

GrantStation Member Results

The Spring 2018 State of Grantseeking™ Report



OUR UNDERWRITERS

We extend our appreciation to the underwriters for their invaluable support.



OUR ADVOCATES

We extend our appreciation to the following organizations and businesses for their generous support in promoting the survey.



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INTRODUCTION

As a leader in the nonprofit sector, part of your job is to know about the latest trends and to apply lessons learned by others to the strategic development of your organization. We are here to help you do just that.

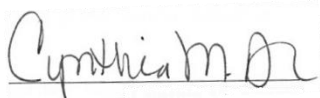
The primary objectives of the twice-yearly State of Grantseeking Report are to help you both understand the recent trends in grantseeking and identify benchmarks to help you measure your own success in the field.

This document, *The Spring 2018 State of Grantseeking™ Report*, is the result of the 16th semiannual informal survey of organizations conducted by GrantStation to help illustrate the current state of grantseeking in the U.S.

Underwritten by [Altum-PhilanTrack](#), [Foundant-GrantHub](#), the [Grant Professionals Association](#), [GrantVantage](#), and [TechSoup](#), this report looks at sources of grant funding through a variety of lenses, providing the reader with benchmarks to help them understand the grantseeking and grant giving landscape.

I would like to personally thank the 4,970 respondents who made this report possible, particularly the 1,392 respondent organizations analyzed in this report that self-identified as Members of GrantStation or one of GrantStation's Premium Licensing Partners.

I hope that the information and benchmarks provided will assist each of you in your good work. Responding regularly to a twice-yearly survey takes commitment, and on behalf of the organizations that will benefit from this analysis and those of us at GrantStation, our underwriters, our advocates, and our collaborators, I thank you.



Cynthia M. Adams

Founder and CEO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As we reached nearly 5,000 respondents to *The Spring 2018 State of Grantseeking™ Survey*, it became apparent that the grantseeking process for GrantStation Members, either through direct Membership or through Membership via a Premium Licensing Partner (PLP), generally resulted in more positive outcomes than for non-members.

Within this report, participating GrantStation Members (1,392) are referred to as GS respondents, GS grantseekers, GS organizations, or GS Members; in comparative sections the entire body of 4,970 respondents is referred to as all respondents.

Compared to all respondents, GrantStation Members more frequently reported larger annual budgets, with the implied increases in staff and infrastructure, including the ability to invest time in grantseeking and grant management tools, which have a significant impact on grantseeking activity and success.

GS Members are active grantseekers. They more frequently applied for more grants than in the previous year (47%) than did all respondents (42%).

In general, submitting a higher number of applications increases the likelihood of winning awards. According to *The Spring 2018 State of Grantseeking™ Report*, out of all respondents, 66% of organizations that submitted just one grant application won an award, compared to 92% of respondents who submitted three to five applications and 97% of those who submitted six to ten applications. So, one way to increase your organization's chance of winning grant awards is to submit at least three grant applications.

GS Members are very successful at securing grants. During the last half of 2017, a total of 82% of GS respondents received at least one grant award (compared to 66% of all respondents). Compared to all respondents (33%), GS Members were more frequently awarded more grants than in the previous year (38%).

In addition, GS Members more frequently won awards of a larger size than the year before (34%) than did all respondents (32%). The median largest individual award for GS Members was \$50,000, compared to \$35,000 for all respondents. For GrantStation Members, the median award total was \$68,900, compared to \$44,100 for all respondents.

GS Members reported that grantseeking's greatest challenges stem from the lack of time and staff for grantseeking activities (20%). These struggles relate to the most frequently reported techniques for reducing indirect/administrative costs; over half (56%) of GS respondents reported that they had reduced indirect/administrative costs by eliminating staff, while 31% reported increased reliance on volunteer labor.

Even so, this report speaks to the importance of making the time to target the right grantmakers for your organization, and stresses the importance of submitting at least three grant applications every six months.

How can this report help your organization find the funding it needs?

First, compare your organization's grantseeking to this report. Are there areas of performance where your organization excels, or where it could stand to improve? Next, set realistic expectations for the projected contribution of grant awards to your total budget, using the results of this report as one of your guides.

Because these reports are meant to serve you and to help you determine where you need to focus your energy, you may consider setting aside time in your next Board of Directors meeting to discuss this report and how the information can be used to help you build a successful and resilient grant management strategy.

Finally, consider continued investment in tools to help organizational growth, such as Membership in GrantStation. At [GrantStation](#), we help you to keep your organization financially healthy through assistance in developing a strong grantseeking strategy. [Member Benefits](#) provide the tools for you to find new grant sources, build a strong grantseeking program, and write winning grant proposals.

Ellen C. Mowrer

President and COO, GrantStation

KEY FINDINGS

DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

- Larger annual budgets, with the implied increases in staff and infrastructure, including the ability to invest in grantseeking and grant management tools, have a significant impact on grantseeking activity and success.
 - Forty-three percent of GS Members reported annual budgets over \$1,000,000, compared to 39% of all respondents.
 - The median annual budget of GS Member organizations was \$812,500, compared to \$575,000 for all respondents.
 - All-volunteer staffing was reported by 11% of GS Member organizations, compared to 16% of all respondents.
 - Thirty percent of GS Member organizations employed over 25 people, compared to 26% of all respondents.
 - The role of primary grantseeker was filled by regular staff members for 72% of GS Member organizations, compared to 63% of all respondents.

GRANTSEEKING ACTIVITY

- Eighty-five percent of GS Members applied for grant funding during the last six months of 2017.
- GS Members (65%) more frequently reported grant funding comprising over 10% of the annual budget than all respondents (61%).
- Compared to the same period in the prior year, 47% of GS Members applied for more grants and 38% were awarded more grants. In addition, 42% reported the receipt of larger awards.
- Application rates varied by funder type; 87% of GS Members applied for private foundation funding in the last half of 2017.
- GS Members (65%) more frequently reported receiving two or more awards than did all respondents (54%). Only 18% of GS Members reported winning no awards, compared to 26% of all respondents.
- Among GS Members, applying for at least three grant awards increased the frequency of winning an award. Twenty-eight percent of GS organizations that submitted one or two applications won no awards. However, only 8% of GS organizations that submitted three to five applications won no awards, and 3% of GS respondents that submitted six to ten applications won no awards. Of those GS organizations that submitted eleven or more applications, all won an award.

AWARDS

- Forty-five percent of GrantStation Members reported total awards of \$100,000 or more, compared to 38% of all respondents.
- The median award total for GS organizations was \$68,900, compared to \$44,100 for all respondents.
- The median largest award for GS Members was \$50,000, compared to \$35,000 for all respondents.
- Among GS respondents, the median largest award received from non-government funders (an aggregate of private foundations, community foundations, corporate grantmakers, and other funding sources) was \$25,100, compared to \$25,000 for all respondents.
- The median largest award received from government funders (an aggregate of local, state, and Federal government) was \$153,975 for GS Members, compared to \$125,000 for all respondents.
- For GS Members, the most frequently reported type of support for the largest award was project or program support (46%).

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AWARDS

- Thirty-five percent of GS Members reported that their organizations receive Federal funding on a regular basis, and 26% reported receiving Federal funding within the last six months of 2017.
- Among GS Members, the largest award median from the Federal government was \$367,000, compared to \$337,500 for all respondents.
- Most GS organizations that received Federal funding in the last six months of 2017 reported that their largest Federal award came in the form of grants (66%) or contracts (21%).
- Forty-nine percent of the funds for the largest Federal award originated directly from the Federal government; 38% originated as pass-through Federal funding via a state government.
- Forty-one percent of GS Members reported that matching funds were required in their largest Federal award. Of those, 57% were allowed to use in-kind gifts toward the match total.
- Sixty percent of GS Members reported that their largest Federal award included indirect or administrative cost funding.

