

Overview of *Enhancing effective charitable giving* and *Innovations in Fundraising* database resources (Airtable)

Summary, David Reinstein, 2 Aug 2018

Summary

This document explains the resources available on the “Airtable” database “giving-researchers-shared”, particularly those relevant to Innovations in Fundraising project and the “Enhancing effective charitable giving” projects. This database is by invitation only, but much of the content is currently automatically fed into the [innovationsinfundraising.org](#) DokuWiki site using the Airtable API and our “fundingwiki” package (documented [HERE](#)).

Airtable

[Airtable](#) is a collaborative web-based software with a variety of displays and organizational structures; it has many features of a relational database, and even more features if one engages their API. It is user-friendly, with a gui resembling a spreadsheet, and easy tutorials, instructions and examples. You can operate it from a browser or a web-driven app.

(While we are using Airtable for now, we may switch to using more powerful database and content management tools in future.)

Key features of tables in Airtables (quick views)

Each Airtable user can have any number of *Bases*, and bases can be shared in work groups.

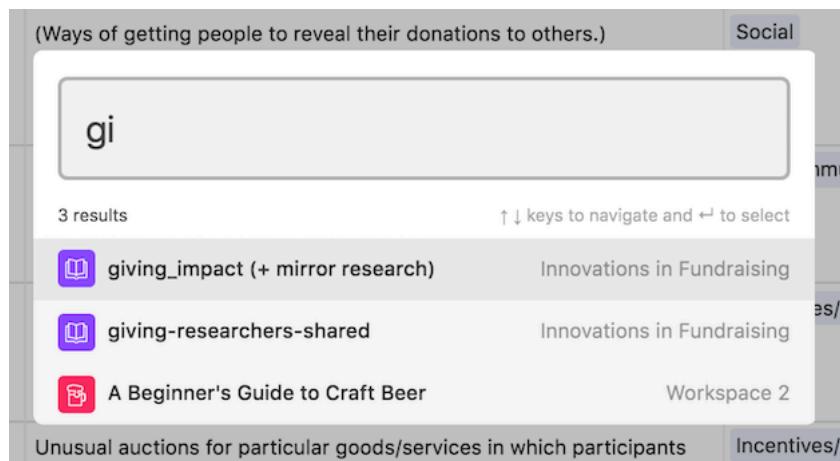


Figure 1: Command-K to jump to any other Base

Here, I outline the base “giving-researchers-shared”

Tools table

There can be any number of tables in each Airtable Base.

Here, the “Tools” table defines, discusses, and considers the evidence on a variety of methods that have been used and proposed to increase and improve charitable giving.

The “description” field gives a plain language Description of this tool.

Note that the first column field of every table is its identifier or “primary key” used to identify it in other tables; this should take unique values (but can be a variety of types). Here, the primary field is “toolname”.

Note that some of these toolnames begin with “c-”; these are tools that we are considering including, but we are not fully convinced yet that the evidence is reasonably strong or the tool is well defined.

| Toolname | Tool name | Description | Category | subcat | Wiki? | Checked |
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------|--------|-------|--|
| CATEGORY | | | | | | |
| 1 3 Size of ask; Low-ball, ‘Legitimation of paltry donation’ (LPD/LPC) - | Ask for *small* donation | Saying things like “even a penny helps” makes small contributions feel legitimate. | Choice architecture, : | | | ✓ |
| 2 c - Automatic or opt-out indexing/escalation - | Auto-index | When people commit to regular donations, automatically sign people up (allowing opt out) to have these increase each year along with inflation, or even faster. | Choice architecture, : | | | c - Automatic or opt-out indexing/escal... |
| 3 c - Default and suggested contributions - | Default/suggested contribution | A “suggested contribution” may be given, or a default contribution may be checked or pre-filled (allowing changes). There may also be a list of suggested contributions (tick boxes). | Choice architecture, : | | | c - Default and suggested contributions |
| 4 c - Nudging can backfire, lead to unsubscription - | Nudging backfire (caution) | Although “nudges” like some of those here may increase donations in a single instance, they may lead people to unsubscribe or distance themselves from the solicitor or charity. Caution is warranted. | Choice architecture, : | | | c - Nudging can backfire, lead to unsubscription |
| 5 3 Personal/direct ask - | Personal ask | Make a direct, specific, and personalised ask for a donation. | Choice architecture, : | | | ✓ |

Figure 2: Tools table, grid view

There are a number of helpful shortcut keys you can use to get around an Airtable (click the question mark in the upper right corner to see these). Clicking command/control-j gives a list of all of the tables in the base. This base is used for a variety of purposes, thus it has many tables.

| | lit_sections | Barriers to EAG... | EA-tools | litsurvey-tasks-issues |
|---|--------------|---|---------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Description | Ways of getting people to reveal their donations to others.) | Social | |
| 2 | Description | \ charity, fundraiser or site could present information on how effective/impactful it is, in terms of the amount of "final outcome" it achieves per dollar donated, or equivalently, the cost per unit of this outcome achieved. E.g., the Against Malaria Foundation could report... | Info/commun | |
| 3 | Description | The same money could be used to either "match" donations or give donors a "rebate". According to economic theory, these are equivalent, but there is evidence that people respond to these differently). | Incentives/gi | |
| 4 | Description | Unusual auctions for particular goods/services in which participants continue to contribute some amount in every round, until all but one person drops out. The last person to drop out wins the thing being auctioned. | Incentives/gi | |
| 5 | Description | Saying things like "even a penny helps" makes small contributions feel legitimate. | Choice archit | |
| 6 | Description | Fundraisers could choose solicitors who have a particular connection with potential donors (e.g., from same university or geographic area), and emphasize this connection. | Info/commun | |
| 7 | Description | When people commit to regular donations, automatically sign people up (allowing opt out) to have these increase each year along with | Choice archit | |

Figure 3: Cmd-J see all tables in base

Here, you see the tools table, sorted by the column “evidence strength”. We are aiming at a formal classification of the evidence strength for each tool, tied into a quantitative meta-analysis, relying on examples from psychology, the medical literature, and the work of Eva Vivalt (AidGrade). We will consider both the *size* of estimated effects (strength of the effects) and the strength of the evidence base; the confidence we can have in these results. However, for now, these measures of evidence strength are based on our own ad hoc judgments, considering the apparent internal and external validity/generalizability of the experiments and other evidence, the credibility of the techniques used, and whether the results have been replicated by other authors and with other approaches providing “converging validation”.

