

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.

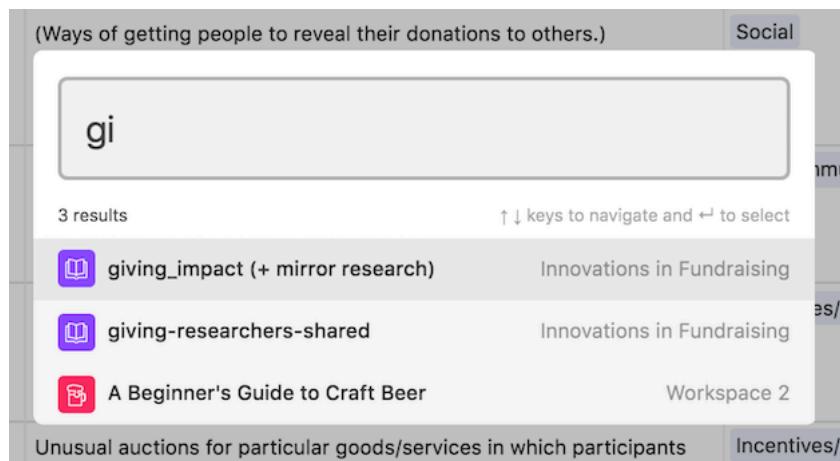


Figure 1: Command-K to jump to any other Base

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
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	Sort, Color, ...	Description	Category	
2	Ways of getting people to reveal their donations to others.)	Social		
3	\ 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		
4	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		
5	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		
6	Saying things like "even a penny helps" makes small contributions feel legitimate.	Choice archit		
7	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		
	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 data is sorted by Evidence strength. The first few rows are:

	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-exp-charity, Field-exp-charity	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 tabs like "All tables", "theories", "Categories", "papers_mass", "EAlit_sections", "Barriers to EAG...", "EA-tools", "litsurvey-tasks-issues", "ideas42", "charity_science", "SHARE", and "BLOCKS". Below the header is a search bar and various filter and sorting options. The main content area displays two tables under the "CATEGORY" heading.

CATEGORY		Description		Category	subcat	Wiki?	Tool/the...	Tool ...
Timing/conditionality, income				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		Description		Filled 5	Filled 0	Checked 1		
Targeting								
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.

