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“Giving Better and Giving More”? Examining the Roles of Philanthropy Advisors in Elite Philanthropy

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Abstract

Over the past 15 years, philanthropy advisors (PhAds) have grown in prominence within financial institutions, family offices and independent consultancies (Beeston and Breeze 2023; Harrington 2016; Ostrander 2007; Sklar and Glucksberg 2021). More recently, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has heightened awareness of the significance of philanthropic advisory services within elite philanthropy. Yet the roles and contributions of PhAds remain under-researched, notwithstanding the long-standing interest in unpacking the “black box” of elite philanthropy (Odendahl 1990; Ostrander 2007; Ostrower 1995), particularly in relation to donor-centred philanthropy (Ostrander and Schervish 1990; Ostrander 2007) and elite power, and increased scrutiny of the role of philanthropic intermediaries (Kumar and Brooks 2021) and professional advisors (Harrington 2016) in elite philanthropy.

The thesis explores the roles of PhAds by asking three questions: What are the roles of PhAds in elite philanthropy? How do PhAds shape narratives of legitimacy within elite philanthropic practices? And what can analysing the roles of PhAds, in the context of pandemic responses, add to existing understandings of elite philanthropy? To address these questions, the thesis took the form of a multi-method qualitative study, based on 34 interviews with philanthropy practitioners, participant and non-participant observation, and document analysis. The study drew on industry grey literature, comprising online materials that include websites, training materials, handbooks, reports and webinars produced by philanthropy advisors. Data was collected between 2019 and 2021.

By incorporating insights from critical elite studies, philanthropic research and examining how philanthropy advisors enable donor-control and elite agency, this thesis advances understanding of the meaning-making processes of philanthropy advisors, by integrating concepts and domains of research on elite identities (Khan 2012; Sherman 2017; Maclean et. al. 2015) and the broader role of philanthropy in legitimising elites and wealth accumulation (Kantola and Kuusela 2019; Harrington 2016; McGoey and Thiel 2018; Sklar and Glucksberg 2021).

The research finds that PhAds form part of an emergent industry, acting as brokers, intermediaries and boundary spanners within elite philanthropy. It examines the legitimising
accounts (Creed et al. 2002) used by PhAds, to understand how they relate to and shape systems of meaning for the role of philanthropists, philanthropy and themselves (philanthropy advice services). The findings emphasise the central role of social impact claims, with philanthropy advice understood as a way of increasing social impact of philanthropy and with PhAds characterising their roles as enabling clients to “give better and give more”. The thesis discusses PhAds’ understanding of their roles in the identity formation of their clients through a “philanthropic learning journey” – an affective and experiential process that aims at the self-realisation of the philanthropist. This contributes to studies on identity and meaning making in elite philanthropy, highlighting the roles of advisors in the formation of positive wealth identities (Harrington 2016; Maclean et. al 2015; Sklair and Glucksberg 2021). The thesis also explores the ways in which PhAds and philanthropy advice services legitimised the role of elite philanthropy in philanthropic responses to the Covid-19 pandemic.

In summary, the project offers two key contributions in building on existing studies of philanthropy advice services and practitioners. Firstly, it provides rich qualitative evidence on under-researched philanthropy advisors and demonstrates their roles as professional enablers of elite philanthropy; and secondly, it expands debates on the legitimising practices of elite philanthropy (McGoey and Thiel 2018; McGoey 2021; Sklair and Glucksberg 2021) by evidencing how donor-centred practices are justified by PhAds as a means to an end.
Lay Summary

Over the past 15 years, philanthropy advisors (PhAds) have grown in prominence within financial institutions, family offices and independent consultancies (Beeston and Breeze 2023; Harrington 2016; Ostrander 2007; Sklair and Glucksberg 2021). More recently, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has heightened awareness of the significance of philanthropic advisory services within elite philanthropy. Yet the roles and contributions of PhAds remain under-researched, despite long-standing interest in unpacking understanding in the day-to-day practices of elite philanthropy (Odendahl 1990; Ostrander 2007; Ostrower 1995), particularly in relation to donor-centred philanthropy (Ostrander and Schervish 1990; Ostrander 2007) and elite power, and increased scrutiny of the role of philanthropic intermediaries (Kumar and Brooks 2021) and professional advisors (Harrington 2016) in elite philanthropy.

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List of Abbreviations

CSR Corporate Social Responsibility
DAF Donor Advised Fund
HNWI High-Net-Wealth Individual
NGO Non-Governmental Organisation
PhAd Philanthropy Advisor
UHNWI Ultra-High-Net-Wealth Individual
Next Gen Next Generation
SDG Sustainable Development Goals
Glossary

Charities: In the UK, a charity is an organisation that is set up to fulfil a specific charitable purpose and operates for the public benefit. Charities can include a wide range of organisations, such as those that provide education, relieve poverty, promote health, advance religion or support the arts. To be considered a charity in the UK, an organisation must be registered with the Charity Commission, a government regulatory body that oversees charities and ensures that they operate in accordance with the law. Charities are also required to have a board of trustees who are responsible for the organisation’s overall strategy and management.

Family Office: A family office is a private wealth management advisory firm that serves high-net-worth families and individuals. Family offices provide a range of services, including investment management, financial planning, tax and estate planning, philanthropic planning, and other customised services that are tailored to the specific needs of the family or individual they serve. Family offices are, typically, established by wealthy families to manage their wealth across multiple generations. Family offices may be single-family offices, serving only one family, or multi-family offices, serving multiple families. Family offices are generally staffed by a team of professionals with expertise in various areas of wealth management, such as investment management, tax planning, legal services, accounting and most relevant for this project, philanthropy advisors.

Donor Advised Fund: A donor advised fund (DAF) is a charitable giving vehicle that allows individuals, families and organisations to make tax-deductible charitable donations to a fund, which is then managed by a public charity, such as a community foundation or a financial services company. Donors can then recommend grants from the fund to support specific charitable causes or organisations. When a donor makes a contribution to a DAF, they receive an immediate tax deduction for the full value of the donation. The assets in the fund can then be invested and grow tax-free. While the donor retains advisory privileges over the fund, the public charity that manages the fund has legal control over the assets and is responsible for ensuring that grants are made in accordance with IRS regulations.
**Foundation:** A Foundation is a charitable organisation and, to date, the most common vehicle for institutional philanthropic. Foundations can be funded by founders via an endowment or by contributions from individuals, businesses or charitable organisations. They can be grant-making whereby they fund other organisations and/or carry out their own programmes.

In the UK, there are different types of foundations that include community foundations, corporate foundations and family foundations. Foundations are often called charitable trusts in the UK, and vice versa, reflecting their legal status.

**Philanthropist:** A philanthropist is a person who donates their time, resources or money to charitable causes. Philanthropists may make donations to charities, establish foundations or trusts and engage in other forms of philanthropic giving to support their chosen causes. In practice and subsequently, in this project’s discussion of data, “philanthropist” is often used interchangeably with donor.

**Third Sector:** The third sector refers to organisations and activities that operate outside of the government and private sectors, with a focus on social, cultural, or environmental objectives. This sector is also known as the non-profit or voluntary sector, and includes organisations such as charities, foundations, advocacy groups, social enterprises and community groups.
Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Background and Context: The Increased Visibility of Philanthropy Advisors in Elite Philanthropy

In May 2019, MacKenzie Scott pledged to give away her wealth “until the safe is empty” (Giving Pledge 2019). In July 2020, Scott announced on her blog that she had given away over USD5 billion to “non-profits selected for transformational work”, with plans to give away nearly USD60 billion (New York Times 2022; Economist 2022). By December of 2020, Scott announced in a blog post that another round of donations amounting to over USD4 billion had been gifted to nearly 400 organisations across all US states over a four-month period. Notably, in this post she mentioned that she had employed a team of advisors to help her “accelerate” her giving in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Unlike many other ultra-high-net-worth elite philanthropists who have set up foundations (such as Bill Gates, Michael Bloomberg and George Soros) or limited liability companies (such as Mark Zuckerberg), Scott wrote cheques directly to organisations, citing that she utilised a team of non-profit advisors to help her identify and assess organisations. Upon publishing the list of recipient organisations, there was heightened interest and speculation about how she was making decisions. It would only be in 2021 that Scott would reveal the team behind these donations, helping to design, develop and execute the strategy of her philanthropic giving: The Bridgespan Group. According to their website, the Bridgespan Group “is a non-profit social impact consultancy firm and advisor to non-profits and NGOs, philanthropists, and investors”. They have advised some of the world’s biggest donors, including clients such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Ford Foundation and Bloomberg Philanthropies and have offices in the US, India, Singapore and South Africa. One of the founders of the Bridgespan Group, a former managing partner at Bain and Company, Tomas Tierney, now co-chairs the board of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

1 https://givingpledge.org/pledger?pledgerId=393 (accessed February 2023)
2 https://mackenzie-scott.medium.com/384-ways-to-help-45d0b9ac6ad8 (accessed March 2021)
5 https://mackenzie-scott.medium.com/384-ways-to-help-45d0b9ac6ad8 (accessed March 2021)
6 https://www.bridgespan.org/ (accessed 12 January 2022)
While the Bridgespan Group is just one example of a philanthropy advisory firm advising high-net-worth individuals or HNWIs and ultra-high-net-worth individuals or UHNWIs, the influence and role of this emergent, global, philanthropic advising industry raises key questions about the role of these intermediaries in elite philanthropy. Given their self-described roles as “social impact advisors”, it is important to understand the role that these actors play and on what basis. And most critically, what it means to be a philanthropy advisor or PhAd, as they will be referred to henceforth.

The industry of elite philanthropy advice has grown in the past 10 years (Beeston and Breeze 2023; Ostrander 2007) and the sector has become increasingly visible and an influential arena for defining the direction of philanthropic practices amongst elites (Sklair and Glucksberg 2021: 322). However, what constitutes philanthropic advice is not always straightforward. PhAds are hired to offer advice in determining the “what”, “how” and “why” of philanthropic giving (Breeze and Beeston 2023), to providing technical expertise on taxation and inheritance, as well as family business succession planning (Sklair and Glucksberg 2021), and their broad range of advisory services caters to varied institutions and organisations, such as private banks, family offices, community foundations and wealth management firms. In other cases, PhAds work as independent consultants (Beeston and Breeze 2023: 51). Given the nebulousness of the emergent philanthropy-advising service industry, understanding the roles of philanthropy advisors is at the heart of this project.

Philanthropy advice services have emerged from individual concentrations of wealth. As such, the rise of inequality and elite philanthropy, in many ways, is a prerequisite for the very existence of professional philanthropy advisory services. For example, some of the earliest records of PhAds emerged in the wake of the 20th century industrial era and birth of what many consider “modern” philanthropy that result from concentrations of wealth (Arnove 1980). And while informal philanthropic advice likely goes back further, formal philanthropy advisors first appeared in more visible ways during the rise of foundations, with the notable

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7 While there is no universal definition, a high-net-worth individual, (HNWI) sometimes referred to as a high-net-wealth individual, the Capgemini World Wealth Report classes HNW individuals as a wealthy person with investible assets above USD1 million. Using this criterion, globally there are about 22.5 million HNWIs. Following this definition, ultra-high-net-worth individuals (UHNWIs) are people with over USD30 million in assets. Over the course of the past 20 years, the global population of HNWIs and their collective wealth have tripled (Capgemini 2022).
example of Frederick Taylor Gates, who served as philanthropic advisor to John D. Rockefeller (Beeston and Breeze 2023). PhAds are not only considered to have played an influential role in the processes and development of institutional philanthropy (McGoey 2015), but their existence is inexorably linked to the idea that philanthropy is something that can be improved or handled strategically. For these 20th century industrialists, improvement was through professional management, as in the case of Carnegie, or for Rockefeller through the adoption of “scientific philanthropy”, aimed at improving the effectiveness of philanthropy through strategic approaches (Howe 1980).

The emergent industry of philanthropy advice services arises in the context of growing inequality. As the number of HNWIs and UHNWIs has increased globally, elite philanthropy too has grown (Hay and Muller 2013; Leat 2016). Large-scale philanthropy, undertaken by elites, is becoming more important (Glucksberg and Russell-Prywata 2020) in the context of a long history of contention about the role of elite philanthropy (Bernholz et al. 2016) and how HNWIs and UHNWIs utilise philanthropy and, in particular, foundations, as unaccountable vehicles through which they can complement personal philosophies and impact society in the ways they deem most beneficial (Barkan 2016; McGoey 2015, 2021). At the same time, elite philanthropy is increasingly taking on roles previously dominated by the welfare state, as they redistribute resources via philanthropic organisations and play a part in global governance, where states and international governing bodies recognise “philanthropists as partners in delivering state policy, leading to widespread acceptance of extra-state institutions in the governing process” (Nickel and Eikenberry 2010: 270). This phenomenon leads Horvath and Powell (2016: 116) to question the role of individual philanthropists and, in particular, entrepreneurial philanthropy, in “reshaping government by inserting itself as a preferred provider of public goods”. Globally, elite philanthropy has influenced and been influenced by the changing relationship between the state and the third sector regarding the provision of welfare services (Arnove 1980; Maclean et al. 2020; Sklair 2021). This influence has raised wider concerns about the plutocratic power of elites (Reich 2018; Frumkin 2006; Callahan 2017), implications for accountability in “philanthropy-policymaking” (Clark and McGoey 2016; Goss 2016; Tompkins-Stange 2016) and the ways that

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8 Growing global inequality and the accumulation of wealth among the global elite have by now been well documented (see e.g. Hugo and Carter 2022 OECD).
elite philanthropy perpetuates inequalities (Glucksberg and Russell-Prywata 2020; Kohl Arenas 2016; McGoey 2015; Morvaridi 2012; Villanueva 2018) and undermines democracy (Reich 2018).

However, concerns are not only related to the concentration of power and wealth through and within philanthropy (see Callahan 2017; Giridharadas 2018; McGoey 2015; Reich 2018; Villanueva 2018) or even the role of private actors in the provision of public welfare, but also, and relevant to this research, to the legitimising practices and processes of elite philanthropy. Concerns exist over the ways philanthropy is used by elites to legitimise wealth and status as part of elite reproduction (Hay and Muller 2014; Sklair and Glucksberg 2021), re-entrenching elite power (Kuldova 2017; McGoey and Thiel 2018). In other words, critiques of elite philanthropy raise concerns that not only is elite philanthropy ineffective in delivering public welfare, but that by positioning elites as capable and necessary actors in the provision of public welfare, elite philanthropy legitimises elites and their wealth as sources of positive social change, further concentrating power (Giridharadas 2018; Schervish 2003).

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 further highlighted the role of elite philanthropy. Over the course of the pandemic, the increased demand for resources for global development and the provision of public welfare in times of crises, coincided with calls for increased philanthropic action. The pandemic also raised debates over what elites should or should not do with their wealth, reflecting public pressure on the wealthy to act. This attention to and visibility of elite philanthropy in pandemic responses brought into sharp focus critiques and concerns over the role of elite philanthropy (Reich 2018; Singer 2015; Kumar and Brooks 2021; Fuentenebro 2020) and, in particular, the ways in which elite philanthropy was promoted as an important and necessary source of resources during the crisis, raising questions about how legitimacy was understood and constructed by philanthropic actors in this context (see the investigation conducted by Politico in 2022 on the role of philanthropy in global public health responses).9

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Attention to concentrations of wealth and power are fundamental to concerns over unequal distributions of resources and the role of elite philanthropy, but far less is known about what informs these practices and processes. Despite the increased visibility of advisors over the past years, and particularly, since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, these crucial intermediaries remain under-researched. To date, discussion and conceptualisation on the role of PhAds is limited in academic research, with most empirical research predominantly found within industry grey literature. As the literature will outline in full, with one notable exception of Breeze and Beeston (2023), PhAds have not been the singular focus of any research, but often used as gatekeepers for researching or lumped in amongst other philanthropy practitioners.

My research explores the emergent industry of philanthropy advice services, utilising philanthropy advisors as a lens to open the “black box” of elite philanthropy. More recently, and notably since 2008, philanthropic advising services have become increasingly professionalised, particularly within the financial and wealth industries, overlapping with professional advice services10 (Beeston and Breeze 2023; Harrington 2021; Sklair and Glucksberg 2021). That philanthropic advice is often included within these professional advice services and the wealth management industry, raises questions about the role of these advisors within elite philanthropic practices. As philanthropy services become something that is bought and sold, questions are raised as to the implications of commodification of philanthropy advice for the social relations of philanthropy (Ostrander 2007). In addition, the role of PhAds in enabling and promoting elite philanthropy equally raises concerns about donor-centred practices within elite philanthropy and the role of PhAds in legitimising new kinds of philanthropic relationships and practices. What interests, incentives and influences does the commodification of philanthropy advice have on legitimacy within elite philanthropic practices?

Fundamentally, the role of PhAds inevitably raises broader questions about the role of private wealth and elites in the provision of public welfare. These questions extend age-old debates related to the legitimising function of philanthropy for elites, particularly in relation to the

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10 Elite professional advice services sell customised advice related to law, investment and consulting firms (Rivera 2012).
public provision of welfare through philanthropy. Debates on the role and legitimisation of elite philanthropy fall into what Seibert (2019) identifies as the “new wave” of scrutiny-facing philanthropy, both in regard to sources of funding and the subsequent priorities of that funding. The existence of a philanthropy advice industry not only raises questions about private wealth for public good, as well as the roles of individuals, organisations and institutions within these debates, but also the role practitioners play in shaping philanthropy, how elite philanthropy is brought into practice and in what ways it is legitimised through and within philanthropy advice. As such, this thesis centres the role of PhAds in order to deepen understandings of the practices and processes of elite philanthropy.

The following section will provide additional background and context, define terms and outline the goals of the project. Before explaining the rationale and aims of my research in depth, I will briefly define the key concepts utilised in the thesis (elite philanthropy, philanthropic elites and elite philanthropic practices) to ground the purpose and scope of the work. I will then outline the aims of the project, share the research questions and provide an overview of the thesis.

1.2. Rationale and Aims

The focus of this research is on elite philanthropy, which I understand as the voluntary giving, at scale, by wealthy individuals, couples, families and corporations (Ostrower 1995). I also adopt Moody and Breeze’s (2016) definition of “elite giving”, which broadens the meaning of philanthropy to include non-monetary gifts and informal giving, whilst recognising the complexity and cultural specificity of philanthropy in theory and in practice. As Harrow et al. have noted, “in its expressions, deliberations, structures, operations and outcomes, philanthropy is as much a creature of distinct managerial and organisational choices and actions as it is of wider social and community concerns” (2021: 304). It is the role of PhAds in these deliberations and operations within elite philanthropy, that is a central concern of this thesis. This project seeks greater understanding of what is actually involved in the day-to-day of elite philanthropic “practice”.
If elite philanthropy is giving at scale, who are philanthropic elites? Given the scope of my research, focused on PhAds as philanthropic practitioners, I find Odendahl and Shaw’s (2001: 5) definition of philanthropic elites instructive and a useful path forward, in which they define philanthropic elites as “wealthy people, representatives of institutions of wealth, such as foundations, and their leaders. The definition includes not only donors but also ‘professionals’, such as personal advisers and private foundation staff”. Notably, Odendahl and Shaw argue that these actors can often take on the values of the elites they serve, complicating and collapsing binary boundaries between elite and non-elite subjects in the context of elite philanthropy. Understanding PhAds as elites also informed my research design and methodological approach (explored in chapter three).

Building on the expanded definition of elite philanthropy, what are elite philanthropic practices? There is no one set of philanthropic practices (Moody and Breeze 2016). In this thesis, philanthropic practices is an umbrella term referring to a range of formal and informal activities that constitute the application of a philanthropic approach in the management and administration of charitable giving and philanthropic activities. Moreover, I limit the focus on philanthropic practices to the processes of philanthropic giving, rather than the motivations or outcomes. As I will discuss in the following chapter, much of the existing research on elite philanthropy focuses on the individual philanthropists seeking to understand their motivations, values and influence on the world through their philanthropic endeavours. However, I contend that this individualisation of philanthropy may, if anything, reinscribe the role of elites. Furthermore, I argue that this also obscures the workings of philanthropy and the structures that enable and perpetuate the existence of elite philanthropy. By focusing on elite philanthropic practitioners, I aim to provide a more holistic picture of what comprises elite philanthropic practices outside of any one individual philanthropist. This research focuses on the role of professional philanthropy services within elite philanthropy, centring the PhAds as a means of understanding elite philanthropic practices.

Another critique of critical philanthropy research is that it is disconnected from practitioner experiences and realities (Nicholls et al. 2015; Haydon et al. 2021). I aim to fill this gap by linking practitioner discourses with elite philanthropic practices. As such, I examine the ways that practitioners play a role in shaping norms and perspectives within elite philanthropy
My understanding of philanthropy, the role of philanthropy in funding charities and the role of a multitude of intermediaries that make up the philanthropy sector, informed the rationale and aims of the project, thereby informing my research design and approach.

Whilst I discuss my positionality, in full, in the methodology chapter of this thesis, it is worth noting that my experience of working within the charity sector has led me to raise concerns around how conceptions of power and legitimacy are operationalised in practice. And, in turn, how these practices are assimilated within discourses and institutions. The project and research focus emerged from my professional background, working in international development and later, in the charity sector in London. I have seven years of direct experience in fundraising and dealing with funding organisations and individual philanthropists, having worked for an intermediary organisation that supports charities and social entrepreneurs. In this role, I worked with charities, often fundraising on their behalf from individual philanthropists, networks and private and corporate foundations. I also acted as a selection panellist, applying grant criteria to determine outcomes of grant applications and prepared pitches and written bids for corporate partnerships, from Corporate Social Responsibility divisions of banks and corporate foundations. In this capacity, I also reviewed and evaluated hundreds of organisations, managed a network of grant funders and conducted sessions to advise foundations and individual philanthropists how they can support charities. Given this context, I aim to provide rich empirical data exploring experiences, meaning-making processes and practices of PhAds that deepen empirical understandings of elite philanthropy.

The thesis is ultimately concerned with asking what the study of PhAds can tell us about the social and legitimising practices used within elite philanthropy. There are, of course, many ways of exploring and conceptualising legitimacy (explored in the literature review), but building on Maclean et al. (2020), I adopt Creed et al.’s (2002) use of legitimising accounts. Creed et al. understand legitimising accounts as the institutional creation of common meanings and identities. They argue that "legitimating accounts reflect the ways that social actors use their knowledge of cultural logics and institutional settings to provide the common meanings and identities that mobilise local participation in sustaining or changing institutional arrangements”. As such, I apply this concept to understand how PhAds shape notions of
legitimacy within elite philanthropy, primarily examining what these can tell us about the roles and rules of elite philanthropic practices through PhAds. I am interested in legitimising accounts as embedded social practices, so rather than identifying clear legitimising strategies, I explore the ways these practitioners account for themselves and their practices.

This project is not that of a forensic accountant following the money, but rather tracks the values, meaning and interpretive frameworks of an influential group of professional intermediaries. More specifically, the project seeks to identify the discursive legitimising practices of these actors and explore the effects that these practices have within elite philanthropic practice. Current literature, focusing primarily on the evaluation of philanthropy as legitimate or not or on philanthropy as a tool for social welfare (effectively or not), miss much on the struggle, negotiation and power dynamics that make up these activities constituting elite philanthropic practice, that occur even before any money is given away. As others have pointed out notably (Breeze 2021; Sherman 2021), the giving away of money is not as straightforward as it may seem, particularly in the context of elite philanthropy. The research aims to deepen understandings of elite philanthropic practice and what studying these actors contributes to debates related to legitimacy in elite philanthropy. Reflecting this interpretivist approach, I seek to understand the legitimising accounts of PhAds within a specific context, time and place, arguing that this enables research that recognises the social, discursive and agentic practices that constitute elite philanthropy (Alborough and Hansen 2023).

The thesis does not set out to evaluate the legitimacy of elite philanthropy, nor does it seek to advance a particular theory of legitimacy and critically, the aim of this research is not to take a normative or evaluative stance on elite philanthropy, where PhAds are used to evaluate the legitimacy of philanthropy. Rather, this thesis argues they are a lens through which to gain insights into the practices of elite philanthropy. This research stems from my broader interest in understanding the symbolic and material power of philanthropy and I take up an

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11 There are, of course, political implications of this choice, particularly in regard to the legitimisation processes entwined within the construction of elite identities through elite philanthropy. As argued by Kumar and Brooks (2021), who directly link inequalities with elite status, they point out the paradox and hypocrisy of elite legitimacy that is perpetuated by the building and sustaining of elite identities and institutions that maintain “the same social and economic institutions that generate inequalities and injustices, while claiming to fight them” (Kumar and Brooks 2021: 325).
approach that explicitly centres a critique focusing on the role of defining social reality as a political project. Nancy Fraser (1997: 1) states:

The terms that are used to describe social life are also active forces in shaping it. A crucial element of politics, then, is the struggle to define social reality and to interpret people's inchoate aspirations and needs. Particular words and expressions often become focal in such struggles, functioning as keywords, sites at which the meaning of social experience is negotiated and contested.

Thus, understanding what terms are used and why and by whom and on behalf of whom, means that questions relating to legitimacy will be central to my project and analysis.

In summary, this thesis is intended to make two primary contributions. Firstly, it seeks to grow the body of research concerned with the role of PhAds in elite philanthropy. My research will advance not only empirical studies of elite philanthropy focusing on the hitherto under-researched role of advisors as enablers and intermediaries, but also add novel contributions to the ways elite philanthropy practitioners responded to the pandemic. And secondly, the thesis will provide rich empirical data-exploring experiences, meaning-making processes and practices of philanthropy advisors that deepen understandings of the legitimising accounts of elite philanthropy practitioners.

1.3. The Research Questions and Approach

The project asks the following research questions:

1. What are the roles of PhAds in elite philanthropy?
2. How do PhAds shape narratives of legitimacy within elite philanthropic practices?
3. What can analysing the role of PhAds in the context of pandemic responses add to existing understandings of elite philanthropy?

To address the research questions, the study took up a multi-method qualitative study, including in-depth qualitative interviews; document analysis of industry reports, websites, training materials and handbooks; and participatory and non-participatory observation. Data was collected between 2019 and 2021, during the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.
1.4. Overview of the Thesis

This chapter has provided background and context for the project, focusing on the questions that the thesis aims to answer and the research voids it aims to fill. The thesis is structured as follows: after this introduction, chapter two provides a literature review of elite philanthropy and philanthropy advisors. It begins by exploring existing literature on the ways PhAds have been conceptualised in academic and grey literatures. The chapter examines the gap in empirical research on PhAds (how and where they have been researched). I then give an overview on the literature concerned with the legitimisation practices of elite philanthropy, particularly related to wealth and donor-centred philanthropy, arguing that there is limited empirical literature examining the perspectives of practitioners, least of all PhAds. I then examine how the study of PhAds can inform our understanding of the legitimising practices of elite philanthropy and thereafter, consider the contributions that it can make to the existing limited, and often normative, research.

Chapter three outlines the methodological approach, as well as adaptations made in light of the outbreak of Covid-19, three months into data collection. The chapter begins with an overview of how to study elites, exploring what feminist approaches to “studying up” can contribute to elite research. The chapter also explores the central aspects of insider/outsider status within this project and explains via the use of vignettes, as a means of bringing visibility to this process. I then describe my research design and methods, describing my use of interviews, participatory and non-participatory methods and document analysis, and conclude by identifying the limitations of my methodological approach.

Chapters four to seven present the empirical findings of the thesis. Chapter four provides the basis of the empirical findings, outlining the role of philanthropy advisors. It puts forward a typology of these advisors and presents the role of PhAds as Brokers, Intermediaries and Boundary Spanners (BIBS). It discusses the implications of the role of PhAds within elite philanthropy and the emergent marketplace of philanthropic advice services. Chapter five builds on key findings of chapter four, with many PhAds describing their role in advancing the “philanthropic learning journeys” of their clients. It examines what is meant by “teaching philanthropy” and the ways that these PhAds describe the learning journey in relation to
emotions and identity creation for their clients. It also reflects on the implications of PhAds in the creation of positive wealth identities. Chapter six explores the PhAds’ understanding of their role, the role of philanthropists and the role of philanthropy in relation to constructions of social impact. It further examines the ways in which most PhAds justify their roles (and produce legitimising accounts) through social impact claims, with philanthropy advice sold as a way to increase the social impact of philanthropy. I connect this to debates on donor-centred philanthropy, the role of elites in social impact and the legitimising practices of the social impact claims used by many PhAds. Concluding the portion of the thesis on findings, chapter seven examines the philanthropic responses of PhAds to the pandemic. The chapter is based on an analysis of webinars, texts and resources, produced in response to the pandemic and created by philanthropy advisors. It examines the ways the pandemic added to our understanding of PhAds. The chapter explores the legitimising strategies of PhAds in relation to the role of philanthropists, the role of philanthropy and their own role in philanthropic responses. The chapter argues that these pandemic responses entrenched forms of self-justification and legitimacy related to impact claims. I examine the role of many PhAds in promoting narratives of noblesse oblige and explore the bounded agency of PhAds in their role in promoting “more and better” giving.

Chapter eight concludes the thesis by summarising the findings and reflecting on the practical implications of the work. It discusses the contributions of the project by answering the research questions of the project alongside existing research, to highlight the ways in which the findings of the research align and diverge from existing research. The chapter also discusses the limitations of this research in relation to the research questions and presents directions for future research. I reflect on the ways PhAds (re)produce discourses on the role of elites and wealth in social impact, legitimating forms of elite identity and elite philanthropy through this process. I demonstrate how such legitimising practices are tied to the construction of positive elite identities through philanthropy and the strategies of legitimisation, used by intermediaries to perpetuate elite philanthropy. Finally, I argue that these practices have implications for how we should understand the self-perpetuating and donor-centred logics embedded in elite philanthropy.
Chapter 2: Literature Review: Understanding and Conceptualising the Role of Philanthropy Advisors

2.1 Unpacking the “Black Box” of Elite Philanthropy Through PhAds

This chapter establishes the core body of literature that this thesis draws on and contributes to discussions of the role of practitioners in elite philanthropy. As the introductory chapter noted, PhAds have received limited, but increasing attention in academic and policy debates. However, little is known about what role they play in shaping and directing elite philanthropic giving. While elite philanthropists have, for a long time, received advice on managing, organising and “improving” their philanthropy (McGoey 2015; Breeze 2021), the professionalisation of philanthropy advice services has led to the emergence of a philanthropy service industry that includes wealth advisors, consultants and other philanthropic intermediaries and professional advisors. Given the emergence of this sector and the limited research on philanthropy services, there are two key questions which I ask of the literature: Who are philanthropy advisors and what roles do philanthropy advisors play in operationalising elite philanthropy?

To address these questions, the chapter is organised into three sections that examine existing empirical research on PhAds and ask what this under-researched group can tell us about elite philanthropic practices.

The first section begins with an overview of existing empirical research about PhAds, drawing from grey literature and academic research. I examine the historical rise of philanthropy services and the more recent emergence of philanthropy advice, within the context of professional advice services (particularly within wealth and financial services). Given the limited research that directly centres PhAds, the second section of this chapter explores what research on other philanthropic intermediaries, that include donor networks, professional advisors (such as wealth advisors) and philanthropy professionals (such as foundation staff), can add to our understanding of PhAds. The section suggests several paths forward for how PhAds can potentially be conceptualised, including as intermediaries, knowledge workers, gatekeepers and brokers. Despite the limited research on PhAds, existing studies suggest they
play a significant role in the day-to-day operations of elite philanthropy, making them a valuable lens through which to examine elite philanthropic practices.

The last section builds on the previous two, to explore what the study of PhAds can tell us about elite philanthropic practices. Specifically, the section argues that to understand the day-to-day work of PhAds within elite philanthropy, we need to examine the legitimising practices related to the legitimising accounts (described in chapter one, section 1.2) of philanthropic advice services. The section first examines how legitimising accounts can help us understand and research elite philanthropic practices. It then looks at existing research and debates on the legitimising practices within elite philanthropy. Finally, the section argues that more research is needed on the justifications and meaning-making processes of philanthropy through PhAds, drawing from research on the legitimising practices of elite philanthropy.

The chapter makes two key claims. Firstly, that PhAds are under-researched actors within elite philanthropy and warrant more investigation as a previously unexplored lens through which to study elite philanthropic practices. Secondly, the chapter argues that examining PhAds can provide prompts for further research that centres how they understand and justify themselves and what these meaning-making processes tell us about the processes, practices and logics of elite philanthropy. By understanding how PhAds construct and legitimise their role, research into PhAds can provide new insights into the “black box” of elite philanthropy. Critically, the chapter aims to address a gap in literature by going beyond examining the role or motivations of philanthropists or wealthy individuals, to examine the structures and systems that enable elite philanthropists to exist.

2.2 The Emergence of Philanthropy Advisors and Philanthropy Advice Services

In this research, I follow Beeston and Breeze (2023) and use the term PhAds to refer to “all those engaged in the act of offering guidance to donors, even if it only constitutes a small part of their broader work”. This conceptualisation is critical, given that philanthropy advice services exist in multiple institutional and organisational settings. Intrinsic to the question of who are PhAds, is what expertise or qualification makes someone a PhAd? The limited
research on PhAds can be partially explained by the lack of clarity of the role. Seemingly, professional philanthropy advisors include anyone who provides philanthropic advice. Some individuals providing advice to philanthropists may not identify themselves as philanthropy advisors, even though they serve as intermediaries working for the benefit of their clients. They may refer to themselves as charity lawyers, impact consultants or play different roles in the philanthropic ecosystem, such as providing education or digital platforms (Beeston and Breeze 2023: 51). This means that identifying philanthropy advisors is more complex in practice, both in what makes up philanthropy and what constitutes advice. The ways in which these are complicated are discussed further in chapter four, but the lack of specificity of what is involved in this role is partially explained by a lack of certification or industry standard, given the fractured nature of philanthropy advice services. It also reflects the breadth of organisational locations where PhAds are situated, the range of qualifications they hold and the types of clients they work with. Glucksberg and Burrows (2016) comment on this “slippery” demographic framework of the client base of the global philanthropy industry.

According to Beeston and Breeze (2023: 37), there has been a clear growth in the number of for-profit professional advisors that offer philanthropy services since the start of the 21st century. This includes the creation of in-house philanthropy departments within private family offices and private banks and services, such as legal, accountancy and tax-planning, along with wealth management firms offering expertise and guidance. This expansion has been accompanied by professional education for practitioners on philanthropic matters, such as training for lawyers and accountants on how to introduce philanthropy to clients as a part of their services (Breeze and Lloyd 2013).

While most philanthropy advisory organisations are located in the United States, the sector has been growing in the UK and other countries since the 1990s, in line with increased interest in corporate social responsibility and corporate philanthropy (Sklar 2018). However, data on the numbers of advisors and where they operate globally is not available, and there is very little data on the size and client base of the philanthropy advising industry. The largest market for philanthropic advising services is in the United States, where over 2,700 people have been accredited by The American College of Financial Services as Chartered Advisors in Philanthropy since the course began in 2003 (Beeston and Breeze 2023). In the UK,
philanthropy advice was integrated into broader wealth management relatively recently. In 2005, Coutts & Co. bank became the first private bank to offer philanthropy advice. These continued to increase and according to Beeston and Breeze (2023) by 2012 most banks with substantial numbers of wealthy clients were providing similar philanthropic advice service. In addition to the banking sector, philanthropy advice is also offered by a range of non-profit and private sector bodies. According to Breeze et al. (2015) in 2012, there were 38 individuals and organisations advertising their services as philanthropy advisors on the Philanthropy UK website.

While we do not know how many PhAds there are, research shows that professional philanthropy advice is of greater interest to younger major donors, often referred to as next gen philanthropists (Sklair 2021; Beeston and Breeze 2023). According to a 2015 study by Philanthropy Impact, only one in five of the 383 professional advisory firms surveyed offers direct philanthropy advice (Philanthropy Impact 2016). Another report from the Charities Aid Foundation found that 39% of wealthy individuals had taken some form of philanthropy advice, according to a 2013 survey conducted by the Scorpio Partnership. In other words, two out of five wealthy people have turned to a professional advisor for support with their giving structure or strategy.

2.2.1 Philanthropy Advisors in Grey Literature

Before going further, it is worth reflecting that much of the data listed above comes from grey literature. In the context of philanthropy advising services, grey literature includes websites, reports, conference papers, training materials and handbooks that take the form of reports and marketing and training materials. While there is wider debate on the trade-offs and risks of incorporating grey literature into systemic studies, Harrow et al. (2021: 306) note that “it is a fact that an extensive grey literature on philanthropic institutions both exists and is

14 The grey literature used within this study is outlined in the methodology chapter. See Appendix II for the full list of documents in this study.
important for how the actors in the field behave, so is deserving of special, scholarly, theoretical attention, as well as empirical acknowledgement”.

Given the audience of such grey literature, much of it focuses on best practices and “how to’s” for philanthropists and advisors. Several guides have been written by advisors for donors that include “It ain't what you give, it's the way that you give it: making charitable donations which get results” by Caroline Fienne (2012) and “Do more than give: the six practices of donors who change the world” by Leslie R. Crutchfield (2011). Other influential books in philanthropy advice aim to assist in improving the “effectiveness” of giving, such as within the effective altruism movement (most notably Peter Singer 2015). Much of these focus on motivations and the promotion and encouragement of philanthropic giving. For example, Breeze and Lloyd, in their 2013 book titled “Why the Rich Give”, argue that the availability of philanthropic services has been a “significant development in UK philanthropy”, noting the role philanthropy advice has played in encouraging “better” and more satisfactory philanthropy for donors (2013: 169).

It is important to note the normative basis of these grey literature studies and the research questions and motivations that guide them (see chapter three, section 3.6 for how I incorporated this into my analysis). Philanthropy advice services are often mentioned in grey literature research on philanthropists/donors or wealthy elites. Other documents, such as guides, handbooks and training materials, of which many were used as primary sources in this thesis (see Appendix II for the full list of documents), are produced by PhAds for PhAds to improve philanthropic advising. In another example straddling academic and grey literature, is a report from the Human Interaction Research Institute, titled “Donor Advisors and Philanthropic Strategy” (Backer and Friedland 2008), in which they conducted a study on what they identified as donor advisors. Taking a psychological perspective, they conducted interviews with 75 donor advisors, including accountants, family office managers, philanthropic advisors, private bankers, trust and estate attorneys, wealth managers and what they call philanthropy ‘thought leaders’. The main motivation for the study was to examine how advisors help shape the philanthropic strategies of their clients to “advance public good”, promote effective advising and provide a set of best practices and recommendations for how donor advisors can promote philanthropy effectively with clients.
Evaluating the normative basis of grey literature is outside of the scope of this research, however, recognising that philanthropy research and practitioners hold a normative understanding of philanthropy, helps explain how these documents are understood and used in practice. This is particularly relevant in relation to grey literature focused on the improvement of philanthropy. There are also cases of blurred lines between academic and grey literature, not because of any particular normative stance, but because of the authors and intended audience.

Beeston and Breeze’s (2023) “Advising Philanthropists: Practices and Principles” provides an example of how grey literature and academic research in elite philanthropy is not always clear cut. This book, published during the final write up stage of this thesis, is the first, to my knowledge, dedicated entirely to understanding the role of PhAds. Published in February 2023 and co-written by Emma Beeston, a practising philanthropy advisor, and academic Beth Breeze, the book aims to provide an accessible introduction to what the job involves and pulls from interviews with 41 philanthropy practitioners and PhAds. Given its co-authors and aim, in many ways this book illustrates the blurring of academic and grey literature in research on elite philanthropy and advisors. A central aspect of Beeston and Breeze's (2023) book is the role of PhAds in the improvement of philanthropy. The book also aligns itself with what Beeston and Breeze (2023: 26) call the shared “common goal” of all philanthropy advisors, that “of increasing both the quantity and the quality of private giving”. The book shares recommendations and advice for philanthropy advisors, explicitly stating that it describes “how advice can help people who want guidance on how best to use their private resources for the public good” (p. 229).

This text demonstrates in two ways why the line between academic and grey literature on philanthropy advisors are often unclear. Firstly, due to the limited research on PhAds, academic audiences often draw from the same and limited research conducted by PhAds. What all these examples illustrate is how much of what is known about PhAds comes from grey literature and the philanthropy advice industry itself. Secondly, this also helps contextualise the normative conclusions about philanthropy taken up by the authors, one of

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\( ^{15} \) The practices of what giving better and giving more means for PhAds will be explored, at length, throughout the thesis, explicitly linked to how PhAds understand and justify their role through these lenses.
whom is a practicing philanthropy advisor. The book describes its audience as including both academics and practitioners, as well as being written on the basis of promoting more and better giving. Whilst I use similar materials, with grey literature being one of the major primary sources of this research, I argue that it is about the contextualisation and analysis of these sources of information that enables more critical distance between grey and academic research.¹⁶

In summary, existing grey literature primarily emphasises the enhancement, expansion, promotion and impact of philanthropy services. Whilst this is some of the only available information about the kinds of services offered, the numbers of PhAds providing advisory services and the uptake of these services, the grey literature falls short of helping us understand where PhAds fit into the puzzle of elite philanthropy. Because much of the grey literature focuses on expanding the market for philanthropy advice services, there is a need for further theoretical and empirical work to understand the role of philanthropy advisors in elite philanthropy. More research is needed to define the scope of their activities, examine their relationship to wealthy donors and their charitable organisations and explore potential ethical implications for both the advisors and their wealthy clients.

2.2.2 Philanthropy Advisors in Academic Literature

In contrast to grey literature, there is little direct academic research on PhAds. Ostrander called specifically for increased research on the role of PhAds in 2007, in the context of new kinds of philanthropic relationships. She perceived different services and educational opportunities being offered to donors, arguing that these cater to donors’ values and interests first and foremost. Ostrander noted that “wealthy philanthropists have, of course, long used advisors of one sort or another. However, in recent years, this is happening on a much larger scale, rising to the level of a whole new industry, with for-profit companies whose product for sale to wealthy clients is advice about their charitable giving” (Ostrander 2007: 364).

¹⁶ For example, one way that I differentiate grey and academic literature within this project is through a citational practice. All primary sources, what would often be considered grey material, is cited in the footnotes. All in-text citations are academic research.
Despite the call for additional attention to this emergent industry, PhAds have mostly shown up on the periphery of other research on elite philanthropy or the wealth industry.

Given there is so little academic research that centres PhAds, where do they “turn up” in academic research? In some ways, the limited research on PhAds reflects a larger gap of empirical research on elite philanthropy, more broadly. Williamson and Godfrey (2021) helpfully conducted a scoping review of 174 articles on empirical studies, that were chosen based on their focus on the philanthropic behaviours and practices of elite around the world. Whilst not the central point of their paper, they make a clear claim that much research on elite philanthropy is not based on empirical justifications, particularly, critical research on elite philanthropy.

A review of the Palgrave Handbook of Global Philanthropy (2015) illustrates how, loosely defined, PhAds are often peripheral to academic studies on elite philanthropic practices. In the Palgrave Handbook of Global Philanthropy (2015), a comprehensive overview of philanthropic giving across 25 countries and one region (the Caribbean) aimed to understand the contextual factors that facilitate or inhibit philanthropic giving. In the handbook, PhAds are mentioned specifically under a sub-heading of the role of financial advisory professionals. Whilst philanthropy services vary from country to country, in general, the handbook notes the lack of information about the role of advisors in philanthropic giving, but with the most information contained in the chapters on the US, Canada and the UK. In the US chapter, the handbook describes financial advisors in philanthropy as funding professionals and non-profit managers (p. 51). In their review, they found that high-net-worth donors consulted with accountants, attorneys, financial advisors, non-profit personnel, community foundation staff and bank or trust company staff, reflecting that philanthropy advice can both fall under various expertise and also that it is in itself expansive, making the role a blurry one. The handbook also offers an example from Canada on how the role of PhAds is viewed, in stating that “at present, their role could best be characterised as modest, but growing. Most banks and financial service companies have at least some staff working as “philanthropic advisors” and a handful of consulting firms across the country specialise in helping Canadians plan their charitable giving activities” (p. 32). Meanwhile, Breeze (2015) notes that in the UK, the
philanthropy advice has only recently been integrated into the broader wealth management field.

Two things are of note from this handbook. Firstly, that PhAds are mentioned only in the context of financial advice that informs where PhAds work and how they are conceptualised elsewhere. This reflects the broader integration of philanthropy services in wealth management and the financial industry. Secondly, the interchangeable use of the role of philanthropic advice and advisors reflects the nebulous nature of the role and what constitutes advice, meaning some descriptions talked about philanthropy advice services as products, rather than the role of advisors in developing or delivering those products. In summary, this text demonstrates that the role of PhAds is not only still unclear, but also takes on different definitions and understandings in the various geographic contexts. This reflects a broader lack of understanding of who PhAds are, what they do and what role they play in elite philanthropy.

PhAds are also often alluded to in academic literature as a sub-category, rather than a separate group of actors, worthy of their own investigation. For example, PhAds have sometimes been referred to as “philanthropoids”, a term coined by Dwight Macdonald in the New Yorker in 1955. Foreshadowing the role of PhAds as gatekeepers, Macdonald categorised the, roughly, fifty individuals at Ford who made the “crucial decisions in the foundation’s work” and decided how to award the foundation’s grants. The “philanthropoid” was “the middleman between the philanthropist and the philanthropee” and his profession was “the giving away of other people’s money” (Macdonald 1955, as quoted by Uy 2020). Philanthropoid, more generally, is used as a blanket catch-all for individuals working within the philanthropy and non-profit sector (Godfrey 2021), for philanthropy advisors directly (Skair and Glucksberg 2021), as well as a broader category of intermediaries and experts working within philanthropy (Kumar and Brooks 2021). Philanthropoids have also been used as a broad descriptor for philanthropic experts and administrators (Uy 2020). Kumar and Brooks (2021) echo this understanding of philanthropoids within the US context, calling them long-servicing experts and professionals within foundations, specifically.
Thus, while PhAds are sometimes included under the umbrella of philanthropoids, a term that has limited uptake in the literature to date, the umbrella term is limited when used in reference to PhAds. Philanthropoids constitute a category of practitioners within philanthropy, but the term is typically used in reference to administrators within foundations and non-profit organisations. However, as even the limited literature on PhAds suggests, they can and often do operate outside of these institutions. Moreover, the term philanthropoids risks flattening categories of philanthropy practitioners by lumping them into one broader category and potentially, overlooking their role outside of and between institutions. Lastly, in other research on elite philanthropy, philanthropoids (i.e. foundation staff, wealth managers and philanthropy advisors) have been used as proxies for elite philanthropists (Breeze 2021: 2). If philanthropic practitioners are used as proxies for donors, this obscures the unique and distinct roles these different actors play within philanthropy.

Building on this, PhAds and philanthropic advice services are sometimes on the periphery of other studies, such as research on wealth and financial industries or in research on professional services. For example, Harrington’s (2016) seminal work on trusted and estate practitioners provides evidence of how philanthropy is integrated into wealth management professional bodies. Professional advising services for elites include specialist lawyers, tax experts and financial advisors that protect (i.e. further accumulate) their wealth through sophisticated tax avoidance schemes (Beaverstock and Hall 2016). This research helps illustrate the role that advisors play within the wealth management industry and the fact that, like wealth managers, PhAds also source their clients from wealthy elites (Sklair and Glucksberg 2021: 322). Philanthropy advisors are mentioned in relation to family offices, with in-house staff who coordinate the “economic, political and philanthropic interests and engage the next generation of inheritors” (Glucksberg and Burrows 2016). However, in these studies, PhAds are often used as proxies for the donor (Breeze 2021) or as gatekeepers for interviews (Maclean et al. 2012; Maclean et al. 2015), rather than the centre of the research itself.

Lastly, philanthropy services are mentioned in relation to donor education programmes (Phillips et al. 2016; Sklair 2018) and donor organising initiatives (Sherman 2021; Wernick 2012). In these scenarios, PhAds often work within foundations or intermediary organisations to provide advice that goes beyond the so-called mechanics of giving and include “serving the
client’s learning needs” (Phillips and Jung 2016b: 512) or taking their clients on “learning journeys” (Sklair 2021). Despite the limited research, these studies suggest that philanthropy advisors play a growing role in helping individuals, families and organisations make informed decisions about charitable giving. They can provide a range of services, including identifying causes and organisations aligned with the client’s values, developing giving strategies, evaluating the effectiveness of existing giving programmes and navigating complex legal and tax requirements (Beeston and Breeze 2023).

However, even within the limited research directly examining PhAds, there is no clearly agreed upon typology of PhAds or philanthropy advice services. Beeston and Breeze (2023) describe PhAds in three ways: interactions, services and functions. In the first case, they identify eight areas of interaction between advisors and donors (drawing from Backer and Friedland 2008) and the services, highlighting the support that advisors offer to clients (such as management and administration, strategic planning, evaluation and impact, and family support). Lastly, they identify the functions related to planning, vehicle structuring, selecting and monitoring. Notably, they stress that while there are commonalities across different categories, “there is no single shared view of what philanthropy advice should or should not cover” (2023: 53). They note that this fragmentation of services contributes to a lack of understanding of PhAds and philanthropy services, more broadly.

One of the few significant studies directly interviewing and examining PhAds, is Sklair and Glucksberg’s (2021) research on the ways philanthropy is promoted to wealthy elites by advisors. In their research they describe how philanthropy is used as a tool to support inheritance and family business succession planning. In their examination of the role of wealth managers, philanthropy advisors and family offices, they categorise advisors into two (sometimes overlapping) categories: “beneficiary-focused” and “donor-focused”. They distinguish the beneficiary-focused on the basis of advisors being concerned with the improvement of philanthropy by making it more effective. In this category, they describe how advisors offered boutique consultancy services to develop philanthropic strategies. Conduct research for client, and run ‘donor-education’ programmes. The second category of “donor-focused” philanthropy is emphasises the benefits that philanthropy brings to clients. These benefits are described in terms of tax “efficiencies” and include “corporate and personal
brand management, the search for meaning and impact in the spending of wealth, the creation of family legacies and the management of inheritance and family business succession processes” (p. 322). Sklar and Glucksberg (2021) also describe the overlaps in relation to “donor-focused” philanthropy advisors found in banks and financial advisory firms as well as those in family offices who are looking for ways to help families manage “transactional-legal and intimate-affective aspects” of inheritance processes (p. 321).

In summary, while PhAds have been noted as increasingly significant in elite philanthropy (Phillips and Jung 2016: 23) and are part of an emergent industry (Ostrander 2007; Sklar and Glucksberg 2021), there has been limited research directly addressing them. This is partly due to a lack of empirical research on PhAds and the blurry nature of what constitutes advice and philanthropy (Beeston and Breeze 2023). As a result, existing research on PhAds is often peripheral to other research and falls under various areas of expertise and institutions. Although research suggests that PhAds play a role in elite philanthropic processes and practices, there is still a gap in empirical research and no clear typology.

When compared to other aspects of philanthropy research, such as donor behaviour and motivations, the role of philanthropy advisors has often been overlooked. Moreover, there is a lack of uniformity in how philanthropy advisors are defined, with different sources using various titles and job descriptions. Existing literature is often siloed to specific institutional locations (e.g. financial service, consultancies or the charity sector), despite recognition that PhAds play a role as intermediaries within elite philanthropy. Furthermore, there is little research on how philanthropy advisors navigate the social relations of power within elite philanthropy and whether they promote certain forms of philanthropic activity. There is neither a clear conceptualisation of PhAds, nor a typology of their functions and activities within the context of elite philanthropy. This means there is a gap in understanding their role in how they may contribute to the overall outcomes and implications of elite philanthropic practices. Therefore, there is a pressing need for further empirical and theoretical research that can provide more insight into the role of philanthropy advisors in elite philanthropy.
2.2.3 Filling the Gap: Why Study PhAds?

I argue that PhAds are an underexplored and relevant avenue through which to gain more empirical research on elite philanthropic practice. A large body of research has made the case that studying philanthropy practitioners, rather than, say, only philanthropists or only the outputs of philanthropic giving, is useful, because it helps open the “black box” of elite philanthropy and captures the nuances and complexities of what philanthropic processes involve. These studies have highlighted the multitude of roles philanthropy practitioners play as intermediaries (Frumkin 2006), experts (Uy 2020), brokers, (Lewis and Mosse 2006; Mohan and Breeze 2016), translators and bridge builders (Kohl-Arenas 2017), boundary spanners (Dale and Breeze 2021), mediators (Yang et al. 2021), “double agents” (Ostrander et al. 2005) and notably, elites (Ahn 2007).

Researching elite philanthropic practitioners also highlights the role of practitioners within elite spaces. Returning to Odendahl and Shaw’s (2001: 5) definition of philanthropic elites is particularly useful in this context. They define philanthropic elites as “wealthy people, representatives of institutions of wealth, such as foundations, and their leaders. The definition includes not only donors, but also ‘professionals’, such as personal advisors and private foundation staff, who often take on the values shared by the elites they serve”. It is this question of locating elites in philanthropy, not only in the wealthy individuals or in the elite situations that often administer or hold the wealth, but, more broadly, amongst the bureaucrats and intermediaries, that I include PhAds. The inclusion of these advisors recognised the breadth of who counts as elite and invites critical consideration of the role of PhAds as elites within elite philanthropy.

Research on the role of practitioners within elite philanthropy also suggests that PhAds are worthy of more research, given my understanding of elite philanthropy as a set of social practices. Ostrander (2007) argues that philanthropy is a realm of social practice, characterised by unequal power dynamics between donor and recipient, where the recipient is either an individual or an organisation. In this understanding, control and decision making is skewed towards the donor, but not exclusively, with the social relations of power contested and negotiated by all parties. Ostrander argues that philanthropic practice has to be
understood through the lens of social position, identity and access to resources. However, as noted by Ostrander (2007), the emergence of philanthropic intermediaries demonstrates limitations of thinking of philanthropy through a simple giver-receiver framework. Rather, understanding philanthropy as a set of social practices amongst many actors, highlights the different sites of contestation and foregrounds philanthropic practices as a way of understanding and researching philanthropy. Furthermore, I argue in the following section that researching social practices, focusing specifically on the legitimisation of and within these practices, enables greater understanding of the kinds of actors that exist in philanthropy, norms and the implications for elite philanthropy.

As such, the study of PhAds is valuable, because it enables us to gain insights into the processes of meaning-making in elite philanthropic practices. Specifically, an examination of elite philanthropic practices sheds light on the legitimisation practices employed by such entities, as discussed in the subsequent section. This underscores the significance of the study of PhAds, in order to understand their practices and implications and thereby, comprehend the processes and “black box” of elite philanthropy. Moreover, an examination of PhAds offers crucial insights into how elite philanthropy practitioners perceive themselves and promote the field.

Having argued that PhAds are an unexplored part of the elite philanthropy puzzle and suggested ways forward for how to understand their role, the following section will examine existing research on the legitimising practices within (and of) elite philanthropy. It will demonstrate that while there is some research on how elites use philanthropy in legitimising practices, there is very little research that examines the role of philanthropic practitioners (and even less for advisors) within these practices. I argue that examining the concrete practices of elite philanthropy can provide evidence of the legitimising processes of elite philanthropy, that deindividualises the focus on philanthropists and opens the door for greater understandings of legitimising processes of elite philanthropy that sit outside of any individual donor.
2.3 Donor Centred Philanthropy: Legitimacy and Legitimising Practices of Elite Philanthropy

The legitimacy of elite philanthropy, and subsequently elite philanthropists, has been a central subject of debate in elite philanthropy research, arguably since the first “big” philanthropy in the 19th century (Breeze 2021; Saunders-Hastings 2018; Vallely 2021). The legitimacy debates amongst philanthropy scholars often takes on a normative or evaluative stance, with proponents arguing philanthropy can and should provide resources to fill that gap of government (Bishop and Green 2009; Breeze 2021). On the other hand, critiques raise concerns related to the unaccountability of elite philanthropists (Frumkin 2006) and the influence of unelected and wealthy individuals (Reich 2014, 2016), not only on specific organisations (Ostrander 1990) or within specific fields (see Ball 2008 on elite philanthropy and education), but also on the global stage, influencing global governance (Lambin and Surrender 2021; McGoey 2015; Harman 2016; Youde 2019). Legitimacy concerns thus range from extreme forms of donor-control and elite power (Maclean et al. 2020) or in what Schervich (2003) calls hyperagency of elite philanthropists. More research critiques have focused on the legitimacy of elite philanthropy, given the origins of wealth and colonial legacies (Villanueva 2018) and the role in continuing to promote and project elite interests (Giridharadas 2018). Before examining the concept of legitimacy and legitimisation with regards to PhAds specifically, the following section briefly examines conceptualisations of legitimacy in the context the role of ‘non-traditional’ actors in civil society and the implications for governance practices and processes.

2.3.1 Legitimacy and Accountability: The Implications of Elite Philanthropy

Research on civil society, and more specifically civil society actors, can provide a path forward for thinking through how legitimacy can and should be conceptualised. Suchman, for example (1995:574) defines legitimacy as “a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions”. In the context of civil society organisations specifically, Meyer et al., (2013:170) note the concept of legitimacy has developed to include different categorisations of legitimacy ranging from pragmatic legitimacy, normative or moral legitimacy, and cultural-cognitive legitimacy. Legitimacy
debates in civil society scholarship have often focused on the expansion of legitimate actors 
(Beetham 1991, Clark 2003, Nelson 1995). More recently the concept of legitimacy has 
been applied to understand “legitimacy-as-relations-in-processes” as a valuable perspective 
for advancing research in civil society organizations (Egholm et al., 2020:1). Ultimately 
legitimacy debates bring into focus which actors are perceived to matter, and what 
influence these actors have in relation to their role as legitimate actors. Understanding the 
construction of legitimacy as an ongoing social process of legitimisation (Suddaby et. al. 
2017:459; Egholm et al, 2020) allows us to examine how actors gain or lose legitimacy. This 
can help us understand the ways legitimisation (who can have it, how it is negotiated) is a 
question of agency and power. As such, this conceptualisation of legitimacy also relates to 
broader research on the social and political legitimacy of civil society organisations as key 
stakeholders.

Another way legitimacy as a process is discussed in the context of civil society is in relation 
to decision-making processes and governance. The term governance includes other societal 
actors such as business and civil society organizations, and other modes of governance 
beyond authority, such as markets and networks. Petschow et al. (2005:46) also describe 
how these “new arrangements” highlight “the need to understand which actors are part of 
decision-making processes.” This involves changes both in ‘who governs’ and at the same 
time ‘how agency and power is exercised’ requiring an examination of the emergence of 
new networks that give legitimacy to the roles of business, enterprise, and even 
philanthropy in agenda setting. Vivienne Schmidt’s (2013) development of the concept of 
throughput legitimacy provides a pathway to both conceptualise and research legitimacy 
within such opaque governance processes. She argues that legitimacy cannot be solely 
evaluated on the basis of the outputs or inputs, but also through the procedural whereby 
the “quality of governance processes, as judged by the accountability of the policy-makers 
and the transparency, inclusiveness and openness of governance processes” (Schmidt 
2013:728). Throughput legitimacy provides a way of evaluating the legitimacy of complex 
processes and procedures occurring within the ‘black box’ of governance processes and the 
accountability of those making decisions within that process (Schmidt 2013).
What is at stake then? Within the context of civil society actors, these questions and conceptualisations of legitimacy, have consequences for the very survival of these organisations. Dimaggio and Anheier (1990) note that the concept of legitimacy is considered crucially important to civil society actors because civil society organisations have multiple and often ill-defined goals and practices which make it difficult to prove their effectiveness. Legitimacy is closely linked to the accountability and transparency of civil society organizations. Evaluative examinations of organisational legitimacy very often feed into the role of foundations themselves (Harman 2016), tying their effectiveness to their legitimacy (Eyre 2021). At the same time, the social construction and normative basis of ‘effectiveness’ equally raise questions over not only what is effective but who gets to decide.

Conceptualisations of legitimacy that understand it as an ongoing and dynamic process of negotiation thus highlight the importance of understanding the legitimacy strategies of such actors and the consequences for what organisations are perceived and treated as legitimate (Harman, 2016). For example, the ability of civil society organisations to fundraise and receive resources lies in their ability to be perceived as legitimate actors, and what Meyer et. al (2013) name as managerialism. In this way, the legitimacy of these organisations (e.g. NGOs, charities, etc.) can be shaped by the funders (e.g. foundations, philanthropists, etc) not only in funding decisions but also in the ways civil society organisations attempt to meet these expectations. There is a large body of research that explores this aspect of donor influence and control over third sector organisations, describing the ways these organisations need to comply with dominant value systems and consequently narrow or alter their mission as a result (Eikenberry 2009, Eikenberry & Mirabella 2018, Jung & Moon 2007). Eghom et al (2020:7) note critically that “these efforts to gain or regain legitimacy reduce the representativeness of civil society organisations and can hamper their mission to pursue the common good” as these actors attempt to “meet the demands and expectations of actors with particular interests”.

Thus, the emergent role of elite philanthropists, and the industry of elite philanthropic organisations, has clear interconnections with these concerns, particularly in relation to the accountability of these organisations and implications for not only who defines the public
good but also who are the legitimate actors within these systems. Moreover, and critically, the implication in regard to what ways legitimacy is claimed and by whom. Examining elite philanthropy with view of the construction of legitimacy as an unequal and contested relational process raises clear pathways of interrogations related to the legitimacy of actors and their relation to networks and governance and the processes of these (Youde 2020). It also raises questions about their own perceptions and constructions of legitimacy, as explored in the following section.’