The screenshot shows a Jupyter Notebook interface with a table titled "giving-researchers-shared". The table has columns for Toolname, Description, Theories, Types of Evidence, Evidence strength, and Contributors. The rows list various tools and their characteristics, such as "Reveal previous donor/donation" and "Matching/price". The "Evidence strength" column is sorted in descending order, with values ranging from 6.0 to 9.0. The "Contributors" column consistently lists "David Reinstein".

| | Toolname | Description | Theories | Types of Evidence | Evidence strength | Contributors |
|---|---|--|--|--|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Reveal previous donor/donation (also 'info') - | Reveal previous donations | Conformity, Fairness, Incomplete information and Reputation-seeking/prestige | Natural experiment, Field-exp-charity, Field-exp-charity, Field... | 9.0 | David Reinstein |
| 2 | Visibility - | Visibility/publicity | Reputation-seeking/prestige, Social signaling | | 8.0 | David Reinstein |
| 3 | Individual beneficiary vs large group ('identifiable victims effect') - | Individual/identifiable victim bias; hot/cold; identifiability ... | Scope insensitivity, Dual systems: hot/cold, Identifiable victims bias | Correlational-observational, Hypothetical/intentional experiment,... | 8.0 | David Reinstein |
| 4 | Matching/price - | Offer a matching donation | Dual systems (system 2), Warm glow - sophisticated, Impact Optimization | Field-exp-charity | 7.0 | David Reinstein |
| | Pre-cover overhead costs - | Pre-cover overhead costs | Overhead aversion | Field-exp-charity, Lab-charity | 7.0 | David Reinstein |
| 6 | Size of ask; Low-ball, 'Legitimation of paltry donation' (LPD/LPC) - | Ask for *small* donation | Conformity, 'Legitimation of paltry donation' | Field-exp-charity, Meta-analysis/lit survey | 7.0 | David Reinstein |
| 7 | Percentage donations tied to purchases, especially in online auctions - | Donations tied to purchases | | Causal-observational (IV etc) | 7.0 | David Reinstein |
| 8 | Personal/direct ask - | Personal ask | | Natural experiment | 6.0 | David Reinstein |

Figure 4: tools sorted by ad hoc evidence strength

Here we see the tools grouped by the field “category”; a functional classification which is further explained in the “categories” table.

The screenshot shows a Notion database titled "giving-researchers-shared". The interface includes a header with various tabs like "All tables", "theories", "Categories", etc., and a search bar. The main view is a grid table with columns for "Toolname", "Description", "Category", "subcat", "Wiki?", and "Tool...". The table is grouped by "Category".

| CATEGORY | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--------------------|--|---------------------------------------|----------|--|
| Timing/conditionality, income | | Count 4 | Unique 4 | Filled 4 | Filled 2 | Checked 4 |
| 1 | Give more tomorrow - | Give more tomorrow | Ask people (now) to (increase) their donation at a later date, rather than increase it immediately. For example, ask a regular donor to begin giving 10% more starting in the following year. | Timing/conditionality, Timing | ✓ | Give more tomorrow |
| 2 | Give if you win - | Give if you win | Ask for *conditional* commitments from uncertain unrealized income. E.g., ask "if you get a raise next year, would you donate 10% of your salary increase?" This can be a nonbinding pledge you're reminded of, or a more formal commitment. (See giveifyouwin.org.) | Timing/conditionality, Conditionality | ✓ | Give if you win |
| 3 | Income source: Ask from less-tangible income - | Tangibility | For people to donate from less tangible sources of income and forms of wealth. E.g., ask them to donate online with digital currency rather than with cash. | Timing/conditionality, | ✓ | Income source: Ask from less-tangible income |
| 4 | c - Deadlines to give - | Deadlines | Give people a deadline, e.g., "please donate before 31 December" (of the current year). (They might also provide a need-based reason for this deadline.) | Timing/conditionality, | ✓ | c - Deadlines to give |
| + | | | | | | |
| CATEGORY | | | | | | |
| Targeting | | Count 5 | Unique 4 | Filled 5 | Filled 0 | Checked 1 |
| 5 | Donor's mood (When to target) - | Donor mood | Target people when you can expect them to be in a particular mood likely to make them want to donate. (E.g., particularly happy or emotional.) | Targeting | | Donor's mood (When to target) |
| 6 | c - whom to target - | Whom to target | Market-profiling, demographic and psychographic research can be used to determine who is most likely to respond to an appeal for your charity | Targeting | ✓ | c - whom to target |

Figure 5: tools grouped by category

One can create and move between a variety of “views” for each table (control/command-shift-K to quickly access the views). These can have types, including the grids we have already seen, forms for easy input of new rows, galleries to display visual content, and Kanban to organize tasks.

