

FOUNDATION PLANNING GRANTS RESOURCE LIST

John S. & James L. Knight Foundation

Summary

In 2001, a study was commissioned by the John S. & James L. Knight Foundation to learn more about planning grants, particularly as elements of initiative grant making. The Foundation recently implemented a five-year strategic plan which heightens its grantmaking commitments to 26 communities of interest around the country, and which focuses on community-driven grantmaking and on capacity building for nonprofit organizations in these communities. Although more traditional foundation-driven grantmaking initiatives will have a much lower profile under this new philanthropic strategy for Knight, planning grants may still be part of its portfolio, particularly as they may fit with initiatives created by the 26 communities.

The study found that there is very little literature on the subject of planning grants, either in the philanthropic or nonprofit management fields. In defining what planning grants are and do, and in determining what experience-based wisdom exists about how to do them well, the study focused on 15 grantmaking initiatives of American foundations which had used planning grants as part of the initiative's philanthropic strategy. Several grantmaking initiatives of the Federal government also were examined in this regard.

The study derived from this analysis a series of lessons learned and recommendations for grantmakers. These, along with case study descriptions of several of the initiatives, are summarized in:

Backer, T.E. & Bare, J. (2002). Looking before leaping. *Foundation News and Commentary*, 43(2), 48-53.

The roster that follows briefly describes each of the 15 foundation grantmaking initiatives examined in this study, along with contact information for each.

The study was conducted by the nonprofit Human Interaction Research Institute; for more information, please contact:

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Roster of Grantmaking Initiatives

Ø *The California Wellness Foundation Children and Youth Community Health Initiative - Childrens Wellness Villages*

In 1997, The California Wellness Foundation (TCWF) awarded to 16 California communities 18-month, \$125,000 planning grants. These enabled each community to design a “wellness village” that actively engaged children and youth in transforming their environments to enhance the health of their communities. Ten of the 16 communities subsequently received slightly over \$1 million each to implement these concepts over 3.5 years - most of them low-income, ethnically diverse communities. The Initiative concluded in September 2002.

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Ø *The California Wellness Foundation Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative - Community Action Programs*

The California Wellness Foundation (TCWF) awarded \$175,000, 18-month planning grants in July 1997 to seven agencies, supporting each in the creation of a Community Action Program (CAP) to prevent teen pregnancies in their communities. In January 1999, these same agencies received \$1.05 million each to implement their plans over a 42-month period. Five of the CAPs received second phase implementation grants of \$900,000 each in July 2002, for another three years.

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Ø *Annie E. Casey Foundation - New Futures Initiative*

New Futures, launched in 1988 by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, offered \$10 million in funding over five years to each of five mid-sized American cities, designed to help them create fundamental systems change for educational, health and other services offered to at-risk youth. Ten cities initially received \$20,000 planning grants, to form a planning committee that would submit a proposal to the Foundation using a format prepared by a technical assistance provider. These community plan proposals were reviewed by the Foundation, and five cities were ultimately selected for multi-year funding.

Two reports on New Futures can be obtained from the Foundation: *The Path of Most Resistance*, the Casey Foundation’s own reflections on what was learned from New Futures, and *The Eye of the Storm*, an essay presenting perspectives from the leaders of the two most successful sites.

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Ø Annie E. Casey Foundation - Plain Talk Initiative

Plain Talk is a four-year, \$5 million neighborhood-based initiative launched in 1996, and aimed at helping adults, parents and community leaders develop skills and tools they need to communicate effectively with young people about reducing adolescent sexual risk-taking. Implemented by the Annie E. Casey Foundation in five urban neighborhoods across the country, the communities were given one year to develop a plan, and three years to implement it. A sixth community engaged in the planning process, but was dropped from implementation after difficulties in moving ahead with their community plan. The Initiative's implementation phase has since been completed, and the Foundation currently is working on its replication and dissemination.

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Ø Annie E. Casey Foundation - Rebuilding Communities Initiative

The Rebuilding Communities Initiative aims to build on existing revitalization efforts, in order to achieve comprehensive community reform that can have significant benefits for the children and families who live in a neighborhood. In January 1994, the planning phase of this initiative awarded \$160,000 planning grants to five CBOs in communities across the country, selected on the basis of past accomplishments and their potential to provide leadership in neighborhood revitalization. These grants enabled the CBOs to design strategic plans for guiding the Initiative's later stages, and to engage other collaborators in comprehensive assessments of each community's needs and opportunities. Rather than moving directly to a capacity building phase of the Initiative as planned, the Foundation extended the Initiative's planning phase for another nine months (to September 1995). Each CBO was given an additional \$200,000 to continue the planning effort, and ongoing technical assistance was provided. This allowed each community to be better positioned to play a significant role in reforming public systems affecting their neighborhoods.

