CATHERINE HYDE TOWNSEND

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* Recognized thought leader in philanthropic equity, especially disability rights
* Motivational public speaker, skilled facilitator and trainer
* Trusted collaborative leader who builds common ground and transcends hierarchy
* International human rights, social justice, and disability and gender expert

**Ford Foundation, Senior Advisor for Disability Inclusion** July 2020 – now

* Through a coordinated combination of funding, learning, and operational change, lead groundbreaking disability initiative transforming the Foundation’s approach to disability inclusion and broader diversity, equity, and inclusion approaches.
* Conceived and launched the [Presidents’ Council on Disability Inclusion, Disability and Inclusion Philanthropy Forum](https://disabilityphilanthropy.org/peer-networks/presidents-council/), and the $10 million [Disability Inclusion Fund](https://borealisphilanthropy.org/disability-inclusion-fund/), the first US disability justice fund.
* Working closely with executive leadership, develop multi-year strategies and accountability across roles and departments.
* Oversee disability communications and framing through developing high-profile multimedia products, such as [Social Justice: What's disability got to do with it?](https://www.fordfoundation.org/about/library/multimedia/social-justice-what-s-disability-got-to-do-with-it/?utm_source=Disability_Lab&utm_campaign=Disability_Identity) (2021), external resources such as a [Disability inclusion menu](file:///C:\Users\Mom%20and%20Dads%20compute\OneDrive\Consultant\•%09Show%20publication) (2018) and language guides, blogs, and internal communications strategy, fueling Ford’s external communications impact.
* Manage and develop diverse learning opportunities that sustain and deepen understanding of disability justice and disability rights in the U.S. and our ten regional offices around the globe.
* Provide technical support and advice to program teams to deepen and expand their disability grantmaking to meet foundation-wide goals.
* Build internal capacity and sustainability of disability inclusion through budgeting, technical advice on operational best practices, relationship building with the disability community, and contracting and managing external consultants in a range of roles.
* Speak publicly at diverse philanthropic and nonprofit conferences to educate a broader audience on ableism and disability inclusion.

**Ford Foundation, Disability Inclusion consultant** Aug 2018 – June 2020

* Supported the Office of the President, eleven regional offices around the globe and seven thematic areas to more than double disability-inclusive grantmaking in first year of consulting.
* Advised leadership on systematic organizational and culture change through policy and practice changes in operations and grantmaking, thought-partnership with program staff and creation of a dynamic learning agenda to make Ford a leader in disability inclusion in a span of 18 months.
* Invited to provide technical expertise to a variety of UN agencies and international non-governmental organizations and ad hoc expert groups such as the [Expert group meeting on the intersections between women’s rights and the rights of person with disabilities](https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-disability/expert-group-meeting-intersections-between-womens-rights-and-rights-person-disabilities) (March 2019).
* Inaugural drafter and participant in [Nairobi Principles on Abortion, Prenatal Testing, and Disability](https://nairobiprinciples.creaworld.org/principles/).

**Human Rights Funders Network, Transition Director** June 2019 – Feb 2020

* Led organization through leadership search and governance development development.
* Managed staff of 4 and multiple consultants to provide robust human rights programs.
* Leveraging years of relationship building, managed donor relationships and funding through transitional year. Coordinated relationship with fiscal sponsor managing operations.
* Developed and managed organizational budget process and financial reporting.

## WELLSPRING PHILANTHROPIC FUND (WPF) New York, NY

### Senior Program Officer, International Human Rights Feb 2006 – June 2017

*Managed grantmaking portfolios strengthening international disability rights and the security and protection of diverse human rights defenders*

* Conceived and launched one of the first grantmaking programs focused on disability rights through close consultation with activists. Spearheaded the quadrupling of WPF’s portfolio.
* Led advocacy amongst human rights donors to strengthen inclusion of people with disabilities.
* Developed and implemented WPF’s first grantmaking strategy to address the security and protection of human rights defenders globally.
* Created internal protocols to support grantee safety and developed shared tools and resources to guide private donors’ efforts to strengthen grantee security.
* Strengthened the capacity of civil society organizations by providing technical assistance on program design, evaluation, organizational development, fundraising, and advocacy.
* Managed local staff in Uganda and Tanzania to implement country-specific grantmaking
* Led a cross-program task force to create grantmaking due diligence protocols across WPF.
* Participated in internal Racial Justice working group to advise on hiring, consulting and learning.