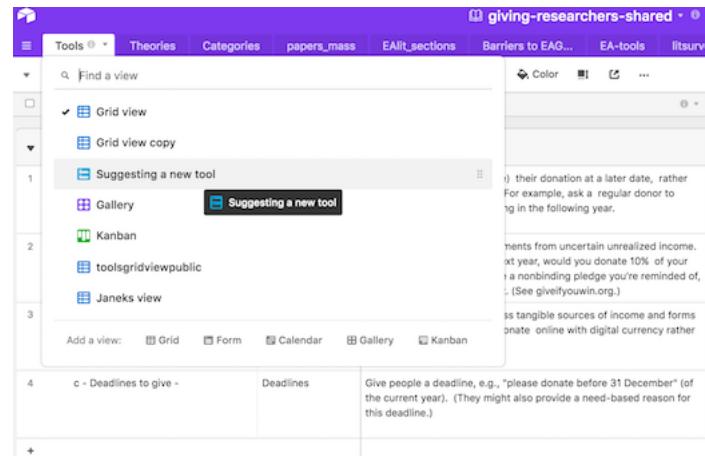


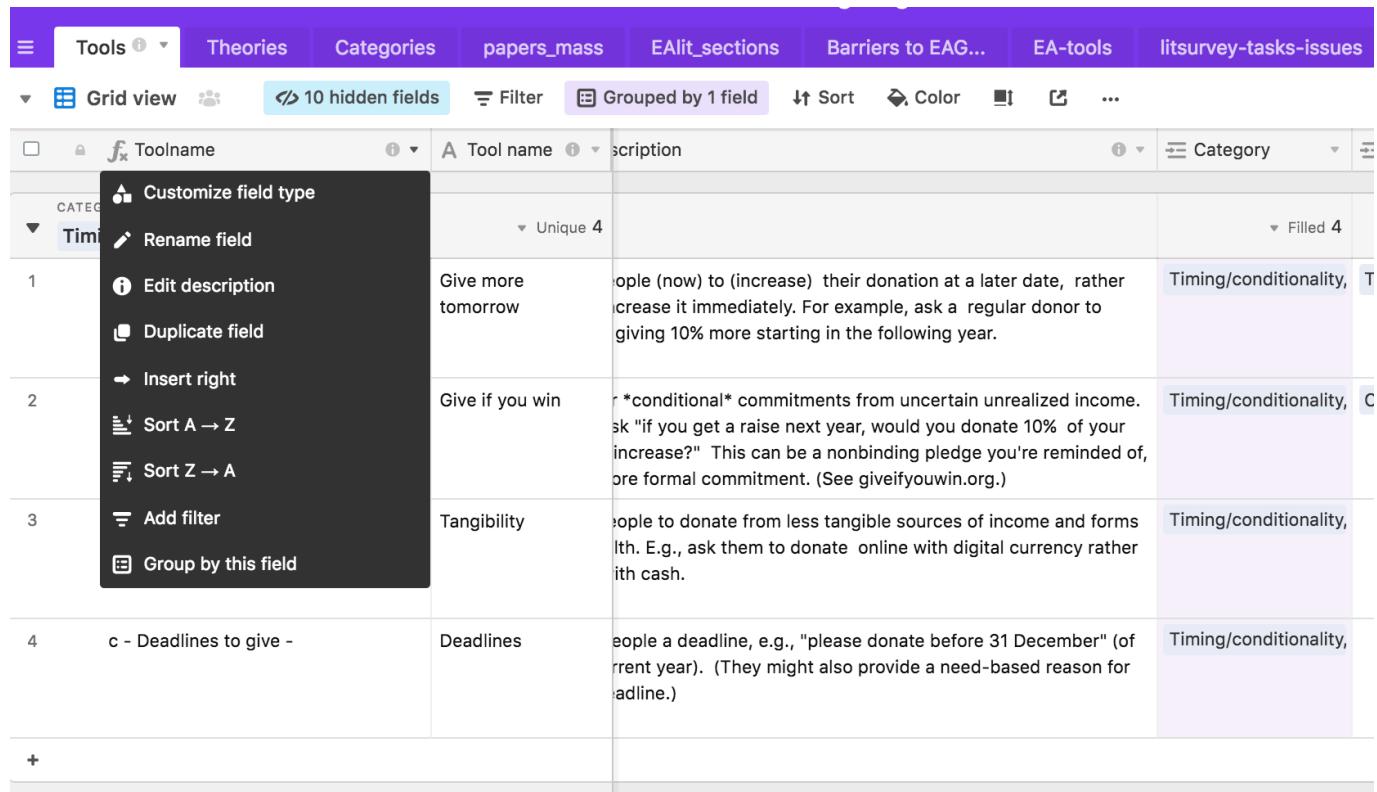
Figure 6: command shift k for views

Here we see a “form view” to allow people to suggest a new tool, particularly users of the InnovationsinFundraising.org wiki. We can share a link to this form or embedded in a webpage. We will be notified when a new tool as suggested. It will be incorporated directly into the Airtable, and we can examine and adapt it before potentially including it on the wiki.

The screenshot shows an Airtable form interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with tabs like 'Tools', 'Theories', 'Categories', etc., and a title 'Suggesting a new tool'. Below the title are buttons for 'Share form', 'Preview', and '...'. On the left, there's a sidebar titled 'Fields' with a list of various fields: 'Tool/theory', 'more papers', 'Tool variation', 'Full discussion', 'secondary papers', 'Category', 'Relevant use cases', 'Moderators (+)', 'Moderators (-)', 'source (moderators)', 'Reverse/(tight?) null pa...', 'Theories', 'Prevalence', 'subcat', 'EA-concepts', and 'Imported table'. To the right of the sidebar is the main form area. It features a section titled 'Suggesting a new tool' with the sub-instruction 'Suggest a tool here and we will respond or try to incorporate it'. Below this is a 'Tool name' field with a placeholder 'short tool name for wiki table' and a 'Description' field. At the bottom, there's an 'AKA' field. There are also buttons for 'Add a cover image' and 'Add a logo'.

Figure 7: form view

We can adjust the properties of each field (column), give it a description, or use it for sorting, filtering, etc., by clicking the tiny arrow on the upper right of that column.



The screenshot shows a database grid with the following columns:

- Toolname**: The primary key, with a tooltip indicating it is unique (Unique 4).
- Tool name**: A descriptive column.
- Description**: A detailed description of the tool.
- Category**: A classification column.

A context menu is open over the first row, specifically for the 'Toolname' column. The menu includes the following items:

- Customize field type
- Rename field
- Edit description
- Duplicate field
- Insert right
- Sort A → Z
- Sort Z → A
- Add filter
- Group by this field

The rows in the grid represent different tools:

1. Toolname: Give more tomorrow; Description: People (now) to (increase) their donation at a later date, rather than increase it immediately. For example, ask a regular donor to give 10% more starting in the following year. Category: Timing/conditionality.
2. Toolname: Give if you win; Description: *conditional* commitments from uncertain unrealized income. Ask "if you get a raise next year, would you donate 10% of your increase?" This can be a nonbinding pledge you're reminded of, or a formal commitment. (See giveifyouwin.org.) Category: Timing/conditionality.
3. Toolname: Tangibility; Description: People to donate from less tangible sources of income and forms of wealth. E.g., ask them to donate online with digital currency rather than cash. Category: Timing/conditionality.
4. Toolname: Deadlines; Description: People a deadline, e.g., "please donate before 31 December" (of current year). (They might also provide a need-based reason for a deadline.) Category: Timing/conditionality.

Figure 8: column options

Each field must have a particular type (which can be reassigned later). Most of these field types are just different formats for storing and displaying data/text (also, allowing for easier means of inputting with autofills/dropdowns, or different calculations in “formula” and “count” fields.)

However, one kind of field, the “Link to another record”, is distinct and perhaps the most interesting. This field tells me that this row relates to a row in another table, identified by its primary key. Such a link allows you to display information from different fields of each table to the other table. A table may have multiple such “Link” fields, and each link field can Linked to multiple records in the other field (if you specify that option).

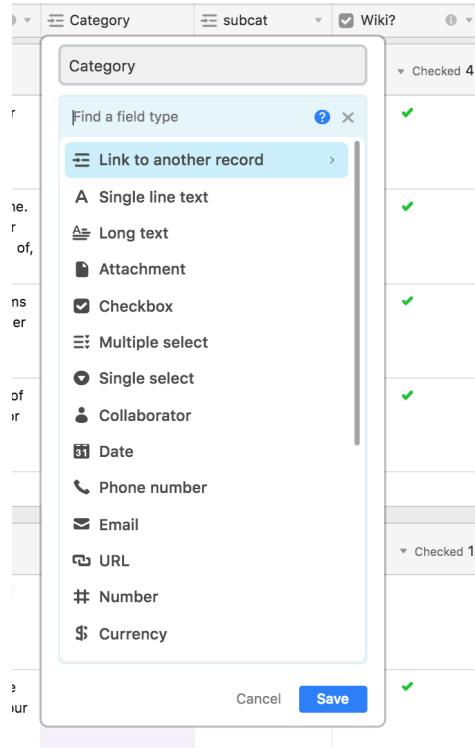


Figure 9: column field types

These link fields display as boxes in a table (grid view).

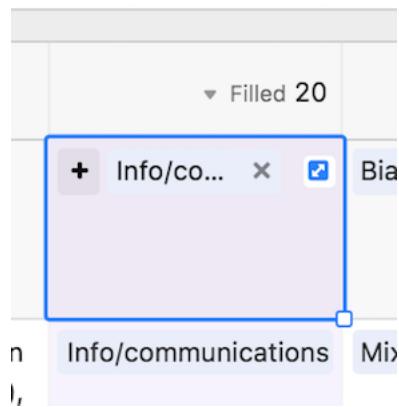


Figure 10: click box link field

Here we see that the “category” field in the tools table is actually a link to the “Categories” table. By clicking on that box (in the tool table) you can view and edit the entry in its own “home” table.

You can by adding a *new* entry to a link field in a table, and that field will be added as a new row in its home table.

Screenshot of a software interface titled "giving-researchers-shared". The main window shows a "Grid view" of records. A specific record for "Info/communications" is selected and expanded. The record details are as follows:

- Toolname:** Reveal previous donor/donation (also 'info') - Gender mediators of this
- Visibility:** Recognition 'to influence others'
- C:** inducing revelation
- CATEGORY:** Info/communications (Count 20)
- SCHEMA:** Add an option (tools)
- DESCRIPTION:** Providing factual information, as well as emotional and descriptive material... on the charity, its work, the cause, the beneficiaries, other donors, its effectiveness and efficiency, etc.
- TOOLS:** (empty)
- BARRIERS:** (empty)

The right side of the interface includes an "ACTIVITY" panel showing a network graph and a message: "No comments or changes to this record yet. Your current plan provides 2 weeks of revision history." There is also a "Comment" button.

Figure 11: opens entry in that table

Some more relevant fields in the tools table:

- “Findings summarized” gives the plain language description of what the evidence suggests about the impact of this tool (and where the evidence is limited).
- “Relevance to EA charities”: Is this tool especially relevant to more effective charities (“effective” in the sense endorsed by GiveWell and the EA movement), and if so, why?

