

## EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

*Philanthropia*, as a word and concept, originated in Periclean Athens as a philosophical term closely associated with the concept of *paideia*, understood as education and acculturation with the aim of attaining the virtues. In this sense of the term, it later became closely intertwined with the Latin concept of *humanitas*, understood as being educated to possess virtues of character by the study of *eruditionem institutionemque in bonas artes*, or 'education and training in the liberal arts'.

Despite this inherent affinity between philanthropy, the humanities, and normative theory, they rarely appear in research published in the field of philanthropic studies. Most scholarship in this field derives from the social sciences, public policy, or managerial training. But is this because disciplines such as history, philosophy, religious studies, and ethics are poorly suited to answer pressing questions of philanthropy and civil society?

The question of the suitability of the humanities and normative theory for studying philanthropy is rooted in the role of the voluntary sector in society. Philanthropy is more than the sum of a series of private actions; it is voluntary action intended for the public good. The concept of the public good has deep historical, religious, philosophical, and normative dimensions. Especially in a pluralistic world, these disciplines are necessary to more competently adjudicate between contested visions of the public good. We at *Philanthropia* advocate this broader understanding of philanthropy and civil society.

The mission of *Philanthropia* is to advance the understanding of philanthropy and civil society from the perspective of the humanities and normative theory. The idea for this journal dates at least as far back as the late 2000s. We are therefore extremely grateful to LCC International University for sponsoring its creation. Thank you also to the Bob Collier Foundation and the Bodman Foundation for providing seed funding. In addition, we sincerely appreciate the authors who contributed to this inaugural issue. The second issue is planned for spring 2025. Following that, we aim to adopt a double-blind, peer-reviewed format, published semi-annually, while continuing to publish occasional special issues by invitation.

The time is right to start this journal, and we look forward to presenting our readers with excellent scholarship on philanthropy and civil society!

Julianna Giannoutsou  
Marty Sulek  
Andrew L. Williams