

Heather O'Connor, Ph.D.

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- A former nonprofit executive with 20 years of experience in the third sector
- Qualitative & mixed-methods expertise
- Practical, applied research for immediate impact
- Custom research, program evaluation, market research, curriculum development, program development

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Philanthropic Studies

Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, 2021

Dissertation: *Reading between the lines: Social contextual influences on the production of and response to charitable appeals*

Master of Arts in Social Work

University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration, 2005

Bachelor of Science in Public Relations

University of Tennessee at Knoxville School of Communications, 1999

ADDITIONAL TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

Certificate in Market Research

University of California at Davis

The Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI)

Human Subjects Research, Social/Behavioral Researchers (ID 38340 & 40253)

Certified Fundraising Executive

CFRE International

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Vice President, Research and Learning

Daylight Advisors, 2022 – Present

- Provide commissioned research and curriculum development services to support philanthropic advisors and the families they serve.

Market Research Analyst

The Canadian and American Pet Cancer Foundations, 2022 – Present

- Conduct pro bono competitor analysis, focus group, and survey research for a newly-formed animal welfare organization.

Research and Evaluation Consultant, Center for Philanthropy and Social Impact

The American College of Financial Services, 2020 – Present

- Conduct survey and interview research on needs and opportunities for the education of philanthropic advisors. Evaluate existing training programs. Design and conduct mixed-methods research to understand experiences unique to advisors of color and LGBTQ+ advisors to inform the design of new programs.

Doctoral Research Assistant, Women's Philanthropy Institute (WPI)

Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, 2017 – 2019

- Conducted literature reviews, developed surveys in Qualtrics, and drafted articles and white papers on gender differences in giving around retirement and high-net-worth donors' support for women and girls.

Doctoral Research Assistant

Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, 2016 – 2017

- Conducted and analyzed individual and focus group interviews on fundraisers' informal support groups and professional growth.

MOST RECENT NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Executive Director

Kachemak Bay Family Planning Clinic, 2012 – 2016 (Homer, Alaska)

- Led a nonprofit reproductive healthcare organization offering direct clinical services, community health outreach, and teen education programs for an average of 1,200 clients each year
- Developed initiatives for marketing communications, fundraising, volunteer recruitment, and community partnerships that diversified funding sources and increased revenue by 38%
- Managed program evaluation and reporting to federal, state, and foundation funders
- Directed a team of 12 FTE employees across three programs

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

O'Connor, H. (2022). "The unexpected activist: Catholic women's support for pro-choice organizations." *Journal of Philanthropy and Marketing*. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/nvsm.1767>

O'Connor, H., Yuen, D., Krause, I. (2022) "[Philanthropic advisors in the 21st century: Holders of the Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy® \(CAP®\) designation.](#)" Center on Philanthropy and Social Impact, American College of Financial Services.

O'Connor, H. (2022). "Writing Compelling Appeals." In *Achieving Excellence in Fundraising, 5th Edition*. Shaker, G., Nathan, S., Tempel, E., Stanczykiewicz, W. (Eds.). John Wiley & Sons.

Mesch, D., Osili, U., Dale, E., Ackerman, J., & **O'Connor, H.** (2021). "Charitable giving in married couples: Untangling the effects of education and income on spouses' giving." *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/08997640211008983>

Dale, E. & **O'Connor, H.** (2020) "The million-dollar donor journey: Stages of development for women donors." *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 26(1). <https://doi.org/10.1002/nvsm.1680>

Dale, E., Shaker, G. & **O'Connor, H.** (2020). "Teaching Philanthropy: Developing Critical and Compassionate Approaches to Giving." In *Teaching Nonprofit Management*. Bezboruah, K. and Carpenter, H., (Eds). Edward Elgar.

Dale, E., **O'Connor, H.**, Small, D., Mesch, D., Osili, U., & Ackerman, J. (2018). "Giving by and for women: Understanding high-net-worth donors' support for women and girls." Indianapolis. Women's Philanthropy Institute, Indiana University. <http://hdl.handle.net/1805/15117>

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA)

American Evaluation Association (AEA)

Market Research Society (MRS)

Qualitative Research Consultants Association (QRCA)