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Excel table with the following columns and data:

| | Toolname | Tool name | Findings summarized | Relevance to EA charities | key |
|----|--|-------------------------------|--|---|------------------------------|
| 9 | Donor's political preferences - | Donor's political preferences | | | karlan2 |
| + | | | | | |
| | CATEGORY | | | | |
| | Social | Count 6 | Unique 5 | Empty 1 | |
| 10 | Reveal previous donor/donation (also 'info') - | Reveal previous donations | Revealing larger previous donations (in a range) increases giving; larger targets can be ineffective | Orthogonal. Relevant to question of 'should EA donors give on social fundraising pages?' To what extent can EA giving be spread by peer norms? Relevant to question of 'should EA donors give on social fundraising pages?' To what extent can EA giving be spre... | Smith21 Frey200 Shang2 |
| 11 | Visibility - | Visibility/publicity | Varied evidence that people 'sometimes' donate more when donations are visible (esp males) or when told of recognition possibility; larger amounts (Alipizar ea) | Not a superpower; all charities can do this. However, the EA community is perhaps strong. Public pledges (Giving Pledge, GWG...) | soeteve |
| 12 | Visibility - Recognition tiers | Recognition tiers | Mention of recognition tiers increases incidence, amount, particularly for larger (prior) givers. Harbaugh finds donations clustered at recognition tiers, Karlan less so. | General power, see previous | karlan_t |
| 13 | Reveal previous donor/donation | Revelation - gender | Women influenced less (but more influential on others) | | |

Figure 12: summarizing findings

Through our API/application (fundingwiki), we can easily push new entries and updates to the Tools table onto the related table on the Innovations in Fundraising wiki.

Tools for Motivating Effective Charitable Giving

We are building a database of useful tools, and a summary of the evidence and use cases. Hover over different categories to see their description or see all tool categories [here](#).

Show 100 entries

Search:

| Tool name | Category | Description | Main findings | Key papers |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Ask for *small* donation | Choice architecture, size/nature of ask | Saying things like "even a penny helps" make small contributions feel legitimate. | Even a penny helps' (lpd/'low bar') increases contribution incidence (appears strongly replicated) but sometimes reduces conditional contribution ('scale-back'); net effect varies. Mediated by anchors and expectations. | (Fraser & H, '89); (Cialdini & S, '76); (Andrews ea, '08) |
| Personal ask | Choice architecture, size/nature of ask | Make a direct, specific, and personalised ask for a donation | Donation requests increase the propensity to give (Yoruk). There is a conventional wisdom that "most donations occur in response to an ask". Some evidence that personal targeting helps. | (Meer, '11); (Yörük, '09) |
| Pledging/precommitment | Choice architecture, size/nature of ask | Ask for a pledge or promised commitment to donate (a particular amount, or in general) before making the *actual* ask requiring the actual commitment of money | | (Fosgaard & A, '18) |

Figure 13: pushed_tool table iiff

This also pushes relevant material into the wiki page entry (on the same site) linked to the table on the wiki.

The screenshot shows a wiki page with the following structure:

- Header:** liF Innovations in Fundraising, Home, About, Add Content, Search, Log In
- Breadcrumbs:** You are here / Tools for Motivating Effective Charitable Giving / Ask for *small* donation
- Page Title:** Ask for *small* donation
- Text:** Saying things like "even a penny helps" make small contributions feel legitimate.
Alternative tool name: Low-ball, Legitimation of paltry donations, LPD, LPC
Tool variation:
Category: Choice architecture, size/nature of ask
Sub-category:
Relevant theories: 'Legitimation of paltry donation' (LPD/LPC), Conformity
Type of evidence: Field-exp-charity, Meta-analysis/lit survey
Evidence strength (ad hoc assessment): 7
- Table of Contents:** Table of Contents ▾
 - Ask for *small* donation
 - Main findings
 - Discussion
 - Practical relevance
 - Key papers
 - Secondary papers
 - Discussion

Figure 14: wiki entry 1

Note (above) that wiki entries also have links to the relevant academic papers' wiki entries, and the full texts of the papers.

Most pages on the wiki also allow discussion (at the moment, not integrated with the Airtable), and we are informed of new comments.

Discussion

Practical relevance

May be easier to legitimate small donations in effective (humanitarian) contexts because of low living costs... Seems a common practice in international giving ("for the price of just a cup of coffee")

Use cases

Prevalence:

Common

Key papers

- [The Effect Of Matching Contribution Offers And Legitimization Of Paltry Contributions On Compliance](#), Full text
- [Increasing Compliance By Legitimizing Paltry Contributions: When Even A Penny Helps.](#), Full text
- [The Legitimization Of Paltry Favors Effect: A Review And Meta-Analysis](#), Full text