INDIRECT/ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

- Compared to indirect/administrative costs for the prior year, 52% of GS Members reported that these costs had remained the same, while 36% reported that these costs had increased. Indirect/administrative costs decreased for 12% of GS respondents.
- GS Members generally kept their costs low; 68% reported indirect/administrative costs as 20% or less of their total budgets.

- Over half (56%) of GS respondents reported that they had reduced indirect/administrative costs by eliminating staff, while 31% reported increased reliance on volunteer labor.
- Individual donations (38%) were the most frequent source of indirect/administrative funding, while foundation grants (13%) were the least frequent source.
- Only 9% of GS respondents reported that non-government funders would not cover any level of indirect/administrative costs. However, 41% of GS respondents reported an allowance of 10% or less for these costs.

COLLABORATION

- Most GS Members (67%) did not participate in collaborative grantseeking in the last six months of 2017.
- Thirty-two percent of those GS Members that did submit a collaborative grant application reported winning an award, compared to 25% of all respondents.
- Increases in annual budget size, with the implied increases in staff and infrastructure, influenced collaborative activities. Fifty-eight percent of GS Members with budgets of \$25,000,000 or more participated in collaborative grantseeking in the last six months of 2017. Seventeen percent of GS Members with budgets under \$100,000 participated in collaborative grantseeking during this period, compared to 11% of all respondents.

OTHER FINDINGS

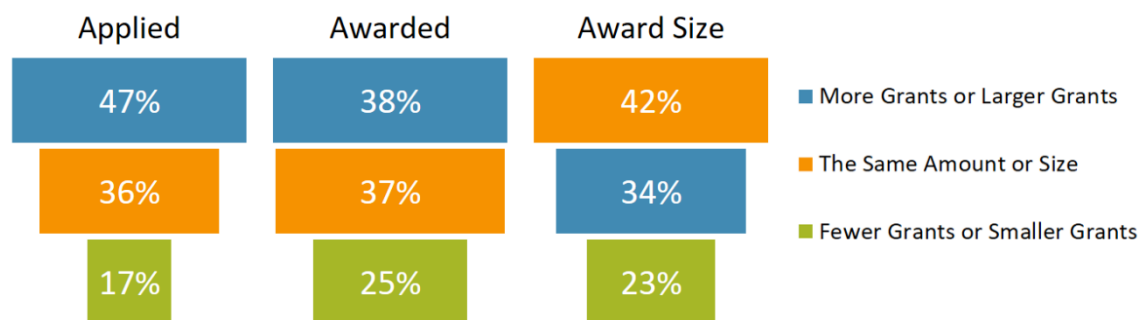
- Lack of time and/or staff (20%) continued to be the greatest challenge to grantseeking among GS Members. Adherence to varying funder practices and requirements (13%), competition for finite monies (13%), and difficulty in finding grant opportunities that matched with specific missions, locations, or programs (12%) were also frequently cited as the greatest challenge to successful grantseeking. Building funder relationships (9%), reduced funding (8%), and the need for a grantwriter (6%) were also reported as grantseeking challenges. The remaining challenges were each reported by 5% or fewer of respondents.

GRANTSEEKING ACTIVITY

RECENT ACTIVITY

From July to December of 2017, 83% of GS respondents applied for the same number of grants (36%) or more grants (47%) than they did in the last half of 2016. Of GS organizations, 75% were awarded the same number of grants (37%) or more grants (38%) compared to the prior year. Moreover, 76% of respondents reported that their organizations received awards of the same size (42%) or larger (34%).

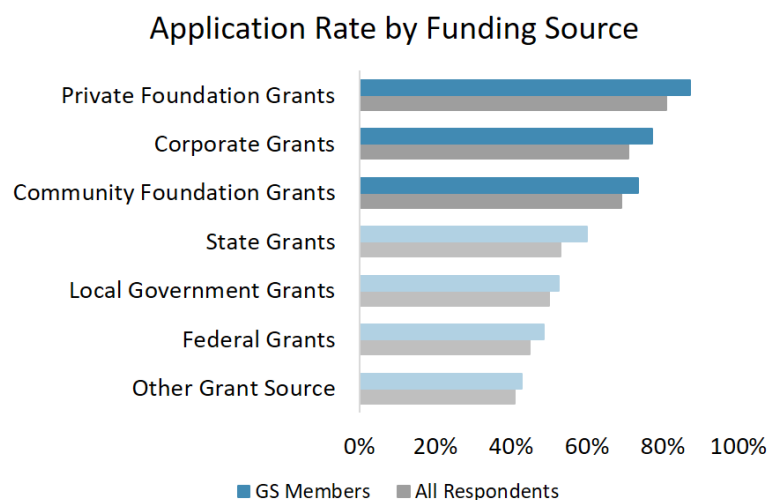
GS Members more frequently applied for more grants (47%) than did all respondents (42%). Compared to all respondents (33%), GS Members more frequently were awarded more grants (38%). In addition, GS Members more frequently won awards of a larger size (34%) than did all respondents (32%).



GS respondents were optimistic about the future; 49% expected to be awarded more grants in the following six months, and 35% expected to receive the same number of awards.

APPLICATION RATES

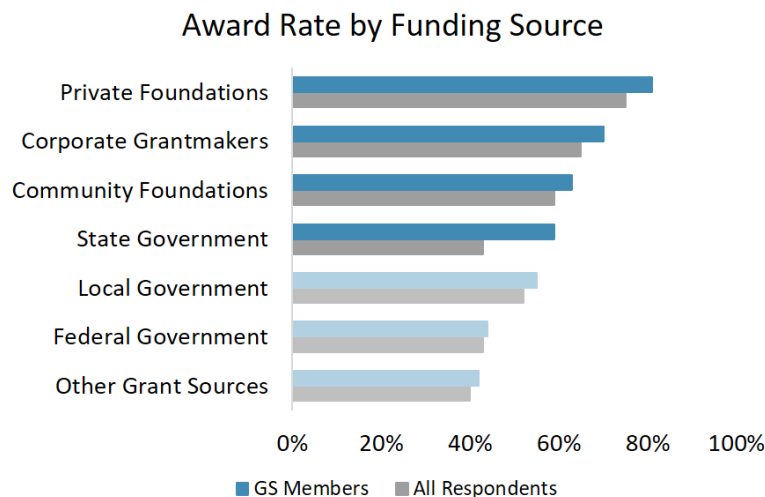
GS Members reported higher applications rates among all funding sources than did all respondents.



Application rates varied by funder type. GS Members most frequently reported applying to private foundations (87%), corporate grantmakers (77%), and community foundations (73%); these funder types are consistently reported as the sources most frequently applied to by all grantseekers. Among government funding sources, state government application rates (60%) were higher for GS organizations than those of local government (53%) or the Federal government (49%). Applications to “other” grant sources were reported by GS respondents at a rate of 43%.

AWARD RATES

GS Members reported higher award rates among all funding sources than did all respondents.