2.3.2 Self-Legitimisation of Elite Philanthropy

The concept of legitimacy is front and centre in elite philanthropy research, in this project I specifically focus on research that has explored the legitimisation processes and practices of and within elite philanthropy. There are many ways to theorise, define and research legitimisation. For example, examining organisational claims to legitimacy (Suchman 1995), examining rhetorical strategies of legitimacy seeking (Suddaby and Greenwood 2005) or through identity claims and legitimising accounts (Creed et al. 2002). I use the term legitimisation to refer to a broad set of practices, processes, justifications and rationale used to make decisions and institutions legitimate. For the purposes of this project. Legitimisation processes have been explored in two primary ways within research on elite philanthropy. Firstly, in how elite philanthropy is used to legitimise elite ideologies, actors and activities, and secondly, in how philanthropy legitimises itself though different discursive strategies. At other times, these two strands of legitimisation are self-reinforcing and tautological, whereby philanthropy is used as a legitimising exercise to further promote and justify philanthropy (Maclean et al. 2020). In the latter case, the legitimisation that elites derive from their philanthropic activities furthers the legitimacy of the institution of philanthropy. I will explore these different strands of legitimacy in elite philanthropy by focusing on the practices of self-legitimisation within elite philanthropy, as this, in turn, focuses on how the actors (individuals, organisations and institutions alike) justify and make sense of their role in elite philanthropy. I also reflect on the contributions that examining self-legitimating practices makes, in helping us add more nuance to debates related to donor-centred philanthropy put forward by Ostrander.
Self-legitimation within elite philanthropy is another key theme that emerges from the academic literature, with some research specifically focused on how elite philanthropic actors legitimise themselves through and within elite philanthropy. For many scholars, understanding how elite philanthropic actors practice self-legitimisation and through what vehicles, is of interest because elites continue to justify and legitimise themselves within an unequal world (Maclean et al. 2012). Maclean et al. (2020: 16) argue that these forms of self-legitimisation are symbolic of a “dysfunctional world order”, whereby “elite philanthropy promises salvation while legitimising the continued existence of extreme inequalities, potentially fostering dependency”. A growing body of research has examined cultural mechanisms that contribute to the reproduction of elites (Higgins 2021; Khan 2013; Sherman 2017), with philanthropy specifically playing a role in creating positive wealth identities (Maclean et al. 2011) or in relation to individual good personhood and moral worth (Sherman 2017).

Studying self-legitimisation highlights how elite philanthropy legitimises certain ideas and ideologies, particularly in discourses of neo-liberalism (Eikenberry and Mirabella 2018). Critical research on legitimisation within elite philanthropy highlights that elite philanthropy entrenches the role of elite actors, elite ideologies and extreme wealth accumulation (Maclean 2020; McGoey 2015; McGoey and Thiel 2018). Others have examined self-legitimising processes at the level of global governance, with a focus on the legitimacy of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), in particular (McGoey 2015; Harman 2016). Whilst these examinations have primarily taken an evaluative approach to questioning and challenging the legitimacy of the foundation, and Bill Gates himself, in global health governance, they have also highlighted how the BMGF have established and justified their legitimacy.

Harman argues that self-legitimisation matters for those seeking to maintain their influence and benefit from the operations of global health related to their levels of influence over how agendas are set (Harman 2016: 357). Harman (2016: 264) argues that the BMGF is able to engage “in a process of self-legitimisation that, in effect, buys consent to its rule and shapes popular perceptions of the Foundation’s work and influence in global health governance”. It
is this focus on self-legitimation, rather than external legitimacy claims, that is made through consent and contestation and shapes the normative consensus over the formal and informal rules of elite institutions (Harman 2016: 364).

Additional research on self-legitimation within elite philanthropy has focused on the output legitimacy of impact claims. Output legitimacy describes acceptance of the coercive powers, but only if these powers are seen to serve the common good and are constrained by the norms of the community (Schmidt 2013). As noted by Sklair and Glucksberg (2021), self-legitimation in this context involves justifying the role of elite philanthropy and private wealth on the basis of public good. Such views, with their references to public welfare and social benefit, strongly echo the philanthrocapitalist discourses that “have embraced the idea that large-scale, private wealth-creation is inevitably beneficial for humankind” (McGoey and Thiel 2018: 115–116). In other cases, McGoey and Thiel (2018) argue that recent elite philanthropy justifies itself on a re-emerging notion of “noblesse oblige”. They argue that self-legitimation of these actors through noblesse oblige enables “wealthy donors to position themselves as apparent benefactors of humanity, including a reliance on metrics that appear to justify the claim that targeted philanthropic expenditures can and are reducing global wealth and health inequalities, but which raise unanswered questions surrounding the actual effects of the outcomes claimed” (McGoey and Thiel 2018: 111). McGoey and Thiel (2018: 117) further argue that many elite philanthropists, with their focus on philanthrocapitalists, defend and legitimise private wealth accumulation by presenting wealth as “naturally” beneficent. The characterisation of private wealth as a means of creating public good reflects the utilitarian arguments put forward by Singer (2015) and proponents of effective altruism. These arguments involve the justification of the accumulation of wealth, in that it gives the individual more money to give away and “do good”. The implications for these forms of self-legitimation, are that elite philanthropy not only enables, but legitimises the influence of and disproportionate control of social change (Reich 2011).

At the same time that philanthropy, at scale, is an increasingly powerful tool for the normative understandings of defining public good, often described as social benefit or social impact, further complications arise when it is the elite defining what is “good”. There is no consensus in what counts as public good and social impact is often vague, however, what has been
observed is how elites are enabled and encouraged to define public good (Kuusela 2023). Research on elite philanthropy has thus focused on how philanthropy is donor-controlled (Ostrander 2007), reifying the interests and concerns of these elites. To explore these questions, some research focuses on the elites themselves and how they describe their intentions and motivations (Schervish 2005, 2008). This is reflected in research on donor intentions, whereby philanthropists justify their elite philanthropy based on obligation (Jung et al. 2015) or the “desire to make a difference” (Lloyd and Breeze 2013). Within these discussions of philanthropy as social practice, one conceptual argument is that individuals’ identities dictate their motivations to give. While donors are motivated by a variety of factors, there is a well-documented trend of wealthy individuals donating significant amounts to large educational, medical and cultural institutions (Odendahl 1990; Ostrower 2004). These narratives of self-legitimisation show that the justifications for elite philanthropy are often linked to the role of private wealth for public good, raising questions about the arbitrators of private wealth; the philanthropists and donors themselves. “Philanthropy is thus presented as one more beneficial consequence of accumulated private wealth, even though references to the extent and impact of such activities are often vague” (Kuusela 2023: 13).

This chapter does not aim to provide an extensive review of the evaluative literature on the legitimacy of elite philanthropy or how philanthropy is used to legitimise certain approaches or outcomes. Instead, it aims to shed light on how practitioners legitimise wealth and the role of elites in the creation of public benefit through elite philanthropy. This includes the ways in which philanthropy confers symbolic power and legitimises extreme wealth, as noted by McGoey and Thiel (2018). Critically, that this legitimisation is often framed on social impact claims, which reinforces the role of elites and their wealth, this raises questions on what the study of elite philanthropy can tell us about how the role of wealth is, and how elites are, legitimised through elite philanthropy, symbolically through claiming to have made an impact.

The legitimisation of elites and elite identities, and the role this has in the legitimisation of wealth, has been explored and argued, at length, by others. Examining these in the context of elite philanthropy highlights two things. One, that the legitimisation of elites on the basis of purported social impact is key, emphasising the links between self-legitimisation of elites
and how these reinforce the role of elites in social change. And two, that these literatures highlight that social benefit and social impact are contested terms in literature and practice.

2.3 The Role of Advisors in Legitimisation Practices

What is the role of practitioners, and more specifically, advisors, in these legitimisation processes, and what can they tell us about the actual practices of elite philanthropy?

Recent studies have explored the role of professional advisors in financial and wealth management. Some of this research has highlighted the administrative function that these advisors play, pointing out the high level of technical skills required to navigate complex legal and tax systems (Harrington 2016; Kuusela 2023). Other research has examined the role of advisors, not only as administrators of wealth seeking to maximise the wealth of their clients, but also as players in inheritance processes (Sklair and Glucksberg 2020; Higgins 2018; Herlin-Giret 2020).

Following Harrington’s (2016) study of the professions’ global strategies to protect and preserve elite family wealth, the role of wealth managers as enablers of private wealth accumulation further perpetuating inequalities has come under increasing attention (Higgins 2021). Previous research has highlighted the crucial role of wealth managers in training and influencing their wealthy clients to secure intergenerational transfer of wealth. For example, Sklair and Glucksberg (2021) observed how wealth managers in the UK and Brazil encourage the next generation to participate in philanthropy as a way to train them in wealth management skills, or what Higgins (2022) calls a pedagogy of inherited wealth.

Kuusela’s (2023) recent study on fund managers also reflects the legitimisation narratives used by these financial professionals and the role they play in legitimising the wealth of their clients through philanthropy. Her research highlights the ways fund managers present philanthropy to the super-wealthy as a means for them to embrace their wealth, arguing that this produces a form of charismatic authority for the wealthy. This argument reflects the ways that these managers promote the logic of enlightened self-interest (McGoey 2012) as a win-win scenario (Giridharadas 2018). It is a logic that accepts individual accumulation through
philanthropy, on the basis that wealthy elites have a role in improving the standards of living for all through their philanthropy, which is predicated on the basis that they have extreme wealth to give away in the first place (Kuusela 2023). Kuusela’s argument that philanthropy is used by wealth managers to legitimate wealth accumulation through “the behaviour of the rich” is a central point (Kuusela 2023: 14). That this legitimisation is framed by fund managers as a way to do good and promote moral worth and behaviour of their clients, and not as a structural issue of inequality, reflects the ways fund managers understand inequality. She links this with Piketty’s (2020: 2) descriptions of inequality regimes that refer to sets of “discourses and institutional arrangements intended to justify and structure the economic, social, and political inequalities of a given society”. She argues that these cultural processes of legitimisation, whereby economic wealth and inequality “are made sense of”, are not simply a way to contextualise wealth and inequality, but “constitutive of the economic regimes and actions that produce them” (Kuusela 2023: 5). Thus, recognising the legitimisation of wealth, elites and donor-control reflect both how elite philanthropy enables the controlling of material resources and the shared cultural structures by which individuals make sense of their environment. Her research and that of Harrington (2016), point to the ways advisors play a role in both managing wealth and also, shaping discourses and practices of the elites in relation to their wealth.

2.3.4 Filling the Gap: Why Study the Legitimisation Accounts of PhAds?

I am contributing to literature by exploring legitimising practices of elite philanthropy, not through the lens of philanthropists, but of practitioners. I argue that it is paramount to understand how those working within elite philanthropy justify and rationalise their role and, in turn, the ways that help to promote and perpetuate elite philanthropy, and the ways in which practitioners legitimise themselves, their clients and elite philanthropy, more broadly. By understanding how these actors make sense of themselves and their work, we are able to understand not only the practices that make up elite philanthropic advice processes, but also the logics that enable elite philanthropy. Theoretically and methodologically, such empirical research aims at documenting what Lamont et al. (2014) describe as everyday “frames” of meaning-making processes and cultural scripts through which different actors make sense of
their roles. I assert that studying the legitimising accounts of PhAds contributes to understandings of elite philanthropic practices and offers insights into the meaning-making processes, providing a lens through which to further unpack the “black box” of elite philanthropy.

Identifying power and locating agency within the social relations of philanthropy is a central concern within critical elite philanthropy, especially in relation to the legitimising practices deployed by elite philanthropists through their philanthropy (Ostrander 2007; Silber 2012; Schervish 2003; Maclean et. al. 2020; McGoe and Thiel 2018). More specifically, there are concerns related to the ways philanthropy legitimises donor-control and elite power. Schervish (2003) put forward the concept of “hyperagency” as a way of describing the power of donors in philanthropy. Jung and Harrow (2015: 48) define hyperagents as actors who have “the ability to shape the socio-politico frameworks and matrices within which networked governance occurs”, noting the rise of philanthropic hyperagents that “have become increasingly visible as cross-sectoral collaboration has made philanthropists increasingly important governance actors” (Jung and Harrow 2015: 48). Hyperagency relates to legitimisation, both in terms of legitimising the role of elites as extra-governmental actors in governance processes, but also, in terms of the implications for agenda setting. In their study on the role of elite philanthropy in democracies, Horvath and Powell (2016: 90) observed that elite philanthropists exercise power by shaping how people observe, by “shaping how people view social problems” and as proselytisers for specific goals that reify the role of elites in defining solutions on behalf of the greater public (Maclean and Harvey 2020). Moreover, given existing research on the links between philanthropy and legitimisation of wealth (Skilair and Glucksberg 2021; Sherman 2017; Higgins 2021), it is also worth directly linking legitimisation claims with what is considered morally laudable or rewarding (Suchman 1995: 85).

Despite the centrality of the debates on legitimacy and the focus on the legitimisation of wealth, elite power and elite philanthropy, less is known about the processes of this legitimisation and the ways these are embedded within elite philanthropic practices. Moreover, as more focus has moved towards intermediaries (Jung and Harrow 2015; Ostrander 2007; Brooks and Kumar 2021), less is known about their role within elite
philanthropic practices and there is a need for more research on the role of philanthropic intermediaries and practitioners in the legitimisation of elite philanthropy. This research aims to address the gap in literature by going beyond examining the role or motivations of philanthropists or wealthy individuals, to examine the structures and systems that enable elite philanthropists to exist. I argue that studying the legitimisation accounts of PhAds will add to key debates in elite philanthropy related to donor-control and elite power. Thus, it is useful to examine legitimising narratives embedded within philanthropic advice practices and how they may reinforce or challenge the influence and power of philanthropists. My research builds on this to explore what role PhAds play in shaping these processes and practices, within the context of an emergent philanthropic advising industry. Understanding the legitimisation processes of PhAds may contribute to research focused on the role of elites in philanthropy, such as through agenda setting (Ostrower 1995, 2002) and concerns over wealthy elites gaining more influence as non-governmental actors in public policy domains through their philanthropy (Schervish 2003; Nickel and Eikenberry 2010).

2.4 Conclusion

This literature review aimed to address two gaps in the research: philanthropy advisors and legitimisation within elite philanthropy. Drawing on a range of theoretical and empirical literature, I examined existing research on PhAds, to examine the role of philanthropy advisors in shaping and directing elite philanthropy, and how their practices and values contribute to or challenge the legitimacy of philanthropic endeavours.

I demonstrated that there is a gap in the research on these advisors and that they are often on the periphery and not centred. Most of the information available about them is grey literature, with almost no academic literature, except for one book that is co-written with a philanthropy advisor. Even in the Palgrave Handbook of Global Philanthropy, the only dimension of philanthropy services within financial services has no agreed upon definition. Although they exist, we do not really know much about them.

The chapter considered the lack of empirical research of philanthropy advisors. It argues for more understanding of the role of philanthropy advisors and that in studying the legitimising
accounts of PhAds, we can better understand the practices of elite philanthropy. While there is some research that suggests their role as brokers, gatekeepers or class intermediaries, there is a need for more understanding. Recognising the role PhAds play, or seek to present themselves as playing within the marketplace of philanthropy, highlights clear debates within contemporary philanthropy related to power, governance and donor control (Eikenberry and Mirabella 2018; Odendahl 1990; Ostrower 1995; Reich 2018), the marketisation and financialisation of philanthropy (McGoey 2015; Sklair 2021; Brooks and Kumar 2021), and even more specifically, the implications of these overlapping financial services and the commodification of philanthropy itself as a product (Harrington 2016; Sklair and Glucksberg 2021).

The chapter argues for increased investigation into PhAds as overlooked actors in elite philanthropy. It also highlights the importance of studying the legitimising practices of PhAds, which can shed light on the inner workings of elite philanthropy. It is not just that PhAds are a vehicle to studying and researching elite philanthropic practices, but their practices are also key to understanding the meaning-making and legitimising process of elite philanthropy. In other words, researching the legitimising practices of elite philanthropy helps us make sense of how philanthropy operates as a “black box” and gives insights into how philanthropic practitioners understand, justify and legitimise themselves. Paying attention to what is made visible and the tensions and contradictions of these legitimising practices, gives insights into the complexity and nuance of elite philanthropic practices. By providing empirical evidence of legitimising practices to understand how PhAds account for themselves and their services, I argue that this will contribute to understandings of legitimacy within elite philanthropy. Secondly, this also serves to deindividualise philanthropy and extend philanthropic research on practitioners outside the scope of foundations.

In conclusion, this literature review highlights two main gaps. Firstly, there is a clear empirical gap in research, as these advisors are under-studied actors and there is not much information available about them. Secondly, there is a gap in understanding how legitimising accounts and legitimacy are constructed from within elite philanthropy and the existing literature is overly focused on the individual, without considering the supporting structures and
institutions that enable elite philanthropy to continue and perpetuate. By studying the legitimising practices of philanthropy advisors, we can address these gaps in the literature.
Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the methodological approach of this thesis. Drawing on critical elite studies and feminist methodological perspectives, I explain my use of a multi-method and iterative approach in the project. I argue for greater engagement between critical elite studies and feminist methodological approaches, given overlapping concerns related to power in the research process, reflexivity and insider/outsider status, and knowledge production.

I first begin by briefly revisiting the conceptualisation of “elite” (outlined in the introduction) and how these conceptualisations directly inform methodological approaches in critical elite studies. I then reflect on methodological techniques and approaches to studying elites and elite philanthropy, philanthropic intermediaries and PhAds, in particular. I justify my decision to deploy multi-qualitative methods: interviews, (non-)participant observation and documentary analysis. Secondly, I explain my research process, including outlining the impact of the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. I detail the adaptations I made and reflect on the challenges and opportunities that resulted from these adjustments and how they shaped the project. Thirdly, I discuss my reflexivity approach and practice over the course of the research. I specifically spend time on my own positionality and reflect on the question of who gets to do elite studies and contextualise this within the intellectual groundings of the project in elite studies and feminist ethics. Fourthly, I give an overview of my approach to data analysis and lastly, I reflect on the limitations of the methodological approach.

3.2 Methodological Approaches to Researching Elites

In this section, I review methodological approaches to critical elite studies and reflect on how the very definition of elites informs the research design, approaches and analysis taken up, reflecting the intellectual grounding of the project. I begin by revisiting the contentious concept of elites and how and why this is relevant when researching elite philanthropy professionals. I then assess various methodological strategies to studying elites and demonstrate the value of feminist methodological approaches within elite studies.
3.2.1 Who Are Elites?

Before examining why critical elite studies provided a useful methodological approach, it is again important to remember that defining elites is a, if not the, point of departure for such research (Odendahl and Shaw 2002: 2). The conceptual literature on elites is extensive and mainly, outside of the purview of this chapter's focus on methodologies within critical elite studies. Given this, I ground my definition directly back to the purpose of the research; one aligned with “reorienting the gaze” towards elite power. Critical elite studies is linked with theoretical understandings of power and status (Odendahl and Shaw 2001). Thus, a definition of elites reflects an understanding of power and society (Odendahl and Shaw 2001) requiring researchers to be clear about how they understand and designate elite status to research subjects (Higgins 2019). Striking a balance between these, Odendahl and Shaw (2001: 301) more succinctly point out that researchers often classify elites into sector categories (e.g. business, political, community), but that these categories are not mutually exclusive and there are substantial overlaps among them. My understanding, and later operationalisation of the term elites, reflects the approach that centres philanthropy professionals (Ostrander 1995b) and industry practitioners as a professional managerial class (Liu 2021) and as transnational professionals (Seabrooke 2014; Harrington and Seabrooke 2020).

3.2.2 Approaches to Studying Elites

There is a range of approaches to studying elites, particularly focused on data collection. The study of elites is often ignored in discussions of qualitative methods, including feminist ones. Many of the key handbooks on qualitative methods, and notably Yin’s 1994 handbook on case study research that is one of the most commonly cited references on qualitative methods, do not explicitly deal with elites (Welch et al. 2002: 613). Importantly, this oversight is also reflected in feminist qualitative methods, as I discuss below.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of elite studies, methodological approaches often use multiple methods and require what Odendahl and Shaw (2001: 11) call flexibility and “a certain degree of opportunism”. Cousin et al. (2018: 236) have helpfully reviewed a range of methods used to bring elites into focus, including surveys, network analysis, interviews,
ethnographic observation, experiments, archival work and analysis of administrative data. Reviewing approaches taken up by other researchers provides useful grounding to demonstrate that there is no one methodological approach to studying elites. While there are multiple ways to study elites, as with any social group, the challenges of “researching up” often focus on a key theme: access. This theme is not only prominent in the literature, but was instrumental to my experience in conducting this research.

3.2.3 Access and Studying Elites

Elites are those individuals “occupying a position that provides them with access and control or as possessing resources that advantage them” (Khan 2012). It is this very access and control of resources that raises concerns in research, when elites consent to and participate in research about them. As a result, some argue that despite the relative visibility of elite groups, they are more difficult to access than other groups, due to their social status and power (England 2002; Harvey 2011; Laurila 1997; Mikecz 2012). Mikecz (2012: 482) further argues that elite research “represents unique methodological problems”, with elite positionality often tied to having power (Maxwell 2015), requiring researchers to adopt different approaches to access for elites, such as extensive preparation and credentialisation, and creativity (Odendahl and Shaw 2002). In this formulation, the researcher, presented as “less powerful” in relation to their subject, inverts the conventional assumption in ethical guidelines that it is the researcher who holds power (Lillie and Ayling 2021: 891). Given the assumed power of elites, researchers have gone so far as to advocate for the forgoing of ethical standards. This “un/ethical” position, coined by Gaztambide-Fernández (2015: 1141), requires researchers to “reveal what elite institutions are invested in keeping hidden thus justifying adhering to a different set of ethical guidelines”.

While constraints related to access are not unique to elite studies (Leavy 2014), the discussion of access to elites does appear to comprise a disproportionate amount of academic research on elites. For example, Smith (2006) argues that a researcher experiencing difficulties with access does not necessarily correlate to the perceived “elite” status or identity of a group, but that negotiating access will vary considerably, depending on the research context and regardless of the perceived status. Cousin et al. (2018) argue that in some ways, the discussion
and preoccupation with access to elites may actually reify the idea of elite as a fixed status. For example, perception that elites are inaccessible, exclusive and are busier than “ordinary” people, reinforces ideas of importance and busyness of this group of people, therefore suggesting that researching elites requires a form of ethical exceptionalism. Along these lines, Gaztambide-Fernández (2015) notes that existing ethical guidelines are inadequate when it comes to studying elites and argues that as a way to disrupt the power of elite research participants, researchers should take up an “un/ethical position” when it comes to navigating access and consent. This argument is based on the idea that elite groups don’t require the same ethical considerations, due to their positions of power, reduced vulnerability and ability to circumvent the research process. Lillie and Ayling (2021) critique some of the ideas espoused by Gaztambide-Fernández (2015) around this “un/ethical position”, arguing that while researchers should acknowledge and create space for recognition of the role of power in the research process, that such forms of elite exceptionalism overlook an ethics of care towards research participants, even if they are elites.

Given that the identification of individuals as “elite” often relies on structural notions of power, rather than a specific research context (Smith 2006), a key question for how to study elites begins by locating elites. In other words, where can elites be studied and what approaches exist for locating them? Strategies here vary significantly, with some utilising institutional support and approval to research within a single organisation (see Ostrander 1995b; Shamir 2005), attending public events (see Moeller 2014; Rajak 2011; Dolan and Rajak 2016) or participating in training and education programmes (see Harrington 2015; Shamir 2005; Sklair 2018). Others have focused more on families, family practices and elite individuals and advisors, whereby locations of data collection are found in people’s homes or offices in a private capacity (Higgins 2019; Higgins and Kunz 2022).

Access, and its practicalities, lead to methodological approaches that fit within two camps, referred to as obtrusive and non-obtrusive methods, or entail a combination of the two. Harrington (2015) has used extended ethnographic immersion, a technique based on

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17 I understand non-participant research as unobtrusive. Originally coined by Webb et al. (1966), “unobtrusive” or “non-reactive” means of data collection refer to social research methods through which the researcher makes no direct contact with participants.
anthropological fieldwork, as vital to her research on transitional professionals, during which she became a qualified wealth manager. Others have also opted for ethnographic approaches to elite research, but in potentially more practical ways that are less time-intensive, with some using single case studies of organisations (see Ostrander 1995b; Shamir 2005), whilst others leverage public-facing aspects of elite spaces, such as conferences (see Moeller 2014; Dolan and Rajak 2016). However, the costs of these public events and their locations can create hurdles for researchers. Garsten and Sörbom (2017) found creative ways of overcoming some of these barriers in their research on events as ethnographic sites. At the World Economic Forum in Davos, unable to get tickets, they used the free shuttle services made available across the town over the course of the forum, in order to gain access to interviewees. Others who have also adopted more flexible approaches include Allison et al. (2019), who used both obtrusive and non-obtrusive methods, namely, interviews and participant observation, in conjunction with documents, to understand motivations and notions of gender equality and empowerment in their research on corporate elites.

Ethnographic and interview-based accounts can also pose other concerns to researchers in elite spaces, firstly related to what Khan (2012) refers to as the performative cultures amongst elites, whereby representations, motivations and justifications are often rife with contradictions. For researchers, this means it can be difficult to evaluate not only the underlying intention and meanings, but also, to dig under the surface of what may often be marketing tag lines or curated communication materials. Cousin et al. (2018: 236) speak to these challenges as both objective and subjective when studying elites, notably that they comprise “a small population, not evenly distributed across places, organisations or institutions, heavily resourced, typically highly educated, used to developing sophisticated discourses about itself, often elusive and difficult to reach and (by definition) powerful”. They later (p. 238) emphasise that when studying elites, these sophisticated representations of self, reflect the idea that their discourses are the only accurate or legitimate ones. These representations can lead to potential backlash, with instances of researchers being threatened with legal sanctions, such as receiving threats (Harrington 2016) and imposing additional constraints and considerations when researching elites. At the same time, other elite researchers utilising these approaches have also shared concerns related to institutional and interpersonal conflicts that result from gaining access. Nader (1972) describes some of
these costs of entry to the field, often related to the necessity for full anonymisation, general availability, communication strategies and secrecy amongst these entities.

Notably, all these approaches and tactics suggest that the positionality of the researcher can limit or enable the ability to navigate these spaces. Cousin et al. (2018) note that even if the researcher is not necessarily the member of an elite themselves, which they argue is actually more often the case than not, echoing Smith (2006), they at the very least, typically, have a social proximity to their subjects. This enables them to pass (i.e. be accepted) in these spaces, which clearly relates to their class status, gender, racialisation and nationality (regarding the ability of the researcher to even attend such conferences) that are all significant in order to conduct these forms of research, for example, Lillie and Ayling’s (2021) research on researcher identity and positionality in their research in elite schools.

It is worth mentioning an ‘elephant in the room’ of elite studies research here. In a slightly sticky and often under-discussed subject of the researcher as elite, described by Smith (2006) and Sherman (2021), Cousin et al. (2018: 239) note: “Research professors share with many elites both embodied and institutionalised cultural capital; for instance, as professionals in the knowledge economy, academics share some sensibilities and interaction repertoires with those elites studied in recent ethnographies of hiring in the advanced tertiary sector (Rivera 2015) and of the organisation of fields such as finance (Zaloom 2006; Ho 2009; Godechot 2016)”. The social proximity also reflects the academic affiliation and education of the researcher and the perceived prestige of these institutions, which Cousin et al. (2018) point out might explain why elite studies are concentrated in “elite” universities. I describe how my own positionality and insider status, given my experience in the sector, enabled me to conduct this research, as described in section 3.3.

Given these constraints and potential hurdles, many researchers opt for more unobtrusive methods, notably documentary analysis. David Mosse (2005) stresses the time and expertise that go into producing the texts thus capturing both the implementation and outcomes of development programmes. However, Allison et al. (2019: 56) note that researchers must be aware that these materials made available “are the ones that corporations and powerful economic institutions want us to see: the graphs and success stories in sustainability reports
and on webpages that supposedly affirm efficient outcomes”. However, Mosse (and Dorothy Smith, whose work on institutional relations of power informed Ostrander’s research on foundations) notes that it is by interpreting these texts with this in mind, that enables researchers to reveal the social relation that produced the texts (Mosse 2005: 15). These arguments indicate that documents and texts should be contextualised within their context, particularly in recognition of the elite contexts in which they are produced.

Given the myriad of approaches to studying elites, I took up an iterative and inductive methodological approach, utilising multiple methods, both obtrusive and non-obtrusive, outlined in section 3.3. Methods and approaches were adapted in response to the challenges of researching during the Covid-19 pandemic. Before describing my research design, the next section will outline my research purpose and ethics, based on principles of studying up.

3.2.4 Feminist Methodologies and Approaches to “Studying Up”

My research topic and research questions are part of a rich tradition of “studying up”. Recently celebrating its 50th anniversary is the call from Laura Nader in 1972 for researchers to study “the colonisers rather than the colonised, the culture of power rather than the culture of the powerless, the culture of affluence rather than the culture of poverty” (p. 289). Studying the middle and upper classes and bureaucracy is essential for challenging assumptions in knowledge production. For example, rather than asking, “Why are people poor?” asking, “Why are people wealthy?” Such research is also necessary to understand power more fully and complexly “to get behind the facelessness of a bureaucratic society, to get at the mechanisms, whereby far away corporations and large-scale industries are directing the everyday aspects of our lives” (Nader 1972: 5).

I argue that one way of studying up, whilst also grounding the everyday practices, is by turning to feminist methodologies and feminist research ethics. Whilst the entirety of the debates around what compromises a feminist methodology and a feminist ethics is largely outside of this chapter, I follow Ackerly and True’s (2019: 6) assertion that no definitive feminist method exists, but that while there is no distinctive “feminist methodology”, there is arguably a distinctive feminist approach to methodology and methods (Krook and Squires 2006: 45).
also draw from Conti and O’Neil (2007: 64) who argue for the integration of feminist approaches in qualitative methods for research elites, on the basis that “feminist researchers insist on a rigorous, thorough, and transparent examination of the role of the researcher in the production of knowledge and an analysis of ‘micropolitics of research’ at all stages of the process”. In this research, this meant I paid particular attention to the practice of care in the research process, i.e. the responsibility of the researcher to the research participants and the responsibility of researchers to determining who is centred in the research. Furthermore, I reflected on what was made visible through this research, as a means to understand the conditions, processes and institutions that cause and sustain oppressions (Ackerly and True 2020).

Inspired by the work of Anne Oakley (1981), feminist researchers have championed reciprocity, self-disclosure and rapport as ways to minimise power differences between interviewers and participants (Pacholok 2016). These are of particular concern to critical elite studies and my research, specifically related to navigating insider/outsider status and relevant to my research approach that adopts a feminist ethics in researching elite philanthropy. This equally aligns with my approach to knowledge production and an interpretivist grounding to research, whereby “feminist knowledge production and practice seeks to bring out the different positions of the actors in order to allow for possible connections with others; feminist analysis aims to interpret, not claim, truth” (Harcourt 1994: 22).

These approaches and ethics raised several concerns for me over the course of the research design and approach. I have reflected on the risk of reinforcing elite discourses through this research. I question whether I am bringing visibility to the “black box” of elite philanthropy or further amplifying the voices of the rich and professional elites, and subsequently, reifying the wider economic and social processes that elite advantage is a part of. These feminist questions and concerns are not new to elite philanthropic research (Conti and O’Neil 2007), but the question remains: who should we make the protagonists in research on elites? In her ethnography of Italian capitalist family firms, Sylvia Yanagisako (2002: 49) argues that in studies of the powerful, who often have considerable control over how they are represented, it is crucial to go beyond their “official” versions in order to “supplement, challenge, and interpret” their dominant discourses with other understandings. Yanagisako (2002: 48)
suggests that “in ethnographic studies, where the subjects are endowed with sufficient financial and cultural resources to make themselves well heard, the challenge is less how to give them voice as it is to let others speak as well”. Drawing from this research means I also reflected on knowledge production and my role as a researcher in this project, in who was made visible and how. At the same time, I agree with Cousin et al. (2018: 231), who contend that “it would be a mistake to become “court stenographers” — mere chroniclers of the powerful and the high society”. In my project, this has meant taking a critical approach, paying close examination to power, who is speaking on behalf of whom and engaging in a reflective practice that focuses on bringing visibility to the tension that this research process has raised, outlined in the following reflexivity section.

3.3 Reflexivity

This research project emerged from questions and critiques circulating in my professional and political work. Inspired by such seminal texts as The Revolution Will Not Be Funded (2017), I was fundamentally interested in understanding how social change is resourced. Within my professional life, working in the charity sector in London and previously, in the field of gender and development, this line of inquiry resulted not so much from what did receive funding, but rather what did not. Paying attention to the gaps and silences within how resources are allocated, by whom and under what circumstances, was central to my professional life, where I often found myself in conversations with feminist organisers who would point out the paradox of increased popularity and visibility of feminism, without the subsequent windfall towards feminist organisations and movements. These conversations were coupled with professional experiences where I was privy to grant-making decisions, partnership strategy meetings with corporate entities and foundations, as well as interactions with HNWI philanthropists; situations in which power dynamics and inequities were often something to be managed, rather than challenged. Similar to Maclean et al. (2015), my research was inspired by critical research on elites and elite power, but unlike Maclean et al., I wasn’t only interested in what “they do with all the money” (Maclean et al. 2015: 1631), but in the processes and logic that underpin and influence where the money goes.
My research approach and ethics underlying the research questions do not only draw from scholarship, “but from surprising real-world observations and experiences” (Ackerly and True 2008: 700). Feminist thinking underpins my theoretical orientations, research ethics and reflective processes. I spent a significant amount of time grappling with issues of power within the research process, questions of accountability and knowledge production and responsibility as a researcher studying elites. As such, engagement with “the place from which one speaks/researches/writes” is essential in feminist research (Koobak and Thapar-Björkert 2014). Reflexivity is a “self-critical approach that questions how knowledge is generated and, further, how relations of power operate in this process” (D’Cruz, Gillingham and Melendez 2007: 75). Fitting with my value stance mentioned above, reflexivity, “unsets and destabilises the power and politics of knowledge, and of ‘theory’; it demystifies the research process, identifies, and ‘locates’ the ‘knower’ in a specific discursive, historical, geopolitical and institutional dynamics of scholarly production” (Madhok 2013: 187). At best, reflexivity is framed as thoughtful self-awareness throughout the research process. At worst, it is framed as cathartic confessional accounts (Pillow 2003) leaning towards self-indulgent navel gazing (Finlay 2002: 532). As such, reflexivity raises practical questions about the “hard and, at times, confusing practice” of reflexivity where there are no clear guidelines as to how to go about it (Madhok 2013: 189).

As this chapter has already noted, I have avoided any “pretence that research is value-free” (Janesick 1998: 41). I do not see my personal and professional position as distinct from the systems that produce the vast inequities and inequalities, and situating my academic and professional roles within broader political, economic and social circumstances is key to my intellectual presumptions, my research design and approach. I advocate for a highly reflexive form for qualitative research within critical elite studies that exposes “the mechanics of its own production” (Rhodes 2001: 32). My project was informed by Firth’s (2022) research on celebrity chef philanthropy in New Orleans, where she built upon the “awkward ethnography”, coined by Ananya Roy (2012: 37). Instead of rendering the strange “familiar” — which middle-class researchers tend to do when they study the poor — this type of awkward ethnography renders the familiar “strange” revealing the forms of power and knowledge through which the researcher is also constituted.
I have worked in the social entrepreneurship space as a programme manager in London for the past seven years. In this role, I have worked directly with social entrepreneurs to take them through programmes that help to grow and scale their work. I have acted as a selection panellist, evaluating organisations for grants, and pitching candidates to funders. In this capacity, I have also conducted due diligence and site checks to ascertain whether the candidates fit these funding criteria. I have recruited social entrepreneurs and their organisations for a fellowship programme, interviewing over 100 individuals and evaluating thousands of grant and fellowship applications. I have also managed a network of grant funders and hosted roundtables from many of the prominent foundations in the UK. I have helped develop bids for corporate partnerships, from both CSR departments of banks to corporate foundations. Importantly, these professional experiences, along with my own social positionality as a white, cisgendered, European-American woman, provided me with an initial network, language and socialisation that enabled me to navigate my research sites both online and offline, explored in section 3.3.2.

3.3.1 The Use of Vignettes

To aid in bringing more visibility to the research process, and myself as a researcher within that process, I use vignettes at the beginning of each findings chapter. In relation to more ethnographic research, Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (2001: 361) advocate for the inclusion of “evocative fieldnotes” in research accounts, as they can “provide particularly rich accounts of the processual nature and full complexities of experience” (p. 361). Humphreys refers to these “autoethnographic fragments” as a means by which researchers “can explicitly question and highlight pertinent thoughts and emotional experiences” (Humphreys 2005: 853). In order to do so in my research, and to bring visibility to the methodological approaches throughout the thesis, and viewing these as data themselves, I use vignettes at the beginning of each findings chapter based on fieldnotes gathered during my data collection. Vignettes “are stories generated from a range of sources including previous research findings. They refer to important factors in the study of perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes” (Hughes 1998: 381). Writing myself into vignettes also reflects my aim to bring visibility to the research process and bring light to my own approach and process of knowledge production. Outside of a reflexive tool, vignettes also incorporated my field notes and participant observation
research, contributing to the sites of data collection that were critical to my access and experiences with interviewing participants. Vignettes thus serve to ground the research within specific times and locations, recognising the importance of space (Hughes and Huby 2004), particularly in a project interested in wealth, in enriching the data available to the reader. It also highlights the role of the emotions and reactions of the researchers and my own experiences of class, gender and race within the research process. The vignettes help to illustrate the in betweenness and complicated ideas of power within elite research practices.

McCarthy’s research on power and gender within CSR value chains and processes provides a good example. Her use of vignettes (2017) to understand and analyse the processes and concepts applied in her research process in a way that she calls “connecting the messiness”, is particularly important when wanting to avoid essentialising the lives and experiences of those participating in the research process. She argues that “vignettes provide a means of connecting the messiness” (McCarthy 2017: 9). The use of vignette techniques here aims to emphasise and position myself in the process of this research. By writing and weaving these throughout the thesis, it enables a more proactive and visible form of reflexivity that aims to further “dispel any notion of a researcher as an independent, objective observer” (Humphreys 2005: 842).

3.3.2 Rapport, Friendship and Insider/Outsider Status

Rapport, friendship and insider/outsider status were all central aspects of the research process. Despite the variety of studies discussing it as an effective technique for securing access to the field (Odendahl and Shaw 2002; Reeves 2010), rapport is often critiqued as an instrumental approach to the emotional aspects of the research process. For example, Duncombe and Jessop (2011) compare “doing rapport” to “faking friendships”. Establishing rapport as a means of gaining access is ethically challenging for multiple reasons, including blurring of the boundaries of “informed” consent – as the consent would be given based on perceived friendliness or even friendship with a researcher (Duncombe and Jessop 2011).

My role as a practitioner and as “insider” then created spaces for complaint and for catharsis. However, this was also balanced with the role of humour in the research process. Sherman’s
study on wealth inheritors discusses explicitly the feelings of shame and guilt, in relation to speaking about wealth in her interview process. This is echoed by Moor and Friedman (2021: 9), whose interviewees described interviews as a form of “therapy”. In my experience, many of the interviewees who described the interview process as cathartic were those who often positioned themselves as “tempered radicals” (Meyerson and Scully 1995). These individuals, sometimes called “intrapreneurs”, are those committed to the organisation and to a cause, identity or ideology. Their efforts to seek and make changes within their organisation, led many interviewees to discuss the power dynamics within their interactions with clients or within their organisations, with a level of frankness. On several occasions, interviewees thanked me for the interviews, sharing that it had been cathartic for them to share their frustrations and experiences.

At the same time, humour was vital to developing rapport in interviews and conducting research and helped to point out and navigate the power dynamics within the interview. This follows Hewer, Smith and Fergie (2019), who have explored the positive role of humour in the research process when engaged reflexively. For example, interviewees and participants would push back on the dynamics of interviews or in ethnographic work by making jokes, such as one attendee at an event, who winked at me and said, “You aren’t writing this all down, are you?”, while another joked, “I look forward to reading your tell-all memoir later.” Both comments provide an example of drawing attention to my role as a researcher in the space (with me taking notes), while also, insinuating that they weren’t worried about what I would write. This sometimes led to moments of discomfort for me and questioning if I was “faking friendship” (Duncombe 2002) in order to extract more information.

The forms of insider/outsider and “doing rapport” (Kvale 1996) played an important part in understanding how to secure consent and access, and my experience in the “philanthropy world” was instrumental to this project. For example, some interviewees would add me on LinkedIn or follow me on Twitter prior to or after an interview, where both my professional and academic affiliations are linked. Both of these platforms also show common connections that make overlapping networks more visible. For example, LinkedIn will show which people

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18 LinkedIn is a business social media platform, commonly used within the philanthropy sector for professional networking.
are linked both to the interviewee and myself. It is likely that this enabled access prior to interviews or when introductions were made afterwards, as in some instances, when someone offered to connect me to a colleague, they would include my bio, a link to my research profile at the university or a link to my LinkedIn profile. I also began all interviews with at least five to 10 minutes of introductions, sharing my professional and academic background and how these informed the motivations for the project, particularly around inequality and philanthropy. Disclosing my professional background, bringing visibility to my professional credentials during data collection, thus served to establish an “insider” status and build rapport.

As Andrea Doucet argues, “within the potentially large webs of...rationales for particular research agendas, perhaps the most important consideration when we consider the relationship between our projects and ourselves, is to reflect on and dissect the personal or political motivations that matter in how we come to our research topics” (Doucet 2008: 75). I found that the frustrations and desire to ask bigger questions about how and where the money goes, were shared by participants relating to how philanthropic practice occurs. Undoubtedly, my “playing up of credentials” with overlapping frustrations with the interviewees, was critical in enabling access (Bryman 2012).

3.4 Methods and Research Design

This research took an interpretivist, inductive approach, employing multi-qualitative methods encompassing semi-structured interviews, participant and non-participant observation and document analysis (Bowen 2009). This section reviews each of the methods, in turn, justifying their selection and discussing their limitations. I then describe the application and adaptation of these methods in the context of adapting the research to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, before describing how I used each method in this project.

*Why multi-methods?*

Qualitative multi-method research is a combination of various qualitative methods (e.g. interviews and observations) (Silverman 2020). A multi-method approach to social research
does not necessarily, or unproblematically, result in a more accurate or complete picture (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007: 184). Following Blaikie and Priest (2019), I find that conducting documentary analysis alongside observation and interviews, enabled me to avoid limitations of focusing solely on one approach or committing what Jerolmack and Khan (2014) call the “attitudinal fallacy” that over-privileged individual-level accounts or decontextualises them. They argue “interaction is central to understanding activity. People do not make meaning or act alone — they do so in relation to other people and in particular situations” (Jerolmack and Khan 2014: 200). Furthermore, through a multi-methods approach, I attempted to understand the practices and circumstances that produced such documents, and the practices these documents produced, in turn (Freeman and Maybin 2011). As such, I used multiple methods and accounts as they are useful for elaboration, particularly when documents are used alongside interviews (Blaikie 2009). Pragmatism also opened me to the combination of interviews, observations and documents, a common combination in multi-method approaches (Justesen and Mik-Meyer 2012). Following Moran-Ellis et al. (2006), I find that combining different qualitative methods in order to investigate the multiplicity and contingency of the social world, provides richer and deeper accounts from multiple perspectives.

**Why interviews?**

The purpose of most qualitative interviewing is to derive interpretations from the person interviewed (Warren 2001: 83). As such, interview participants are viewed as meaning makers and not passive conduits (Holstein and Gubrium 1995). Given my interest in how practitioners within elite philanthropy understand their roles, I employed interviews as a data collection method. Interviews form the basis for many of the direct citations in my chapters on findings. Despite the contestation over the format of the interviews (Zuckerman 1972) and the power dynamics involved (Smith 2006), interviews are commonly used in critical elite studies. Furthermore, considering the interpretive basis of the project, and because I was interested in how actors’ understanding and make meaning of their work and practices, I opted for semi-structured interviews. This was not only a technique used to build rapport, but one based on my assumption of interviewees as the experts of their lives and good faith actors (Pacholok 2012: 209). The rationale for choosing specific interviewees was that of “theoretical
sampling” (Corbin and Strauss 1990), where groups or sub-groups of interviewees emerged over the course of data collection and analysis based on either distinct categories between the groups (for example, wealth advisors versus philanthropy advisors, consultants versus in-house advisors) or other characteristics emerging as significant thematic clusters (impact-oriented versus wealth-oriented).

*Why participant and non-participant observation?*

Lofland and Lofland (1995) describe participant observation as a process that establishes and sustains a many-sided association. This process, they continue, usually involves intensive, unstructured interviewing, in which the researcher attempts to discover the experience of the participant through a process of asking questions. Because participant observation involves looking, listening, watching and asking, this process often is interwoven with the informal interviewing process (Aktinson and Hammersley 1998). In researching elites, Odendahl and Shaw (2001: 8) emphasise that the timing of participant observation research, accompanied with informal interviews with key informants, is a method to gain access to elite spaces, build trust, establish the researcher’s credibility and can be useful for the investigator to gain familiarity with the elite culture under consideration. Non-participant observation, on the other hand, does not allow the researcher to ask participants questions in real time. Rather, researchers take a “fly on the wall approach”, where the researcher does not directly interact with participants and is particularly well-suited for digital media and video recordings (Williams 2008).

Combining participant and non-participant observation in elite studies also allows for adaptation, depending on evolving access over the research period and was particularly important in my research when adapting research to online spaces.
Why document analysis?

Document analysis was a critical aspect of my research as a means of understanding how PhAds and the service industry presents itself internally to the sector and externally to the public. Others have raised reservations about the extent of understanding that can be gained based on the analysis of texts alone (Bedford 2009: 171). Given my interest in how PhAds construct and understand their own legitimacy and the emerging marketplace of philanthropy, material produced by the philanthropy service industry, including reports, promotional material, training material and websites, were critical to my study. Studies on corporations, international organisations and NGOs regularly analyse the visual and textual materials produced by these entities (Allison et al. 2019: 56; Cousin et al. 2018: 242). More often than not, this is justified due to a lack of access or to supplement limited access, with concerns that these materials result in superficial understandings of how things “actually work”.

However, rather than documents being a disappointing source of data, since they can be created to give a superficial or even, intentionally misleading representation of organisational activities (Booth and Glyn 1979), they proved to be a valuable source of data when combined with participant observation and interviews. I was able to deepen my understanding of how actors and organisations understand themselves and their role, and the way they presented this externally through documents. David Mosse’s (2005) arguments, speaking of development programmes, but relevant for my study, notes that paying attention to the time and expertise that are put into producing texts can encapsulate the implementation and outcome of programmes. Thus, I interpreted them “backwards to reveal the social relations that produced them” (Mosse 2005: 15). Following Freeman and Maybin (2011), I focused on the contexts in which documents are produced, the language/discourse of documents, as well as their power and impact. This also meant thinking through who produced documents on “best practice”, such as handbook and training materials, who the intended audience was and how these materials would end up in front of the audience (see my approach to data analysis, as outlined by Hammersley and Atkinson 2007 in section 3.6). This is particularly relevant, given the juxtaposition of privacy and visibility amongst elite subjects and, in particular, elite professionals, where some aspects of work are completely invisible, such as client names or
costs of services, while other aspects, such as professional work history and bios, are made easily accessible and visible through organisation web pages and LinkedIn.

As Teasdale et al. (2020: 6) note, third sector intermediaries (in their case, social innovation intermediaries) circulate different types of text, such as advertisement material, newsletters and reports, to communicate their purpose and mission to a broad audience. Thus, I initially cast a wide net in regard to the types of documents and texts I considered. In particular, I pulled from Teasdale et al.’s (2020) assertion that websites constitute a huge repository of data about contemporary ways of doing and thinking, arguing that websites as sources of information are expedited for understanding how organisations discursively construct their worldviews and frame their roles.

Another source of data is online materials, including websites and social media. The use of social media, such as LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube, has gained popularity not only as a research subject, but as a method for data analysis (Snelson 2016). In my research, webinars and recordings uploaded to YouTube became important to my data collection at the outset of the pandemic (outlined in detail below). The SAGE Handbook of Social Media Research Methods provides a detailed, general guide for conducting social media research and data collection/analysis, but focuses on methods related to research on how social media is used, rather than online materials as a source of data, specifically. However, despite the popularity of YouTube, relatively few articles have discussed the practical use of YouTube as a research tool and source of data (Sui et al. 2022). Typical concerns around data collection of online platforms relate to what constitutes the “public sphere” or publicly available data. Social media presents practical and ethical implications related to risk of harm, private versus public data, informed consent and anonymity (Hennell et al. 2020: 474). Hennell et al. (2020) argue that “a general distinction has been made in the literature between social media data that are publicly accessible (and potentially therefore ethical for research use), and social media accounts that make use of restricted permissions with the highest possible privacy protections (thus potentially unethical to use for research purposes without consent)”. In my research and in writing up, I used YouTube videos uploaded by organisations, rather than individuals, that were posted publicly and readily accessible to anyone. I adhered to the University of Oxford guidance on internet-based research and referred to the guidelines put
forth by the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences’ Research Ethics Committee, who updated ethical considerations in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. These were useful, as my research relied more on non-participant and online data collection.

I contend that the documents I analysed, including conference programmes, press releases, newsletters, training materials, meeting notes and workshops are the products of social practices. I have analysed the documents in context and asked directly about documents of interest during interviews (to which some participants brought their own documents or shared their screens with me, in the case of online interviews).

3.4.1 Covid-19 Pandemic: Adapting the Research Focus and Approach

In this section, I will briefly describe the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on the research project, from research focus, design and methods, reflecting on the challenges these posed to the research project and my adaptations.

I began my initial interviews and field research in November of 2019. My final in-person fieldwork was in February 2020. During these four months, I attended three in-person events and conducted 10 interviews. In the early stages of my research, I intended to conduct my research through a case study. I was utilising participant observation and informal interviews to recruit a case and had two high-potential cases lined up in February of 2020. Both potential cases were philanthropic initiatives, developed by PhAds who were brokering the partnerships. By March of 2020, both initiatives were put on indefinite hold. At that stage, I took stock of my approach and research questions and assessed what I had already collected. Following the advice of my supervisors and further to interrogating my data, I asked myself, “What does my emergent thesis look like based on data collected to date?” and, “What are the emergent methodological considerations?” At the same time as my planned case studies fell through and my scheduled interviews were cancelled, the elite philanthropy world I had been immersing myself in moved to online spaces. This meant a windfall of information was made available about philanthropic funding sources, calls for collaboration within the sector led to the publishing of reports to signpost funds and government support for the charity sector, and intermediary organisations opened up meetings and made what had previously
been “members only” events, available on YouTube. Another invite-only event, the Skoll World Forum (a site I had planned to do rapid ethnographic fieldwork at over the course of a week), moved online, whereby the majority of the sessions were made available for the public and the notes uploaded onto a publicly available Google document. At the same time, PhAds advertised handbooks, guidebooks and sent out weekly newsletters, delineating how elite philanthropists and philanthropy advisors should respond to the pandemic. It was at this time that I incorporated the pandemic into my research questions as it became clear that the moment of data collection provided a useful analytical lens through which to examine the roles of PhAds.

Due to the pandemic, I conducted less in-person participant observation, but the philanthropy advice sector was arguably more visible and accessible than at any previous time. I also adapted and introduced more non-obtrusive methods and document analysis, focused on texts and materials produced by these intermediary networks and organisations. This, along with online webinars and panels, brought together some of the most significant actors from across the sector whom I otherwise would not have known existed and who, through these webinars and public appearances, helped to supplement the interviews and written materials I had collected thus far. It was at this point that I identified Philanthropy Impact as a key network.

Philanthropy Impact (PI) is a prominent organisation in the philanthropy space, so much so that most advisors I spoke to are members of PI or referred to them in interviews. It was a name I had been familiar with prior to the onset of the pandemic. I became aware they had launched a web series that otherwise, would have only been made available to members (primarily philanthropy advisors and practitioners) through in-person events with Chatham House Rules. However, because of the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, they recorded and made publicly available a series of events and uploaded them to YouTube (see Appendix III for full list of webinars). Here is a brief description from the introduction to the web series:

**PI** is a membership not-for-profit organisation whose overarching vision is to increase and improve philanthropy and social investment. We work with advisors to the ultra-high-net-worth and high-net-worth individuals to grow and enhance the quality of the support they give to their clients around philanthropy and social investment. With the
support and impact of our far-reaching and incredible network we act as knowledge hub and centre of excellence offering events, specialists knowledge sharing, training, voluntary standards, and sector and government liaison. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic we have set up the series of chats to connect with our members whilst we're unable to hold our popular events, but also, to provide support during a time when our professional and personal lives are colliding. We are not clear on what the future holds and so philanthropy and social investment is more important than ever. We want to create a space of ideas sharing collaboration and solidarity for our members and wider network.

After listening to several of the episodes of events uploaded to YouTube, I identified the series as a key site of data collection. Given this focus and the abundance of new materials, I returned to my research design principles of detective work and opportunism. Following what Goldstein (2002: 671) advises, building positive relationships with whomever you can and then asking for further introductions, which is akin to “snowball” or “chain-referral” sampling in interviews (Lofland et al. 2006: 43), I once again reached out to contacts in May 2020, lining up eight interviews with PhAds between June and August 2020. I found the importance of my existing relationships vital at this point and agree with Lofland et al. (2006: 41), who emphasise the importance of “connections, accounts, knowledge and courtesy” in gaining access, while Hammersley and Atkinson (2007: 62) advocate for “patience and diplomacy” and argue that “boldness” may also be required.

Thus, whilst the pandemic led to a pause and delay within my data collection process and a shift in the focus on the project, it ultimately, led to a refocusing of the project, resulting in an entire findings chapter devoted to examining the responses of PhAds and philanthropy advice services to the Covid-19 pandemic as well as informing the research questions themselves.

As with so many others in the UK and across the world, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on my ability to conduct research, not just in terms of the methodological adaptations outlined above, but also, my personal circumstances. This project has been conducted over the course of lockdowns, family hospitalisations due to Covid-19, multiple flat moves and a cost-of-living crisis. These personal circumstances, resulting from the pandemic, have added an extra layer of complexity and stress to my research process, and have undoubtedly shaped the project.
The next section goes into further detail about each of the methods used in the study: the participant and non-participant observation, interviews and document analysis.

3.5 My Research Methods

3.5.1 Participant and Non-participant Observation

In line with my multi-method approach and to further supplement my interviews and document analysis, I used non-participant and participant observation online and offline.\(^\text{19}\)

The complexities of the role of these practitioners meant that one methodological approach or method was insufficient to research the different forms that philanthropic practice takes outside of a singular institutional setting (banks, family offices, consultancies).

In the initial phase of my data collection, I used participant observation to identify both potential case studies and interviewees. Based on professional contacts and initial recommendations and invitations from key gatekeepers, I attended two, three-day long summits. One in Barcelona in November 2019 and the second outside of London in February 2020. Both summits related to the field of social entrepreneurship and brought together participants from the third sector (such as charities and non-governmental organisations), as well as foundations and individual philanthropists. The first proved fruitful in learning how to describe my research in accessible and relevant ways. This led to many people expressing interest in my research and giving me their contact details should I want to interview them. While some of these individuals, ultimately, weren’t interviewed or directly relevant, I found this an important experience to practice interviewee recruitment, fine tuning my language choices and learning how to take fieldnotes.

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\(^{19}\) My understanding of non-participant observation in this study pulls from Ugoretz’s (2017) description of “digital unobtrusive methods” (Ugoretz 2017), that reflects on the ethics and practicalities of non-participation in online settings.
I would later attend two other virtual forums (listening to 40+ hours of online webinars and sessions). In early 2020, I participated in a weeklong online training course. The course was attended by philanthropists, impact investors, next gen inheritors and foundation directors focused on transforming philanthropy. The course was organised by a foundation as part of a donor educating and advocacy branch of their work. These brief visits proved not so much supplemental to interviews and document collection, but as invaluable for access, drawing connections and case selection.

In-person participant observation events (October 2019 – March 2020):

- A day-long workshop for philanthropy practitioners, organised by a PhAd consultancy;
- Two social entrepreneurship/philanthropy summits (3 days each)

Online participant observation events (March 2020 – July 2021):

- A weeklong donor education course, which aimed to encourage philanthropists and philanthropy professionals to adopt transformative practices in their philanthropy (February 2021);
- Research member of a philanthropy collective, involving monthly meetings with philanthropy advisors and philanthropists

Online non-participant asynchronous observation:

- Philanthropy Impact webinars, including 30 webinars (30 minutes each) collected from April 2020 – December 2020

At the events I attended in person (prior to March 2020), I engaged in numerous informal conversations. While these are not cited in the chapters on findings, they have undoubtedly shaped the research. More specifically, initial entry and informal conversation during this initial phase of data collection would later inform my interview approach. This was explicitly relevant to inform the types of questions to ask and how to ask them. For example, in one informal conversation, I asked the person how they thought about accountability and legitimacy, only for them to push back with, “I don’t know that I would frame it in terms of
accountability or legitimacy. I don’t know that those words resonate with me.” This served to remind me to centre the experiences and narratives of the interviewees, enabling them to guide me in what they chose to talk about in relation to their work, rather than guiding them explicitly or upfront. I used these informal conversations as the basis for refining my interview guide.

In-person participant observation was critical to gaining access and recruiting interview participants. Similar to Odendahl and Shaw’s (2001: 9) research in studying elites, I too had key informants host and shepherd me around these events. My professional networks and experience in the sector (outlined in the reflexivity section 3.5) undoubtedly facilitated my access to these spaces. My own positionality as a white woman, with the credibility of an academic institution to provide legitimacy of my research project, was also vital (this is discussed in section 3.4 and described in vignettes at the beginning of chapters four and six). In another example, an interviewee later invited me to an event they were hosting, explicitly for philanthropists and those working in philanthropy, where I subsequently was introduced to three other PhAds whom I later interviewed online. I found these direct introductions and the importance of an in-person chat prior to an interview, vital to my access.

3.5.2 Interviews

I conducted 34 semi-structured interviews: five in person and the remaining online. I initially used Zoom for these online interviews, then switched to the MS Teams platform, in accordance with the updated ethical guidelines by CAHSS Research Ethics Committee (June 2021). Despite advantages, such convenience, qualitative researchers have discussed a number of ethical and practical issues associated with online interviewing, particularly in relation to Skype (Deakin and Wakefield 2014; Seitz 2016; Lo Iacono et al. 2016). Issues include dropped calls, poor audio or video quality and the limitations of reading non-verbal cues (Deakin and Wakefield 2014). However, Archibald et al.’s (2019) review of research, using Zoom for qualitative interviewing, argues that Zoom serves “as a highly suitable platform for collecting qualitative interview data” (Archibald et al. 2019: 7).
Interviews were, typically, one hour, with some slightly shorter or longer. In three cases, interviewees requested more time and scheduled second, follow-up interviews with me. I conducted follow-up interviews and “fact checking” over email, with three interviewees with more technical expertise in charity and taxation law. When needed, I sent follow-up emails to interviewees to confirm word use or choice, or to clarify a point or an acronym in order to ensure I captured how the interviewee ascribed meaning. I interviewed 16 current and former philanthropy advisors and 12 philanthropy practitioners (members of the foundation and intermediary organisation staff whose roles focused on fundraising, working directly with HNWI donors and whose function was on “influencing” the philanthropy ecosystem). I interviewed two researchers specialising in philanthropy practice. I also interviewed four philanthropists (some who preferred to be called donors). Two interviews with researchers from intermediary organisations were selected, not because they themselves study PhAds specifically, but for broader context on the philanthropy advice and service sector. Both followed sector events where the researchers presented their work. I asked slightly different questions to them as a result. Table 1 below outlines the list of interviewees.

Table 1: List of Interviewees by Institutional Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Interviewee</th>
<th>Sub-Category (role/setting)</th>
<th>Sub-total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropy Advisor</td>
<td>Consultancy</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Financial and Professional Services</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family office (Single-/Multi-)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Third Sector Organisations and/or Foundations</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropy Professional</td>
<td>Foundations/Funding Organisation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Philanthropy Intermediary/Network</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Director of Third Sector</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organisation/Charity Researcher</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philanthropist/Donor</td>
<td>(U)HNWI/ Philanthropist</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Appendix I)
Recruitment and Access

My initial list of possible interviewees was developed through my early phases of in-person participant observation and from my professional contacts and informal interviews, where I identified those who were often referred to as experts, researchers and key intermediaries. Often, these included staff, directors and both current and former PhAds, their clients and foundation directors. These first interviews were accompanied by participant observation (outlined later), but are important to mention at this time in relation to the interviewee selection process. My project began, initially, by casting a broad net that relied on meeting people in person. My initial criteria were broad, given I had not yet entered my research directly on PhAds at this point, but I asked people within my professional networks for referrals of who would be good to speak to about philanthropy; this meant other researchers, charity directors, charity fundraisers and grant makers. My first informal interviews were with feminist funders and researchers, where I spoke to them about the political and economic context of conducting research on elite philanthropy, heard their ideas and gathered advice on how to do so. At the same time, I attended several sector-wide events and, in these spaces, attended philanthropy-specific gatherings, approaching speakers and panellists afterwards to secure interviews with them or ask for recommendations. It was through this process, by beginning to recruit interviewees based on who was considered an “expert” and, more broadly, who was interested in engaging in philanthropic research, that PhAds very quickly came to prominence as key informants and gatekeepers.

I approached contacts through my professional work in the social entrepreneurship field and connected directly with individuals who had worked with philanthropy advisors and philanthropy intermediaries. In general, there was a surprising amount of enthusiasm from my interviewees for more information about philanthropy advice and services. Most mentioned that they were interested in being studied and centred in research and consequently, were very open and helpful during interviews. Three interviewees insisted on second, follow-up interviews for further discussion and others offered additional time, should it be useful to me. This was the case for PhAds I met with in all institutional settings, including network organisations and third sector organisations, feminist funding organisations and
foundations. As others in elite studies have noted (Higgins 2019), persistence was also important to my access and resulted in sometimes approaching potential interviewees through multiple avenues. This included direct messages on Twitter and LinkedIn, in which I would describe my work and ask for their email addresses, so I could send more information. If that failed, I would find common connections who could provide introductions, which often happened through snowballing techniques employed after the first set of interviews.

I had high response rates to emails (approximately 90%) and messages, as they were all personalised. In the first sentence or two, I would explain how I knew them, either having heard them speak on a panel or having read a report they or their organisation wrote.

