Dropbox

Announcing the Dropbox Foundation

February 15, 2018 5:00 AM EST

by Drew Houston and Arash Ferdowsi

For the past 10 years, we've seen the impact our products can have when they free up our time to focus on work that truly matters. Medical researchers share data sets to develop vaccines. Musicians compose scores. Aid workers access and coordinate information from the field. A big part of our mission has always been helping our users achieve their missions.

As Dropbox continues to grow, we want to do more—especially for organizations that are fighting for equal opportunity, basic freedoms, and fundamental necessities for people around the world. Today, we're excited to launch the Dropbox Foundation, which will focus on promoting and protecting human rights by partnering with impactful nonprofits in two main ways.

Unrestricted grants
First, each partner will receive unrestricted grants. 75% of grants to non-profits come with a catch—specific conditions for how those funds must be used. The Foundation will instead offer flexible, unrestricted grants that our partners can use to meet their greatest needs. These organizations know what they need better than anyone, and we trust them to use these funds to make the biggest impact.

Skills-based volunteering
Second, the Foundation's partners will receive support from Dropbox employee volunteers with skills that match each organization's needs, whether it's financial modeling, improving data security, or recruiting the best talent.

The Foundation is jointly funded by the two of us and Dropbox, with an initial endowment of approximately $20 million that we expect to grow over time. It will be overseen by a board that includes Dropbox executives Dennis Woodside (COO), Bart Volkmer (General Counsel), and Amber Cottle (VP of Policy), as well as four independent directors from Silicon Valley Community Foundation.

After receiving applications from organizations around the world, we're proud to announce our initial group of Foundation partners for 2018:

- GOAL, based in Dublin, responds to humanitarian crises and develops local capacity for the world's poorest and most vulnerable populations
- Larkin Street Youth Services, based in San Francisco, supports at-risk youth with the resources they need to rebuild their lives, nurture their potential, and break the cycle of homelessness
- War Child UK, based in London, works with children affected by conflict; providing safe spaces, access to education and equipping them with skills for the future
- WITNESS, based in Brooklyn, harnesses the power of video and technology to help global activists document human rights abuses and distribute their evidence in in safe and ethical ways that lead to lasting change

These partners were selected because of their commitment, optimism, and creative problem-solving. Between them they have more than a hundred years of combined experience defending human rights. We hope to help these partners expand their impact and learn from them along the way. Learn more at dropbox.foundation.