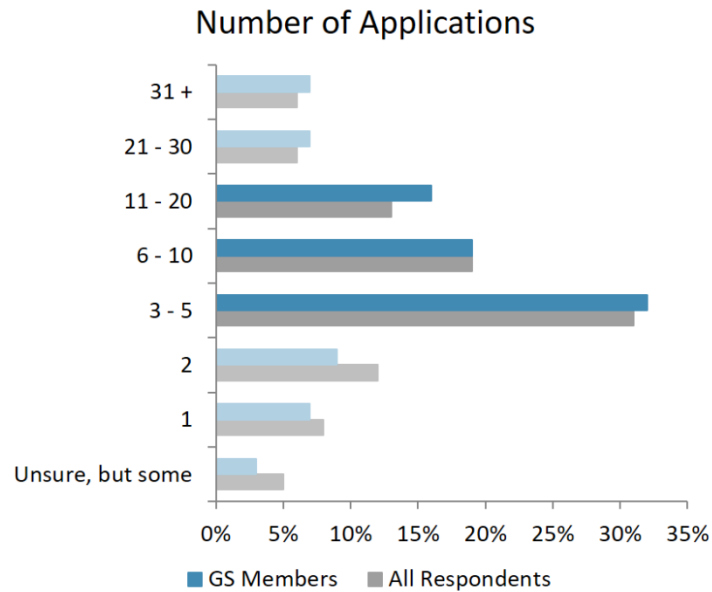


More frequent award rates were reported from private foundations (81%), corporate grantmakers (70%), and community foundations (63%). Among government funding sources, state government award rates for GS respondents (59%) were higher than those of local government (55%) and the Federal government (44%). Awards from “other” grant sources were reported by GS Members at a rate of 42%.

NUMBER OF GRANT APPLICATIONS

GS Members (81%) more frequently reported submitting three or more applications than did all respondents (75%).

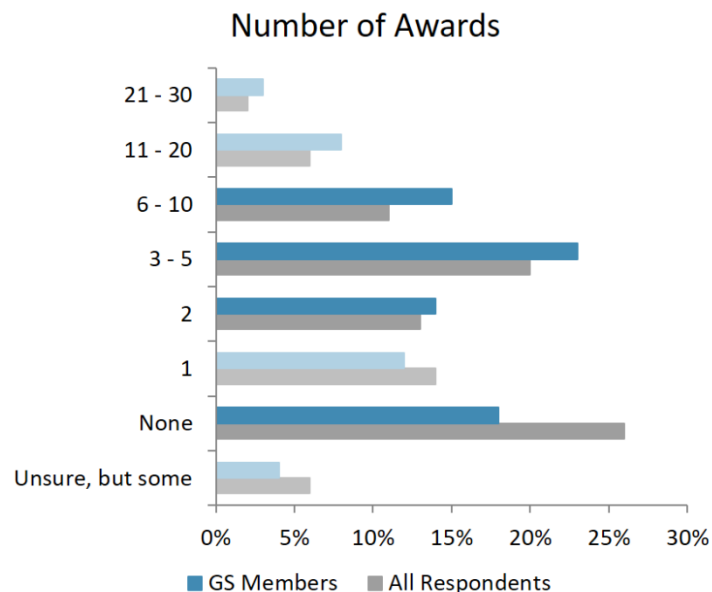
Most GS respondents (85%) applied for grant funding during the last six months of 2017. Of those that submitted a grant application during this period, most (67%) submitted between three and 20 grant applications. One or two grant applications were submitted by 16% of GS respondents. Fourteen percent of GS organizations submitted 21 or more grant applications. Some applications, of indeterminate quantity, were submitted by 3% of GS respondents. Of the GS Members who submitted a grant application during the last half of 2017, 96% submitted at least one online application, and of these, 29% submitted all their applications online.



NUMBER OF GRANT AWARDS

GS Members (65%) more frequently reported receiving two or more awards than did all respondents (54%). The percentage of GS Members who won no awards (18%) was lower than that of all respondents (26%).

During the last half of 2017, a total of 82% of GS respondents received at least one grant award. Twenty-seven percent of GS organizations received one or two grant awards and 38% received between three and ten awards. Eleven or more grant awards were received by 13% of GS respondents, while 4% reported receiving some awards, but were unsure of the exact number.



GRANT APPLICATIONS VS. GRANT AWARDS

The relationship between applications submitted and awards won can be seen in the chart below. A larger number of applications was more likely to result in a larger number of awards. Some awards received in the last half of 2017 resulted from applications submitted at an earlier time, and some applications were submitted for which awards had not yet been determined.

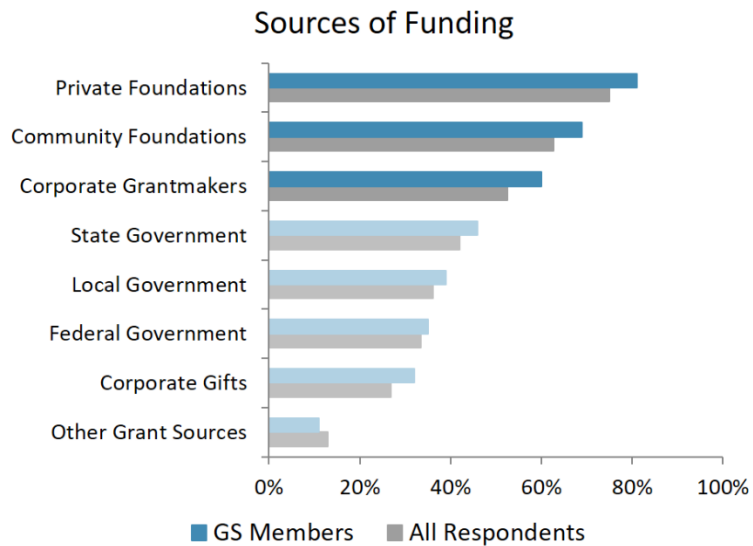
Number of Awards	Number of Applications						
	1	2	3 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 20	21 - 30	31 +
None	25	27	31	6	0	0	0
1	40	36	54	5	3	0	0
2	4	42	111	22	5	0	0
3-5	4	4	158	99	37	5	3
6-10	1	1	14	82	91	17	6
11-20	0	0	1	9	42	39	21
21-30	0	0	1	0	6	9	19
31+	0	0	1	0	1	4	26

- One Application: 66% of GS Members were awarded at least one grant, compared to 63% of all respondents.
- Two Applications: 75% of GS Members and 75% of all respondents were awarded at least one grant.
- Three to Five Applications: 92% of GS Members were awarded at least one grant, compared to 89% of all respondents; 73% of GS organizations were awarded two to five grants, compared to 69% of all respondents.
- Six to Ten Applications: 97% of GS Members were awarded at least one grant, compared to 96% of all respondents; 81% of GS grantseekers were awarded three to ten grants, compared to 77% of all respondents.
- 11 to 20 Applications: 100% of GS Members were awarded at least one grant, compared to 98% of all respondents; 92% of GS organizations were awarded three to 20 grants, compared to 77% of all respondents.
- 21 to 30 Applications: 100% of GS Members were awarded at least one grant, compared to 99% of all respondents; 88% of GS grantseekers were awarded six to 30 grants, compared to 87% of all respondents.
- Over 30 Applications: 100% of GS Members were awarded at least one grant, compared to 99% of all respondents; 88% of GS organizations were awarded over 11 grants, compared to 85% of all respondents.

Applying for at least three grant awards increases the frequency of winning an award. Twenty-eight percent of GS organizations that submitted one or two applications won no awards. However, only 8% of GS respondents that submitted three to five applications won no awards, and 3% or fewer of GS grantseekers that submitted six or more applications won no awards.