Another aspect of access for in-person interviews, was offering to meet them where and when they wanted. As a result, I conducted in-person interviews at the offices of PhAds, in co-working centres, in coffee shops near their offices and even in a train station. The locations did impact the recording quality of the interviews, adding an extra challenge to transcriptions. Virtual interviews were easier to manage (and more straightforward to arrange, given many were conducted whilst in different forms of lockdown), but equally, I spoke with people before or after work or while they were on lunch breaks, and in one case, while they were on a lunchtime walk. Most of my interviews began with asking how the person was doing and if they were feeling well enough for the interview on that day (confirming this by email, typically the day before, when asking for written consent).

Given that I had conducted many online interviews during the pandemic, interviewees were often in their own homes, rather than an office environment. This meant interviews were sometimes interrupted by dogs, children and other family members, providing an element of intimacy that has become more common with remote working.

I held informal interviews as part of the snowballing to expand my contact list. These interviews focused on understanding specific concepts or technicalities, for example, related to accounting and legal expertise connected to the charity commission and tax law. The expertise was important for me to understand when categorising different PhAds, as different kinds of expertise bring them into the elite advising process and at distinct times. To get an
overview of the landscape, I conducted online research on philanthropy services available in the UK and cross-referenced this with interviewees and events. This was useful in terms of learning the different contexts in which PhAds operated. I did not approach institutions to ask permission to speak to their PhAds (as others researching CSR initiatives had done; see Allison et. al. 2019), but rather asked to speak to PhAds directly.

Following the recommendations of Higgins (2019), Mikecz (2012) and Ostrander (1995), I prepared for each interview by familiarising myself with the participant and their organisational context. As is common amongst the philanthropy and financial sector in the UK, all interviewees have biographies related to their profiles within their organisations. I would cross-reference these with personal websites, Twitter profiles and LinkedIn profiles. I also reviewed relevant documents, particularly blogs, previous public interviews if available, speaking engagements and other publicly available material, including their CVs, and appearances on podcasts and other public platforms. This informed the beginnings of interviews, where I indicated I had “done my homework” (Higgins 2019; Breeze 2021), which potentially boosted my credibility and allowed interview participants to dive in deeper, rather than providing superficial information that was already readily available. It was also a useful tactic in recruiting interviewees via direct messages on Twitter, LinkedIn or email (if I was able to find an address). By indicating that I had already visited their websites, etc., I found advisors more willing to then centre their own experiences working in the sector and add more depth to the interviews. In some cases, this meant interviewees shared their screens to talk me through internal documents and presentations used with clients or sent follow up emails containing these documents after the interviews. Anonymity ensured that this wouldn’t be shared or used directly. However, they informed my analysis of how these texts were used by advisors, in practice.

This allowed me to personalise the discussion guide (asking about particular activities, publications and explicit experiences with clients that were listed on their websites), as well as shift interviews back on track when they wandered. Having questions that specifically related to other organisations and networks, served to signal my familiarity with them and the sector, further encouraging interviewees to discuss the emergence of an industry. To supplement this tactic further, after interviews and as part of my fieldnotes, I would do
another round of internet searches to find documents they had cross-referenced or previous work experiences they had spoken about. This led to findings related to how philanthropy works and how the role is described: ranging from impact officers to sustainability experts to simply being listed as charity lawyers, demonstrating that there is no clear-cut typology of PhAds (outlined in chapter four). Following each interview, I wrote up notes and reflections as soon as possible. I sent a follow-up email to each participant, thanking them and including, when relevant, documents and in some cases, sending research, recommending readings or flagging interesting upcoming sector events. Hammersley (2007: 69) notes that “expertise and knowledge may be of value in the field as a basis for establishing reciprocity with participants”. I have already examined the advantages and complications associated with this form of reciprocity in my reflexivity section (3.3).

As I developed a more comprehensive picture of this emergent industry, I was able to refer back to earlier interviews to cross-reference which networks were mentioned and which were given credibility by practitioners. It is through this technique that I was not only introduced to “key” informants and gatekeepers, but to corporate practitioners I otherwise did not have existing connections to. Moreover, the cross-referencing and networking process was vital to managing my shift online during the pandemic, when I relied more heavily on direct referencing and introductions, being unable to meet people more organically through in-person events. It is through this practice of cross-referencing networks with various interviewees, that I identified and came across the Philanthropy Impact webinars that were repeatedly referenced in interviews and through the existence of the network itself (detailed in section 3.4).

Bringing an ethics of care into the interviewing process felt particularly important to my project, as data collection occurred over the course of the pandemic. In online interviews conducted from March 2020 onwards (discussed in-depth in section 3.7), I would plan for the initial five to 15 minutes of the interviews for introductions, as well as provide time and space to check in with my interviewees: ensuring they were well, asking about how they and their households were coping, asking if they felt safe where they were situated and checking if they still had capacity for the interview. Conducting online fieldwork during a time of crisis
inevitably led to having personal conversations, given I was speaking to most of these people in their homes during a time of acute emotional, economic and political turmoil.

Overall, I found interviewees to be candid and helpful. As mentioned, interviewee recruitment at in-person events was overwhelmingly positive and straightforward. I found that because philanthropy is an under-researched area, PhAds and other philanthropy practitioners were generally very encouraging of my research and explicitly helpful in connecting me with others. For example, on several occasions, interviewees offered to introduce me to people they identified as key experts in the field. These were individuals I either already knew or had already interviewed and on eight separate occasions, interviewees offered to help me with my research without being prompted. To illustrate the extent of the openness of my interviewees, below are a few examples from my transcripts:

“But if you want to return for a call in a few months, because you’ve come up with some other questions or something, please don’t hesitate. Just e-mail me and I’m happy to do it again.”

“Do you want access to more advisors or are you happy with what you’ve got?”

“Please can we have a follow up call when you’re further in the process? It’s really interesting.”

“I’m so pleased with what you’re doing. Please can we have a follow up call when you’re further in the process?”

One could interpret these offers either as a form of gatekeeping (Odendahl and Shaw 2001) or as a form of elite control over the research process (Allison et al. 2019; Harrington 2017). I chose not to view it as such; instead, I view the interviewees as good faith actors genuinely interested in the research and genuinely wanting to be as helpful as possible.

Anonymity and Consent

Each interview began with the interviewee reading and signing an informed consent form (see Appendix VI). The form also included signatures asking permission to record the interview, which I confirmed verbally in all interviews. Ensuring anonymity and consent raised questions
around insider/outsider status. My reflections on these dynamics were ongoing as the project evolved, raising questions about consent against the information I provided, particularly around the critical nature of my research questions (i.e. what questions I was asking and for what purposes). Thus, issues of consent felt particularly important, given my professional background and existing relationships with those in the sector and the “small world” of elite philanthropic services. Interviewees often brushed aside the informed consent forms and laughed off the verbal consent I would confirm prior to recording interviews. To mitigate this, I would insist interviewees confirm they were happy to be interviewed and stated that individuals would be anonymised in my research. I found this required persistence on my part.

To accommodate the evolution of the research purpose, I began interviews describing myself and my professional background and disclosing the initial motivations for pursuing a PhD researching elites, being explicit about my sources of frustration on fundraising, my role as a gatekeeper to networks and funds and asking, “Where does the money go?” I find Pacholok’s feminist reflections on studying up and selling out (2012) useful to frame issues of informed consent in the context of being an “undercover feminist”. While there were other aspects of my research process that I found troubling (outlined in my reflexivity section, at length), stating my own motivations for the project felt important for letting interviewees “in” on my general approach and disclosure of the research process.

During research design, I considered carefully whether to anonymise participants. Beeston and Breeze (2023) chose not to anonymise participants or organisations in their book on PhAds. However, the lack of anonymisation also comes from a normative stance of wanting to promote better and more philanthropy advice and services. The authors also sought to share examples of best practice as an effort to further professionalise philanthropic advice services.

Given that my research aims and motivations differ, I contend that anonymity was a critical aspect of gaining access, with several interviewees noting that they could share more critical perspectives, because they would remain anonymous. Thus, anonymity was important in generating rich data and enables me to analyse the role of PhAds critically. To ensure anonymity, individual participants are identified by their broad job role. I also did the same
for the institutional location of interviewees where they might be identified, given the small number of PhAds, overall. Where insider knowledge of the sector may identify individuals by these characteristics, they are obscured to the best of my ability. To ensure the security of the information collected, I stored all data collected on my password-protected computer and all interview transcripts were deleted by the transcription service after sending them to me. On the other hand, I did not anonymise organisations. Despite good reasons to anonymise the organisations named (Ritchie et al. 2013), I decided to keep organisation names known, due to the public nature of the materials and data collected (i.e. websites, handbooks, training materials, etc.) and public profiles of these elite institutions.

The research project was submitted for ethical review and approved by the University of Edinburgh Review Board.

3.5.3 Document Collection

The first stage of document analysis was to gain a broad overview of the philanthropy advice sector. This was a recursive process, whereby I went back and forth between different sectors (public, private, third sector), geographical locations and organisations. The aim of this “mapping” exercise was to locate documents in a way that retained an openness and interpretive flexibility, and avoided excluding documents that might have been potentially useful to my research, but weren’t initially as obvious.

Yanow’s (2006: 12) description of interpretive research as akin to piecing together a thousand-piece jigsaw puzzle, reflects my own experiences of collecting and selecting documents. I initially began collecting documents referenced in interviews or related to the events and attending organisations. Equipped with more context and keywords, I then conducted simple internet searches to assess and access what was available online. Search results included individual and corporate websites, as well as LinkedIn and Twitter profiles. In particular, I found LinkedIn and Twitter useful as gateways to both individuals and organisations, whereby both would share the most recently written and published reports and also, highlighted meetings and webinars they participated in. This was indispensable during the data collection period between April and August 2020. I found Philanthropy
Impact’s website particularly useful, as they have gathered hundreds of reports, blogs, books and relevant materials.

During the course of collecting these documents, I was very aware of selection bias, given the emergent and porous nature of the philanthropy industry and that my review of documents would inevitably be incomplete (Yin 1994: 80). To mitigate this, I repeatedly reached out to gatekeepers and industry contacts and used interviews to signpost me to relevant documents, networks and materials. As per Bowen (2009), I repeatedly reviewed documents, even in the collection phase, revisiting websites repeatedly to determine if I had missed any sub-pages or using the search function on webpages to look up specific concepts, people and keywords. Ultimately, I found these limitations as minor flaws, rather than major disadvantages, given the effectiveness of this methodological approach (Bowen 2009).

I took an iterative and open approach to inclusion criteria for documents, as relevance of documents was not always immediately obvious (see Appendix II for the full list of documents).

- 14 documents were guides and handbooks produced by philanthropy advisors and intermediaries on how to practise elite philanthropy. Some of these were written by advisors for clients. Others were written for advisors as part of training materials on “best practice”.
- 21 of these documents were reports written by philanthropy intermediaries, advisors, foundations and charities. Of these, I selected documents that were either referred to in interviews, panels or those that were written by PhAds.
- Ultimately, I focused on 16 main websites, typically those of networks or intermediators who collect and disseminate information through reports and blogs. Others were selected in relation to the guidelines and recommendations for clients available directly on the website. For website analyses, I downloaded single pages of the websites into text form and imported this into NVivo 12 Pro qualitative analysis software.
These materials, produced mainly by and for PhAds and their clients, were critical to understanding how these actors legitimise and understand their practices and roles in elite philanthropy, Covid-19 pandemic responses and the specific ways these materials were promoted to motivate elite philanthropic responses. These materials complemented observations from panels and interview data.

All documents (see Appendix II for the full list), with the exception of internal documents shared in interviews, were publicly available. However, many required a certain amount of ‘detective work’, whereby documents mentioned in webinars or interviews were often behind a paywall, but could be found when searching the name of said document directly. This was true for a number of handbooks I initially could not find on the company websites, but I could find individual sections by searching for specific authors or titles of said handbooks. In some cases, I was unable to gain access, particularly when reaching out to organisations for access to their handbooks and not receiving responses from the generic email addresses on their websites (demonstrating the importance and value of having an ‘in’). However, locations where access was denied, presented another realm of analysis into my research. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007: 41) contend that “the discovery of obstacles to access, and perhaps of effective means of overcoming them, itself provides insights into the social organisation of the setting or the orientations of the people being researched”. This extended not only to the participant observation, but also, to the online materials that are often offered to clients, and what made the availability of these materials at the outset of the pandemic all the more significant (the reasons for this are explored in chapter seven). Therefore, while participant observation or full access would have provided more data, my ability to access, or not, certain spaces and people (both online and offline) fed into my analysis.

Given that these reports are publicly available and circulated widely, I did not anonymise those produced and publicly available on the websites, particularly given that the authorship is often the organisation, rather than any individual PhAd.
3.6 Data analysis

My data sources for analysis were: my field notes; transcripts of audio recorded interviews; documents; online webinars. The analysis of this data was done thematically. While the online, semi-structured interviews and non-participant observations during the second stage were based upon earlier in-person participant observation and interviews, the analysis integrated both stages. Because I am interested in gaining a better understanding of PhAds and their role in elite philanthropic practice, I used an iterative approach, predominately inductive, in addition to the coding and data analysis of interviews with elite philanthropy practitioners and clients, as well as documents (Corbin and Strauss 1990). I transcribed five of my own interviews, with the rest of the interviews and webinar content transcribed by an external company or using an automated transcription service. However, to avoid some of the pitfalls of having someone else transcribe interviews (see Rubin and Rubin 2011), I ensured no major mistakes were made by relistening to the interviews, which not only ensured that any inaudible segments could be filled from memory, but also, ensured a deeper engagement with the data.

Interview transcripts, fieldnotes, documents and transcriptions of webinars were coded and analysed in NVivo 12 Pro, using techniques grounded in thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2022). I coded transcripts, fieldnotes and meeting notes through inductive open coding, using both descriptive and analytic codes. How philanthropy was conceptualised and operationalised by interviewees and how this was put into practice was initially explored through coding of “good practice” and “bad practice” in philanthropy (the rules) and using these initial themes as an avenue through which to identify key actors (roles). Thematic analysis then led to the refinement of codes and the identification of key concepts, conceptualised and operationalised by direct actors in relation to identity, change, impact, neutrality and affect. My document analysis pulled from Shamir’s research on CSR professionals, who analysed the way professional identities and self-styled occupational roles are created and sustained (Shamir 2005: 232). These texts, particularly those written by PhAds promoting their work to clients or by PhAds promoting training for other advisors, were key in my later insights into narratives of self-legitimacy and on identity formation within the philanthropic advice process.
My analysis proceeded in several stages and intertwined with fieldwork, rather than taking place afterwards. For example, following completion of initial fieldwork (i.e. interviews, observing and participating in events) and data collection (i.e. documents and webinars) up until March 2020, I paused data collection to take stock on data collected to date. I analysed this data, in particular interviews and fieldnotes, to identify the main themes and directions for the pivoting of the project completely online. At this stage, I identified PhAds and their role within elite philanthropic practice. This resulted in identifying key themes and key stories of these themes, and how participants understood their own role in the operationalisation and promotion of philanthropy. I began initial coding along these themes of data. In parallel, having previously identified key networks within the philanthropic advisory space and following their online activity, in addition to the rescheduling of interviews, meant that I became aware of pandemic-specific online events and resources being produced by PhAds, for PhAds and philanthropists. This led to a second and distinct phase of data collection and analysis, focused specifically on responses to the pandemic by PhAds.

I began by reviewing my notes and interview transcripts line-by-line, taking note of words and repetitive phrases. This resulted in a long list of words and phrases that I attempted to examine and organise in relation to each other. Following the suggestion of my supervisors, I then built a word tree of key concepts. As analysis of the data began, it became clearer that a story was emerging, regarding how actors talked about and made meaning of philanthropic identities and advice, as emotional and social impact. Similar to Silber’s (2012) research on the role of emotions in philanthropic giving, the importance of these themes emerged from the data and were not targeted a priori in the original research design. It was only at this stage and in the process of coding interviews, that identity and emotions emerged as a thematic category and their importance, in relation to identity creation and legitimacy, surfaced.

I looked at narratives combined with processes and practices within my codes and themes. To help me examine what was said and the meaning behind what was being discussed, as well as how and where it was said, and for which audiences (particularly for the online materials/texts such as the recorded panels, websites, etc.), I asked my data a series of

1. How are the texts written?
2. How are they read?
3. Who writes them?
4. Who reads them?
5. For what purposes?
6. On what occasions?
7. With what outcomes?
8. What is recorded?
9. What is omitted?
10. What is taken for granted?
11. What does the writer seem to take for granted about the reader(s)?
12. What do readers need to know in order to make sense of them?

3.7 Limitations

This chapter, thus far, has explored the research design and data collection and analysis strategy used in this project. This section will now discuss the limitations of my project, focused on the method itself within the emergent field of philanthropy research and alternative paths that could have been taken.

The first limitation is the scope and scale of this project that reflects the subject matter itself: an emergent field. The emergence of this field made the sample small and required flexibility when considering sampling techniques of interviewees, given a lack of oversight over the number of PhAds. As with any approach to interview recruitment, particularly through snowballing, those I interviewed were initially introduced through contacts I had met in person and were later able to introduce me to others. I found reaching out without an introduction or some connection not as fruitful.

There were also challenges in conducting both participant observation and non-participant observation, related to gaining and negotiating consent (explored in section 3.5.2). In terms
of non-participant observation, these were reliant on materials available in the public sphere and realistically, there is more information available than I could have read. I did my best to mitigate this by casting a wider net and narrowing my focus to the most relevant materials based on the emergent themes, however, through this process, some materials were unavoidably missed or neglected. In addition, there were documents I sought, but was not able to gain access to them, due to budget constraints or availability being restricted to clients and members only (often part of the business model of these organisations). This was mitigated, in part, by the Covid-19 pandemic, but inevitably, there are more documents that I was not able to analyse.

Along similar lines, given my research centres the perspective of PhAds themselves, I risk over-privileging their perspectives on how they understand their function. Meaning that whilst they present themselves, and often given they are selling their services, it is unsurprising that they may overemphasise their influence and role, particularly when it comes to clients. I tried to maintain a critical distance and perspective, by emphasising that these are the views of PhAds speaking about themselves. However, experience is not truth, but a version of the truth (aligning with my commitments to interpretivism). At the same time, the relatively small sample size reflects the relatively small sector of philanthropy advising in the UK. This, in some ways, reflects the very nature of elite studies, whereby elite implies a small group of people who hold disproportionate power. Building on this, there are also complex geographical limitations to my project. While I focused primarily on PhAds based in the UK, many of these advisors live and work across multiple geographies, with clients who also work and live in different places and whose philanthropic engagement (and often tax status) crosses borders. I now recognise PhAds as brokers, intermediaries and boundary spanners, however, this makes the category difficult to operationalise and the category of PhAds even more nuanced. This means that in many ways, it is difficult to allocate fixed geographical foci for PhAds.

As such, alternative methodologies could have been explored to gain a deeper understanding (and subsequently inform directions for future research). One of the most obvious would have been taking up a single or multiple case studies of different types of philanthropy advisors. A case study may have equipped me with more access to the entirety of the advising process,
enabling me to follow specific clients over a period of time. It also would have enabled greater inclusion of other forms of data and deepened perspectives on the day-to-day. Access would, obviously, have been a greater concern and there might have been ways for me to focus on one case study with more non-obtrusive methods, for example, focusing solely on Philanthropy Impact and interviewing previous employees or people who had attended seminars and events to better understand how others perceive their work.

Even if I had conducted a single case study, this still would have limited my ability to perceive the boundaries of the emergence of the industry. As such, other techniques, such as surveys of PhAds, might have proven useful. However, without institutional approval or without having a local partner through which to administer the survey, conducting such a survey would be very challenging, given the difficulty in identifying and findings PhAds. A survey or multiple case studies may have enabled greater comparison between different perspectives within the sector, furthering a typology of PhAds that is largely outside the scope of this research. Social Network Analysis (SNA) could also have been an interesting approach and is one that I considered earlier in the project. However, given my concerns for understanding social relations of power, SNA would not have provided me with data to answer my research questions that focused on how practitioners understand themselves and their roles.
Chapter 4: The Role(s) of Philanthropy Advisors in Elite Philanthropy

Vignette: Elite Spaces, Networks and the Role of Philanthropy Advisors in Social Impact

I am in the first days of my fieldwork in London, just months before the first lockdown of the pandemic. I am starting to reach out to individuals within my professional network to talk about my research and schedule interviews. Over the course of a conversation with a professional acquaintance, he mentions an upcoming event, a gathering of third sector organisations, that might be of interest. He thinks I will have something to learn and perhaps contribute. I am uncertain of its relevance, given the primary focus is on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but he promises it will be worth my time. The details of who will be there, what is happening and the objectives or outcomes of the gathering are vague, but I am assured it will be an important event following the Davos launch at the World Economic Forum the previous year, with funding and philanthropy a central concern for the group. He describes it as a multi-day event, bringing together international NGOs, philanthropists, social entrepreneurs and other intermediaries. The gathering is by invitation only and the written invitation states that the focus is on harnessing the “collective power of the group to enhance the impact to achieve systemic change”.

A few weeks later, I arrive by taxi at a Grade I listed, stately home in England. Security allows me through the main gates after confirming that I am on the guest list. Upon arrival at the house, I enter the main marbled hall with statues from the Sack of Rome flanking either side of the doorway. A staff member of the foundation, co-hosting the event, greets me. They hand me my welcome packet and badge and I am referred to one of the estate staff, who labels my bag (assuring me it will be brought up to my room shortly) and leads me through several rooms to what was once servants’ quarters. My room has a name tag with my name inscribed on it. He points out the shared bathroom at the end of the hall and allows me to settle in.

Twenty minutes later, I am sitting in the grand library with approximately fifty people and we are welcomed by our hosts. The initiative’s co-founders are a mix of NGOs and foundations. Invitees include foundations, impact investors, NGO directors, civil society leaders,
government leaders, a few academics and social entrepreneurs from around the world. Through the window, I see sheep grazing and the herd of deer, which the estate raises for hunting. We do several ice breaker exercises for people to meet each other in the room, but are discouraged from sharing our titles or work backgrounds. Rather, we are asked to focus on connecting as people first.

After a couple of hours of facilitated networking exercises, the host comes forward, welcomes everyone warmly and states, “We are here to change the world.” Initial introductions are made, paying particular attention to the McKinsey consultants facilitating the event. McKinsey is a global management consultancy firm and the “trusted advisor to the world’s leading businesses, governments, and institutions”. The McKinsey consultants later mentioned how this is more fun than work and how lucky they feel to be part of a project “doing good”. This meeting aims to co-create a strategy for “changing the world” over the next decade.

To open the day, the McKinsey consultants present an analysis of the “problem”. The problem is multi-faceted, but is primarily introduced as a resourcing issue. How do we get more impact-oriented funding? In a presentation by McKinsey, they present an annual funding gap of USD52.5 trillion to reach the SDGs in developing countries alone. Other slides are shown, outlining the problems the world is facing and they are vast, from rising inequality to “broken government” and governance systems. Corruption is depicted as being rampant. Current dominant funding practices are presented as needlessly constraining and the urgency for more funding and resources is emphasised repeatedly. This narrative is reinforced throughout the day: The will is there, but it is just a matter of “getting the resources into the right hands”.

The McKinsey facilitators emphasise that the task ahead is daunting for those trying to address these problems and bring about change. A consultant rhetorically asks the group, “Who are we and why should we be the ones to take on these challenges?” The McKinsey consultant presents a slide noting who is in the room, including the numbers of beneficiaries and their geographic spread. They then present a series of slides describing the social impact

20 https://www.mckinsey.com/ (accessed March 2023)
of attendees. They do so without ever describing or defining what they mean by impact. They then claim:

Everyone here is a game-changer and we already know this. We are going to make mistakes and fail, but we must try. The need for change is urgent. If not us, then who? Imagine the exponential impact of what we would achieve if we multiply our efforts. The world needs us and we can’t do it alone. By working together, we have the legitimacy to change the world.

Later in the day, a participant from a third sector organisation states:

We are owning that we are aware of our privilege and we use it to serve the greater transformation. How do we want to enable partnership? It’s time for the power of ideas. We owe it to ourselves and all the people we are working for.

I am left thinking about what is meant by change and impact, when you strip away the lofty and aspirational language. How are privilege and power being deployed and understood by the speaker and the participants? What is being operationalised in relation to the ability and desire to “change the world”? And critically, who can become a “game-changer”, given the elite nature of the invitation-only event?

These key themes and phrases being unquestioned and presented as self-evident, raise more questions for me about what is being assumed and how these are linked to narratives of self-legitimisation.

On the second day, after dinner, I again find myself in the library, a drink in hand, chatting with a middle-aged, white man. Earlier, another participant had pointed him out as a “philanthropy expert” and someone I should definitely speak to. We discuss feeling out of place in the current luxurious setting. I joke about how I had spent the morning hovering in front of the breakfast buffet, trying to decide which side to start from and which spoon to use. We also discuss how we are both unsure how we got invited to such a “swanky” gathering or what the gathering is about. Finally, I talk about my research on philanthropy, power and accountability.
He describes his work as the director of a philanthropy network. We joke about both being philanthropy nerds who enjoy drinking gin. He mentions that, in addition to his role, he has his own philanthropy consulting business where he advises high-net-worth and ultra-high-net-worth individuals and families. He describes this as his side hustle that he fell into by accident. I ask how he goes about finding clients and he mentions that he does not often go to philanthropy events, but rather meets clients by attending parties, such as gallery openings. He says that most of his clients come through word of mouth. He hands me his card and says I should interview him, adding, “Boy, do I have some stories for you.”

After the event, I send him a thank you email. He re-extends his offer to be interviewed and later, introduces me to several other philanthropy advisors in foundations, intermediary networks and financial services. He also signposts key philanthropy networks and sends me guidebooks that he and other philanthropy advisors use.

4.1 Introduction: Who Are PhAds?

In retrospect, meeting this philanthropy advisor led to a critical shift in the analytical focus of my project. Over the course of my data collection, I turned my attention away from just understanding PhAds as gatekeepers or key informants, to focus on the role of this emergent group of actors. In the early days of my fieldwork, when enquiring who I should speak to, I was repeatedly pointed in the direction of PhAds. Given the emergence of philanthropy advice services and the limited research on philanthropy advisors, this chapter seeks to answer the following questions: Who are philanthropy advisors and what role do they play in operationalising elite philanthropy?

As described in the introduction, PhAds are professional advisors who provide a range of services pertaining to the planning and administration of philanthropic giving. Even if we understand PhAds as professionals who provide philanthropy advice services, it is still not obvious how to research this group of actors. While PhAds are gaining some visibility, as a researcher, it was only because I had worked in these spaces that I gained access and was invited into a trusted elite space where charity directors, foundation staff and philanthropists alike were mixing and mingling. It was this access that enabled me to first observe, in some
Another complication in researching who PhAds are, is due to the multiple hats that they wear. For example, at this event alone, several of the people I met worked as advisors within consultancies, third sector organisations and networks, simultaneously. These often-invisible actors, working within the "black box" of elite philanthropy, are not only often in the room where elite philanthropy occurs, but play a role as key influencers. As illustrated in the vignette, they are also often considered philanthropy experts, raising questions about what role and influence these actors have as intermediaries navigating the world of elite philanthropy. PhAds function as knowledge producers, translators and brokers, and somehow sit at the intersection of these worlds, in-between the funding and the third sector organisations. The McKinsey consultants reflect the intertangling of social impact and finance in elite spaces. At the same time, there is an increased visibility of the role of intermediaries within elite philanthropic practice, illustrated by the McKinsey consultants in this gathering, who not only facilitated much of the event, but set the tone and framing throughout the gathering. This raises questions around what types of narratives are created and legitimised within these spaces, who is centred and what ideas are made visible.

Because of the complexities and nebulousness of the sector and the work, there are currently no simple answers as to who PhAds are, given the emergent nature of the field and the absence of consensus around categorisation. The chapter aims to understand who PhAds are by examining where they work and what services they provide.

This chapter focuses on identifying where PhAds work, who pays for them and what expertise they are hired for. Thus the chapter contributes to the nascent research on this emergent industry (outlined in section 2.2 of the literature review) by demonstrating the consistency of what philanthropy advice norms and practices across varying organisational contexts. The chapter evidences this through a novel typology, whereby PhAds are considered as brokers, intermediaries and boundary spanners. I argue that understanding PhAds as BIBS enables a more expansive understanding of their roles beyond being simple service providers. This enables greater consideration of thinking about the roles of this emergent sector beyond a single institutional context or customer and helps to capture the breadth of what PhAds consider part of their roles. The chapter argues this approach not only contributes to
increased empirical understandings of their roles but acts as a lens through which to examine discourses and norms of elite philanthropy illuminating what is valued, what is considered a success and who is centred in these practices. In summary, the chapter argues that understanding PhAds as BIBS not only brings visibility to the emergent industry of philanthropy advising but also, reveals how PhAds describe their role and services, providing the basis for subsequent chapters’ analysis of the legitimacy claims utilised by PhAds.

The chapter begins by exploring where they can be found, noting the emergent nature of the sector. The often-invisible role of advisors and lack of official accreditation means that, as of now, PhAds are often self-defined. The chapter examines the ways PhAds describe their roles and the multiple hats they wear. The chapter then explores where PhAds work and who pays for these services, highlighting not only the emergent marketplace of philanthropic services, but the overlaps with wealth and financial services. Lastly, the chapter reviews what services PhAds offer and reflects on what is commodified in philanthropy services and what these services include. The chapter concludes by reviewing the key findings, arguing that whilst the role of PhAds is often implicit and emergent, understanding them as brokers, intermediaries and boundary spanners helps to bring visibility to their practices and illuminates their role in elite philanthropy. The chapter also will demonstrate that despite the variation across different types of PhAds in the study, findings were consistent across this variation, institutional location.

The chapter draws from interview data with PhAds and contributions made in recorded presentations, seminars and roundtables. The data was collected across different sites and formats, such as in the event described in the vignette above and from online events, interview data and webinars (see chapter three, section 3.5). Data was also collected via websites and documents. These materials include reports, internal documents used between clients and advisors, promotional material for prospective clients, training materials for PhAds and guides produced by PhAds for clients. The primary audiences for these documents, in the form of guides or handbooks, are philanthropy advisors themselves, as well as prospective clients, whereby the documents seek to promote philanthropy services and philanthropy itself. The sources of the documents demonstrate the range of institutions in which philanthropy services are located, including private banks, wealth management firms,
consultancies, philanthropy networks and foundations. As the vignette demonstrates, PhAds can operate within a number of different spaces, therefore understanding their role, as well as how they understand their function within these spaces, is a rich site of data collection.

4.2 Where Do PhAds Work?

Given the multi-faceted role of PhAds, another way to understand their diverse roles in elite philanthropy is by examining where they work. This section examines the institutional locations of PhAds and explores what these can tell us about their role and functions within elite philanthropy.

Philanthropic advisors and intermediaries adopt a variety of institutional structures (by which I also include organisational forms), within both the private and voluntary sectors. PhAds work within a variety of institutional spaces, ranging from family offices to private banks, foundations and independent consultancies, meaning philanthropy services are delivered through both private companies and non-profit entities or charitable entities. For example, reviewing the list of recommended PhAds on the CityWealth Leaders\(^21\) (2021), a directory of wealth companies and managers in the US and UK, we find PhAds in private banks (such as Coutts & Co.),\(^22\) management consultancies registered as LLCs (such as IG Advisors),\(^23\) intermediary organisations and foundations registered as charities (such as the Charities Aid Foundation),\(^24\) wealth management firms and impact investment firms registered as LLPs (such as Tribe Impact).\(^25\)

A review of the members who list philanthropic advice services on Philanthropy Impact’s online directory\(^26\) provides a similar spread, with organisations and individuals listed across a range of professional services. PhAds also have vastly different professional backgrounds and experiences as individual consultants, foundation staff, lawyers, accountants and financial or

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\(^{21}\) https://www.leaderslist.co.uk/lists/top-professionals/meet-the-advisors-top-recommended-philanthropic-advisors-2021 (accessed March 2023)


\(^{23}\) https://www.impactandgrowth.com/ (accessed 20 March 2023)

\(^{24}\) https://www.cafonline.org/my-personal-giving/long-term-giving/philanthropy-advice (accessed March 2023)

\(^{25}\) https://tribeimpactcapital.com/ (accessed 20 March 2023)

\(^{26}\) https://www.philanthropy-impact.org/members (accessed 22 March 2023)
At the same time, professional advisors who provide advice related to philanthropy may not see themselves as philanthropy advisors or have it in their job title. This is exemplified in interviews, websites (including LinkedIn profiles) and sector documents, where philanthropy advisors used varying terms to describe themselves. This holds true for their formal titles (e.g. what is on their LinkedIn profile or business card). Examples of role titles include “Philanthropy and Fundraising Advisor”, “Head of Philanthropy Services” and “Impact Officer”. It is therefore, not enough to only include people as PhAds who have the title philanthropy advisor listed on LinkedIn or on their company website under the philanthropy advice services category, as they may be philanthropy advisors without it appearing prominently in their role title or description. This was more apparent in snowballing techniques in data collection, where philanthropy advisors would signpost me to other advisors (when I would not have identified them as such from their websites or LinkedIn profiles). This is exemplified in the vignette, where the director of a venture philanthropy network mentioned he worked as a PhAd, alongside his full-time role. In another example, a philanthropy advisor connected me to a “Programme Officer” at a global health foundation, who was responsible for directly advising UHNWIs in running donor education programmes for wealthy donors. Thus, the field of philanthropy advisors is not fully visible for those outside the sector, given the range of philanthropy services and the different actors who have influence on charitable giving, but may not consider themselves philanthropy advisors directly.

Philanthropy advice services is an emergent field with ill-defined industry norms, however, my findings suggest that philanthropy advice services are primarily offered through four types of entities: Firstly, through consultancies. Secondly, through single- or multi-family offices. Thirdly, within financial and professional services. Fourthly, through third sector organisations and philanthropy networks.

27 See Appendix II for the full list of documents, but in particular: Document 2, Document 8, Document 27, Document 31
28 Interview 15
29 Interview 14
Consultancies: Individual advisors or philanthropic consultancies take on clients ranging from individuals to foundations to third sector organisations. Interviewees, working as consultants, described clients, including HNWI to UHNWI individuals, larger companies and even foundations. Data from websites and interview materials describe a range of clients ranging from family offices, foundations, wealth managers, private banks, corporate foundations, non-profit organisations, social entrepreneurs, philanthropists, their families and boards. My interviews with PhAds were, primarily, with those operating in consultancies. Some of these interviewees set up their own business and worked alone. Other interviewees founded or worked within consultancies that had teams ranging from two to 15 people. Some of these consultancies also advise clients who work or are based internationally. For example, several interviewees working in consultancies, described working with clients who were based across multiple countries, with their charitable giving reflecting this.

Single- and Multi-Family Offices: The second grouping is in single- or multi-family offices. Glucksberg and Burrows’ (2016) research on family offices characterises them as wealth and investment management firms hired by (U)HNW families. The range of wealth in families ranges from USD250 million for a single-family office and at least USD100 million for a multi-family office, with a focus on family succession and inheritance. As opposed to the services of wealth management firms, outlined below, family offices offer bespoke services, by assembling a team that is dedicated to their family’s financial affairs. Services vary from firm to firm, but can include income tax planning to financial planning, cash flow management, property management, private travel management, preparation of financial reports and philanthropic strategies. In interviews and webinars, several advisors working with family offices referred to their work within the firm as a complementary service, meaning it was a service offered as part of the broader management services offered by the firm. However, according to an interview with a PhAd in a family office, most offices are not big enough to employ their own in-house philanthropy advisors and will often outsource this advisory function.

30 Interview 4, Interview 6, Interview 7, Interview 9, Interview 11, Interview 15, Interview 22
31 Some of these consultancies are registered as charities, rather than for profit. For example, Bridgespan Group, mentioned in chapter one, is a registered non-profit in the United States, but provides and charges for philanthropy services, similar to the consultancy services provided by the Charities Aid Foundation in the UK. To recognise this distinction, I have included consultancies based in charitable organisations in the fourth category.
32 Interview 4, Interview 6, Interview 7, Interview 15, Interview 22
33 Interview 23, Webinar 9, Webinar 22
34 Interview 23
Financial and Professional Services: Other PhAds are based in financial services, working in the wealth management industry, such as private banks and investment houses. These include Barclays, UBS, and Coutts & Co. The structure of philanthropy advisory services varies from bank to bank and reflects the resources allocated by the business. In some banks, there is a separate team of people, whilst in others, there is more effort to train client-facing employees (for example, financial managers) in broader, less specialised philanthropic advising. In some cases, particularly for banks, philanthropic advice is offered as a free service available to private wealth clients.

Third Sector Organisations: Lastly, there are also PhAds who work within foundations or other philanthropic intermediaries, including philanthropy networks or organisations, that focus on donor education. Overlaps between philanthropy advice and donor education initiatives are also complex, particularly in relation to private client work, as can be found with the Charities Aid Foundation or Founder’s Pledge. In other examples, some PhAds worked in charities and viewed philanthropy advising as part of their broader work of “influencing funders”. One interviewee described this as the way that she advised individual philanthropists who fund their charity, on how to be “more effective” in their other philanthropic giving, not only for this charity, but for the sector as a whole.

As these four categories illustrate, PhAds work in various institutional and organisational locations with a range of clients, building relationships across and between different organisations. At the same time, while philanthropy advice services are offered in many different institutional settings, they may offer similar products and services. However, despite these similarities, philanthropy advisors differentiated themselves along institutional locations, as well as the products and services being offered. With respect to the complex role and remit of advisors within private wealth management, one interviewee, a PhAd in

38 https://www.cafonline.org/my-personal-giving/long-term-giving/philanthropy-advice (accessed March 2023)
40 Interview 21
41 Interview 34
financial services, noted that there are differences between types of actors, particularly those working within and outside of financial services. She went on to note that there are no clear roles of PhAds, in general, and that they are part of a broader category of professional advisors. When asked to elaborate on the different types of advisors providing philanthropy advice, she said:

I've recently been coming into contact with a lot of family business consultants. Their sole purpose isn't to provide philanthropy advice, but [philanthropy advice] is within the scope of their role. [The role] is quite nebulous, quite murky and quite undefined. And the sense I get is that it's different for a lot of people, but these are the people that focus on things like family governance and the softer stuff like the relationship building, how do we talk about our wealth, what do we want to do with it, what's the purpose and, like, next gen education and that kind of stuff. They don't operate DAFs, they don't set up charitable foundations, they don't hold any money, but they're very key as a strategic partner, particularly for family business owners and throughout multi-generational wealth. (emphasis added)

As described in chapters one and two, for the purposes of this thesis, I understand PhAds as those who are performing functions that involve philanthropy advising. However, not everyone who provides philanthropy advice will think of themselves as a PhAd. As the quote above illustrates, this PhAd in financial services also recognised some of these advisors as key to elite philanthropic practices, but notes that they refer to themselves as business consultants. Her description of the scope of the role demonstrates how it requires these advisors and professionals to opt into the title of PhAd themselves. Because there is no official accreditation or formalised system of designating philanthropy advisors and, often, philanthropy advisors hold multiple roles (within a single organisation or as a separate individual consultancy on the side), the role of philanthropy advisor is often a form of self-identification. This means that individuals providing advice on philanthropy may not identify themselves as a professional philanthropy advisor. This, however, does not mean that clients are not receiving advice on philanthropy, but rather that it is not centred or recognised as such by the advisor or within the professional advisory firm. Whilst there can be overlaps in providing advice and services related to philanthropic practice between private wealth practitioners and philanthropy advisors, they are separate professional entities. The philanthropic advising process (philanthropic planning, implementing, monitoring and review) requires multiple sets of expertise and skills, thus requiring different resources and
expertise.

One way to make sense of this is to understand two categories of PhAds. Those that self-identify as PhAds (e.g. have this in their job description and title) and understand their primary role and function as providing philanthropy advice, while others provide philanthropy services (e.g. the business consultants mentioned above) and consider this a secondary function. By secondary, I do not mean to imply that this is the second most relevant or important aspect of their work, but rather subordinate or supplementary to their other duties. In table 2 below, the differences are described between PhAds, where their primary function is advice versus those who provide philanthropic advice services, but may not consider themselves PhAds. Table 2 also demonstrates the different locations across which these functions exist amongst interviewees, namely, PhAds whose primary function work is within consultancies, financial and professional services, third sector organisations (such as funding organisations and charities), as well as within family offices.
### Table 2: Where PhAds Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Institutional Locations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary Function PhAds</strong></td>
<td>Advisors who consider their primary role in relation to providing philanthropic advice. Professionals who call themselves advisors. They may have a background in tax/accountancy or may not (in relation to their professional status).</td>
<td>Consultancies&lt;br&gt;Single-/Multi-Family Offices&lt;br&gt;Financial and professional services&lt;br&gt;Third Sector Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary Function PhAds</strong></td>
<td>Advisors who provide advice related to, or have an influence on, philanthropic giving, but who would consider this secondary or in relation to other professional expertise (such as tax or wealth advising services). They do not refer to themselves as PhAds, but may include this under a list of services. For example, they may provide philanthropy services within a broader offering of accounting, tax advice or financial planning services.</td>
<td>Consultancies&lt;br&gt;Single-/Multi-Family Offices&lt;br&gt;Financial and professional services&lt;br&gt;Third Sector Organisations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The role of PhAds is also difficult to define, given PhAds themselves have a variety of professional backgrounds and experiences. This is because they come from various workplaces and experiences and there is no clear career pathway to working in this emergent industry.

In an interview, a PhAd in consultancy describes the often indistinguishable and nascent aspects of philanthropy advice and services in the UK, as follows:

> All the private wealth banks, all the law firms, all the accountants’ firms, all the offshore trust companies, all these are now offering or are talking about philanthropy services...  

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42 Interview 15
offering. Investment houses are offering some form of social impact thing, whatever that might be.

This means PhAds can offer different services and assume many different functions simultaneously. The emergent and fractured nature of philanthropy advice was prominent in interviews that describe a lack of visibility and clarity over the size and scope of the philanthropy advice sector.

During an interview,\textsuperscript{43} when asked how clients learn about philanthropy advice services, a PhAd in a consultancy answered by describing the places where philanthropy advice services are offered:

There's a couple of pure philanthropy advisors out there, who tend to be working it as part of a wider offer, (…). And then you have a handful of randoms who have spun out into the world, either from a charity background or from just a private, wealthy, family office space and then you have people who run events. But it is quite a fragmented marketplace.

According to the interviewee, “pure advisors” are those whose primary role is as a PhAd within financial and professional services. These may include banks providing philanthropy advice services exclusively for their private banking clientele. The interviewee here, captures the fragmentation of philanthropy advice services reflected across the data, which range from workshops and gatherings to working in various institutional locations. This fragmentation sheds light on how prospective clients find out about the existence of philanthropic advice services, whilst some PhAds working in financial services are part of the in-house offerings (mentioned above as part of a “wider offer”).

What is notable here is that, because of the emergence and fragmentation of philanthropy advice, there is little visibility for PhAds, as well as philanthropists seeking out philanthropy advice. What is telling about this is that, whilst data collected describes the role of PhAds across multiple locations and events, they rarely specify what constitutes advice. The lack of specificity in defining “philanthropy advice” across PhAds working in different locations,

\textsuperscript{43}Interview 15
indicates that there is no universal definition or standard for what constitutes philanthropy advice and further highlights the fragmented nature of elite philanthropy advice services. This suggests that the role of PhAds in elite philanthropy is highly varied and contingent on a range of factors, including the specific context in which they are operating and based on the needs of their clients (reflecting the donor-centred nature of these services and of the role of PhAds).

Given this fragmentation and the different institutional locations of philanthropy advisors, what constitutes philanthropy advice and what can this tell us about the role of PhAds in elite philanthropy?

4.3 What is Philanthropy Advice?

Philanthropic services vary greatly, with many advisors or firms only taking up some of the services, ranging from administrative to strategic advice. A means to understand what constitutes advice is by examining how PhAds market their services.

Several interviewees commented on the difficulty in describing what their philanthropy services fully involve and the challenges of describing and selling these services to clients. A PhAd in consultancy\(^{44}\) described, in an interview, the difficulties they have in describing their services, because they are so varied:

> We spend a really long time trying to summarise what we do into a neat list of things that you can pick from and it’s really quite hard, because sometimes people can’t imagine what they need. And so, a lot of what we do is sometimes speaking to people who are at the very beginnings of thinking about doing philanthropy at all and they have no idea what that means. They just know that they have more money than they need and they want to do good or their wealth advisor’s telling them they should give money away. And they have different motivations when they come to us at that point, but ultimately, they don’t know anything. They don’t know what philanthropy really looks like, how the charity world works, what role they could play in it and they certainly don’t know what role a formal advisor could play either.

\(^{44}\) Interview 22
Several PhAds in interviews echoed the sentiment that oftentimes, clients don’t know what they are hiring for or what they need when they begin working with a philanthropy advisor. The role of PhAds is thus self-defined in terms of what they construct for their clients as philanthropy services, whereby PhAds create a role for themselves and for philanthropy advice through their products and services. The broad scope and vagueness of these services serve to attract a wider range of clients.

During interviews, PhAds emphasised there is no established or fixed way of giving philanthropy advice, although handbooks and marketing materials provide more concrete examples and lists of advice services provided by PhAds. As an example, and according to the Philanthropy Impact Handbook for Professional Advisors, philanthropy advice is a process that has similar steps to other professional services, namely, 1) planning, 2) implementing and 3) monitoring and reviewing.

**Planning:** Planning services for wealthy clients can include:

- Personal/family philanthropic strategy development
- Family governance
- Tax advice
- Advice on giving structures/vehicles
- Selecting organisations/projects
- Landscaping and context
- Identifying social/impact investing opportunities

The planning stage described above aligns with interviewee descriptions of working and meeting with clients or from philanthropists describing their interactions with philanthropy services.

**Implementing:** The next phase of the advice process, according to the Philanthropy Impact

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45 Document 9 (p. 7)
Handbook,\textsuperscript{46} is the implementation of the advice. This can include a myriad of services that often result in philanthropy advisors engaging with other professional services (e.g. PhAds whose advice is a secondary function). For example, in the planning stage, a client may decide to set up a charitable trust, but the advisor is not a lawyer, so the client may be referred elsewhere or the service might be acquired on a consultancy basis.\textsuperscript{47}

According to the Philanthropy Impact Handbook,\textsuperscript{48} implementing philanthropic advice can include the following:

- Setting up a giving structure/vehicle
- Succession planning in line with philanthropic strategy/inheritance
- Tax planning onshore/cross-border
- Aligning business with philanthropic strategy
- Managing non-financial assets (e.g. art or property giving)
- Managing financial assets (e.g. share giving)
- Aligning investments with philanthropic strategy
- Investment management for endowments
- Accounts/trust/foundation administration and management
- Values-based investments (e.g. social investment)
- Research, knowledge, network and inspiration
- Public communication strategy

**Monitoring and Review**: According to the Philanthropy Impact Handbook\textsuperscript{49}, the last range of philanthropy advice is a review process. Services here include:

- Financial reporting
- Tax reporting
- Monitoring impact
- Monitoring implementation and tactical adjustments of strategy

What these examples illustrate, is the range of services and expertise required for the different phases of philanthropy (i.e. planning, implementing, and monitoring and reviewing).

\textsuperscript{46} Document 9
\textsuperscript{47} Interview 1, Interview 24
\textsuperscript{48} Document 9 (p. 7)
\textsuperscript{49} Document 9 (p. 7)
4.4 What Products and Services Do PhAds offer?

My findings indicate that although PhAds provide a range of services, there are three primary ways in which they market their expertise, explained in further detail below. They are:

- Offering strategic advice,
- providing technical expertise and administrative support, and
- engaging in teaching philanthropy.

**Strategic Advice on Philanthropic Giving**

The promotion of philanthropy services as “improving” philanthropic giving, is a key offering across all PhAd advisory services. In another example from The Charities Aid Foundation’s (CAF’s) philanthropy services website, they advertise their services as providing “evidence-based philanthropic advice” to “maximize the impact of your giving where our expert advisors support our private client donors to define their philanthropic focus, develop their strategy and give confidently”. CAF also offers philanthropy advice services to professional advisors, meaning professional advisors hire CAF’s advisors on behalf of their clients:

> Addressing clients’ social and environmental concerns can signal your firm’s progressive outlook and has the potential to draw in a new generation of HNW women and younger HNWIs. As well as providing the tools to help your clients give in a tax-effective and strategic way, partnering with us can help differentiate your offer to grow your business.\(^{51}\)

As these quotes illustrate, what is included or not in philanthropy advice, varies by the institutional setting, the advisor and the client. However, that philanthropy advice services and training are marketed by some PhAds to companies on the basis that it will make the company appear to have a “progressive outlook”, points to the ways that philanthropy advice services are understood as inherently socially progressive. The strategic functionality of philanthropy advice being presented as a way for businesses to signal values, is discussed, at length, in chapter six, in the context of social impact.

\(^{50}\) [https://www.cafonline.org/my-personal-giving/long-term-giving/philanthropy-advice](https://www.cafonline.org/my-personal-giving/long-term-giving/philanthropy-advice) (accessed March 2023)

\(^{51}\) [https://www.cafonline.org/professional-advisers](https://www.cafonline.org/professional-advisers) (accessed March 2023)
Similarly, PhAds in financial services also make the case that their services are not only aligned and integrated with the financial offerings, but are linked with improving the social impact of their giving. Their services are thus linked to helping clients “improve” their philanthropy. For example, from UBS’s website for philanthropy services:

UBS Philanthropy Services is a unique, award-winning offering that partners with clients and their families to maximize their philanthropic impact. We provide comprehensive advice, insight experiences, and execution services, and employ an investment-based approach to deliver solutions to pressing social and environmental issues.

UBS services also offer a range of resources and toolkits “including checklists, templates and guides designed to help you maximize your impact”. They also provide “insights” to clients, through what they describe as “curated and exclusive content via podcasts, videos, articles, and research by experts, practitioners, thought leaders, and other GPC members. You can also attend tailored and curated gatherings – online and in-person”.

For example, in an interview with a PhAd in financial services, she described her role as such:

My day job is to meet clients who were introduced to me through their bankers, (...). And 99% of them, when I ask them, “Why now and why this?” they will tell me, “I never thought I’d make this much money. I feel profoundly grateful to have it and I’d like to make the world a better place.” So, you could say that 99% have a very strong social conscience, through faith or not. My job, how we've designed it, has three parts. [Client] meetings with me. We've designed our own literature, so we have a guide to giving for them. (...) And then I do events. (...) But philanthropy becomes a part of their life and we have a 45-minute chat and I take them through their life and why it’s happened, what’s important, what’s worked, what hasn't worked, what's next.

The PhAd goes on to describe her role more explicitly:

My role, really, is to help them decide what kind of giver they want to be. So, what their profile might be or not? How much time do they have to give to it? Do they want to do it through a foundation or a donor advised fund or just cut a few cheques a year? Do they want the kids involved in it? The time thing is really interesting, because they

53 Interview 28
often have no idea how much. I say, “Listen, give it as Carnegies and a Rockefeller. Giving money away is easy. Giving it away well is really difficult”.

What these quotes illustrate is the way PhAds in interviews emphasised their role in the “planning phase”. A prominent theme in the ways PhAds described their role was in relation to helping their clients design and articulate their goals with their philanthropy. According to many PhAds in interviews across different institutional settings, a prominent aspect of their role was asking clients questions that enable them to decide what types of philanthropy they want to engage in and then supporting their clients to do that. The planning phase is highlighted in the quotes above, in relation to “having a chat” with clients and encouraging philanthropy to “become part of their life”. By making the case that philanthropy is a set of complex and complicated decisions, the philanthropy advisor emphasises that her role is to help the client navigate those challenges. According to another report, this phase can also involve reviewing the personal, family and business objectives.\(^{54}\)

**Technical Expertise and Administrative Support**

PhAds also describe their role in providing technical expertise and administrative support. During an interview,\(^{55}\) one PhAd in a consultancy described their services as “research and due diligence and project management and relationship management”. This consultancy provides clients with support, such as planning and implementing (i.e. project management) and manages compliance with the charity commission, on behalf of their clients. PhAds also provide technical expertise to set up and, sometimes, even administer the “giving vehicles” of their clients. Advisors describe giving structures, hitherto referred to as giving vehicles, and the legal entities they present to clients, as options. Giving vehicles can include setting up their own charitable trusts to give grants, cheque book giving (writing cheques directly to charities rather than grants), Donor Advised Funds or impact investing opportunities.

The UBS Philanthropy Compass\(^{56}\) dedicates an entire chapter towards “choosing a philanthropic vehicle”, which they describe in three categories: Direct giving, discretionary

\(^{54}\) Document 18
\(^{55}\) Interview 4
\(^{56}\) Document 12
funds and Donor Advised Funds (DAFs). In another example taken from the Coutts Handbook for Philanthropy, they present the choices to clients as a philanthropic approach:

You are likely to want to use a number of vehicles to channel your philanthropy. You might start by simply funding an organisation directly, but as your philanthropy becomes more strategic and significant in scale, you may wish to create a more formal legal entity for it, such as a trust or foundation. An alternative to this might be to establish a fund through a specialist intermediary, such as a community foundation. Tax considerations may also influence how you choose to structure your philanthropy.

They also emphasise that clients should “not be afraid to experiment with these structures until you find one that works for you”. Whilst much of this falls under strategic advice, outlined in the previous section, some philanthropy services require higher levels of technical expertise. Given the technical expertise, such as legal expertise, required to register different giving vehicles, in many cases, philanthropic advice directly overlaps with financial and wealth services. This is particularly related to taxation, sometimes referred to as “tax effective” giving. Philanthropy advice in financial services, at times, explicitly describes the integration of philanthropy within broader wealth strategies in marketing materials to clients. For example, on HSBC’s philanthropy services website, they state:

We believe your philanthropy plans and charitable structures belong at the heart of your overall wealth management strategy. With that in mind, our specialists work with you and your advisers, providing advice and support to guide the development of your philanthropy. We support you every step of the way, from initial vision and planning through to implementation and ongoing management of your charitable trusts and foundations.

Another example is National Philanthropic Trust UK (NPT UK), an English charity “driven by our mission to make philanthropy more convenient and efficient for donors”. According to their website, clients can “give smarter with our uniquely flexible donor-advised funds”. They advertise their offering of Donor Advised Funds as an “increasingly popular giving vehicle in philanthropy. We work with donors, advisors, financial institutions, corporates, foundations and charities to give using DAFs. We’ll help you spend less time dealing with the complicated,
administrative side of giving and more time focusing on what you want to achieve”.\(^{60}\) They state that their “philanthropic expertise helps donors find tax-efficient strategies even in the most complex giving circumstances, in order to maximise charitable impact. NPT UK does what other DAFs can’t”.

PhAds, both in primary and secondary functions, provide administrative and technical expertise, but according to several interviewees,\(^{61}\) depending on the size and expertise of the PhAd, they may signpost to external experts if the PhAds do not have the expertise themselves.

“Teaching” Philanthropy

In webinars, interviews and documents, PhAds describe teaching philanthropy as a key part of their services. Teaching philanthropy, often referred to as the “learning journey”, is a metaphor, commonly used to describe the process of personal transformation that individuals experience through exploring their identities as philanthropists (Maclean et al. 2015). As discussed in chapter two, the narrative of the “philanthropic journey” is commonly used to describe the approach of philanthropy advisors towards their clients, whereby, in the planning phase, advisors will identify ways in which clients can determine their philanthropic objectives (often framed as introspective exercises on articulating values). For clients to learn about what type of philanthropic giving they want to engage in, advisors will recommend a series of activities, enabling the clients to learn about philanthropy. This can happen through formal donor education programmes (such as The Philanthropy Workshop)\(^{62}\) or through conducting specialised research for a philanthropist to learn about a specific sector they may be interested in funding. However, the “learning journey” can equally be more informally constructed by advisors and can include formative experiences, such as site visits to charities, charity events, meeting with experts, meeting with other philanthropists, peer groups and exchanges, panels and events, as well as roundtables and trusteeships. Learning is also

\(^{60}\) [https://www.nptuk.org/](https://www.nptuk.org/) (accessed March 2023)

\(^{61}\) Interview 4, Interview 6, Interview 22, Interview 23

\(^{62}\) [https://www.tpw.org/](https://www.tpw.org/) (accessed March 2023)
framed as giving time and getting involved, “hands-on” volunteering, mentoring, advocacy and recruiting networks.

In interviews, PhAds often described their client work in relation to one-to-one conversations with clients, to teach them about their philanthropy. A PhAd in a consultancy\(^\text{63}\) described her role as follows: “We take people wherever they are along their journey and then we help them get better and better and more impactful and then they’re done”. In another interview,\(^\text{64}\) a PhAd in a consultancy described her role as working with a range of funders to develop structures and a grant-making approach. She described working with a client who wanted to give away GBP200 million to charity “and we helped him on that journey”, describing the primary objective to enable “more effective giving”. A PhAd in financial services\(^\text{65}\) echoes this, describing how they work with clients: “We need to be making sure that the client understands that they can see us as a trusted advisor, as a partner through their philanthropic journey.” Another PhAd in a consultancy\(^\text{66}\) described their services as “providing a really rich donor experience and donor education journey”.

In a webinar,\(^\text{67}\) a PhAd in a private bank and director of philanthropy services, emphasises their role in teaching philanthropy, stating:

> I don’t choose charities for clients. That’s not part of my role. I teach them how to do it themselves. I think it’s very important.

This was echoed by another PhAd working in a private bank in an interview.\(^\text{68}\)

> But what it has now developed into is that I teach them how to fish, but I don’t do their fishing for them, is how I would describe it.

On their website,\(^\text{69}\) UBS’s private philanthropy services offer “immersive and inspirational experiences” for clients, such as trips to visit programmes and charities. Their website states:

\(^{63}\) Interview 4  
\(^{64}\) Interview 11  
\(^{65}\) Interview 26  
\(^{66}\) Interview 7  
\(^{67}\) Webinar 9  
\(^{68}\) Interview 28  
Are you looking to make a real difference in the world through your philanthropy, but aren’t sure where to turn next? Our Philanthropy Academy offers the knowledge and tools you need to become an effective change-maker.

Through our philanthropy experts, who have the unique perspective of working in or with the only independent foundation linked to a global wealth manager, you’ll learn how to create strategies that align with your values and goals, measure the impact of your donations and investments and much more.

You’ll also be offered the opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals in our Global Philanthropists Community and build a network of change-makers who are also committed to having a positive impact in the world.70 (emphasis added)

Within these learning journeys, UBS also describes opportunities for clients to become part of a members-only donor network, “connecting philanthropists, and convening and encouraging collaboration” under the auspices of their Global Philanthropists Community. In 2022, they organised a conference for the Global Philanthropist Community, described as “an interactive event, where you’ll join peer philanthropists, social entrepreneurs and thought leaders for a day of inspiring and engaging discussions”.71 They also offer a Philanthropy Academy, a virtual learning programme comprised of 25 sessions, aiming to help clients “begin this journey” that “helps you become an informed changemaker” and move “from thinking about philanthropy to actually doing philanthropy”.72 The role of the advisor, framed as helping their client on a journey, was present in interviews with PhAds in family offices, consultancies and financial services. The philanthropic learning journey was also the topic of several webinars and written guides and materials.73 PhAds framed the learning journey as a key technique for how they provided philanthropic advice. What the learning journey involves, and how PhAds describe their role within it, is explored in the entirety of chapter five. What is notable now, is that the learning journey constitutes an important framework for how PhAds articulate their role and that of philanthropic services, in promoting knowledge and expertise of philanthropy.

Often, PhAds offer several of these services across multiple institutional locations. One PhAd

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71 https://my.ubs.com/content/dam/gpc-lbx7i/gpcc/GPCC_Agenda.pdf (accessed March 2023)
73 The metaphor of taking clients on a journey through philanthropic services is so ubiquitous in philanthropy advice services that it is the central focus of the next chapter (5)
consultancy, on their website, describes their work as a combination of philanthropy education, strategy advice, expert programming, networking and peer learning.\textsuperscript{74} The role of PhAds is complex, even for PhAds themselves, as their services focus on navigating the philanthropic marketplace, creating “learning journeys” and relationship building, detailed in table 3.

Table 3: What are PhAds selling? Products and Services Offered by PhAds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Description and Activities</th>
<th>Offered By and Marketed To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Strategic advice on philanthropic giving | Often referring to the planning phases of giving, developing what PhAds call a philanthropic strategy for their clients. This includes developing theory of changes, determining the philanthropic approach (e.g. direct giving, setting up a charity, impact investment, etc.) | Offered by: Primary Function PhAds in:  
Consultancies  
Single-/Multi-Family Offices  
Financial and Professional services  
Third Sector Organisations  
Marketed towards:  
Individuals  
Families  
Charities  
Foundations  
Corporations |

\textsuperscript{74} https://www.philanthropyinsight.co.uk/ (accessed 20\textsuperscript{th} March 2023)
| Technical expertise and administrative support | Often in relation to the implementing aspect of philanthropic giving, this involves providing technical and administrative services. This could include administration of a fund (e.g. administration of a DAF) or setting up the giving vehicle (e.g. registering a charity). This also includes financial advice and services around tax planning and planned philanthropic giving in a will. | Offered by: Primary Function and Secondary Function PhAds in:  
- Consultancies  
- Single-/Multi-Family Offices  
- Financial and Professional services  
- Third Sector Organisations  

**Examples of activities and practices:**  
- Family governance  
- Tax advice, Advice on giving structures/vehicles  
- Selecting organisations/projects  
- Setting up a giving structure/vehicle  
- Succession planning, in line with philanthropic strategy/inheritance  
- Tax planning onshore/cross-border  
- Managing non-financial assets (e.g. art or property giving)  
- Managing financial assets (e.g. share giving)  
- Investment management for endowments  
- Accounts/trust/foundation admin and management  
- Financial and tax reporting  

| “Teaching” philanthropy | Organising and delivering formal and informal learning programmes, such as formal trainings for donors or developing boutique “learning journeys” for clients. | Offered by: Primary Function PhAds in:  
- Consultancies  
- Single-/Multi-Family Offices  
- Financial and Professional services  
- Third Sector Organisations  

**Marketed towards:**  
- Individuals  
- Families  
- Charities  
- Foundations  
- Corporations  

**Examples activities and practices:**  
- Creating reading lists and research reports for clients on thematic areas of charities  
- Running workshops and trainings for philanthropists  
- Planning and curating donor learning journeys that involve site visits to charities  
- Site visits to charities  
- Meeting with experts, peer groups and exchanges  
- Panels and events |
Interviewees gave examples of the kinds of advice and services they provide, including sourcing charities, admin support and developing donor education programmes. In several cases, particularly in relation to PhAds working in the context of smaller consultancies, they mentioned signposting clients to external legal advisors (an example of secondary function PhAds). One interviewee in a family office described how she “outsourced” any of the services they could not provide in-house. In contrast, in webinars and an interview with a PhAd in financial services, some professional advisors described their role, more in relation to executing, rather than planning. Clients tell them what they want to do (e.g. donate a particular amount to charity or set up a foundation) and they see their role as administrative, involving tasks such as filling out the appropriate paperwork and administering the funds.

