

2015 New Member e-Resource Packet

# Strengthening Grantee Relationships

February 2015



*Smarter grantmaking. Stronger nonprofits. Better results.*

## GEO Publication Guide

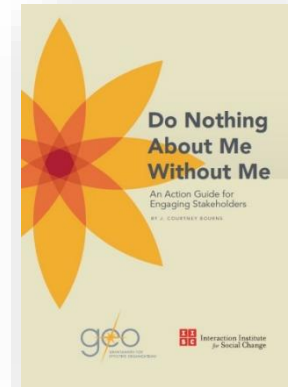
### Do Nothing About Me Without Me An Action Guide for Engaging Stakeholders

This publication provides an overview of how grantmakers are reaching out to grantees, community members and other partners for smarter grantmaking. Released in partnership with the Interaction Institute for Social Change, [Do Nothing About Me Without Me](#) helps organizations answer:

- What is stakeholder engagement in philanthropy?
- To what extent do grantmakers value external input on their strategy and practice?
- How is this topic related to concerns about diversity and equity?
- Why is stakeholder engagement important for philanthropists?
- How do we determine the right way to engage stakeholders?

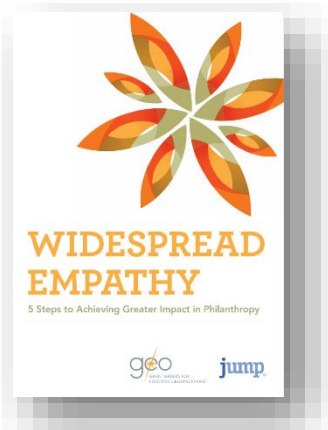
[Download publication.](#)

[Download executive summary.](#)



### Widespread Empathy 5 Steps to Achieving Greater Impact in Philanthropy

When funders base their actions on a gut-level understanding of grantees', community members' and other partners' perspectives, they become more effective. Through current examples from the field, [Widespread Empathy](#) provides concrete steps for organizations to become high-empathy grantmakers:



- *Make it about others, not about you.* Grantmakers work behind the scenes, putting nonprofits and other partners out in front.
- *Get out of the office.* Working hand in hand with community members increases an organization's empathy.
- *Bring the outside in.* Incorporating those they serve into the staff, board or volunteer committee keeps grantmakers out of isolation.
- *Invest in what it takes.* Creating widespread empathy in an organization may require a greater investment in operations.
- *Lead from the top.* An organization's leaders need to walk the talk to build an organizational culture of empathy.

[Download publication.](#)

[Download executive summary.](#)

## GEO Publication Guide

### Is Grantmaking Getting Smarter?

Grantmakers recognize the value of supporting effective, well-led organizations — strong organizations create meaningful changes in the world. To help us understand whether we are making progress in supporting nonprofits in ways that allow them to be successful, GEO conducts field research to track trends in grantmaker practice. In short, we want to know: is grantmaking getting smarter?

[GEO's 2014 study](#) highlights some important shifts in how grantmakers support nonprofit results, but also reveals where we're falling short. To help inform this study, GEO convened a nonprofit task force and feature the perspective of nonprofit leaders throughout the report to talk about the impact that smarter grantmaking practices have on their work.



[Download publication.](#)

[Download executive summary.](#)

## Supplemental Resources

### THE SMARTER GRANTMAKING PLAYBOOK



Smarter Grantmaking • Strengthen Relationships with Grantees

## STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS WITH GRANTEES




Better solutions take hold when they grow from the community where the change is needed. When we fail to achieve the best results, it is often because we aren't connected to our communities and the work of grantees.


What is stakeholder engagement? 

What are different ways to engage stakeholders? 

Which stakeholders should we involve in our decisions and how? 

What is empathy and what are the benefits? 

How do we build and maintain authentic relationships? 

How do we know if our stakeholder engagement is working? 

Where can we go to dig deeper on stakeholder engagement? 

Who is engaging stakeholders well?(Member Stories) 

*To help grantmakers practice empathy, build trust with grantees and engage the people most affected by the issues we seek to address, GEO has compiled answers to some of the most common questions about stakeholder engagement. If you would like to propose a new question related to this topic, please contact Leonor Alfonso.*

## Supplemental Resources

The Members Area of GEO's [website](#) is full of additional materials to help grantmakers effectively support nonprofit leadership development. We've assembled a list of our favorite resources on this topic. Click on the links below and start exploring.

- [Log in](#) to your member account to view our content.
- [Register](#) and create a unique account for each person at your organization.

### From GEO's Resource Library

*The Resource Library houses GEO's publications, discussion guides and other tools available to members.*

#### [Imagine, Involve, Implement: Transforming Grantmaker Practices for Improved Nonprofit Results](#)

Change is never easy. Modelling the best practices can make the switch simpler. *Imagine, Involve, Implement* examines the behaviors of grantmakers who nonprofit leaders identify as the best at supporting results, and offers a step-by-step guide to implementing the changes recommended in *Listen, Learn, Lead*.

#### [Listen, Learn, Lead: Grantmaker Practices that Support Nonprofit Results](#)

Pioneering grantmakers have found new ways to break down barriers standing in the way of nonprofit success. In this publication, GEO synthesizes candid feedback from nonprofit leaders and grantmakers on practices that positively impact a nonprofit's ability to deliver on its mission.