GRANT FUNDING SOURCES

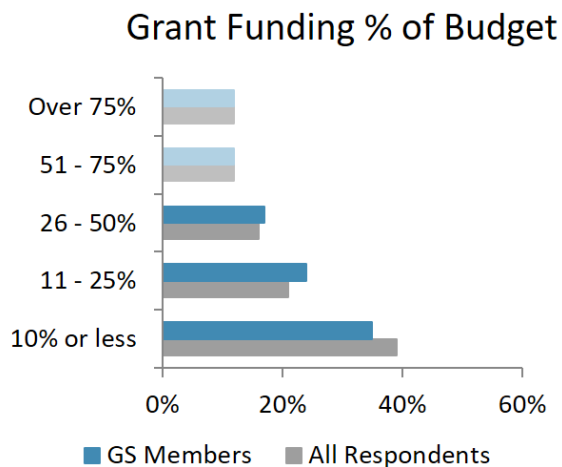
Compared to all respondents, GS Members reported funding from all sources at higher rates (except for “other” grant sources).



GS Members most frequently reported private foundations (81%), community foundations (69%), and corporations (60%) as funding sources; these also continued to be the most frequently cited sources of grant awards for all respondents. Among government funders, state (46%) and local (39%) funding sources were reported more frequently by GS Members than Federal funding (35%). Other funding sources, (including religious organizations, the United Way, donor-advised funds, civic organizations, and tribal funds) were reported by 11% of GS respondents.

GRANT FUNDING BUDGET CONTRIBUTION

GS Members (65%) more frequently reported grant funding as comprising more than 10% of the annual budget than all respondents (61%).



Grant funding comprised 10% or less of the annual budget for 35% of GS respondents, and 11 to 25% of the budget for 24% of GS respondents. Grant funding was 26 to 50% of the budget for 17% of GS respondents, and 24% of GS organizations reported grant funding of 51% or more.

SUMMARY

GS Members are active grantseekers. Compared to the same period in the previous year, they more frequently applied for more grants (47%) than did all respondents (42%), and were awarded more grants (38%) than all respondents (33%). The receipt of larger awards was also reported more frequently by GS Members (34%) than by all respondents (32%).

In comparison to all respondents (61%), GS Members (65%) more frequently reported grant funding as comprising more than 10% of the annual budget.

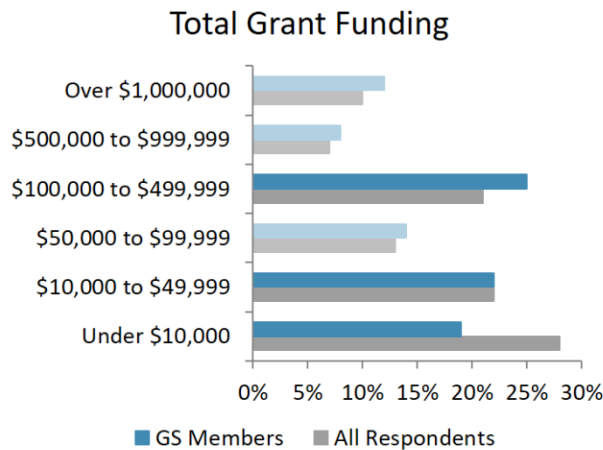
GS organizations most frequently applied to and reported funding from private foundations, community foundations, and corporations. Among government funding sources, GS organizations more frequently applied to and reported funding from state and local sources than from Federal sources.

More awards were won by GS Members. Most GS Members (85%) applied for grant funding during the last six months of 2017. Of those, 82% of GS respondents received at least one grant award, compared to 74% of all respondents. Applying for at least three grant awards increased the frequency of winning an award. Twenty-eight percent of GS organizations that submitted one or two applications won no awards. However, only 8% of GS respondents that submitted three to five applications won no awards, and 3% of GS organizations that submitted six to ten applications won no awards. Of those GS Members that submitted eleven or more applications, all won an award.

TOTAL FUNDING AND LARGEST AWARDS

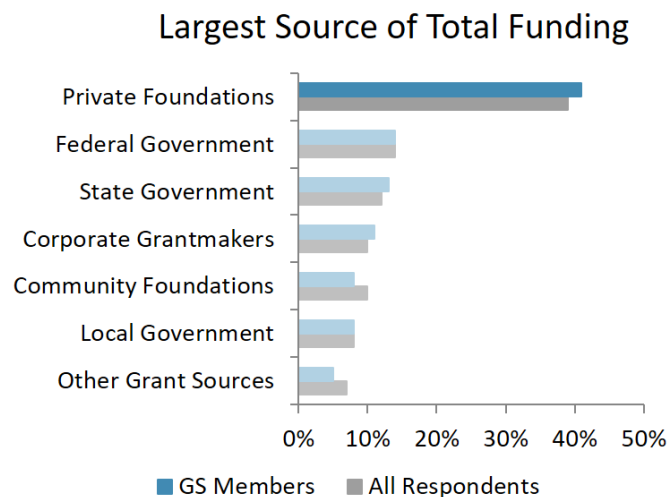
TOTAL GRANT FUNDING

Forty-five percent of GrantStation Members reported total awards of \$100,000 or more, compared to 38% of all respondents. Total awards between \$100,000 and \$499,999 were reported by 25% of GS respondents, and 41% of GS respondents reported total awards below \$50,000. The median award total for GrantStation Members was \$68,900, compared to \$44,100 for all respondents.



LARGEST SOURCE OF TOTAL FUNDING

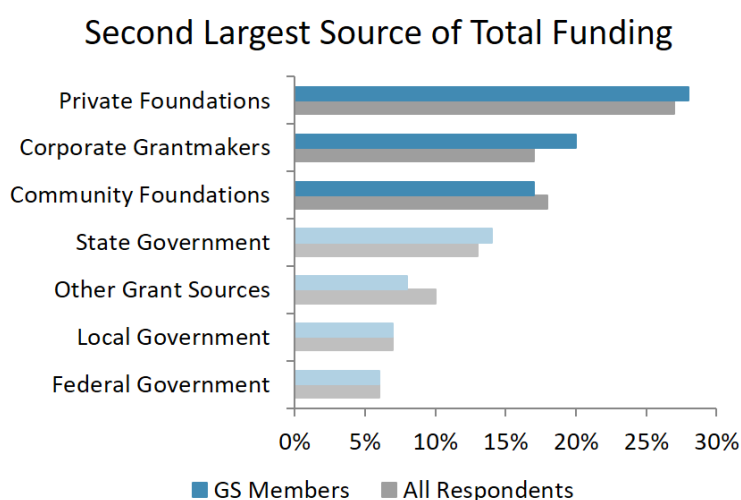
Compared to all respondents, GS Members reported total funding from private foundations, state government, and corporate grantmakers at higher rates.



Private foundations (41%) were by far most frequently reported by GS Members as the largest source of total grant funding, followed by the Federal government (14%). State government was the largest source of total funding for 13% of GS respondents, followed by corporate grants (11%) and community foundations (8%). Local government was reported as the largest source of total funding for 8% of GS respondents, and 5% reported “other” grant sources as their largest source of total funding.

SECOND LARGEST SOURCE OF TOTAL FUNDING

Compared to all respondents, GS Members reported the second largest source of total funding as private foundations, corporate grantmakers, and state government at higher rates.



