

Charity Navigator Announces New Service

02.14.18 | Linda J. Rosenthal, JD



New Jersey-based [Charity Navigator](#) (CN) is “the country’s [leading online charity evaluation service](#).” A 501(c)(3) itself, this organization helps donors make informed decisions about spending their charitable dollars. It gives information and data for about 1.6 million nonprofits including evaluations of these organizations’ financial condition, accountability to the public, and transparency in operations.” Charity Navigator offers this service [free of charge](#) to the organizations it evaluates, as well as to the general public; this helps ensure “unbiased evaluations” of the nation’s 501(c)(3)s. Late last year, Charity Navigator launched a new, expanded service that now includes “impact statements and progress reports.” As of the late 2017 launch, it applies to over 2,400 charities in its database.

This project is the first joint venture with three other important organizations that serve the nonprofit sector: “We are delighted to be working with GuideStar, GlobalGiving, and Classy,” said Charity Navigator CEO Michael Thatcher, “to encourage thousands of organizations to provide their results information alongside our latest charity evaluations.”

Collaboration by Charity Sector Leaders

The most significant aspect of the more comprehensive service is the inclusion of the impact reports, according to Mr. Thatcher, who characterizes it as a “radical expansion” of the information already offered by Charity Navigator. It gives donors more of the information they frequently request. In addition to the data already available – that is, financial analyses that Charity Navigator had developed from each organization’s Form 990 filings – site visitors can now review the impact reports that are prepared by the charities, themselves, and supplied by GuideStar, Classy, and GlobalGiving.

This is an initial joint project with these participants; there are some additional collaborations in the planning stages.

The first partner is [GuideStar](#), itself a 501(c)(3), the “world’s largest source of nonprofit information, connecting people and organizations with data on 2.5 million current and formerly IRS-recognized nonprofits.” It has more than eight million site visitors every year including a broad swath of individuals, organizations, public entities, and the media interested in the philanthropic sector. The information offered by GuideStar includes data from the IRS, as well as directly from the 501(c)(3)s, and “via other partners in the nonprofit sector.” Users also “see GuideStar data on more than 200 philanthropic websites and applications.”

Jacob Harold, President and CEO of GuideStar, told reporters that “GuideStar is excited to partner with Charity Navigator to share our quantitative and qualitative data about nonprofit programs.” He added: “We believe the inclusion of GuideStar’s Gold- and Platinum-level data will enrich donors’ experience on Charity Navigator.”

The second partner in this new project is San Diego-based [Classy](#), a social enterprise that “creates world-class online fundraising tools for nonprofits, modernizing the giving experience to accelerate social impact around the world.”

Classy’s mission “is to mobilize and empower the world for good.” According to Co-Founder Pat Walsh, the organizers of Classy “always felt that showcasing the impact nonprofits are making in their communities is a critical piece of empowering the sector.”

The third participant is [GlobalGiving](#), a 501(c)(3) public charity, that is the “largest global crowdfunding community connecting nonprofits, donors, and companies in nearly every country. This group helps “nonprofits access the tools, training, and support they need to be more effective” and to attract “more donations to more effective organizations.”

Conclusion

During this experimental phase, progress reports shared by Charity Navigator will not have any effect on the star or numerical rating nonprofits receive from CN.

A list of all 2,400 organizations currently supplying their progress reports is available upon request.