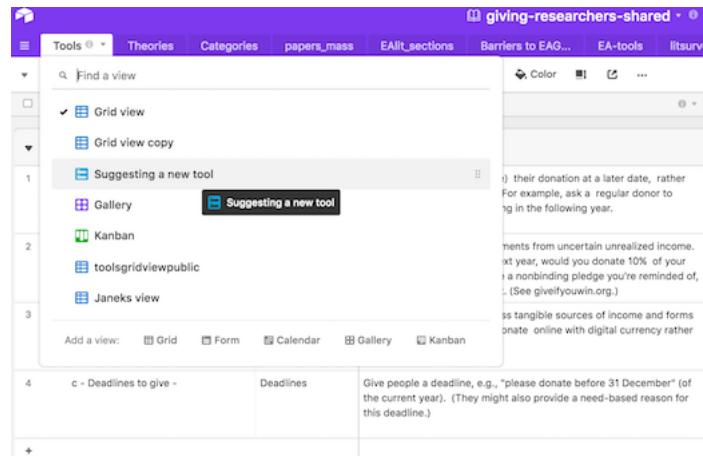


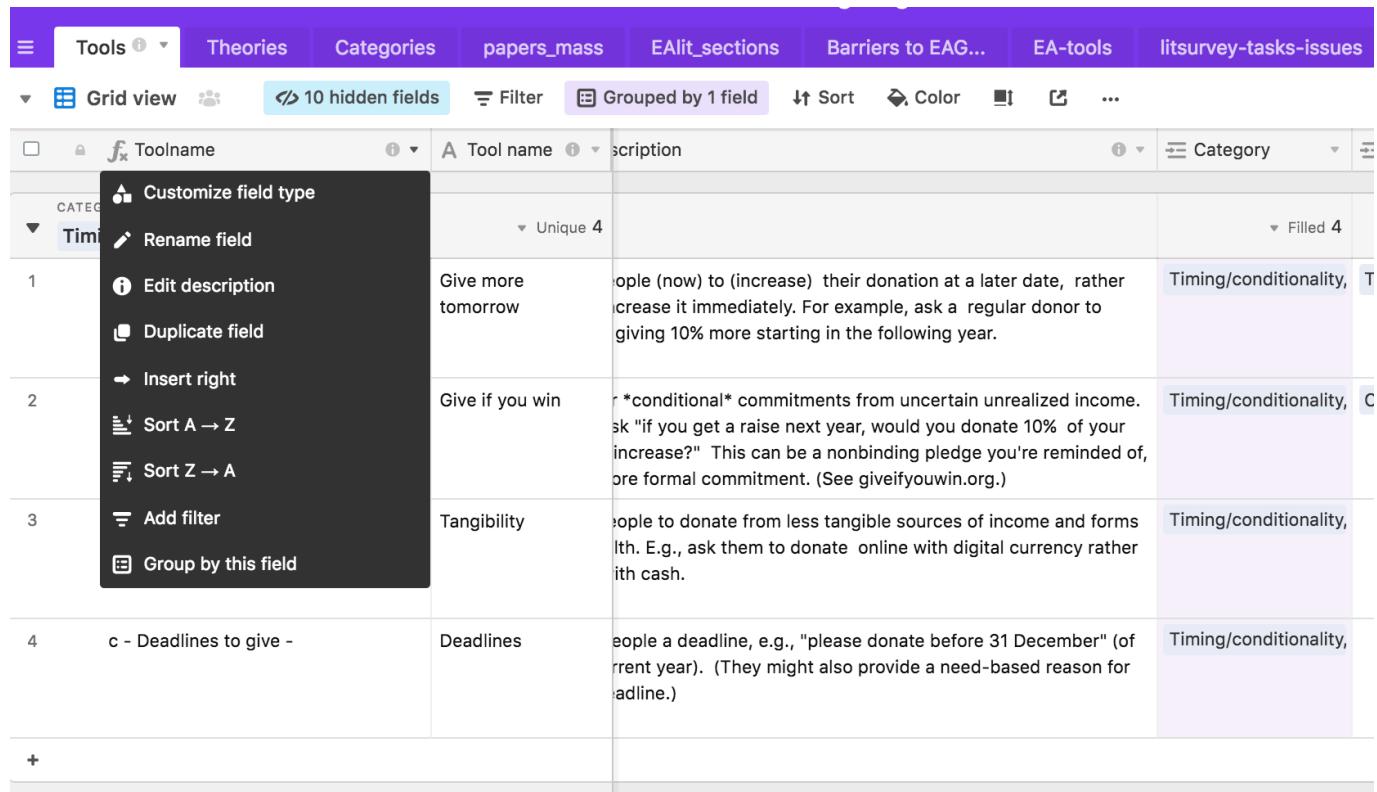
Figure 6: command shift k for views

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).

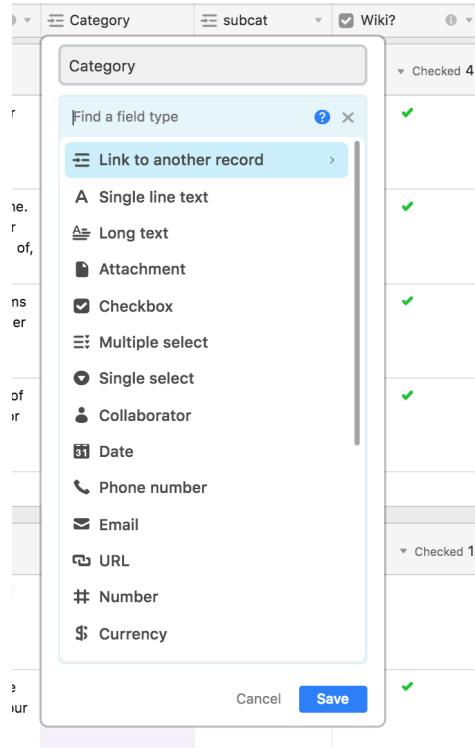


Figure 9: column field types

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

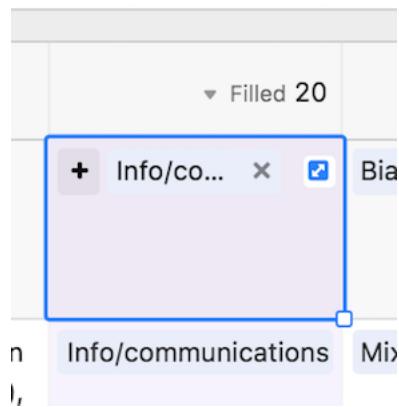


Figure 10: click box link field

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 expanded view includes fields for "Toolname", "Visibility - Recognition 'to influence others'", "c - inducing revelation", and "CATEGORY". The "CATEGORY" field is set to "Info/communications" (Count 20). Below this, there are sections for "NESTED IN", "SCHEMA", "DESCRIPTION", "TOOLS", and "BARRIERS". The "DESCRIPTION" section contains the text: "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." A sidebar on the right is titled "ACTIVITY" and shows a small map icon and a note: "No comments or changes to this record yet. Your current plan provides 2 weeks of revision history." A "Comment" button is also present.

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
I9	Donor's political preferences -	Donor's political preferences			karlan2
+ I10	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
I11	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
I12	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
I13	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 titled "Ask for *small* donation". The page content includes a quote about the legitimacy of small contributions, definitions of alternative tool names, tool variations, categories, sub-categories, relevant theories, types of evidence, and evidence strength. To the right of the main content is a sidebar with a "Table of Contents" section containing links to "Ask for *small* donation", "Main findings", "Discussion", "Practical relevance", "Key papers", "Secondary papers", and another "Discussion" link. The URL in the address bar is "tools:ask_for_small_donation".