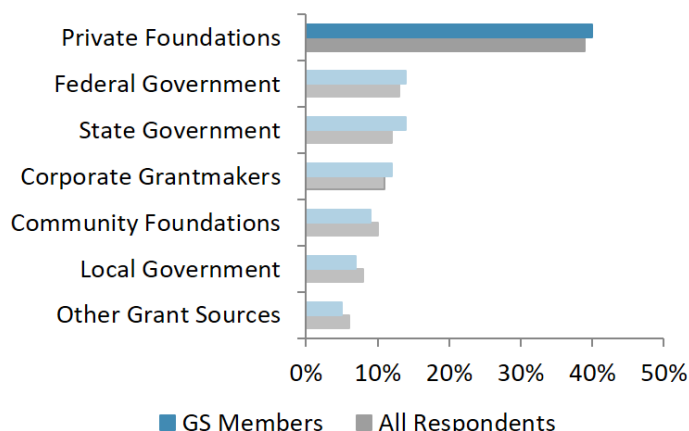
The second largest source of total funding was reported as private foundations by 28% of GS respondent organizations. This was followed by corporate grants (20%), community foundations (17%), and state government (14%). Other grant sources (8%), local government (7%) and the Federal government (6%) were also reported as the second largest total funding source.

LARGEST INDIVIDUAL AWARD SOURCE

Compared to all respondents, GS Members reported the largest individual award source from private foundations, corporate grantmakers, the Federal government, and state government at higher rates.

Forty percent of GS Members reported private foundations as the source of the largest individual award; this rate was nearly three times greater than the next largest individual award sources, the Federal government and state government (each 14%). Corporate grants were the largest individual award source for 12% of respondents, followed by community foundations (9%), local government (7%), and “other” grant sources (5%).

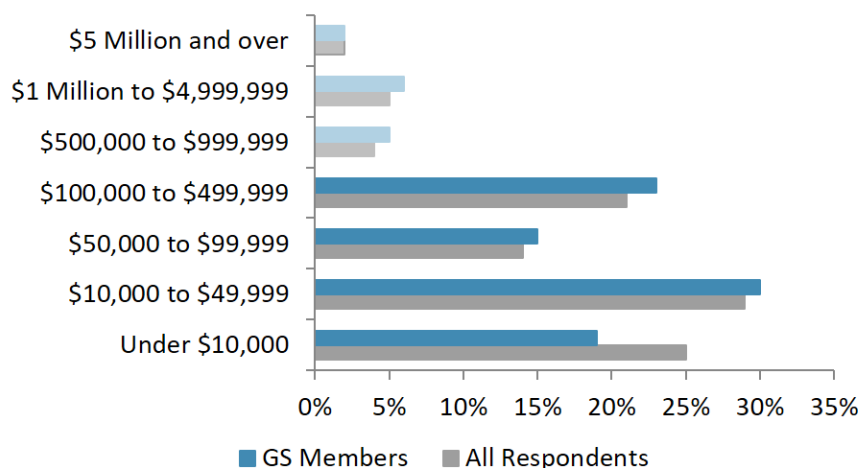
Largest Individual Award Source



LARGEST AWARD SIZE

The median largest individual award for GS Members was \$50,000, compared to \$35,000 for all respondents.

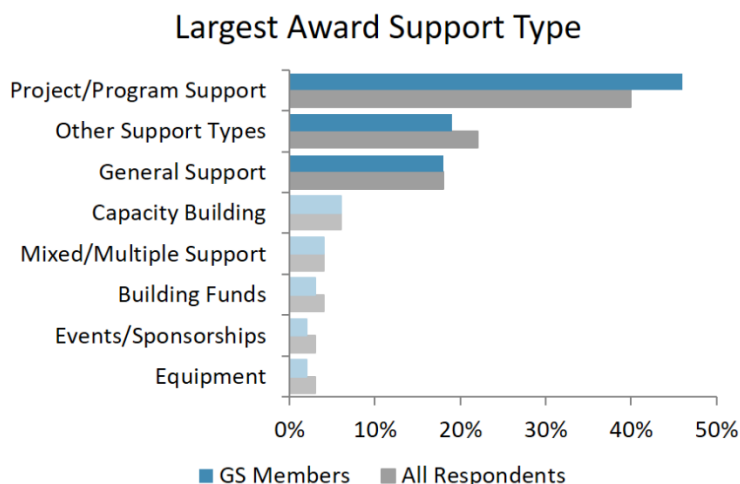
Largest Individual Award Size



Eighty-seven percent of GS respondents reported a largest individual award under \$500,000. A largest individual award under \$10,000 was reported by 19% of GS organizations, while 30% reported a largest individual award of \$10,000 to \$49,999. Fifteen percent of GS Members reported a largest individual award between \$50,000 and \$99,999, whereas 23% reported a largest individual award of \$100,000 to \$499,999. A largest individual award between \$500,000 and \$999,999 was reported by 5% of GS respondents, while 6% reported a largest individual award of \$1 million to \$4,999,999. Two percent of GS organizations reported a largest individual award of \$5 million or more.

LARGEST AWARD SUPPORT TYPE

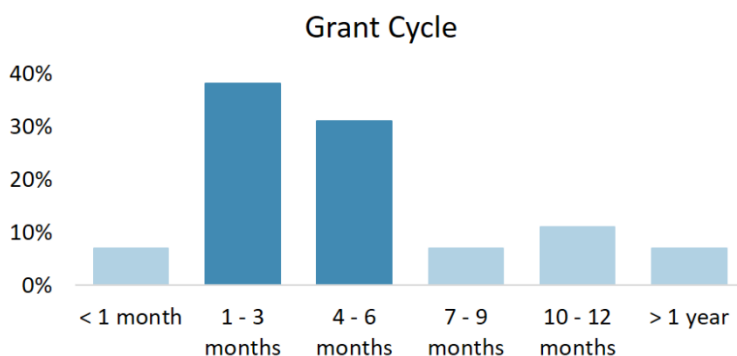
The largest award received by 46% of GS Members was in the form of project or program support, compared to 40% of all respondents.



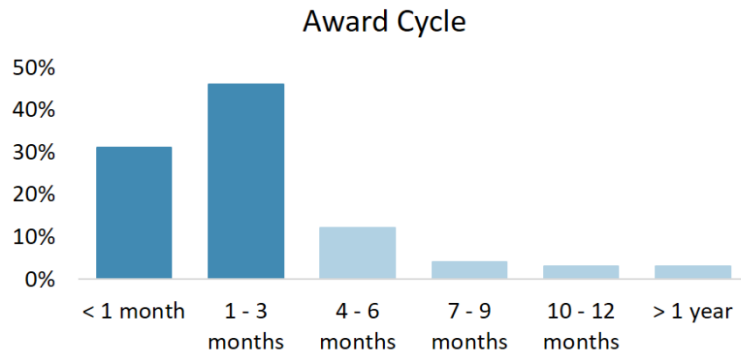
The “other” category, comprised of any support type reported at a rate of less than 2% (including advocacy, collaborations, infrastructure, and training programs) was reported by 19% of GS respondents, followed by general support at 18%.

LARGEST AWARD LOGISTICS

The grant cycle length—from proposal submission to award decision—for the largest grant award was between one and six months for 69% of GS respondents. A longer grant cycle of seven months or more was reported by 25% of GS organizations, while 7% reported a short grant cycle of less than a month.



Once an award decision had been determined, funders released the award monies quickly; 77% of GS respondents reported receiving the award within three months of notification. Delayed receipt of award monies, taking four months or more, was reported by 23% of GS respondents.



SUMMARY

Larger awards were won by GS Members. The median award total for GrantStation organizations was \$68,900, compared to \$44,100 for all respondents. The median largest individual award for GS Members was \$50,000, compared to \$35,000 for all respondents.

Forty-five percent of GrantStation organizations reported total awards of \$100,000 or more, compared to 38% of all respondents. Total awards between \$100,000 and \$499,999 were reported by 25% of GS respondents, and 41% reported total awards below \$50,000.