Secondary papers

Contributors David Reinstein

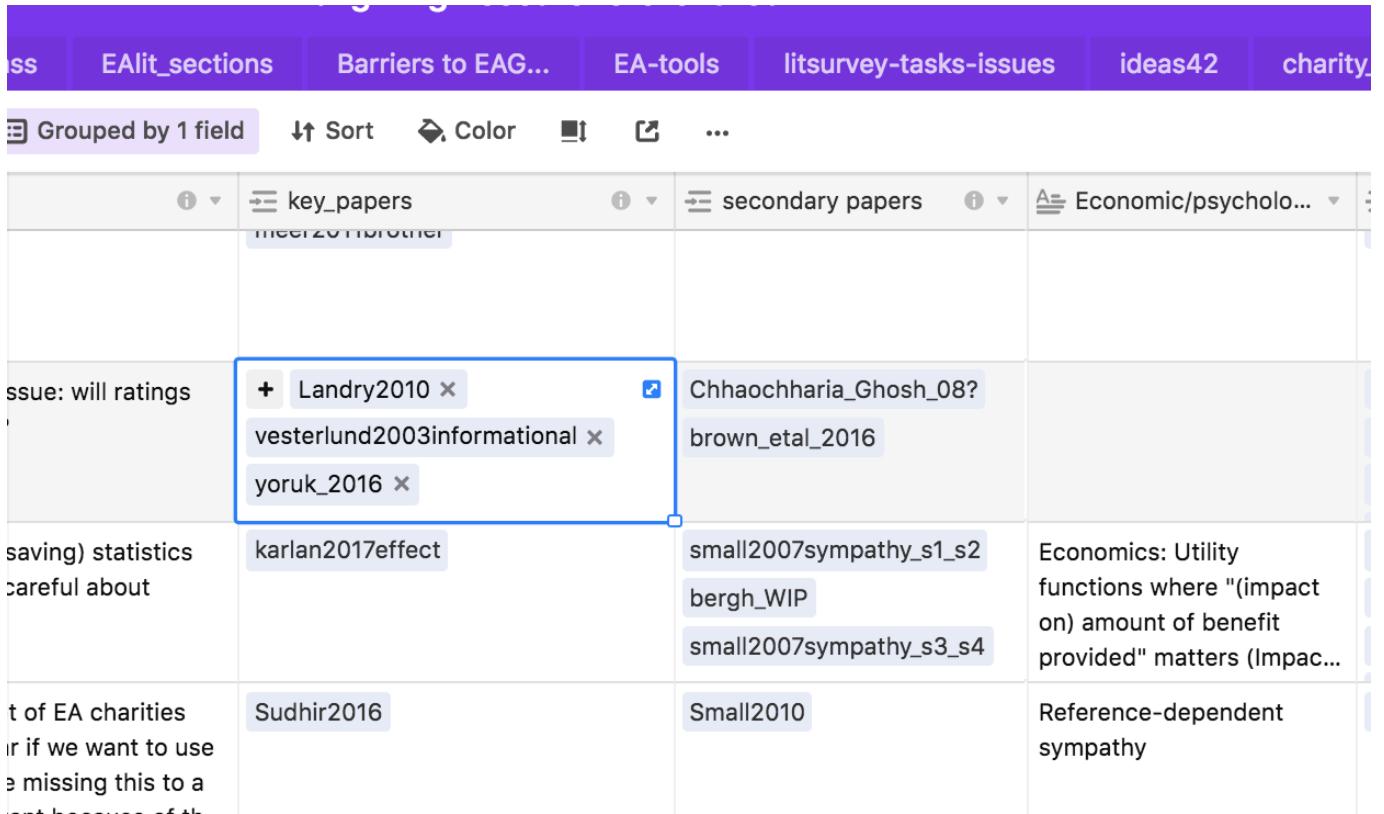
Discussion

Real name:

Figure 15: wiki entry2

Other tables

The tools table links to the “papers_mass” table in several fields, including “key_papers”; the papers providing the most relevant and strongest evidence for the tool, and “secondary papers”.



The screenshot shows a database interface with a purple header containing tabs: 'EAlit_sections', 'Barriers to EAG...', 'EA-tools', 'litsurvey-tasks-issues', 'ideas42', and 'charity'. Below the header is a toolbar with icons for grouping by one field, sorting, coloring, and more. The main area is a table with four columns. The first column has rows for 'Issue: will ratings' and 'saving) statistics careful about'. The second column has rows for 'Landry2010', 'vesterlund2003informational', 'yoruk_2016', and 'karlan2017effect'. The third column has rows for 'Chhaochharia_Ghosh_08?', 'brown_eta..._2016', and 'small2007sympathy_s1_s2'. The fourth column has rows for 'Economics: Utility functions where "(impact on) amount of benefit provided" matters (Impact...)' and 'Reference-dependent sympathy'. A blue box highlights the 'key_papers' column for the 'Issue: will ratings' row, which contains the three paper names from the second column.

| | key_papers | secondary_papers | Economic/psycholo... |
|---|---|---|---|
| Issue: will ratings | + Landry2010 ✕ vesterlund2003informational ✕ yoruk_2016 ✕ | Chhaochharia_Ghosh_08? brown_eta..._2016 | |
| saving) statistics careful about | karlan2017effect | small2007sympathy_s1_s2 bergh_WIP small2007sympathy_s3_s4 | Economics: Utility functions where "(impact on) amount of benefit provided" matters (Impact...) |
| t of EA charities if we want to use missing this to a | Sudhir2016 | Small2010 | Reference-dependent sympathy |

Figure 16: key papers

Again, clicking on this box both reveals the link to its home table, and allows you to view and edit this entry within its home table. Note the doi and bibtex citation format is included for this paper.

The screenshot shows a software interface for managing research papers. The main title is "giving-researchers-shared". The left sidebar lists categories like "Categories", "hidden fields", and various research topics. The main panel displays a record for the paper "karlan2017effect" from the "papers_mass" table. The record includes the following fields:

- A BIBTEXID**: karan2017effect
- BIBSTATUS**: complete
- A PARENCTE**: (Karlan & W, '17)
- A DOI**: 10.1016/j.socrec.2016.05.005
- BIBTEXFULL**:

```
@article{Karlan_2017,
doi = {10.1016/j.socrec.2016.05.005},
url = {[https://doi.org/10.1016%2Fj.socrec.2016.05.005]},
year = {2017},
month = {feb},
publisher = {Elsevier (BV)},
volume = {66},
pages = {1–8},
```

Here is the “papers_mass” table, the largest table in this base. We are working to include and flesh out entries the largest set of academic papers relevant to motivators and influencers of charitable giving decisions. We have particularly focused on Economics and Psychology, on *empirical* work directly involving or addressing *actual* charitable giving, and on published or well-cited papers. There is also a focus on studies considering variables that could be *adjusted* to influence giving patterns, and also on issues relating to giving effectiveness. However, none of these are exclusive restrictions.

| | Tools | Theories | Categories | papers_mass | EAlt_sections | Barriers to EAG... | EA-tools | ltsurvey-tasks-issues | ideas42 | charity_science | SHARE | BLOCKS | | | | | |
|-----|---------------------|----------|--------------------|---|---|--|------------|-----------------------|---------|---|-------|------------------|--------|-------|------|-------|-----|
| | Grid view | | | | | | | | | | | 17 hidden fields | Filter | Group | Sort | Color | ... |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 234 | Kamenica2011 | complete | (Kamenica, '12) | 10.1146/annurev-economics... bibstatus | @article{Kamenica_2012, doi = {10.1146/annurev-...} | Kamenica, Emir, (2012). //Behavioral Economics ... | article | | | Behavioral Economics And Psychology C | | | | | | | |
| 235 | Kaplan2008 | complete | (Kaplan & R, '09) | 10.1016/j.euroe... corev.2008.0... | @article{Kaplan_2009, doi = ...} | Kaplan, Todd R.; Ruffle, Bradley J., (2009). //In ... | article | | | In Search Of Welfare-Improving Gifts | | | | | | | |
| 236 | karlan2007dpm | complete | (Karlan & L, '07) | 10.1257/aer.97.5.1774 bibtexid | @article{Karlan_2007, doi = {10.1257/aer.97.5.1774},...} | Karlan, Dean; List, John A., (2007). //Does Price ... | article | | | Does Price Matter In Charitable Giving? Large-Scale Natural Field Experiment | | | | | | | |
| 237 | karlan2012can | complete | (Karlan & L, '12) | 10.3386/w17954 bibtextfull | @techreport{Karlan_2012, doi = {10.3386/w17954},...} | Karlan, Dean; List, John, (2012). //How Can Bill An... techreport | | | | How Can Bill And Melinda Gates Increase Donations To Fund Public Goods? | | | | | | | |
| 238 | karlan_mcconnell | complete | (Karlan & M, '14) | 10.1016/j.jebo... corev.2014.06.013 | @article{Karlan_2014, doi = ...} | Karlan, Dean; McConnell, Margaret A., (2014). ... | article | | | Hey Look At Me: The Effect Of Giving Ci | | | | | | | |
| 239 | karlan2017effect | complete | (Karlan & W, '17) | 10.1016/j.soc... corev.2016.05.005 | @article{Karlan_2017, doi = ...} | Karlan, Dean; Wood, Daniel H., (2017). ... | article | | | The Effect Of Effectiveness: Donor Response Effectiveness In A Direct Mail Fundraisin | | | | | | | |
| 240 | karlan2010getting | complete | (Karlan ea, '10) | 10.3386/w16205 bibstatus | @techreport{Karlan_2010, doi = {10.3386/w16205},...} | Karlan, Dean; McConnell, Margaret; Mullainathan, ... | techreport | | | Getting To The Top Of Mind: How Reminiscence Biases Influence Charitable Giving | | | | | | | |
| 241 | karlan2011small | complete | (Karlan ea, '11) | 10.1016/j.jpube... corev.2010.11.024 | @article{Karlan_2011, doi = ...} | Karlan, Dean; List, John A.; Shafir, Eldar, (2011). ... | article | | | Small Matches And Charitable Giving: Evidence From A Natural Field Experiment | | | | | | | |
| 242 | karlsson2009ostrich | complete | (Karlsson ea, '09) | 10.1007/s11166-009-0060-6 bibtexid | @article{Karlsson_2009, doi = {10.1007/s11166-009-0060-6},...} | Karlsson, Niklas; Loewenstein, George; ... | article | | | The Ostrich Effect: Selective Attention To Charitable Giving | | | | | | | |
| 243 | kataria2012honestly | complete | (Kataria & R, '14) | 10.1007/s11238-014-9469-5 bibstatus | @article{Kataria_2014, doi = {10.1007/s11238-014-9469-5},...} | Kataria, Mitesh; Regner, Tobias, (2014). //Honest!... techreport | article | | | Honestly, Why Are You Donating Money? An Experimental Study About Self-Awareness | | | | | | | |
| 244 | Katz2005 | complete | (Katz & R, '05) | 10.1016/j.ejpol... corev.2004.06.001 | @article{Katz_2005, doi = ...} | Katz, Eliakim; Rosenberg, Jacob, (2005). //An ... | article | | | An Economic Interpretation Of Institutional Charitable Giving | | | | | | | |
| 245 | katzev:asp | complete | (Katzev, '95) | | @techreport{katzev1995applying,... | Katzev, Richard D., (1995). | techreport | | | Applying Social Psychology To Charitable Giving | | | | | | | |

