



SEMI-ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
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## Strategizing Grantmaking in Tough Economic Times

**Tuesday, January 27, 2009 10:45 – 12:15pm**

*Facilitators:*

**Michael J. Hirschhorn**, President, Jacob & Hilda Blaustein Foundation; Director, International Human Rights Funders Group

*Panelists:*

**Jeff Krehely**, Research Director, Movement Advancement Project

**Judith J. Plows**, Principal, KrasnePlows

*Sponsors and Session Organizer:*

The Atlantic Philanthropies and International Human Rights Funders Group

Questions and concerns:

- Data points and perspectives
- What to do when staff is downsized
- How to manage different decision making processes
- Ethical investments
  - Social change not about grant making (?)
- Funding for indigenous peoples
- How to address funders who are nervous about funding human rights mission
  - How to establish an Alliance for Justice within an Australian context
- How to fund crisis that does not consider economic downturn (?)
  - Funding a crisis cause when the return is little to non-existent
- Being mindful about not replicating systems of oppression
  - Keeping the goal of elevating the voices of those who the organization is trying to serve in perspective (even priority?)
  - How to maximize resources
  - Recognizing that we are working within a very corporate framework
- How to communicate with communities where the state of economic crisis is a daily reality
  - How can the shifts of this time be best expressed to those people
- How to simultaneously advance reproductive health and rights
- Assisting communities and organizations hardest hit by the economic downturn

- How they tend to have a harder time effectively articulating goals and communicating with funders
- Increasing outreach to individual donors
  - More strategies
- How to strategically move forward?
- Holistic grant making
  - Capacity building
- Better understand the funding landscape
- Working beyond survival
- Identifying what are the urgent needs so that programs can be shaped appropriately
- Responsible grant giving and stepping in on failed situations

Judy

- Providing a framework to filter out the noise so that people can focus on the real issues
- Focus the questions
- Look at what the organization does not what they say they do
  - Look at the budget and results of the organization as a whole and not just the program
- Q: How do we factor in rapid changes and dynamics into the decision making process?
  - Recognizing that times are different
- Leadership
  - When the organization experiences “Founder Syndrome,” support the organization because they are going through major changes
- Comment:
  - How to address organizations that have a wealth of passionate people but a fundamental lack of funds?
- Response:
  - Make the greatest impact with the money you have
    - Sometimes that means picking the bigger (perhaps more effective organization) that moves the agenda forward over the smaller orgs that may have great intentions but poor strategies and success prospects
  - Remain true to your organizations mission and values (Funders)
- Comment: Small efforts and huge impacts versus only looking at big foundations
  - Keeping the constituents at the decision making table

MAP

- You don’t have to cut the money but you do have to play smart and make strategic decisions
- Recommends signing up at the website and adapt it to the work that you’re doing
  - A lot of data and tools are available to assist in developing indicators
- Having a mix of qualitative and quantitative data
- Connecting with the Development Director versus the ED
  - Talking with people who are the nuts and bolts of the organization to get the less sugar-coated picture
  - Establish a relationship with them

- Put money into development → having a full-time development staff member
- Look into the Equality Federation (Donor development software), Non-Profit Finance Fund
- Being mindful about not trying to dictate the missions and goals of an organization's
  - Providing support so that they can be self sustaining
  - Respecting self-determination
- Questions to think about:
  - Who's using program money and who's not
  - "Who is gaming whom?"