advisor to institutions including the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Camelback Ventures, Kaiser Permanente, and community-based organizations across 26 states. Spearheaded $100M+ in philanthropic investment strategy and secured $8M+ in funding for community-led initiatives. Expert in stakeholder engagement, coalition building, and tech innovation aligned with social justice values.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Community Engagement Partners - Founder and Co-CEO

May 2018 - current   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

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

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

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

May 2005   Minneapolis, MN

SKILLS

- **Technical Development:** React 19, Next.js 15, TypeScript, Python (pandas, NumPy, Pydantic v2, Jupyter), PostgreSQL, Neon Serverless, Mongodb, Supabase, Prisma ORM, Drizzle ORM, Redis, Github
- **AI/ML Tools**: Machine Learning, Deep Learning, Prompt Engineering, pgrag, Vercel AI SDK, Anthropic API, Voyageai, pgrag, Hugging Face
- **Product & UX:** UI/UX Design, API Development & Integration, Data-Driven Interfaces, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe InDesign
- **Strategy & Leadership:** Strategic Planning, Executive Advisory, Change Management, Program Development, Fundraising Strategy
- **Social Impact:** Trust-Based Philanthropy, AI for Social Good, Community-Centered Tech, Advocacy & Organizing Campaigns, Cross-Sector Coalitions