

Brad R. Fulton, PhD

Combining Social Science with Data Science to Advance Philanthropy

EDUCATION

Duke University | Ph.D., Sociology
University of Chicago | M.A., Social Science
U.C. Berkeley | B.S., Industrial Engineering

EXPERIENCE

Indiana University | O'Neill School and
Lilly Family School of Philanthropy
Professor [2026 – Present]
Associate Professor [2020 – 2026]
Assistant Professor [2015 – 2020]
Smart Charity | CEO [2020 – Present]

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

2026 [Generative AI Faculty Fellow](#) | Indiana University
2025 [President's Award for Nonprofit Research](#) | ARNOVA
2024 [Academic Leader in Data](#) | Chief Data Officer Magazine
2023 [Trustees' Teaching Award](#) | Indiana University
2023 [Data & Analytics Section Award](#) | ARNOVA
2022 [Excellence Award: Using Data for Good](#) | Alteryx
2022 [Outstanding Article Award](#) | *NVSQ*
2021 [Editors' Prize for Best Article](#) | *Nonprofit Mgmt. & Leadership*
2021 [Outstanding Article Award](#) | American Sociological Association

[Philanthropy Research Hub](#) | [Founder and Director](#) [2020 – Present]

I lead a team of 32 researchers who are combining social science and data science to advance philanthropy. We extracted IRS data on 250,000 foundations, 1 million nonprofits, and 10 million grants to construct a [foundation-grantee network](#) dataset of the entire U.S. nonprofit sector. This longitudinal data allows us to: 1) examine the sources and distribution of funding and 2) identify philanthropy's role in both reinforcing and reducing social inequities.

[Google Maps Sampling Frames](#) | [Director](#) [2018 – Present]

I developed a Python-based [program](#) that generates organizational sampling frames by systematically scanning Google Maps to identify organizations of interest and retrieve their information.

[National Study of Community Organizing](#) | [Director](#) [2011 – Present]

I oversee data collection and analysis on 215 community organizing coalitions along with their ~5,000 member organizations and ~3,500 affiliated leaders. This research reveals how coalitions navigate internal social differences and leverage those differences to foster civic engagement, address community needs, and promote equity.

[Observing Civic Engagement Lab](#) | [Co-Founder and Co-Director](#) [2016 – Present]

We use an innovative data collection method—[systematic social observation](#)—to gather detailed information about organizations' internal dynamics at a relatively large scale. This method bridges the gap between *deep-but-narrow* ethnographic studies and *broad-but-shallow* survey research. With \$2 million in funding, we have conducted studies in 5 cities, training 80 observers who have collected data from over 4,000 organizational gatherings.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

Federal Reserve Bank: Rural Economic Development	Aspen Institute: Addressing Philanthropy Deserts
U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services: Strategy	GivingTuesday: Mapping Nonprofit Ecosystems
Entrepreneurship Funders Network: Ecosystem Analysis	Trust for Civic Life: Addressing Philanthropy Deserts
Appalachia Funders Network: Rural Philanthropy	AmeriCorps: Assessing Civic Infrastructure
Fidelity Charitable Catalyst Fund: Philanthropic Redlining	REDF Impact Investing Fund: Workforce Development
<i>Chronicle of Philanthropy</i> : Research Contributor	Aspen Institute: Faith in Philanthropy Initiative

ECOSYSTEM LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE

Nonprofit Open Data Collective: Form 990 Specialist	Aspen Institute: Philanthropy & Social Innovation Fellow
Enhanced 990 Data Project: 990 Expert Contributor	GivingTuesday: Academic Research Partner

Brad R. Fulton | bradrfulton@gmail.com | 510.435.5576 | <https://bradrfulton.com/> | [LinkedIn Profile](#) | [Google Scholar](#)