What Is a Columbia Donor-Advised Fund?

A Columbia Donor-Advised Fund (DAF) is an easy-to-use, flexible, expert-managed tool that expands the impact of your charitable giving. Establishing a DAF at Columbia allows you to harness the power of Columbia’s endowment to grow your philanthropy while eliminating the administrative burdens and fees of private foundations. Columbia DAFs offer confidentiality in your giving and flexibility in defining your philanthropic goals.
Columbia Endowment’s Long-Term Results

Columbia Donor-Advised Funds are invested alongside the Columbia Endowment, benefitting from the same proven long-term investment results produced by the Columbia Investment Management Company’s (IMC) long-term risk-adjusted strategy. The IMC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Columbia University, has yielded a decade of steady, above-market growth for Columbia’s endowment investments.
Immediate Tax Benefits—Make a gift now and qualify for an immediate tax deduction for the full amount of the gift. It’s especially beneficial for gifts of appreciated marketable securities, gifts made from liquidity events such as the sale of a business, or gifts made from income events such as cash bonuses. These gifts are deductible at a higher rate than if given to a private foundation.

Cost-effective—Unlike private foundations, there are no administrative fees for a Columbia DAF.

Simplicity—Columbia manages all record keeping, distributions, and tax reporting, meaning there is no administrative burden on you. Making a distribution from your DAF is as simple as sending an email.

Professional Management Expertise—Columbia DAFs benefit from Columbia Investment Management Company’s team of experts who have a history of delivering long-term investment returns, at no additional cost to you.

Privacy—No information is made available publicly when you establish a Columbia DAF, offering you greater privacy than a private foundation. You can also make anonymous distributions from your DAF.

Flexibility over Time—Columbia DAFs allow you to take your time determining your philanthropic priorities while your investment continues to grow. When you’re ready, you can select the causes most important to you at Columbia and other charities.
FAQs

What is the minimum contribution I need to make to create a DAF at Columbia?
You can establish a Columbia DAF with a gift of $1 million or more.

What assets can I use to establish a Columbia DAF?
You can use any combination of the following assets: cash, marketable securities, insurance, and bequests. Contact our Office of Alumni and Development for help determining how your assets can be used to establish a Columbia DAF.

Does Columbia charge me for administering my DAF?
No. Columbia does not charge any fees to administer DAFs.

How much of my Columbia DAF must be designated to Columbia?
At least half of your DAF must be allocated to the areas of your choice across Columbia University. The remainder can be directed to IRS-qualified public charities.

Is there a minimum annual distribution I have to make from my DAF?
We ask that you make annual grants of at least 5 percent of your total DAF’s market value.

Are there any specific grants I cannot make from my Columbia DAF?
Grants cannot be made from your Columbia DAF to any of the following: private non-operating foundations; individuals, political candidates, or parties; or for personal benefit, such as tuition, dues, membership fees, benefit tickets, or any goods purchased at a charitable auction. Grants from Columbia DAFs cannot be used to satisfy any legally binding pledges at Columbia or any other institution.

How do I make a grant from my DAF?
Making a grant using your DAF is as simple as sending an email to the Columbia DAF team at ColumbiaDAF@columbia.edu. They will process your request and send you an email confirmation.

Can I transfer my account from a commercial or private donor-advised fund?
Yes; please contact the Office of Alumni and Development at ColumbiaDAF@columbia.edu.

Can I make additional contributions to increase my DAF?
Yes; you can add to your Columbia DAF at any time. Each additional gift will also qualify for an immediate tax deduction.

Columbia’s Long-Term Endowment Performance
Strong and steady across market and economic cycles

The chart on the left compares the historical performance of the Columbia Endowment with a typical Growth Portfolio invested in 65 percent MSCI All Country World Equity Index and 35 percent Barclays Aggregate Bond Index.
Want to learn more about establishing a Columbia DAF of your own? Contact our Office of Alumni and Development to discuss the different charitable vehicles that can help you achieve your philanthropic goals in the way that best suits your financial needs.

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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
Donor-Advised Fund