What can we take away from how PhAds describe, market and characterise their role(s)? Firstly, the data suggests that the role of a philanthropy advisor reflects an often-fractured sense of what is included, or not, in philanthropic services, which may be strategically useful for PhAds when navigating relationships with philanthropists and generating work. However, while the services and approaches to philanthropic advice might differ from advisor to advisor (depending on their function, as described in table 1 and expanded on in table 2), there is one fixed aspect to them. All PhAds describe tailoring their services, based on the needs of their clients. Whilst this may seem like an intrinsic aspect of professional services, it raises interesting questions in relation to elite philanthropy and the resulting outcomes of philanthropic advice, echoing concerns about philanthropy being donor-centred.

4.5 What Role(s) do PhAds Play in Elite Philanthropy?

Whilst there is a myriad of titles and no fixed, professionally recognised standards for PhAds, I argue that one approach to understanding the role of PhAds is as Brokers, Intermediaries and Boundary Spanners (BIBS). Brokers, intermediaries and boundary spanners are all terms used to describe individuals or organisations that facilitate relationships and exchanges between different sets of actors (Bornbaum et al. 2015). BIBS are often not defined and have

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75 Interview 23
ambiguities\textsuperscript{76} (Neal et al. 2022), with competing and overlapping definitions of these roles. Despite the lack of consensus on definitions, according to Neal et al.’s (2022) systemic review, brokers are commonly defined as people engaged in multiple functions, including research dissemination, relationship building and capacity building. Intermediaries are commonly defined as organisations that engage in research dissemination. Finally, boundary spanners are commonly defined as people or organisations engaged in relationship-building. Even these definitions demonstrate some of the overlaps between these roles, most notably relationship building. Neal et al. (2023) also note that past conceptualisations of BIBS have typically focused on five main strategies: disseminating evidence, facilitating relationships, building capacity, finding alignment and advising decisions.

In this project, I am not seeking to build a theory of BIBS by testing the extent to which definitional distinctions are valid, nor do I aim to evaluate the implications for the effectiveness of PhAds through these terms. Rather, in the absence of professionally recognised criteria, I am using the framework of BIBS in the attempt to categorise and make sense of the roles PhAds play in elite philanthropic practice.

4.5.1 Defining BIBS in the Context of Elite Philanthropy

Following the recommendations put forward by Neal et al.’s (2020 and 2022) systemic review of definitions and understandings of BIBS, I define my use of BIBS below. I have adopted these definitions for the context of PhAds and defined each of them as follows, noting the primary definitional difference between each category is in relation to the level of involvement of the actor, rather than any particular strategy.

**Brokers** are individuals or organisations that serve as mediators between two or more parties, who would not otherwise interact directly. Brokers typically have specialised knowledge, expertise or resources that allow them to facilitate interactions and transactions between these parties. In the case of PhAds, this could include introductions between

\textsuperscript{76}Neal et al. (2022) discuss the ambiguities of defining BIBS, and the limitations of the concept due to the lack of specificity, and dependent on the context (most often used in policy research).
philanthropists\textsuperscript{77} or making direct introductions between clients and charities.\textsuperscript{78} This explanation also lends itself to the description of the gatekeeping functions.

**Intermediaries** are similar to brokers; in that they facilitate interactions between two or more parties. However, intermediaries, typically, have a more direct role in the transaction and may be involved in mediating or negotiating the terms of the interaction. For PhAds, this was sometimes described in relation to how PhAds create relationships between clients and facilitate introductions, but also, then act as convenors or facilitate the actual meetings.\textsuperscript{79}

**Boundary spanners** are individuals or organisations that operate at the boundaries between distinct groups or entities. They are responsible for bridging the gap between different perspectives and they may play a critical role in facilitating communication and collaboration across these boundaries. For PhAds, this captures the ways that they create knowledge about and for the sector, such as by developing trainings for philanthropists\textsuperscript{80} and other advisors, and writing reports on what they consider best practices.\textsuperscript{81}

In summary, brokers, intermediaries and boundary spanners all play important roles in facilitating interactions between different groups or entities. While they share some similarities, they differ in terms of their level of involvement in the transaction, the nature of their role and the specific skills and expertise they bring to the table. This is important when we think about the role of PhAds and what constitutes elite philanthropic practice. The advice-giving process and the role of PhAds within elite philanthropic practice extends further than simply providing advice. Understanding their role as BIBS (and the overlapping functions across these three categories) helps capture the nuance and expansiveness of the role of PhAds. While interviewees used terms interchangeably, I have categorised activities and roles as per the definitions outlined above.

\textsuperscript{77} Interview 26, Interview 33
\textsuperscript{78} Interview 21, Interview 22, Interview 23,
\textsuperscript{79} Interview 7, Interview 18, Interview 9
\textsuperscript{80} https://www.philanthropy-impact.org/content/training-course-advisors (accessed 23 March 2023)
\textsuperscript{81} See Appendix II for the list of handbooks, guides and reports.
4.5.2 PhAds as Brokers, Intermediaries and Boundary Spanners

**PhAds as Brokers**

According to PhAds, a key aspect of their role is to work across and between organisations as brokers.

While PhAds describe encouraging philanthropy, they are not necessarily expected to have comprehensive expertise in philanthropy or to necessarily know or recommend specific charities, but they are expected to be able to signpost their clients. In many interviews, PhAds across different institutional locations noted that they were not experts in a particular area of philanthropy, nor do they promote a particular kind of approach to philanthropy. Their role is to encourage philanthropic giving and broker relationships for the clients, either by signposting them to charities or to the more specific expertise their clients need to be able to give philanthropically. This was described as arranging connections between their clients and other donors or charities.

In other contexts, the type of expertise required to be a PhAd was defined more in relation to being a “guide” for the client and connecting them with resources, rather than necessarily providing specific technical or topical expertise. The following quote from the Philanthropy Impact handbook serves as an example of these ambiguities in the role and expectations of professional advisors administrating philanthropy advice:

> [Professional Advisors] are not expected to be experts in all areas of philanthropy advice. Rather, their opportunity is to work more closely together as a network of experts in support of their clients’ ambitions. The wealth advisory industry will thrive where groups of advisers work together to complement each other’s disciplines, bringing best practice to clients, irrespective of the source. Recognising the changing needs of HNW and UHNW individuals and new patterns of personal wealth use and allocation, is a valuable first step to understanding what services clients want their professional advisers to provide. Some clients will have a clear vision for their giving and will know which organisations they want to support and how. But often, when

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82 Interview 6, Interview 15, Interview 26, Interview 28
83 Interview 26
84 Document 9 (p. 8)
clients first think about how they can have an impact in society, they do not know which cause is of most interest to them: for many, it is a process of discovery. **Advisers do not need to make recommendations – they simply need to be aware that their client is on this journey and to ask how they can help.** They can act as a valuable sounding board in this process, keeping in mind that there are a wide range of issues and causes that could be of interest to clients. (emphasis added)

Here, the role of the advisors is to facilitate and encourage them to “do” philanthropy without necessarily being prescriptive about how that should be done. The role of PhAds, in this case, is helping the client navigate the philanthropic marketplace by not only providing strategic advice, but then enabling them to act upon it through brokering. The above quote illustrates this by emphasising that professional advisors are not expected to have the answers, but are expected to signpost or guide their clients to the right people, services and expertise, therefore acting as gatekeepers and intermediaries. While the role of PhAds in helping clients through a “journey” is explored in the following chapter, for now, the role of PhAds as “journey” facilitators relates to their role as intermediaries, working with clients as “sounding boards” to help them determine their philanthropic goals, as part of the “process of discovery”.

However, many PhAds do not directly refer charities to clients or even recommend charities. One interviewee described this as a potential liability for the bank, as they did not conduct due diligence on organisations and, as such, could not recommend charities. Other PhAds described this in relation to their understanding of their neutrality, emphasising that their services focused on helping clients identify thematic areas or set up foundations, rather than determining where grants or philanthropic giving should be allocated. In an interview, a PhAd in a private bank emphasises:

> I will sit with a client and because my role isn’t regulated by any overarching body, we have to be very mindful, always, that we’re simply giving advice. So, I don’t choose charities. I don’t tell them how much to give.

One PhAd from a family office describes in a webinar her role, as helping clients navigate the philanthropic marketplace, as such:

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85 Webinar 9
A lot of people don't quite know where to go, because they've been so busy running their businesses, that they don't really know how to navigate the charitable sector. (...) Whilst they might not quite know how to navigate into the right charity at the right entry points and the right people to speak to, they know what causes they care about.

Other PhAds describe their role in building up “impact portfolios”\(^\text{86}\) (i.e. a list of charities a client donates to). The crux for this chapter is the emphasis that PhAds, in their role as brokers, placed on the knowledge and expertise of the philanthropic marketplace that they require, in order to conduct the research and due diligence to produce such lists for clients. According to a PhAd interviewed in a consultancy, she described the role of her firm as “impact brokers”\(^\text{87}\), enabling clients to “create impact with their wealth” by brokering relationships between private wealth holders and charities. PhAds justified and understood their role, both in terms of encouraging philanthropic giving and improving that giving as a result of their advice. The role of PhAds in defining (or not defining) impact is explored in greater detail in chapter six. An aspect that this brokering role raises is the role of PhAds as gatekeepers. Some interviewees mentioned the role of PhAds as gatekeepers.\(^\text{88}\)

\textit{PhAds as Intermediaries}

PhAds also act as intermediaries, similar to the brokering function, in that in their role as intermediaries, PhAds create connections between actors. However, in their role as intermediaries, as understood in this thesis, they take a more active role in setting up the conditions of the relationship. For example, rather than just arranging for two parties to meet, the intermediary role gives the PhAd a seat at the table.

In this role as intermediaries, PhAds described working as “go betweens” and “guides” to help their clients to navigate the marketplace of philanthropy, thus requiring them to have a foot in both worlds; the charity sector and the donors. In another interview\(^\text{89}\) with a PhAd in consultancy, the interviewee described this intermediary role (between charities and donors), as follows:

\(^{86}\text{Interview 4}^{87}\text{Interview 22}^{88}\text{Interview 1, Interview 9, Interview 10, Interview 21}^{89}\text{Interview 22}\)
I spend my days, 50%, working with charities and 50% working with donors. Within donors, its philanthropists, individuals and foundations. But also, businesses that are giving away resources as well.

She went on to describe how spending time with both, enables her to do the bridge building work between the two. She describes her role as understanding the needs of their clients, matching them with the needs of charities and then arranging meetings between the two, such as accompanying the client to a site visit to a charity. Echoing this way of understanding the role of PhAds as intermediaries, a PhAd and lawyer, in a webinar, describes the “in betweenness” of her position as “seeing both perspectives”, making her equipped to negotiate on behalf of both parties and act as an intermediary, in that her understanding enables her to facilitate “win-wins” for both sides.

In another example, A PhAd who runs his own philanthropy consultancy, described in an interview that one of his main roles is “talking to lots of different audiences, knowing a little bit about each of them and then translating them to each other”. This was echoed by a PhAd in financial services, when asked in an interview how she describes her role, and said:

Helping and supporting [clients] and partnering with them on better articulating their values as an individual or as a family, helping to translate those values into some sort of a philanthropic strategy and then thinking through or helping them think through the ways that they would execute that strategy properly and effectively.

This PhAd describes her role as brokering relationships and introductions to charities for clients, conducting the initial due diligence and making recommendations. PhAds may conduct due diligence, recommend charities for clients to give to or, as part of a “learning journey”, arrange meetings or visits with charities. In one interview, a PhAd in a family office describes how she refers charities to clients:

Sometimes that will be me putting together a long list of opportunities for clients to meet with charities that they care about, where I can see there’s a synergy against the wishes that they’ve expressed and to be able to offer new ones. Because somebody

90 Webinar 1
91 Interview 15
92 Interview 26
93 Interview 23
can make a huge impact with a small amount of money in a very small charity, doing something very, very specific, or that same sum of money could do something quite small within a large charity.

In an interview, a PhAd in consultancy referred to this in-between role as bridging or matchmaking, stating, “From our perspective, we work to be the conduit between those different competing needs, whilst basically getting the best value out of the partnerships for both sides.”

Here, PhAds serving as brokers and mediators, underscore their perception of themselves as facilitators who foster beneficial outcomes. Thus, in their capacity as advisors, PhAds describe the need to recognise and appreciate the various objectives and incentives that drive all stakeholders involved and actively facilitate communication between the two. In some cases, PhAds even described their role in mediation as “protecting charities from overbearing donors”.

**PhAds as Boundary Spanners**

Several interviewees spoke about their role in bridge building, which can be seen as a form of boundary spanning. This has many overlaps with the brokering and intermediary role, as bridge building involves translating between different groups or entities. In this case, PhAds can also be responsible for bridging the gap between different perspectives, and they may play a critical role in facilitating communication and collaboration across these boundaries. For PhAds, boundary spanning captures how they create knowledge about and for the sector, developing trainings and best practice producing, creating networks and disseminating knowledge about philanthropy.

PhAds often described their role as “navigators” and “translators”, experiencing overlaps with their roles as brokers and intermediaries, and often saying they have a foot in “both worlds” of the third sector and of donors/private sectors. Critically, for the boundary spanning work, PhAds described their role in facilitating collaborations. An executive director of a family

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94 Interview 22
95 Interview 4, Interview 9, Interview 11
office that provides professional services for ultra-high-net-worth clients, reflected on this boundary spanning role in a webinar, as follows:

I think from an advisor’s perspective, (...) I think it boils down to [three] things. One is about understanding their personal situations very deeply. The second is about being that translator and helping them cut through all the noise and the information that’s coming at them. One is around drawing on networks and collaborations (...) to help people move really quickly, but also, give as effectively as possible.

PhAds describe how they promote elite philanthropy and aim to expand the market of philanthropic advice services through producing knowledge, creating networks and promoting philanthropy services. Some PhAds do this through producing reports and documents on best practices for clients and other advisors. Other PhAds conduct trainings for professional advisors, in particular, framing the role of philanthropy services as part of a larger project to promote philanthropy. Within the scope of promoting elite philanthropy and subsequently, philanthropy services, PhAds produce a large amount of publicly available material for clients on “how to do” philanthropy, as well as for other philanthropy advisors on how to give philanthropic advice. These include handbooks, blogs, podcasts and reports. Some examples include:

“Giving More and Better: How can the philanthropy sector improve?” (2016) by New Philanthropy Capital and the Hazelhurst Trust. According to the New Philanthropy Capital website, they provide support, consultancy and are an all-round philanthropy advisor and charity expert. The Hazelhurst Trust is a grant making charitable trust.


“Growing philanthropy advice: Why does its potential in the UK remain unfulfilled?” (2016) by Boncerto, a philanthropy advising consultancy.

Beyond producing reports that promote philanthropy advice services, PhAds also run events to promote aspects of philanthropic practice, one key example being Philanthropy Impact, the network of philanthropy advisors. Philanthropy Impact’s website states that “we work with advisors, philanthropists, charities and governments to develop greater expertise, awareness and impact in philanthropic action. We provide resources, bespoke events and platforms to support the development of the philanthropy sector”. Philanthropy Impact has run a web series for professional advisors titled “Walk in my Shoes”, aimed at supporting philanthropy advisors during the pandemic (uploading the webinars onto their YouTube channel since April 2020). According to the webinars, the web series is “carefully curated” to promote various aspects of philanthropic practice (e.g. some webinar titles include “Corporate philanthropy”, “Social entrepreneurship catalysing philanthropy through innovation”, “Philanthropy and social impact investing: their role in the recovery” and “Philanthropy and social investment” (see Appendix II for full list). The breadth of topics covered, as well as the range of speakers, which includes investors, philanthropy advisors, philanthropists and other professional services, demonstrates the breadth of what falls under the umbrella of philanthropy advice services.

The role of PhAds as producers of knowledge is justified and articulated in two primary ways in industry: grey literature and in interviews. Firstly, in promotional materials, philanthropy advice services are justified in terms of increasing market capture and expanding the philanthropic service offering. For example, one chapter in the Philanthropy Impact Handbook, which targets professional advisors and PhAds, is explicitly titled “How to take advantage of an emerging commercial opportunity by providing philanthropy advice”. The handbook argues that professional advisors should provide philanthropic advice, on the basis that it not only will improve their relationship with clients, but also, that advice “results in higher client satisfaction and raised retention rates” and “meeting client needs enhances the

101 Document 10
103 https://www.youtube.com/@philanthropyimpact7311/videos (accessed 19 March 2023)
104 https://philanthropy-impact.org/content/handbook (accessed March 2023) (p. 1)
reputation of professional advisers and leverages best practice”. As such, PhAds can often act as knowledge producers in how they market their services, by promoting the uptake of elite philanthropic advice services.

Secondly, and sometimes concurrently, some PhAds also describe their role as producing “best practice” to promote better philanthropic advice and, in turn, create “better” philanthropy advisors.\textsuperscript{105} Within this capacity, some intermediary networks and PhAds also run trainings, not only for philanthropists (as mentioned above in terms of teaching philanthropy), but also, for other professional services to learn how to give advice on philanthropy. In the case of Philanthropy Impact, they have two trainings on its websites, the first titled “Maximising ESG/Impact investment client satisfaction”, and the second titled “Providing Philanthropy and Social Investment Advice”.\textsuperscript{106} The trainings, “developed specifically for Professional Advisors” are, according to the website, designed for private client advisors, wealth management, private banking, financial advisors, as well as tax and legal sectors. The promotional flyer for the training states:

\begin{quote}
The world is changing, and the professional advice industry must change with it. The shifting values of next generation investors are driving a greater need for a new kind of wealth management. \textit{They want more and better philanthropy advice} and guidance from their advisors – but the professional advice community receives low ratings for this aspect of their service (average 5.9 out of 10). This training course focuses on what a 10 out of 10 rating should look like and prepares you to deliver this new and important part of your service.
\end{quote}

Thus, in their role in providing trainings, PhAds act as boundary spanners, not only through their one-to-one advising, but in building up the capacity of other organisations to provide philanthropy advice. Understanding the boundary spanning work of PhAds highlights the ways PhAds sometimes frame their role in building up the field of philanthropy advice and justify their role within that (the self-legitimisation of PhAds is explored in chapters five and six). In essence, comprehending PhAds' boundary-spanning work illuminates how they position themselves as proponents for the growth of philanthropy guidance and justify their role accordingly.

\textsuperscript{105} Interview 33, Interview 20, Interview 28
\textsuperscript{106} https://www.philanthropy-impact.org/content/course-content (accessed March 2023)
In one webinar, a PhAd and leader of philanthropy services at one of the world’s most prominent professional consultancy firms, described how their firm hired Philanthropy Impact to train their professional advisors. The PhAd explained that the aim of these trainings was to enable their advisors to be equipped to guide their clients on their “donor journeys” and “to talk to clients about purpose”, as a means of making their firm more competitive. An important takeaway from these findings is that the promotion of philanthropy services is interlinked with the promotion of philanthropy (and “doing good”). By promoting philanthropic advice services, these materials present the role of PhAds as promoting philanthropic giving and helping their clients “do good”.

This approach is epitomised by HSBC on their website, where it is stated that:

For more than 65 years, we’ve been helping wealthy individuals’ and families’ pursuit of important social causes – in turn we’ve helped the growth of a thriving philanthropic society.

Also, in the opening of a webinar, a staff member introduces the webinar with this statement:

Our research shows that professional advisors play a significant role in reaching wealthy individuals and encourage them to consider giving or investing money in philanthropic initiatives in a meaningful and transformative way.

In their role as boundary spanners, PhAds, particularly in consultancies, may also accept charities as clients. In interviews and marketing materials, philanthropy advice services for charities included helping them to develop their fundraising strategies, particularly in relation to attracting donations from HNW individuals. Some PhAds provide pro-bono or low-bono services to charities (including training, workshops, etc.) to help charities become better at fundraising for themselves.

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107 Webinar 14, Interview 28, Interview 14
109 Webinar 14
Table 4 below helps to illustrate the various roles PhAds play. However, the differentiations between what makes a PhAd a broker versus an intermediary versus a boundary spanner are not fixed, and the differences between them are not meant to be fixed, but rather illustrate the various levels of engagement, the complexity of relationships and how PhAds negotiate these on an ongoing basis. Therefore, these categories illuminate the ways that PhAds, both in primary and secondary functions, and in different institutional locations, contribute to elite philanthropic practices and sometimes, in overlapping ways. These also illustrate how PhAds define and understand their roles and define themselves across and between these categories. Understanding PhAds as BIBS thus not only increases the visibility of PhAds, but also, provides clarity over their role in elite philanthropic practices. As brokers, PhAds arrange introductions. As intermediaries, they function as mediators, sitting at the table and negotiating the terms and conditions of the relationships for their clients. Finally, as boundary spanners, PhAds bridge and translate during the day-to-day client work. Their role can also involve boundary spanning work, such as when they conduct trainings and teach philanthropy to philanthropists in donor education programmes, as well as the organising of trainings by PhAd networks for advisors, encouraging them to include philanthropy advice in their services.

Table 4: PhAds as Brokers, Intermediaries and Boundary Spanners

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<th>Actor</th>
<th>Brokers</th>
<th>Intermediaries</th>
<th>Boundary Spanners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhAds in Consultancies</td>
<td>Example practices:</td>
<td>Example practices:</td>
<td>Example practices:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Navigating marketplace</td>
<td>• Convening</td>
<td>• Translating</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Facilitating introductions</td>
<td>• Mediating</td>
<td>• Bridge building</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Matchmaking</td>
<td>• Arranging learning journeys</td>
<td>• Convening networking events and conferences</td>
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<td>• Gatekeeping</td>
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<tr>
<td>PhAds in Financial and Professional services</td>
<td>• Navigating marketplace</td>
<td>• Arranging learning journeys</td>
<td>• Building networks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Introducing peers</td>
<td>• Facilitating</td>
<td>• Donor education</td>
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<td>• Gatekeeping</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: PhAds as Brokers, Intermediaries and Boundary Spanners (continued)

| PhAds in Third Sector Organisations | Navigating marketplace • Matchmaking • Gatekeeping | Arranging learning journeys | Creating networks • Promotion and celebration • Convening (conferences) • Donor education • Trainings for professional advisors |

This table offers insight into how PhAds justify their role and expertise as intermediaries, brokers and boundary spanners. PhAds described their role and expertise in relation to their function as intermediaries, brokers and boundary spanners and claim to provide value and sell their services by navigating the philanthropic marketplace through these various roles. Thus, it is unsurprising that it is difficult to neatly categorise or create a typology for PhAds, given the “in-between” nature of their roles that involves wearing multiple hats. This table does not provide a complete and exhaustive typology to understand the role of any individual PhAd. However, conceptualising PhAds as BIBS helps us understand the overlapping and varied roles PhAds play at multiple levels, from the day-to-day micro-practices of providing philanthropy advice, to building networks, to promoting philanthropy advice services across different institutional settings.

4.6 Conclusion and Discussion

This chapter has explored the following two key questions:

- Who are PhAds; and
- What role do they play in elite philanthropy?

Answering these questions is challenging due to at least three main factors: the emergent nature of the field, the nebulous nature of the work and the absence of consensus around categorisation. In order to account for these challenges in researching the identities and roles of PhAds, this chapter has proceeded to explore the location of their work, as well as the range of services they offer.
The first part of the chapter explored how we can answer who PhAds are, through studying where they work. The data I draw on demonstrates that PhAds can be found within consultancies, single- and multi-family offices, third sector organisations, including charities, foundations and intermediary networks, as well as in professional and financial services, such as philanthropic, high-end wealth management companies or investment funds. Building on my understanding that a PhAd is anyone providing philanthropy services, rather than someone who only self-identifies as a PhAd, I proposed two distinguishing categories of PhAds. On the one hand, there are advisors who consider their primary role to be related to providing philanthropic advice. The second category, on the other hand, comprises those who provide advice related to, or having an influence on, philanthropic giving, but who consider this secondary or in relation to other professional expertise. I categorise these actors as PhAds, but whose philanthropic advising is a secondary function of another role.

In the second section of this chapter, I then examined how we can answer who PhAds are by examining what products and services they offer. My findings indicated that although PhAds provide a range of services, and that there is no agreed upon understanding of what constitutes philanthropy advice, there are three primary forms of products and services. Firstly, they offer strategic advice. Secondly, they provide technical expertise and administrative support. And thirdly, they engage in teaching philanthropy.

The last section then proposed to conceptualise PhAds as brokers, intermediaries and boundary spanners (BIBS). For the purposes of this thesis, BIBS is a useful framework to categorise, map and understand the varying practices and roles of PhAds. The data I examine suggests that PhAds, rather than being experts on philanthropy or simply telling people how to administer their philanthropy, understand their roles in a more complex way. The BIBS typology makes visible the various levels of involvement, from brokers navigating the philanthropic marketplace and matchmaking, to intermediaries arranging the conditions of meetings and facilitating the interactions, to boundary spanners producing knowledge and building bridges. Importantly, whilst these categories are useful for illuminating the complexity of the identities and roles of PhAds, I also argue that no individual PhAd would match neatly into any particular category. Instead, understanding PhAds as BIBS enables a more expansive understanding of their role, beyond simply providing services to advisors.
Crucially, many PhAds also actively shape and influence elite philanthropic practices. I specifically argue that because of the broad range of institutional locations and services provided and the lack of professionally recognised standards for PhAds, considering them as BIBS allows for crucial insights into how philanthropy advice services facilitate the day-to-day functioning and expansion of elite philanthropy. Furthermore, what is also striking is the consistency of the findings across a wide variation of PhAds in different settings, exemplified in Table 3 and Table 4. This consistency informs the findings across the remaining chapters (5, 6, and 7), and speaks to the robustness of the findings related to how we should conceptualise and understand the role of PhAds in elite philanthropy.

As discussed in the literature review, while other research has recognised philanthropic practitioners as brokers (Kohl-Arenas 2017; Mohan and Breeze 2016), intermediaries (Frumkin 2006; Jung et al. 2016; Ostrander 2007) and boundary spanners (Dale and Breeze 2021), these terms have not been systematically applied to PhAds, in particular. This typology demonstrates the range of the role of PhAds, from micro-practices to the shaping of the sector across multiple organisational settings. This adds to existing research on PhAds, by linking the practices of PhAds within their role in elite philanthropy. Given the emergent nature of the profession, it is, perhaps, unsurprising that PhAds in many interviews often describe themselves as wearing multiple hats. This is reflected in the institutions that offer and pay for philanthropic advising, including foundations, banks, intermediary philanthropic organisations, family offices and other wealth and financial services. At the same time, individual PhAds, particularly those in consultancies, describe working with a range of clients who pay for these services: from providing strategic advice to CSR initiatives to working with international development agencies, private (U)HNWI, families and corporate foundations. As this diversity indicates, to understand the role of PhAds, it is vital to pay attention to what services are being offered and where. The what has been discussed in relation to the services they provide and the where has been outlined in relation to the organisational setting of the PhAd, with implications for who the clients or customers are for these services.

While my findings, relating to the emergent role of PhAds, aligns with these previous findings, particularly in relation to their role as intermediaries and gatekeepers, my research emphasises that PhAds reflect a commodification of philanthropy. Examining how they
describe themselves and their role, highlights what is being bought and sold, as PhAds help their clients navigate the marketplace of philanthropy and what is offered (i.e. sold) by them to clients. Identifying where PhAds work, who pays for them and what expertise they are hired for, enables us to better understand not only their role, but the discourses and norms of elite philanthropy, revealing what is valued, what is considered a success and who is centred. Studying PhAds helps inform our understanding of how philanthropy advice is described and delivered, which is explored in more detail in the next chapter, taking up the role of PhAds in the philanthropic “learning journey”.

What does recognising PhAds as BIBS contribute to our understanding of elite philanthropy? First and foremost, this chapter expands the usage of BIBS to PhAds by following Neat et al.’s (2022) recommendation to define and delineate the different aspects that constitute each of these categories (section 4.5.1). I argue that understanding PhAds as BIBS, allows us to grasp their role in decision-making processes and practices of elite philanthropy, and perhaps, increases our understanding of “the strategies that BIBS use, the skills needed to carry out these strategies and the expected outcomes of these strategies” (Neal et al. 2023: 95). This insight is particularly relevant, given how PhAds describe their role in building relationships, capacity building through trainings and workshops, as knowledge managers navigating the philanthropic landscape, and as translators and linking agents who facilitate the formation of relationships (Bornbaum et al. 2015). Categorising PhAds as BIBS centres their social relation at the individual and organisational level, rather than seeking to define them only, on the basis of their institutional location or on what services or products they offer. For example, existing research that only recognised philanthropy services within the wealth management sphere (Harrington 2016) may risk overemphasising the role of PhAds as simple service providers, overlooking their role as intermediaries within the elite philanthropy and its influence and interaction with third sector organisations. Moreover, if we only understand PhAds as service providers, it would overlook their role in promoting and shaping elite philanthropic practices. Understanding philanthropy advisors as brokers, gatekeepers, network builders and “experts”, offers a lens through which elite philanthropy can be made more visible, helping to clarify how and where elite philanthropy happens. Their roles as BIBS also provide insights into what Ostrander (1995) referred to as the ruling relations within elite philanthropy, with PhAds acting as brokers, intermediaries and boundary spanners within
these relations. Critically, this helps explain how the role of PhAds is positioned in regard to the promotion of philanthropy and philanthropic services.

The different institutional locations of PhAds also raises interesting questions, given the integration of philanthropy advice services into financial services, into how philanthropy is promoted, and the implications for philanthropy services being integrated into the role and remit of professional advisors and financial services. At this stage, the data makes it clear that for many PhAds interviewed, promoting philanthropy is an important aspect of their role and their understanding of what being a “good” philanthropy advisor means. Thus, they characterise their role in promoting the uptake of philanthropy, through raising awareness of philanthropy with clients.

Understanding PhAds as BIBS also contributes to research that recognises elite philanthropic practice outside of the exclusive lens of the philanthropist, while others have researched philanthropists as boundary spanners (Rowe 2021) and knowledge workers (Ball and Juneman 2012), particularly in the context of networks. For example, Rowe (2021: 2) described venture philanthropists as boundary spanners and knowledge brokers “linking together a range of actors from NGOs, governments, corporations, intergovernmental agencies and business”, while also “producing research and actively disseminating research, leveraging authority with governments and publics.” Importantly here, it is the philanthropists that are centred, but not those around them. Research that only focuses on the role of PhAds can neglect the myriad of other actors that contribute to the development and delivery of elite philanthropic practices. A detailed engagement and unpacking of the role of PhAds helps illustrate the enablers around philanthropists and elite philanthropy. This is not to diminish the role that philanthropists play within philanthropy, but highlights the complex sets of social relations that constitute philanthropic practice and the decision-making processes that constitute these practices.

Given the global rise of elite philanthropy outlined in chapter two, paying attention to the types of philanthropy promoted by philanthropy advisors and intermediaries can give us insights into the practices and processes of elite philanthropy. Understanding PhAds as BIBS not only brings visibility to the emergent industry of philanthropy advising, but also, helps to
reveal what PhAds understand their role to be and how they legitimise their roles. Subsequently, elite philanthropic practices are explored in the chapters that follow. The perspectives of PhAds on wealth, social impact and the promotion of specific forms of philanthropy within financial services, in particular, deserves greater research and attention. These themes will be explored in chapters five and six.
Chapter 5: The Philanthropic “Learning Journey”: Emotions, Wealth and Identity Creation as Philanthropy Advice

Vignette: What Kind of Wealthy Person Do You Want to Be? Donor Education as Identity Work

It's early 2020, and a next gen inheritor and philanthropist I've met through a philanthropy advisor, invites me to join a weeklong donor education programme. The programme, facilitated and designed by a foundation, aims to create a “learning process” for private funding institutions, individual philanthropists, family foundations and impact investors. According to the invitation, the programme is part of the foundation’s efforts to influence other funders to move their giving towards grassroots organisations and movements, to help transform the philanthropy sector. The workshop, usually held in person, will be online because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The week before the workshop, participants are assigned readings and films to watch, covering various topics, but focusing on inequality and social justice. We are invited to come with an open mind and encouraged to “decentre ourselves”, listen and learn.

Participants come from different institutional settings, often wearing multiple hats as philanthropists themselves or working in the philanthropy sector. Participants include next gen inheritors, foundation staff, impact investors, family offices and professional advisors. We reflect on how we can use our privilege for “good”. We talk about values, reflect on ourselves and our positionality, and think about what praxis means in the context of philanthropy. Finally, the programme details how current systems of philanthropy reproduce society's power dynamics related to coloniality, race, class and gender.

The week is emotional. The facilitator, while sensitive to the group’s needs, is also stern. We speak about how we are limited and complicit by our choices and institutional locations. Several participants, who share they are likely to inherit hundreds of millions of pounds within the next years, talk about the challenging family dynamics that extreme wealth has brought to their families. Several participants describe the breakdown of relationships as a result of
what they refer to as “wealth hoarding”. Others share frustrations with the limitations of philanthropy and the challenges of working with their families' wealth advisors. We talk about taxes. We talk about a lack of accountability in the philanthropy sector and the negative impacts of capitalism. Finally, we discuss how much money is enough. I'm struck by the degree of political analysis and reflexivity of the participants. We are asked to consider what practices we will integrate into our daily lives.

By the end of the week, we all share that we are emotionally drained. I, too, am exhausted. The emphasis on a deep, reflective practice, learning about yourself and others and sharing personal stories about ourselves and our positionality, requires a high level of attentiveness. It also leads to a shared language and relationships being built over the course of the workshop. I make friends with several of the participants, whom I will later meet up with in person or arrange for periodic catch ups.

It is sometimes unclear what participants will do differently after the course and the facilitator is not prescriptive. We are encouraged to think about change as a process, rather than a destination; we are on our own “learning journeys”.

5.1 Introduction: Philanthropy Advice Services and the “Learning Journey”

Donor education initiatives, such as the one outlined above, are gaining prominence in the philanthropy service industry (Sklair 2021). Across the data I collected, teaching philanthropy was not restricted to donor education workshops and courses, and the idea of philanthropy as a learning journey for the donor was ubiquitous across the data. Notably, the idea that philanthropy is not only something you do, but that it is linked to someone you are, is highlighted in the vignette above. The course focused on us looking inwards, reflecting on our values and positionality, and highlighted the surprising importance of emotions and identity within elite philanthropy. The overtly progressive focus of this course is not ubiquitous across all donor education programmes, however, the question of what it means to be an ethical wealthy person and the notion that this is something that can be taught, is a theme that is explored throughout this chapter. Philanthropy’s links with the construction of positive wealth identities, as discussed in chapter two (see section 2.3.1), is a central theme raised in
this chapter. Emotions, and the links with how those within elite philanthropy understand themselves and their role, provide insights into the meaning-making processes that happen in the day-to-day practices of elite philanthropy.

Moreover, existing research focuses on how a philanthropist justifies the accumulation of wealth or donor-centred decision-making processes (see Maclean et al. 2015 on the learning journey metaphor amongst entrepreneurial philanthropists). This chapter aims to contribute to the literature on the role that PhAds and philanthropy advice services play within these legitimising practices.

Across the data collected, most PhAds emphasise that their role is to take clients on a “learning journey”. What do PhAds mean by the learning journey, how does the learning journey inform philanthropic advice practices and why do PhAds describe their role in these terms?

This chapter presents two key findings related to the learning journey and philanthropic advice, with a particular focus on the socio-emotional role of PhAds in their advice services. Building on the previous chapter’s examination of PhAds as BIBS, this chapter interrogates their self-described role as teachers, mentors and guides within the ‘learning journey’. The first finding will uncover the ubiquity of the philanthropic ‘learning journey’ and explore how examining the use of this metaphor adds value to our understanding of elite philanthropic practices, particularly the boundary-spanning role of PhAds. It will examine how PhAds strategically utilise the learning journey to create philanthropic identities, a form of identity work. This involves describing the intended outcomes of the learning journey, such as becoming their own experts and adopting philanthropic identities. The second finding will delve into the emotional labour required of PhAds and its implications for the commodification of emotions within elite philanthropic advice services. Overall, this chapter adds value to the gaps in the literature by closely interrogating the legitimising practices of PhAds, focusing specifically on the role of PhAds as boundary spanners and the legitimisation of donor-centred practices within elite philanthropy related to the self-actualization of clients through philanthropic advice services.
By developing a fine-grained analysis of the diverse types of PhAds, their roles and their practices, the chapter argues that PhAds should be perceived as enablers of elite philanthropy, thereby enhancing our comprehension of elite philanthropy practices and illuminating how these are embedded within the legitimising accounts of PhAds. The chapter highlights the importance of the production of specific philanthropic identities within the legitimisation practices of the “learning journey”. Critically, the chapter demonstrates the role many PhAds play in helping elite philanthropists to understand themselves as legitimate actors, as well as agents of change. The chapter demonstrates that the “learning journey” is a rhetorical strategy that evidences the intertwining of PhAds’ self-legitimisation and the legitimisation of elite philanthropic practices, more broadly. This reflects the ways that philanthropic identities are acquired and purchased through forms of philanthropic advice, whereby clients pay to learn how to become philanthropists. This also exemplifies the ways philanthropy advice services are sold, not only as a service and a provision of knowledge, but rather also, as educational and transformational experiences for the client. This further embeds the links between their clients and philanthropic identities as key levers for their institutional work, to promote more and better philanthropy and their services. This research on PhAds enables us to tie together critiques of philanthropy and debates about its role in understanding commodification, emotional labour, self-actualization, and wealth. I argue that PhAds can aid us in understanding how the institution of elite philanthropy works by understanding their role in producing and reproducing discourses of legitimisation.

The chapter begins by exploring where the metaphor of the learning journey appears, demonstrating its ubiquity. The section (5.2) outlines how PhAds describe the advice-giving process as an experience and as a learning journey for their clients. It also details how PhAds understand their role as teachers, mentors and guides within the “learning journey”. Next, the chapter outlines how PhAds describe the intended outcomes of the learning journey, becoming their own experts and taking up philanthropic identities. The practices and strategies used by PhAds to create elite philanthropic identities and their emphasis on the relational and socio-emotional dimensions of the “learning journey” are also examined. The chapter then highlights how PhAds characterise their role as counsellors and therapists, and examines their framing and justification of “the learning journey” as a means of encouraging positive wealth identities in “more and better” giving. The chapter concludes by reflecting on
the “logic of philanthropic giving”, the focus of elites as a unit of change for PhAds, the implications for the legitimisation of wealth and donor-control within, and of, elite philanthropy, and finally, the commodification of emotions and feelings within advice-giving processes.

5.2 The Ubiquity of the Philanthropic “Learning Journey”

During my research, the metaphor of the philanthropic journey was widespread in promotional materials for philanthropy advice services, from consultancies to financial and professional services, and third sector organisations. Descriptions of philanthropy and philanthropic advice as a journey or the “learning journey”, were prominent across the data collected, with some variation in language. For example, the Charities Aid Foundation’s website and J.P. Morgan’s website call it a “giving journey”, UBS invites clients to “journey with fellow philanthropists”, Philanthropy Impact and Coutts & Co. repeatedly mention the “philanthropic journey” and STEP refers to the “donor journey” and “social impact investment journey” interchangeably. In a testimonial, New Philanthropy Capital describes a case study of working with a family foundation in the “early stages of their giving journey”.

The role of PhAds and advisors in the “learning journey” was also present in training materials for advisors themselves. Most handbooks and guides, created by PhAds for clients and advisors, use the metaphor of the journey.

The Philanthropy Impact Handbook, a guide for professional advisors, states:

113 https://www.philanthropy-impact.org/ (accessed December 2022)
117 Document 9 (p. 3)
High-net-worth and ultra-high-net-worth (HNW and UHNW) individuals’ needs are changing. Increasingly, they want more and better support from their professional advisers (Private Client Advisers, Wealth Management, Private Banking, Independent Financial Advice, Tax and Legal Sectors) on their philanthropic journey. (emphasis added)

The Coutts Handbook for Philanthropy\(^\text{118}\) states:

At Coutts, we often find that clients’ philanthropy journeys and strategies emerge and develop over time.

From the Barclays Guide for Next Generation Philanthropy:\(^\text{119}\)

Whether you have had an established vehicle for your family’s philanthropy for some time, or you are just starting out on your own giving journey...

Notably, the “learning journey” metaphor extended beyond marketing materials and was evident in interviews and informal conversations with advisors and in participant observation, with advisors describing their role in taking clients on “giving journeys”, “education journeys” and “philanthropic journeys”.

Given the ubiquity of the phrase, how do PhAds describe the “learning journey”? What does this involve in the day-to-day practices of philanthropic advice?

As mentioned in the previous chapter, some philanthropic advice services offer visits and experiences as part of their learning journeys. This could include planning visits to charities or travelling to visit programmes. UBS offers visits to Philanthropy Insight through their Optimus Foundation,\(^\text{120}\) while other donor networks and PhAds organise visits to charities for their clients.\(^\text{121}\)

When asked what their role involved as advisors, PhAds described advice giving as a process, whereby philanthropy advice was about teaching philanthropists to develop an approach to philanthropy. In an interview\(^\text{122}\) with a former PhAd in financial services and director at a third

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\(^{118}\) Document 1 (p. 12)  
\(^{119}\) Document 4 (p. 3)  
\(^{121}\) Interview 13, Interview 22, Interview 28  
\(^{122}\) Interview 25
sector organisation, the journey was described as helping the donor “really drill down on what it is they want to do” and the role of PhAds defined as “taking them on an education journey”.

Some PhAds often justified the use of the metaphor on the basis that their clients did not know how to do philanthropy or how to be a philanthropist, and that their role (particularly those whose primary function was to provide philanthropy advice) was to meet both needs. In several interviews, PhAds explained that a portion of their work, particularly when beginning to work with a client, involved demonstrating that their client needed advice, due to their lack of knowledge about philanthropy. Clients were described as not understanding the mechanics of giving (e.g. financial considerations, taxes, impact evaluations) or not knowing which causes to give to (e.g. knowing which charities work in which areas). In an interview, a PhAd in a consultancy stated, “The biggest challenges for us are that people don’t know that they need us.”

In other cases, the journey metaphor was used by some PhAds to describe different levels of knowledge their clients have about philanthropy. For example, a PhAd in a consultancy mentioned repeatedly how they embed the idea of the journey into their client work and that “everybody is at a different step on that journey”. Here, the PhAd describes the advice as “guiding” and “collaborating”, ensuring that the concerns of the clients are centred. The phrase “meeting the client where they are” was central to descriptions of the role of the PhAd and the language of the learning journey. Along these lines, most PhAds interviewed mentioned that “meeting clients where they are” is the first step of the philanthropic journey, or as one researcher and strategic advisor described in a webinar, a way of determining their clients’ “philanthropic orientation”. In other words, PhAds use the journey as a way to promote and sell their services to a broad range of clients, who may have different expectations and understandings of what is involved in doing philanthropy.

While the philanthropic journey was presented as something that clients do, it was also

123 Interview 4
124 Interview 7
125 Interview 4, Interview 6, Interview 7, Interview 19, Interview 23, Interview 26, Interview 28
126 Webinar 6
presented as a way of becoming. In interviews, many PhAds described how they help clients begin their philanthropic journey through a series of questions that help to guide the clients in deciding what “type” of philanthropists they want to be. A PhAd in financial services described this philanthropic identity work, as such, below:

They’ve probably done a little bit here and there and then they get to that point, they get to the rainy day, when they always said, “One day, I’ll do something.” And that day arrives. And one client came to me and he put 8 million in a foundation. He knew he wanted to do education and he seriously thought he would wake up one day and he would know what to do. And he realised that he didn’t know how to find an educational charity. And luckily, then he was banked at [name of bank] and his banker said, “Well, I think you need a bit of what they call a fireside chat with [name redacted].” It was lovely. That’s how they describe it. It seems very unthreatening, I think.

The PhAd here demonstrates the tensions within the philanthropic advice process. She is not telling the client how to do their philanthropy, but her role is to help them do so for themselves. In other words, in her description of her role, philanthropic advice would not be actionable advice around the mechanics of giving, but rather involve encouraging the client to think differently. Moreover, the language of the learning journey is also described as non-threatening, in that it does not highlight the ignorance of the client or even overtly imply that the advice process aims to change the client’s thinking. Rather, the PhAd emphasises that the advice is capacity building for the client, because it centres their needs and is “non-threatening”. She goes on to share what happens over the course of this meeting:

So, they realise, “Oh, my.” They have no idea what the turnover is. They have no idea. And they suddenly realise that they actually would welcome and would benefit from, basically, some philanthropy 101. It’s, “Okay, so what do I need to know?”

In another webinar, a lawyer whose focus is on tax, trust, estate and philanthropic planning, describes her approach to the “learning journey”. She characterised the role of advisors, as guides helping clients along this “learning journey” to realise their charitable intent and act upon it.

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127 Interview 4, Interview 6, Interview 11, Interview 15, Interview 23, Interview 28
128 Interview 28
129 Webinar 8
I think giving is very personal. And I think you have to meet your client where they are. (...)

I had someone come to me for the first time, who didn't come for philanthropy and they were worth significant sums of money. And when I asked them if they had any charitable intent, they said, no, not at this point in their lives, which, you know, to the people on this call, sounds odd, doesn't it? You know, if you have more than people could spend in three generations and you don't think you want to think at all about philanthropy. You know, everyone has their own view. But you meet people where they are. Different people are motivated by different things. But I think you have to, sort of, guide people in the right direction. And there's some people that are very keen and might say, “I've never done this before. I'm interested in funding X or how do I find out more about Y?” And it's really collaborating with all of the people in our networks and putting the right client in touch with the right people and explaining to them, are they concerned about tax or are they not concerned about tax? Just meeting them where they are is the most important thing that I think I could say. And then making sure that they have the appropriate advice to back up their goals.

According to PhAds, clients often lacked basic awareness and knowledge about the areas to which they have chosen to give philanthropic donations and described their role in providing a “reality check” for clients. They described, sometimes incredulously, what clients needed explanations for, implying that, due to their wealth, they lacked insight and awareness. In an interview, a PhAd in consultancy related the following in teaching their client about inequality:

I'd say that any philanthropist who comes to us at the early stages, that is almost, I mean, if they continue to work with us, which most of them do once we've got them through the door, that all of those are success stories, because they honestly do tend to come with just wild misconceptions or lack of knowledge and just lack of awareness. And so, seeing people get to grips with things, even just literally, really basic probably, actually quite outdated things like Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Literally thinking about like, “Oh, people live without food” and just getting their heads around the fact that inequality exists and that some injustices are systemic, not just about individual bias and just those topics. It's like teaching students all over again.

As the quote illustrates, this “lack of awareness” among clients justifies and makes the case for PhAds offering their services, whereby philanthropic advice is viewed by them as a means of providing perspectives to clients that they would otherwise not have. One theme that

130 Interview 22
emerged from interviews was awareness-raising with clients, in regard to social problems and poor understanding of what is involved in philanthropy. A PhAd in a foundation, speaking about her work with philanthropists in an interview, described “the journey” as a disconnect between what philanthropists say they want to do and what they actually can do. She called this the “realist gap”. She gave an example of working with a family foundation, who approached her about wanting to fund movements, but that after some time, realised they actually wanted to fund grassroots charities.

In another example, when asking a PhAd in consultancy, during an interview, to describe an example of working with a client, she described her role in moving a client away from what she considered an overly simplistic understanding of a problem and encouraged the client to move away from a market-based approach. She described the experience, as such:

I help them to develop their strategy and to make fulfilling decisions (...). I think it’s a long learning journey, but it was experiential learning in a way. So, how do you explain to a philanthropist the different types of contexts to help them realise the things that work? You can tell them, but they won’t listen to you. But if they experience it in practice, they realise that actually, (...) we are never going to solve the heart of the problem. (...) That was my experience of trying to take a philanthropist on a journey that came from a very certain viewpoint, that was incredibly business minded.

In this sense, some PhAds characterise their role as conduits to knowledge and learning, as capacity builders and knowledge brokers. The very person-centred nature of these descriptions reflected a commitment of PhAds to knowledge and learning, emphasising their role as brokers, intermediaries and boundary spanners between clients (often individuals or families) and the charity sector, at large. Conceptualising philanthropy as a journey (without a defined destination), means that PhAds often frame philanthropy as a process and one that results in becoming a philanthropist. The temporality and idea of philanthropy as a process was a significant theme in how philanthropic advice services described the “learning journey”, where clients become more philanthropic or become philanthropists.

131 Interview 13
132 Interview 11
The giving journey was often characterised in interviews and handbooks as something that is unique to each philanthropist, one that the client decides and also, reflects the donor-centred nature of philanthropic advice processes. Here, the client is encouraged to think about themselves and what their philanthropy will allow them to do and be. Barclays’ report on The Future of Giving Engaging the Next Generation,\(^{133}\) illustrates this. The guide includes the following diagram, illustrating how the journey is framed as a process, whereby the client begins with themselves (e.g. your vision, research, theory of change and objectives), developing “expertise” through this and, ultimately, making sure they “have fun” throughout.

![Figure 1: The Philanthropy Journey](source: Barclays 2019: 37)\(^{134}\)

Philanthropy was instrumentalised by PhAds as a way of helping clients build or strengthen their familial relationships. In this formulation, the value of the philanthropy advice services was philanthropy as a form of bonding experiences. At the same time, PhAds also described that while family relationships were strengthened as a result of these services, this also strengthened the relationships between the clients and the firm.

The guide to giving, available on Philanthropy Impact’s website\(^{135}\) and directed at potential philanthropists, asks them, “What kind of philanthropist would you like to be? The tool below will help you on your journey to identifying and achieving your philanthropic ambitions.”

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\(^{133}\) Document 4  
\(^{134}\) Document 3  
In summary, this section has evidenced that the “learning journey” is ubiquitous as a metaphor for understanding the key roles of PhAds. PhAds and philanthropy advice services often frame philanthropy as a process, something to be experienced for the client, rather than a one-off event or transaction, meaning that philanthropy is framed as something that someone does and philanthropists as something that clients can be. PhAds frame their role as teachers, mentors and guides within the “learning journey” and emphasise philanthropy advice as a type of philanthropic pedagogy that makes philanthropy personal and approachable to clients. PhAds describe the journey as creating welcoming and non-threatening ways to promote and, ultimately, sell and provide their services to clients.

This section evidenced how PhAds describe philanthropy advice as a learning journey, in which they see their role as teachers, mentors and guides. However, while the metaphor of the journey emphasises process, the following section will explore how PhAds describe the outcomes of this process for their clients.

5.3 Teaching Philanthropists to Fish: Encouraging Clients to Become Their Own Experts

According to most of the PhAds interviewed, a core principle of the “learning journey” is that of developing the expertise of the client and positioning the client as experts of their own philanthropy. Therefore, the role of the advisor is not to tell the philanthropist what to do, but to enable the client to do their philanthropy independently. PhAds described their role as building clients' capacity, so that after determining what kind of philanthropist they want to be (through introspection), the PhAd then develops a strategy for them to learn about the “whats” and the “hows” of their philanthropy. The “whats” include creating opportunities for their clients to learn about the specific issue area. PhAds described the ultimate goal of the learning journey as aiming for their client to “give better and give more”. According to PhAds, clients transition from no or limited philanthropic giving towards “better” or “smarter” philanthropic giving. This trajectory was mentioned most often, in relation to client success stories or when asked what their goal or aim was in giving philanthropic advice.136

136 The next chapter (chapter 6) will specifically examine what “better” and “smarter” means in the context of social impact and how PhAds make impact claims within, and as a result of, philanthropy advice.
During an interview, a PhAd in consultancy described the role of advisors in helping clients along the “philanthropic journey” as a series of steps, from not engaging in philanthropic giving to engaging somewhat to eventually becoming more “strategic”:

People come to us at really different stages. So, the one I was talking about before, where they’re just really starting right at the beginning, was really like an education piece to begin with and helping people to even think about what could be possible. But we also do get people who’ve been doing [philanthropy] for a while. They’ve given away X amount, they’ve maybe set up a [Donor Advised Fund] or they might even have a family foundation that they inherited or something, and they just know that they’re not doing as well as they could. Or it’s taking up more time than they want it to and they want to figure out how it can be better or they want to use [their philanthropy] for a certain purpose, like to honour the legacy of the family member who left the money or if they want to do something with it and so, they want something more strategic.

When asked for specifics or examples of what success looks like for advisors, they constantly emphasised the confidence and ability of the philanthropist to make decisions on their own, where they no longer “needed” the advisor (thus becoming their own expert). Success was often defined in relation to the development of the client into a philanthropist, rather than the outcomes of the philanthropy. This was mentioned repeatedly in interviews with PhAds across different institutional contexts:

**PhAd in consultancy:** “At the end of the day I view success, again, if the people that I’m working with are on that journey, learning and they’re getting smarter and smarter and smarter and then they actually don’t need me.”

**PhAd in a family office:** “And ideally, in a perfect world, I would be aiming for my clients to not need me in a few years’ time, because I’d have taken them into the place that they wanted to be, so that they were their own experts.”

**PhAd in financial services:** “And if they read the guide and they never met me, that would set them in very good stead. I don’t want anyone dependent upon me. So, often what we will do is they will take the guide away, they will read it and then they will come back with the next set of questions. Most clients, I only see a couple of times and then they’re good to go.”

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137 Interview 22
138 Interview 6
139 Interview 23
140 Interview 28
This trajectory of taking the client through a series of experiential learning opportunities, was referred to as a tactic for how to promote philanthropic identities. Many PhAds described their services as brokering learning opportunities for clients through experiential learning opportunities, with a type of hands-on engagement facilitated by the PhAd. This was mentioned repeatedly in “learning journey” success stories.

A PhAd in financial services\textsuperscript{141} described her role of building up the confidence and capacities of her clients, as follows:

\begin{quote}
We have to be very mindful, always, that we’re simply giving advice. So, I don't choose charities. I don’t tell them how much to give. I teach them how to fish, but I don’t do their fishing for them, is how I would describe [my role].
\end{quote}

Framing the client as a student enables PhAds to sell an experience, whilst also, navigating the power dynamics of the client/advisor relationship. This reflects the idea mentioned earlier, around PhAds promoting their services and offering advice in “non-threatening” and “welcoming ways”. Moreover, the conceptualisation of the role of PhAds as capacity building (teaching the philanthropist to “fish”), leads to a lack of clarity over the actual role of the PhAd. In teaching the client how to “fish”, the PhAd describes the intended outcomes of the advice as one where the client doesn’t need advice, because they have become their own expert.

The following section expands on this specific outcome, whereby PhAds promote the uptake of philanthropic identities for their clients, on the basis of making their clients “feel good” about themselves and their wealth through their philanthropy. The section will explore how PhAds describe the processes of philanthropy advice through emotional work.

\textbf{5.4 The Role of PhAds as Wealth Therapists: The Socio-Emotional Aspects of Philanthropy Advice}

\textsuperscript{141} Interview 28
Echoing the guilt and anxiety that emerged during the donor education workshop, described in the vignette at the top of the chapter, a strong theme that surfaced through interviews with PhAds that they see as a key role, is managing the emotional experience of their clients. Given the emphasis on trust and relationships, another way in which PhAds characterised their work and role, was through the lens of counsellors and therapists, with one PhAd in financial services describing herself as a “wealth therapist”.

She explained this, in relation to the guilt and anxiety clients often expressed in relation to their wealth (referred to as “wealth shame” by other interviewees). Again, the “entry” of philanthropy and advisors at a time of wealth accumulation, birth or death, helps to make these conversations more acute, particularly for advisors working with clients with intergenerational wealth. A PhAd in a family office described her role, as follows:

> It’s very much a relationship basis of trust where we get involved with people’s lives, not just their money. Because the richer people get, the more miserable they often become, because the more headaches that they have. It’s ironic, really, when everybody aspires to be rich. But actually, it can bring about all sorts of hideous, horrible things, as well as pressures. So, we’re there to be thoughtful and to help them and to act as really good, independent advisors. Philanthropy fits into that piece, because it opens up personal conversations. It allows us to talk about the transition of wealth across generations, we talk about values, we talk about legacy, death. (...) [Philanthropy is a very good lever to get to know your clients better. So, from a business development point of view, it means we get to know our clients better. People start talking about where they came from, their health issues, their skeletons in the closet about things that have happened to them that maybe other people have never heard of. (emphasis added)]

As such, and according to many PhAds, a successful advisor works to both enable the client to share their values and express insecurities about their circumstances, whilst also, helping to mentor and coach them. Advisors also noted that for many of their clients, the conversation about themselves and their values (as demonstrated through the line of questions and the “purpose of their wealth”) led to very emotional responses. A PhAd in financial services described the client, a private equity banker, becoming emotional during

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142 Interview 28
143 Interview 29, Interview 33
144 Interview 23
145 Interview 28
an introductory meeting about his philanthropy:

They end up getting quite emotional. But at the end of it, he said to me, “I've never had a meeting like this in my life.” I thought, “Oh, God. I finally got one really wrong.” And I went, “Oh”, and he said, “You have no idea how nice it was. For the entire hour, you had nothing to sell me and you wanted nothing from me. I cannot remember the last time I had a meeting like that.”

In another interview, a PhAd in consultancy described working with philanthropists in relation to their nervousness and fear of words like “impact”, when first starting on their “philanthropic journey”:

The work with the philanthropists was very much in the lines of sitting around tables, and a mixture of therapy and hand-holding a lot of the time to help people understand what was being said.

PhAds also described managing the shame and guilt clients feel about their own wealth. For example, a philanthropy professional and researcher described this dynamic in his work in a foundation as:

We want to distribute resources, but we can’t tell funders to distribute resources more equitably, in a way that makes them feel ashamed that they have money.

PhAds also mentioned that they play a unique role in the service industries around clients, whereby they are often present at births and deaths, when clients have discussions about where and how to leave money and the role of philanthropy, in what PhAds often refer to as the legacy of their clients. A PhAd in a family office had this to say about the role of these advisors during times of transition, particularly around birth or death:

What’s potentially a really sad, depressing conversation and somebody going, “I know I’m going to die. I need to write my will. I've actually got nobody really to leave all this money to that I spent my career creating.” And one, to go, “Okay, well, let's turn this into a positive.”

146 Interview 15
147 Interview 29
148 Interview 23
The role of philanthropy advice as a service that meets the emotional needs of clients, was prominent across interviews and webinar data, particularly for PhAds offering philanthropic services as part of a larger offering, such as in financial services or within the setting of a (multi-)family office. According to some PhAds, their role and relationships with clients was justified internally within their institutional context, because of their unique ability to develop emotional bonds with clients. Integration of philanthropy into financial services highlights two things. First, how philanthropic services centre relationships and socio-emotional aspects of these services (e.g. the clients care about their families and not the numbers in these instances). Secondly, this emotional and relational labour and function of philanthropic services adds economic value to banks, providing a competitive edge over other firms. This came up repeatedly when PhAds in financial services described the justification for their role within services that are, typically, about increasing the wealth of their clients, rather than encouraging them to give it away.

The role of PhAds as counsellors extended beyond one-to-one meetings with clients. They described their role as therapists in relation to managing the dynamics of families. A PhAd in consultancy described his role as a mediator with clients, going beyond simply helping them implement their philanthropic strategy or teaching them about philanthropy:

A lot of what I do is... for instance, a husband and wife in Boston that I work with, he’s private equity, she’s a social activist. She believes that private equity is creating the wealth inequity that exists on the planet and so, I play the role of therapist to them, first and foremost. So, they buy a basket of hours from me. Some of the hours are, like, having conversations with them and trying, either together or separate, to really understand where there’s alignment and where there’s tension. Some of the hours that they buy from me are, I’m building out the business plan on their foundation.

A PhAd in a family office described that even in cases where families hadn’t used the philanthropy services offered, she was still viewed as a trusted advisor and highlighted the importance of trust in the relationship. She describes a situation where a client had attended several seminars and presentations she had given, but had not yet inherited wealth to give away:

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149 Interview 6
150 Interview 23
But the strength of my relationship with them, as a family, has got to a stage where it was me that the daughter, the woman in her 40’s, chose to ring up at 8 o’clock one evening to say, “My husband has just beaten the crap out of me. What do I do?” But, as a firm, because we get close to our clients through these topics and discussions, and the daughter having been to some of my presentations and seminars, and she’s not in a position to give yet personally, because she’s not inherited her wealth. But she’s really interested in it. But she’d seen enough of me and my personality to know that I would care enough and get involved enough to know what to do. So, yeah, it personalises the firm to some extent. (...) But I’m able to fulfil that role as just somebody genuine and open, who she could relate to. And she probably wouldn’t have done that with anybody else in the firm, because they’re accountants and lawyers and pension people who don’t talk about the soft stuff.

In another example, a PhAd in financial services\(^{151}\) described a key part of her role, in relation to discussing wealth and the emotions of her clients:

A lot of time we end up talking about their wealth and how they feel about it, because who else are you going to talk to about that? And somehow, this is a part of it. It makes them feel better about their money. Some of them feel terribly guilty about it and quite burdened by it. And worried about their kids by it and worried about separating them from their friends by it, depending on how it’s been made and how much in the public domain it is. Some of them don’t want their children to know, they don’t want friends to know. One client said to me, “I could sit around a dinner party table and someone could talk about giving 2,000 to charity.” She said, “I could give 200,000 without missing it, but I can’t say that”, and she said, “It makes me feel really uncomfortable, because I just don’t want to be separated, because I can do so much more if I really wanted to.” So, I find the psychology of wealth fascinating.