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

Main findings

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.

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

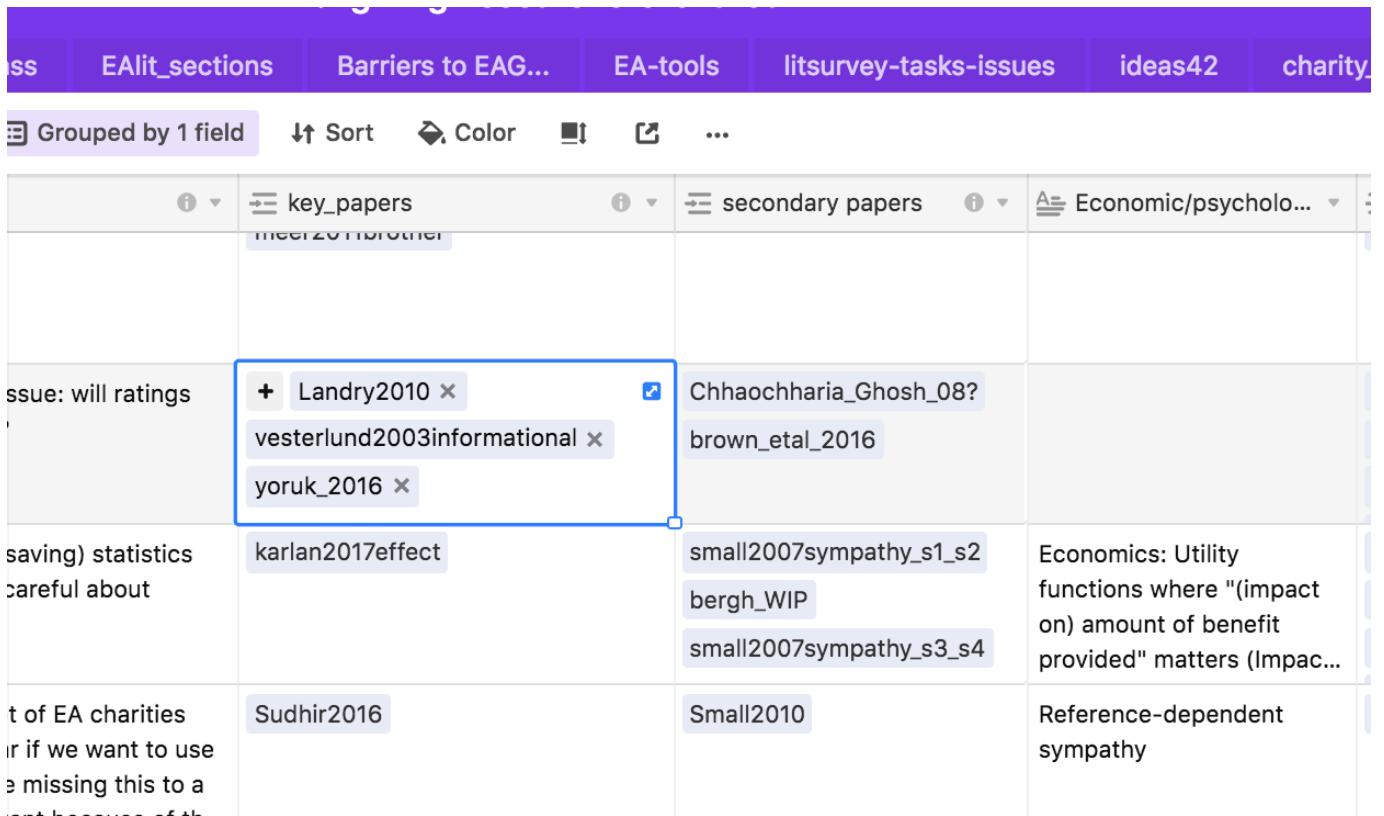
Discussion

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 a dropdown arrow. The second column is labeled 'key_papers' and contains a list of paper titles: 'Landry2010', 'vesterlund2003informational', and 'yoruk_2016'. The third column is labeled 'secondary papers' and contains: 'Chhaochharia_Ghosh_08?', 'brown_etal_2016', 'small2007sympathy_s1_s2', 'bergh_WIP', and 'small2007sympathy_s3_s4'. The fourth column is labeled 'Economic/psycholo...' and contains: 'Economics: Utility functions where "(impact on) amount of benefit provided" matters (Impact...'. A blue box highlights the 'key_papers' column for the first row.

	key_papers	secondary papers	Economic/psycholo...
issue: will ratings	+ Landry2010 ✕ vesterlund2003informational ✕ yoruk_2016 ✕	Chhaochharia_Ghosh_08? brown_etal_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 ir if we want to use e 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 window title is "giving-researchers-shared". The left sidebar lists categories such as "Categories", "hidden fields", "Abstract", "Quoted", "Effect", "References", "DOI", and "BIBTEXFULL". The main content area is titled "karlan2017effect" and is described as "Record from papers_mass".