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Ø Edna McConnell Clark Foundation Institution and Field Building Initiative

The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation is committed to providing long-term support for carefully-selected local and national youth serving organizations. After an intensive due diligence assessment, a six-month grant of up to \$250,000 is awarded to those candidate institutions that meet the foundation's criteria. Its purpose is to support creation of a five-year "business plan" that addresses (a) stabilizing the quality of the organization's programs or services if that needs to be done, (b) strengthening the organization's core capacities and assuring its sustainability, and (c) where appropriate, supporting its growth. Long-term support may be provided to the youth serving organization after review of this plan, with performance targets tied to the plan's key milestones.

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Ø The Colorado Trust - Colorado Healthy Communities Initiative

From 1992-2000, The Colorado Trust's Colorado Healthy Communities Initiative supported 28 communities in completing a one-year planning process, followed by a two-year implementation stage, designed to engage a broad cross-section of community interest groups in planning and implementing actions to address local health issues. The planning process was intended to identify problems, create a project plan addressing them, and to build "community capacity" - the strengths that residents bring to a cause for improving local quality of life.

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Ø The Colorado Trust - Colorado Violence Prevention Initiative

From 1995-2000, the \$6.2 million Colorado Violence Prevention Initiative of The Colorado Trust supported violence prevention planning and implementation grants to communities throughout Colorado. Communities were able to apply for implementation-only grants, or for planning grants that could lead to implementation grants.

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Ø Robert Wood Johnson Foundation - Fighting Back Program

Beginning in 1988, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Fighting Back Program sought to reduce demand for illegal drugs and alcohol by developing community-wide initiatives to mobilize a single, comprehensive system of preventive interventions. A total of 15 communities nationwide were given two-year planning grants, and of them, 14 were subsequently awarded five-year phase 1 implementation grants. Phase 2 implementation grants (1996-2002) were awarded to eight of the original grantees; three additional grantees have continued operations without further funding support from the Foundation.

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Ø W.K. Kellogg Foundation - Families for Kids Initiative

The Families for Kids initiative of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation was designed to encourage reforms in the adoption system, to provide a permanent home for children lingering in foster care who are not likely to be returned to their families. To begin this Initiative, the Foundation provided one-year \$100,000 grants for "visioning projects" in 19 communities, involving a process through which community members were encouraged to "imagine" a better child welfare system. Several overview publications on the Initiative in PDF format are available on the Foundation's website.

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Ø W.K. Kellogg Foundation - Food Systems Professions Education Initiative

The Food Systems Professionals Education Initiative, supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, seeks to promote change in university-based education programs throughout the U.S. for food systems professionals, so they can be more responsive to the complex issues of food systems in the 21st century. Visioning project grants were made for this initiative in 1994-1995, with each of 12 projects bringing together two or more higher education institutions for a process of reflection, dialogue and building a vision that included partnerships with business, industry, and communities. The Initiative is scheduled for completion in 2002, and several overview publications in PDF format are available on the Foundation's website.

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Ø John S. & James L. Knight Foundation Arts Marketing Collaborative Initiative

For the last several years, the John S. & James L. Knight Foundation has supported development of community-wide arts marketing collaboratives in some of its 26 communities of interest across the country. A designated lead organization in each community received a planning grant to begin its work on creating a community-wide arts marketing collaborative. So far, six planning grants and four implementation grants have been awarded, with three additional communities currently exploring what their involvement might be.

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Ø John S. & James L. Knight Foundation Initiative to Promote Youth Development and Prevent Youth Violence

The Knight Foundation's Initiative to Promote Youth Development and Prevent Youth Violence established in 1995 a \$5 million national incentive fund to supplement local guidelines for support of youth development and youth violence prevention projects in all 26 Knight Foundation communities. As part of this Initiative, 13 one-year planning grants of \$25,000 to \$100,000 were awarded, to support developing a comprehensive strategic plan in communities where there was minimal or no prior planning. Six implementation grants subsequently were made (at the beginning of the Initiative six other communities were awarded implementation grants where a planning process had already taken place, or where other existing activities precluded the need for this type of planning).

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Ø John S. & James L. Knight Foundation - Magic of Music Initiative

Launched in 1994, the Magic of Music is a Knight Foundation Initiative directed at strengthening symphony orchestras. Phase I of the Initiative included 13 planning grants of \$50,000 each that were awarded to 11 orchestras. A number of implementation activities are now underway with some of the planning grantees.

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Ø Lila Wallace Readers Digest Fund - Community Partnerships for Cultural Participation

Nine community foundations across the country received four or five year grants, ranging in size from \$500,000 to \$1,500,000, as part of the Readers Digest Fund's Community Partnerships for Cultural Participation Initiative. Each community foundation first received a \$55,000 one-year planning grant that led to their preparing a proposal for the implementation phase of this program.

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