## DISABILITY RIGHTS FUND

**President and founding Co-chair of the Board of Directors** 2008 – June 2018

*Led inaugural Board of participatory, collaborative fund supporting disability-led human rights advocacy in the Global South*

* Coordinated the launch of the first-ever human rights fund dedicated to the rights of people with disabilities developing a participatory structure of donors and activists with disabilities.
* Mentored Executive Director during tremendous programmatic and operational growth resulting in more than $25 million in funding for disability organizations in more than 30 countries.
* Managed inclusive governance structure and catalyzed Board recruitment and giving.
* Served as interim director during Executive Director’s three-month sabbatical.

**International Human Rights Funders GrouP** June 2004 – March 2008

*Developed dynamic forums for learning and exchange amongst private human rights grantmakers*

* Served as first staff person, coordinating donor education and programming on cross-cutting human rights issues such as LGBT and disability rights through three annual donor conferences.
* Tripled membership and managed financial accounting and operations as the sole staff person
* Conceived and curated a bi-monthly human rights newsletter.

## MERTZ GILMORE FOUNDATION New York, NY

### Program Associate June 2004 – Jan 2006

*Supported the launch of one of the first US human rights grantmaking programs in the country*

* Communicated guidelines to prospective grantees and guided their proposal development.
* Identified grantee and donor partners through research and analysis of funding data.

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**Coordinator,** LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust, **Assistant to Executive Director** Jan 2002 – June 2004

*Organized innovative open space and dance grantmaking portfolio with annual budget of $6 million*

* Improved efficiency and monitoring by developing the Trust’s first grants management database.
* Launched Foundation rebranding, including web site and logo.

## JP MORGAN & CO., INC New York

### Chief Administrative Officer, *Healthcare Investment Banking* July 1995 - July 1999

*Managed strategic planning and operations of 70-person team with $120mm budget*

* Developed performance dashboard on staffing, deals and revenue replicated across division.
* Identified operational cost savings and managed ten administrative assistants.

## JP MORGAN & CO., INC New York, Geneva, Singapore

### Management Consultant

*Developed financial and qualitative analyses to inform clients’ strategic investments.*

* Systematized asset valuation for Private Banking dramatically improving the efficiency of risk management systems.
* Conducted cost analyses of Asia contingency sites and presentation operations in NY and London.

# Other leadership Positions

* Women Enabled, *Member/President* of the Board of Directors (2017-now)
* Disability Rights Working Group, *Co-leader*, International Human Rights Funders Group (2007 – 2017)
* Human Rights Defenders Working Group, *Steering Committee*, IHRFG (2012 – 2015)
* Disability Funders Network, *Member,* Board of Directors (2007 – 2013)
* Embankment Preservation Coalition, Jersey City, NJ *Member,* Board of Directors (2005 – 2008)

# Education

### Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut May 2001

M.A. in International Relations,Human Rights & Law

*University Fellow, Academic Excellence Award Winner*

### Ludwig-Maximillan University, Munich, Germany Sept 1993 – Aug 1994

### Hamilton College, Clinton, New York May 1995

B.A. in World Politics and German

*Summa cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa, World Politics senior prize, German honors*

# Select publications and awards

“[Beyond Identity Funding: Rethinking Social Justice Philanthropy](https://nonprofitquarterly.org/beyond-identity-funding-rethinking-social-justice-philanthropy/) “ Non-Profit Quarterly with Diana Samarasan (30 May 2023)

“[How Funders Can Make Disability Visible](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/how_funders_can_make_disability_visible),” Stanford Social Innovation (30 June 2021) with Bess Rothenberg

“[5 Actions Nonprofits Can Take to Embrace Disability Rights and Access](https://nonprofitquarterly.org/5-actions-nonprofits-can-take-to-embrace-disability-rights-and-access/),” Non-Profit Quarterly (30 October 2020). *People with disabilities bring unique perspectives to tackling injustice and inequality.*

“[A CSO Playbook to Reclaim Civic Space: 1.0](https://www.csis.org/analysis/cso-playbook-reclaim-civic-space-version-10),” Center for Strategic & International Studies (December 2018). *CSOs must confront restrictions that are fueled by weaknesses in the sector itself.*

“[Collective Power of Inclusion](https://ihrfg.wordpress.com/2017/04/25/collective-power-of-inclusion/),” IHRFG (10 April 2017). *Women with disabilities fall through the cracks: The disability rights field rarely considers gender and women’s rights groups rarely address disability.*

Selected for inaugural Changemaker Authors Cohort, a group of social justice practitioners writing books, by Narrative Initiative and Unicorn Authors Club.

“[Ford Foundation’s Efforts to Elevate Disability Rights Holds Lessons for Other Grant Makers](https://www.philanthropy.com/article/ford-foundations-efforts-to-elevate-disability-rights-holds-lessons-for-other-grant-makers),” Chronicle of Philanthropy with Hilary Pennington (2 Dec 2022)