



Grantmaking Myths

Personal Stories are always the most powerful. It doesn't matter if the organization measures outcomes or collect data as long as they have stories that can touch your heart.

- The strongest case is to present stories but back it up with data
- The data should be from respected resources
- Getting data on outcome and impact is important to understand success of program/org and if it is "worth" supporting- How many people do you serve? How have their lives have been changed?
- Long-term data is great whenever possible.
- Data generated by the organizations is important
- Stories are important to connect people to other people's experiences
- We are an institutional funder so it has to be data driven because we are accountable to donors and why we made certain decisions.

A lower "overhead" cost/percentage is always better.

- Why should non-profits be held to different standard than for profit groups?
- If you are having low overhead costs, but you are not effective, what is the point?
- It encourages lying about expenses or taking from different programs
- It encourages exploitation of non-profits staff- i.e. they are not paid fair market wages.
- You need technology and smart people to generate data so you need overhead
- These are infrastructure costs. So using the term "overhead" makes it sound that it is fringe benefits.
- There are different ways to show these costs- circles within circles instead of pie charts.

Organizations that have had a financial surplus in recent years don't need our money.

- Organizations with a financial surplus demonstrate good financial management.
- It is not a good practice for funders to punish an organization for being successful at raising funds.
- Grants to these organizations can provide an opportunity to start new programs or expand existing programs
- The surpluses may be restricted and they may not have unrestricted funds to try new things or have the flexibility to meet unplanned challenges

The % of clients that are women and girls is the best way to rank the proposals.

- A focus on the impact and outcomes of the organization is more important than the number of female clients.
- Training boys in appropriate social behaviors may have a greater impact for improving the lives of women and girls and yet the clients would be male.
- Organizations may start a pilot project with a small number of clients to develop impactful, innovative programs.
- Advocacy efforts are socio-politically focused to make systemic change. Client numbers and individual outcomes are less relevant for this type of focus.

Direct services are more important than advocacy or long-range systems change proposals.

- Direct services alone are not going to affect change. Ultimately, we want to reduce the need for direct services.
- Any law change could affect direct services, instantly, so it is important to understand the policies and regulations that affect direct service provision.
- For the Women's Foundation, the strongest organizations are the ones that are doing both direct services to address the immediate needs and working upstream to address long-term change.

The organizations that serve the highest number of women and girls are the best match for the Women's Foundation.

- We're evaluating potential nonprofit partners by quality, not quantity. As an outcomes-driven funder, results matter more than the total number served.
- How the organization targeting women and girls is more important than how many women and girls are served.
- Some organizations have made effective cases for funding about why their work with men and/or boys is changing the world for the better for women and girls.
- Similarly, some organizations may specialize in reaching a vulnerable, smaller sub-population of women. We examine the context of the total number served.