Fields visible in the interface include:

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

```
@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

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_citations	Exact replica
	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.

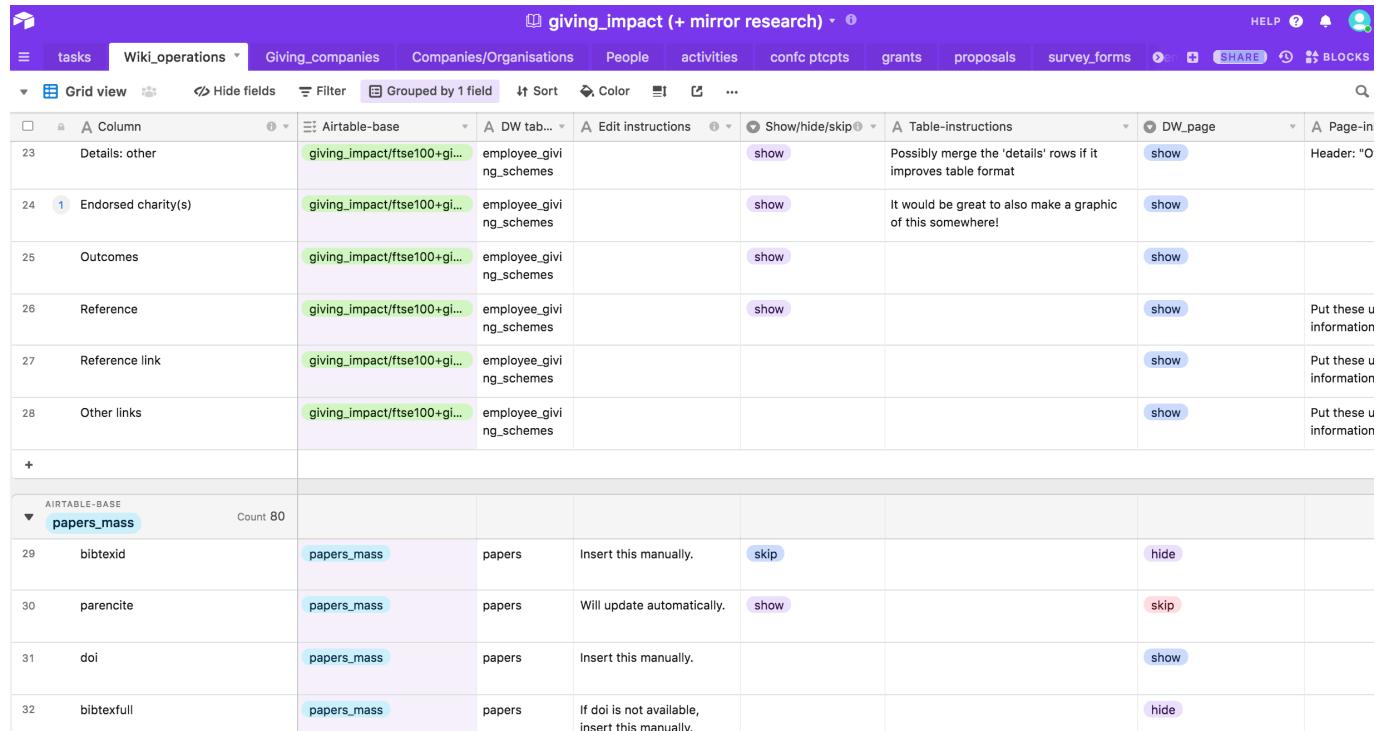
The screenshot shows an Airtable interface with a purple header bar. The header includes the title "giving-researchers-shared" with a document icon, a gear icon, and a help icon. Below the header are several tabs: "litsurvey-tasks-issues", "ideas42", "charity_science", "Relevant use-cases", "critiques", "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", and "Pledges and promises, aski". The "URL" column contains URLs such as "http://www.charityscienc...", "http://giving.dartmouth.e...", and "http://www.cityphilanthro...". The "Charity_sci" column contains text like "'Pledges and promises, a" and "c - Donor choice -".

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 corresponding to a category like "Details: other", "Endorsed charity(s)", "Outcomes", etc. 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" field 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.

The table “EAlit_sections” outlines the structure of the paper, already providing links to information that will be integrated.

EAlit_sections				
	Section	Working on	Notes	EA-concepts
1	1. Presenting the puzzle and challenge: Our ineffective giving; Motivation and description	1. Presenting... david reinstein	Utilitarianism. Why don't people give in an evidence-based way (allude to key explanations). Motivation - Why should you care about this? Descriptives of giving (US, international)...	Psychometrics and targeting people
2	1.1. Who does give effectively? (merge to above... or put this at bottom?)	1. Presenting...	Who *does* give internationally/effectively (descriptives). Briefly defining the EA movement as an important force "we" (economists, psychologists) need to discuss. (Or put this at bottom?)	
3	1.2. Why (under what models) is this a puzzle?	1. Presenting...	Why (under what models) is this a puzzle? Economics and psych models --> puzzle? Models where people care about the impact of their gift or just 'amount sacrificed' (naive warm glow). Does impact map into the 'good feeling' from giving, can it do so?	
4	1.3. Overview of research Question/Problem: Why don't people give in an evidence-based way?	1. Presenting...		
5	1.4: Previous literature reviews and surveys, lack of previous work	1. Presenting...		
6	2. Explaining the puzzle: Barriers to EA giving and potential responses, evidence	2. Explaining...	What could be behind the problem/puzzle? General characterization of 'barriers'.	
7	2.1 Are charities in competition? Is the ineffective giving reducing effective giving? Ask people to give to EA charity 'instead'?	2. Explaining... david reinstein	Does one ask (or donation) crowd out another... when and how? This is critical to understanding the extent to which gains can be achieved by getting people to 'switch' from other charities. To the extent this is the case, factors driving giving to the non-EA charities, especially local obligations (e.g., neighbors pressure you to give to local orgs...)	Competing/cooperating with other c
8	2.2. Barriers considered (economic, psychological, systematic)	2. Explaining...		

Figure 25: organizing ealitpaper

This table also links directly to the papers_mass table, organizing the papers we are referencing and reviewing in each section.

	Subsection	every links	Papers to incorporate	link - more papers	prenskey	prenssecondary	papers_mass copy
11	2.3. MEATY section (Barriers) here [some material moved to 999.x below] ... see "Barriers to EAG" table						
12	3. Tools for motivating EA giving	small2007sympathy_s1_s2 Wiepkning2012 meer2011brother	burger_ea_04? dellavigna2012 andreoni2017avoiding	(Small ea, '07)a, (Small ea, '07)b, (Chang & L, '09), (Fong & O, '11), (Gneezy ea, '17), (Landry ea, '05), ...	(Kogut & R, '05)a, (Kogut & R, '05)b, (Sudhir ea, '16), (Dyck & C, '92), (Isen & N, '79), (Andreoni ea, '17), ...	chang2009, Fong2011, landry2005tue, small2007sympathy.s3_s4, Wiepkning2012, ...	