Figure 17: papers table

The papers Airtable table is also automatically integrated with the wiki (both an overall “papers” table, and a large set of pages).

You are here / [papers](#) / The Effect Of Effectiveness: Donor Response To Aid Effectiveness In A Direct Mail Fundraising Experiment

[papers:the_effect_of_effectiveness_donor_response_to_aid_effectiveness_in_a_direct_mail_fundraising_experiment](#)

The Effect Of Effectiveness: Donor Response To Aid Effectiveness In A Direct Mail Fundraising Experiment

Karlan, Dean; Wood, Daniel H., (2017). [The Effect Of Effectiveness: Donor Response To Aid Effectiveness In A Direct Mail Fundraising Experiment](#), Journal Of Behavioral And Experimental Economics, 66, , 1–8.

Keywords:

Discipline:

Type of evidence: Field-exp-charity

Related tools: Effectiveness info: deliberation, "Impact" (per \$) info

Related theories:

Related critiques:

Charity target:

Donor population:

Paper summary

Discussion

First wave treatment was an non-numerical indicator of the method's credibility:

“According to studies on our programs in Peru that used rigorous scientific methodologies, women who have received both loans and business education saw their profits grow”; in first wave the strong emotional appeal was present for both control and treatment.

The second wave treatment was quantitative

Figure 18: paper in wiki

We are working towards collecting a key set of variables from each empirical paper to use in meta-analyses, to feed into our overall evaluations, as well as yielding additional cross-study findings. (We are also tracking, and interested in collecting, archiving, and sharing the full datasets). This will be an involved and time-consuming process; Vivaldi (2017; “How much can we generalize from impact evaluations”) describes a somewhat-comparable undertaking, which required a substantial organization and time commitment from AidGrade staff and volunteers.

SE OF EFFECT SIZE ▾

SE CALC METHOD ⓘ ▾

EFFECT SIZE (SHARE OF MEAN DONATION) ▾

0.1400

MEAN INCIDENCE ⓘ ▾

0.110

EFFECT SIZE (INCIDENCE) ⓘ ▾

0.0270

HEADLINE P-VALUE ⓘ ▾

A DESCRIBE HEADLINE P-VAL ▾

Less than .01 for impact of pooled treatments on log gift amount (se=.1)

Figure 19: collecting metadata

The fundingwiki app automatically populates and updates information on the number of times each paper has been cited, using the Crossref database. Tools such as these will enable this to be a perennial resource, rather than a frozen-in-time evaluation.

| rating (1-5) ⓘ | ## num_citation... ⓘ | Exact repli... ⓘ |
|----------------|----------------------|------------------|
| | 16 | |
| | 265 | |
| | 4 | |
| | 43 | |

Figure 20: citations auto update

The “Categories” table provides and explains a number of “schema” we use to characterize both the tools and the “Barriers to effective giving” (discussed later).

| Categories | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------------|--|
| (Sub)Category or theme | Nested in | Schema | Description |
| Timing | Timing/condition | tools | When the donation is requested, when it will be collected, or something else involving the timing. |
| Conditionality | Timing/condition | tools | Donations may *depend* on some event (a natural disaster occurring, the donor getting a raise, etc.) |
| 2.3 Psychological distance/emotional arousal | | EA-Barriers-functional | Whether a cause/charity is something people are aware of, feel is important/salient, and feel close to. |
| 2.4 Identity | | EA-Barriers-functional | Things that run against one's self-perception and how one believes others will see you. |
| 2.5 Inertia and systemic/institutional | | EA-Barriers-functional | Factors limiting individual and social *change* in behavior |
| 2.6 Aversion to *doing* evaluations | | EA-Barriers-functional | Things that make people reluctant to evaluate and consider the effectiveness of charities, and ways that doing these evaluations reduce generosity. |
| 2.7 Quantitative biases | | EA-Barriers-functional | Problems dealing with numbers and making logical evaluations involving numbers, values and amounts. Common cognitive errors *or* intuitive and ... |
| Inherent | | EA-Barriers-functional | Longstanding or inherent societal and material factors |
| Base values; (non) utilitarian | | EA-barriers-conceptual | People may fundamentally *not* be Utilitarian in their values and goals. Thus they may not even try to maximize others' well-being in their charitable ... |
| Judgement/cognition failures | | EA-barriers-conceptual | (Even if utilitarian), in using system-II to maximize, they make mistakes and do this sub-optimally, due to misperceptions, cognitive biases, logical ... |
| Emotion overrides cognition | | EA-barriers-conceptual | System-1 hijacks and frustrates attempts to be analytical in making charitable decisions |
| Systemic | | EA-barriers-conceptual | Social, economic, and institutional factors impede effective giving |

Figure 21: categories table

Our literature survey and synthesis work also engages and connects to previous relevant work, such as the Ideas42 “Behavior and Charitable Giving” report, which is outlined in the table below.

| | Name | Category | EA_Barriers | Papers lin... | Outreach meth... | Outcomes af... | Results_notes | Comments |
|----|---|-------------------|---|------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| 4 | Revealing similarities between current and prospective donors increases average donations | Social norms | Revealing similarities between current and prospective donors increases average donations | Roson2007a | phone solicitation | Donation amount | | A *mediator* of the above effect? |
| 5 | Sharing information about major supporters validates your organization | Social norms | Social norms | karlan2012can | Direct mail | Participation rate Donation amount | "One group of donors was told that contributions would be matched by the B..." | Case-specific? |
| 6 | Seed money increases donation | Signaling and ... | Seed donation | List2002 | Direct mail | Participation rate | "Researchers mailed letters asking for funds to support a capital campaign at ..." | This needs to be better differentiated and characterized |
| 7 | Lead gifts encourage participation and higher donation amounts | Signaling and ... | Seed donation | Rondeau_list_08 | Direct mail | Participation rate Donation amount | | |
| 8 | Reaffirming donors' identities as charitable, giving people increases donations | Image and Ide... | | Kraut_73 | In-person | Donation amount | > As part of a widely publicized local fundraising campaign, canvassers visited ... | |
| 9 | Reminding people of their past behavior as "donors" increases contributions | Image and Ide... | | milkman2014iden | Direct mail | Donation amount Donation frequ... | > n a large-scale field experiment conducted with the American Red Cross (ARC), ... | |
| 10 | Offering public recognition increases donations | Image and Ide... | Visibility - Recognit | karlan_mcconnell | phone solicitation | Participation rate Donation amount | > members of a service club at Yale University contacted alumni and asked ... | There is other evidence too |

Figure 22: connect ideas42

This Airtable contains a host of other tables relevant to the projects mentioned here, and related academic and impact collaborations.