#### [Widening the Pool: Open and Inclusive Grant Competitions](#)

While most grantmakers are familiar with running competitive grantmaking processes, the level of openness and inclusivity can vary widely. In this guide, we explore how several grantmakers met the federal government's mandate to design and manage open grantmaking processes as a condition for receiving Social Innovation Fund grants.

#### [GEOAsks Interview: Elizabeth Christopherson, Rita Allen Foundation](#)

October, 2014

In this issue of GEOAsks, we talk to Elizabeth Christopherson, president and chief executive officer, to learn about how the foundation has shifted to an approach that focuses on engaging grantees, peer grantmakers and beneficiaries.

## Supplemental Resources

### From the GEOList Archives

*GEOList, GEO's membership-only listserv, allows grantmakers to ask questions of over 4,700 individuals in the GEO community and receive real-time feedback.*

#### [Ways to Build Empathy & Understanding Among Leaders & Donors?](#)

March, 2014

*A contributor to one of our programs recently asked: How might we truly build empathy for the people we are trying to serve with our work? How might our donors too gain that same sense of empathy? My question for my GEO peers is: What strategies have your organizations developed that help leaders and donors to empathize?*

#### [Grantee Grievance Procedure](#)

March, 2014

*We are working on developing a procedure for responding to and acting promptly on all complaints from grant applicants or grantees. If anyone already has a comparable policy already in place, would you consider sharing with us?*

#### [Resources for Grantees on Types of Grants](#)

April, 2014

*We have launched a four part conversation focus group series with grantees and prospective grant applicants. We would like to learn how to better develop our grant making philosophy and practices as it applies to four types of grants: program, operating, capital campaign, and capacity building grants. Two questions: Do you have any suggestions for questions which would help provoke interesting thought and conversations on these topics? Could you recommend a short article or website link on these issues which we could give to the attendees at the end of the sessions?*

#### [Customer Satisfaction Assessments](#)

January, 2012

*As part of our improvement process we intend to engage key stakeholders (grantees, donors, professional advisors, etc.) around a series of yet to be identified questions about our services. Our end goal is to gather data around "how can we do our work better. We wish we had the resources to engage an external provider to conduct this assessment, however, at this time, we think we will manage and implement most of the work internally. I wonder if any of you have undertaken a similar process, and what counsel and advice you might offer? What lessons have you learned about design and implementation of a customer satisfaction project (whether conducted by you all or by an outside firm)? What did you wish you knew before you started?*

## Supplemental Resources

### From our Member Stories

*The Member Stories bank provides a glimpse into the work of your peers by sharing members' experiences in their own words.*

Who is Strengthening Grantee Relationships?

#### [Saint Luke's Foundation](#)

"If we're trying to move the needle on the issues we're addressing, we really have to understand the space. No one knows more about what's happening in the community than our grantees. That's why we want to have a conversation and talk about what they are seeing in the community."

~ LaTida Smith, Vice President for Programs, Outcomes and Learning

#### [The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation](#)

"We can't do our work with [our grantees]. We can't get to the results we want without [them]. While we bring an important resource to the table, it is just one of the ingredients needed to do this very important work."

~ Tracy Sawicki, Executive Director

#### [Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties](#)

On the Impact Grants Initiative: "We are using it as a tool to reengage people who were no longer engaged with the organization and to attract new donors to be interested in the organization, because we gave them an experience that was really hands-on, teaching them both philanthropic practices and working on strategic grant decisions"

~ Adin Miller, Senior Director of Community Impact and Innovations



# Publication Order Form

Do you prefer the feeling of flipping paper pages while exploring best practices in grantmaking? GEO member organizations are eligible to receive up to 15 complimentary print copies of each of our publications over the course of their membership lifetime.

If you want to read GEO publications in hard copy, complete the form below and return it to us. *Please note: Some of our titles are not available in print. We apologize for the inconvenience!*

- Assessing the Impact: General Operating Support Vol. 2
- Catalyzing Networks for Social Change: A Funder’s Guide
- Coaching and Philanthropy, An Action Guide for Grantmakers
- Cracking the Network Code: Four Principles for Grantmakers
- Do Nothing About Me Without Me, An Action Guide for Engaging Stakeholders
- Evaluation in Philanthropy: Perspectives from the Field
- Four Essentials for Evaluation
- General Operating Support Action Guide
- Investing in Leadership Volume I
- Investing in Leadership Volume II
- Imagine, Involve, Implement: Transforming Grantmaker Practices for Improved Nonprofit Results
- Is Grantmaking Getting Smarter? (2011)
- Is Grantmaking Getting Smarter? (2014)
- Learn and Let Learn: Supporting Learning Communities for Innovation and Impact
- Listen, Learn, Lead: Grantmaker Practices that Support Nonprofit Results
- Many Hands, More Impact: Philanthropy's Role in Supporting Movements
- On the Money: The Key Financial Challenges Facing Nonprofits Today — and How Grantmakers Can Help
- Pathways to Grow Impact: Philanthropy's Role in the Journey
- Supporting Next-Generation Leadership
- Widespread Empathy: 5 Steps to Achieving Greater Impact in Philanthropy

.....  
**Mailing Information**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return by fax to 202-898-0318 or by email at [membership@geofunders.org](mailto:membership@geofunders.org).