13	3.1. Psych/behavioral tools; applicability to EA charities	Fraser1989effect breman2011give karlan_mcconnell	Cotterill2012 Winterich_etal? karlan_mcconnell izuma	(Falk, '07), (Elfenbein ea, '12), (Bremmer, '11), (Kellner ea, '17), (Fraser & H, '89), (Karlan & M, '14), (Cialdini & S, '76), ...	(Meyvis ea, '11), (Edwards & L, '14), (Jones & L, '13), (Karlan & M, '14), (Cotterill ea, '12), (Reinstein & R, ...)	falk2007gift, Harbaugh1998, landry2005tue, Reinstein2012, ...	
14	3.2 De-biasing and misperception correction	kogut2005identified	Caviola2014	(Kogut & R, '05)a	(Caviola ea, '14)	kogut2005identified	
15	3.3 innovative proposals	Kellner_EA_2017 smeets2015giving		(Smeets ea, '15), (Kellner ea, '17)		Kellner_EA_2017, Smeets?	
16	3.4 EA-movement approaches and pitfalls	Charity science Wiepkning2012		(Wiepkning ea, '11)		Wiepkning2012	
17	4. Conclusion; a research agenda						

Figure 26: organizing EAlit papers

The separate “Barriers to EAG” table is below.

This organizes and assembles the discussion and evidence on potential factors and categories of factors that may explain the limited amount of “effective giving”. This represents the largest part of our review paper; we focus on clear definitions of the most relevant psychological (and “behavioral economic”) biases, and carefully asses the available evidence. We focus specifically on evidence in the charitable domain, but we also consider the broader evidence for these biases in other contexts.

Barriers to EAG...				
		EA-tools	litsurvey-tasks-issues	ideas42
	Discussion vie	Filter	Grouped by 1 field	Sort Color
	A Description	Category-functional	working on	related ter...
	CATEGORY-FUNCTIONAL			
	2.6 Aversion to *doing* evaluations	Count 4		
	Market & Social Norms	2.6 Aversion to *doing* evaluations	Ari Kagan Nick Fitz david reinstein	People see charity as in the social 'domain' not the market one, and thus find it strange to apply CBA to it.
17	Taboo Trade-Offs (c.f., Protected Values)	2.6 Aversion to *doing* evaluations	Ari Kagan Nick Fitz david reinstein	Some things seem so invaluable that attempting to quantify them is seen as reprehensible - lives are in this category, so putting a monetary (or QALY) value on a life is avoided. Peop e.g.,
18	1 Cost effectiveness information may turn off System-1 and reduce giving; statistics diminish impact of 'identifiable victim'	2.6 Aversion to *doing* evaluations	Robin Bergh	
19	2 Cost-benefit analysis (CBA) aversion/disinterest (or simply finding it less appropriate/normal/virtuous) [MERGE INTO THE ABOVE ELEMENTS]	2.6 Aversion to *doing* evaluations	Ari Kagan Nick Fitz david reinstein	People may be reluctant (?how observed/manifested) to consider the cost and benefits of the actions they are funding through their charitable donations (or they find this less appropriate/normal). This contrasts with a much greater willingness to consider these and other domains such as consumption, investment, and public policy. People also seem to ... If det may i consi
+ CATEGORY-FUNCTIONAL	2.7 Quantitative biases	Count 7		
20	Scope insensitivity	2.7 Quantitative biases	Ari Kagan	People's stated valuation of a loss seems not to strongly increase in magnitude what would be expected. For example, when asked in isolation people might say they are ... sensi

Figure 27: barriers to EAG

For each barrier or bias, we consider why it is may be particularly relevant to *effective* giving.

	A Description	Quick description	Relevance to EG
11	per-interest/local public good (put elsewhere or remove??)	In the context of 'team reasoning' and cooperative equifinality, it may seem selfishly beneficial to give locally to a public good that your smaller group gains from. If there is "competition" ...diminishing empathetic returns to giving or moral licensing this may lead to less EG.	
12	Volunteer experience unlocks emotion and giving	Volunteering for a cause may make people care about it more, and be more likely to give to it.	It is difficult for people to have volunteering experiences with most EA causes. People tend to volunteer for local and domestic causes, and their sympathy and giving may follow this (perhaps due to cognitive bias).
13	Social perceptions and signaling empathy vs effectiveness	Giving may be (consciously or instinctually) driven by signaling one's motivation/desire/likelihood of helping local peers and kin in immediate need. Observers may perceive those who donate as being more empathetic to those closer to them, and more sympathetic and better friends and partners than those who consider effectiveness information and donate to distant causes.	This may drive people (instinctively or consciously) to donate in response to emotional stimuli and to local causes, to people whom they have a direct connection, and in response to requests from friends and family. By the same token, this may crowd out/substitute for more effective giving. As noted, effective causes tend to be distant and to involve problems ...
