

the Change Agent project

GRANTMAKER PRACTICES THAT IMPROVE NONPROFIT RESULTS

Join us in finding new ways to improve nonprofit performance.

Grantmakers can only succeed when the nonprofits they support achieve meaningful results. So it is in every grantmaker's best interest to improve the context in which grantees do their work. Today, across philanthropy, pioneering grantmakers have taken these ideas to heart and found new ways to break down the barriers standing in the way of nonprofit success. They're reshaping grantmaking practices, through changes as simple as providing more prompt response to grantee queries and as major as new funding strategies. Dissatisfied with the status quo, determined to change the way philanthropy does business, these change agents are inventing ways to revolutionize grantmaking practice.

The Change Agent Project is a new initiative that seeks to engage change agents, learn how they overcome barriers in the way of optimal grantee performance, then inspire and equip other grantmakers to do the same. Our ultimate goal is to provide more grantmakers with the resources, ideas and connections they need to make the greatest contribution to the nonprofits they invest in.

Learning from those who have moved beyond barriers to grantee results.

The project process will involve three core steps:

1. *Identify* the most promising change opportunities. We will do this by conducting interviews and focus groups with leaders from nonprofits and grantmaking organizations, asking, "Which barriers, if removed, would have the greatest impact on nonprofit results?"
2. *Engage* grantmakers who have overcome these barriers and learn how they did it. We will do this by finding examples of philanthropy's change agents and discovering how they bridged the gap between knowing what needed to be done and making change happen.
3. *Build* resources to equip other change agents to achieve similar results. We will do this by taking the most promising solutions and translating them into support for grantmakers who want to improve grantee success.

A community effort.

The project approach is organized around the premise that many of the solutions we seek already exist within the field of philanthropy. Philanthropy is too diverse for one-size-fits-all approaches to grantmaking or traditional, top-down initiatives based on "best practices." Instead, grantmakers learn best from their peers — the change agents who have successfully fixed a problem while working under the same constraints as everyone else. This project will collect and transfer lessons from these exemplars to help more grantees be more effective. Success will come through a community effort, with change agents from philanthropy and nonprofits helping to define the problems and create the solutions. We invite you to join us in this effort.