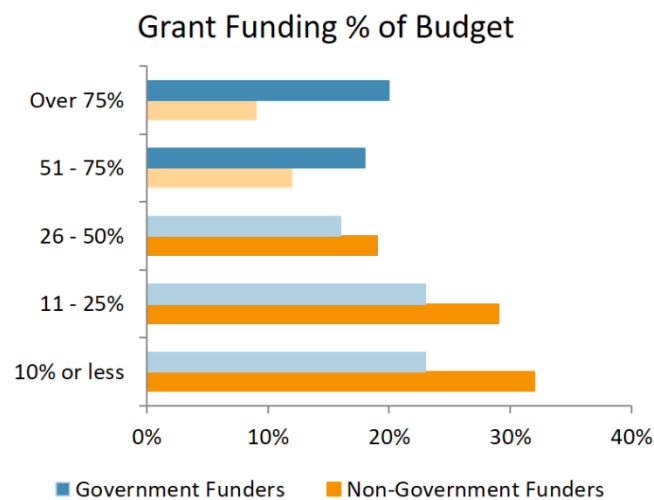
Private foundations were the most frequently reported largest source of total funding (41%), second largest source of total funding (28%), and source of the largest individual grant award (40%) for GS Members.

The largest individual award was in the form of project or program support for 46% of GS respondents. Sixty-nine percent of GS respondents reported a grant cycle length—from proposal submission to award decision—between one and six months, and 77% reported a speedy release of award monies, within three months of notification.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

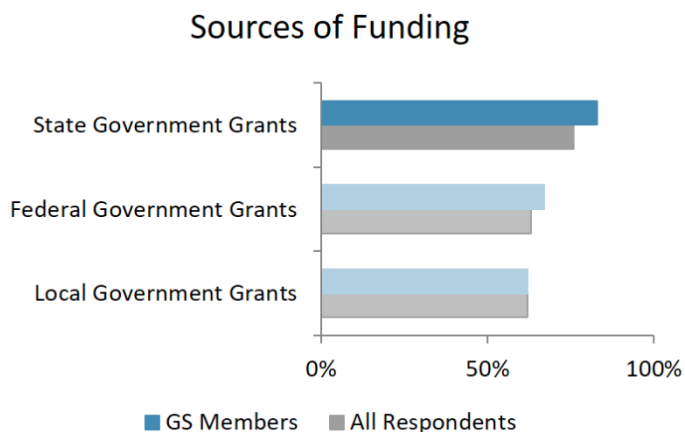
GOVERNMENT GRANT FUNDING BUDGET CONTRIBUTION

GrantStation Members that reported government funders as the source of the largest award relied on grants to fund a larger portion of their annual budgets. Of GS organizations with the largest award funded by government sources, 38% reported that grants comprised over one half of their annual budgets, compared to 21% of GS respondents with the largest award funded by non-government sources.



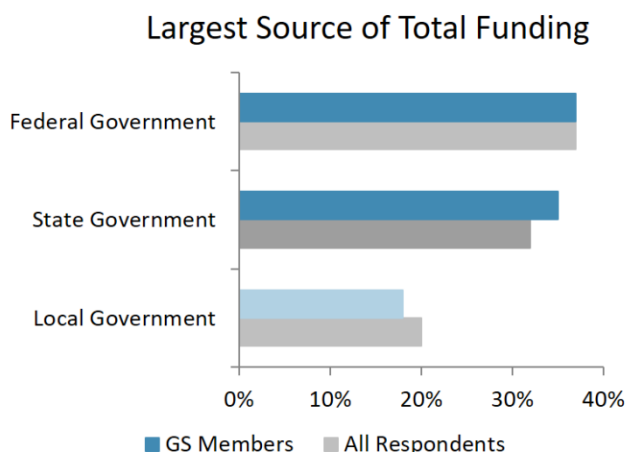
GOVERNMENT FUNDING SOURCES

Among those GS Members that reported government funding sources, state government (83%) was most frequently reported as a government funding source, followed by the Federal government (67%) and local government (62%).



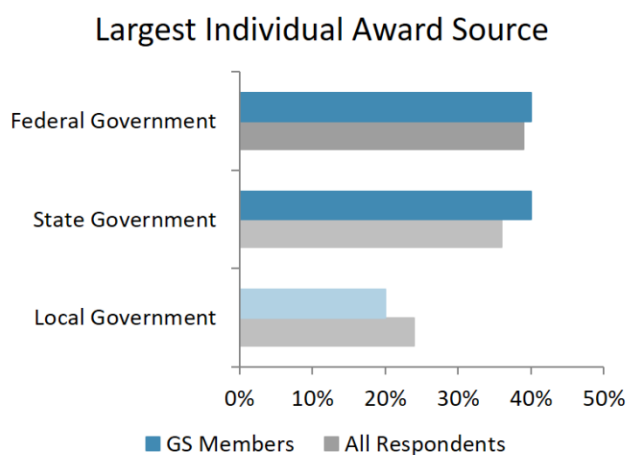
GOVERNMENT LARGEST SOURCE OF TOTAL FUNDING

The Federal government (37%) was most frequently reported as the largest source of total government funding among GS Members reporting government support. This was followed by state government (35%) and local government (18%).



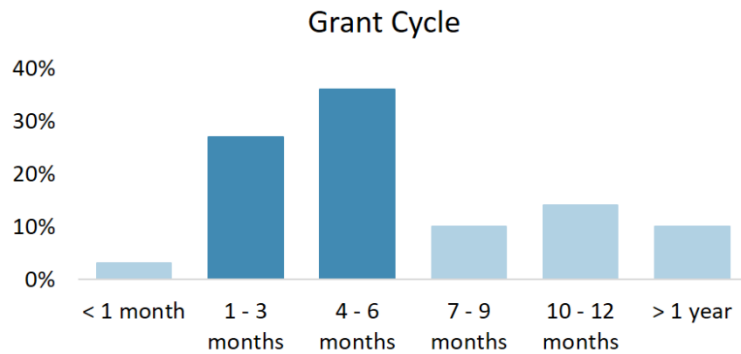
GOVERNMENT LARGEST INDIVIDUAL AWARD SOURCE

Among those GS Members that reported government funding sources, the Federal government and state government (each 40%) were most frequently reported as the largest individual award source, followed by local government (20%).

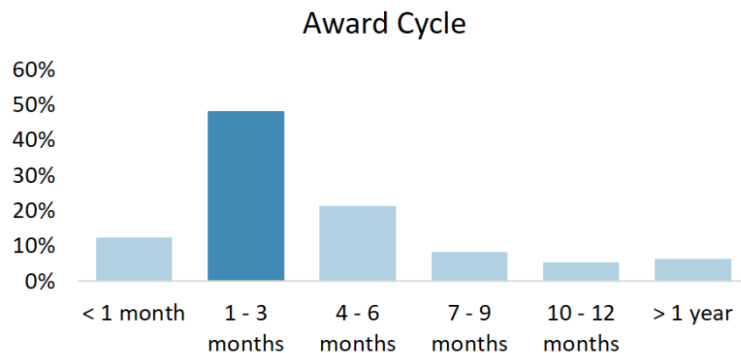


GOVERNMENT LARGEST AWARD LOGISTICS

The government grant cycle length—from proposal submission to award decision—for the largest award was between one and six months for 63% of GS Members, while 3% reported a short grant cycle of less than a month. A longer grant cycle of seven months or more was reported by 34% of GS respondents. The longer grant cycle reflects the government application process; the non-government application process took seven months or more for 19% of GS respondents.