During an interview, a philanthropist\(^{152}\) recounted the key role a PhAd played in persuading her family to set up a foundation. After working with her siblings, she created a presentation for her family to persuade them to set up a foundation. This led to a three-day retreat, facilitated by a philanthropy advisor/coach, who helped the family outline a strategy. She described the days as “deep therapy work” which, ultimately, led to the foundation being set up, with her father agreeing to triple the initial amount to establish a foundation of over USD30 million.

\(^{151}\) Interview 28
\(^{152}\) Interview 32
In summary, the socio-emotional dimensions of the “learning journey” is prominent in the promotional materials of philanthropic advice services, as well as in the ways PhAds describe their practices. The role of PhAds as therapists and counsellors is present in one-to-one advising and cases where PhAds work with families. Moreover, the role of PhAds as a trusted advisor is not only about managing clients' shame and guilt, but promoting their clients' personal fulfilment. PhAds repeatedly emphasised centring the emotional fulfilment of clients through their philanthropy advice. The role of philanthropy as a means of building and sustaining relationships was another prominent finding. PhAds describe this in relation to their relationships with the clients, the relationship clients have with their institutions as a result of these services and the relationships clients have within their families, because of their engagement with philanthropy services. The role of emotional fulfilment and relationship building, not as a consequence of taking philanthropic advice, but as a reason to use philanthropy services, reflects how philanthropy advice services commodify emotions. These findings suggest that PhAds commercialise emotions and emotional labour as a key aspect of their role and how they characterise the value they bring to their clients and their firms.

5.5 The Role of PhAds Promoting Positive Elite Identities

As the previous section illustrated, PhAds often describe their role as “therapists” within the “learning journey”. This interpersonal aspect of the advising process is not only a consequence of the personal nature of philanthropy advice processes, but also, reflects how many PhAds characterise their role in encouraging clients to cultivate positive elite identities. The philanthropic learning journey was sometimes described as a way for clients to experience moral growth, through the construction of a philanthropic identity that characterises the wealth of clients as something that can be used “for good”.

This sentiment was echoed across many reports\textsuperscript{153} and exemplified by the following:\textsuperscript{154}

The philanthropy sector’s role is to help people get started on this journey, stick with

\textsuperscript{153} Document 1, Document 3, Document 4, Document 10, Document 20
\textsuperscript{154} Document 18
it and, over time, reach the point of being a thoughtful and engaged philanthropist. This will help people not only give better, but also, to give more, unlocking that potential for the charity sector. Too often, the lack of a systematic approach to giving prohibits people from beginning the philanthropic journey.

One interviewee, a PhAd in financial services, emphasised that her role involved inspiring clients to become philanthropists by encouraging them to adopt a philanthropic identity. She described her role in shaping a client’s “journey”:

My role, really, is to help them decide what kind of giver they want to be. So, what their profile [as a philanthropist] might be or not. How much time do they have to give to it? Do they want to do it through a foundation or a Donor Advised Fund or just cut a few cheques a year? Do they want the kids involved in it? The time thing is really interesting, because they often have no idea how much [time it requires]. I say, “Giving money away is easy. Giving it away well is really difficult.”

She went on to describe her role in helping clients see themselves as philanthropists, even if they are reluctant to do so. She described a successful “learning journey” as follows, describing her role in helping her client become a philanthropist:

I think, if you consider someone comes to me with a blank sheet of paper, knowing very little, having done very little and 10 years later they have a package in their life, which they feel really good about and they found the organisations that they want to fund and they found the commitments they want to make, and it’s all working, what we’re talking about is a journey from A to B. And some people might already be along that road when they come to me, but usually they come to me, because they’ve made mistakes or they’re not feeling good about it. (…) But the journey is really from where you start and to where you end up with this. And the ending up is where you find the place where you’re very happy to be and you’re happy with what you’re doing and it feels good, it feels right. It could be on a continuum. You might end up doing more over the years in terms of financial, but you’re happy to be giving more. Because you’ve gone past 101. You’re moving into the grown-up phase of giving. (emphasis added)

The role of philanthropic services in creating a personal journey, focused on helping clients identify and “discover” their values, was a central aspect of how PhAds describe their work in encouraging philanthropic identities. Advisors referred to the “learning journey” as identity work, whereby PhAds encourage the adoption of philanthropic identities, creating positive

155 Interview 28
wealth identities by shifting clients away from shame associated with their wealth and shaping a way for clients to create purpose, meaning and, ultimately, feel good about themselves. PhAds describe their role as creating purpose for their clients’ wealth through philanthropic services and as a PhAd in a family office stated during a webinar:156

I think it's key for advisors to really understand their clients’ personal situations and what different hats they might be wearing. What are their worries as a parent or sibling, as an entrepreneur and an employer and as a philanthropist? And how might they best use their resources?

PhAds emphasised the importance of relationship building in centring the values of the client. With the first meetings and interactions with clients often structured as a series of questions, PhAds described the philanthropic “learning journey” as a way to get their clients to reflect upon their values in relation to their wealth. For example, The Coutts Handbook for Philanthropy157 also prompts the question of introspection required from philanthropists along their “learning journeys”. The handbook notes that in order for philanthropists to ensure that their philanthropy “expresses their personal and family values”, the philanthropist must first reflect on a set of introspective questions.

The Coutts Handbook for Philanthropy158 goes on to state:

**Developing a philanthropy strategy**

Your journey begins even before you have the resources to give or make your first commitment. The experiences that shape you are as important as the financial assets you bring.

Once you’ve explored your key motivations for philanthropy, we encourage you to think about three factors.

- Explore your values, interests and passions around giving
- Consider any learning you’ll need to undertake and what impact your input can have
- Explore the resources which you can bring to your giving

The place where these intersect will help you chart the direction of your philanthropic journey and give it focus.

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156 Webinar 6
157 Document 1 (p. 11)
158 Document 1 (p. 12)
What is interesting here is also, the overlaps with teaching, developing a theory of change and how this is framed as embedding the values and motivations of the client. The “learning journey” and the development of a philanthropic strategy presented here, requires the client to have done the personal and inner work of identifying what they want to do and then, creating a strategy to mirror and match those motivations. Relating back to the previous chapter, what counts as philanthropy is also extremely broad, ranging from direct giving to setting up a foundation, to giving through a DAF, to impact investing. In the framing of the “learning journey”, PhAds then deflect accountability and consequences of their advice, and emphasise the role of the philanthropist as the one responsible for the outcomes of the philanthropy, with the client making the choices and the PhAd ensuring the client feels “good” about those choices. A PhAd in consultancy\textsuperscript{159} framed his role and that of his clients, as follows:

[Philanthropy] is a choice. So, you could end up on a yacht in the Bahamas instead and that’s quite a tempting option. We’ve got to make this something that you enjoy, something you want to get involved with and then once you are involved with it, something that does as much good as it can, because that will keep you involved. I don’t, necessarily, prescribe to the idea that there is a perfect way of doing philanthropy. It’s more about making sure people are engaged, making sure people get what they want out of it, because then they will do more of it. And then making sure they are not making some very obvious mistakes.

The notion that the point of philanthropy is to feel good, was framed by PhAds as an important aspect in encouraging philanthropists to give more. A PhAd in a family office\textsuperscript{160} stated the following during an interview:

My role is very hands-on with clients, really helping them plan theirs and their families’ charitable giving and unpacking their values, and what they want to do and leave and how they want to spend their time. Because a lot of people get quite interested in philanthropy when they’re thinking about retiring and it can fill a huge void in somebody’s life. And philanthropy is not just about cash. It’s also about engagement and helping people identify the causes that they care about and what boards they want to sit on or committees they want to run, and how they want to bring their skills, and often entrepreneurship, into the charitable space to give back and add value, which isn’t just about opening up your cheque book. Some clients know exactly where they want to put their money in terms of what charity and, in which case, I’ll spend

\textsuperscript{159} Interview 15
\textsuperscript{160} Interview 23
time with them looking at planning over what period of time they give that money, what mechanisms they do that through, whether they want to set up their own charities, which I very much discourage, whether to use Donor Advised Funds or just to give directly out of that income or to plan that income, because most people don't put philanthropy into their income strategy.

One PhAd in a consultancy\textsuperscript{161} shared the importance of the professional advising to discuss their clients’ purposes. She portrayed the training their firm provided to all their wealth advisors in introducing philanthropy in their client services, more broadly.

I think it's important to talk to clients about the purpose of their wealth and to help them with that journey. And people find that quite a difficult conversation. It’s, maybe, because people don't give themselves or they just don't feel like it's a topic. (...) We have found it really improves our client relationships. It deepens our relationships with clients. Understanding what clients want from the purpose of wealth is such a core point for private clients. It’s a real value-add and really helped our clients, really, along their journey.

A PhAd in financial services\textsuperscript{162} described the reluctance of some clients, in describing themselves as philanthropists:

And most of them would not call themselves philanthropists. They're not Lloyd Dorfman or Vivian Duffield or the Sainsbury family.\textsuperscript{163} They're giving very generously, but as one client said to me, “He’s a wonderful man worth about 100 million in Northern Ireland”. He said, “I couldn't even spell [philanthropist] and I don't think I want to be one of them.” But I would call him a philanthropist. So, a lot of people feel it's a bit, I'm not a Rockefeller. I'm not a Carnegie. I'm not one of those founders. I'm not Gates. So, what am I? Well, maybe I'm just a generous donor.

In summary, the pedagogy of philanthropy advice reveals how PhAds leverage the socio-emotional dimensions of the “learning journey” to promote specific kinds of philanthropic identities, where clients become engaged and informed leaders through their philanthropy. The following sections explore how PhAds justify and legitimise the learning journey and the construction of these “philanthropic identities”, that create positive wealth identities through philanthropic services, arguing this is a way of encouraging more philanthropy.

\textsuperscript{161} Webinar 14
\textsuperscript{162} Interview 28
\textsuperscript{163} Both examples here, of high-profile British philanthropists and household names. Sir Lloyd Marshall Dorfman is a British entrepreneur and philanthropist. The Sainsbury family founded Sainsbury’s, the UK’s second-largest supermarket chain and have a charitable trust run by multiple generations of the family.
5.6 “Giving Better and Giving More” by “Feeling Good While Doing Good”

Importantly, the learning journey was emphasised and justified repeatedly during interviews and webinars, as a means to an end or a win-win, with PhAds linking increased emotional fulfilment and connections of clients through “learning” and “expertise”, as critical to encouraging more philanthropic giving. PhAds thus characterise the “successful learning journey” as one that is fulfilling and engaging for the donor, leading to more money being given away.

For example, in some marketing and promotional materials, PhAds justified their advice and the importance of philanthropic advice services, by arguing that clients who “receive advice give away more than those who don’t receive advice”.\(^{164}\) This was echoed repeatedly during interviews with PhAds in consultancies and financial services.

The role of PhAds, in making clients feel comfortable with their giving, was often framed as a central aspect of their role, not only in promoting the uptake of their services, but justified as a means of encouraging clients to give away more money. One PhAd, in a webinar,\(^ {165}\) recounted the importance of PhAds making philanthropy personal and emotional, as a strategy:

> So, the more we understand deeply the person in front of us, the more we can help to guide them into being comfortable with actually giving money away.

The emotional fulfilment and the link with positive philanthropic identity here, is one in which clients feel better about themselves and their wealth, as a result of their philanthropic activities. As one philanthropist stated bluntly in a webinar:\(^ {166}\)

> There is absolutely no point in doing philanthropy, unless it makes you feel better. And by doing it and doing it well, in the right places, it makes you sleep better at night.

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\(^{164}\) Document 16, Document 9
\(^{165}\) Webinar 6
\(^{166}\) Webinar 21
The adage of “feeling good by doing” works to reinforce the self-described role of advisors as helping clients give more and give better. In another example of the role of advisors to encourage clients to give away more, a PhAd in consultancy\textsuperscript{167} characterised his clients as wanting to do good and feel good:

> The advisory work that I do is primarily, actually, with foundations and high-net-worth individuals. So, they’re folks that have a pile of resources, who are trying to figure out what’s the best use of those resources. And so, they want to do no harm in the world, and if they felt comfort about where the money was going, that they would give it away in larger amounts and more quickly as well. (emphasis added)

He went on to add:

> If people are engaging more and they’re picking up on the perspective and on the context, they’ll feel better, they’re going to put more money out, there’s a higher level of engagement and then you see the joy piece. So, there’s joy and then I’m successful if they’re actually starting to put more of the resources to work.

In these examples, PhAds justify and explain the learning journey along a similar logic. By encouraging clients to become more engaged in their philanthropy (i.e. learning by doing), the client will become “better” at “doing” philanthropy. The role of the PhAd, in encouraging their client to become philanthropists and teaching them to be better at their philanthropy, is part of the “giving better and giving more” logic. In other words, the role of PhAds in building the capacities of philanthropists, is framed as a win-win for the philanthropists and for the improved outcomes of philanthropy.

When interviewing PhAds, some described success as when the clients feel so good, that they become advocates of philanthropy amongst their peers and publicly. The “doing good by feeling good” was also characterised by many PhAds as their own measure of success. A PhAd in consultancy\textsuperscript{168} described the importance of clients feeling good, as such:

> I know that I’m successful with families when they’re so excited that they have a perspective that they’re actually doing good work. And for them to have that perspective, it means that they’re getting engaged in it more, they’re on a “learning

\textsuperscript{167} Interview 6
\textsuperscript{168} Interview 6
journey” and they’ve gotten to different places on the journey where they feel better about it.

In another example, a PhAd in a family office\(^{169}\) related a recent success story, where she worked with a client for six months to help him choose a cause that was “meaningful to him”. She then described encouraging him to “bring it forward into his lifetime”, rather than leaving a sum to charity upon his death:

And so, it actually ended up being a charity to endow a chair at a university. And rather than that just being a legacy donation, we brought it forward, which was really nice. He's now in the process of recruiting and setting it up and that's really lovely, because he's really proud. And he's interacting with that process of engaging that post and they will have a relationship. So, it's just things like that which are really straightforward and tangible. Why would he want to give it away after his death and get no pleasure from that, no satisfaction or, “Actually, I worked really hard and now my money's in a university post.” But really important. It’s just a nice, real-life example of a really big donation that's gone to the university now and they can then set up the endowment with it. It's now earning money for them and it'll work well. And he's massively, really happy and positive about it. Actually, his name will live on and it will bring about good in an area that he cares about. (emphasis added)

The PhAd emphasised the importance of philanthropy being an experience for the philanthropist. Here, the PhAd does this by encouraging the client to start giving now, rather than giving money away in a will after death. She emphasises the importance of the philanthropy being pleasurable and the satisfaction for the client of experiencing philanthropy, and the subsequent happiness.

The importance of emotional connections and relationships was also emphasised by PhAds in regard to younger generations. In one webinar,\(^{170}\) a PhAd in a consultancy described the role of the PhAd in the “philanthropy journey” as guiding the client and bringing “values into the room”. He described the role as encouraging the clients to identify values and their visions and develop emotional connections with their giving, thus going beyond simply posing questions to clients:

A lot of the people [aren’t] clear on either their values or their visions, and don’t yet

\(^{169}\) Interview 23
\(^{170}\) Webinar 18
understand how powerful it is. So, the role of the advisor is crucial. But it's not only something that, sort of, goes through the list of questions. It's something that the advisor, also, needs to do from their heart. And that's something that I see still missing, so are they really engaged in a way to formulate these engaging questions together with the client and create this emotional basis to actually be able to do something?

The role of the PhAd was described as creating the emotional link for their clients with their philanthropy, building up the confidence and philanthropic “expertise” of their clients and, ultimately, encouraging their clients to “do something”.

A PhAd in a family office described this process, at length, in an interview. I asked her to walk me through how she works with clients and what she meant by a learning journey. The advisor described, in detail, an example of a recent client. She said she began by asking them what they cared about most and what “problems” they cared about. After a period of reflection and several conversations about values and how involved the client wanted to be in her philanthropy, she settled on wanting to become philanthropically involved in supporting the prevention and treatment of cancer. The advisor then created a learning “programme”, conducting research for the client on different charities, working on the theme of cancer. She also said that, in this research, she created summaries of “the problem” (e.g. describing the number of people impacted by cancer). Next, the advisor organised a meeting between the philanthropist and “experts”, such as directors of cancer charities, doctors and medical researchers. The advisor, also, took the client to a research lab to meet the lab director “to see where the money would be going”. Finally, the advisor described expertise building as a way of getting buy-in from the client. The advisor emphasised that all this time and energy were worthwhile, because, according to her, when clients feel “proximate” to the problems and solutions, they trust the charities more and are inclined to donate more money.

In this example, the PhAd described her role in encouraging and promoting philanthropy through a “learning journey”. She then justified her role in centring the client, as it resulted in a donation to the charity, noting that had it not been for her advice, the donation would not have been made. She emphasised this example as a success story because of the

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171 Interview 23
emotional connection that resulted from the “learning journey”. She described her role and the entire process of working through these steps with the client, as such:

Well, why do you want to give? What kind of cancer? What is it that’s affected your life? Why do you want to give to cancer research? And everybody’s got a cancer story, sadly. So, get under the skin of that. You get to talk to the people who work on, say, ovarian cancer and then, get my client to meet or understand what the priorities are in the research of ovarian cancer at the moment and how their money can affect change. And that could mean a visit to meet some researcher, depending on the value of the potential gift and get to go to the wet labs and have that meeting at the [name redacted] institute or wherever, to make it real. And then that relationship is one that’s cemented, and it means something and I really care about philanthropy being that good. And that person, I know, will then, at their dinner party on Friday night or on the golf course, they will be telling them about how amazing it was, about what [that charity] is doing at the moment. So, they’re instantly turning them into advocates. It’s a natural progression of people who want to give.

In summary, PhAds frame and justify the “learning journey” as a means of encouraging positive wealth identities that, in turn, encourage “more and better” philanthropy. PhAds justify the expansion of philanthropic advice services as a means to an end, with the learning journey leading to “more and better” philanthropy.

5.7 Conclusion and Discussion

This chapter highlights the importance of the “learning journey” in philanthropy and the crucial role played by PhAds in encouraging and guiding their clients towards becoming “better donors”. This chapter presents two key findings related to the learning journey and philanthropic advice, with a particular focus on the socio-emotional role of PhAds in their services. The first finding uncovers the ubiquitous nature of the philanthropic “learning journey” and how examining the use of this metaphor adds value to our understanding of elite philanthropic practices and, in particular, the boundary spanning role of PhAds in their services. It examines how the learning journey is strategically utilised by PhAds to create philanthropic identities, a form of identity work. The second finding delves into the emotional labour required of PhAds and the implications for the commodification of emotions within elite philanthropic advice services. Overall, this research helps us to comprehend the legitimising practices of elite philanthropy, focusing specifically on the role of PhAds as boundary
spanners and the legitimisation of donor-centred practices within elite philanthropy, related to the self-actualisation of clients through philanthropic advice services. The remainder of the chapter explores each of these two findings, in turn, and concludes with what the implications of these findings and a reflection on examining “the learning journey”, thus tell us about PhAds and elite philanthropy.

*Philanthropic Identity Creation and the Role of PhAds as Boundary Spanners*

The role of PhAds, and the giving of philanthropy advice, is more complex than simply navigating the philanthropic marketplace as brokers and intermediaries. This chapter reveals, in greater depth, the role of PhAds as boundary spanners, with the “learning journey” as a prominent expression of this role. Many PhAds describe their role as guiding their clients through a “learning journey”, teaching them how to fish, rather than simply catching the fish, to help them become “better” philanthropists. The chapter reveals that PhAds understand their work through narratives of self-actualisation, identity formation promoting narratives that characterise philanthropy as a way for clients to create a sense of purpose for themselves through their wealth, and some even design customised learning journeys for their clients. Through these learning journeys, PhAds describe their success when clients learn how to “be” philanthropists, living their values and finding meaning in their philanthropic work.

In seeking to shape the identities of their clients towards “philanthropic orientation”, PhAds sell their advice on the basis that it will enable their clients to self-define, as their philanthropic identities relate directly to the practices of identity work and identity creation.\(^{172}\) My findings build on the argument that philanthropic engagement should be conceived as a form of identity work (Breeze 2007; Maclean et al. 2015), adding that the philanthropic advice process explicitly offers this as part of their services, with many PhAds describing it as a main aspect of their role and the desired outcome of their services. As mentioned briefly in chapter two, identity claims and identity creation are an aspect of how philanthropists and wealthy elites describe themselves in relation to their philanthropy.

\(^{172}\) While outside the scope of this project, I follow Maclean et al. (2015), who build upon Ybema et al. (2009), arguing that identity construction is a social process and is bound up in ontological concerns related to individuals’ mode of being in society, as well as understanding identity claims and legitimising accounts (Creed et al. 2002). Most relevant to this project is the relation between identity building and “the emergence of individual purpose and agency” (Creed et al. 2014: 113).
The identity work involved is prominently featured in PhAds’ promotional materials, where they position themselves as teachers and facilitators in the philanthropic learning journey, akin to donor education initiatives. The construction of the identity of the philanthropist, highlights the discourses that PhAds produce and reproduce through their services, particularly in relation to the “learning journey”, that emphasise the educational aspects, focused on the internal “work” of self-actualisation of clients, of their role and that of philanthropy.

In recognising the boundary spanning work of PhAds and the identity work embedded in how PhAds describe their philanthropy advising process, my findings demonstrate the ways that PhAds describe and justify their role as intentionally creating positive elite identities and meaning making of wealth. The role of philanthropy in relation to positive wealth identities has been explored elsewhere (Maclean et. al. 2015; Schervish 2003; Sherman 2017; Sherman 2021; Kantola and Kuusela 2018; Khan 2011; Kuusela 2018). Philanthropic engagement has been conceived as a form of identity work in other research (Ball 2008; Breeze 2007; Maclean et.al. 2015), with some research particularly noting the role of positive wealth narratives (e.g. using your wealth “for good”) that construct positive wealth identities, not just for the individual, but for their families as well (Glucksberg and Burrows 2016; Higgins 2021; Sherman 2017; Sklair 2021). Positive wealth identities are based on the logic and assumptions that private wealth can and should be used for good, extending to the person who holds the wealth. Positive wealth identities are often related to meritocracy and worthiness, sometimes specifically related to how elites justify their wealth in relation to their being hard workers or self-made or related to their own intelligence (Higgins 2022; Khan 2011; Khan and Jerolmack, 2013; Sklair 2022).

Themes of positive wealth identities are reflected in how many PhAds describe their clients and the purpose of their services. Others have also noted how philanthropy is used to help people make sense of their economic advantages (Sherman 2021; Wernick 2012). This chapter has examined how elites construct positive wealth identities and grapple with how to be a “good” wealthy person (Sherman 2017). In her study of wealthy families in New York, Sherman found that high-net-worth individuals tried to claim moral legitimacy through their philanthropy or volunteering. Sherman (2017) argues that the claims of individual-level, good
personhood, form part of how some people reconcile the discomfort they feel with having so many resources in an unequal world. She states that “if they inhabit their wealth well as individuals, they become morally worthy” (Sherman 2017). My findings suggest that PhAds echo these sentiments and thus, view this link between their clients and philanthropic identities as key levers for their institutional work, to promote more and better philanthropy and their services. Self-legitimation processes of PhAds were therefore intertwined with PhAds legitimising their clients as philanthropists. By being wealthy and generous, elite philanthropy creates wealthy identities that help recast “the accumulation of family wealth as a benevolent act” (Sklair and Glucksberg 2021: 325). What is noteworthy here is the ubiquity of not only the learning journey, but also, the metaphor of individualised self-improvement within philanthropy advice services. Nally and Taylor (2015) describe this as an ideological commitment to a vision of development as a project of individualised self-improvement, oriented to the creation of effective (and more) market subjects, in this case philanthropists themselves. PhAds described using these conceptions of self-development to reinforce narratives of legitimisation for their clients to adopt. The role of storytelling and the sensemaking process of what it entails to do philanthropy and be a philanthropist, one that is central to the learning journey, is a mode of self-legitimation (Maclean et al. 2015).

Other research has also examined the ubiquity of the learning journey in relation to legitimacy in elite philanthropy. Most notably, Maclean et al. (2015) researched the metaphor and framework of the learning journey in philanthropy, where actors envision and make sense of personal transformation. They note that “the journey provides a valuable metaphor for conceptualising narrative identities in entrepreneurial careers as individuals navigate different social landscapes, illuminating identities as unfolding through a process of wayfinding in response to events, transitions and turning-points”. Maclean et al. focused primarily on entrepreneurial philanthropy, described as donor-centred philanthropy, led by CEOs and entrepreneurs. My findings suggest that the learning journey extends beyond this group to individual donors and families, expanding the offering of the learning journey and philanthropy services to this group. Their arguments that “philanthropic identity narratives empower wealthy entrepreneurs to generate a legacy of the self that is both self- and socially-oriented, these “generativity scripts” propelling their capacity for action while ensuring the
continuation of their journeys”, are consistent with what was observed in this research, in terms of how PhAds described working with individuals, families and corporate clients.

Many of these studies focus on how wealthy people construct these identities for themselves. Maclean et al. (2015) interviewed wealth managers and philanthropy advisors in their study, however, they did not explore how advisors either reinforce the discourses of the learning journey or prompt clients to take up this narrative. Given that my interviews and focus were on how PhAds describe themselves and their role, this data has allowed for detailed analysis on how PhAds credit themselves with equipping their clients with the narratives of the learning journey as a key selling point. During interviews, PhAds repeatedly described the advice-giving process concerning their clients' morals, values and identities. They describe this process in more complex ways than recommending charities or helping clients set up foundations. That their success as advisors is linked to their ability to build trusted relationships with clients, is also vital. PhAds described their success in relation to their clients enjoying their philanthropy and creating “purpose for their wealth”. Maclean et al. (2015: 1645) identified similar justifications and logics in their research on philanthropic narratives of entrepreneurial philanthropists, whereby the philanthropic learning journeys stem “from twin logics of helping others to help themselves, and the individual’s desire to lead – and be seen to lead – a more meaningful life by shaping a better future identity”.

Thus, my findings on how PhAds conduct “identity work” through their advice, encouraging their clients to articulate their values and sense of self, build on this research by demonstrating that these narratives are not only used by philanthropists or wealthy elites, but also, by philanthropy advisors themselves. Moreover, this research adds to understandings of the strategic use of the learning journey metaphor, not only as a way for clients to understand themselves, but as a way to sell and describe philanthropic services. These findings align with Sklair’s (2021: 120) research on elite philanthropy in Brazil and in the UK, that identifies the role of PhAds in providing educational opportunities for their clients through donor education programmes and networking opportunities. Thus, the “learning journey” sometimes referred to actual trips for clients to learn about philanthropy, but more often, was used as a metaphor to describe the process of clients becoming philanthropists. This research thus, also adds to understandings of how the meanings and morality of elite
philanthropy are constructed, not only by philanthropists, but also, from the perspectives of PhAds.

PhAds facilitate this process by helping their clients construct charitable identities and find purpose in their wealth, as well as serve as wealth “therapists” and cultivate positive elite identities for the benefit of society. Thus, a central theme of this chapter is the intermingling of concerns over philanthropic identity, wealth and its management, and broader operational objectives in the design of elite philanthropic practice, particularly in relation to donor-centred practices. The utility of wealthy people and their wealth is explored further in the following chapter six, through impact claims.

_Affect, Identity Work and the Commodification of Philanthropy as an Experience_

This chapter highlights how many PhAds encourage the uptake of philanthropy, on the basis that it helps wealthy people understand themselves better and provides them with a sense of emotional wellbeing. My findings, which highlight the importance of emotions (and emotional fulfilment of clients) within philanthropy advice, reinforces other research on elites and professional services, adding additional perspectives on how PhAds describe their work and how they make meaning of the emotional labour of this work that centre the donor. Other research on advisors, specifically wealth advisors, has also examined the emotional labour of these actors (Harrington 2016; Barman 2016; Hunter 2015; Sklair 2021). The ways in which PhAds describe their role is not only through administrative functions or “best practices”, but through a lens that focuses on the emotional fulfilment of their clients, stemming from their philanthropy. PhAds describe their role as mentors and teachers, but also, emphasise emotional labour as fundamental to their advice-giving practices. In my data, advisors repeatedly stressed the emotional labour required to perform this role, to help their clients “find purpose” for themselves and their wealth through elite philanthropy services, with advisors often referring to their role as a form of “therapist” for their clients. In other cases, PhAds in a private consultancy described how wealth shame could be leveraged to help these individuals feel better through philanthropy, thus a positive wealth identity constructed by PhAds enables the client to feel good while doing good. This commercialisation of
emotional labour of the PhAd is central to their practice and the commercialisation of emotions within philanthropy advice services.

This chapter demonstrates how some PhAds use their clients’ anxieties to promote their services. As one philanthropy intermediary described it, managing the “wealth guilt” of the donors is a primary concern in their work. What is noteworthy here, is how philanthropy is used to manage the anxieties and transform them into something “useful”, by what they describe as helping people do good with their wealth. The creation of positive elite identities, as described earlier, is also reflected in interviewee accounts of guilt and wealth shame of their clients, with the role of PhAds as “wealth therapists”. The result is that PhAds describe the success of their role in relation to helping people “feel good” about their giving, as a means to enable clients to give “better and give more”, implying the construction and legitimisation of philanthropic identities of donors.

In my work, the meritocracy and self-help narratives are more directly related to aspects of being “good rich people” by “doing their part” (also explored in chapter six). PhAds enable this by encouraging self-reflection, where clients align their wealth with their values. Much of these narratives reinforce the noblesse oblige that both McGoey and Thiel (2018) and Shamir (2005) examine in relation to self-legitimisation within philanthrocapitalism, specifically. Shamir’s ethnographic work on CSR “in action” is also relevant here, as they try to “show how the process of group formation and professional socialization conspires to enforce a particular definition of the situation whereby ‘society’ is conceptualized as ‘community, ‘community’ often refers to ‘employees,’ and ‘social change’ is framed in terms of ‘educational programs’” (Shamir 2005: 234). Shamir goes a step further to argue that this reflects a commercialisation of morals and ethics, one that resonates with the fact that PhAds sell these experiences, and subsequent catharsis, as part of their service offerings. PhAds also often reinforced this catharsis as a measure of their own success, emphasising that they knew they were successful when their clients were happy. This helps illuminate the practices of elite philanthropy as embedded within the processes of legitimisation. Brooks and Kumar (2021: 4) also found similar ideas of self-improvement in their research, but in relation to the outcomes of the philanthropy, rather than processes utilised. Others have looked at these forms of self-improvement in donor organising groups and networks, often characterised as the more
“progressive” donor groups (see Wernick 2012 on donor organising). Scully et al. (2018) offer the somewhat broader concept of “privilege work”, processes that some see as enabling philanthropy and sometimes redistributive action, helping clients to do good and be good as a result of giving up some of their wealth.

More specifically, what my research adds is a deepening of the meaning-making processes within elite philanthropic practices of PhAds. Simply put, the framing of philanthropy is not only on “doing good by doing well” (Porter and Kramer 1999, 2002), but what might be termed “doing good by feeling good”, a strategy developed and promoted by PhAds for their clients. For example, PhAds recognised managing the emotional responses of clients, such as guilt and shame, as an important aspect of the role. The management of such responses, and that this is a key aspect in how PhAds understand and recognise their role, illustrates how the philanthropic advising process, and especially the learning journey, helps to legitimise the occupying of wealth, by making it more morally comfortable to do so.

Examining how PhAds understand their role, highlights the importance of emotional labour in elite philanthropic practice, emphasising the role of affect in the philanthropy advice industry. This, importantly, reveals how the role of PhAds as service providers results in a commodification of emotions within elite philanthropic advice processes. The elite subjectivities formulated through the learning journey surface the ways that the philanthropy advice process intentionally rationalises philanthropy and wealth through elite subjectivities of their clients, whereby philanthropy advice encourages the rationalisation of wealth with the emotional life of the clients. This highlights the ways that philanthropy advice services purchased by the clients, facilitate the experiences of emotions of the clients and the relational dynamics of the philanthropic advice process, with PhAds there as co-producers of these elite identities. Emotions as commodities and what Illouz (2007) calls mood-producing commodities and relation-marking commodities, also highlight the ways in which the commodification of emotions in the philanthropy advice services are described as ways for clients to change and improve themselves and their families. Feeling good while doing good is thus a reflection of the ways that philanthropic advice services intertwine the co-production of emotions (between client and PhAds) and philanthropy as an experience and commodity (e.g. the learning journey).
The learning journey thus reflects the ways that PhAds develop close bonds with clients based on the intimate knowledge of their families and values, mirroring Harrington’s (2016) findings of wealth managers who cultivate these bonds through empathy and care. Santos’ (2012: 751) research on private wealth managers also links the emotional labour and relational work of advice processes and the professional identities of advisors with private wealth managers, noting the interclass solidarity exhibited by advisors in their work and through caring for clients, by caring about their wealth. The role of emotions in markets has been explored, at length, by Hochschild (1983), who links the commodification of emotions and the relations of this as part of the “currency of feeling”. The learning journey, and the advising of clients as a journey, reflects the ways that emotions and caring are embedded within philanthropy advising processes, furthering both Harrington’s findings that link wealth managers’ socio-emotional bonds, loyalty and trust, embedded into their fiduciary responsibilities and duty of care, as well as furthering the role of advisors in mitigating the “anxieties of affluence” identified by Sherman (2017), all in the name of promoting philanthropic subjects and philanthropic identities. That PhAds describe themselves as mentors and teachers within these processes, further produces discourses of positive elite subjectivities.

Implications and Conclusions

The learning journey serves not only as an actual experiential learning programme, but also, as a framing device for PhAds to sell their services in a non-threatening manner. I find that the learning journey, as described by PhAds, also reflects the commodification of philanthropy, whereby through philanthropy services, philanthropy becomes something that can be bought, sold and experienced. Moreover, this commodification highlights how philanthropic identities are acquired and purchased through these forms of philanthropic advice, whereby clients pay to learn how to become philanthropists. Whilst other research has focused on donor education programmes (Sklair 2021) and the motivations and intentions of donors (Breeze and Lloyd 2013), less has focused on the practices and mechanisms of these programmes. I argue that the role of PhAds can be understood through the products and services they offer, which this thesis argues, supports the commodification of philanthropy, with the learning journey offered as a product and often an experience. Firstly, this can be understood in how philanthropy advisors describe their role and what they are selling and to
whom, with the philanthropist as the client. These services and the product of philanthropy are reflected in a number of technical and administrative functions, but what emerged as significant in my research is that PhAds are selling not only their expertise or administrative services, but an experience for their clients. This adds to our understanding of the rhetorical strategies of PhAds and illustrates the complexities of how they understand their role. The advice process was described by some PhAds, not as a service and provision of knowledge, but rather an educational and transformational experience for the client. This form of identity creation demonstrates how self-legitimisation is integrated (and sold) through the “learning journey” and also, reflects the boundary spanning role PhAds play in elite philanthropy.

Thus, the role of PhAds involves emotional labour that serves for their clients to make sense of themselves and their wealth through the advising process, as much as it does from actually “doing” philanthropy. This emphasises the importance of the identity creation process in the role of elite philanthropic advice-giving. Philanthropy advisors characterised their role as facilitators of this process of introspection. The result is a commercialisation of feelings. PhAds want their clients to feel good about their philanthropy, so they do more of it, meaning advice is focused on making philanthropy an experience and a process, and an enjoyable one at that. This emphasises that PhAds encourage philanthropy that is “personal” and makes their clients and their families happy, giving them new language to think about their wealth and the role of wealth and, critically, imbuing wealth with “purpose” to do good.

Ultimately, these narratives of the utility of wealth and philanthropy decontextualises wealth accumulation. This framing enables clients to construct narratives that allow them to see themselves as occupying their wealth legitimately. This demonstrates that “feeling good by doing good” serves to legitimise elite involvement in philanthropy, as well as wealth. For example, in my findings, interviewees made distinctions between clients and placed emphasis on them as “good people”, premised on the basis that they were caring and kind and, importantly, perceived as using their privilege and wealth to “contribute” to society. My findings build on this by demonstrating how these emotions are wielded to become part of an economic transaction and learning journey, whereby elites can become worthy and good, wealthy people through their philanthropic learning journey.
The next chapter focuses on this framing and delves into the description of “good” by PhAds, exploring how they describe social impact and the role of philanthropy, philanthropists and philanthropy advice. The chapter interrogates what is meant by “giving better and giving more”. It then provides evidence of how PhAds describe the learning journey as a legitimising strategy to promote philanthropy and philanthropy advice services. It also highlights the legitimising accounts used by PhAds, that wealth can do good through philanthropy and that wealthy individuals can learn to do good with their wealth by becoming “better” philanthropists.
Chapter 6: “Social impact; It’s Why We Are All Here”: The Role of PhAds and the Legitimising Functions of Social Impact Claims in Elite Philanthropy

Vignette: Improving Philanthropy and Increasing Social Impact

It is February 2020, and I am invited to an event in London, hosted by a philanthropy advisor consultancy. The all-day workshop is bringing together philanthropy professionals, including philanthropy advisors, private foundation directors, philanthropists and charity fundraisers. The invitation states that the aim of the event is to challenge, question and expand the thinking about how elite practitioners and philanthropists give and what they give to. I would come to learn through the workshop, that this is how practitioners describe their goal of generating social impact; by improving philanthropic practices, while negotiating the power imbalances that make philanthropy donor-centred. The day aims to bring us together to create more opportunities for philanthropy in the UK and abroad and to help us all achieve more social impact.

When I arrive, I am presented with a name tag and make my way to the complimentary espresso counter. For the next 30 minutes, more people trickle in for mixing and mingling. With her arm around my shoulder, I am introduced to others and almost shepherded around by the organisation’s director. She is a master at networking and introduces me to several philanthropy intermediaries and professionals: “This is Tatiana. She is writing her PhD on philanthropy and is writing something about the event. You should talk to her.”

Shortly after the blur of introductions, the day’s programming begins. In one of the sessions, focusing on neutrality and the funder’s ability to remain neutral, I meet a philanthropy advisor working in a foundation who describes her frustration with the leadership of the foundation. Her role is to work with high-net-worth individuals, wanting to learn from the foundation’s approach to philanthropy. Her role is to help them “improve their giving” to create more social impact, but she shares with me that she is worried about reproducing unequal power dynamics through her advice. She is very interested in my research and hands me her business card. She does not want to impose, but would love to be interviewed.
At the next break, I find the host and thank her for inviting me. She asks for my input on how the event is going, noting that this is an experiment. She is interested and slightly concerned about how the content will land with this audience, as the “political” angle is not common in the philanthropy sector. We joke about what she had to put on the invitation to get people to show up, when the event aims to “smuggle in” a progressive agenda: getting funders and philanthropists to think about their power and privilege as a way of improving their philanthropy. The underlying concern is that the unequal power dynamics within philanthropy can lead to more inequality and, in the words of the PhAds hosting the event, undermine sincere efforts of the philanthropy sector to create social impact. The PhAd describes that everyone at the event wants to increase their social impact, but few would want to talk about their role and the role of philanthropy in perpetuating inequalities. They hope that the philanthropic practices of these actors will “improve” by making the philanthropists and philanthropy professionals present think through their own positionality and power. The shared assumption being that by “improving” philanthropy, philanthropy can “create” more social impact.

There is a buzz in the room and we are ushered back to our seats. The final panel of the day consists of three philanthropists, exploring what role they see for themselves in shaping philanthropy. One of the philanthropists who owns a foundation, states that they see their role as one of taking risks and that “we can fund things governments won’t”. The next panellist, who runs a foundation and a charity, notes that the responsibility of being a philanthropist weighs on her quite heavily. She reflects on how “funders and recipients of funds are on different sides of this invisible wall, but we are all people at the end of the day. It’s about collaboration. I fund people who I vibe with and trust”. The final panellist differentiates himself from the first two. He emphasises that he sees himself as an investor and not a philanthropist. He introduces himself as one of the disillusioned philanthropists and bankers seeking “redemption and salvation” through his philanthropy.

According to the host and emphasised in the closing remarks, the overarching theme and question that is reiterated throughout the day is that practitioners know philanthropy isn't perfect; but how can they make philanthropy better?
As the event finishes, two attendees approach to hand me their business cards, asking for me to reach out and interview them. I leave the event with a pocket full of business cards and catch the tube home.

### 6.1 Introduction

The term “social impact” holds significant importance in the world of elite philanthropy and is often used to justify and evaluate elite philanthropy, making it a central theme in my research. This is encapsulated in an interview with a PhAd in a consultancy. When asked about her understanding of social impact, she responded, “It’s why we’re all here.” Given that PhAds describe their role in relation to social impact, what can their understandings of social impact tell us about legitimising practices of elite philanthropy?

Philanthropic literature often debates the value and role of philanthropy across normative lines. This is reflected in definitions of philanthropy. For example, Sulek’s (2010: 199) analysis of philanthropy’s development as a concept, noting a shift in definitions of philanthropy from the “love of humankind” towards definitions of philanthropy that move towards more “active” efforts “to promote human welfare”. Similarly, Payton and Moody (2008) assert that the defining features of philanthropy are “voluntary action for the public good” (p. 27) and “morality and moral action” (p. 50). These also relate to etymological and tautological arguments that philanthropy’s benevolent status results from its literal meaning: the love of humankind. These normative conceptualisations make the unpacking of what is meant by impact within philanthropy even trickier, whereby impact and social change become a type of tautology within philanthropy: *philanthropy is good/impactful, because philanthropy is impactful/good*. Moreover, these normative understandings of philanthropy within philanthropic literature often evaluate philanthropy, based on its potential for public benefit (Breeze 2021). But with the presumption of philanthropy as “good”, these definitions already reflect many of the tensions that exist in the conceptualisation of philanthropy: Good for whom? This is illustrated in the vignette above when panellists described the role of

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foundations in relation to government, while one philanthropist overtly described his philanthropy as a form of moral “salvation”.

In both academic literature and philanthropic practice, conceptualisations of philanthropy embed understandings of the role of philanthropy in relation to social impact and social benefit (Phillips and Jung 2016: 11). As the vignette above illustrates, elite philanthropy is promoted on the basis that it plays a role in creating social impact and that social impact can be increased on the basis of improved practices. Moreover, the vignette also demonstrates the ubiquity and strategic ambiguity of social impact narratives in elite philanthropy. Social impact was used in many ways as a catch-all term to refer to any positive benefits of philanthropic giving. This not only raises questions about what constitutes “better” philanthropy, but who gets to decide and in what ways. Asking what philanthropy achieves in terms of benefits to others and its purported role in creating social impact, are critical to the contestation over the legitimacy of elite philanthropy, outlined in chapter two, section 2.3.1.

Building on the previous chapters, the idea that philanthropy can be improved is central to narratives of social impact that are entangled in ideas of improving philanthropy and thus, central in how PhAds describe and justify their role. Central to ideas of improvement is the language of “theory of change” that will be explored to further understand how social impact claims are used by PhAds to legitimise themselves and their clients.

This chapter will present two primary findings. Firstly, the evidence gathered demonstrates the undeniable importance of social impact narratives in understanding PhAds’ perceptions of philanthropists, philanthropy, and philanthropic advice. The different frames through which social impact is described - whether it be benefits to society, donors, or businesses - affirm that social impact claims lie at the core of the self-legitimation of philanthropic advice services. Narratives of social impact are key to unlocking what is meant by “giving better and giving more. Secondly, the chapter will find that PhAds use impact claims to legitimise their role in elite philanthropy and promote their services as a means of creating social impact. The second finding relates to how many PhAds understand their role in relation to social impact claims and maximizing benefit, and that donor-centred philanthropy advice is often framed as a means to an end, where philanthropy is the ultimate goal in and of itself.
By examining the everyday practices deployed by PhAds to market their services and promote the uptake of elite philanthropy, this chapter will contribute key insights into the ways that elite philanthropy is legitimised in these spaces and the ways these are embedded into the theory of change of PhAds. As described in the previous chapter, elite subjectivities formulated through the learning journey surface the ways that the philanthropy advice process intentionally rationalises philanthropy and wealth through elite subjectivities of their clients, whereby philanthropy advice encourages the rationalisation of wealth with the emotional life of the clients. This highlights the ways that philanthropy advice services purchased by the clients, facilitate the experiences of emotions of the clients and the relational dynamics of the philanthropic advice process, with PhAds there as co-producers of these elite identities. This chapter builds on this to outline the ways a donor-centred focus is justified on the basis of a particular theory of change, whereby the construction of positive elite identities is bound into the logic of “better and more” philanthropy, and importantly, is seen as a vital precursor for “better and more” philanthropy. These findings build on the existing literature by demonstrating how elite philanthropy services reinforce and justify these narratives, not as an inevitability, but as a justifiable and strategic way of doing ‘more good’ through elite philanthropy – a legitimising practice. The chapter’s findings contribute to debates related to donor-centred philanthropic research.

The chapter focuses on how PhAds describe social impact in relation to philanthropy and this reveals the assumptions and logics related to the legitimising strategies they deploy. The chapter begins by briefly revisiting contested understandings of social impact and the key debates in elite philanthropy, specifically focusing on how social impact is defined and by whom. I then examine how PhAds define social impact, often depicting this as the role of the philanthropist. I then examine three main impact claims used by PhAds to describe the sources of social impact in elite philanthropy, which suggest that impact is “created” by donors, wealth and philanthropic advice itself. I then explore how PhAds talk about social impact and how these are embedded into the logics of philanthropy services as helping clients “give better and give more”, specifically related to narratives of efficacy within elite philanthropy. I then examine the ways in which PhAds describe who benefits from elite philanthropy, highlighting that benefit is described as mutually beneficial and how PhAds
describe and promote philanthropy services as beneficial for the donors, businesses and the broader public.

The chapter concludes by reflecting on what is meant by “better” and “more” within this context, looking at how PhAds’ definitions of social impact often reflect normative understandings of philanthropy and thus, need to be understood through legitimising practices, particularly those that justify donor-centred philanthropy as a means to create social impact. Finally, it examines these understandings of social impact in relation to their legitimising function for philanthropy advice services and the promotion of elite philanthropy.

6.2 The Difficulty in Defining the Buzzword: Social Impact

Social impact is a fuzzy catch-all, but debates related to philanthropy fall under two main pillars – What counts as social impact (i.e. who gets to define what counts as public benefit) and how social impact happens (i.e. who creates or causes social impact). Social impact appears everywhere in elite philanthropy (Jung et al. 2016) and is often embedded within narratives of the improvement of philanthropic practices. Despite the ubiquity of the term social impact, what is understood as social impact and how social impact happens is a contested and central theme in elite philanthropic literature and practice.

The conceptualisation of social impact, that ties into the role of philanthropy in society, is at the core of many debates on legitimacy and effectiveness within philanthropy. This has become particularly salient in the literature, in relation to the ideas and ideals of philanthrocapitalism (Bishop and Green 2008) that advocate for more strategic and innovative approaches to philanthropy. The failure and limitations of philanthrocapitalistic approaches have come under scrutiny, not only for their disappointing outcomes, but also, the troubling processes of these philanthropic approaches. Critics warn that these exacerbate, rather than address, inequities (McGoey 2015, 2018; Glucksberg and Russell-Prywata 2020). The importance of this “double failure” of philanthropy raises important questions on the constructions of impact during the process of philanthropy. Others examine the impact “for whom”, in relation to who is involved and why they are involved in philanthropic processes (Gordon 2017: 23). And while it matters for the outputs and
subsequent social impact of philanthropy who gets to decide what counts, both in terms of focus area and in terms of what “solutions” or organisations are resourced, as argued by Betsill et al. (2021), Baker and Moran (2011) and Miller (2019), these practices serve to legitimise accounts of success and roles of philanthropic actors (i.e. the role of philanthropists within these processes). The analysis of the impact of philanthropic processes has also focused on the consequences in terms of social relation and relations of power (Faber and McCarthy 2005; McGoey 2015; INCITE! The Revolution Will Not Be Funded 2017; Ostrander and Schervish 1990). Ostrander (2007), in particular, noted the shift towards more donor-centred practices, particularly in relation to impact and ideas of effective philanthropy.

In summary, what and how social impact are constructed are key to unpacking the legitimisation of certain philanthropic approaches over others, particularly in relation to accounts on the role of private wealth in contributing to public “good”. This chapter aims to contribute to existing literature by recognising that it is the contestation over defining social impact as a process, rather than simply understanding social impact as the result of better management, that opens the “black box” of elite philanthropic practices and highlights the roles and legitimising accounts of PhAds within elite philanthropic practices (Anheier and Leat 2006: 2).

Notably, this chapter does not seek to evaluate if or how PhAds increase, or not, the social impact of their clients’ philanthropy, nor does it make normative assessments over the role of philanthropy and social impact, more broadly. Instead, this chapter contributes to research that explores how social impact is understood in practice, by examining how PhAds make sense of social impact and the role they play within constructions of social impact in elite philanthropy, thus expanding the locus of who defines social impact.
6.3 Depicting Social Impact as Being Donor-Defined

In my field notes and across all data collected, social impact was often used alongside, or interchangeably, with the terms “social good”, “public good”, “common good”, “social value” and “social change”. At other times, social impact was referred to simply as “impact” or positive “impact”. A lack of shared or common definition led to ambiguities in how PhAds described the intended outcomes of philanthropy and the beneficiaries. Some of the vagueness in defining social impact, resulted from PhAds claiming that they do not define social impact, because of their neutrality. PhAds described being neutral about both the cause and the method for the philanthropy, meaning that many PhAds emphasised that they would not tell their clients what kinds of causes to give to, how much to give or in what ways. For example, a PhD in a consultancy described, in a webinar, that the firm is “very much donor led, so we’re kind of cause agnostic and take their lead”. In another interview, a PhD in a consultancy noted that, “When it comes to [their vehicle for philanthropy], I feel like I don’t advocate one way or the other.” In another example from a donor network, they emphasise that they “take a cause-neutral approach to finding the best ways to save and improve lives”. As this section will explore later, PhAds (particularly those whose primary function is to provide philanthropic advice) do take into account different levels of social impact, such as funding very immediate material needs to more structural changes, but these are not predetermined by the majority of PhAds.

In this way, when asked to define social impact, PhAds described their role in making their philanthropy more effective and strategic, rather than telling their clients directly what to give to or how to give. This ambiguity illustrates the paradox of philanthropy advice. On the one

174 Document 20
175 Document 20
176 Document 1
177 Webinar 9, Webinar 21, Webinar 22, Webinar 23
178 Webinar 1, Webinar 6, Webinar 11, Webinar 13, Webinar 15, Webinar 17, Webinar 20, Webinar 22, Webinar 23
179 Document 3
180 Document 28
181 While outside the scope of this research, it is also worth noting that it was often not clear when the term social impact was differentiated from the intended outputs and outcomes of philanthropy. This might also lead to confusion in terms of what impact claims are being made. I recognise these differences, while at the same time focusing on how impact claims are made, rather than seeking to differentiate between outputs and outcomes for any particular speaker.
182 Webinar 4
183 Interview 6
184 https://founderspledge.com/ (accessed January 2022)
hand, many PhAds echo the sentiment that they are not prescriptive or directive about what “kind” of philanthropy their clients decide to take up. On the other hand, most PhAds emphasised that they cared about what their clients “achieve” with their philanthropy. However, because the giving, reporting and evaluation of philanthropy is predetermined by clients and thus, not necessarily aligned with the needs of any individual charity or organisation, philanthropic advice services are fundamentally donor-centred. This donor-centred framework is enabled by PhAds characterising their advice as neutral. Even within philanthropy training manuals and handbooks, neutrality is emphasised as an important aspect of the professionalisation and legitimacy of philanthropy advisors.

Neutrality often came up in relation to social impact and in the context of what “kind” of impact they were encouraging their philanthropists to have. Throughout interviews and documents, PhAds, particularly within financial services, often referred to the importance of neutrality within the advice-giving process, as a source of professional legitimacy. During an interview with a PhAd in financial services, she characterised herself as agnostic when it came to social impact and stated that she maintained her neutrality by signposting and references. She described encouraging a client to speak to another philanthropist who would recommend which charities to give to. She explained that this was to avoid any liability, given due diligence is not part of their philanthropy advice offering. This means that the bank cannot be held accountable or liable for recommending specific charities to clients as they do not conduct due diligence. Instead, she described the importance of introductions to peers or introductions to “experts” identified by philanthropy advisors. The selection of the experts was not viewed by her or the bank as compromising the neutrality. She described this, as such:

> When it comes to specific referrals of specific charities, we wouldn't do that. But we would help introduce them to someone who can actually look at the whole field, landscape it, figure out who's doing a good job and then recommend some grants.

In this quote, social impact is described in relation to the charities doing a “good job”, whereby a good job is related to the perceived social impact being created by the charities.

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185 Interview 26
The link between narratives of social impact and effective charities, was a key theme in PhAds describing what made a charity worthy. For example, in an interview with a PhAd in a family office,\(^{186}\) she captured how she navigates promoting “better” philanthropy by guiding clients towards more “impactful charities”. After discussing how she takes her clients on a learning journey, I asked her if there were times when she was prescriptive or if she guided clients away from or towards specific ways of giving. She replied:

I pride myself on being cause neutral and actually, the last few years I’ve actively not sat on trustee boards, just to try and make sure that people don’t perceive me as being [biased]. Where I steer people away from things is through due diligence. So, somebody says, “I want to give money to X charity.” I’ll be, like, “Really? Well, I’ll look into it.” I’ll research it, do the due diligence and then tell them why they shouldn’t or in terms of sums of money, if somebody wants to give a huge sum of money to a charity that just would be overwhelmed by that amount of money, I would say, “No, don’t do it, because it will end up having a negative impact on them.” And look at how creatively they can work with a charity over a longer period of time and give the money over ten years or set up an endowment or spread the money further afield. Certainly, I won’t let people put their eggs in one basket in the early stage of working with them. So, that’s the sort of negativity that I exude, is in terms of saying, “No, you shouldn’t give your money to Heritage, because there are people sleeping on the street. We need to sort that out before we worry about heritage issues.” I see the charitable sector having value at every level and I don’t think it’s for anybody to judge what an individual thinks is more valuable than anything else.

In this instance, the hypothetical client was new to giving money philanthropically, which meant the PhAd described her role in shaping what the client should think of as social impact. The way the PhAd understands her neutrality is specific to causes, but according to her description here, her neutrality is not compromised by guiding a client to “better” charities.

Social impact was often emphasised alongside the objective of “efficient” and “strategic” giving and linked to helping clients do more “good” with their philanthropy. In these ways, PhAds encouraged philanthropists to define the social impact for themselves, often through the philanthropic journey (described in the previous chapter).

\(^{186}\) Interview 23
Along these lines, some PhAds also explained their goal in helping their clients define social impact through impact measurement. In handbooks and guides, PhAds did not describe what made charities or philanthropy impactful. These materials aimed to support the donor to define social impact for themselves, by deciding what causes they cared about, how they wanted to approach their philanthropic giving and how they wanted to measure the social impact of their philanthropy.

In another guide\(^{187}\) for advisors and philanthropists, the guide dedicates an entire section to impact evaluation. It describes the importance of assessing impact, in that “understanding impact can also be key to keeping donors engaged and excited by their giving”. The guide also states that:

> Assessing the impact of a donation is important for knowing whether their funding has been well used by the charity and what difference their support has made; as well as for assessing whether they should continue to fund that organisation.

Here, the role of PhAds is to develop the sense of social impact for their clients, again noting that social impact is understood through the lens of how the donor understands and feels the social impact. The assessment for the continuation of philanthropic support is a question of attribution for the donor. The guide emphasises that the philanthropists should examine if their donation did what they wanted or expected it to do – a donor-centred practice.

In another example, a guide\(^{188}\) for philanthropists asserts that:

> Identification and evaluation of potential recipients of your gift will depend upon both the level of your giving and your objectives. However, as with any investment, it is good practice to know as much as you can about the charity and its field of work when making a contribution. When evaluating a charity, essentially you want to know three things: what it does, how effective it is and how you can make a difference.

Again, the theme of philanthropy as an investment, with the idea of social impact returns, is prominent in how the guide characterises the role of philanthropist. This is also explicit in

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\(^{188}\) Document 2 (p. 11)
how the same guide\textsuperscript{189} then gives advice on how philanthropists should evaluate the impact of their philanthropy:

> Donors give because they want to have an impact, to make a positive difference for a cause or in the lives of others. While the nature and degree of this impact will vary, donors will want to assess and understand the results of the investment so that they can better help the charity as well as improve the effectiveness of their own philanthropy.

In these documents, the process of assessing impact is presented as a feedback loop to the funder/philanthropist, who can decide if their objectives are being met and can improve the effectiveness of their philanthropy. The evaluation here is two-fold. Not only are philanthropists encouraged to determine which charities are most effective, but they are also encouraged to define these metrics, according to their own ideas of what impact and effectiveness mean, rather than the stated goals and performance metrics of the charities themselves. For example, one PhAd in a consultancy\textsuperscript{190} described metrics that include the number of individuals receiving scholarships to a nationwide campaign to influence education policy. Another PhAd in a consultancy\textsuperscript{191} described metrics for one family that included providing grants to marine conservation charities, to hosting round tables and then funding a campaign related to fisheries in the Mediterranean. One of the implications of this being that this PhAd described a success when their wealthy donor actively sought to influence policy work through their funding.

In some cases, impact evaluation was described alongside the personal philanthropic objectives of donors. Philanthropy Impact’s Guide to Giving, on their website,\textsuperscript{192} recommends a “review process” of charitable, personal and corporate objectives:

> Once you have been funding projects for a while, you should take time to assess whether \textit{you’re achieving what you expected}. Reviewing objectives may be about ensuring your giving evolves to match your changing preferences, but it is also about considering whether \textit{a revised giving strategy could have a greater impact on the areas you care about}. (emphasis added)

\textsuperscript{189} Document 2 (p. 11)
\textsuperscript{190} Interview 22
\textsuperscript{191} Interview 4
\textsuperscript{192} https://www.philanthropy-impact.org/assessing-impact/assessing-impact
PhAds thus characterise their aim to teach their clients to define social impact, as a desired outcome of the philanthropy advice process (linked with the learning journey outlined in chapter five). For example, in an interview\textsuperscript{193} with a PhAd in consultancy, I asked how he helps his clients improve their philanthropy. In response, he explained, at length, the manner in which he helps clients define social impact, namely, by teaching them about the various ways that social impact can be understood. He emphasised that he did not define this for them, but took the client through a process of understanding the complications of defining and measuring social impact. This is done as a way of managing the expectations of the client. He recounted a conversation with a client, as follows:

So, people are, like, “What do you mean kind of impact for solving a problem?” And I was, like, “Well, take homelessness. It’s very much a US problem, but it’s kind of global.” (...) So, there’s a lot of different parts of homelessness. There’s the actual providing shelter and clothing and food and there’s mental health, there’s substance abuse and there’s a lot of other things that you need to work on. And those are not going to be solved anytime soon. Those things are going to take generations to solve those problems. And then, in the meantime, people are on the streets. So, do you see yourself as somebody who wants to just make sure that somebody’s got a shelter at night or do you want to maybe attack some of the underlying problems of homelessness or do you want to do both? So, [it’s] understanding where people are with regard to an issue and then try to understand what’s their unit of change? Do they want to be direct service bearers to people or do they want to be involved in policy change and advocacy to shift systems to leverage other resources? So, how close to the action do you want to be? (emphasis added)

In interviews\textsuperscript{194} and documents,\textsuperscript{195} several PhAds described social impact in relation to encouraging their clients to adopt what they considered to be strategic approaches to their philanthropy. This is best illustrated in examples of PhAds encouraging clients to develop theories of change for their philanthropy, in relation to social impact. The Coutts Handbook for Philanthropy\textsuperscript{196} links learning and impact under one section, stating that “for many, identifying the causes, issues or communities they would like their philanthropy to focus on is a real journey of learning and exploration”. The guide continues to encourage a donor to develop a theory of change. They link the theory of change as part of “impact planning”,

\textsuperscript{193}Interview 6
\textsuperscript{194}Interview 1, Interview 29, Interview 32, Interview 31, Interview 24
\textsuperscript{195}Document 1, Document 2, Document 3, Document 4, Document 16
\textsuperscript{196}Document 1 (p. 17)
stating “how you target your philanthropy and the nature of the work you support will depend on your theory of change and what it is you want to achieve”. The guide follows with:

Many organisations are now adopting the “theory of change” model to impact planning. Put simply, this is a structure and setting for action. It articulates the difference you are trying to make and the steps you need to achieve it. You might find it helpful as a structure for your giving. Philanthropy strategies are often underpinned by a theory of change. You could consider questions, such as:

- What change am I hoping to achieve through my philanthropy?
- How do I think this change will come about?
- Who are the key organisations – in civil society, government or business – active in the field?
- Are there barriers to, or opportunities for, change?
- How can I use my resources to help bring about this change?
- Which organisations are best placed to enable this change with my support?
- Recognising that my resources alone are unlikely to be enough to create this change, who do I need to coordinate or collaborate with or influence?
- What might success look like and how will I/the organisations I support track and measure progress?

This extract illustrates how PhAds describe the role of the philanthropist in their philanthropy and how concepts of change and impact are embedded within this. The guide also explicitly links learning with impact narratives, arguing that the more the donor learns, the more impact the donor will be able to have. Mirroring findings from chapter five, they encourage the philanthropist to “visit different projects”, “meet and learn from the people and communities where you want to make an impact”, “look at reports, blogs and other data to learn more about the areas where you want to help” and even to “meet with government or business representatives connected to your fields of interest”. In the guide, the donor is repeatedly encouraged to tap into their own curiosity and “make a difference”. At the same time, impact and change are not specifically defined here, nor is what is meant to be achieved. Rather, the handbook encourages the reader, the philanthropist, to consider what change will be meaningful to them to achieve results. Again, the results are not defined here, but rather put in the context of “making a difference”.

