

A Smarter Grantmaking Community

2009 Member Survey Findings

Grantmakers for Effective Organizations' 2009 Member Survey found that **participation in GEO leads to important changes in grantmaker practice that contribute to nonprofit success.** The GEO impact is apparent at both the individual and organizational levels.

High proportions of respondents reported that involvement in GEO had increased their awareness of strategies or practices that enhance nonprofit success (77 percent), increased their knowledge of how to effectively implement practices that enhance nonprofit success (70 percent), and led to improvements in their practices (55 percent).

In addition, 64 percent of respondents noted that involvement in GEO led to a change in practice at their organization. Positive changes reported included strengthened practices in the areas of organizational learning (50 percent), leadership development (32 percent), and stakeholder engagement (36 percent); and increased levels of general operating support (33 percent), multiyear funding (24 percent), and capacity-building support (34 percent). Respondents who were more familiar with GEO were significantly more likely to report changes at both the individual and organizational levels.

“Our organization’s openness to providing general operating support was definitely spurred by and supported by information from GEO.”

Nearly all survey respondents (99 percent) rated their overall experience with GEO as favorable (56 percent) or highly favorable (43 percent), which was virtually unchanged from 2006, the last time the survey was conducted. Members continued to rate GEO’s offerings highly, with the national conference and publications as the two most valuable resources. Eighty-three percent of respondents said they gained new insights and 48 percent said they changed an aspect of their work in the past year because of a GEO publication.

“It goes back to the notion of ‘organizational curiosity’. GEO is able to convene forward-looking grantmakers and people who are thoughtful about doing this work.”

Members continue to hold GEO in high esteem. This year, members rated GEO highly, with a majority agreeing that GEO is a leader in the field of organizational effectiveness and that GEO conveys a clear change agenda for philanthropy.

Only 25 percent of respondents offered suggestions for ways GEO could better serve their needs or interests. Many of their comments related to a desire for more ways to connect with GEO, such as increasing the number of regional offerings.

“We completely revamped the evaluation of one of our programs based on the Engage for Results workshop; we have modified our approach to knowledge management based on the New Orleans, San Francisco and Boston Conferences.”

GEO engages in this biennial assessment to answer key questions such as:

- What changes in grantmaker practice can be connected to member participation in GEO?
- How do members rate their overall experience?
- How do members rate GEO’s current programs and services?
- What suggestions do members have for GEO?

Smarter grantmaking. Stronger nonprofits. Better results.

The results of the 2009 member survey make it clear that GEO achieves the greatest impact through its most active members. GEO is committed to advancing smarter grantmaking and will continue to do so by increasing and broadening its membership base to include other innovators while deepening engagement with its existing community.

The GEO 2009 Member Survey was conducted in Spring 2009 by Harder+Company Community Research, an independent evaluation firm. GEO uses its member survey to learn about its overall impact and the relative effectiveness of its various programs and services, and to obtain anonymous feedback from members to help strengthen the organization’s performance and guide future program decisions.

¹ Of the 1,931 individuals contacted, 505 participated in the survey, a response of 26 percent. [Of the 322 individuals listed as GEO’s primary contacts, 150 responded (47 percent).] Harder+Company supplemented the survey with follow-up telephone interviews conducted with a sample of 15 survey respondents.

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