

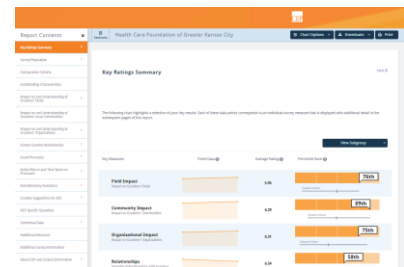
Key Findings and Recommendations from the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City 2016 Grantee Perception Report

Prepared by The Center For Effective Philanthropy

In September and October of 2016, The Center for Effective Philanthropy (“CEP”) conducted a survey of Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City’s (“HCF” or “the Foundation”) grantees, achieving a 65% grantee response rate. The memo below outlines the key findings and recommendations from the Foundation’s Grantee Perception Report (“GPR”). HCF grantee perceptions should be interpreted in light of the Foundation’s goals, strategy, and context.

This memo accompanies the comprehensive survey results found in the Foundation’s interactive online report at <https://cep.surveymresults.org> and in the downloadable online materials.

The Foundation’s full report also contains more information about survey analysis and methodology.



Overview

Overall in 2016, grantees rate HCF similarly to the Foundation’s 2012 Grantee Perception Report. When asked to describe the Foundation in one word, grantees most frequently use “supportive.”

- HCF is rated higher than typical – in the top quarter of CEP’s dataset – for its impact on grantees’ fields and communities.
- Grantees rate the Foundation higher than typical for its impact on their organizations as well as the degree to which the Foundation has improved their ability to sustain the grant-funded work. However, a lower than typical proportion of grantees report receiving intensive forms of assistance beyond the grant.
- Grantees rate the overall quality of their relationships with the Foundation similarly to the typical funder in CEP’s dataset. The clarity and consistency of HCF’s grantee communications stand out as distinct strengths, while the frequency of interactions and contact changes remain opportunities of growth.
- In their suggestions for the Foundation, the largest proportion of grantees request refinements to HCF’s selection process.
- Grantees from the Foundation’s Mental Health and Safety Net funding areas rate significantly more positively than grantees from other funding areas on most measures throughout the report. Grantees from the Foundation’s Application Defined Grant funding area rate significantly less positively than other grantees on most measures.
- Grantees who have received 11 or more grants from HCF rate significantly more positively on most measures throughout the report than grantees who have received fewer grants.

Continued Strong Impact on Grantees' Fields and Communities

HCF's grantees rate the Foundation's impact on their fields and communities higher than those of the typical funder in CEP's comparative dataset, as they did in the Foundation's 2012 GPR.

- Grantees emphasize the Foundation's thought leadership, rating HCF in the top quarter of CEP's dataset for the extent to which it has affected public policy in their fields.
- Grantees also rate HCF higher than typical for the extent to which the Foundation understands the social, cultural, or socioeconomic factors that affect their work.
 - Relatedly, HCF receives higher than typical ratings for the extent to which it understands the needs of grantees' intended beneficiaries.
- When asked a custom survey question about the Foundation's role, more than half of grantees identify HCF primarily as a leader in improving health in their regions.



"The staff are knowledgeable, understanding and experts in the field of health care access and policy. HCF is a trusted leader in building a responsive community in achieving positive health outcomes for everyone."



"HCF is known by all organizations in our community as a supporter for many different fields that may all interact at some level. They are well-known by professionals as well as laypersons in our community."

Positive Perceptions of Organizational Impact with Desire for More Nonmonetary Support

As in 2012, grantees' ratings for HCF's impact on their organizations are higher than typical.

- Grantees rate the Foundation in the top quarter of CEP's dataset for the extent to which HCF improves their organization's ability to sustain the grant-funded work in the future.
- Additionally, HCF receives higher than typical ratings for the Foundation's awareness of grantees' organizational challenges and for the extent to which HCF takes advantage of its resources to help organizations address their challenges.
- However, a smaller than typical proportion of grantees, and a significantly smaller proportion than in 2012, report receiving assistance beyond the grant check.
 - Of note, those grantees that receive *any* non-monetary support rate HCF more positively than those receiving no additional support on many survey measures, including HCF's impact on their fields and communities and aspects of their relationships with HCF.



"Through the continued financial support of the HCF, [our organization] is able to provide services to children and parents affected by domestic and sexual violence. If funding were to cease, activities, age-appropriate support groups, and parenting classes would have to be added to...already full caseloads."



"HCF staff are great to work with and extremely helpful. I would like to see more resources available on their website for non-profits. Especially around connecting like-minded non-profits to each other.... Organizations could benefit from an increased capacity to do more by...collaborating instead of working in silos."