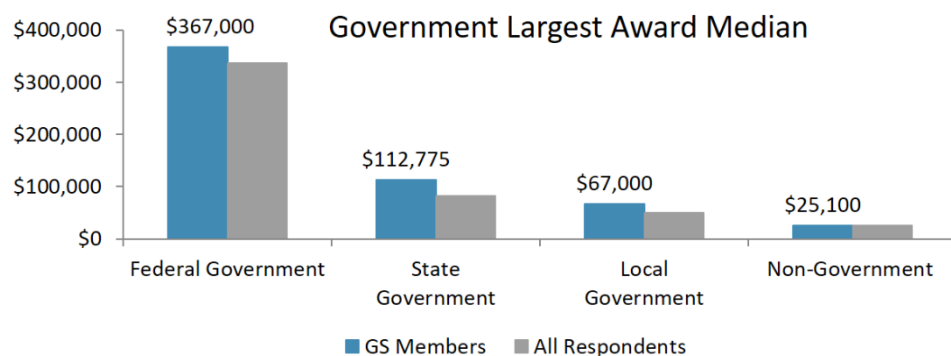


Once an award decision had been determined, the government often released the award monies within three months of notification (60%). Delayed receipt of award monies, taking four months or more, was reported by 40% of GS respondents. This timing is significant, as 86% of funds from non-government sources were released within three months of notification.



GOVERNMENT LARGEST AWARD SIZE

The largest individual award medians from government entities were higher than those from non-government funders, and were higher for GS Members than for all respondents.



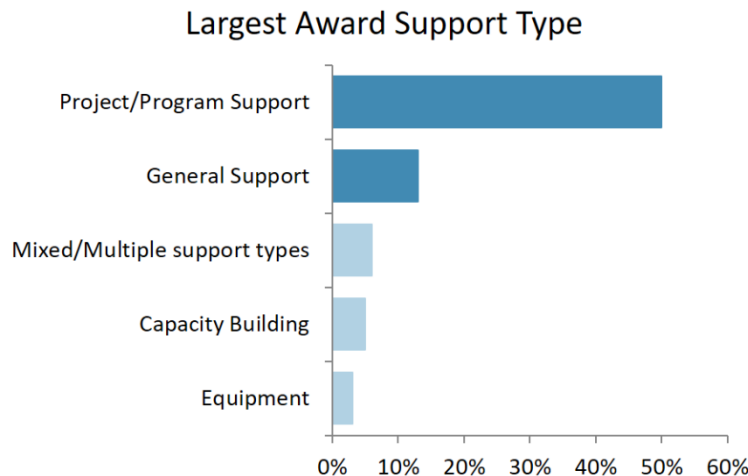
- For GS Members, the largest individual award median for the Federal government was \$367,000, compared to \$337,500 for all respondents.

- GS Members reported a largest individual award median of \$112,775 for state government, compared to \$82,500 for all respondents.
- For GS Members, the largest individual award median for local government was \$67,000, compared to \$50,000 for all respondents.

Of note, the largest award median from non-government funders (private foundations, community foundations, corporate foundations, and “other” sources, in aggregate) was \$25,100 for GS Members and \$25,000 for all respondents.

GOVERNMENT LARGEST AWARD SUPPORT TYPE

The largest government award received by 50% of respondents was in the form of project or program support, followed by general support at 13%. Also reported were mixed/multiple support types (6%), capacity building (5%), and equipment (3%). All other support types (23%) were individually reported at a rate of 2% or less.



SUMMARY

GS Members that reported government funders as the source of the largest award relied on grants to fund a larger portion of their annual budgets. Of GS organizations with the largest award funded by government sources, 38% reported that grants comprised over one half of their annual budgets, compared to 21% of GS organizations with the largest award funded by non-government sources.

Among those GS Members that reported government funding sources, state government (83%) was most frequently reported as a government funding source, followed by the Federal government (67%) and local government (62%).

GS Members reported higher individual awards from government funders than all respondents. For GS organizations, the largest individual award median was \$367,000 for the Federal government, compared to \$337,500 for all respondents. GS Members reported a largest individual award median of \$112,775 for state government, compared to \$82,500 for all respondents. In addition, for GS

organizations the largest individual award median for local government was \$67,000, compared to \$50,000 for all respondents.

The largest individual award medians from government entities were higher than those from non-government funders. The largest award median from non-government funders (private foundations, community foundations, corporate foundations, and “other” sources, in aggregate) was \$25,100.

The largest individual award was in the form of project or program support for 50% of GS Members.

The government grant cycle length was between one and six months for 63% of GS respondents, while 3% reported a short grant cycle of less than a month. A longer grant cycle of seven months or more was reported by 34% of GS Members. The longer grant cycle reflects the government application process; the non-government application process took seven months or more for 19% of GS respondents.

Once an award decision had been determined, the government often released the award monies within three months of notification (60%). Delayed receipt of award monies, taking four months or more, was reported by 40% of GS respondents. This timing is significant, as 86% of funds from non-government sources were released within three months of notification.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Thirty-five percent of GS Members reported that their organizations regularly receive Federal funding, and 26% stated that their organizations received Federal funding within the last six months of 2017.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AWARD FORM

Those organizations that received Federal funding from July through December of 2017 reported that their largest Federal award came in the form of grants (66%), contracts (21%), or another form, including cooperative agreements and reimbursements (8%). Five percent were unsure of the form of funding.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AWARD ORIGIN

Forty-nine percent of the funds for the largest Federal award originated directly from the Federal government, while 38% originated as pass-through Federal funding via a state government. Nine percent originated in another form, primarily pass-through funding from a non-Federal level of government or a nonprofit organization. Four percent of GS respondents were unsure of where their Federal funding originated.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MATCHING FUNDS

Fifty-one percent of GS Members that received Federal funding reported that their largest Federal award did not require matching funds, whereas 41% reported that it did. Eight percent of GS respondents that received Federal funding were unsure if matching funds were included.

Of those GS organizations that received awards requiring matching funds, 57% were allowed to use in-kind gifts toward the match total, including volunteer hours, facilities usage, time and travel, and donations of goods and services. GS Members most frequently reported a match requirement of 11% to 25% (40%). Twenty-one percent of GS organizations reported a match requirement of over 50%, while 18% reported a 26% to 50% match, and 13% reported a match requirement of 10% or less. Nine percent were unsure of the match amount, if any.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INDIRECT/ADMINISTRATIVE COST FUNDING

The largest Federal award included indirect/administrative cost funding for 60% of GS Members, while 30% reported that cost funding was not included, and 10% were unsure if this type of funding was included.

Of those GS Members that did receive indirect/administrative cost funding, 51% reported that their largest Federal award included an allocation of 10% or less for indirect/administrative costs, and 18% reported that the award included 11% to 20% funding for these costs. Eleven percent reported that their largest Federal award included funding of 21% or more for indirect/administrative costs, while 20% were unsure of the level of funding allocated to these costs.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REPORTING

Of GS organizations that received Federal awards, 60% were required to report on outcomes or cost per unit for the largest award, while this type of reporting was not required for 24%. Sixteen percent were unsure of reporting requirements.

Of those GS Members that received Federal awards requiring outcome or cost per unit reporting, the reporting was more detailed or time-consuming than in the past for 25%, whereas it was less detailed or time-consuming for 1%. There was no change in the reporting difficulty for 44% of respondents, and 30% were unsure as to the level of reporting difficulty.

RESPONDENTS BY GOVERNMENT LARGEST AWARD SOURCE

As illustrated by *The Fall 2018 State of Grantseeking™* Survey results, an organization's demographics can be defined by the source of the largest award. The following are typical GS Member organizations that received their largest award from each funder type.

