

Valley Philanthropy Forum 2013

“Hiding in Plain Sight”

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Replicating Nonprofits - 5 Recommendations for Donors

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- 1. Analyze and redesign** Before replicating a program into a new community, analyze what is already there, what is culturally appropriate, and what’s needed. Do a benchmark scan, have a focus group, talk to the community and help the non-profit learn and adapt before replicating.
- 2. Partner**
 - a. Work with the grantee in a way in which the truth of what is happening on the ground is approached with objectivity. Discuss together: what is the best way to go about this? And then collaborate in the creation and implementation of a plan.
 - b. When you give, give beyond the dollars: provide technical assistance, connections with other grantees, recommendations to other foundations, etc.
- 3. Fund long term** Change does not happen overnight. Building sustainability takes several funding cycles and new ventures need deep level of support:
 - a. If you can, fund long term, give larger gifts and provide both programmatic support and capacity building funds.
 - b. If your organization can’t fund several years in a row – some funders can’t – use the time to bring other funders to the table.
 - c. If your budget does not have room for a renewal, continue to stay connected with the agency in case you might be able to fund again in the future.
- 4. Be open to risk and failure**
 - a. Foundations have the flexibility to adjust their risk tolerance higher than public funders.
 - b. Work with the grantee to build, from the start, appropriate evaluative measures into the new venture. Such measures will let you know if it was successful, or if it “failed”.
 - c. Failure is an arrow that points towards an opportunity. Grantee and grantor can build together a process of analyzing data to make course corrections together.
- 5. Be involved** A grant, like any stock purchase, is a financial investment. Watch and tend your portfolio of grants the way you would watch a portfolio of stocks. Don’t wait until the end of the year to analyze where things are going. Keep your finger on the pulse, keep learning, talk to people, and adjust as needed.

For additional resources for funders and case studies, explore our website: www.jmcphilanthropicadvisors.com

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