



## Bar Foundation Best Practices: Grantmaking—Beyond Financial Support

**Turning challenges into opportunities.** Foundations across the country are facing significant losses in revenue. As a result, foundation leaders are faced with difficult decisions about grantmaking. This challenge presents an opportunity for bar foundations to think outside the box for ways to positively impact grantees.

**Talk to donors.** Just as grantees must find additional funds to make up for the shortfall, foundations should do the same. Rather than wait for an economic upturn, foundations can engage stakeholders and donors now in discussions intended to address current financial challenges and increase revenue.

**Talk to grantees.** Foundations can reach out to grantees to brainstorm creative foundation-grantee collaborations (e.g. training or fund development activities provided by the foundation). Foundations may suggest partnerships between grantees with similar goals and objectives to meet the community's needs.

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“Since our success as grantmakers is dependent on the success of our grantees, we must focus on the things grantmakers can change that will help those on the front lines achieve more—especially as nonprofits struggle to try to meet increases in demand for services with fewer resources.”

*-Grantmakers for Effective Organizations*

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### Tips from Bar Foundation Executives:

- Market your grantees to potential donors
  - Through grantee testimonials, demonstrate how the foundation's financial support can change the lives of individuals
  - Attract donors and donations by showcasing foundation beneficiaries (grantees, scholarship recipients, etc.) at events or through the foundation's newsletter
  - Connect the foundation's donors to grantees through site visits and grantee presentations

- Involve grantees
  - Openly discuss how losses in revenue will impact the foundation's ability to grant money
  - Ask grantees how the foundation can support their work in non-traditional ways, such as connecting them to other grantees or potential sources of new funding

### Other tips:

- Consider streamlining your application process to reduce time and cost for both the foundation and the grantee
- Consider mission-related investments to increase funding to organizations or as a way to prioritize funding

References:

ALPS Foundation Services, [www.foundationsservices.com](http://www.foundationsservices.com)

ALPS Foundation Services Fall 2009 Grantmaking webinar,  
<http://www.alpsnet.com/FoundationServices/Webinars/tabid/148/Default.aspx>

American Bar Association, <http://www.abanet.org/>

Association of Fundraising Professionals, [http://www.afpnet.org/resource\\_center/resource\\_tools](http://www.afpnet.org/resource_center/resource_tools)

Council on Foundations, <http://www.cof.org/>

Grantmakers for Effective Organizations, <http://www.geofunders.org/home.aspx>



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