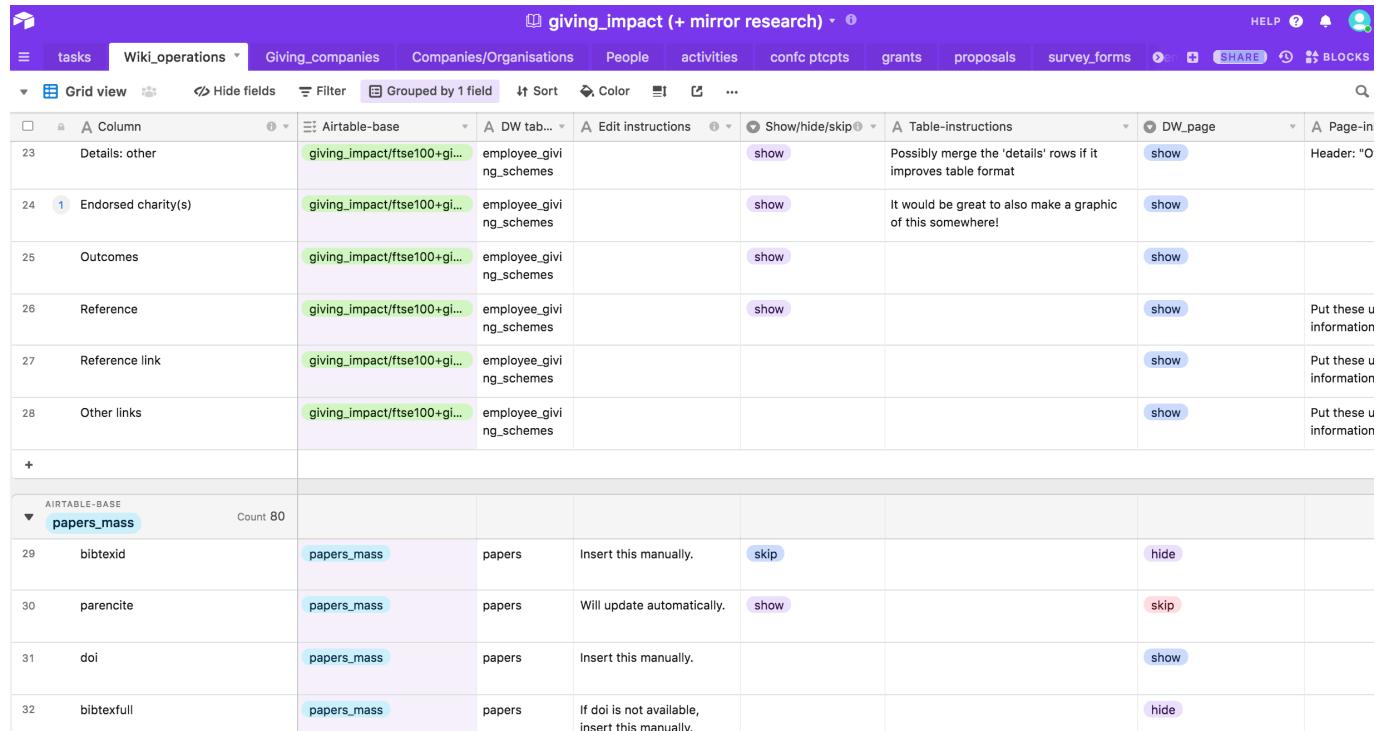
The screenshot shows an Airtable interface with a purple header bar. The header includes the title "giving-researchers-shared" with a document icon, a gear icon, and a help icon. Below the header are several tabs: "litsurvey-tasks-issues", "ideas42", "charity_science", "Relevant use-cases", "critiques", "Researchers_etc", and "SHAR". On the far right of the header are icons for "Reshare", a plus sign, and "SHARE".

The main area displays a table titled "tools". The columns are "Notes" (dropdown menu), "tools" (dropdown menu), "URL" (dropdown menu), and "Charity_sci" (dropdown menu). The "tools" column contains entries like "Give if you win - Pledges a", "Pledges and promises, aski", etc. The "URL" column contains URLs such as "http://www.charityscienc...", "http://giving.dartmouth.e...", and "http://www.cityphilanthro...". The "Charity_sci" column contains dropdown menus with options like "Pledges and promises, a", "Pledges and promises, aski", etc.

To the left of the main table is a sidebar titled "Find a table" which lists various tables in the database, each with a number and a checkbox. The listed tables include: charity_science (checkbox checked), Relevant use-cases (checkbox checked), critiques, Researchers_etc, Institutions, People (checkbox checked), effective_charities_rated, charity_raters, paper-tool_connections, p-curve-table (Simonsohn), Data_sources (prelim), social_donations_sites, Charity_experiments, Experiences, and a "+ Add empty table" button. At the bottom of the sidebar is an "Import spreadsheet" button.

Figure 23: othertables

A different airtable base includes a table giving “instructions” for how the giving-researchers-shared Airtable should be integrated with the innovationsinfundraising.org wiki. This is accomplished through the continued coding and running of the fundingwiki app.



The screenshot shows an Airtable grid view titled "giving_impact (+ mirror research)". The table has several columns: "A Column", "Airtable-base", "DW tab...", "Edit instructions", "Show/hide/skip", "Table-instructions", "DW_page", and "Page-in". There are 28 rows, each containing a category name and a corresponding "Airtable-base" value. The "Table-instructions" column contains notes such as "Possibly merge the 'details' rows if it improves table format" and "It would be great to also make a graphic of this somewhere!". The "Page-in" column contains notes like "Header: 'O", "Put these u information", and "Put these u information". Below the main table, there is a section titled "AIRTABLE-BASE papers_mass Count 80" with four rows: "bibtxid", "parencite", "doi", and "bibtexfull", each with a "papers_mass" value and instructions for handling it.

| | A Column | Airtable-base | DW tab... | Edit instructions | Show/hide/skip | Table-instructions | DW_page | Page-in |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--|----------------|---|---------|-------------------------|
| 23 | Details: other | giving_impact/ftse100+gi... | employee_giving_schemes | show | | Possibly merge the 'details' rows if it improves table format | show | Header: 'O |
| 24 | 1 Endorsed charity(s) | giving_impact/ftse100+gi... | employee_giving_schemes | show | | It would be great to also make a graphic of this somewhere! | show | |
| 25 | Outcomes | giving_impact/ftse100+gi... | employee_giving_schemes | show | | | show | |
| 26 | Reference | giving_impact/ftse100+gi... | employee_giving_schemes | show | | | show | Put these u information |
| 27 | Reference link | giving_impact/ftse100+gi... | employee_giving_schemes | | | | show | Put these u information |
| 28 | Other links | giving_impact/ftse100+gi... | employee_giving_schemes | | | | show | Put these u information |
| + | | | | | | | | |
| AIRTABLE-BASE | | | | | | | | |
| Count 80 | | | | | | | | |
| 29 | bibtxid | papers_mass | papers | Insert this manually. | skip | | hide | |
| 30 | parencite | papers_mass | papers | Will update automatically. | show | | skip | |
| 31 | doi | papers_mass | papers | Insert this manually. | | | show | |
| 32 | bibtexfull | papers_mass | papers | If doi is not available, insert this manually. | | | hide | |

Figure 24: wiki_instructions not auto

Increasing effective charitable giving: a review

With a team of academic collaborators, we are working on a review paper highlighting the “puzzle” that while people donate a great deal to charity, they donate relatively little to charities that evidence suggests are the most effective ones.

