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**Anne Field**, Contributor

I cover for-profit social enterprises and the people who fund them

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An S&P-Like Index for Nonprofits

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Impact investors in for-profit companies aren't the only ones interested in, well, making an impact. So are donors to nonprofits.

Enter the Social Impact 100 Index. Recently introduced by the [Social Impact Exchange](#), an initiative of the Growth [Philanthropy](#) Network, it includes high-performing nonprofits and features information about those organizations on its web site. There you can see a list of all the nonprofits, with descriptions of their missions, growth plans, location of sites, and major funders, along with a summary of their financials (revenue, expenses, net).



(Raining Money (Photo credit: methodshop.com))

The goal is to create a Standard & Poor's-like index that can build a systematic capital market encouraging contributions to nonprofits with successful track records—and boost the ability of these organizations to grow, scale, and serve an ever-larger population. The particular focus is on individual donors who, according to Alex Rossides, president of Growth Philanthropy Network, give \$300 billion in charitable contributions a year compared to around \$35 billion from foundations.

“It's very difficult for individual donors, who aren't experts at evaluating organizations, to find nonprofits that are truly effective and improve lives and have a high impact,” says Rossides.

Organizations in the Index, called the S&I 100, have to meet a few criterion. First, they focus on four areas—health, poverty alleviation, education and youth development. They also must provide an assessment by a third-party, provide a written growth plan, have a budget of at least \$1 million and have been in existence for more than three years. The selection process starts with nominations from foundations and other groups that are vetted by a Social Impact Exchange review team, as well as outside evaluators.

The nonprofits listed range from [Roca](#), a Chelsea, Mass., organization that works with high-risk young men, to [Project Lead the Way](#), an [Indianapolis](#)-based provider of educational curriculum in science, technology, engineering and math, used in more than 4,700 schools. And they include some biggies most people have heard of, such as [Big Brothers Big Sisters of America](#).

The big task, of course, is to get the word out to individual donors and then persuade them to use the S&I 100 as a tool in their giving. To that end, according to Rossides, they're working with donor-advised funds. private

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Contributor

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I'm an award-winning journalist with a particular interest in for-profit social enterprise, as well as entrepreneurship and small business in general. I've covered those areas for many many places, including The New York Times, Bloomberg

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The author is a Forbes contributor. The opinions expressed are those of the writer.

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the indexed nonprofits at once—to build, in effect, an S&P-like fund. They just have to get donors to participate.

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