Many PhAds encourage philanthropists to view their philanthropy as creating impact, helping to explain how “theory of change” and “strategy” are deployed in materials written by PhAds.
These measurement and review processes, encouraged by philanthropy advisors, which use personalized criteria rather than organisational goals, further entrenches the perspectives of the philanthropist concentrating their control and power over a philanthropic process. While the benefits of philanthropy are shaped around the needs and desires of the donor, philanthropy advisors will also emphasise that they act as brokers and translators for charities and attempt to mitigate the role and influence of philanthropists, if the desires of philanthropists do not “match up” with their philanthropic goals.

In summary, my findings suggest that PhAds often explicitly do not define social impact, but rather encourage their clients to define it for themselves. By encouraging their clients to create strategies or develop theories of change, PhAds encourage donors to determine what social impact means to them and develop metrics to measure the impact against objectives they set for themselves. By maintaining their professional neutrality, PhAds not only depict social impact as being donor-defined, but also, present philanthropy as a way to “create” social impact. Moreover, the portrayal of philanthropy as something that can be improved by better management or strategies, promotes ideas of philanthropy as a technocratic tool, rather than a contested social process.

6.4 Causes of Social Impact in Elite Philanthropy according to PhAds

The framing of philanthropy as a source of social impact was prevalent across all data collected, including webinars, handbooks and interviews. For example, this was reflected throughout the 24 episodes of the Philanthropy Impact webinar series. Benefits for society are described by different panellists as “helping society”,197 “positive impact”,198 “solving issues and challenges”199 and “contributing to sustainable solutions”.200 Philanthropy as a source of social impact was also echoed across documents collected.201

197 Webinar 12
198 Webinar 25
199 Webinar 26
200 Webinar 29
201 For example, see Document 12, Document 9, Document 1
Given the prevalence of social impact narratives within marketing materials and webinars promoting philanthropy, it is worth spending time to untangle the specific impact claims: How did PhAds construct the who, what and how of philanthropy as a source and “creator of social impact”? My findings suggest there are two main ways that PhAds make impact claims when describing the role of philanthropy. Firstly, PhAds claim donors can create social impact. Secondly, they claim wealth can create social impact. Lastly, my data suggests that PhAds make impact claims in relation to philanthropy advice itself, whereby philanthropy advice leads to increased social impact, a central aspect of self-legitimisation according to PhAds.

**Impact Claim: Donors Create Social Impact**

Within the narrative of social impact, PhAds often frame the role of philanthropists as “creators” of social impact through their philanthropy. During interviews, philanthropists were often characterised as agents of change, whereby the client is characterised as being able to “solve social problems” or “make a difference” or “do good” through their wealth. The Coutts & Co. website,\(^{202}\) promoting their services to prospective clients, describes this as follows:

> Why Give? Philanthropy is a desire to be part of social change. It involves bringing together all your resources – your money, time and expertise – to help solve society’s most pressing problems. It’s an incredibly powerful way to figure out what you want your wealth to stand for over the long term.

As this quote illustrates, the guide encourages philanthropists to use their resources to solve the world’s social problems. Across data, it is not only that PhAds promote the idea that donors can create change, but that they should, and present philanthropists as hyperagentic, because of their wealth.

In other examples, PhAds also described how philanthropists directly “create impact”. For example, in a webinar,\(^{203}\) a PhAd in financial services described how philanthropists understand social impact:

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\(^{203}\) Webinar 18
Some look at it, how many lives have we changed? Some look at how much new CO2 footprints have we actually saved? (...) We actually look into how many lives can we change in a longer perspective, because yes, education is extremely important, but we also think further, in terms of once a child has obtained a piece of education, will they be able to actually find a job afterwards? We love the principle of what I always call teach a fisherman how to fish. So not only do you give them, potentially, a better start in life that they would have not received otherwise, but it’s more [about] how can they change their life for better?

Here, the social impact is described in relation to the outcomes of the philanthropy and the choices of the philanthropist. The PhAd repeatedly emphasises the link between lives changed or saved as a result of the philanthropy. What is critical in this quote is the attribution between the philanthropist and the social impact. The language of what have “we changed” and the giving of a better life, reflect how PhAds characterise the role of philanthropists and philanthropy in “creating” change and impact.

Within the idea that PhAds can create social impact through their philanthropy, they invoke ideas that philanthropists should consider adopting strategies to their philanthropy as a means of maximising their social impact. For example, the philanthropy services page on the HSBC website, 204 describes this as follows:

We recognise that your philanthropy is driven by your individual passions, essential to your personal growth and that of your family. A strategic approach, with researched, planned and directed activities built around the issues you feel passionate about, is likely to achieve significantly more for the causes you support. If you are already engaged in philanthropy, there can be considerable value in taking a fresh, objective look at your strategy. By reviewing your activities, programmes, projects and grants, you can make sure they remain closely aligned with your vision. (emphasis added)

UBS Philanthropy Compass, 205 aiming to “improve your operations to optimize your impact”, describes three approaches to how philanthropists can create change: adding resources, building capacity and campaigning for change. The guide asserts that philanthropists should position themselves as a “leader in the field” through funding their own campaign organisations that are part of their chosen campaign. This reflects how some philanthropy advice services overtly encourage their clients to become actively involved in shaping the

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204 https://www.privatebanking.hsbc.com/philanthropy-services/ (accessed March 2023)
205 Document 12 (p. 5)
social outcomes of their philanthropy, not only by funding certain causes, but becoming actively involved as “leaders”.

During a webinar, a PhAd in a consultancy explained how they encourage their clients to become “leaders” through their philanthropy, as such:

Through hands-on engagement in the projects they fund, through deep, trusting partnerships with [anonymised global health foundation], through showing up as partners to us in our advocacy initiatives, members really become informed advocates, empathetic leaders and strategic investors in social impact.

A key theme emerges from this narrative: that philanthropists not only are encouraged to define social impact for themselves, but to identify as agents of change themselves. It is not only that philanthropists create change through their philanthropy, but that philanthropists are able to create change themselves.

**Impact Claim: Wealth Creates Social Impact**

In other framings, impact claims attributed wealth itself, whereby wealth was characterised as a tool for creating social impact. In data, this was evident when a number of PhAds promoted philanthropy services to philanthropists, but also, when they asserted that other professional advisors should include philanthropy services in their offerings. In a webinar, a PhAd described the link between impact and wealth as:

We specifically work with professional advisors to ultra- and high-net-worth individuals, to support you in helping your clients to create impact with their wealth, based on their value system and really enhancing your client service offer. (emphasis added)

Whilst donors are still framed as the ultimate decision makers over their wealth, it is the wealth that “creates impact”, rather than simply the donor, characterising private wealth as a technocratic and benign instrument that can be used for good. In these formulations, rather
than philanthropy creating “good”, PhAds also made claims about the role of private wealth in creating social impact. For example, the Philanthropy Impact Handbook\(^{208}\) stated this, as follows:

> Decisions for HNW and UHNW individuals on how to ensure their wealth is having a positive impact in society may encompass how to build their businesses, how to invest their money or how to give their money away to good causes.

Other examples furthered the entrenchment of the role of wealth in “creating” social impact, as something that could be embedded within the wealth planning of philanthropists, particularly in the context of PhAds or advisors in financial services. For example, in a webinar,\(^{209}\) Philanthropy Impact introduced the episode with:

> We want to empower you to give the best advice possible to your clients around their philanthropy and social impact journey throughout their wealth strategies. (emphasis added)

The “you” here refers to professional advisors, the primary audiences for these webinars. As this example begins to illustrate, not only is social impact not clearly defined, but the assumptions about the role of philanthropy in “making a difference” and “doing good” is a prominent aspect of narratives used by PhAds, in relation to the role of philanthropy and private wealth. That this is embedded within client service offerings and wealth strategies, also highlights how narratives of social impact are embedded within the process of wealth creation and philanthropy, rather than only being a result or an outcome of philanthropy. These quotes illustrate a key theme across all data collected: that private wealth can, and should, be used for social good through philanthropy. Unlike the previous framing of donors creating wealth, here the framing is that the wealth creates the positive impact, rather than only the donors themselves. The significance is the framing of the attribution of social impact, with wealth characterised as a technocratic tool that can create positive social change.

\(^{208}\) Document 9 (p. 3)

\(^{209}\) Webinar 25

Philanthropy advisors most often refer to philanthropy’s purpose in relation to social impact, as the central aspect of philanthropy and of their role. The role of advisors in relation to social impact is often reflected in their professional role titles. Examples of philanthropy advisor titles include Head of Impact, Director of Impact and Impact Consultant. The link between the role of philanthropy advisors and social impact is equally reflected in the names of philanthropy organisations and intermediaries, for example, Philanthropy Impact and Tribe Impact.

In marketing materials and in interviews, PhAds describe their role and the role of philanthropic advice services, as helping their clients “give better and give more” to increase the social impact of their giving. The J.P. Morgan website for philanthropy services elaborates by stating:

Giving back is often an essential part of a life plan — as well as a financial plan. It’s why we offer a wide range of philanthropic services and advice. We can help you articulate the impact you want to have and the amount you want to give, and identify the structure that’s right for you. No matter where you are in your giving journey, our goal is always the same — to help you create the impact you want to have in a way that works well with your overall financial plan.

The theme of creating impact and the role of philanthropy advice in helping clients articulate and increase the social impact, often linked with the donor journey, was prominent across interview data and documents. When asking one PhAd in a consultancy about what success meant for them, he explained that their understanding of success is tied to their clients giving better and giving more. I asked the interviewee to elaborate further on what is meant by making someone a “better philanthropist”. The PhAd replied by talking directly about impact:

In terms of our impact, the key impact for us is what do the [clients] do [with their money]? Where does the money go and how do the people that we give money to use it? So, that’s thing number one. How do they use it? (...) We can see whether they’ve found good people, really, and whether they’re continuing to learn and change and

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211 Interview 4
help. Not necessarily whether their impact is huge this year, in terms of their outcomes and what they’re working on (...) Other things that are valuable are, “Do our clients increase their giving?” That’s a very straightforward metric. So, client number one started with 2.5 million and is now at 4 million a year. That’s true. Client number six, who I just spoke to last week, has gone from 1 million to one and a half.

This quote echoes the logic that philanthropy advice leads to better philanthropy, which leads to more social impact AND more philanthropy. At the same time, it demonstrates how these impact claims can collapse and confound the social impact of philanthropy and philanthropy advice. In these impact claims, the social impact of philanthropy and the outcomes are collapsed, where the advice itself is linked with greater impact.

In interviews, handbooks and websites alike, most PhAds repeatedly justified their role and motivation through emphasising their understanding of the importance of their services, contending that clients who receive advice give away more than those who do not. Simply stated, PhAds assert that their clients give more as a result of their advice, based on the idea that “guided” philanthropy is more effective and impactful.212

A philanthropy advisor in consultancy213 described her role in “improving” philanthropy, as follows:

We work with people who are giving away at least a quarter of a million a year to over 4 million. Many of those people are stuck in a mediocre philanthropy model where they can’t get good, because they don’t have time and they don’t have capacity. (...) So, there’s just this sway of badly used capital for people who would like to do really, really good philanthropy. So, our job is to [help].

In summary, there were two main ways that PhAds made impact claims; by encouraging more philanthropy through the uptake of their services and creating “better” philanthropy by supporting more strategic philanthropic approaches.

PhAds described their role and advertised philanthropy services, on the basis that advice leads to more social impact, outlined in table four below. The table provides examples of impact

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212 Interview 11
213 Interview 4
claims across different institutional locations of PhAds, to demonstrate the ubiquity of these impact claims across these different settings. PhAds in consultancies, financial services and in third sector organisations all make similar claims about the role of philanthropy advice in stimulating social impact. Comparing impact claims across different institutional locations demonstrates some of the consistencies amongst PhAds. These similarities, in how PhAds describe their work with clients, is noteworthy, particularly considering the different types of clients they work with and the different organisational contexts (e.g. between financial services versus third sector organisations).

Table 5: Impact Claims Across Institutional Locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional Locations</th>
<th>Exemplary Quotes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhAds in consultancies</td>
<td>“We take people wherever they are along their journey and then we help them get better and better and more impactful and then they’re done.” (PhAd in consultancy) 214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“From day one, our mission has been to build the capacity of non-profits, businesses and philanthropists to achieve impact and growth – from grassroots organisations working tirelessly in their communities through to those seeking large-scale, systemic change.” (Philanthropy Consultancy) 215</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“We help philanthropic individuals become strategic and confident social change makers. We educate, unlock and enable families to engage, invest and achieve high impact social change, efficiently and effectively, in partnership with social change leaders.” (Philanthropy Consultancy) 216</td>
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<td>“We understand people often lack the time, confidence or expertise to fulfil their philanthropic goals and we partner with them to navigate a complex landscape and maximise the impact of their giving.” (Philanthropy Consultancy) 217</td>
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214 Interview 4
216 [https://www.philanthropyinsight.co.uk/](https://www.philanthropyinsight.co.uk/) (accessed March 2023)
Table 5: Impact Claims Across Institutional Locations (continued)

| PhAds in financial and professional services | “And then in terms of what we actually do, it’s very simple. We help our philanthropic clients be more effective and more impactful in their philanthropy.” (PhAd in financial services)  

“The Philanthropy Centre at J.P. Morgan enhances philanthropic impact globally by offering our clients and their families strategic and innovative advice, thought leadership and learning opportunities” (Philanthropy advice services in financial services, J.P. Morgan’s Guide to Giving) |

| PhAds in third sector organisations | “[The panellists] will be exploring the benefits of innovation and the role and activities of professional advisors in supporting their clients to create change.” (Staff member at Philanthropy Impact)  

“We specifically work with professional advisors to ultra- and high-net-worth individuals, to support you in helping your clients to create impact with their wealth, based on their value system and really enhancing your client service offer.” (Philanthropy Advisor)  

“We want to empower you to give the best advice possible to your clients around their philanthropy and social impact journey throughout their wealth strategies.” (Staff member at Philanthropy Impact)  

“Donors of all wealth levels are concerned about how effectively and efficiently their money will be spent. They also are increasingly seeking professional advice to help them to give effectively, so that their contributions can have a real impact.” (UK’s Guide to Giving)  

“But as well as encouraging more giving, we also want to support people to give in ways that create more impact. Attitudes towards philanthropy have evolved and many philanthropists now strive to be more strategic and effective in how they address social problems. (…) Nevertheless, the philanthropy sector can do more to help philanthropists focus on being more effective so they can have a bigger impact.” (Report from a third sector organisation) |

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218 Interview 26  
219 Document 6  
220 Webinar 17  
221 Webinar 18  
222 Webinar 25  
223 Document 2 (p. 3)  
224 Document 18 (p. 6)
This data suggests that PhAds predominantly promote their services and their role, in relation to helping clients create “more impact” with their philanthropy as a result of their services. This was consistent for PhAds in consultancies, third sector organisations, family offices and financial and professional services. These claims were also consistent across written and promotional materials and in how PhAds described their role and motivations in interviews.

More “strategic” Philanthropy Through More Strategic PhAds

Constructions of social impact, according to PhAds, is dependent on the ways philanthropy is done. In other words, the framing of PhAds and the offer of philanthropy services reflects the idea that the effectiveness of philanthropy is based on the choices made by the philanthropists in how they do philanthropy, and advice helps clients create strategies that make their philanthropy more effective and more impactful. Two examples illustrate how many PhAds make impact claims. Firstly, by encouraging their clients to articulate and develop social impact measurements and secondly, by encouraging clients to develop their own theories of change.

In an interview with a former PhAd in financial services and director at a third sector organisation,225 effectiveness was described as encouraging clients to use their money “wisely”. She described working with a client, as such:

> You've got to spend a lot of time understanding what their ultimate goal is with their money, because say, someone's giving you £5 million. That's an awful lot of money and used wisely, it could have a real transformative impact on something. But if we took that £5 million and just built loads of schools, it might get, say, 100,000 kids in school, but you're not going to systemically change the face of education in that area, country, continent, whatever it is.

As mentioned in chapter five and in the introduction to this chapter, many PhAds described their role in teaching clients about social impact, with the increasing of social impact often related to the philanthropy advice process. In an interview226, a PhAd in consultancy described

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225 Interview 25
226 Interview 6
how he explains the role of philanthropy and social impact to clients, with effectiveness being linked to the efficiency of giving:

So, what we’re trying to say is, (...) our product costs us X and it creates Y in terms of impact. But for us to reach more kids, we’ve got to become more efficient and so, we’re going to maybe either strip down the product or take parts of it away or we have to use technology. But we don’t know what the outcomes are going to be. So, let’s fund a number of different prototypes or a number of different innovations. Let’s measure it and then if they’re successful, we know what’s going to happen. We’re going to scale that. So, what I find is, getting back to philanthropy, people (...) just want to fund scale. You’re working with 100 kids. Let’s get you to working with 1,000 kids. (emphasis added)

This illustrates how social impact is framed as an outcome of the philanthropy, which results from the “efficiencies” and measurement strategies deployed by the philanthropist and the advisor.

The Philanthropy Impact Handbook\(^{227}\) equally emphasises how philanthropy advisors should actively encourage their clients to define their goals and their methods, sometimes by developing their own “theory of change” to help guide their philanthropy. The handbook frames this around the different decisions a client faces:

Donors must understand the change they are hoping to achieve with the money they want to give. They must then identify the most appropriate method to achieve those goals, whether that is through a gift, a loan or an investment. They must also identify the right organisations to support, and then consider how much to give or invest, how frequently and for how long.

The measurement system also reflects ideas of how many PhAds describe accountability to their clients, whereby they encourage the philanthropist to manage the “oversight” over the social impact of the organisation. Below, one philanthropist notes the importance of impact measurement in how he decides what charity he supports. The philanthropist frames his role as one of oversight, in relation to holding charities accountable to create social benefit that aligns with the donor’s idea of what counts as social benefit. The philanthropist accounts for this by describing his role as making sure the donation is “well spent”:

\(^{227}\) Document 9 (p. 8)
I want to look back each year and have a look and say, “I gave that charity X thousand pounds. What have they done with it? Oh, they did that. Wow, that sounds great. I’m definitely going to give them some more this year.” Or those guys, “Mm, that doesn’t feel quite as much as I would have liked. Maybe I want to reconsider backing them again this year and find somebody else who maybe is doing a better job.”

Several PhAds articulated a distinction between charity and philanthropy to advocate for better and more philanthropy. In many cases, this was presented in the context of improving the perceived effectiveness of philanthropy. Interestingly, several PhAds framed the connection between philanthropy and social impact in the context of differentiating philanthropy from charity. The Coutts & Co. website228 explains this differentiation by stating the following:

Philanthropy involves supporting good causes in a way that’s different from what’s commonly seen as charity. You could give a large donation to a cause you care about. That’s charity. It’s reactive and spontaneous. You see or hear of something happening in the world that inspires, upsets or angers you – or all three – and you give money to the relevant organisation that helps deal with it. It’s a wonderful thing. You feel good, and the charity gets some much-needed support to do its great work. But philanthropy is something more, something deeper, longer-term and strategic. For the most part, it involves ongoing funding for a particular charitable activity, but today many philanthropists use approaches other than straight donations. These include giving loans, equity or long-term capital to charitable organisations or social enterprises, which is known as social investment or impact investing.

The distinction between philanthropy and charity came up repeatedly in interviews and handbooks, in relation to narratives of social impact. In encouraging their clients to take up philanthropy, rather than charity, PhAds centre the agency of the client, but encourage them to develop strategic approaches on the basis that this leads to more social impact than charity.

Managing and Mitigating the Influence of Donors

Several PhAds described their role in managing, as well as attempting to reduce the influence of donors on charities. Despite promoting donor agency, many PhAds also recognise the

unequal power imbalances, as stated in interviews. Echoing a theme from the vignette at the top of the chapter, PhAds described their role in mitigating the overstretch or overreach of philanthropists and that philanthropy advisors themselves should play a role in managing donors.

PhAds emphasised that in their advice services, they attempt to manage influence of philanthropists in defining social impact, if the desire of philanthropists does not “match up” with their philanthropic goals. One philanthropy professional\(^{229}\) described her role in her foundation as protecting charities from donors. A former PhAd in financial services and director at a third sector organisation,\(^{230}\) described how she navigated these tensions in her role as a broker between the donor and the charity:

> When we get a whiff of an interest that someone wants to give slightly more serious money, then we spend a long time building a programme together, specifically for that donor and really understanding how we can help them meet their philanthropic needs. So, we would never go against the work of [the charity] and we would never be led by the donor, in terms of telling the country what we’re going to do or telling the communities what they need. But we would take what we know to be a gap or a funding need and we would tailor it to such an extent, that the donor feels part of the solution, as well as the funding. (emphasis added)

This quote also exemplifies the work that philanthropy advisors do in terms of matchmaking and brokering, where the donor benefits alongside the charity. The advisor describes working together with the charity and the donor to find a win-win solution. The advisor is there to communicate to the donor about the charitable needs, while also, making sure that the donor is getting their philanthropic needs met. In this case, the needs here require that the donor feels that they are not only writing a cheque, but that they are more directly involved in creating the public benefit. The justification of involving the donor in this way is made to get the “serious money” to the charity, meaning that advisors justify the involvement of the donor, so as to encourage them to give more. What this quote illustrates is how, even in trying to mitigate the power of the donor, the donor is still recentred by the PhAd, while at the same time having boundaries set on the role of the donor in relation to the targets and goals. The

\(^{229}\) Interview 13
\(^{230}\) Interview 25
PhAd here described this as a way of limiting the influence of donors, whilst still keeping the donor involved to encourage their philanthropic giving. The lever of change here is in influencing the donor. By meeting the philanthropic “needs” of the donor and making the donor “feel part of the solution”, the PhAd is able to encourage the donation of money to the charity. Within this framework is the role of PhAds in promoting better and more philanthropy, but also, that “better” philanthropy is linked to “more” impact.

A PhAd in a consultancy\textsuperscript{231} described how PhAds work with clients to have the focus be less on the client and more on the impact, by turning the funding relationship between donor and charity into a partnership. She described how their role is to maximise the impact by aiming to achieve this outcome:

Arriving at a place that is impact-centred, not client-centred or donor-centred, but impact-centred for how that partnership could go, just from an on-paper perspective. And then, of course, there’s the actual relationship itself. So, we probably wouldn’t advocate for [a partnership] to happen if we knew that our donor was a bit of an arsehole.

Table six below summarises the three impact claims outlined above and distils the underlying logic of each claim. The table also notes how these claims were used by different PhAds in institutional contexts and highlights specific source materials and documents where such claims were most prominent.

Table 6: The Social Impact Claims of PhAds

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<th>Social Impact Claim</th>
<th>Logic of Claim</th>
<th>Used By</th>
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| Philanthropists can create social impact | PhAds make the case that if philanthropists do their philanthropy well, this can lead to more impact. Therefore by creating “better” philanthropists, philanthropy advice leads to more impact. | • PhAds in consultancies, third sector organisations, financial and professional services  
• Particularly, within handbooks directed at philanthropists themselves (see documents 1, 12, 47) |

\textsuperscript{231} Interview 22
Table 6: The Social Impact Claims of PhAds (continued)

| Wealth is a source of social impact | Private wealth can create social impact through philanthropy. By encouraging clients to align their wealth with their values and putting their wealth towards “good” causes, their wealth can “do good”. Therefore, getting the client to “give more” through philanthropy leads to more social impact. | • PhAds in consultancies, third sector organisations, financial and professional services • Particularly, in training materials for professional advisors (see documents 9 and 20) |
| Philanthropy advice leads to more social impact | PhAds can increase the social impact of philanthropy through their advice. PhAds therefore, encourage all philanthropists to seek out philanthropy advice services. So, by getting more people to use philanthropy advice, you can get more people to give better and give more, leading to more social impact. | • PhAds in consultancies, third sector organisations, financial and professional services. • Used almost universally to promote services. |

As the section has explored thus far, narratives of social impact are key to how PhAds describe the role of philanthropy and philanthropists. Social impact came up in the context of success stories for PhAds, with PhAds directly describing their success as wrapped up in narratives of social impact. PhAds characterised their role and purpose and increasing impact, with many directly linking philanthropic giving to increased impact.

At the same time, a few PhAds expressed doubts about their influence on philanthropists and their scepticism about their own social impact claims. For example, a PhAd in financial services\textsuperscript{232} described her doubts relating to the influence of her advice, due to her lack of oversight over the entire philanthropic process of a client:

\textsuperscript{232} Interview 26
Because we are advising people who then give out money and then make an impact. And therefore, A, I don’t even know if the advice that I’m giving has really been taken, because quite often, philanthropy advisors aren’t there for the entirety of the process. And B, I don’t really know what the impact figure is or anything that they’re doing and measuring is happening on the other side of it, because I’m not there in the meetings with them.

In another interview\(^\text{233}\) with a PhAd in consultancy, we spoke, at length, about what success means, noting that his priority was to get people started with philanthropy, rather than necessarily getting the clients to improve their philanthropy. I asked, “So, when you’re saying doing it better, whether that be giving more or giving in a different way, what does that mean?” He replied:

> The honest answer is, first up, it’s just a tag line, a marketing line. I mean, people wouldn’t pay you to do it worse. (...) For me, what I have realised is that what seems to resonate and what I am a big fan of, is it’s not going in and saying, “Well, you should be doing— if you’re not doing it strategically, that’s terrible. If you’re not doing it based on a set of principles, then that’s terrible. If you’re not doing it based on this, then that’s terrible.” \(\text{It’s more about actually helping people do something.}\) So, a lot of the time, with philanthropists especially, it’s helping them get going or helping them understand what they should do and make that first step or understand how they could do that first step. And then when it comes to the real improving, so that’s really about just do something and helping them do something. When it comes to doing it better, it’s then saying, “Well, actually, it’s listening a bit” and going, “Don’t repeat what other people are doing or their shortcuts. Learn from the ways you can be effective.” (emphasis added)

Here, the PhAd links success to ways of improving philanthropy, without directly describing this in relation to social impact. Importantly, the threshold here is lower, meaning that he framed his role and his success following a normative basis for philanthropy, whereby success is even having the client do some philanthropy.

However, in another interview\(^\text{234}\), one PhAd in consultancy describes the philanthropy advisory services within these financial institutions and their self-described motivation to create social impact, with a level of scepticism. He describes the rise in philanthropy offerings

\(^{233}\) Interview 15
\(^{234}\) Interview 15
within these firms and questions their motivations and potential for providing “good” philanthropic advice that results in public benefit:

There’s been a change, a little bit, I think, in the last few years, but I am still a little bit cynical about it. If you are talking about the networks that the philanthropists starting from cold would look at and see what the market looks like, for example, all the private wealth banks, all the law firms, all the accountants’ firms, all the offshore trust companies, all these are now offering or are talking about philanthropy offering and/or the investment houses are offering some form of social impact thing, whatever that might be.

His stated scepticism is reflective of contrasting ideas he has about “good” and “bad” philanthropy advisors. In his interview, he expressed worry that the advisors in these firms are not, as he describes, “impact focused” enough. By which he reinforces the idea that philanthropy can create social impact, but that it requires “good” philanthropic advice to do so and this advice is not consistent. In summary, many PhAds recognise the complications and even the limitations of donor-centred practices, reflecting their roles as BIBS to negotiate and broker what they perceive to be the best outcome from all parties.

6.5 Who Benefits from Philanthropy according to PhAds

As established above, many PhAds often depict social impact as being defined by the donor, however, in this section, I demonstrate how PhAds attribute social impact to philanthropic individuals, wealth and philanthropy advice itself. Building on these previous two sections, this section examines how PhAds frame who benefits from philanthropy within social impact claims. I provide examples through three frames and then illustrate how PhAds use these frames as legitimising accounts, to justify philanthropy advice services and characterise the motivations for their role. In short, I analyse the arguments that PhAds put forth about who philanthropy benefits (donors, their businesses, the business of PhAds and society) and how.

Frame 1: Individual Donors Benefit from Philanthropy

In materials depicting theories of change, PhAds encourage clients to think about their personal objectives with their philanthropy, in terms of what benefits they hope to get out of
their philanthropy. As touched upon in the previous section (and in chapter five), a clear theme emerges as to their characterisation of how individual philanthropists benefit emotionally from their philanthropy or as one PhAd in a family office described, at length, how philanthropy makes her clients happier and feel better, because it gives them purpose.

I encourage my clients to do [philanthropy], because it makes them feel better often and it gives them purposes that they didn't know that they cared about or wanted to be involved in. So, it's a really positive thing to give to people.

Outside of the individual benefits to the clients, PhAds also marketed philanthropy to clients on the basis that it would benefit the families of the clients. Philanthropy Impact’s Guide to Giving on their website reinforces this when they ask the philanthropist to review their objectives in terms of whether they are achieving what they expected.

Most people have charitable objectives for their giving, e.g. to support dementia research, to provide holidays for terminally ill children, to increase literacy levels within inner-city schools. However you may also have personal objectives related to your family e.g. ensuring the family meets three times per year (...).

Echoing that PhAds sell their services and encourage philanthropy on the basis that it benefits the philanthropist and their family, the UBS Philanthropy Compass describes multiple ways that philanthropy can contribute much to “strengthening a family”. It provides the following examples: “Opportunity for keeping the family connected”; “Getting to know one another through shared experiences”; “Developing shared values”; “Creating a family legacy”; “Platform for developing skills”.

During interviews, philanthropy was presented by advisors, as a means of leaving a legacy for the donor’s family. A philanthropy advisor in financial services emphasised that her role as a philanthropy advisor can involve helping clients “overcome a challenge with respect to their family or with respect to the legacy they’re going to leave the world”. When asked to give

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235 Interview 23
237 Document 12 (p. 74)
238 Interview 26
examples of success with a client, the advisor shared a story of a client whose aim with his philanthropy was to benefit not only himself, but his entire family.

There was another 70-plus year-old gentleman we worked with a few years ago and his primary aim was to bring the family together. So, we did a lot of governance with them and trying to bring them together around, to help them share stories across four generations and what they really cared about in life. And that was his aim, rather than the actual impact of what they were doing.

Another aspect of how philanthropy advice services centre the needs of their clients is when philanthropy is offered as a means of strengthening family bonds, particularly around the next generation. This was a claim in many marketing materials. For example, the Coutts Handbook for Philanthropy\(^{239}\) states that philanthropy “can provide an opportunity for the family to do something significant together. When done well, it can bring the family closer together”. Philanthropy is described as a way for:

A family to get a sense of what people think the family stands for, what its core values are and who is interested in getting involved. Ask the family how they feel about money and the idea of philanthropy. Explore people’s views on different subjects, such as poverty and the environment.

The handbook\(^{240}\) also recommends the reader “consider organising a family retreat and inviting a professional advisor as a facilitator to help you establish a direction for your family philanthropy”.

Similar claims are also evident in Barclay’s report on Future Giving: Engaging the Next Generation,\(^{241}\) which also described philanthropy as a means of bringing family to engaging the next generation, meaning those who will inherit the wealth of the family (e.g. children, grandchildren, etc.). The guide\(^{242}\) prompts: “How will you build philanthropy into the DNA of your own family?” This ties in the narrative of the learning journey again, emphasising that it is up to the parents to now guide their children.

\(^{239}\) Document 1 (p. 37)
\(^{240}\) Document 1 (p. 39)
\(^{241}\) Document 4 (p. 8)
\(^{242}\) Document 4 (p. 3)
Whether you have had an established vehicle for your family’s philanthropy for some time, or you are just starting out on your own giving journey, two of the questions you may seek help to answer sooner or later are: “What is the best way to involve our children, or others in our family, in our giving activities? And at what stage in their development should we start that conversation with them?

In contrast to perspectives centring the benefits to donors, several PhAds who were interviewed expressed concerns that the benefit to donors was being overly emphasised in philanthropy services. The following quote from a former PhAd in financial services and director at a third sector organisation, expressed her concerns on the focus on the donor, as such: “Unless [philanthropy advisors are] really, really sophisticated people who have done this for many years, they tend to look at what benefits the donor more than what benefits the organisation.” She goes on to specify that this is a higher risk for financial advisors in a secondary function of philanthropy advice, because “the financial advisors often do not really understand philanthropy, because it is not their primary focus. They understand it as a process and they understand it as a thing that somebody does, but they don’t get the underlying charities in the same way”. This is because PhAds with a primary function on philanthropy have more time and expertise related to philanthropic advice, rather than it being a secondary aspect of their role.

According to these PhAds, they characterise their role as ensuring that the donor benefits from their philanthropy, but contend that their advice also ensures that the donor is not the sole or primary beneficiary of philanthropic giving.

Frame 2: Business Benefits from Philanthropy

The manner in which philanthropy benefits businesses was described by many PhAds in two main ways. Firstly, many promote philanthropy to clients on the basis that it is in the interests of the client’s family business for profit making and their business’ reputation and secondly, by PhAds in financial and wealth services promoting philanthropy services as a way to add value to their firms.

243 Interview 8, Interview 9, Interview 13, Interview 19, Interview 29, Interview 33, Interview 34
244 Interview 25
245 See table 2 from chapter 4 on the distinction between primary and secondary functions for PhAds
In the first case, promoting philanthropy for the benefit of their client’s wealth, echoes how individual philanthropists benefit by extending their legacy or bringing the family together, as well as linking the benefits to the family business. The role of philanthropy in maintaining family bonds and intergenerational wealth was also a prominent theme in the data. Aside from managing the perceptions and experiences of “doing good” that create a sense of fulfilment for a client, philanthropy advisors and professionals also assert that philanthropy can benefit clients in relation to their wealth accumulation and wealth succession across generations.

Maintaining family bonds and consequently, preserving their wealth, was cited as a reason clients take up philanthropy, as much as it was framed by philanthropy advisors as a consequence of “doing” philanthropy. According to the Coutts Handbook of Philanthropy:

For many families, philanthropy is a key dimension of the meaning and purpose of wealth, an important way in which family values are conveyed, and a path to engage the next generation so they are prepared for the opportunities and responsibilities wealth brings.

The implications here related, particularly, to “next generation philanthropists” and philanthropy’s role in tightening family bonds and inheritance, with the benefit being that wealth stays “within the family” over time. Importantly, these notions entrench the idea that philanthropy needs to be marketed to philanthropists in ways that demonstrate how they and their families will benefit, in terms of personal fulfilment and financial security. Moreover, some philanthropy advisors described that families benefit from philanthropy, in the sense that it offers them a means of conveying and living their values. Philanthropy was presented as an activity or hobby, as a way of bringing families together, as well as a way to begin preparing the “next generation” of inheritors into the family business. STEP, self-described as a global professional body, comprising lawyers, accountants, trustees and other practitioners that help families plan for their futures, has taken a proactive approach in how they describe and address the benefits of philanthropy to the professionals in their network.

246 Document 1 (p. 41)
247 https://www.step.org/ (accessed March 2023)
A guide, published by STEP and aimed at philanthropy professionals, describes philanthropy as a way of “equipping the next generation to succeed as effective stakeholders”. The guide makes the case that philanthropy should be prioritised by advisors as a way of engaging the next generation of wealth holders:

It is often the case that families focus their efforts on preparing the younger generation for roles in the family business. Although this can be important, responsible stewardship requires a broader vision to prepare the younger generation. A successful family needs more than just a few younger-generation members who can be involved in operational or governance roles in the family business. All family stakeholders need to be prepared for a broad range of functions, including roles as responsible shareholders, trust beneficiaries and otherwise.

STEP describes this in regard to the “responsible stewardship of wealth” for “wealth holders”, reflecting the title of the guide: “Family dialogues on the responsible stewardship of wealth”. The guide makes the case to advisors to take up philanthropy services as a way of better servicing their clients, through the retention of the next generation of clients who are going to inherit this wealth:

The landscape for wealth-owning families is evolving, becoming more complex and interdependent in the face of a current uncertain climate. “From shirtsleeves to shirtsleeves in three generations”, the proverbial saying is front of mind of many wealth generators, concerned about whether the next generation of family members will sustain and grow their inheritance.

The guide goes on to describe the role philanthropy plays in “reputation building and protection” for these families, as another mechanism in the retention of wealth and elite status:

Family decisions need to consider more than just whether a step they are taking is strictly legal – aggressive tax positions are an example of where short-term tax savings may harm the family and its business in terms of reputation and short-change the communities within which the family lives and works.

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248 Document 20 (p. 4)
249 Document 20 (p. 4)
250 Document 20 (p. 11)
A second theme, concerning the benefits of philanthropy to businesses, emerged in how PhAds in financial services characterised the growth of the philanthropy market and the value added to their firms, thus growing the business of the PhAd. When asked about how their role or time as philanthropy advisors was valued within their firm, particularly if or when the services are part of a broader client offer (e.g. in the case of a law firm, bank or family office), PhAds noted several reasons why their role existed, including primarily, to add value in multiple ways. Philanthropy advisors characterised the impact on the firm firstly, as a way of expanding client services and secondly, as a way of creating impact by encouraging their clients to be philanthropic (aligned with the logic of philanthropy as impact). Philanthropy as a client offer, particularly within wealth management firms, was mentioned as a key benefit for the firm, in sustaining and deepening relationships with existing clients and opening conversations with the “next generation” of clients who will inherit.\textsuperscript{251}

A PhAd in a consultancy, in an interview\textsuperscript{252}, stated that he viewed the expansion of PhAds into financial services and, particularly, amongst wealth advisors, as a “a way to gain more market share in new clients by having a philanthropy offering”.

For instance, a PhAd in financial services\textsuperscript{253} described how she builds relationships with clients and how this strengthens the relationship with the bank. She described that by having their clients feel good about their advice and feel good about their philanthropy, this adds value to the bank. Her role as a PhAd through the “philanthropic journey” is to develop this trusted relationship first and foremost. She stated:

\begin{quote}
We need to be making sure that the client understands that they can see us as a trusted advisor, as a partner through their philanthropic journey. That is important to the bank, because it means that we can sustain a relationship with [the bank] over a long period of time, through multiple generations. That’s really important to the bank.
\end{quote}

In interviews\textsuperscript{254}, several PhAds in wealth and financial services justified their role similarly, emphasising how they justified their role internally on the basis of client relations adding

\textsuperscript{251} Document 4, Document 9, Document 10, Document 20
\textsuperscript{252} Interview 15
\textsuperscript{253} Interview 26
\textsuperscript{254} Interview 23, Interview 26, Interview 28
value to their firm. This is, particularly, due to the role philanthropy plays within families, enabling firms to build relationships with the next generation of clients, explored in chapter five.

The framing of the benefit of philanthropy also reveals the blurred boundaries between what counts as “philanthropy”, where philanthropy is used interchangeably with impact investing by some. The focus on the indirect economic returns from elite philanthropy (for the client and the firm) is often described through tax benefits and even in regard to protection of social status as a basis for long-term wealth accumulation.

It is noteworthy that while tax benefit was mentioned in written materials, it was only mentioned in one interview with a philanthropy advisor in financial service. The silences on the tax benefits for philanthropists, in interviews, may be attributed to the emphasis placed on social impact and the socio-emotional aspects of their role during interviews.

**Frame 3: Society Benefits from Philanthropy**

Whilst social impact was not clearly defined by PhAds, narratives about the importance of philanthropy and the contributions philanthropy makes to society and the world, were central to impact claims made by PhAds. This is best exemplified by the following quote from the UBS Philanthropy Compass that states: “Philanthropy has played an instrumental role in shaping progress around the world and still does”.

Most guides and handbooks include “success stories of philanthropy”, historically and currently, to provide examples of the benefits of philanthropy to society. The UBS Philanthropy Compass handbook discusses philanthropy as a way of “creating change”. The Philanthropy Impact Handbook, a training document for philanthropy advisors, describes the role philanthropy has in creating a “positive impact in society”. The Coutts Handbook for

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255 Interview 26  
256 Document 12 Philanthropy Compass (p. 11)  
257 Document 12  
258 Document 9 (p. 3)
Philanthropy, meanwhile, echoes this framing and proclaims that “we believe that philanthropy is a tool for good”. The handbook goes further and states that “philanthropy makes a difference. Philanthropy is diverse in nature. But what unites philanthropists is a passion for using their resources to make a real difference to the causes or communities they care about – both at home and across the world”.

When providing examples of what can entail public benefit and social impact, PhAds typically listed a range of ideas for clients, including thematic lists or problem areas in written materials. In J.P. Morgan’s Guide to Giving, these thematic areas include a list of problems or “needs” where philanthropists can become “engaged”, including education, food security, healthcare systems and affordable housing, amongst others. The guide states that “you may be drawn to global organisations or to local charities. Both have critical roles serving those in need”. The Coutts & Co. philanthropy guidebook echoes this broad framing of benefits of society as “anything”, giving examples of philanthropy’s role in supporting civil society that “makes a real difference to people’s lives” through recipient organisations such as places of worship, schools or universities, local grassroots organisation, social enterprises, local radio stations and social movements. It also provides other examples of thematic areas that include education and employability support, coordinating emergency disaster relief, animal welfare, access to sport and the arts, and bringing people together to combat loneliness and isolation.

Another report, titled “Giving Better, Giving More: How can the philanthropy sector improve”, described this, as such:

For those motivated by impact, like the thoughtful philanthropists, it is only when they get to the top stage and achieve results-oriented philanthropy that they will feel fulfilled.
The sentiment that emotional fulfilment for philanthropists is linked to social impact claims is how PhAds describe their theory of change. In this theory of change (described in section 6.3), PhAds explain their role in building the capacity of their clients, so that the philanthropists influence the improvement of philanthropy themselves. This donor-centred approach is emphasised by PhAds as a means of improving philanthropic outcomes (i.e. creating social impact), by focusing specifically on the philanthropist. However, within these constructions, PhAds use multiple frames of benefit to frame philanthropy as mutually beneficial. While success and benefit are often donor-focused, PhAds frame these benefits alongside benefits to business and society, at large. The Philanthropy Impact Handbook\textsuperscript{264} details how philanthropy can provide multiple benefits at once, by arguing that wealth can lead to positive benefits for individuals, business and the public. This mutuality and the role of PhAds as brokers to maximise mutual benefit through philanthropic advice practices, is explored in the following section.

6.6 Self-legitimacy as Maximising Benefits for Philanthropists, Business and Society

The framing of mutuality, that philanthropy services are useful, because they are good for the client and “good for the world”, is a key legitimising strategy used by PhAds to justify their role and the utility of philanthropy advice services, more generally. According to several PhAds, donor satisfaction is linked to motivating them by linking their clients’ philanthropy with impact. In other words, PhAds justify focusing on the donor as a means of creating more impact.

The framing of personal objectives was presented as something mutually beneficial. PhAds often encourage their clients to recognise the multiple motivations and multiple outcomes of their giving, in which personal objectives sit alongside social impact. The Coutts Guide to Giving\textsuperscript{265} directly addresses this point:

Philanthropy is unique, in that it creates benefits for society while also being rewarding for the philanthropist. Some people are uncomfortable with the idea of philanthropy being anything other than purely altruistic. But many of today’s most
prominent philanthropists acknowledge that the more people get out of their philanthropy in terms of personal fulfilment, the more they are likely to give.

Linking with the philanthropic identity work of chapter five, some PhAds aim to encourage forms of philanthropy that are “impact focused”, however, the impact in these cases is defined by philanthropists.

PhAds justified centring the donor and the benefit to the donor, on the basis that it increases social impact, meaning if the donor is happy, it also leads to more benefit. In an interview, a PhAd in a consultancy\(^\text{266}\) described how he gets his clients to “feel good first” and then slowly encourages them to do more, saying:

> I know that I’m successful with families when they’re so excited that they have a perspective that they’re actually doing good work. So, giving that perspective and then they start feeling better about themselves, right, and then I was like, “Well, let’s do a grantee perception report. Let’s figure out what your grantees are saying about you. Were they positive things, things that you want to continue doing? What are the negative things? What do you want to stop doing? What are the things that you haven’t been doing that you may want to start?” (emphasis added)

The link between the positive feelings of donors with impact, was echoed by a PhAd in financial services during a webinar:\(^\text{267}\)

> And any organisation that shows where each pound that you have spent has gone to, gives the donor more comfort. [It helps them] feel the impact that was created.

In another interview,\(^\text{268}\) I asked a PhAd in a consultancy what makes someone feel that they are giving well. She replied:

> The connection to the work, feeling like it’s coherent. I think that’s really important, because often, people feel scattered [with their giving] and they have given to things just because people have asked them to. They’ve ended up not really feeling like they are moving anything and they’ve given to things that may or may not be good and those people over there might be doing something good with it, but as the donor, they

\(^{266}\) Interview 6
\(^{267}\) Webinar 18
\(^{268}\) Interview 4
don’t know. So, they feel really far away from any impact that there is and they don’t feel like they’ve had any personal influence. (emphasis added)

As this quote illustrates, PhAds often emphasised the link between donors defining the impact and the donors feeling the impact. In other words, donors “feel” the impact more after they have defined it. For example, in a webinar, a solicitor specialising in charity law described the need to evidence the direct impact of a philanthropic contribution to the client as an integral aspect of the “client” or “donor” experience.

The experience for a donor is pretty poor. You know, you find you get invited to some nice dinners and you might go out to Africa and do some stuff for a few days and you’re made to feel like a king, but you’re not getting really high-quality data that links you to the effectiveness of the organisation. And, as a result, doubts grow in your mind about, “Well, okay, these seem like really nice people, but actually, are they really doing any good?” So, the fundamentals in people’s minds are, “I’m really glad I support this organisation. I can see they’re doing good and I’ve got the metrics to show these guys are right up near the top of the class here. And I not only am happy to carry on backing them. I’m going to tell my mates about them.” (emphasis added)

The centring of the donor in defining social impact is justified under the logic that this positive feedback loop for clients will encourage them to give more. A key aspect of this is the framing of the mutual benefit for both the client, getting to find purpose and meaning in their lives, as well as the “impact” doers, who get more resources as a philanthropist becomes more deeply committed and interested in the cause or organisation. A PhAd in a family office described the mutual benefit and the collapsing of the distinction between public good and private interests, as such:

From an internalised point of view and my, sort of, slightly socialist hat on, if I can encourage people to give more and it benefits their hearts and their minds and their families, then it’s a win-win. So, if I can be a catalyst to unlocking some private money for public goods, then I feel like I’m doing a good thing for society in my role. (emphasis added)

Here, the PhAd describes her role in creating a “win-win” for the client and for society.

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269 Webinar 13
270 Interview 23
In a webinar, a PhAd from a consultancy characterised their philanthropy advice services as focusing on multiple kinds of impact:

We think about impact in three ways, achieving triple impact. Impact for women and girls around the world, impact on the philanthropist herself toward more effective, strategic giving and then impact on the philanthropic system and trying to move the whole system of philanthropy toward one that is based on justice.

This quote shows how multiple frames can be used at once, and how these multiple frames reflect how PhAds characterise their role in maximising benefit across multiple frames. In this example, the PhAd describes the impact of their firm benefitting society (e.g. impact for women and girls) and benefitting the philanthropist. The last frame of impact reflects how philanthropy advice and the improvement of philanthropy is also framed as a form of social impact. By trying to “move the whole system of philanthropy” towards justice, the PhAd implies that philanthropy can be more just and that this is a form of social impact for the PhAd. PhAds describe the expansion of philanthropy (a justice-oriented one) as a form of “impact”. While not all PhAds described their impact in the same way, many expressed understandings of improving philanthropy as a sector, as a part of their role.

In summary, the three impact claims outlined in section 6.3 underscore how PhAds describe the origins of social impact, while this section has explored how PhAds frame who benefits from impact. Critically, both sections have highlighted the use of social impact narratives by PhAds in legitimising accounts for their clients, philanthropy and philanthropy advice.

6.7 Conclusions and Discussion

This chapter has explored how PhAds legitimise their role through narratives of social impact. By examining how they define social impact and how they talk about it in relation to elite philanthropy, the chapter has revealed the logics behind their legitimising strategies. Specifically, the chapter has highlighted how PhAds use impact claims to depict the sources of social impact in philanthropy and how they promote philanthropy services as mutually

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271 Webinar 19
beneficial. The discussion has also reflected on the normative understandings of philanthropy embedded in PhAds' definitions of social impact and their legitimising function for philanthropy advice services. Ultimately, this chapter has contributed to a deeper understanding of how PhAds justify their role in elite philanthropy and promote philanthropy services, through three main impact claims:

1. Philanthropists can create social impact
2. Wealth is a source of social impact; and
3. Philanthropy advice leads to more social impact.

In summary, this chapter has two primary findings. Firstly, the evidence I have gathered demonstrates the undeniable importance of social impact narratives in understanding PhAds' perceptions of philanthropists, philanthropy and philanthropic advice. The different frames through which social impact is described - be it benefits to society, donors or businesses - affirm that social impact claims lie at the core of self-legitimisation of philanthropic advice services. Narratives of social impact are key to unlocking what is meant by “giving better and giving more”. Secondly, the chapter finds that PhAds use impact claims to legitimise their role in elite philanthropy and promote their services as a means of creating social impact. The second finding relates to how many PhAds understand their role in relation to social impact claims and maximising benefit, and that donor-centred philanthropy advice is often framed as a means to an end, where philanthropy is the end goal in and of itself. These primary findings are unpacked in greater detail below.

Building on the previous chapter’s analysis of “giving better and giving more” within the context of the learning journey, this chapter explored what is specifically meant by “better and more” and how this phrase is used by PhAds and within philanthropic advice services. The expansive range of topics discussed under the umbrella of philanthropy, also reflects the expanse of what counts as change and impact, creating consensus on the idea that all those present want to do good, at the expense of defining what the good is.

The ambiguity of social impact, social change and doing good as a result of philanthropic activities, is key within PhAd presentations of impact. Given that social impact is so central to
how PhAds market their services and describe their motivations and purposes, it was surprising to learn of the ambiguity and loose definition that PhAds apply to social impact. The ambiguity around defining social impact – outside of relating it back to the role of PhAds – was notable and in some ways, speaks to its legitimising functions. By presenting social impact as broadly and ambiguously as possible, PhAds reinforced the appeal of philanthropy in non-threatening and welcoming ways. This was particularly observed in how benefits were described in more detail to clients and in making the business case for philanthropy, while social impact was written and talked about in the broadest terms. Moreover, the attribution of social impact to the role of philanthropist, philanthropy and philanthropy advice is at the crux of this chapter.

Definitions of social impact reflect normative understandings of philanthropy. That PhAds view their role as a form of social impact, albeit an indirect one, reflects an important framing for how they legitimise and justify their position to themselves and others. Normative understandings of social impact and the ambiguity of social impact also reflects the “goodness” of philanthropy, because of social impact, and further, reflects the goodness of the philanthropist. This has further implications for elite power: Kuldova (2016) calls these forms of philanthropy within the business context a form of staging benevolence, while expanding divisions of power through the legitimisation of informal power by elites. My findings build on the existing literature by demonstrating how elite philanthropy services reinforce and justify these narratives, not as an inevitability, but actually, as a justifiable and strategic way of doing “more good” with philanthropy – a legitimising practice.

In addition to expanding understandings of the role of PhAds, these findings add to debates related to donor-centred philanthropic research. Donor-centred, as well as donor-controlled philanthropy, has become a longstanding topic (Odendahl 1990; Ostrander 2003; Ostrower 1995), with scholars and practitioners exploring its implications for philanthropic practices and the social relations within philanthropy. One aspect that has received less attention, however, is the reinforcement of donor-centred practices and subsequently, donor-controlled philanthropy by those around the donors, and the underlying logic of donor-centred practices as a means to achieve social impact. A prominent theme from my findings is that PhAds normalise the idea of elites as agents of change. Individualised modes of change
are not only aligned with narratives of self-help and personal betterment, but are often combined with narratives of elite actors as agents of change. PhAds describe their clients as capable of having “huge impact on the world”, if equipped with the right information and mindset. The findings presented by this chapter, therefore, also serve as an example of how donor-centred aspects of elite philanthropic processes can be reinforced by PhAd practices. As outlined in chapter five, in these practices, philanthropists are encouraged to define and identify the social problems they want to address, the approach or strategy they want to take (i.e. identifying favoured solutions) and then encouraged to think through what impact measurement metrics would be satisfying to them. These donor-centred logics of PhAds were also reflected in the theories of change and business models, and this chapter has identified how these practices raise implications for the utility of social impact narratives, in the further legitimisation of wealth and the role of elites. Critically, what this theory of change adds to literature on donor-centred philanthropy is that PhAds view the donor as not only the unit of change, but also, as a means to an end. In other words, by benefitting the donor, PhAds suggest that they are encouraging more giving through increasing the agency and capacity of the philanthropist, and then benefitting society through the likely occurrence of more philanthropy.

This chapter has also identified a tension experienced by PhAds in understanding their own roles, which was reflected in their descriptions of how they “teach” philanthropists. This chapter finds that PhAds present teaching as a non-threatening way to emphasise their role in building relationships with clients, rather than necessarily telling them how to do philanthropy. This was a common theme among PhAds interviewed: they described their role in providing advice on philanthropy, but ultimately, did not tell their clients how to do philanthropy. Rather, their explanation of teaching reflected ideas about their role being focused on encouraging philanthropy by creating more philanthropists. In other words, the role of PhAds was presented as promoting ideas about the role of private wealth for good, rather than giving direct advice on the “best” way to do philanthropy. At best, the successful “learning journey” results in the unit of change being “better rich people”, who are perhaps more generous, trusting or more inclined to give away wealth. At the same time, by framing their role as guides or teachers, PhAds distanced themselves from the outcomes of their advice and philanthropic giving, and by rather framing their role as facilitators or mentors to
clients, they retained their neutrality in their role as brokers, gatekeepers and translators. Moreover, it also explains that the role of PhAds is often invisible, given that they themselves encourage the clients to make decisions related to their philanthropy, rather than crediting their advisors for their philanthropic strategies or principles. This approach recentres the role of the philanthropist, whilst also, decentring and obscuring the advisor's influence on actual outcomes within philanthropic practices.

This chapter, overall, found that PhAds promoted a technocratic representation of the advice process, to reinforce their neutrality that relies on a strategically ambiguous definition of social impact, enabling them to build consensus and make claims of neutrality. Examining these narratives alongside wider research on economic inequality and wealth accumulation, makes these legitimisation discourses particularly troubling. These claims shift focus away from the socio-economic inequality inherent to private wealth accumulation. Instead, it perpetuates the belief that the growing wealth of global elites plays no part in the reproduction of these inequalities (Glucksberg and Russell-Prywata 2020). Instead, social impact is decontextualised from global systems that produce inequality, philanthropists are foregrounded as agents of change and wealth is embedded with values and purpose through acts of philanthropy. That advisors frame their role in institutional change and social change as neutral, obscures the reality of institutional change as “a conscious and systemic political project” (Muzio, Brock and Suddaby 2013: 702). Moreover, change is not a matter of better management or technocratic efficacy. As Anheier and Leat (2006: 2, cited in Harrow 2010: 126) stated, “social change [the purpose of philanthropy] is a negotiated, contested political process, not simply a matter of better management”. PhAds advertise their services in relation to “giving better” or what Eyre (2021) frames as “expediency” in giving. What my findings also reveal are the tensions that exist between how PhAds describe their legitimacy, alongside how they measure success and compare these outputs; the result of a vagueness of social impact and the subsequent metric of success of clients feeling good, contributes to a recentring of the donor.

To conclude, the claimed neutrality of the PhAd serves to decontextualise their role in framing problems and promoting philanthropy more generally, particularly as they describe helping clients create purpose for their wealth. This decontextualisation of philanthropy advice,
whereby PhAds claim to be agnostic or neutral, highlights their avoidance in describing or defining social impact and instead, placing the onus on the client. There is a clear paradox as PhAds describe how they improve the impact of their clients, whilst also, encouraging clients to define the impact for themselves. For many PhAds, donor-centred practices are viewed as a means to an end to achieve social impact. They may encourage donors to focus on their own values and interests in order to motivate them to give more and give more effectively. They may also emphasise the importance of measuring impact, to demonstrate the effectiveness of donors’ giving and to encourage them to continue doing so. By reinforcing donor-centred practices, PhAds claim to help donors achieve greater social impact through their giving. Thus, many PhAds described their own success in relation to social impact claims and benefit, and presented philanthropy advice as a way for clients to increase social impact. My findings suggest that often, the act of philanthropy is understood by PhAds as a form of social impact in and of itself. The next chapter explores the ways in which these logics and claims to social impact, and the implications for donor-centred practices, were negotiated and often extended within the context of pandemic responses.
Chapter 7: Elite Philanthropy in Unprecedented Times: Philanthropy Advisors and the Strategic Appropriation of the Covid-19 Crisis

Vignette: Crises and the “Golden Era” of Elite Philanthropy

Tucked in a quiet back street of Mayfair in London sits The Conduit, a membership club, co-working space and “home for people passionate about social change”.\(^{272}\) Opened in October 2018, The Conduit was co-founded by Paul Van Zyl (former executive secretary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa and later co-founder of the Centre for Transitional Justice) and Rowan Finnegan, the founder of Regenerative Investment, a London-based sustainable investment firm. The club is based in an eight-storey building, featuring an events floor, rooftop bar and terrace, restaurant and basement speakeasy. The founders aim to bring together social entrepreneurs, investors, creatives, business leaders, policymakers and civil society. The first guest chef was Massimo Bottura, a globally renowned, Italian, Michelin star chef. Adding to the opulence, the interior is designed with recycled and sustainable materials, wherever possible, and the ceramics and tapestries are sourced from “local” artisans from Eswatini (formerly named Swaziland).

Promotional materials describe The Conduit as a place that will not just be the home of NGO leaders and philanthropic communities, but that it will provide a channel between them and those with the finances to support them. Anyone wanting to join will have to put forward their reasons and submit “proof of their commitment to social change”. The standard membership fee is listed on the website\(^ {273}\) as GBP1,800 plus a GBP850 sign-up fee. It states that there are concessionary rates available. The membership includes a programme of hundreds of events per year, workshops, talks and debates covering “the pressing issues” of “employment and economic opportunity, education and skills, climate change and sustainability, health and nutrition, women’s empowerment, and justice and equality”. The founders also plan to launch a GBP100 million impact fund to invest in causes they jointly select. The vision is to open a Conduit in several cities around the world to create a “global community”. Their stated aim is to create a space to “gather changemakers to solve real-world issues”. The Conduit’s purpose is to act as a “catalytic platform to tackle some of the

\(^{272}\) https://www.theconduit.com/ (accessed January 2020)  
most pressing challenges facing the world today” and “accelerate collaboration for transformative impact”. The Conduit Club repeatedly describes itself as being all about fostering “solutions” and “impact”. “The Conduit is about bringing people together who have an ambition and capability to tackle some of the world’s biggest issues”, points out Rowan Finnegan. He goes on to say in the article’s interview: “Our membership criteria have been designed to ensure that those joining the community have a proven track record in systemic change.” In a Financial Times article, Paul Van Zyl notes, “We are not interested in presenting the problem, but in finding solutions.” According to the founders, members have the ability to search and connect with a diverse community from all walks of life, sectors and industries and of all ages, including youth activists, grassroots social entrepreneurs, authors, CEOs, investors, policy makers, tech entrepreneurs, scientists, civil society leaders and documentary filmmakers.

Entering the building in early 2020 for an interview, I am asked to sit and wait for my host, a member of The Conduit, to come down and get me. I’ve heard about The Conduit before and know several PhAds who are members, but this is my first visit. I sit on a plush couch, slightly hidden by a heavy and plush red curtain in the small inconspicuous entry way, watching as groups enter and leave. Some are wearing suits and some are more casually dressed, but all strike me as being undoubtedly cool. I am eventually welcomed by my host and we enter the fifth-floor cafe where there is a distinct hustle and bustle, offering a combination of polished floors and polished people. Small groups of people are engaged in animated conversation, interspaced with headphone-clad individuals working on MacBooks. I sneak a few glances around the room, searching for familiar faces, either from my own professional network or for more public figures. In promotional materials, the club advertised the membership by including high profile names such as Paul Polman, the head of Unilever, Sir Ronal Cohen, philanthropist and investor, Christiane Amanpour from CNN and Salil Shetty, Secretary General of Amnesty International.

It would only be a month or so later when the country would go into lockdown, with all shops, businesses and offices closing and people having to remain at home. The Conduit moved into online events and there were attempts to continue convening members. Their YouTube channel, created during that time, includes a video titled “How Justice Can Heal”, linked to an
anti-racist reading list related to the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd, alongside a recommended video titled “How to make poached eggs and hollandaise sauce”. Embedding social change and sustainability into the everyday lives of members is emphasised as being as important as ever.

In October 2020, The Conduit closed its doors and announced it has entered into administration. A few months later, they announced the club would reopen in a new location in 2021. In addition to the new location, the club also announced that they would incorporate a hybrid (online and offline) version of their programming of events and talks. In the same interview in the Financial Times, Paul van Zyl described how they have adapted, by saying, “Before the pandemic, there was a huge waitlist for the talks, but we didn’t record them, so when it was over, it was over. Previously, it was all physical, but during the pandemic, we developed a digital programme, which was highly regarded.”

In other marketing materials, the club credits the pandemic with re-energising their raison d’être. In an article in the Glossary Magazine, van Zyl emphasised the role of the pandemic in motivating their work and that following the pandemic is the ideal time to join a club such as The Conduit. He stated that “if you look back at history, times of crisis catalyse a golden era of entrepreneurship because there’s something irreducibly human in wanting to solve problems. And we are seeing that in the level of interest in the new club.” He also went on to state that “in order to create a sustainable world, you have to sustain yourself. This means building a network, forming relationships and experiencing joy and comfort.” The Conduit also describes how they plan to use such events to catalyse conversations among members and build out an engaging interactive programme that goes beyond hosted talks. “Imagine Al Gore comes and gives a talk about the latest climate challenges,” he explains. “We’ll record the highlights of that and play it back to our members on Monday and then on Thursday, three of our most prominent members who are working on financing solutions to the climate crisis will lead a conversation.”
Furthermore, van Zyl shares that “the pandemic has made purpose and social change 10 times more relevant than it ever was before, and that’s been the core of The Conduit from the very outset.”