This paper draws from the database and wiki, and each of these will be integrated with one another. The analysis and discussion in the survey paper will be mirrored on the wiki, providing a platform for discussion and continuous updating. Each element of the surveyed evidence will be provided as a database entry, cross-referencing relevant papers, theories, use-cases, and available raw data.

AidGrade offers a partial model for the evaluation and dissemination process

www.aidgrade.org/meta-analysis

Build your own meta-analysis

Help: How do you make a meta-analysis?
What is a meta-analysis?
Outcome definitions.
I want to filter by something else, like by location!
Where did you get the results from in the papers?

1 Select Program 2 Select Outcome
Conditional Cash Transfers Enrollment Rate

3 Choose Filters / Effects
What was the method used? Was the study blinded? Fixed or random effects?
 Randomized Blinded Fixed effects
 Not Randomized Not Blinded Random effects
 Either Either

Submit

Submit 29 studies match your criteria

Outcome Effects
Enrollment Rate 0.03048 0.066

Studies Download

Akresh, de Walque and Kazanga (2013)
Weighting: 1.89%
0.083 0.18 0.28

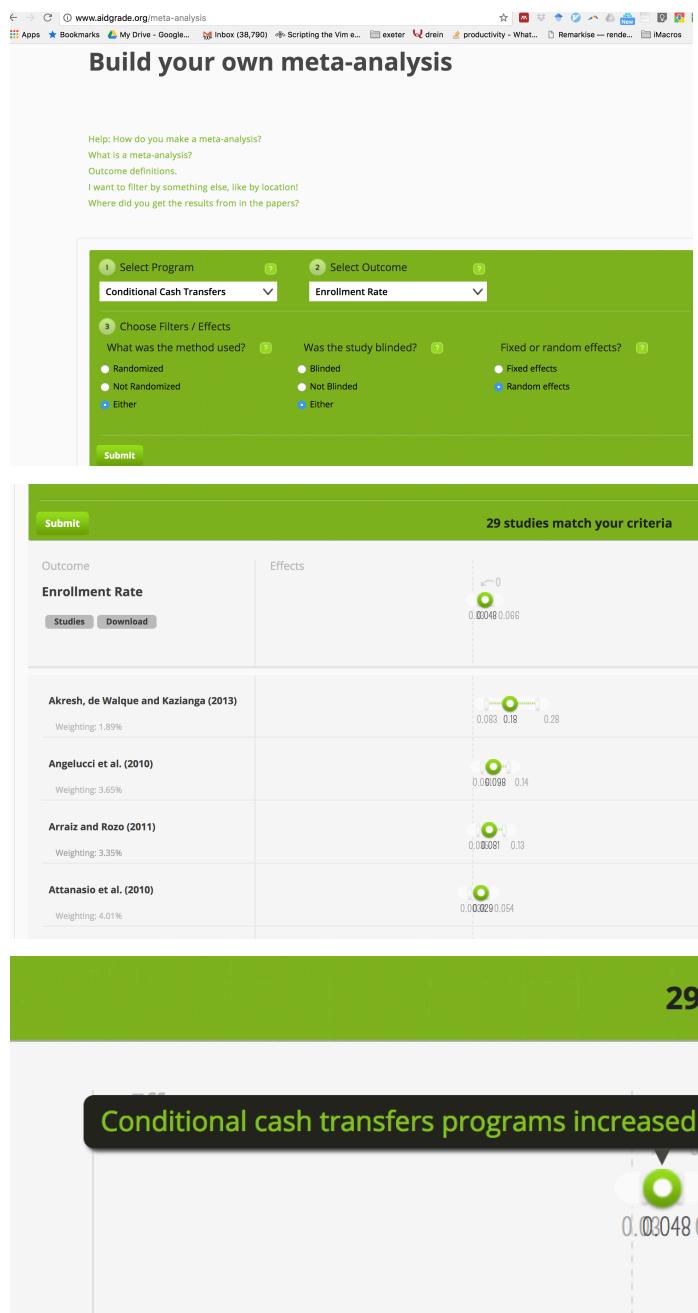
Angelucci et al. (2010)
Weighting: 3.65%
0.09098 0.14

Arraiz and Rozo (2011)
Weighting: 3.35%
0.08081 0.13

Attanasio et al. (2010)
Weighting: 4.01%
0.03290 0.054

29 studies match your criteria

Conditional cash transfers programs increased enrollment rate by 4.8 percentage points
0.03048 0.066



Where did you get the results from in the papers?

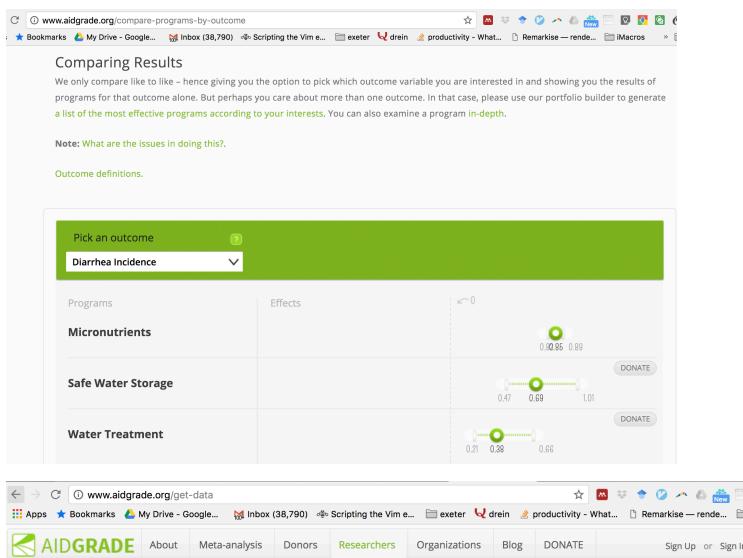
We follow certain conventions in extracting the results from papers. Short answer: we typically use the authors' preferred specification but look for those results that have the fewest controls (which could be used to bias results). Long answer: it's complicated, and full details can be found in the [Coding Manual](#).

Sometimes results are presented in a paper in a way that doesn't seem at first glance to line up with what is on the website. There are a few possible reasons for this:

1. The results were presented in an alternative format.

For example, a paper might have presented the mean attendance rate, the standard deviation of the attendance rate, and the number of observations for each of the treatment group and the control group. These six numbers can be converted for combining with numbers presented in a different format – for example, a regression coefficient and standard error.

2. The results were presented for different subgroups.



Get data

[Download data](#)

Please cite as:

AidGrade. (2015). *AidGrade Impact Evaluation Data, Version 1.1*. Available from: <http://www.aidgrade.org/get-data>.
Click to go back, hold to see history.

You can also download meta-analysis results from the [meta-analysis app](#).