

# Evaluation of the Mitchell Kapor Foundation's Targeted Grantmaking Program

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# Overview of Presentation

- Purpose of Evaluation
- Evaluation Methods
- Highlights of Evaluation Findings
  - Interactions with Grantees
  - Impact of Grantees' Work
- Looking Ahead

# Purpose of Evaluation

- Learning Outcomes
  - Deepening knowledge of MKF staff
- Doing Outcomes
  - Understanding grantees' impact on the community
- Reflecting Outcomes
  - Assessing MKF's process for evaluating applicants/grantees and its interactions with them

# Evaluation Methods

- Internal Reflection Sessions
  - Three memos to MKF
- Applicant Data Analysis
  - 216 applications received from late 2007 to early 2009
- Grantee Final Report Analysis
  - 25 reports for grants awarded in late 2007 to early 2008
- Grantee Interviews
  - 10 grantees (5 Green Access and 5 VoICE)

## Interactions with Grantees: What Worked Well

- Application and final report processes went smoothly, asked for right amount of information
- MKF staff understood complexity of issues grantees were addressing
- Convening role played by Foundation helped connect grantees to each other
- MKF staff was accessible and innovative
- Blog was a great resource for staying up-to-date on the field, MKF's thinking

## Interactions with Grantees: Areas for Improvement

- Mixed reports of MKF's responsiveness to requests, frequency of communication
- Desire for more transparency amongst some grantees
  - Communicating changes in direction of grantmaking
  - Explaining how information in final reports is used
- More opportunities for in-person site visits

## Interactions with Grantees: Implications for Foundation

- Maintain consistent communication and transparency with grantees
- Assess training provided to MKF staff members
- Share with grantees information about how final reports are used
- Consider performing more site visits, continuing to arrange convenings and connect grantees
- Conduct ongoing assessments of grantee needs

# Grantees' Reflections on Foundation Grantmaking in General

- Establish deeper, longer-term relationships with funded organizations
- Make changes to type of grants made and grant guidelines
  - General support grants
  - Multi-year grants
  - Guidelines for funding policy change work
- Streamline reporting processes

# Impact of MKF Funding

- Helped grantees to leverage other funds
- Allowed grantees to prioritize certain aspects of their work
- Helped grantees carry out programmatic work (Green Access)
- Supported existing staff members, allowed for creation of new positions (VoICE)

# Impact of Grantees' Work: Green Access

- Few grantees provided data on outcomes
- Many mentioned need to build capacity
- Focus on shorter-term outcomes
- Grantees addressing change at different levels:
  - Changing knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors
  - Changing policies and practices of institutions
  - Changing local and state policies
  - Building infrastructure
  - Building the field

## Impact of Grantees' Work: VoICE

- Few grantees provided data on outcomes
- Focus on building capacity, shorter-term outcomes
- Many outcomes centered around 2008 election
- Grantees addressing change at different levels:
  - Raising awareness about civic engagement
  - Reducing barriers to civic engagement
  - Changing local and state policies
  - Building organizational capacity
  - Forming partnerships and building the field

# Impact of Grantees' Work: Challenges and Lessons Learned

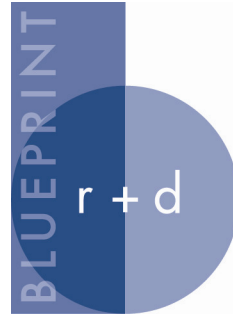
- Loss of funding or insufficient funding
- Staff transitions
- Difficulty reaching target populations
- Need to build organizational capacity
- Desire to maintain momentum in off-election years

# Looking Ahead

- More capacity-building support to grantees
- Engage grantees in dialogue about longer-term outcomes
- Revise program map to emphasize outcomes
- Create standard set of information on outcomes to collect from grantees
- Use this information to further refine and focus grantmaking

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