7.1 Introduction

The outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 led to global disruptions in various sectors, including philanthropy. As lockdowns were announced globally, philanthropic partnerships, projects and programmes were put on pause, cancelled or in some cases, pivoted their focus. As described in chapter three, section 3.4.1, my project shifted substantially at the outset of the pandemic in March 2020. I collected data between November 2019 and November 2021, resulting in a shift in the project’s anticipated focus as the pandemic rapidly came to dominate discussions within the sector. As the philanthropy sector adapted to the pandemic, so did PhAds, with many services shifting to online formats and pandemic-specific services being created. These responses resulted in a wave of resources and reports produced by the philanthropic sector for clients, other advisors, as well as the broader philanthropic sector. Individual philanthropy professionals, organisations, businesses and networks published guides and included pandemic response advice on websites aimed at philanthropists and philanthropy professionals, instructing them on using philanthropy to respond to the Covid-19 crisis. Alongside these written materials, philanthropy professionals convened online events to share and develop resources for the philanthropy sector. At other times, the pandemic was used as a way for philanthropic intermediaries to underline their own goals, as exemplified in the vignette.

These pandemic responses raised questions about how the sector, intermediaries and PhAds adapted to, but also, strategically leveraged the pandemic to promote the uptake of philanthropy and their services. As illustrated in the vignette above, many within the sector framed the pandemic as an opportunity for philanthropy and philanthropists to play a role in mitigating the crisis, raising additional concerns through these accounts about what and whose actions were legitimised. This chapter thus considers the final research question: What

can analysing the role of PhAds in the context of pandemic responses add to existing understandings of elite philanthropy?

To do so, the chapter considers how PhAds framed philanthropic responses to the Covid-19 crisis. More specifically, I examine how these responses extended, reaffirmed or destabilised how philanthropic professionals and advisors characterised the role of philanthropy, the role of philanthropists and their role as advisors. The chapter explores how examining these materials deepens our understandings of how PhAds understand and present their own work and construct professional self-legitimacy of PhAds and their clients, as well as the legitimacy of elite philanthropy, overall. The chapter draws, primarily, from reports, guides and online events related to pandemic responses primarily between April 2020 to December 2020, in order to foreground the ways in which PhAds encouraged their clients, advisors and the philanthropy sector, more broadly, to act in response to the pandemic. The chapter explores the legitimising accounts used by PhAds during the pandemic, demonstrating that their adaptations and responses to the Covid-19 crisis made the tensions, inherent in the role, starker. This raises questions about how PhAds navigate their role as BIBS. It also foregrounds the intensified impact claims that PhAds utilised to justify philanthropy during the Covid-19 pandemic period.

There are several important areas where this work makes an original contribution to the overall aims of the thesis. By understanding the pandemic as a key moment of visibility for the philanthropy advice services. The chapter argues that examining the responses of PhAds during the pandemic surfaced underlying tensions associated with the role of PhAds, brought about by demonstrating their limited agency in both influencing clients and how they understand professional neutrality, while serving the clients’ needs above all, complicating constructions of neutrality presented by PhAds in Chapter 5 and 6. This equally highlights how the discourses of PhAds that are related to social impact, construct a role of elites in social change that normalises ideas of them as agents of change and extends their hyperagency, by encouraging world-building exercises through their philanthropy. Moreover, the findings of this chapter extend the concerns related to donor-centred philanthropy explored in the previous chapters. The pandemic responses foregrounded this logic, revealing that PhAds promote elite philanthropic giving to reinforce the language of hyperagency of donors.
This chapter contributes to this nascent literature by focusing not on the outcomes of the philanthropic responses, but on how elite philanthropy practitioners framed and described their own role in pandemic responses. It highlights the continuity of certain pre-pandemic impact claims (that donors should play an important role in crisis responses) and that the role of PhAds was to enable such philanthropic giving. A main contribution of this chapter is evidencing the rhetorical strategies deployed by PhAds to justify and legitimise their perceived importance of philanthropy, philanthropists and critically, philanthropic advice in the context of crisis responses, extending interrogations of implicit and explicit theories of change promoted by PhAds and the implications for the entanglement between the self-legitimisation strategies of PhAds with the legitimacy of their clients (as elite philanthropists) and with elite philanthropy itself.

The chapter begins by examining how PhAds framed the role of philanthropy in pandemic responses and how narratives of the “unique” role of philanthropy responses reflected legitimising impact claims made by PhAds. The next section examines how PhAds specifically described the roles that philanthropists should play within philanthropic responses, exploring their emphasis on the role of philanthropists in the pandemic on the basis of moral obligation, and encouraging philanthropists to exercise their agency through celebratory narratives. The chapter then explores how PhAds reflected on their role and the role of philanthropy advice services, more broadly, examining how they leveraged their role as BIBS to develop strategies to promote their services and elite philanthropy.

Importantly, the chapter does not seek to evaluate philanthropic responses to the pandemic, with respect to the outcomes of the advice given by PhAds or the resulting outcomes of the philanthropic giving. Rather, the chapter examines the discursive and rhetorical strategies deployed by PhAds in their pandemic responses, following the overall aim of the thesis, which is to unpack the legitimising accounts of PhAds to further explore the “black box” of elite philanthropy. The chapter furthers the project aim by evidencing the legitimising processes through concrete practices of PhAds, to highlight the meaning making processes of their work.

A significant aspect of philanthropic activity during the pandemic, was the emphasis of PhAds on philanthropic responses as uniquely placed to address the Covid-19 crisis. Across almost all webinars, Covid-19 handbooks and guides, in an effort to promote the uptake of their services and elite philanthropy more broadly, the role of philanthropy was emphasised as critical in responding to the Covid-19 crisis.

Echoing the narrative of the vignette, many PhAds promoted philanthropy on the basis that it leads to “solutions”. This is also evident in impact claims described in chapter six, whereby PhAds justify philanthropic giving on the basis that it creates social impact. In the context of pandemic responses, these impact claims were sometimes extended, in that not only were PhAds continuing to frame philanthropy as able to create social impact, but that the exceptional need created by the pandemic made philanthropy uniquely positioned to respond. In other words, the importance of philanthropy was linked in relation to the magnitude of the crisis and how PhAds understood and characterised the central role that philanthropy should play in meeting that need of funding shortages for charities.

PhAds in webinars, especially, promoted the uptake of philanthropy. For example, a former wealth manager and director of an impact investment firm advocated for philanthropy in a webinar275 by stating:

There's no question that it is philanthropy that has taken centre stage during this initial period of intense social and economic shock, when solutions needed to be immediate and generous and many of the charities that are delivering relief to vulnerable people are themselves under threat.

Narratives emphasising the significance of philanthropy to the Covid-19 pandemic were echoed in written materials as well. For example, J.P. Morgan Chase’s “Guide to Giving:

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Effective Philanthropy During the COVID-19 Pandemic 2020\textsuperscript{276} described the exceptional significance of philanthropy. The guide states:

The Covid-19 pandemic has created a worldwide crisis of a magnitude few have ever known. (...) The role of philanthropy has never been more important, and donors, both experienced and new, are looking for ways to give quickly and effectively for the greater good.

In another example, The Beacon Collaborative shared a presentation titled “Do something New”\textsuperscript{277} on their website, in which they describe the opportunity for philanthropy to “redefine how the charity sector works to make sure it is more effective, adaptive, resilient and can tackle injustice and inequality better than in the past”. The second slide states:

Philanthropic capital can make a difference to the continued delivery of services and support to those who need it most in the relief and recovery phases of Covid-19 response.

Some PhAds not only framed philanthropic giving as central to pandemic responses, but that this necessity was on the basis that the urgency required fast and philanthropic giving, with philanthropy presented as more expedient than the government. This was reflected in a common narrative articulated in webinars, where philanthropy was justified on the basis that it “filled gaps” left by the State. This form of philanthropic exceptionalism, the idea that philanthropy and philanthropic capital is unique, was sometimes emphasised in relation to the inability of the overwhelmed State to meet the needs of the public.

One PhAd in a webinar illustrated this point by describing how philanthropy could enter “pandemic mode” or “firefighting philanthropy”,\textsuperscript{278} meaning that philanthropy was able to respond quickly and efficiently, in ways that the state was less equipped to do.

During an interview, a PhAd in a foundation\textsuperscript{279} framed the role of philanthropy and philanthropists in relation to the state, as such:

\textsuperscript{276} Document 6
\textsuperscript{277} Document 8
\textsuperscript{278} Webinar 10
\textsuperscript{279} Interview 14
This is something that we tell our philanthropists; that philanthropy has a unique role to play and we’ve seen that come all across the sector where it just moves so much faster than the government can. Everyone has a very clear role. Private sector is complementing that in its own ways. But [with] philanthropy, you can quickly redirect your funds, release them to the higher need areas and modify your reporting, because you’re in pandemic mode.

Most PhAds repeatedly emphasised that philanthropy should play a key role in distributing finances (“capital”) and that philanthropy was uniquely suited to do so, on the basis that it was more flexible and quicker to act due to the lack of oversight.

In webinars and documents alike, some PhAds often described philanthropy’s role as complementary to government, with the role of the philanthropist there to identify the gap “left by the government”. In a webinar, the co-founder of a donor network framed this as:

One area in which I’d love to see us collaborate a lot more, is filling that chasm. So, government comes further down in its risk-taking and philanthropists and trusts and foundations are willing to further back up the scale-up of proven innovations, so that we complete that spiral and we don’t end up with a gap in it.

Many PhAds also framed the pandemic as strategically useful, in terms of encouraging philanthropists to consider more carefully their overall impact. In a webinar, a philanthropy professional and advisor encapsulated how philanthropy and private wealth were emphasised as vital to philanthropic responses. She stated that in the immediate aftermath of lockdowns, their firm saw “a wholesale increase in the number of clients asking how they can increase the impact” of their philanthropy. She went on to ask:

How can they turbocharge that impact by bringing in the broader wealth to ensure that [they aren’t] just focusing on firefighting now, but they’re creating, obviously, solutions for their future? As we all know, impact investing is, actually, the best vaccine that we have.

280 Webinar 17
281 Webinar 10
The themes of urgency, efficiency and social impact were used by many PhAds to leverage the pandemic and legitimise philanthropic giving. This foregrounded their emphasis on the role and active involvement of philanthropists, by highlighting the decision-making power of donors in the time of crises, reifying the power and role of donors and their wealth in responding to the Covid-19 crisis.

In another example from a webinar, a board member of an impact investment institute emphasised the role that she perceived philanthropy, and more importantly, individual philanthropists, can and should play in supporting the charity sector, describing the pandemic as “the moment for philanthropy”. She stated, “I think it will have to be the philanthropists. (...) Philanthropists will have to step in.”

Here, the framing of philanthropists as “uniquely positioned” to supplement government, to identify and fill in the gaps, was echoed by many advisors who described not the resources required to do this, but that it is the philanthropist role, as an individual, to serve this function. Another way philanthropy was framed as uniquely positioned to respond to the pandemic, was the argument that philanthropic funding is fast and flexible. It was also framed as supplementary, with the onus of action and the focus of mobilisation on philanthropy’s role in financing public benefit. This line of argumentation highlights how private wealth for public good was central to the impact claims made by PhAds about philanthropic responses to the pandemic. These impact claims also related to their characterisations of the role of philanthropists in pandemic responses, explored in the following section.

282 Webinar 21
7.3 Impact Claims in Covid-19 Responses: The Role of Philanthropists as Agents of Change

A significant recurring theme that surfaced amongst PhAds, was their description of the role of their clients as crucial actors in pandemic responses. In documents and webinars alike, most PhAds characterised philanthropists as central to pandemic responses, positioning these individuals as needed agents of change on behalf of the public, further leveraging the “moral urgency” of a social problem to legitimise philanthropic activity. For example, one of the ways in which elite individuals are portrayed as agents of change is by supporting charities through direct financial donations.

In some cases, PhAds called for philanthropists to ensure the continuation of the entire charity sector. For example, New Philanthropy Capital’s 2020 guide\(^\text{283}\) for philanthropists, titled “Do Something New”, aimed at supporting the charity sector through the Covid-19 crisis and framed how philanthropists could respond to the pandemic. The guide states:

> Through their funding, philanthropists can help to ensure that we don’t lose vital services, support communities through the economic and social challenges brought by the pandemic and make our charity sector stronger for the future.

In many cases, philanthropists were encouraged by PhAds to exercise a form of hyperagency, extending ideas of donor-defined social impact, explored in chapter six. More specifically, PhAds encouraged philanthropists to give even better and even more. New Philanthropy Capital’s 2020 report,\(^\text{284}\) titled “Shifting Your Funding Practices During Covid-19”, states:

> For experienced funders, the increase in need accelerated by COVID-19 requires a new way of thinking, to identify and prioritise organisations that are delivering critical services. This requires a commitment to do more and to go above and beyond.

In other cases, the pandemic was described as an opportunity for philanthropists to do things differently and “better”. On their website,\(^\text{285}\) New Philanthropy Capital’s 2020 guide\(^\text{286}\) portrays the need for philanthropists to be part of the response effort, encouraging them to

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\(^\text{283}\) Document 8
\(^\text{284}\) Document 14 (p. 1)
\(^\text{286}\) Document 8
shape the response efforts in relation to charities themselves:

For both new and experienced funders, the challenge is the same – responding to the Covid-19 recovery effort will mean giving more and in new ways. It will involve asking tough questions to make sure we maintain the charities we really need to support communities, and the needs of wider society for the long term. (emphasis added)

Many PhAds leveraged the pandemic to motivate or encourage a particular kind of donor agency, amplifying previous strategies of encouraging donor involvement, on the basis that more engaged donors will give better and more in the “long term”. The long term being the giving of the philanthropist over the course of their lifespan (and beyond), rather than the types of grants (e.g. multi-year grants).

Whilst a few PhAds, in webinars and handbooks, encouraged philanthropists to do things differently, this was often not specified outside of encouraging philanthropists to give quickly and to exercise their agency. This donor-centred decision-making power was expressed by some PhAds as a series of trade-offs and decisions made by the philanthropist. Some guides described this in imperatives, around the need for the philanthropist to assess and evaluate the social impact. For example, J.P. Morgan Chase’s “Guide to Giving” advises:

As you consider getting involved to support organisations affected by and responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, assess how they are functioning, what they need and how the relationship might evolve.\textsuperscript{287}

Here the document echoes the findings of chapter six, with PhAds encouraging donors to define social impact by evaluating the impact of charities. A major theme emerging from these documents was the role of the philanthropist to make the “best” decisions possible on behalf of the “community”. J.P. The guide\textsuperscript{288} continued by describing how philanthropists can approach these decisions, by asking them, “How do you engage?” It states:

You may be drawn to global organisations or to local charities. Both have critical roles serving those in need. Whether your time horizon encompasses immediate assistance or your gift invests in a long-term strategy, both will be vital to sustaining thriving

\textsuperscript{287} Document 6
\textsuperscript{288} Document 6 (p. 3)
The appeals made by many PhAds, in the context of the pandemic, extended the logic of philanthropists in creating change (see table 6), but further accentuated the decision making and strategies of PhAds in “serving those in need”. These responses add to our understanding of how PhAds frame the role of philanthropists in social impact, whereby philanthropists simply need to make better and more strategic decisions in order to be “impactful”. The use of the pandemic by PhAds as a way of encouraging this form of action, speaks to their appropriation of the pandemic to naturalise the involvement of elites in these pandemic responses and potentially, future global crises. Framing philanthropic practice as a set of choices, also extends their description of the role of private wealth for public good, with the pandemic raising the stakes for their clients and themselves.

New Philanthropy Capital’s guide\(^{289}\) also framed the role of philanthropists in responding to the pandemic as a set of difficult and “complex choices”. The New Philanthropy Capital website\(^{290}\) went further, to emphasise that philanthropists should think through their response to the “turmoil posed by Covid-19”, noting the important role they can play in “saving” the charity sector:

> Philanthropists should always ask fundamental questions about effectiveness, but in the current climate they might also ask, “Which charities can we not afford to lose?” This could reveal a set of grantees who donors believe to be vital to our collective work, but for one reason or another, they have not supported before. Philanthropists should now consider this group when making decisions about grants and take the lead in keeping the organisations they believe in, thriving. (emphasis added)

In another webinar,\(^{291}\) the director of a philanthropy network also emphasised the role of philanthropists, in thinking about their philanthropic responses in the context of the survival of charities through the crisis:

> Many organisations will undoubtedly fail, and one of the questions is, is it going to be survival of the fittest or are we going to have to pick winners? Who’s going to fail and

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\(^{289}\) Document 8


\(^{291}\) Webinar 2
who are we going to allow to fail and who are we going to back not to fail? (emphasis added)

The centring of the philanthropist and philanthropy in making decisions on the future of the charity sector, described by some by which charities will survive, was echoed in webinars. For example, the founder of a venture capital fund stated in a webinar:\(^292\)

> What’s keeping me awake is: are we doing the best possible job to make sure that organisations are going to be able to survive? Because there undoubtedly will be some casualties, *but the organisations that are going to be able to survive are the ones that we want the most.* (emphasis added)

In another example from a webinar,\(^293\) a PhAd and co-founder of a philanthropy intermediary network reflected on the role of philanthropy advisors in determining which charities survive, linking that to the advice they provide to clients:

> Within the sector, we are going to see a lot of charities that don't survive. And we should try to concentrate on those that are having the greatest impact.

These framings of how philanthropists choose survivors reflect Darwinian perceptions of the charity sector, suggesting that the “best” of the charities will survive, but that philanthropists can choose what makes a charity good or not, based on their understanding of the problems and the need. These framings accentuated how PhAds described the role of philanthropists, in the context of the pandemic, and highlights their encouragement of donors to define social impact in the pandemic. While this expands on the ways that some PhAds described donor-defined social impact, what is different from previous descriptions is that many PhAds emphasised the agency of the donor in decision making to a greater extreme, reifying the power of wealthy donors through their advice services. The pandemic responses of many PhAds amplified the importance of their clients, by framing philanthropists as all-powerful decision makers. This is important, because it reveals how many PhAds think about the role of wealthy individuals in society; as hyperagentic individuals with the potential to do good, if

\(^{292}\) Webinar 12

\(^{293}\) Webinar 8
they so choose to. The reliance on narratives of philanthropists as morally responsible and astute wealthy individuals is explored in the next section.

7.4 The Moral Imperative to Act: Noblesse Oblige in Philanthropic Advice

Many PhAds and philanthropy professionals also presented the pandemic as an opportunity for wealthy people to live their values and use their wealth for good. Moral appeals to the individual philanthropist were prominent in webinars, with PhAds emphasising that philanthropists should be part of pandemic responses on this basis.

For example, a PhAd in a multi-family office\textsuperscript{294} described the urgency of the situation that required “a moral obligation” to act. Another PhAd, a director of a consultancy firm, described in a webinar\textsuperscript{295} the opportunity for philanthropists to live their morals through their philanthropy, stating:

There's a huge opportunity in all of this. But now we have to act with the philanthropic money with a decent mindset. Take the responsibility and claim your responsibilities back and be engaged.

In another webinar,\textsuperscript{296} the head of philanthropy advisory services for a bank, shared her experiences with working with clients in responding to the pandemic. She noted that most of her clients are entrepreneurs or owners of big enterprises. She began by reflecting on how the pandemic had affected them:

So, for [my clients], this crisis really hit them at the heart. On the one hand, they had to worry about their business continuity and on the other hand, they're also concerned about the impact of the crisis on their families and on their employees. So, in a way, they're tackling both. How do you keep the business running? And on the other hand, what can I do for the community? And it's pretty interesting to see how they're bringing their business discipline to their response, in terms of helping community.

Another PhAd\textsuperscript{297} went on to link their clients’ hyperagency with claims regarding the morality

\begin{footnotes}
\item[294] Webinar 9
\item[295] Webinar 1
\item[296] Webinar 7
\item[297] Webinar 10
\end{footnotes}
of these philanthropists. When asked to describe how her clients were responding to the pandemic, she shared:

They are also bringing their discipline to planning for their giving. So, they're looking into whether their investment strategies will generate the income required for all the commitments they've made previously and how to respond to additional requests. Some are being more flexible in the way they give, not just financially, but also, in time and leveraging their own resources. *I know individuals who are using their private jet to deliver supplies. So, they are showing the best of humanity during this crisis.* (emphasis added)

This quote illustrates how concepts of philanthropy, wealth and impact investment are intertwined. It also provides a second characterisation of the framings for “moral obligation” in this context. The first being the moral obligation of clients with regard to remaining economically liquid enough not to fire any employees or halt financial commitments, which are a result of the pandemic. The second framing of moral obligations to respond directly to the pandemic, such as delivering supplies. Both of these framings suggest the morality of wealth and the owner of this wealth and the choices of this, as an expression of the moral value of their wealth. Moreover, the quote demonstrates how wealth is presented as enabling and constitutive of virtue and morality in itself. Furthermore, it highlights the impact claims leveraged by some PhAds linking philanthropy and social impact, with philanthropy not as a means to an end, but also, as an end in and of itself, with a mandate to encourage more giving through whatever means necessary. The webinar panellists often celebrated the involvement of philanthropists in seeking to “maximise” the output of their philanthropy, explicitly enabling them to create “solutions for the future”, in addition to emphasising both their hyperagency and morality, and positively and mutually reinforcing principles to be celebrated. In the examples where PhAds framed philanthropist responses during the pandemic as motivated by their good character, rather than facilitated by their wealth, their understanding of their clients, as units of change and wealth as a benign tool for good, was highlighted.

7.5 The Role of PhAds as BIBS in Pandemic Responses

Appeals for action by PhAds were not only directed towards philanthropists, but also, towards the philanthropy sector and philanthropy advisors themselves. In particular, this
foregrounded the role of PhAds as BIBS, and the way many PhAds characterised their motivations in relation to promoting better and more philanthropy through their advice. A key expression of this was the role of PhAds as boundary spanners, where many PhAds, across different institutional contexts, disseminated and produced pandemic specific materials, guides and resources that were made freely available.

In describing their role in promoting, teaching and creating knowledge about and for the philanthropy sector, PhAds accentuated their role in pandemic responses. For example, Philanthropy Impact, a high profile and well-known membership organisation for philanthropy professionals and advisors (see section 3.4.1 in the methodology section for further details), opened their weekly events to the public as webinars, uploading them to YouTube (see Appendix III for the complete list). Each webinar was comprised of panel discussions of approximately 30 minutes. According to one webinar, prior to the pandemic, these events were closed-door, member-only meetings under the Chatham House Rule and rules of engagement, meaning their online availability afforded unprecedented external access and visibility.

In keeping with their role as boundary spanners and intermediates, PhAds described their motivations for making documents and resources available, on the basis that they wanted to contribute to pandemic responses. This explains, in part, why so many documents and webinars were made publicly available at the outbreak of the pandemic. Because PhAds view philanthropy advice as tied to creating social impact (see table 6 in chapter 6), their impact claims explain why they went “public” with advice that was otherwise, usually, only for clients. For example, the moderator of the webinar series described the motivation for the videos, as such:

At Philanthropy Impact, we want to create a space of ideas, sharing of collaboration and solidarity for our members, and also, our wider network.

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298 Webinar 2
299 Webinar 2
In other examples across the webinar series, philanthropy advisors and professionals alike emphasised the need to share resources.\(^{300}\) One PhAd and lawyer\(^{301}\) described this as encouraging everyone to get into “sharing mode” related to information.

A PhAd who specialises in creating and managing philanthropic funds for donors and family offices, described in a webinar:\(^{302}\)

> In an unprecedented move, we put together on our website for our donors, a Covid resource page to start to collate this (…). It's not about us trying to promote ourselves or sell ourselves. It's just giving a resource for people.

Philanthropy Impact describes in early webinars, the desire to build online spaces for their community and the wider community, as a means of making their members more easily able to access information and for the philanthropy sector to co-operate. The Philanthropy Workshop, a network and donor education initiative, compiled a summary of global Covid-19 resources for philanthropists, including guides, articles and what they self-describe on their website as “thought leadership”.\(^{303}\)

The increased visibility of PhAds raises questions as to why PhAds and these networks made some material and some meetings more open. PhAds became more visible (and accessible to research) during the pandemic, due to emphasis on resource sharing (e.g. newsletters, signposting, publicly available handbooks and guides), as well as opening of meetings of key membership networks (e.g. Philanthropy Impact’s web series uploaded to YouTube). The data suggests two ways in which PhAds framed the need for this transparency and openness. One was the urgency of the need, pulling on moral appeals for action. The second framing positioned the pandemic as an opportunity for philanthropy.

PhAds used several rhetorical strategies in these documents and events, leveraging the visibility of philanthropy and philanthropic responses in the pandemic to legitimise

\(^{300}\) Webinar 1, Webinar 13, Webinar 14, Webinar 15, Webinar 22, Webinar 24  
\(^{301}\) Webinar 1  
\(^{302}\) Webinar 2  
\(^{303}\) https://tpw-org.my.site.com/s/covid-19-resources (accessed April 2023)
philanthropic action, with philanthropy (and philanthropists) framed as the solution to the “problem”.

In their role as brokers and intermediaries, many PhAds described shifts in their work, resulting in helping clients to navigate the charity sector in the context of the pandemic. They presented the advisory role as brokers between philanthropists and charities, and intermediaries convening and encouraging more philanthropy. Notably, several PhAds emphasised the role of advisors as particularly important in the context of the pandemic. For example, a Philanthropy Impact webinar\footnote{Webinar 14} on Philanthropy and Social Investment, titled “How do we achieve more and better from (U)HNWI”, provided insight into how PhAds view their role in relation to their clients. The introduction to the webinar reflects how philanthropy advisors position themselves:

Our research shows that professional advisors play a significant role in reaching wealthy individuals and encourage them to consider giving or investing money in philanthropic initiatives, in a meaningful and transformative way. A professional advisor’s role is pivotal at a time when the charity sector is now facing a massive loss of income due to the Coronavirus crisis, which will impact on the most vulnerable in our society.

In describing its aim, the Philanthropy Impact web series captures the ways the web series underscored how PhAds attribute their advice with increased social impact. The webinar\footnote{Webinar 14} continued with:

In this episode, we will explore how advisors can support clients in balancing their financial security and their committed philanthropic obligations. Are advisors ready to address several economic and societal issues that the crisis has produced? What resources are available to advisors and their clients to navigate the response and recovery initiatives and ensure they are creating the most impact?

In other instances, PhAds provided further evidence of their role as brokers and intermediaries, in helping their clients navigate the marketplace of the charity sector and navigating demand for services within the pandemic. The web series also emphasised the
pressures of “juggling” these multiple interests that philanthropy advisors navigate, with successful advisors portrayed as being able to achieve the balance between various “trade-offs” and also, taking up their role as translators and bridge builders. For example, the head of philanthropy advisory services for a bank states:306

[Our clients] want to know exactly what is going on, on the ground. They watch TV news, see clips of stories about people suffering and they will come to us and ask, “Is this really true? Who can I give to?” So, we have seen increases in terms of queries about, “How can I help?”, because this is a crisis that they’ve never seen before.

In describing the increased demand for their services, this PhAd re-entrenched their role as broker and several PhAds described the challenges of signposting their clients to charities. Many also acknowledged the role they had in shaping the pandemic responses of their clients. The advisors’ role in helping clients “define” the problem, resonated as part of the contradictions in maintaining the neutrality of their role as advisors. A PhAd at a family office reflected on this, in relation to clients asking how they can support the National Health Service (NHS):

Clients are being bombarded, quite rightly and understandably, with different emergency appeals and different information. I think our job as advisors is to be able to collate all of that information, distil it, know who we can pick up the phone to, know who’s doing effective things in different sectors and find ways to help our clients join the dots.

In another webinar,307 a philanthropy advisor in a multi-family office expressed the moral function of advisors in philanthropy advice, as follows:

And I think, as an advisor (...), we don’t want to be in a position in a year’s time where our clients come back to us and go, “Well, why didn’t you give us the advice? Why didn’t you, sort of, prick our moral conscience and help our compassing in going through this process?

In summary, the findings suggest that PhAds instrumentalised the pandemic and narratives of morality and agency, to legitimise their role and the role of philanthropic advice services.

306 Webinar 7
307 Webinar 9
These rhetorical strategies echoed those deployed by PhAds, in relation to legitimising the role of philanthropy and philanthropists in pandemic responses. These were extensions of how they foreground the role of advice services in pandemic responses. What was distinctive was how PhAds characterised the sharing of their knowledge and resources in response to the pandemic. Many described the necessity of sharing information openly and presenting their advice in relation to social impact claims, thus ensuring that philanthropic responses to the pandemic were effective, according to their understanding of effectiveness.

7.6 The “Opportunity” of the Pandemic for Philanthropy and PhAds

Alongside philanthropic responses, revealing how PhAds reinforced the link between philanthropic advice and better philanthropy, many PhAds also characterised the pandemic as an opportunity. Some described this in relation to the relevancy and necessity of their services, thereby increasing the demand thereof. For example, in a webinar, the director of a philanthropy intermediary network and trustee of a foundation, explicitly encouraged philanthropy professionals to view this as a time to engage clients into philanthropy:

\[\text{This is our generation's war and therefore will be marked out by how we respond, and therefore they want to join in, but really struggle to know how, because they have not been, historically, major philanthropists, but they have the capacity. I really hope we can turn this from crisis into opportunity from a philanthropy point of view.}\]

When describing what philanthropists should do, PhAds emphasised the pandemic as an opportunity for them to take up a more active role in philanthropy. For example, The New Philanthropy Capital Report goes on to, more explicitly, emphasise the role they believe philanthropists should have in defining the social impact of their philanthropy during and after the pandemic:

\[\text{As well as mitigating the negative impacts of Covid-19 on charities and communities, funders have an opportunity to support the positive shifts that could occur at this time of disruption - both in terms of the funding ecosystem itself and for the issues charities are confronting. (emphasis added)}\]

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308 Webinar 6
Other PhAds described the pandemic as an opportunity to strengthen philanthropy advice services and relationships between clients and their firms (e.g. building up client base). In other words, the opportunity was also framed by some PhAds as an opportunity to expand philanthropic advice services of their businesses. Handbooks and guides thus not only shared advice and resources for clients, but also, promoted their services. J.P. Morgan Chase’s “Guide to Giving”, states:\footnote{Document 6}

We encourage you to use this guide to refine your intentions. As you do, J.P. Morgan Chase will be here to support you on your philanthropic journey.

Not only was the bank promoting their philanthropy advice services, but also, linking the credibility of these services with the experience of “the bank” as a philanthropic actor. The guide\footnote{Document 6} goes on to further state:

These best practices and resources draw on the work of clients, experts in the non-profit sector, our long experience in philanthropic advisory and J.P. Morgan Chase’s own US$50 million global philanthropic commitment to address the challenges of Covid-19. The pandemic response presents a range of opportunities in which to invest, from the initial healthcare needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized to a comprehensive set of longer-term systemic issues.

The opportunity for advisors was thus built into how they leveraged the pandemic to reinforce their legitimacy and role, and on what basis. The personalisation of the bank through philanthropy services, by encouraging client giving and corporate giving, gives the impression of collegiality and collaboration between the bank and clients working alongside each other to respond to the pandemic. The pandemic was then leveraged to get closer to clients, improve the reputation of the firm and expand philanthropic services.

In another example, UBS not only encouraged philanthropic giving generally, but also, explicitly to their own foundation. The UBS Optimus Foundation website\footnote{https://www.ubs.com/global/en/ubs-society/philanthropy/blog/2020/better-time-to-give.html (accessed April 2023)} included the following on a blog:

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We're in the midst of an unprecedented crisis that is affecting all our lives in ways we could never have predicted. The Covid-19 Coronavirus pandemic is truly global and if we are to see an end to it, our response must be global too. That’s why we’re launching the UBS Optimus Foundation Covid-19 Response Fund. If you want to give it your support and help contain the outbreak, we’d like to invite you to team up with us. You donate, we match 10% of your donation.

Here, UBS highlights their philanthropic efforts as the “business”, with the bank acting as a partner to clients in their philanthropy. Echoing the philanthropy services offered by the Wealth Management UK branch, whose philanthropy services website313 states, “Together we can change the world. Want to change the world? So do we.”

These echo the sentiments of the vignette at the top of the chapter, where the co-founder of The Conduit, Van Zyl, noted how the pandemic galvanized individuals to have more “purpose” in creating “solutions”.

In a webinar,314 a PhAd in financial services characterised the pandemic as an opportunity for philanthropists to be protagonists in pandemic responses:

I've worked in philanthropy for 25 years plus and philanthropy has always, kind of, been a dirty word in most circles. And I feel that this is a really exciting time in terms of philanthropy being celebrated for the first time in the UK. And what I think or I'm hoping will be an outcome of this, is that that celebration of what's going on and the outcomes will lead to philanthropists being more out and proud about their giving and being that very modern word and becoming influencers. And I think that’s something. If we can change the culture of philanthropy, as a result of the pandemic, by bringing in new funders and being more proud as a nation of what we could do philanthropically, then I think that's a really fabulous gift that will mean that the next generation will find it easier to find their peers, so they're not as isolated in their giving and not to be embarrassed about giving to charity and having made money. (emphasis added)

These framings advocate that philanthropists play an active role in pandemic responses and should be encouraged to do more in the immediate and longer term. The quote demonstrates that during the pandemic, some PhAds promoted the idea of philanthropists as protagonists who deserve recognition and celebration. The quote also illustrates, somewhat, how they

314 Webinar 9
promoted themselves and their services during the pandemic, by encouraging clients to do the “right thing” and that these same clients should be celebrated for being moral and responsible wealthy people through this time of crisis. The pandemic responses highlighted how PhAds described positive wealth identities, positioning themselves as allies and cheerleaders for their clients.

7.7 The Tensions of Philanthropy Advice in Covid-19 Responses

The pandemic added to understandings of how PhAds framed their role in maximising benefit for all (explored in chapter six, section four), by revealing some of the pre-existing tensions they face when navigating client relationships and advice. These tensions revolve around key themes, including the professional neutrality of advisors, urgency of the crises, wealth maximisation and philanthropic giving, and managing clients’ emotions.

One way these tensions expressed themselves was how PhAds navigated the promotion of philanthropic giving at a time when their clients may have been less inclined to give away money, with the reasons for this primarily attributed to the broader political and economic uncertainty caused by the pandemic. The responses of PhAds to the pandemic exposed pre-existing tensions in regard to their professional neutrality. In a webinar, a PhAd and solicitor also described the delicate dynamics she experienced with clients and her role as an advisor in supporting them, while also promoting philanthropic giving:

I think these are extraordinary times and I think it is the right thing for advisors to be checking in proactively with clients. Obviously, it’s sensitive how you do it. You don’t want to be intrusive to their situation or what they’re up to. And you know you certainly don’t want to say, “Hey, how’s it going? In this crisis what are you giving to?” You know, I wouldn’t go that far.

In another example of how PhAds explained the urgency of the pandemic and compromising to business as usual, a former wealth manager and director of an impact investment firm stated in a webinar:

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315 Webinar 1
316 Webinar 1
I do think that we’re in circumstances in which people need to lighten up a bit on their own wealth optimum maximisation and start to think more about the urgency and some of the things that are happening. And I think the philanthropy part of this is making sure you get capital to worthy organisations quickly. (...) We all have to respond really, really quickly here. (emphasis added)

Here, PhAds characterise conflicting priorities between professional neutrality and urgency. This highlighted the differences between how they previously presented philanthropy as mutually beneficial and harmonious for clients, and subsequently, with this framing disrupted by the pandemic, highlighted the incompatibility between wealth maximisation and philanthropic giving. The quote exemplifies how many PhAds expressed an obligation to encourage more giving, whilst also, needing to not undermine their clients’ wealth interests. This revealed that the mutually beneficial framing of philanthropy, the win-win, was considered more difficult to navigate.

Similarly, a PhAd and solicitor specialising in philanthropy, reflected during a webinar317 on the role advisors describe for themselves in regard to neutrality, advocating for advisors to “take a stand”, despite them having a “studied neutrality” when speaking to clients:

Probably like most of you advisors, I am very emphatically cause neutral, you know, with my clients. (...) But this really is a situation, I think, where we are going to see things get quite bad. And I am really encouraging clients, even in a way that I might not normally do. (...) I want to actually encourage them to do something. I don’t think that means that anyone, any foundation or individual donor needs to move away from their priorities. I think that we, as advisors, need to be clear about that. You don’t need to start funding something you wouldn’t have funded before, but (...) do fund those organisations you do feel good about. (emphasis added)

As these quotes indicate, there is a careful line PhAds tread between maintaining neutrality and imparting to their clients the urgency and potential impact of their philanthropic giving. Importantly, PhAds such as the one quoted above, link these processes to the emotional effects on clients, i.e. advising to fund those organisations that donors will feel good about. As explored in greater detail below, the pandemic ushered in a period of crisis that PhAds

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317 Webinar 1
drew on as a moment of deepening tensions in their role as brokers for good causes, whilst having to recognise they, ultimately, serve the interests of their clients.

In a webinar,318 a PhAd and solicitor characterised her concerns about the maximisation of wealth, as such:

I am fearful that market performance may mean that some funders will try and retrench and pull back funding. And, of course, that would just be disastrous for vulnerable people and for the sector right now.

The framing of urgency by advisors, the need to get philanthropists to give proportionally to that need, results in some PhAds questioning their role in that process, particularly around “maximising impact” and reconciling that with other aspects of their role. The specific prioritisation dilemmas emerged in particularly acute form for wealth advisors (whose role as philanthropy advisors is a secondary function), as their role in maximising the wealth of their clients was in contradiction with their role in maximising the philanthropy of their client.

The role of the advisors, to act as a form of moral conscience of their clients, was also prominent in the data, in keeping with previous characterisations of the role of philanthropy advisors. In a webinar,319 a philanthropy advisor in a multi-family office describes the tensions in her role, in relation to inaction in ensuring clients live up to their values (the values of the client). She states:

Because, inevitably, we’re all recalibrating, we’re all thinking about what our values are, what’s important to us in life. And I think, as an advisor within the space, whether it's as a wealth advisor or as a private client lawyer or an accountant working with a high-net-worth, we have a real moral obligation, as well as a professional obligation to be having these sometimes-difficult conversations. (emphasis added)

A PhAd at a bank described the role of PhAds:320

It’s to make sure that [Covid response funds] get put in front of the right clients. That

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318 Webinar 1
319 Webinar 9
320 Webinar 10
doesn’t mean that we might necessarily give them the usual level of advice. So, it might not be discretionary advice, but things like the Big Society Capital Response Fund should certainly be put in front of the larger foundations and the family office clients that we all have in our client banks. And I think we need to be quite brave on this, actually, because it could make a massive difference. (emphasis added)

The quote here reveals the tension between discretionary advice and promoting a specific fund to clients.

Note the characterisation of being willing to promote the response to the Covid-19 crisis as one of bravery. Such purported boldness was encouraged also in the context of promoting philanthropy or suggesting that clients not think about profit maximisation. This also demonstrates the ways in which PhAds adapted their norms to more actively encourage their clients to give philanthropically. Given that PhAds characterised their role in enabling clients to give philanthropically, the pandemic responses reveal the tensions that PhAds face with clients, whereby they promote philanthropic giving, but do not pressure clients to do so. Ultimately, many PhAds describe being beholden to ensuring their clients felt comfortable first and foremost, and would not provide advice or promote philanthropic giving that would jeopardise the relationship with their clients.

The ways in which many PhAds framed the urgency of need of the pandemic, revealed how they, in their advisory relationship with clients, feel limited in what they can promote and to what degree they can encourage clients to be philanthropic, in the same ways that advisors described their role as being non-threatening to their clients in chapter two. That philanthropy advice continues to be non-threatening, adding to our understandings of the contradictions that PhAds navigate. On the one hand, they emphasise the important role that philanthropy advice plays in promoting and supporting philanthropic responses in the pandemic. On the other hand, PhAds describe their bounded agency and limitation in actually influencing clients.

In another webinar,321 a PhAd and solicitor reflects on her position to her clients:

321 Webinar 1
I certainly am getting in touch with clients that I know, you know, have DAFS,\textsuperscript{322} have foundations, letting them know that we’re there and sharing some resource with them. I think that is certainly worth doing. I wouldn’t like myself, personally, to look back at this time and think that I had some access to folks who could do it, a bit of something, but I didn’t do something with that. So, in the same way that I’m reaching, you know, into my own pocket and putting into, you know, charitable relief causes that I think are worthwhile and impactful, I’m trying to be a lever for that for clients. It is challenging and it’s sensitive. (emphasis added)

This is another example of pandemic responses revealing the tension PhAds face in navigating the maximising of benefits for their clients and maximising the philanthropic giving (and subsequent assumed public benefit).

Several PhAds also describe managing to increase philanthropy giving for public benefit, and to encourage clients, so that they will feel good (managing wealth and anxiety of clients). In a webinar,\textsuperscript{323} a researcher and PhAd in financial services described the role advisors play in framing the anxieties of clients over their wealth, in relation to broader economic precarity resulting from the crisis. He describes the wealth anxieties, as such:

It's not just your current personality or emotional situation. It's also your current wealth situation. And in times like this, when many people are seeing income streams dry up, when many people, well, we're all sequestered away, we naturally, I think, start to think shorter term and think closer to home and we think about personal resilience and family resilience and protecting ourselves. There's a lot of people who, in better times, might be easy donors, who right now are thinking, sort of, a version of the Augustine prayer. Lord, make me chaste, but not yet. I want to do good with my wealth, but right now, my focus is more on my family and my personal security. And we have to recognise these as genuine issues amongst donators or investors, because unless we talk people through that anxiety, it's very difficult to get them to the point where they are comfortable to donate money or comfortable to invest. (emphasis added)

Additionally, the pandemic responses extended how PhAds emphasise the importance of managing clients' emotions, and how they describe their role as wealth therapists is echoed in this quote, with the PhAd describing philanthropic advice as talking people “through that anxiety”. However, these pandemic responses added to previous depictions of these

\textsuperscript{322} Donor Advised Funds (See glossary for definition)
\textsuperscript{323} Webinar 6
anxieties, demonstrating that PhAds perceived their limited agency in influencing their clients.

In many ways, the pandemic responses brought visibility to pre-existing tensions within philanthropic advice, whereby philanthropy advice centres the donor and prioritises and foregrounds their clients' emotional and economic concerns. Ultimately, PhAds are accountable to their clients. Foregrounding the perceived social outcomes of philanthropy and philanthropy impact is advanced obscuring of the business model of philanthropy advice, one in which PhAds sell philanthropic products and services to elite clients: philanthropists themselves. As such, much of the evidence of the emotional well-being of the philanthropist reinforced the narratives of PhAds encouraging clients to become philanthropic, on the basis that this will create social benefit. However, this social benefit is defined and determined by the clients, which may not necessarily align with the needs or priorities of the wider community. The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the tensions within elite philanthropy, as philanthropic advisors strategically used the crisis to legitimise their roles and the actions of their elite clients. This strategic use of the pandemic by PhAds to leverage philanthropic agency, has shed light on the inherent tensions within elite philanthropy, adding understandings of how PhAds self-legitimise and make meaning of their role.

Overall, the Covid-19 pandemic has exposed the rhetorical strategies used by PhAds to legitimise elite philanthropic responses to the pandemic, while at the same time, these pandemic responses have highlighted tensions within the role of philanthropy advisors in responding to the crisis.

7.8 Conclusion and Discussion

Chapter seven examined what the responses of PhAds to the pandemic revealed, in the context of how they framed the role of philanthropy, the role of philanthropists (their clients) and the role that PhAds should play. This analysis was based on materials that PhAds produced during the outset of the pandemic, including training materials for advisors, guidebooks for philanthropists, as well as webinars and public materials. This analysis brings visibility to how PhAds understand, promote and justify the role of their clients and
themselves. This chapter demonstrates how different practices, carried out by PhAds and implemented due to a new sense of urgency, resulted in more hyperbolic presentations of “heroic philanthropists”.

Their promotion of elite philanthropy and their services during the Covid-19 crisis helped make their legitimacy claims newly visible. This was made most apparent by the outpouring of newsletters and guides from these intermediaries and philanthropy advisors. In addition, the public streaming and recording of online sessions (that prior to the pandemic were closed, members-only events), offered better access for the researcher to understand how PhAds understand their role as promoting knowledge sharing and exchange. At the same time, it also demonstrated the tensions within these organisations concerning legitimacy claims. Importantly, what this visibility provided was an opportunity to examine what knowledge was produced, as well as by whom and for whom. Examining what material was made public or not and in a time of crisis, and how that was shared, is illuminating in regard to how these advisors promote their services. I argue that examining these materials deepens our understandings of how PhAds understand and present their own work and construct professional self-legitimacy of PhAds and their clients, as well as the legitimacy of elite philanthropy overall.

My findings suggest that many PhAds emphasised the role of wealthy clients to fill gaps in government provision, urging these individuals to make use of their sense of powerful agency to act on behalf of the interests of society, at large. Webinars, handbooks and written materials suggest that many PhAds emphasised the role of elites to take action in the pandemic, fill gaps that the government was not and emphasises the agency of these individuals to act on behalf of society, at large. This reflects other claims in philanthropy that legitimacy is constructed by philanthropists in relation to the state, with philanthropy filling a gap or supplementing the state (Bishop and Green 2008; Reich 2018). This was emphasised through capitalistic framings of urgency, with clients being encouraged to decide which charities would survive, echoing the concerns of the legitimisation of donor-control (see Daly 2012; Schervish 2003; Nickel and Eikenberry 2010; Eikenberry and Mirabella 2018). This reflects the centring of donors as heroes and agents of change within much of the materials produced to encourage philanthropic giving and that the role of philanthropy advice is to
encourage “more and better” elite philanthropic giving. This thesis has argued that both trends - of philanthropy filling a gap vis-à-vis the state and capitalist framings of urgency - are not only an extension of donor-control within debates of the legitimacy of philanthropy, but also, contribute to a normalisation of discourses on the role of capitalist wealth and wealthy people, and elite institutions as sources of “good” (Odendahl 1990; Ostrower 1995) that rely on individual morality and action (Kohl-Arenas 2016; Sklar and Glucksberg 2021).

At the time of writing, there is nascent research published on the impacts of Covid-19 on elite philanthropy. Initial research has focused on the outputs of elite philanthropy and examines philanthropy in the context of other humanitarian crises responses. Patil’s (2021) research focuses on the role of tech donors in education responses, homing in on agenda setting and the implications of for-profit philanthropy. They argue that there was an unprecedented philanthropic response of the technology sector to Covid-19. With both companies and individuals within Big Tech advancing philanthropic agendas based on unique donor logic in the US, particularly within the education sphere. They specifically focus on the window of opportunity by for-profit philanthropists. The article, while raising questions about donor logics, relies on public documents of tech companies and does not draw on practitioner experiences or even interviews with philanthropists, thereby only providing a limited understanding of how practitioners understand and navigate their responses to the crisis. In another example, Torpey et al. (2021) examine the charitable giving of tech elite in response to the pandemic, comparing the profits made by big tech firms to their philanthropic giving and noting that the biggest “winners” of the pandemic, in terms of profits, did not correlate with an increase in philanthropic giving.

Sklair and Gilbert’s (2022) work reflects on the role of philanthropy in “de-risking” the state for development of Covid-19 vaccines. In particular, their analysis of the Gates Foundation’s donation as an alternative to challenging IP rights, highlights the consequences of the promotion and potential dangers of over-promotion, as well as philanthropy’s ability to shape pandemic responses. Their work also highlights the role of foundations in impact investing, focusing on COVAX (the Covid-19 vaccines global access initiative). This response platformed a response, centred on “blended finance” and “social bonds”, to address the gaps in funding required to meet global development agendas, rather than supporting the proposal for a
temporary waiver to pharmaceutical patent rights. These studies point to how elite philanthropy gained increased attention at the outbreak of the pandemic, the influence it had on pandemic responses (Torpey et al. 2021) and in what ways (Patil 2021). They further point to the consequences for agenda setting in the crisis responses, what forms of philanthropic action were encouraged and the basis thereof (Sklair and Gilbert 2022).

This chapter contributes to this nascent literature by focusing not on the outcomes of the philanthropic responses, but on how elite philanthropy practitioners framed and described their own role in pandemic responses. It highlights the continuity of certain pre-pandemic impact claims (that donors should play an important role in crises responses) and that the role of PhAds was to enable such philanthropic giving. Patil (2021) argues that the disaster philanthropy of tech donors was presented as a window of opportunity for elite donors to enact change in public education. While this is something that Patil describes as an implication, my research evidences how the “opportunity” of the pandemic was part of the rhetorical strategies deployed by PhAds in webinars and written materials. A main contribution of this chapter is evidencing the rhetorical strategies deployed by PhAds to justify and legitimise their perceived importance of philanthropy, philanthropists and critically, philanthropic advice in the context of crises responses.

What did this analysis add to understandings of PhAds? Examining who produced materials for whom can help provide insights into the institutional relations of elite philanthropy. My findings suggest that PhAds focused on mobilising both their clients and other professional advisors. With clients, the data suggests that PhAds promoted philanthropic giving through handbooks and materials that were made available for clients and for the general public. The materials made public often addressed elite clients and highlighted the role of philanthropy advice services, thereby constructing self-legitimacy and donor legitimacy within philanthropic responses. That most PhAds don't have oversight into the outcomes of their advice before the pandemic, they similarly lacked oversight in the philanthropic responses to Covid-19, continuing the focus on donors as a means to an end, whilst also, promoting their services. This continued to highlight how PhAds understand their own work to promoting more philanthropy, whilst also, leveraging the pandemic to promote donor-centred and donor-controlled philanthropy, normalising elites in philanthropic responses and potentially,
raising questions about the implications of promoting philanthropic giving by promoting specific elite philanthropic identities.

Sklair and Gilbert’s (2022) work on the role of philanthropy in “de-risking” the state for development of Covid-19 vaccines, overlaps with arguments presented in these findings, in the sense that philanthropy is justified as a means of “filling the innovation gap”. Their research focuses more explicitly on the financialisation of development, where they build on Mitchell and Sparke’s (2015) understanding of philanthropy’s role “as a form of market foster care, designed to compensate for the failures of both market and state to drive development through the Washington Consensus”. In my research, I found that PhAds were not explicitly arguing for market-based interventions in philanthropy, rather maintaining the donor-defined social impact, outlined in chapter six. Instead, many PhAds emphasised different forms of philanthropic giving and vehicles. However, many posited that the role of philanthropy is one to “fill the gaps”, suggesting philanthropy is a part of a functioning market economy which can effectively meet the needs of the public. That this is justified on the basis of encouraging more philanthropy, and on the basis that philanthropy is framed as uniquely positioned to respond, reinforces philanthropic exceptionalism (Eyre 2021).

This capitalistic and individualistic framework was reflected in the discourses surrounding Covid-19 responses, that emphasise the role of elites in identifying which charities would “survive”. The role of PhAds, at that time, was to organise a form of triage: Donors were not only encouraged to get involved, but to frame the pandemic response as “survival of the fittest”. This reflected capitalistic understandings of the role of philanthropy and philanthropists, with philanthropists being framed as potential “heroes” who could “save” charities from going under on behalf of society and the greater public good. PhAds have long relied on individualistic “hero” narratives of social change to sell their services to clients or, in their framing, encourage clients towards philanthropic action, but this became even more prominent during the pandemic.

The chapter highlights how the crisis has provided PhAds with an opportunity to strategically appropriate the pandemic as a legitimising strategy for themselves as professionals, and for elite donors. Many PhAds repeatedly promoted the involvement and action of philanthropists
and through moral appeals, encouraged a response of noblesse oblige. In webinars and written materials alike, many PhAds called for philanthropists to use their wealth to respond to the crisis. This framing positioned philanthropists as key actors in addressing the pandemic and promoting social good, thus enhancing their public image and legitimising their role in society. Moreover, this reflects the concerns related to donor-centred philanthropy and how PhAds justified donor-control on the basis that philanthropy leads to social impact. The pandemic responses foregrounded this logic, revealing that PhAds promote elite philanthropic giving to reinforce the language of hyperagency of donors (Schervish 2003).

Lastly, the pandemic also highlighted the tensions associated with the role of PhAds, brought about by demonstrating their limited agency in both influencing clients and how they understand professional neutrality, while serving the clients’ needs above all. This equally highlights how the discourses of PhAds that are related to social impact, construct a role of elites in social change that normalises ideas of them as agents of change and extends their hyperagency, by encouraging world-building exercises through their philanthropy. This reflects critiques of elite philanthropy in the literature that raise concerns over donor-control.

The following concluding chapter will reflect on the key findings and contributions of the empirical chapters, revisit the research questions and reflect on the limitations of this work and directions for future research.
Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

Opening the “black box” of elite philanthropy has been a central concern of this project. Building on existing research in critical philanthropic studies and a wealth of novel empirical data, this thesis has sought to challenge existing scholarly narratives and assumptions about the nature of elite philanthropy and instead, develops a critical lens through which we can examine the practices of, and processes around, elite philanthropy through PhAds. Simultaneously, it has crafted a purposeful and distinctive methodological contribution, as a result of the challenges and complexities of undertaking this research as an “insider/outsider” to philanthropic advice practices. In this final chapter of the thesis, I elaborate on these contributions in greater depth, focusing on the crucial role of legitimisation in making sense of the PhAd position and its practices.

As noted in chapter two, little is known about what informs these practices and processes, contributing to the perpetuation of the “black box” of elite philanthropy. While increased scrutiny and critiques of the role of elite philanthropy have risen in prominence (Bernholz 2016), the practices and process of elite philanthropy often remain obscured, due to the opaque nature of the decision-making processes and the limited public oversight of the activities of philanthropic organisations (Jung and Harrow 2015). This lack of transparency has led to questions about the motives and values of philanthropic donors and the extent to which they are truly advancing the public interest, particularly given elite philanthropy is intimately bound up with the exercise of power by elites (Maclean et al. 2021). Moreover, questions of legitimacy within elite philanthropy are fundamental to questions of distributions of wealth and the role of elite philanthropy. In particular, philanthropy can be seen as a tool to not only legitimise wealth and status as part of elite reproduction (Hay and Muller 2014; Sklair and Glucksberg 2021), but also, to re-entrench elite power (Kuldoa 2017; McGoey and Thiel 2018).

To date, critical elite philanthropy research has overlooked the role of philanthropic advisors in several ways. Firstly, by focusing primarily on the motivations and role of philanthropists in
elite philanthropy, it has obscured the motivation, role and practices of other key players, namely, intermediaries. Secondly, examining elite philanthropy primarily within the settings of charitable foundations, has meant that elite philanthropic practices in other institutional contexts have been neglected. As outlined in the introduction, philanthropic advising services have grown and become increasingly professionalised, particularly within the financial and wealth industries, raising questions about the emergent role of professional advisors in philanthropy (Beeston and Breeze 2023; Harrington 2021; Sklair and Glucksberg 2021).

Arguing that PhAds offer a novel and productive lens for enhancing and deepening our understandings of elite philanthropic practices, this project opened the “black box” of elite philanthropy through three central questions:

1. What is the role of PhAds in elite philanthropy?
2. How do PhAds shape narratives of legitimacy within elite philanthropic practices?
3. What can analysing the role of PhAds, in the context of pandemic responses, add to existing understandings of elite philanthropy?

The answers to these questions contribute new knowledge about the roles that PhAds play and how philanthropic advising practices embed a donor-centred, rather than a recipient-centred focus in the world of elite philanthropy. By examining the everyday practices deployed by PhAds to market their services and promote the uptake of elite philanthropy, I contribute key insights into the ways that elite philanthropy is legitimised in these spaces. A donor-centred focus is justified on the basis of a particular theory of change, whereby the construction of positive elite identities is bound into the logic of “better and more” philanthropy, and importantly, is seen as a vital precursor for “better and more” philanthropy.

This, firstly, adds to existing literature by providing insights into the roles of PhAds. As I discuss in the literature review, existing literature on philanthropy advisors is often fragmented, focusing on various, distinct aspects and failing to provide a comprehensive synthesis. Research that only focuses on the role of elite philanthropists tends to neglect the myriad of actors that contribute to the development and delivery of elite philanthropic practices. Elite philanthropic research that treats elite philanthropy as a monolith, inhibits our
understandings of the decision-making processes that constitute these practices and the agents behind them. Moreover, much of the literature focuses on normative debates about the nature of philanthropy, as well as the motivation of philanthropists (as discussed in chapter two, section 2.2). I have demonstrated how such an approach is limited insofar as it struggles to get at the empirical reality of the world of elite philanthropy, missing much of the struggle, negotiation and power dynamics that make up these activities. In other words, it is the who, the what and the why of elite philanthropic practices, occurring even before any money is given away, that require greater scrutiny. This thesis has contributed to these efforts by providing robust empirical research focusing on these practices, demonstrated by the consistency of findings despite the variety of actors interviewed and included in the study exemplified in Table 3 and Table 4. The surprising consistency of findings between PhAds in different institutional locations or in different roles informs the basis of the study’s conceptualisation of PhAds across these different setting as BIBS and enablers of elite philanthropy.

However, one of the main challenges in addressing the role of PhAds in elite philanthropy is precisely, the difficulty of attribution. PhAds often do not have any oversight over the outputs of their clients’ philanthropic giving, resulting in issues over the extent to which PhAds influence clients, which I discuss further in section 8.3. Accordingly, it is precisely the obscurity of the legitimising practices and processes of elite philanthropy that this research has addressed by turning to PhAds, illuminating the ways in which these actors understand themselves and the roles they take on within the elite philanthropy industry.

Using PhAds as a lens contributes to conceptual understandings of legitimising practices within elite philanthropy, because of how they describe their role in shaping elite philanthropic practices toward “better and more” giving. This project adds to existing literature by providing insights into how those working within elite philanthropy understand their role, the role of philanthropists and elite philanthropy itself. By deeply examining legitimising practices within elite philanthropy through PhAds, this research enables not only greater understanding of the emergent field of philanthropy advising, but also, the meaning making within practices, processes, justifications and rationale used by PhAds. As noted in chapter two, section 2.3, the key trends in critical elite philanthropy literature are evaluative
approaches to legitimacy (Lambin and Surrender 2021; McGoey 2015; Harman 2016; Youde 2019), donor-controlled philanthropy from the perspective of philanthropists themselves or foundation staff (Kohl-Arenas 2016; Maclean et al. 2020) or in the context of the role of philanthropy in the legitimisation of wealth and positive elite identities (Higgins 2021; Maclean et al. 2011; Sherman 2017). I have diverged from these approaches in my research by closely examining PhAds, focusing on legitimisation of PhAds as a set of embedded social practices deployed by PhAds, to legitimise themselves as an emergent professional field.

The remainder of this concluding chapter revisits these central contributions in more depth and provides a synthesis through the framework of legitimisation. It does so by reflecting how concepts of legitimacy are constituted by PhAds to generate common logics, meanings and identities (Creed et al. 2002) in their philanthropic advice services. In section 8.2, I recap my key findings and contributions in response to the research questions. I also reflect on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the project and my methodological contributions. In section 8.3, I discuss the dilemmas of the research process, focusing on the justification of my choices related to the scope of the project (such as reliance on self-reporting) and the consequences of my approach towards, for example, anonymisation. Section 8.4 considers directions for future research. The thesis, which has captured the emergence of the professional field of PhAds and their role as key players in elite philanthropy, provides a foundation upon which further academic scrutiny can be based. I suggest three foci: further categorisation of the work of PhAds, especially around boundary spanning; efforts to map and evaluate the outputs of philanthropic advice; and attention paid to new constituencies in relation to “next gen” clients.

8.2 Key Findings and Contributions Through the Lens of Legitimisation

As I explored in chapters five, six and seven, the central concern around which my thesis revolved was the practices of legitimisation. Below, I summarise three key sites through which legitimisation practices are illuminated in my research.
8.2.1 The Role of PhAds and Legitimisation Within Elite Philanthropic Practice

The Role of PhAds as BIBS in Elite Philanthropy: A Way Forward

This is the first academic study centred on the experiences and practices of PhAds. PhAds are often on the periphery of other studies or merely mentioned in passing, with a suggestion for further investigation (see chapter two, section 2.2). Alternatively, they are considered together with other sorts of philanthropic practitioners (Jung et al. 2016; Ostrander 2007; Haydon et al. 2021) or as part of overarching discourse on wealth industry practitioners and inheritance processes, without their distinct role being subject to in-depth scrutiny (Hay and Muller 2014; Harrington 2016; Higgins 2021; Sklair and Glucksberg 2021).

My research has not only illuminated the everyday worlds of PhAds, but has focused, primarily, on the legitimacy work undertaken by PhAds within elite philanthropy. To do so, in chapter four I applied a typology of PhAds as brokers, intermediaries and boundary spanners. This typology (borrowed from Neal et al. 2022) offers a fruitful new resource for scholars in critical philanthropy studies. It provides a means to categorise PhAds as distinct actors within elite philanthropy, highlighting the specific sub-roles they undertake. Consequently, this typology facilitates a fresh dialogue amongst elite philanthropy researchers surrounding the multi-faceted roles of PhAds and the roles played by elite actors in philanthropy. Because of the broad range of institutional locations and services provided and the lack of professionally recognised standards for PhAds, considering them as BIBS allows for crucial insights into how philanthropy advice services facilitate the day-to-day functioning and expansion of elite philanthropy across and between different roles, institutional locations and networks. For these reasons, understanding PhAds as BIBS enables a more expansive understanding of their role, beyond simply providing services to clients. By developing a fine-grained analysis of the diverse types of PhAds, their roles and their practices, the thesis argues that PhAds should be perceived as enablers of elite philanthropy, thereby enhancing our comprehension of elite philanthropy practices and illuminating how these are embedded within the legitimising accounts of PhAds, discussed below.

