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TOOLS

6 Strategy Design Amid Complexity: Tools for Designing and Implementing Adaptive Funding Strategies

Erica Snow, M.S., M.P.A., Colorado Health Foundation; Jewlya Lynn, Ph.D., Spark Policy Institute; and Tanya Beer M.P.A., M.A., Center for Evaluation Innovation

Increasingly, foundations recognize the importance of designing adaptive strategies that can respond to complex environments and problems. Foundations now need processes and tools to create and implement adaptive strategies while also addressing the core dilemmas such strategies create: managing accountability in the context of adaptation, adapting at the right level, and responding to changes in context without creating too much instability for grantees. Using a case study from the Colorado Health Foundation's advocacy funding strategy to increase health care coverage, this article presents a set of tools to help foundations design adaptive strategies and ideas for balancing accountability for achieving goals with adaptability throughout the course of an initiative.

DOI: 10.9707/1944-5660.1246

22 Network Evaluation in Practice: Approaches and Applications

Madeleine Taylor, Ph.D., and Anne Whatley, M.S., Network Impact; Julia Coffman, M.S., Center for Evaluation Innovation

As more funders support networks as a mechanism for social change, new and practical knowledge is emerging about how to build and support effective networks. Based on extensive review of different types of networks and their evaluations, and on interviews with funders, network practitioners, and evaluation experts, the authors have developed an accessible framework for evaluating networks. This article describes the evaluation framework and its three pillars of network assessment: network connectivity, network health, and network results. Also presented are case examples of foundation-funded network evaluations focused on each pillar, which include practical information on evaluation designs, methods, and results, as well as a final discussion of areas for further attention.

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SECTOR

- 38** Grey Matter(s): Embracing the Publisher Within
Lisa Brook, B.A. and Gabriela Fitz, M.A., Foundation Center

Many foundations act as publishers, making information available to the public by funding research and publications, or by authoring their own. While there are some common obstacles preventing foundations from moving toward shared systems and practices, the authors describe a number of publishing practices being widely adopted, such as open licensing, digital object identifiers, open access repositories, and Schema.org, that together address most of those obstacles and represent a set of shared practices around which the social sector might coalesce and coordinate.

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REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

- 51** Building an Organizational Culture That Supports Philanthropy in Indian Country: A Funder's Story
Adam Kintopf, B.A., Nicole Toves Villaluz, B.A., Jaime Martínez, M.Ed., Barbara Schillo, Ph.D., ClearWay Minnesota; Y. Elaine Rasmussen, M.S., Native Americans in Philanthropy

Organizations working to create positive change in American Indian communities soon learn that one size does not fit all. Issues of sovereignty, historical trauma, poverty, epidemic disease, isolation, and mistrust means that what works in the general population may not in Indian Country. ClearWay Minnesota works to eliminate smoking and improve health among all Minnesotans – including those living on tribal lands. Native peoples regard tobacco as a sacred medicine given by their creator, and traditionally use it spiritually and ceremonially. This article examines ClearWay's project to overcome challenges around its work in Indian Country and to build support for that work among its leadership. Outcomes from this project could be useful to organizations attempting to reduce disparities for American Indians in health, substance abuse, economic equity, and more.

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REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

65 Catalytic Funding, Partnership, Evaluation, and Advocacy: Innovation Strategies for Community Impact

Lora Warner, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

With long-term commitments to concentrated geographic regions, community foundations are in a unique position to highlight problems and stimulate other nonprofit organizations and funders to develop local solutions. This article describes how the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region combined catalytic funding, partnership with grantees, creative use of evaluation, and design of advocacy tools to promote and strengthen youth arts programming. The partnership approach gave rise to very different working relationships with grantees, moving the foundation away from its traditional role to one that led to shared ownership among all the collaborative partners. The author offers eight insights for others interested in using innovative methods to lead large initiatives designed for broad community impact.

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