14	Social norms	Social norms promote giving to traditional non-EA causes and fundraisers, and responding to peer requests. --> crowding out? Norms may also suggest giving to causes like AMF is "weird".	
15	Asks (cut because this is essentially redundant)	"Donation requests increase the propensity to give" (Yoruk). There is a modest positive correlation between donation amounts and donation requests.	

Figure 28: barriers to EAG, why relevant

We further propose and discuss tools addressing these barriers and promoting effective charitable giving.

Tool-concept	EFFECTIVE?	eff...	Relevance...	EA_relevance	category	Info/communications
1 Make impact more comparable by allowing joint evaluation (Evaluation mode)	★★★	★★★★★	Sum 12	Sum 16	Effective charities could present their (e.g., lifesaving) statistics *relative* to average/popular charities (but be careful about demonizing particular ones)	Info/communications
2 (Info enhancing) social closeness of recipient -	★★★	★★★★			May be a 'superpower' because distances mean people perceive lack of closeness, but recent tech enables more visceral and interactive presentation (Skype, VR...) [for effective humanitarian charities]	Info/communications
3 Percentage donations tied to purchases, especially in online auctions -	★★★	★★★			May be a superpower because it triggers *fairness* and EA charities can buy more because of low costs and standards of living in LDCs. CURRENT: Common	Incentives/gifts

Figure 29: tools remedies

We also use the “Kanban” view for some Airtable tables to manage our tasks.

The screenshot shows a Kanban board in Airtable with the following details:

- Backlog:** Contains 3 records. One card: "Dig in on the literature o..."
- In progress:** Contains 1 record. One card: "Pick papers to model our...". It includes a "QUICK COMMENTS" section with a link: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/15flnWUuvDh6TQQ63rvB5vAU430jtqIBXnDH6DXvNIEM/edit#>
- Completed (for now):** Contains 2 records. One card: "Discuss goals for publica...". It includes a "CURRENT CHOICE" section: "Curr. Dir. in Psych Science or Ps...".
- Reviewing:** Contains 0 records.
- Blocked:** Contains 0 records.
- Abandoned:** Contains 1 record. One card: "SAMPLE: Paragraphs/ma...". It includes sections for "QUICK COMMENTS", "WHO IS WORKING" (DR), "PRIORITY (0-10)" (7), and "CURRENT CHOICE".

Figure 30: kanban_ea Lit

A glimpse of our preliminary paper outline

1. Presenting the puzzle and challenge: Our ineffective giving	3
1.1. (Motivation) Why should you care about this? Descriptives of giving (US, international) and how 'ineffective' it is. Who does give effectively? Potential global welfare gains to changing "where we give."	3
1.2. Why (under which models) is this a puzzle?	3
1.3. Overview of research Question/Problem: Why don't people give in an evidence-based way?	3
1.4. Previous literature reviews and surveys, lack of previous work	4
2. Explaining the puzzle: Barriers to EA giving and potential responses, evidence	5
2.1. A major underlying issue: Are charities in competition? Is the ineffective giving reducing effective giving? Ask people to give to EA charity "instead"? [discussion and evidence]	5
2.2. Barriers considered (economic, psychological, systemic)	5
2.2.1. Conceptual classifications of barriers to EG	5
2.2.2. Functional classification of barriers	6
2.3. Barrier: Awareness and consideration	7
2.3.1. Distance - Spatial/Physical: parochial altruism/ingroup bias	7
2.3.2. Distance - Temporal (future problems and people)	7
2.3.3. Distance - Social/Cultural (interpersonal and identity e.g., race, gender, age, etc)	7
2.3.4. Distance - Hypothetical (probability to happen)	7
2.3.5. Distance - Emotional (Small's paper)	7
2.3.6. Consistent problems aren't in the news	7
2.3.7. Social/geographic distance attenuates empathy (and other motivators), aka, parochialism	7
- - - - -	

Figure 31: paper outline 1

2.7.7. Statistical victim effect	10
2.7.8. Overhead aversion	10
2.7.9. Opportunity cost neglect	10