Professional Self-Legitimisation of PhDs and Legitimisation of Elite Philanthropy
While studying the role of PhAds in elite philanthropic practices is a central contribution of this thesis, my research also sheds light on the ways in which PhAds’ self-legitimisation is intimately connected to the legitimisation of elite philanthropy and philanthropists. This emphasis, therefore, helps to reveal the dual legitimising role of PhAds. Firstly, with regard to self-legitimisation and the way they justify the need and role for their services and their role, and secondly, with regard to the ways PhAds legitimise elite philanthropy and philanthropists through this work. Examining PhAds’ roles in these legitimisation practices thus underpins many of the big debates in elite philanthropy. By closely examining the logics of those within elite philanthropy, we can unpack conceptualisations and, importantly, rationales of donor-centred philanthropic practices and the commodification of philanthropy through advice services. For example, their boundary spanning role described in chapter four highlights the ways many PhAds explicitly describe their role in trying to shape and influence elite philanthropic practice.

Below, I revisit how PhAds shape narratives of legitimacy, focusing on four points. Firstly, I discussed the role many PhAds play in helping elite philanthropists to understand themselves as legitimate actors, as well as agents of change (as described in chapter five). Secondly, I revisit the legitimising narratives of impact claims attributed to philanthropic advice processes, explored in chapter six, section 6.3. Thirdly, I examine the self-described role of PhAds as “wealth therapists” and the emotional labour embedded within philanthropic advice practices, evidenced in chapter five, section 5.4, which also reflects another aspect of their boundary spanning role between professional and personal and strategic advice, alongside the socio-emotional aspects of their roles. The fourth and last point explores the rhetorical strategies deployed by PhAds in the learning journey, explored in chapter five.

First, PhAds primarily seek to enable elite philanthropists to understand themselves as legitimate actors, acting on behalf and in the name of public good ( chapters six and seven). The “hyperagency” (Schervish 2003) assumed by elites is not only a direct consequence of their wealth, but is explicitly expanded and normalised in elite philanthropic processes. Hyperagency is something that PhAds harness and legitimise in their philanthropic advice as a way of leveraging elite power “to do good”. I have demonstrated how donor hyperagency
and donor-centred philanthropy is embedded within advising processes: clients are intentionally encouraged to “feel good” about their giving, as their wealth can be meaningfully “used for good”. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, we see a ramping up in relation to the legitimising discourses employed by PhAds, to construct a role of elites in social change that normalises ideas of them as agents of change and extends their hyperagency, by encouraging world-building exercises through their philanthropy. That PhAds explicitly seek to legitimise elite philanthropists, often through positive wealth identities, adds to research on the role of these advisors in promoting positive identities on behalf of their clients, demonstrating that these legitimising narratives do not only come from elite philanthropists, but are introduced and created by PhAds.

Second, the thesis highlights the ways in which elite subjectivities are tied into claims of impact, with the thesis highlighting that many PhAds describe the role of philanthropists in “creating impact” (see table 6 in chapter six). Claims of social impact are key to unlocking the meaning of “giving better and giving more”, as well as the justification of donor-centred advice. I demonstrated how PhAds emphasise the importance of philanthropy in relation to its role in “creating” social impact. Understanding how PhAds rationalise and encourage the philanthropic involvement of their clients, adds a deeper understanding of the logics of elite philanthropy and contributes to understandings of how those within philanthropy construct a normative basis for philanthropy in relation to social impact claims. Chapter six described the different impact claims of PhAds in three ways: firstly, that philanthropists can create social impact; secondly, that wealth is a source of social impact; and finally, that philanthropy advice leads to more social impact.

Thirdly, a key finding of the thesis pertains to the emotional labour described by PhAds, who recognised managing the emotional responses of clients, such as guilt and shame, as an important aspect of their role. PhAds often talked about how their work helps their wealthy clients understand themselves better and provides them with a sense of emotional wellbeing. In so doing, PhAds encourage a form of legitimisation for their clients, in relation to how their clients “should” or “could” feel about themselves and their wealth. These legitimising practices go beyond previously identified discourses of “doing good by doing well” (Porter and Kramer 1999, 2002), but might be termed instead as “doing good by feeling good”. As
discussed in sections 5.4 and 5.6, this showed that one strategy for self-legitimisation amongst PhAds was encouraging positive wealth identities as a metric of a successful advising process. The effect of this strategy (with respect to legitimisation) is not only evident in how philanthropy is used to manage the anxieties and transform them into something “useful” (Sherman 2017, 2021), but that this extends to the philanthropic advising process, even before any money has been given way (or not). Through demonstrating how advisors anticipate, recognise and navigate the emotional responses of their clients and recognise this labour as an important aspect of their role, the thesis indicates the ways in which PhAds’ self-legitimisation is wrapped up in the emotional wellbeing of clients and, in turn, the emotional wellbeing of clients is central to the legitimisation of elite philanthropy. Crucially, this process of PhAds encouraging their clients to design their philanthropy around themselves, their worldviews and their emotional fulfilment, justifies donor-centred philanthropy as a means to an end. As I discussed in chapter six, the idea of philanthropy as a means to an end reflects a rationalisation, whereby the “end justifies the means”. The end here being directly related to their theory of change that focuses on an interior and subjective benefit to the donor, rather than any external public benefit. This framing thus, normalises and legitimises wealth through the idea that elites, again, are able to have “impact” through and because of their wealth.

Finally, as I showed in chapter five, the PhAd-client relationship is exemplified by the “learning journey” as a rhetorical strategy that evidences the intertwining of PhAds’ self-legitimisation and the legitimisation of elite philanthropic practices, more broadly. This reflects the ways that philanthropic identities are acquired and purchased through forms of philanthropic advice, whereby clients pay to learn how to become philanthropists. This also exemplifies the ways philanthropy advice services are sold, not only as a service and a provision of knowledge, but rather also, as educational and transformational experiences for the client. This further embeds the links between their clients and philanthropic identities as key levers for their institutional work, to promote more and better philanthropy and their services. This research of PhAds enables us to tie together critiques of philanthropy and debates about the role thereof, in understanding commodification, emotional labour, self-actualisation and wealth. I argue that PhAds can aid us in understanding how the institution of elite philanthropy works, by understanding their role in producing and reproducing discourses of legitimisation.
**Justifying Donor-centred Practices: A Means to an End?**

The rhetorical strategies of legitimising accounts within the social practice of elite philanthropy are central to how we make sense of the “black box” of elite philanthropy. Chapters four, five and six showed that donors are centred and recentred in PhAd practices, making donor-centred philanthropy a major theme throughout this thesis. This is not surprising, though, as philanthropic advice is a product that is being sold. However, this thesis expands current understandings of donor-centred philanthropy, by foregrounding the reinforcement of donor-centred practices by those agents’ orbiting donors, such as PhAds. By understanding how PhAds view donor-centred practices as a means to an end to achieve social impact, we can gain insights into the meaning-making processes for PhAds and their descriptions of mutual benefit in philanthropy. Ultimately, this provides an understanding of how wealthy elites are framed by PhAds as agents of social change, legitimising their role and embedding their practices within mainstream elite institutions.

The examination of these (self-)legitimising practices contributes to the conceptual debates on donor-centred philanthropy and the circular logics of elite philanthropy, in two ways. First, by demonstrating that legitimising practices are embedded in the PhAd role and self-justification, my research illuminates otherwise-obscured aspects of donor-centred philanthropy bound up in the emotional labour of PhAds. Second, studying these legitimisation processes begins to reveal the circular logics of elite philanthropy practices, foregrounding *philanthropy as a self-legitimising act*. I unpack each of these points below.

Crucially, my research has linked donor-centred philanthropy debates with elite identity formation, commodification of philanthropy and the emergent field of PhAds. That PhAds describe their role in relation to their clients’ “anxieties of affluence” (Sherman 2017), demonstrates that PhAds have identified “making their clients feel good” as a desirable goal for promoting philanthropy. In other words, my findings build on the existing literature by demonstrating how elite philanthropy services reinforce and justify these practices of centring donor emotional wellbeing and donor values, not as an inevitability, but, actually, as
a justifiable and strategic way of doing “more good” with philanthropy – a legitimising practice.

Promotional material for philanthropy advice services and PhAds have made it clear in their accounts throughout this research, that when they have done their job well, it should lead to “more and better” philanthropy. While this thesis does not directly examine the outputs of philanthropy or quantify the extent to which PhAd actions directly contribute to “more” or “better” philanthropy, by looking at the role of PhAds and their practices, it has provided an expanded view of how the cycle of more philanthropy can happen and underscores that PhAds are relevant actors to look at in the continuation of this cycle. In promoting a donor-centred approach in their services, one in which their success is measured in the promotion of philanthropy and the creation of philanthropists, PhAds risk reifying elite power interests through their advice service.

My findings across all four empirical chapters highlight how many PhAds encourage the uptake of philanthropy, on the basis that it helps wealthy people understand themselves better and provides them with a sense of emotional wellbeing. The theory of change for PhAds being that by improving the philanthropic practices of their clients, they create more philanthropy. Critically, what I have argued is that PhAds view the donor as not only the unit of change, but also, as a means to an end. In other words, by benefiting the donor, PhAds suggest that they are encouraging more giving through increasing the agency and capacity of the philanthropist, and then benefitting society through the likely occurrence of more philanthropy.

In chapter six, for example, PhAds describe their theory of change, linking the satisfaction of their clients with the increased uptake and distribution of philanthropy. In this theory of change (described in section 6.3), PhAds explain their role in building the capacity of their clients, so that the philanthropists influence the improvement of philanthropy themselves (“giving better”). At the same time, the satisfaction of clients was often described in relation to the emotional fulfilment and linked with the increased amount of giving (“giving more”). As a result, my thesis has shown how many PhAds emphasise this donor-centred approach as a means of improving philanthropic outcomes (i.e. creating social impact), by focusing
specifically on the philanthropist—a donor-centred practice that not only justifies the centring of the client’s worldview, but one that transforms the influence on the donor as an indirect proxy for social impact.

As a whole, the findings of this thesis suggest that we must rethink donor-centred philanthropy and thus look at this concept, not only in terms of donors as individuals making decisions (reflecting concerns of donor-control), but delve into how they are being asked to decide things and who is presenting them with options. This thesis contributes evidence of how the idea of donor-control is embedded within the practice of philanthropic advising, even in the ways that philanthropists are told to think about themselves (from PhAds), which can create elite subjectivities around feeling good and control over “doing good” for the world. It is also notable that PhAds do not have oversight—they provide philanthropic advice, however there is no monitoring of the outputs of their advice. PhAds often have limited agency in philanthropic decisions (e.g. how much to give or to whom, which remains donor-centred) and it may be that the advice they give for “more and better” philanthropy is because that is all they have control over in their limited agency. In other words, because PhAds have limited, direct outputs that can be monitored (due to donor-centring), this thesis suggests that they might promote a tautology around philanthropy, whereby it is not a means to another outcome, but becomes the end goal in and of itself.

My argument about the circular logic of improving philanthropy through better philanthropists, echoes McGoey’s (2012) critique of the tautological logic of philanthropy, discussed in chapter two. According to this logic, philanthropy perpetuates itself through discourses of self-legitimisation that emphasise its necessity and indispensability. What my research shows is that, in many ways, this logic is also reflected in the self-legitimisation of PhAds—the solution to ineffective philanthropy is more and better philanthropy advice, compounded by the perceived necessity and indispensability of donors. Importantly, this sense of indispensability was intensified as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the ramifications of which I examine in the following section.
8.2.2 Hyperagency, Noblesse Oblige and the Extension of Donor-Control in Covid-19 Responses

A further major contribution of this thesis has been to the emergent research on elite philanthropy during Covid-19, further opening the black box of elite philanthropy. Unlike other nascent literature on the role of elite philanthropic responses to Covid-19, my research focuses on the legitimising practices and justifications for philanthropy, rather than the output of this philanthropy. Thus, the thesis contributes by studying the effects of the pandemic, focusing on the ways PhAds publicly responded to the pandemic, revealing how existing logics and legitimising practices were reinforced. As described in the methodology chapter and chapter seven, the promotion of elite philanthropy and their services during the Covid-19 crisis helped make their legitimacy claims newly visible. Findings from chapter seven suggest that PhAds focused on mobilising both their clients and other professional advisors, to play a bigger role to “fill the gap” of the overburdened state in pandemic responses. The narratives of urgency and the acuteness of the crisis were utilised to legitimise elite philanthropic activities, extending legitimisation of philanthropic individuals through celebratory narratives, as well as encouraging professional advisors to take advantage of the “opportunity” of the pandemic to promote philanthropic advice services. The visibility and public sharing of philanthropic documents (such as guides and specific handbooks for elite philanthropists) were justified alongside the impact claims promoted by PhAds. In opening up their knowledge, PhAds themselves aimed to create more philanthropy and following their logic, more social impact. I argue that examining the materials produced in the context of Covid-19 responses, deepens our understandings of how PhAds understand and present their own work, and construct professional self-legitimacy of PhAds and their clients, as well as the legitimacy of elite philanthropy, overall.

Importantly, what this visibility provided was an opportunity to examine what knowledge was produced, as well as by whom and for whom. By positioning philanthropists as key actors in addressing the pandemic and promoting social good, PhAds enhanced the public image of philanthropists, legitimising their role in society. PhAds repeatedly promoted the involvement and action of philanthropists and through moral appeals, encouraged a response of noblesse oblige. In webinars and written materials alike, many PhAds called for philanthropists to use
their wealth to respond to the crisis. Chapter seven demonstrated how PhAds recentre the agency of philanthropists in the context of Covid-19 responses, encouraging clients to take up roles that expand concepts of donor-control to the entire charitable sector. For example, chapter seven (see section 7.3) described the ways PhAds emphasise the role of philanthropist in identifying which charities would “survive”, whereby donors were encouraged to exercise their hyperagency to “save” charities. This reflected capitalistic understandings of the role of philanthropy and philanthropists, with these wealthy individuals being framed as potential “heroes” on behalf of society and the greater public good. This is an important contribution, as it provides insights into the ways PhAds extended, adapted and, ultimately, furthered the project of elite philanthropy by promoting philanthropy advice services. That PhAds frame the need and urgency of philanthropy action on the basis of an overwhelmed state, speaks to the ways elite action and wealth are normalised as sources of public good. This is important when understanding the legitimisation practices in pandemic responses, as the thesis demonstrates how PhAds normalise the involvement of elite philanthropists in crises responses.

Notably, ideals of noblesse oblige and appeals to individual moral duty were front and centre in legitimising elite philanthropy in pandemic responses and in PhAds’ strategies for galvanising elites into philanthropic action, with the donor-centred aspects of PhAds calling for more philanthropic giving and for these wealthy individuals, as uniquely situated, to make decisions on behalf of “all of us” due to their wealth. Moreover, this reflects the concerns related to donor-centred philanthropy and how PhAds justified donor-control on the basis that philanthropy leads to social impact. The pandemic responses foregrounded this logic, revealing that PhAds promote elite philanthropic giving to reinforce the language of hyperagency of donors in the context of the pandemic. In other words, the time of crisis provided a unique vantage point into legitimising practices of PhAds, highlighting their justifications for philanthropic actions through the celebration of elite philanthropic activities, whilst simultaneously, recentring positive elite identities as a means to an end.
8.2.3 Conceptualisations of Legitimacy in the Context of Philanthropy Advising

In exploring the dynamics of legitimacy, my research substantiates prevailing viewpoints, understanding legitimacy as contested and negotiated highlighting the connections between PhAd’s legitimacy, the legitimacy of their clients as philanthropists, and the overarching legitimacy of elite philanthropy. The section offers a reflection of legitimacy within civil society literature, revisiting these in relation to debates on the recognition of legitimate actors and exploring how the governance practices of these actors influence both their legitimacy and ultimate accountability. I focus on three main ways my project substantiates, extends, and contributes to the existing literature on legitimacy explored in the literature review (section 2.3.1).

Examining elite philanthropy within these conceptualisations of legitimacy raises clear pathways of interrogations related to the legitimacy of actors and their relation to networks and governance and the processes of these. As described in the literature review, legitimacy debates focus on the significance of actors and their influence, emphasising the role of specific actors (the who) in the ongoing social process of legitimisation. This perspective, as outlined by scholars like Suddaby et al. (2017) and Egholm et al. (2020), enables the examination of how actors acquire or lose legitimacy, highlighting the role of agency and power in the negotiation of legitimisation. Furthermore, this conceptualisation of legitimacy extends to broader research on the social and political legitimacy of civil society organisations as pivotal stakeholders. This project has explored the ways that PhAds, as BIBS, construct and negotiate legitimacy not only for themselves but for their clients and philanthropy itself. My findings thus highlight the role of a range of intermediary actors within elite philanthropy and underscore the importance of re-visiting legitimacy as relation in process (see section 2.3.1). In this sense, the legitimacy of elite philanthropy is not determined by its essence or substance, for example as per the evaluative nature of Harman’s critique (2016), but can be defined through its position as a contested entity whereby legitimacy is produced based on a system of relations between actors. Petschow et al. (2005) stress the importance of understanding the actors involved in decision-making processes and highlight the emergence of new networks that legitimise the roles of key stakeholder in agenda setting, highly relevant to research on PhAds and philanthropic intermediaries more broadly. For example, in this
research it highlights the implications for the commodification of philanthropy addressed in previous sections by examining the role of philanthropy advice as a legitimising practice, one through which elite philanthropists, and their advisors, seek additional legitimacy for themselves and their philanthropy. By focusing on the legitimacy of their clients as ‘good’ decision-makers, PhAds reproduce forms of legitimisation for their clients feeding into conceptions of donor-centred philanthropy.

It is worth revisiting Vivienne Schmidt's (2013) concept of throughput legitimacy as a way of thinking about the relationship between processes and legitimacy particularly in relation to accountability, transparency, inclusiveness, and openness. Throughput legitimacy emphasizes the importance of investigating the role of PhAds in decision-making processes to understand the functioning and leverage of legitimacy. My findings highlight the lack of accountability, openness, and transparency within the elite philanthropy advice processes. As described in the literature review, the social construction and normative basis of ‘effectiveness’ equally raise questions over not only what is effective but who gets to decide. This raises particular questions in relation to the representation of goodness and effectiveness by PhAds in relation to their advice, their clients, and their role as ‘neutral’ brokers in this process. If throughput legitimacy provides a way of evaluating the legitimacy of complex processes and procedures occurring within the ‘black box’ of governance processes and the accountability of those making decisions within that process (Schmidt 2013), the role of PhAds within these processes raises concerns around transparency and accountability. This is especially relevant for PhAds given philanthropy advice itself is not often visible and more often than not something that happens ‘behind the scenes’ as described in chapter four. As described in chapter six, PhAds emphasised their role in ‘better and more’ in philanthropy. Their practices of self-legitimising emphasised their legitimacy based on the outputs of their work rather than the processes. The rhetorical focus on output legitimacy (social impact) over throughput legitimacy (the decision-making processes) highlights questions of accountability, especially given most PhAds do not have oversight of the outputs of their philanthropic advice. Thus, thinking through ideas of throughput legitimacy (Schmidt 2013) surfaces the questions of accountability for PhAds and the emergent role of the philanthropy advice industry given the lack of transparency of decision-making processes.
Managerialism is particularly relevant and worth revisiting here to further examine implications of these conceptualisations of legitimacy. As explored in the literature review (section 2.3.2) managerialism, a concept termed by Meyer et al. (2013) speaks to the ways that the ability civil society organisations to secure funding and resources is closely tied to their perceived legitimacy as determined by funders. Thus, funders, such as foundations and philanthropists, play a significant role not only in funding decisions but also in shaping the ways these organisations (e.g., NGOs, charities) strive to meet expectations. My research highlights the role of PhAds within these formulations of managerialism and the potential impacts of donor-legitimising practices within elite philanthropic advice. The enabling of donor control and donor-centred practices as a means to an end echoes the conceptualisation of managerialism and extends it to a broader range of funders. This project does not examine the ways that charities shaping themselves to the donors but notes the role of PhAds in this process in their work as brokers, gatekeepers and boundary spanners. Moreover, managerialism and formulations of legitimacy within this not only have implications of PhAds’ advice on and for charities, but also in terms of shaping their advice to charities on how to better meet, and anticipate, the desires and needs of their clients. Meaning managerialism helps explain the ways PhAds sell their advice related to ‘giving better and giving more.’ This PhD adds to conceptualisations of managerialism by exploring the link between processes of legitimisation not only on charities and dynamics with funders but extends this to PhAds, highlighting the ways these intermediaries tailor and shape their advice to meet the needs of their clients.

In conclusion, this research highlights the relevance of conceptualisation of legitimacy as a contested and relational process to understanding the emergent elite philanthropic advising industry. Most notably, it further emphasises the ways that PhAds understand their role as one focused on the legitimisation of themselves, their clients, and elite philanthropy. These conclusions prompt crucial questions about the legitimacy of actors, their connections to networks and governance, and the underlying processes involved. This project thus contributes to debates in literatures both in terms of practices, focused on the importance of processes expressed through the ‘black box’ of throughput legitimacy, as well as adding perspectives on donor-centred philanthropy as forms and negotiations of legitimisation that
not only speak to the direct legitimacy of donor centred philanthropy as a practice, but
demonstrate how this forms of legitimisation is bound up in the legitimisation of elite
philanthropist and elite philanthropy more broadly. This project adds to existing literature on
conceptualisations of legitimacy by examining these within a previously unexplored context.
By deeply interrogating legitimising practices within elite philanthropy through PhAds, this
research enables not only greater understanding of the meaning making within practices,
processes, justifications and rationale used by PhAds but also adds to a broader base of
research concerned with legitimacy in civil society.

8.2.4 Methodology

Lastly, my thesis adds to methodological debates about positionality and dilemmas of
research as an “insider/outsider”. Questions of access are dominant in elite studies research.
Given my professional experience, my insider/outsider status was fundamental to my
approach to this research. The blurred lines of the insider/outsiderness that create the
“awkwardness” (Roy 2011) for the researcher and ethical challenges of establishing rapport
in order to access the field (described in section 3.2.2), is ethically challenging for multiple
reasons due to muddled boundaries of consent and friendship with a researcher (Duncombe
and Jessop 2011). The vignettes and reflexivity section (chapter three, section 3.3) are thus,
not intended as a kind of cathartic confessional account (Pillow 2003), but to examine what
the kinds of social proximity to these elite spaces (Cousin et al. 2018) contribute to data
collection and analysis.

As described in section 3.3 of chapter three, in rendering the familiar strange, I’ve contributed
to methodological toolkits through the utilisation of extended vignettes, to not only bring
visibility to the research process and adaptation due to the outbreak of Covid-19, but to
address questions of who “gets to” do this kind of research. In writing myself into accounts of
access, I bring visibility to the research process and add to conceptual debates on what is
required and what it can look like to “study up” in elite philanthropy. I did this by utilising
vignettes to help to illustrate the in betweenness and complicated ideas of power within elite
research practices. These vignettes also bring in elements of the methodology throughout the
research project - recognising the situatedness of myself, my research and knowledge within
a certain time and place. In writing myself into the project in this way, I’ve tried to be explicit about the approaches and how these fed into my data collection and analysis, noting not just the methodical techniques, but also, who can do this kind of research. Thus, the thesis contributes to ethical debates on the insider/outsider position. In chapter three, I reflected on the risk of reinforcing elite discourses through this research. I question whether I am bringing visibility to the “black box” of elite philanthropy or further amplifying the voices of the rich and professional elites and, subsequently, reifying the wider economic and social processes that elite advantage is a part of.

8.3 Limitations

As with all research, this study has a number of limitations. This section describes limitations and the adaptations made to mitigate these.

As discussed in the methodology chapter, excluding interviews, the majority of the collected documents (including written materials and webinars) were produced by PhAds and sometimes, for PhAds. These materials, such as training handbooks, networking events and webinars, often served as informational and promotional materials. Whilst these documents enabled my analysis of self-legitimisation, offering insights into the contexts within which they were produced and reflected how PhAds chose to present and describe their own work, this choice did have limitations.

First and foremost, because this research was focused on following the advice-giving process from beginning to end, I have a limited perspective on what actual influence PhAds have on giving, both in terms of approaches to giving and the amounts being donated. This meant that while I asked advisors how they measured and understood success (giving better and giving more), this research could not capture the outcomes of their advice. Instead, this research focuses on how PhAds describe, understand and promote their role and services. Moreover, not having spoken with the clients of these advisors, meant I was not able to assess the validity of many of the claims made by PhAds, for example, the extent to which PhAds are able to equip their clients with philanthropic know-how through “learning journeys”. However, in the case of learning journeys, my digital data and, in particular, the online
webinars, revealed that philanthropists themselves often mirrored the language of philanthropic journeys. This suggests that PhAds do play a role in encouraging philanthropists to think of their philanthropy as a journey, but research with a greater focus on clients of philanthropy advisors would bear this out.

This research contributes to an important and hitherto missing piece of the puzzle in our understanding of elite philanthropic practice, but PhAds cannot be understood as a proxy for their clients, nor do they provide a complete reflection of all elite philanthropy. One lesson to be drawn from this is that the centring of advisors in this research and the kinds of documents reviewed, may lead to an overemphasis on the role of PhAds. In describing and promoting their work (both within the interview context and in the materials that I examined), they may have exaggerated their own influence. Similarly, when trying to delineate the role of advisors, my findings do not provide indication as to which circumstances PhAds have more influence in, and only some insights about how they understand their own agency in their institutional contexts. When conducting my analysis, I considered what Cousin et al. (2018: 233) call the “fundamental attribution error” often committed by elite researchers. They make the point that while social scientists tend to use structure to explain phenomena, such as poverty, they focus on agency to explain affluence. Furthermore, they argue that while scholars may be more nuanced when discussing the traits of poor people when explaining poverty, they do not do so with elites and wealth, leading to a flattening of categories amongst elites or an over privileging of the characteristics of individual elites to explain an entire category (Cousin et al. 2018).

I take this to mean that while PhAds are important players, they are not a homogenous category, nor are they masterminds behind elite philanthropy who should be presented as having the ultimate explanatory power for the ongoing rise and expansion of these forms of giving. To avoid exaggerating the influence of PhAds (and the analytical power of using them as a lens), I have directly worked to frame the research within the context of PhAds as one piece of a larger puzzle of elite philanthropy. This aim was built from my focus on narratives of self-legitimacy as a key understudied space. Examining self-legitimacy, particularly from interview data, also has analytical implications of conflating what people say they do with their behaviour. As Jerolmack and Khan (2014: 178) argue, self-reporting of attitudes and
behaviours (collected through verbal accounts) can be limited in their ability to explain behaviours, as they are overly individualistic and often abstract. Thus, I supplemented my analysis with accounts of interactions with elite philanthropy events, documents and (non-) participant observation.

Methodological limitations are discussed in the methods chapter three, at length. To briefly recap, I recognise that the inductive and exploratory nature of the project also meant that this approach, while fruitful, resulted in iterative data collection processes that, in turn, influenced my research questions. For example, PhAds were identified as a key analytical focus later in the project, due to the outbreak of the pandemic and subsequent increase in access and visibility. This approach is consistent with other iterative and inductive approaches to research questions, design and analysis (O’Reilly 2009). Had I identified intermediary organisations (such as Philanthropy Impact) earlier, it may have been possible to attend more specific webinars, gain access to more organisations and, perhaps, interview more PhAds. However, given the prominence of the networks, access achieved through snowballing recruitment and mixed methods of documents, interviews and webinars, meant that rich and diverse data collected in this study provided a comprehensive understanding of PhAds and was sufficient to address the research questions and achieve the study’s objectives. Moreover, had I taken a more deductive approach, I might not have had the flexibility I needed to adapt to the research context brought on by Covid-19. The data available was impacted by the timing of data collection in relation to the outbreak of the pandemic. Given my focus on PhAds emerged over the course of my data collection, I had less time to interview more PhAds. As a result, I successfully reoriented the project towards greater emphasis on textual analysis and non-participant observation.

As with any research project, there are ways that this research could have been conducted differently. First, reflecting on the types of individuals and organisations through whom I obtained data, it may have been possible to enrich the results of chapter four by more in-depth discussions with PhAds in different institutional spaces. For example, I could have spoken to more PhAds working for family offices, as well as those hired by third sector organisations to help with fundraising efforts, which could have provided more data to elucidate the differences between primary and secondary function PhAds. This is partially
explained by the inductive nature of the study, the lack of clear professional guidelines or qualifications for PhAds and the lack of consensus about who PhAds were until after the data collection was finished, due to the emergent and nebulous nature of the work. This was particularly true in relation to multi- or single-family offices who often don’t have in-house philanthropy advice services.

In some ways, this reflects the overlaps between grey literature and academic literature, explored in the literature review (see section 2.2.1). Securing verifiable data in the philanthropy sector, where the funding for the research often comes from philanthropy and philanthropists themselves, does raise questions about how to examine these documents. Another area for further development would be to devote more time to understanding the backgrounds of PhAds. In order to better understand the role they create for themselves, it might have proven relevant to analyse their career paths more explicitly, so as to answer the questions of what qualifies someone to be a PhAd, according to PhAds, and perhaps, demonstrate differences between career trajectories of PhAds in different organisational contexts. While I asked interviewees for their backgrounds, the information varied from interviewee to interviewee on their professional histories. I compared their responses to their LinkedIn profiles to determine whether they devoted less or more time to their experiences. However, I did not ask sufficient follow-up questions in the moment, as it was something I became aware of during data analysis. I could have asked more direct questions about how they categorise themselves or whether they consider themselves qualified to do so. To mitigate this, I conducted follow-up interviews and informal conversations with charity lawyers and several PhAds from different institutional locations, to sense check whether my categories were accurate, too vague or too specific. This also raised questions about what these categories are for; while my categorisation might be relevant in helping raise awareness of these actors in academic research, they do not necessarily provide any clarity for practitioners in the sector, for whom these broad categories of PhAds may be less relevant.

Selection bias is another possible limitation, as I did not interview as many people working as PhAds in the third sector, because this category of PhAds emerged later in my research. Thus, I may not have captured the diversity of actors pursuing progressive agendas. Firstly, I do not intend to generalise my findings to all PhAds and I recognise that the results in this study most
accurately reflect PhAds who opt into the title and are based in the UK. I have also attempted to look at diversity in other ways, through highlighting the contention within and between advisors. At the same time, there are other groups of advisors, philanthropy intermediaries and donor organisers emerging in the UK who, according to their objectives, aim to reform what they consider the mainstream status quo of elite philanthropy in the UK. Some of these views were captured in my sample and were important contacts for gaining access to certain sites and documents. However, many and most of these being groups that describe themselves as progressive or justice-oriented donors, there is not yet (to my knowledge) a group of PhAds organising to provide alternative advice services. In the UK, there are formal and informal networks, such as the Tax Justice Network and Good Ancestor Movement that have begun working with more progressive wealth managers and wealthy individuals as forms of “tempered radicals”. However, they were not the focus of this project overtly and I do not intend to homogenise the individuals working within this sector by recognising PhAds as a category, nor to invisibilise the contestations within this group.

Along the same lines, given the global nature of elite philanthropy, elite philanthropists and the category of transnational professionals PhAds sometimes fall into, there are limitations to having only focused my study on PhAds in the UK. This limited my ability to distinguish between or within these categories, to be able to speak to the significance of the UK sector of PhAds, compared to that of other geographies. This includes my limited ability to distinguish between those working exclusively with domestic clients and those whose clientele is international, or both, which only came up anecdotally in interviews. Furthermore, while my research responds to calls for more focus on philanthropy outside of the United States (the dominant focus for philanthropic research to date), by focusing on the UK, ultimately, my research reifies the focus of philanthropy research in the US and Europe, rather than contributing to research that expands this outside of the Global North.

It is also worthwhile reflecting on the decision to anonymise interviewees, as this was a critical criterion for accessing advisors and practitioners, which became obvious in early interviews and outreach when advisors would double-check if and how I would anonymise interviews, discussed in chapter three. However, anonymising interviewees meant I was sometimes unable to draw more overt connections between interview data and publicly available
documents, speeches and webinars. While I found continuity between the two aspects, the “small world” of philanthropy advising meant I needed to be judicious in how I spoke about specific individuals and networks. It also meant I was not able to use some internal documents shared with me, due to their distinct nature and the risk of these being identifiable to those within the sector. It also resulted in vaguer categories of PhAds in the list of interviewees (see Appendix II), as I risked identifying participants by being too explicit about their role, titles or locations. This was also because some institutional locations will only have one PhAd employed. In other cases, some PhAds have a more public-facing role and could have been attributed to certain quotes directly, rather than a set of broader perspectives. While the categories of PhAds and industry practitioners are not clearly defined as it stands, with many holding more than one position or wearing multiple hats with institutional roles, as well as roles within their own consultancies, this project was not able to explore the overlaps in these services, which could have been a fruitful direction of the research. I could have made this a more explicit focus of the research by asking for more professional and educational background information of PhAds.

Many of the limitations of this project directly feed into the directions of future research, described in the following section.

8.4 Directions for Future Research

This research has made substantive steps towards answering key questions regarding PhAds and elite philanthropy and in doing so, raised further questions and research direction.

First and foremost, there is a need for greater political and historical contextualisation for elite philanthropy in the UK, and how this emergent marketplace is being legitimised and expanded through financial and wealth institutions. Further research could examine the origins of these services within these financial institutions and link these services more explicitly with the increasing financialisation of philanthropy. Findings related to the centring of client relationships on the role of purpose and values may be one way of taking the research forward, such as claims related to the “responsible stewardship of the rich in an age of unprecedented inequality” (Sklair and Glucksberg 2021) as part of morality being inserted
into the market. Kuldova states that it is “only through morality [that] the business elite [could] acquire an appearance of legitimacy and capitalism be rendered good, a ‘capitalism with a human face’ (Kothari 1986; Žižek 2009), capable of fixing its own evils” (Kuldova 2018: 58). Building on this premise, more research on the (de)politicisation of wealth through philanthropy (particularly related to Morvaridi’s 2015 critique) and efforts within the sector towards the repoliticisation of wealth (as seen from the perspective of those working to point out the contradictions within these services), could be linked directly back to literature on NGOisation and how resourcing and wealth shape civil society. While these themes emerged more out of informal conversations of third sector organisations working with philanthropists, more research is needed to explore the dynamics and hybrid forms of social power playing out in these forms of elite philanthropy.

More explicitly, being able to trace the origins of these services with the outcomes, following advisors and clients over a longer course of time might be difficult in terms of feasibility of research, but is nevertheless an interesting path of enquiry to explore the relationships between donor-centred philanthropy advice and the impacts on organisations, as well as how language of partnership is used to rename or reframe different forms of donor-control, rather than actually subverting the power of the donor. This could involve focusing on the methods and philanthropic vehicles taken up and the impacts, as well as the amount of philanthropic giving – unpacking more of what “giving better, giving more” actually involves. One way to do this could be, again, through a case study approach, interviewing or surveying clients of different philanthropic advisors and services, alongside those who received their philanthropic giving. This would require a bigger research team to review the giving practices and outputs, as well as conduct the number of interviews across a range of organisations.

As such, considerably more work will need to be done to determine what outcomes occur from PhAd advice for both clients and for the recipients of funding. In the first case, a logical next step would be to focus on the outcomes of PhAd services and to examine the extent of any influence on the philanthropic giving. More research could be conducted to understand if, how and under what circumstances philanthropy advisors’ advice is taken and the material consequences of this (e.g. did philanthropists give more/less/differently as a result of this
advice?). This could be conducted by focusing on one philanthropic advisory as a case study, involving ethnographic work and interviews with both advisors and their clients.

Building on this, and by way of gaining oversights on the outputs and impacts of philanthropy advice services, another direction could also explore the outcomes of philanthropic services and the role of PhAds from the perspective of the recipients of this philanthropic giving. Highlighting the role of PhAds as BIBS could be a fruitful way to unpack the gatekeeping, convening, mediating and translating roles of PhAds between charities and philanthropists, specifically. This could involve exploring the perspectives of NGOs or charities and could more directly link this research in debates on the depoliticisation of funding, as argued in The Revolution Will not be Funded (2007). A fruitful path of research could also examine how PhAds encourage clients to view themselves as partners to charities, rather than funders, and how this alters the experience for organisations.

There has been increased, although still limited, attention paid towards PhAds and the role of consultants and management consultancies in philanthropy in the past years. High-profile elite philanthropists using philanthropic advice services, such as MacKenzie Scott, have raised the profile of philanthropy advisors. While still burgeoning, the rise of these services, particularly in relation to the “next generation” wealth holders and the great transfer of wealth, was a prominent concern expressed by PhAds, both within and outside of financial services. A clear direction of research would be to take up an overt lens on wealth practitioners’ understandings of next generation clients and how this group is changing and shaping their services, understanding of their role as PhAds and potentially, expanding philanthropy service offerings. As this process was focused on PhAds, it did not include the perspectives of these role players, although this future clientele was mentioned often. Based on insights from several interviews, sector webinars and advisors’ training material, the “business opportunity” of these clients may also provide an entry point in regard to access for researchers.

This study lays the groundwork for future research into not only the continued expansion of the philanthropy advising industry, but the overlaps between financial/wealth services, management consultancies and elite philanthropy advice, and the role of PhAds as enablers.
My research suggests a differentiation in regard to PhAds in a primary function versus a secondary function, highlighting the differentiation between advisors in administrative functions (where they are privy to where the money goes and how much), who may have more oversight and advisors who provide strategic support or one-off conversations, who may have less. Over the course of my data collection, several PhAds whom I interviewed served international clients. Another related area for research is PhAds who themselves split their time between countries, suggesting a hypermobility of this profession. Harrington and Seabrooke’s (2020: 400) work, centring professionals and their role in building institutions, is an interesting lens through which to draw parallels with philanthropy professionals (and PhAds, in particular) and their role in building elite philanthropy. They go a step further to argue that this further facilitates the international mobility of elites, capital and ideas. As mentioned in the limitations of my research, this study focused on PhAds based in the UK or with clients in the UK. A path forward for future research would be to examine the global and international nature of these advisors or to examine PhAds across and between different geographic locations.

Research on these overlaps would not only help to untangle the overlaps between these industries and potentially, further advance the typology for PhAds as proposed in chapter four, but examine how different forms of elite philanthropy “travel” with the advice industry. For example, while there is disproportionately research available on US philanthropy, compared to other approaches of philanthropy globally (Jung et al. 2016), it is not clear as to the influence that US forms of elite philanthropic giving have on the rest of the world outside of their hypervisibility. More specifically, more research could be done to examine the proliferation of the firms of giving vehicles (such as DAFs) and the role of PhAds in shaping best practices. In anecdotal examples from my findings, one philanthropist described advice she received from her advisor related to setting up her foundation to derive the greatest tax benefit, but also, related to the political nature of her donations. This suggests that using PhAds as a lens could be a productive space in which to understand the expansion of different vehicles of elite philanthropy being taken up in parallel with research on how elites navigate global tax systems with their advisors. One path forward for this would be to pay continued attention to how elite philanthropy advice is being taught, so not only focusing research on donor education systems, but on how those who run those programmes are trained.
themselves. For example, STEP (Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners) has included training on philanthropy advice in their training programmes for wealth and financial advisors.

A natural progression of this work is to analyse the different forms of contestation within the philanthropy advising space, particularly through the lens of advisors who view themselves as tempered radicals, attempting to change philanthropy from within. Over the course of my research, I came across many different individuals and groups organising to reform philanthropy advice and elite philanthropic practice within the UK. Many of these groups have their origins in the US, but are adapting to the UK and Europe with donor organising groups, such as Resource Movement and Resource Justice. Further research should be undertaken to explore how these groups use conversations on philanthropy to politicise wealth and seek to influence wealthy individuals to move away from philanthropy altogether. Forthcoming research from Sherman (2021) in the US supports this thinking and suggests a fruitful direction for research, with the role of researchers and access to these spaces one in which the researcher acts explicitly as a critical friend. Lastly, this line of research also relates to how these groups define and understand social impact. Anecdotal findings in my research suggest that those working to politicise wealth, are aiming to shift the philanthropy as impact model to taxation as social impact, with implications for the legitimisation strategies relating to impact claims. Research examining how this line of thinking and argument emerged would be an entry point into understanding the potential and limitations for change within these spaces, and the entrenchment of narratives of social impact (and its ambiguity) fuelling the legitimisation of wealth through the language of social impact.

8.5 Conclusion

This thesis has opened the “black box” of elite philanthropy through studying the role of PhAds. In centring PhAds, it has offered a novel avenue into understanding elite philanthropic practices, and provided a more holistic picture of what comprises elite philanthropic practices beyond any individual philanthropist or institutional setting. My research has made two primary contributions. It not only advanced the body of research concerned with the role of PhAds in elite philanthropy as enablers and intermediaries, but also, adds novel understandings of how elite philanthropy practitioners responded to the pandemic. The
thesis provides rich empirical data-exploring experiences, meaning-making processes and practices of philanthropy advisors that deepen understandings of the legitimising accounts of elite philanthropy practitioners.

I have thus provided a deeper understanding of the practices and process of elite philanthropy through PhAds. Rather than viewing philanthropy solely through the lens of individual philanthropists making decisions, my examination sheds light on the broader ecosystem in which philanthropic activities unfold. By illustrating the intricate dynamics and social relations within the philanthropic advice services sector, including the emerging industry of philanthropic advice-giving, my thesis underscores the significance of PhAds as key facilitators in this complex system. This perspective allows for a comprehensive exploration of the multifaceted actors and processes involved in philanthropy, moving beyond the narrow focus on individual donors and offering insights into the diverse array of individuals who assist and shape philanthropic endeavours.

By examining the discourses of self-legitimisation of PhAds, this study also expanded the understandings of how PhAds practice legitimisation for themselves and on behalf of their clients. I contend that focusing on their legitimacy discourses helps to better understand the marketplace of elite philanthropy. By highlighting the significance of practices and self-legitimisation within these broader contexts, the thesis puts forth the notion that the role of advisors and their legitimising strategies warrant more significant discussion and consideration across various strands of literature. As such, this thesis not only contributes to the current scholarship, but also, lays the foundation for future research directions.

I have argued throughout this thesis that understanding the political relations of power of these processes is critical to understanding the norms of elite philanthropy. Elite philanthropy – historically and contemporaneously – is systemically enabled by extreme inequalities in the distributions of income and wealth. Philanthropy cannot be understood independently of processes of wealth creation, accumulation and consequential socio-economic inequalities. Most studies focus on the thematic philanthropic causes (i.e. the outcomes) of philanthropic giving, rather than the choices and distinctions of those choices. Elite philanthropy is systemically and institutionally embedded, governed by norms, rules and practices. How
wealth, legitimacy and social impact are understood and contested within elite philanthropy is thus critical. The ubiquity of elite philanthropy (Maclean et al. 2020) leads to obfuscation over how and where change comes from, acting as a smokescreen designed to obscure “the failures and inequalities inherent within the current international economic system” (Youde 2019: 8) and speaks to how “the institutions and practices have maintained the same social and economic institutions that generate inequalities and injustices, while claiming to fight them” (Kumar and Brooks 2021: 325).

As elite philanthropy advice services continue to grow, we must pay attention to how these services legitimise the accumulation of wealth, in the name of redistribution and social welfare (Vogel 2006). McGoey, in her critiques of the tautological logic of philanthropy, noted that “the solution to failed philanthropy is more of it; the failure of philanthropy is its success” (2012: 196). As such, McGoey’s observation is echoed in how PhAds discuss themselves and their role in advising clients. This thesis has revealed how PhAds are part of this cycle and in many cases, they directly state that they aspire to enable this cycle to continue (i.e. “better and more philanthropy”). Therefore, it is not only the failure of philanthropy that leads to more philanthropy, but also, the success of philanthropy, a success that is embedded into the normative basis of philanthropy as a form of social impact in and of itself. In this framing, rather than philanthropy being a means to an end, the expansion and perpetuation of elite philanthropy itself is the end goal.
References


Godechot, O. (2016) *Wages, bonuses and appropriation of profit in the financial industry. The working rich.* Routledge international studies in money and banking. Oxfordshire, UK: Routledge, pp. 244. Available at: https://hal-sciencespo.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01433807.


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Appendices

APPENDIX I: Interviews

Note: All in-person interviews are indicated with *

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<th>Institutional / Organisational Setting</th>
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<td>Philanthropy Advisor</td>
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APPENDIX II: Documents

*Note: Documents, specifically related to Covid-19 responses, are indicated with *

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<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>A guide to giving (3rd edition)</td>
<td>Philanthropy UK, 2008</td>
<td>Handbook written by Philanthropy UK. Philanthropy UK was hosted by the Association of Charitable Foundations, a membership association for foundations and independent grant-makers in the UK. The guide was funded by Coutts &amp; Co., who wrote the forward to the guide. Philanthropy UK ceased operations in 2013.</td>
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<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Smart giving: A guide to donating</td>
<td>Barclays, 2019</td>
<td>Guide written by Barclays’ Philanthropy Service as a resource for clients.</td>
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<td>Document Number</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Future giving: Engaging the next generation</td>
<td>Barclays, 2019</td>
<td>Guide written by Barclays’ Philanthropy Service for clients.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Life after a business exit: What every entrepreneur needs to know about the reality of life after selling their business</td>
<td>Coutts &amp; Co., 2018</td>
<td>Guide written by Coutts. Coutts &amp; Co. is a private bank.</td>
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| **11**          | Covid guide newsletter archive* | The Beacon Collaborative, April - July 2020 | During the peak of the Covid-19 crisis, from April through to June, The Beacon Collaborative put together a newsletter. The newsletters contained information on individual charities, noteworthy letters, cause-related funds, as well as other news from across the third sector.  
*Audience: Funders, philanthropists and others with an interest in the charity sectors* |
| **12**          | UBS philanthropy compass: Shaping great wealth | UBS, 2017 | Handbook originally written by UBS, alongside FSG and Cass Business School in 2011 (Note: Cass is now called Bayes Business School). Originally, only made available to clients, but made publicly available at a later date. I was unable to track down when this happened. FSG is a global nonprofit consulting firm that according to their website (https://www.fsg.org/) advises “foundations and corporations to create equitable systems change.”  
*Audience: Philanthropy advisors and the philanthropic or social sector* |
*Audience: Philanthropists* |
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<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td>The role of wealth advisors in offering philanthropy services to high-net-worth clients</td>
<td>Scorpio Partnership, 2008</td>
<td>Report written by Scorpio Partnership, a consultancy in the global wealth management industry. According to the document, Scorpio Partnership was engaged by New Philanthropy Capital (United Kingdom), Wise (Switzerland) and the Bertelsmann Stiftung (Germany) to undertake research focused on the role of wealth advisors in offering philanthropy services to high-net-worth (HNW) clients. At the time of writing, the Scorpio Partnership is no longer active.</td>
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<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td>Growing philanthropy advice: Why does its potential in the UK remain unfulfilled?</td>
<td>Boncerto, 2016</td>
<td>White paper written by Joanna Walker (a philanthropy advisor) for Boncerto, a philanthropy advisory consultancy.</td>
<td>Philanthropy sector, more broadly</td>
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<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td>CAF’s UK giving 2019 report</td>
<td>CAF, 2019</td>
<td>Report written by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF). CAF is a charity and bank that also runs its own philanthropy advice services for individuals, families, foundations and businesses.</td>
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| 18              | Giving more and better: How can the philanthropy sector improve?      | Angela Kail and Stephanie Johnson, NPC and Matthew Bowcock, Hazelhurst Trust, 2016 | According to the document, the report is a summary of findings from a project funded by the Hazelhurst Trust, to examine how philanthropists are influenced and encouraged or discouraged in their giving. The report is hosted on New Philanthropy Capital’s website.  
**Audience:** Philanthropy sector and philanthropy advisors |
| 19              | Private client dining club and cancer research UK - Roundtable discussion at the Francis Crick Institute: Trends in philanthropy and the role of advisors | The Private Client Dining (PCD) Club and Cancer Research UK, 2019              | Report written by Cancer Research UK, a funder, and Private Client Dining club, a business networking club. According to the document, the report is “a summary of a recent discussion with professional advisers to get their views on trends in philanthropy and the role they can play in improving levels of giving. This discussion was facilitated by CRUK and the Private Client Dining Club”.  
**Audience:** Philanthropy sector |
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| 20              | Family dialogues on the responsible stewardship of wealth: A guide (2021) | STEP, 2021      | Guide written by STEP. According to the document, "STEP is a global professional body, comprising lawyers, accountants, trustees and other practitioners that help families plan for their futures".  
**Audience:** Wealthy individuals and families, professional advisors |
| 21              | The future of giving: How our donation habits are changing, and what charities can do about it | Barclays, 2017  | Report written by David McHattie, Head of Charities, Barclays Corporate Banking.  
**Audience:** Philanthropy sector |
**Audience:** Philanthropy sector |
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<td>24</td>
<td>The art of adaptation: Why talking philanthropy transforms the adviser-client relationship</td>
<td>CAF, 2015</td>
<td>Report written by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF). CAF is a charity and bank that also runs its own philanthropy advice services for individuals, families, foundations and businesses.</td>
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</table>
| 26              | Disruptive philanthropists: how a new wave of modern philanthropists are shaping tomorrow* | KPMG, 2021 | Report written by KPMG Family Office & Private Client. KPMG is a global professional service company. According to their website, their family office and private client advisors support business owners, entrepreneurs, landed estates, trustees and family offices on all aspects of their tax affairs.  
Audience: Philanthropists and prospective clients |
Audience: Philanthropy sector |
<p>| 28              | Long term value and the role of wealth managers to generate a positive impact | Ernst &amp; Young LLP, 2019 | Presentation prepared by Ernst &amp; Young LLP, a management consultancy. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Number</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author and Date</th>
<th>Description / Context</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Global trends and strategic time horizons in family philanthropy</td>
<td>Campden Wealth Limited and Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, 2020</td>
<td>Study written by Campden Wealth Limited, a membership organisation for HNW and UHNW, and Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, a philanthropy advising consultancy. &lt;br&gt;<strong>Audience:</strong> Philanthropy sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Maximise your impact - UBS philanthropy services in the UK</td>
<td>UBS, 2020</td>
<td>Marketing material for clients of UBS Philanthropy Services giving an overview of products and services available to clients. &lt;br&gt;<strong>Audience:</strong> Philanthropists and existing and prospective clients</td>
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<td>Document Number</td>
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<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>The grant making tango: Issues for funders</td>
<td>Julia Unwin, 2004</td>
<td>Report written by Julia Unwin, policy advisor to the Baring Foundation at the Baring Foundation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Wealth planning and philanthropy in times of crisis*</td>
<td>National Philanthropic Trust UK, 2020</td>
<td>NPT UK provides donor advised funds (DAFs) to donors in the UK. NPT UK is affiliated with National Philanthropic Trust, the largest independent provider of DAFs in the United States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Help your clients plan their giving in uncertain times*</td>
<td>National Philanthropic Trust UK, 2020</td>
<td>By John Canady, Chief Executive Officer of NPT UK. NPT UK provides donor advised funds (DAFs) to donors in the UK. NPT UK is affiliated with the National Philanthropic Trust, the largest independent provider of DAFs in the United States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Covid-19 response and resources*</td>
<td>National Philanthropic Trust UK, (n.d.)</td>
<td>Resource list put together by NPT UK. NPT UK provides donor advised funds (DAFs) to donors in the UK. NPT UK is affiliated with National Philanthropic Trust, the largest independent provider of DAFs in the United States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="https://www.nptuk.org/covid-19/">https://www.nptuk.org/covid-19/</a> (Accessed March 2023)</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Audience:</strong> Philanthropy sector, advisors, philanthropists</td>
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<td>Document Number</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Author and Date</td>
<td>Description / Context</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Global philanthropy’s response to Covid-19 and how to get involved*</td>
<td>National Philanthropic Trust UK, 2020</td>
<td>Blog written by John Canady, CEO of NPT UK. NPT UK provides donor advised funds (DAFs) to donors in the UK. NPT UK is affiliated with National Philanthropic Trust, the largest independent provider of DAFs in the United States.</td>
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## APPENDIX III: Philanthropy Impact Webinars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Webinar number</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Webinar Title and Citation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>16 April 2020</td>
<td>The impact of Covid-19 on the advisory space</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Episode 1 ‘Walk in My Shoes’ series for Professional Advisers [Webinar] (2020).</em> Online. Available at: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbtolI4ASmg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbtolI4ASmg</a> (Accessed 27 April 2021)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>16 April 2020</td>
<td>Living with values in uncertain times</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td><em>Episode 2 ‘Walk in my Shoes’ series for Professional Advisers [Webinar] (2020).</em> Online. Available at: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ux4f1FhBKy8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ux4f1FhBKy8</a> (Accessed 15 March 2021)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>16 April 2020</td>
<td>Digital transformation in response to Covid-19</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td><em>Episode 3 ‘Walk in my Shoes’ series for Professional Advisers [Webinar] (2020).</em> Online. Available at: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B32NVr1xP04">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B32NVr1xP04</a> (Accessed 15 March 2021)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>16 April 2020</td>
<td>Donor advised funds as vehicles for giving during an emergency</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td><em>Episode 4 ‘Walk in my Shoes’ series for Professional Advisers [Webinar] (2020).</em> Online. Available at: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNp7_VF_QcM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNp7_VF_QcM</a> (Accessed 15 March 2021)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>20 April 2020</td>
<td>Contrasting and comparing American and English philanthropy in the context of Covid-19</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Episode 5 ‘Walk in my Shoes’ series for Professional Advisers [Webinar] (2020).</em> Online. Available at: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMWYbe7J_Qk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMWYbe7J_Qk</a> (Accessed 15 March 2021)</td>
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<tr>
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</table>
| 6              | 27 April 2020| Philanthropy and social investment  
| 7              | 4 May 2020   | Philanthropic efforts in Asia to battle the Covid-19 crisis  
| 8              | 13 May 2020  | The role philanthropy can play in saving charities and supporting infrastructure  
| 9              | 18 May 2020  | Engaging new funders, role of professional advisers  
| 10             | 12 June 2020 | Impact investing and ESG - Building a better future  
| 11             | 4 June 2020  | The future of food – implications and innovations  
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Webinar number</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Webinar Title and Citation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>10 June 2020</td>
<td>Philanthropy and social impact investing roles in recovery</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>15 June 2020</td>
<td>What kind of society do we want to build?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td><em>Episode 13 ‘Walk in my Shoes’ series for Professional Advisers</em> [Webinar] (2020). Online. Available at: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2x6DZuYx5k">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2x6DZuYx5k</a> (Accessed 15 March 2021)</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>24 June 2020</td>
<td>Philanthropy and social investment: how do we achieve more and better from (U)HNWI</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>1 July 2020</td>
<td>Climate change – The real impact of Covid-19</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>7 July 2020</td>
<td>Cross border giving - what does the future look like?</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>14 July 2020</td>
<td>Social entrepreneurship: catalysing philanthropy through innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webinar number</td>
<td>Date</td>
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</table>
| 18             | 21 July 2020 | The future of impact investing: related issues and opportunities  
| 19             | 28 July 2020 | Women of wealth and gender equity - What professional advisors to (U)HNWI should know  
| 20             | 11 September 2020 | Enriching the role of professional advisors digitally  
| 21             | 17 September 2020 | Art, philanthropy and social entrepreneurialism  
| 22             | 21 September 2020 | The winds of change: Next generation philanthropists and social impact investors (their role in the Covid-19 recovery phase and what they want from their professional advisors)  
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Webinar number</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Webinar Title and Citation</th>
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</table>
| 23             | 1 October 2020 | The implications of Covid 19 and Brexit on philanthropic giving and social impact investing  
| 24             | 8 October 2020 | A virtual conversation between our board member, George King, Partner, MASECO Private Wealth and Tom Ilube, CBE  
Episode 24 ‘Walk in My Shoes’ series for Professional Advisors [Webinar] (2020). Online. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNToyZUm0vw (Accessed 15 March 2021) |
| 25             | 15 October 2020 | Corporate philanthropy  
| 26             | 21 October 2020 | Donor advised funds – How can they help professional advisors support their clients?  
| 27             | 27 October 2020 | Application of technology - connecting donors/philanthropists with charities (data driving the world of impact)  
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Webinar number</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Webinar Title and Citation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>5 November 2020</td>
<td>Managing in this unprecedented time and what it means for the advisory space – 8 months later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Episode 28 ‘Walk in my Shoes’ series for professional advisors</em> [Webinar] (2020). Online. Available at: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MfKgi3kqir0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MfKgi3kqir0</a> (Accessed 19 March 2021)</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>7 December 2020</td>
<td>Systemic change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>2 December 2020</td>
<td>Trust in philanthropy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Episode 31 ‘Walk in my Shoes’ series for Professional Advisors</em> [Webinar] (2020). Online. Available at: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euKiQL2U4QE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euKiQL2U4QE</a> (Accessed 19 March 2023)</td>
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APPENDIX IV: Example Interview Guide

Outline for Interviews:
- Informed Consent and anonymity
- Intro + research aims + research questions
- Their role and practices
- Role of private philanthropy, more broadly
- Wrap-up

Research Aim:
- To explore the role of philanthropy practitioners and intermediaries in private philanthropy.

Research Questions:
- What are the rules and role of private philanthropic giving?
- What are the opportunities and challenges of these funding systems?

Introduction

Example script: My research is looking at funding systems, private philanthropy and how things work. I’m fundamentally interested in the ways philanthropy is linked with power and inequality. I’ve spent many years working in the charity sector and was increasingly aware of the dynamics of funding relationships and how they impact organisations. My PhD research and questions come out of this experience. My research is exploring the influence that different philanthropic actors have (or not) in shaping the funding/philanthropy sector. Any questions before we begin?

Can you tell me a little bit more about:
- your role in your organisation, your background, your involvement with the philanthropy/funding sector?

1. Role and practices
   - What is your role? What does that look like?
   - How does the advising process work? How do you determine the objectives and scope of the advising?
   - Who are your clients? Who pays for these services? Is there anyone you wouldn’t work with?
   - What is success for you? Can you give me an example?
   - What is the learning journey? Can you describe what you mean by this?
   - How do you navigate relationships with clients? Can you describe step by step what you do?
   - What challenges do you face in your role?
2. **Role of philanthropy and philanthropists**
   - What is good philanthropy to you? What do you mean when you say “giving better and giving more”?
   - What role do philanthropic intermediaries/funders/advisors play? What role should they play?
   - Who are the main actors (organisations, people, networks) in private philanthropy? Who do you go to for advice or expertise?
   - Another concern is around inequality and power in philanthropy. What do you think? How do you navigate this? Can you give an example?

**Wrap-up**
- Are there any meetings/conferences in which I could participate to gain insight into these questions?
- Is there anything else you’d like to add on this subject or related issues? Is there anything that you think I’m missing?
- Who else should I speak to?
APPENDIX V: Outreach Emails

Email without prior Introduction

Dear [Name],

I am a PhD researcher at the University of Edinburgh in Social Policy. My research is focusing on philanthropic funding. I am interviewing people who have direct experience in the field, who can speak to the opportunities and challenges of private and corporate philanthropy. My basic objective is to understand more about the processes and practices of private philanthropy, especially donor-grantee relationships.

Given your experience in the sector, and in particular, your experience with [ADD RELEVANT BACKGROUND], I’m reaching out to see if you would be interested in being interviewed. The interview would last one hour (and could be conducted in person or via Zoom). My questions are designed to enable you to reflect about these issues. Everything we discuss will remain strictly confidential and your identity will be kept anonymous.

If you have any questions about this research or want to schedule a time to speak, do email me at

Kind regards,

Tatiana Cary

Email following Introduction

Dear [Name],

[Add personalised note based off of connection or introduction]. Thank you so much for taking the time to contribute to my research. I've attached an information sheet and included a brief project summary below. [Offer of in person or online interview].

Project Overview:
This project seeks to understand the processes that guide philanthropy and philanthropic funding. The study aims to understand the practices, policies and rules of philanthropy. I'm specifically interested in understanding the challenges/opportunities of philanthropy through the lenses of power and accountability. How has the involvement (or not) of different philanthropic actors influenced or shaped the funding sector?

Thank you again and looking forward to connecting soon.

Kind regards,

Tatiana Cary
APPENDIX VI: Information Sheet and Consent Form

This project seeks to understand the processes that guide philanthropy and philanthropic funding. The study aims to understand the practices, policies and rules of philanthropy. I'm specifically interested in understanding the challenges/opportunities of philanthropy through the lenses of power and accountability. As part of this project, I (Tatiana Cary) am asking practitioners in the field of philanthropy to share their perspectives.

Participant Involvement
Following the University of Edinburgh School of Social and Political Science’s ethical guidance, I need to ensure that people participating in this study consent to be interviewed. If you are willing to be interviewed for this study, please sign this form (attached) to confirm that you have freely agreed to be interviewed. All personal data and information that participants share in interviews will be held confidentially, in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. At no point will the information provided be shared in a way that will allow participants to be personally identified. Any quotes in a resulting report will be anonymised. Interviews will be audio recorded to aid accuracy.

Voluntary Involvement and Withdrawal: Participation in this research is voluntary. The interviews will be audio recorded (subject to your approval) and transcribed. Audio recording is helpful in the analysis process to ensure that details of the conversation are not lost. If you do not wish to be recorded, I will instead take written notes.

Even after agreeing to be interviewed, you may:
- Choose not to answer any particular question if you prefer not to;
- Terminate the interview at any time;
- Inquire about the research at any time; and/or,
- Completely withdraw from the project at any point prior to the submissions of the research outcomes for publication. In case of withdrawal, the data collected from your interview will be deleted from the research database.

Confidentiality:
You will remain, to the best of my ability, anonymous and will not be identified in published reports. If requested, you will be able to receive a copy of the interview transcript after it is completed to review your words and amend or add to them. The contents of the interviews will be analysed and written up in published works, such as academic journal articles or scholarly texts, in addition to my (Tatiana Cary’s) PhD thesis.

Queries:
For any queries about this research, please get in touch with me through the contact details below:
Tatiana Cary
School of Social and Political Sciences
University of Edinburgh
CONSENT FORM

The research team will adhere to The University of Edinburgh’s Ethics Guidelines. Interviews will be recorded and the researcher will take contemporaneous notes. Data will be stored securely in anonymous format. All quotes and responses reproduced in the final PhD and any subsequent research publications will be anonymised around functional headings and any details that may identify respondents will be removed.

I .............................................. [Print Name] consent to be interviewed as part of the Research Project, led by Tatiana Cary. I understand that the researcher will make every effort to protect my identity and that my responses will be reproduced in anonymous format. I understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time.

Signed .................................................................................. Date ..............................................