



The mission

At its core, a [charity election](#) is an experience that exposes young people to underlying principles of effective altruism with the aim of expanding the global community of people who incorporate them into their decision making, especially around giving.

Through providing [large numbers of high school students](#) with experience researching and discussing highly effective charities and their evidence of impact as part of a meaningful experience in critical thinking and civic engagement, the programme is designed to foster a culture of giving and giving effectively, expand moral circles, promote compassion, and raise the profile of outstanding causes among future givers. We also aim to give students confidence as changemakers who can make a positive impact on the world and provide them with basic resources that might lead them to impact-focused fellowships, courses and career resources.

How it works

Based on Giving Games, the process is adapted for a secondary school audience and with additional components promoting [civic engagement](#), [youth empowerment](#) and [positive school climate](#).

High schoolers use basic principles of charity evaluation to choose among three high-impact, Giving What We Can-listed organisations over a week of [discussion](#), [reflection](#), [research and voting](#). The lesson plan is laid out in a self-contained slideshow provided to the school. Once the students vote, a pot of up to \$2,000 (sponsored by GWWC) flows to the charities in a proportion chosen by the school. Ultimately, the students receive a statement of impact that estimates the social good accomplished by their donation. There is no cost to the school.



Key elements

Flexible hosting

The event has been hosted in classes including AP Government, Civics, Ethics, Social Studies, IB Philosophy, Mathematics, English and Geography.

Framework

The three-hour, student-centred programme is run through a self-contained, low-prep slideshow offered to schools.

Sponsorship and ballots

Each student ballot is worth \$2, so the more students that vote, the more is directed to the charities. The school specifies an allocation: winner-take-all, 70%/20%/10%, or proportional.

Student leaders

[Student leaders](#) (optional) promote the event to their peers and enhance the experience for all. They practise key citizenship and life skills like public speaking and interviewing, and earn Service Leadership Certificates from Giving What We Can.

Further resources

We provide teachers with an expanding list of post-event resources to share with students, especially further opportunities around effective giving (activity ideas, fellowships, career resources and more).

Charities

A variety of [GWWC-recommended](#) causes are selected to challenge preconceptions and stimulate critical discussion.

Global interest

The event has run in six countries and received interest from at least nine others. It has also been [run successfully in Italian](#).



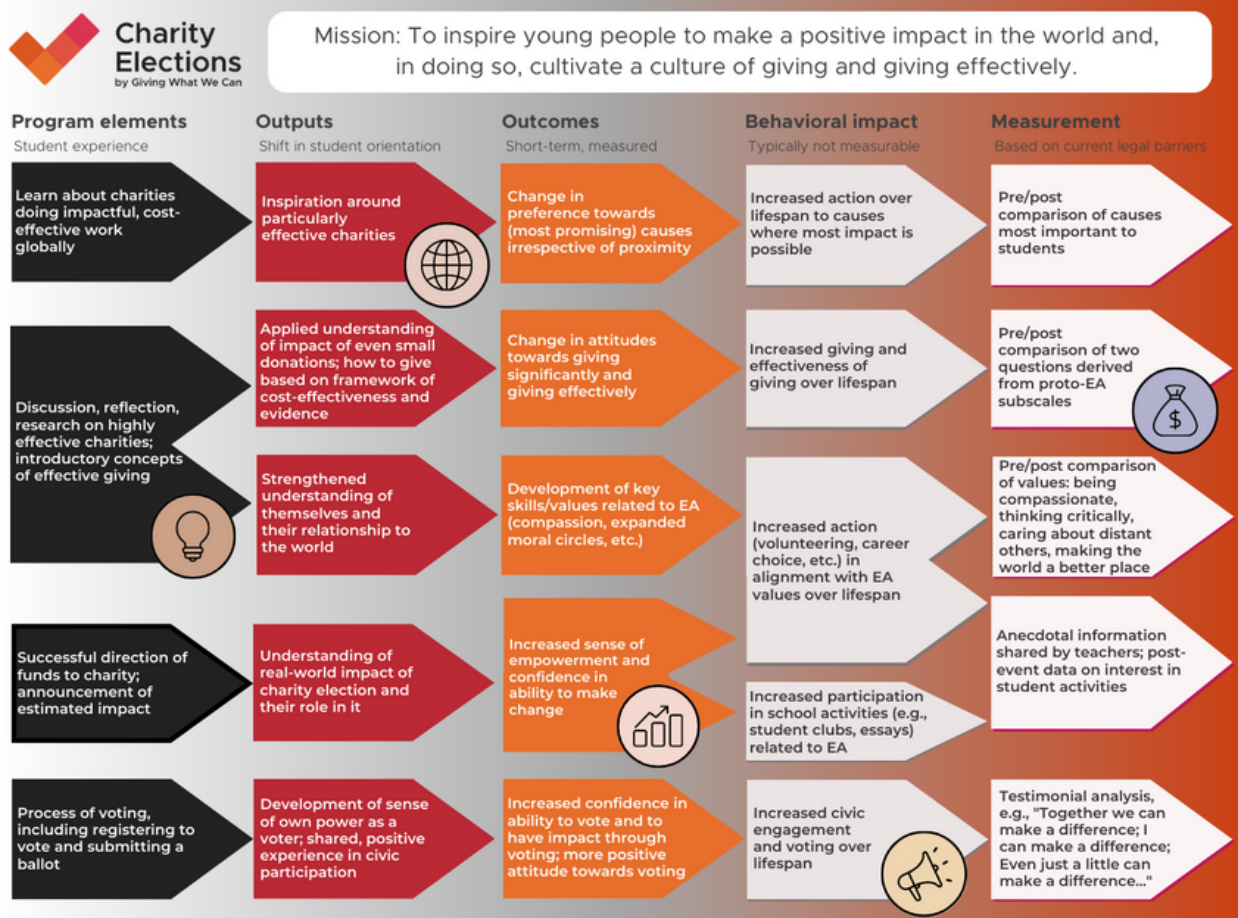
Jump to more details

[Goals for funding](#)

[Why support us?](#)

[Evidence of Impact](#)

Theory of Change



Motivated by running a charity election, students have started [effective altruism-related clubs](#), incorporated [principles of effective giving into school charity programs](#), published [articles on school websites](#), created [Instagram pages](#), and conducted [interviews](#) to reflect on the impact of their campaigns. Results have been presented by teachers at [national and international conferences](#). [View enlarged Theory of Change here](#).



Further promise for increased civic engagement

A [study at the Centre for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tufts](#) found that “youth who reported having been either encouraged to vote or taught how to register to vote in high school are more likely to vote and participate in other civic activities . . . [and] more knowledgeable about voting processes . . . than other youth.” Counterfactually, those who had not received such encouragement were less civically engaged. Civics and government teachers might incorporate our event into the curriculum as a positive encounter with civic engagement that has the opportunity to foster positive attitudes towards civic participation later in life.

An array of benefits



Culture of Giving

Cultivates a culture of giving, and giving effectively, among young people



Changemaking

Gives students confidence as change-makers



Compassion

Fosters compassion and social & emotional learning (SEL) skills, and expands moral circles & international mindedness



Decision-making skills

Provides framework for students to make meaningful decisions using reason and evidence



Student voice

Empowers student voice through exploratory learning and a student-centric approach



Critical thinking

Inspires critical thinking and develops student perspectives on authentic world issues



Civic participation

Offers a positive experience in civic engagement and enhances positive school climate



Leadership

Offers students the opportunity to earn Service Leadership Certificates from GWWC



Charitable support

Directs funds to high-impact charities while raising the profile of outstanding causes among future givers