2.8. 2b. Barriers: “Waste aversion”; Perfectionism/deontological aversion to ‘waste’ (or excuse-driven, motivated reasoning), Perceived lack of transparency, and perceived/actual corruption overseas (‘protected value’); “risky charities”	10
3. Tools for motivating EA giving	10
3.1. Psych/behavioral tools; applicability to EA charities	10
3.2. 3.2. De-biasing and misperception-correction	11
3.3. 3.3. innovative proposals	11
3.4. 3.4. EA-movement approaches and pitfalls	11
4. Conclusion; a research agenda	11
5. Works Cited	11

Figure 32: paper_outline_2

Our work is informed by other survey papers and scoping exercises. However, there is very little published work in this area.

- Other structural and social barriers

1.4. Previous literature reviews and surveys, lack of previous work

Comparison of outlines [HERE](#)

- Ideas42: "We did not find many field-based, experimental studies on the factors that encourage people to choose thoughtfully among charities or to plan ahead to give."

Effectiveness-specific:

- Gertler, "[Charitable Fundraising and Smart Giving](#)"
- ([Baron and Szymanska 2011](#)) - Heuristics and Biases in Charity: Largely conceptual, minimal survey of specific empirical/experimental papers ([outline here](#))

See also:

- [Charity Science: Trials and synthesis of research for Effective Altruism Outreach](#)
- Geoffrey Miller's "10 cognitive and emotional challenges in EA"
- Nemirow presentation: Psychological Phenomena Hindering Effective Altruism

Charitable giving, more general

- [Bekkers and Wiepking, \(2011\). "A Literature Review of Empirical Studies of Philanthropy: Eight Mechanisms That Drive Charitable Giving" esp "Part 2: why do people give"; Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly: "awareness of need," "solicitation," "costs and benefits," "altruism," "reputation," "psychological benefits," "values," and "efficacy."](#)
- Andreoni and Payne (2013). Chapter 1 "Charitable Giving" in Auerbach, Alan J., et al., eds. Handbook of Public Economics. Vol. 5. Newnes;
- Andreoni (2006), "Philanthropy" in Handbook of Giving, Reciprocity and Altruism
- "Gift giving: an interdisciplinary review" [Sargent and Woodliffe \(2007\)](#), Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing

4

Figure 33: previous surveys

For each “barrier to effective giving” we have a template for writing up this concept and explaining, characterizing, and evaluating the evidence. These broader “reports” may be later incorporated into our database. However, we will need to substantially reduce and consolidate this for our review paper itself.

Barrier Title:

Related Terms

(Mainly for keyword lookup/for our own benefit. Classify as synonyms, mechanisms, etc if helpful.)

Description:

- 1-4 sentence description/definition of the barrier

Conceptual Discussion:

- How the concept works, etc. Provides context for evidence section
- Definitional issues, disambiguation, confusions to avoid
- Discussion of proposed/evidenced mechanisms and links to fundamental theories

Brief on the evidence (1-2 sentences)

EG Relevance:

- How this particular barrier proves problematic for effective giving

State of Evidence:

- Key papers (for each paper; study-by-study where appropriate; Summarize findings and key takeaways; make sure to include both description of evidence and evaluation of **each piece of** evidence)
 - Methods
 - Findings
 - Evaluation of paper's evidence (discuss strengths/weaknesses of approaches and statistical analysis, statistical strength and robustness of evidence)
- Brief on tangential papers (non charity) and papers supporting the mechanism
- Overall evaluation of evidence
- Evidence gap and suggestions for future work and approaches

Solutions

Focus on practical tools fundraisers/charities/EA movement can use to overcome barriers, grouping these tools by category (e.g., framing, de-biasing, incentive, social, etc.) where relevant

- Evidenced solutions (cite above papers if experiments offer relevant evidence for particular approaches)
- Possible solutions (cite papers proposing these; cite evidence from other domains)

Figure 34: barrier template

Here is one writeup (in progress) on the proposed barrier “Cost-benefit analysis aversion”. For this barrier, we ultimately decided that, while this is clearly important and ties to a variety of evidence, the category is somewhat too broad, and we will treat it under different headings

Cost-benefit analysis (CBA) aversion (or simply finding it less appropriate/normal/virtuous)