Typical Funder-Grantee Relationships, with Opportunity for More Frequent Contact

On a summary measure of its relationships with grantees, HCF is rated similarly to the typical funder. CEP's research finds that the funder-grantee relationship – defined by high quality interactions and clear, consistent communications – is one of the strongest predictors of grantees' perceptions of impact on their fields, communities, and organizations.

Quality and Quantity of Interactions

- Grantees rate the Foundation higher than typical for their comfort approaching HCF should a problem arise.
- However, HCF receives comparatively lower ratings for the Foundation's responsiveness and fairness of treatment.
- HCF grantees have less frequent with their Program Officers than is typical. Ten percent of grantees report contact with their Program Officers monthly or more often, compared with 16 percent in 2012 and 29 percent at the average funder.
- A higher than typical proportion of HCF's grantees report experiencing a contact change in the past six months.
 - Those grantees that report a contact change rate HCF's fairness of treatment, consistency of communications resources, and approachability over the past year significantly less positively than those that did not experience a contact change.

Clarity and Consistency of Communications, and Funder Transparency

- As in 2012, grantees rate HCF higher than typical both for the clarity of the Foundation's goals and strategy and for the consistency of HCF's communications.
- Over ninety percent of grantees indicate using at least one HCF communication resource – most frequently, the Foundation's website and funding guidelines.
 - Grantees rate their individual communications with Foundation staff and the Foundation's funding guidelines as the most helpful forms of HCF communication.
- Additionally, grantees view the Foundation as very transparent, rating HCF higher than typical for all aspects of the Foundation's transparency. In fact, ratings for HCF's transparency in the processes for selecting grantees are in the top five percent of CEP's dataset.



“Their weekly e-newsletter...and other communications and resources are highly valued and unique in the grantmaking world.”



“[We suggest] better communication with grant recipients and those interested in applying for support.... More interest in what our programs' activities look like would give HCF a better understanding of the work we do and help us better understand what HCF's goals are, too. It would allow for more growth and guidance than we have experienced in the past.”

Typically Helpful Reporting Process and Opportunity to Improve Grantees' Experiences with Selection Process

Grantees' ratings and open-ended comments highlight an opportunity to improve their experience with the Foundation's processes, specifically the selection process.

Reporting and Evaluation Process

- Grantee ratings for helpfulness of HCF's reporting/evaluation process have significantly declined since 2012 and are now similar to those of the typical funder.
- While a higher than typical proportion of grantees report discussing their evaluations with staff/evaluators, a lower than typical proportion report exchanging ideas with HCF staff about assessing the results of their funded work.
 - Grantees engaging in this idea exchange rate the Foundation significantly more positively on many measures throughout the report, including HCF's impact on and understanding of their local communities and aspects of the Foundation's transparency.

Proposal and Selection Process

- Grantee ratings are in the bottom thirty percent of CEP's dataset for the extent to which the Foundation's selection process strengthens their funded organizations/programs.
- When asked how the Foundation could improve, over a third of grantees propose changes to HCF's selection process. Suggestions include streamlining the process and greater communication and/or feedback during the process.
- As in 2012, grantees report a lower than typical amount of involvement by HCF staff in proposal development. However, they rate the level of pressure they experience to modify their priorities in order to receive funding from the Foundation higher than typical.
 - Grantees that indicate a high level of pressure to modify their organization's priorities (those that rate a five or above on a seven-point scale) rate the Foundation significantly less positively on nearly every survey measure.



"The amount of paperwork is tremendous. Please reduce one or more of following: the detailed letter of intent, grant proposal, two reports, two budgets, site visits and pre-proposal meetings."



"Consider providing some feedback at the time of the Letter of Intent on whether or not the application will be a good candidate for funding... Had we been given feedback at the time of the LOI that we were not likely to receive funding, we would not have spent our limited time and resources on the application."

CEP Recommendations

Based on its grantee feedback, CEP recommends that Foundation consider the following in order to build on its strengths and address potential areas for improvement:

- Consider increasing the provision of **non-monetary assistance**, given the association of this assistance with more positive grantee perceptions throughout the survey.
- To improve and enhance the **quality of interactions** grantees have with staff, work with staff to develop clear and concrete expectations for the quality and quantity of interactions between staff and grantees, seeking in particular to increase staff responsiveness.
- In moments of staff turnover or internal grant contact changes, review – and communicate to grantees – HCF’s processes for **ensuring knowledge transfer during moments of transition**.
- With regards to HCF’s administrative processes,
 - Review the selection process to determine if the Foundation can **streamline any aspects**;
 - Consider **expanded engagement with grantees during the reporting process** – particularly through more discussions and idea exchanges with grantees.

Contact Information

Mena Boyadzhiev, Manager
menab@effectivephilanthropy.org

Emily Radwin, Analyst
emilyr@effectivephilanthropy.org

