

Chinese Family Foundations in New York Today and the Conditions for Community Foundations in China

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Abstract

The 2000 census reported an increasingly educated and affluent Chinese-American population. This has raised the giving ability of the community as a whole, and the growth of a range of philanthropic activities. Chinese family foundations are active players in this field.

In her paper, Ms. Seng focuses on Chinese family foundations in the state of New York. She analyzes their patterns of giving; assesses their awareness of various giving vehicles, in particular community foundations and donor-advised-funds; and explores possibilities for establishing a network among the foundations for information sharing.

The author also examines the current legal and socio-economic conditions in China and Hong Kong for the promotion of community foundations. Although China has yet to establish its first community foundation, she identifies organizations in the country that provide some of the services of a community foundation. She explains that while the community foundation paradigm has shown itself to be apt for encouraging philanthropic giving and overcoming some major hindrances in developing the non-profit sector, there are concerns in China about establishing community foundations under the current legal structure.

Ms. Seng also documents the first attempt to establish a community foundation in Hong Kong, describes the reasons for its failure, and explores the possibilities for the future philanthropic landscape. She describes ways that those outside China might help facilitate “a smoother process” in starting and running a community foundation in Hong Kong.

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