- David Reinstein summary

Description

People may be reluctant (?how observed/manifested) to consider the cost and benefits of the actions they are funding through their charitable donations (or they find this less appropriate/normal). This contrasts with a much greater willingness to consider these and other domains such as consumption, investment, and public policy. People also seem to avoid accessing/buying/seeing information (particular information that may be likely to feel compelled to give.)

Theoretical/conceptual discussion

As previously noted, for this to be considered a bias, the relevant individuals must intrinsically value the usefulness of their charitable activity at least to some extent. I.e., they must be Utilitarian, at least in part, or for some of the time. However, they may consider it very costly or distasteful to actually do this evaluation, or it may clash with other motivations and tendencies.

This aversion also must be distinguished from a lack of *ability* to do CBA in the charity domain.

The reluctance to engage in this evaluation process may relate to the aforementioned “taboo trade-offs”; if these tradeoffs are taboo, considering them may involve great emotional distress.

Berman et al refer to the idea that “believing that charity is a subjective decision licenses individuals to donate in

Figure 35: writeup1

Relevance to EG

If determining which charity is effective requires CBA people may avoid doing so. If effective charities force people to consider CBA people may avoid these charities.

Evidence

People sometimes actively avoid information about charity effectiveness that would motivate doing a CBA... (no solid evidence found yet)

/ **Fong and Oberholzer-Gee, (2010)** run dictator game experiments involving payments to real-life welfare recipients living in 178 public housing in Pittsburgh. In their “Choice treatment”, a subject can choose to pay \$1 to learn about subject’s drug use or disability, information meant to suggest the deservingness of the recipient. “We find that a third of the dictators are willing to pay money to learn more ²⁷ about their recipient. Dictators who acquire information mostly use it to withhold resources from less-preferred types, leading to a drastic decline in aggregate transfers.” [Part of this may be misstated, as *those who decide not to buy information appear less generous than the average*]

Note: This evidence is only tangentially relevant

Dellavigna et al provide evidence that people will pay costs to avoid being asked and avoid social pressure, and for this same case if they are asked they then respond by giving. [But this is not avoiding CBA-related information]

People rarely seek out effectiveness information and are reluctant to purchase it

[Cite: That survey-based study where few people say that they have looked into the effectiveness information on the charities they donate to]

In Null's (2011) study (more fully described below), in a final stage

Subjects were given the option to spend \$5 of their total gift to the development charities in order to find out which of the three would receive a matching rate of \$3 (the other two would receive matching rates of \$1.50). Altruistic subjects whose donation was at least \$20 and gave to all three charities, or whose total gift is greater than \$35 and gave to two charities, would find it profitable to purchase the information. ... (84%) met these criteria on gift size and number of charities supported.

Figure 36: writeup_2

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 Studies Download

Akresh, de Walque and Kazanga (2013)
Weighting: 1.89%
Angelucci et al. (2010)
Weighting: 3.65%
Arraiz and Rozo (2011)
Weighting: 3.35%
Attanasio et al. (2010)
Weighting: 4.01%

0.0348 0.066

0.083 0.18 0.28

0.09098 0.14

0.08031 0.13

0.03290.054

29 studies match your criteria

Conditional cash transfers programs increased enrollment rate by 4.8 percentage points

0.0348 0.066

Where did you get the results from in the papers?

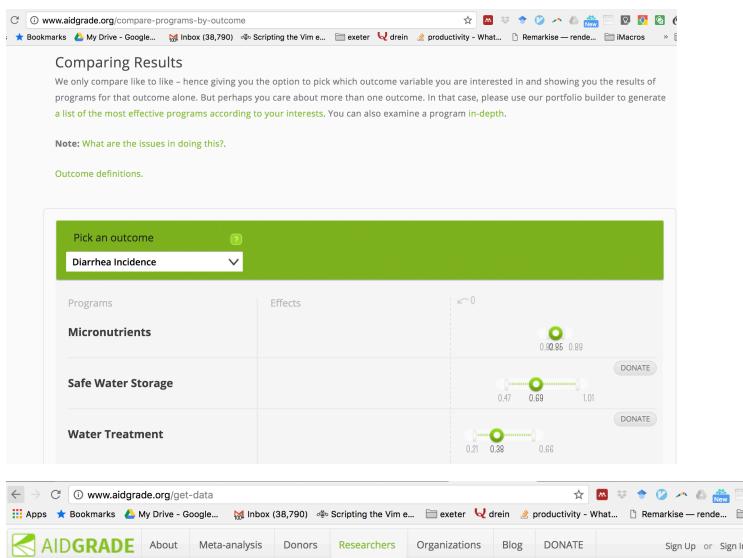
We follow certain conventions in extracting the results from papers. Short answer: we typically use the authors' preferred specification but look for those results that have the fewest controls (which could be used to bias results). Long answer: it's complicated, and full details can be found in the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