ORGANIZATIONS FOR WHICH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WAS THE LARGEST AWARD SOURCE:

Eighty-three percent of GS Members from organizations for which the Federal government was the largest award source (FGLAS) were directly associated with their organizations as employees (39%) or at an executive level (44%). Nonprofits comprised 68% of FGLAS organizations, while educational institutions comprised 16%, and government or tribal agencies comprised 12%. Among respondents from educational institutions, 15% represented K-12 schools and 85% represented two- or four-year colleges and universities. FGLAS organizations most frequently reported employing over 200 people (31%), between one and five people (18%), and between 26 and 75 people (17%). Sixty-nine percent of FGLAS organizations reported annual budgets of \$1,000,000 and over; of those, 27% reported annual budgets of \$25,000,000 and over. The median annual budget was \$ 4,500,000. FGLAS organizations were older than other organizations; 35% were 26 to 50 years old and 36% were over 50 years old. Forty percent of FGLAS organizations were located in a mix of service area types (rural, suburban, and urban), and 26% were located in urban service areas. The most frequent geographic service reach for FGLAS organizations was multi-county (28%), one county (17%), or one multi-state (13%). Human Services (29%), Education (21%), and Health (11%) were the most frequently reported mission focuses. Fifty-six percent of these organizations reported a service population comprised of over 50% individuals/families at or below the poverty level.

ORGANIZATIONS FOR WHICH STATE GOVERNMENT WAS THE LARGEST AWARD SOURCE:

Eighty-eight percent of GS Members from organizations for which state government was the largest award source (SGLAS) were directly associated with their organizations as employees (34%) or at an executive level (54%). Nonprofits comprised 85% of SGLAS organizations, while educational institutions comprised 5%, and government or tribal agencies comprised 8%. Among respondents from educational institutions, 50% represented K-12 schools and 50% represented two- or four-year colleges and universities. SGLAS organizations most frequently reported employing one to five people (17%) or six to 25 people (34%). Fifty-seven percent of SGLAS organizations reported annual budgets of \$1,000,000 and over; of those, 25% reported annual budgets between \$1,000,000 and \$4,999,999. Twenty-one percent of SGLAS organizations reported annual budgets between \$500,000 and \$999,999. The median annual budget was \$1,500,000. Most SGLAS organizations were 11 to 25 years old (25%), 26 to 50 years old (37%), or over 50 years old (27%). Fifty-one percent of SGLAS organizations were located in a mix of service area types (rural, suburban, and urban), and 27% were located in an urban service area. The most frequent geographic service reach for SGLAS organizations was multi-county (39%), one state (17%), or one county (15%). Human Services (35%), Arts, Culture, and Humanities (13%), and Health (10%) were the most frequently reported mission focuses. Fifty-five percent of these organizations reported a service population comprised of over 50% individuals/families at or below the poverty level.

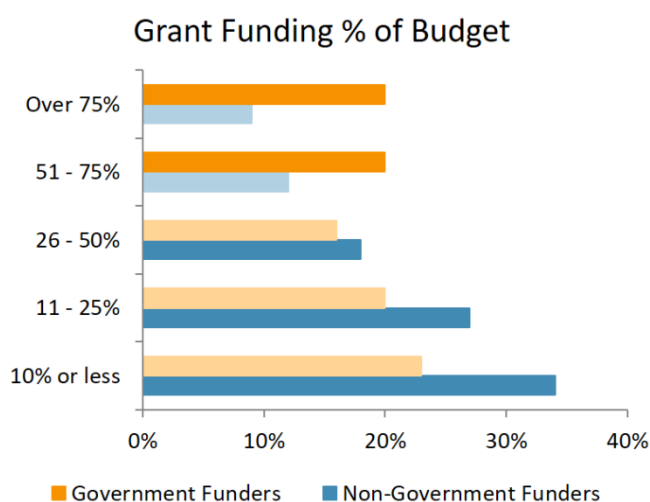
ORGANIZATIONS FOR WHICH LOCAL GOVERNMENT WAS THE LARGEST AWARD SOURCE:

Eighty-three percent of GS Members from organizations for which local government was the largest award source (LGLAS) were directly associated with their organizations as employees (26%) or at an executive level (57%). Nonprofits comprised 91% of LGLAS organizations. LGLAS organizations most frequently reported employing one to five people (27%), six to 25 people (26%), or 26 to 75 people (15%). Fifty-one percent of LGLAS organizations reported annual budgets of \$1,000,000 and over; of those, 25% reported annual budgets between \$1,000,000 and \$4,999,999. Twenty-five percent of LGLAS organizations reported annual budgets between \$100,000 and \$499,999. The median annual budget was \$1,244,450. Most LGLAS organizations were 11 to 25 years old (20%) or 26 to 50 years old (35%). Fifty-two percent were located in urban areas and 26% were located in a mix of service area types (rural, suburban, and urban); the most frequent geographic service reach for LGLAS organizations was multi-county (32%) or one county (19%). Human Services (35%), Arts, Culture, and Humanities (17%), and Youth Development (15%) were the most frequently reported mission focuses. Sixty percent of these organizations reported a service population comprised of over 50% individuals/families at or below the poverty level.

NON-GOVERNMENT FUNDING

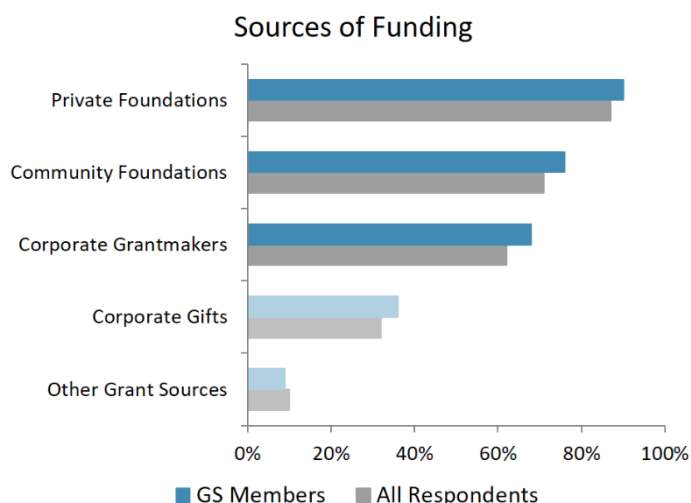
NON-GOVERNMENT GRANT FUNDING BUDGET CONTRIBUTION

Organizations that reported non-government funders as the source of the largest award relied on grants to fund a smaller portion of their annual budgets. Of GS organizations with the largest award funded by non-government sources, 79% reported that grants comprised less than one half of their annual budgets, compared to 62% of GS organizations with the largest award funded by government sources.



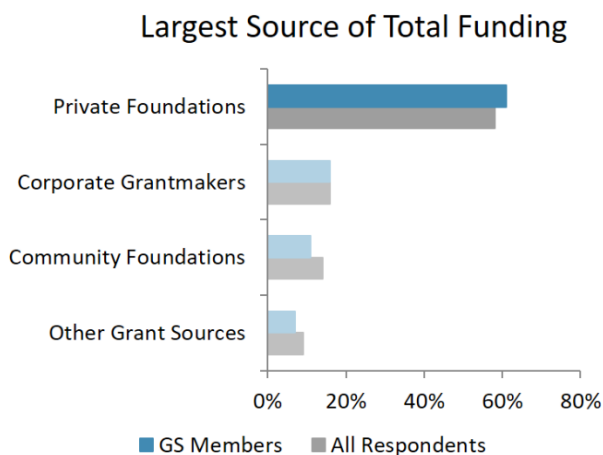
NON-GOVERNMENT FUNDING SOURCES

Among those GS Members that reported non-government funding sources, private foundations (90%) were most frequently reported as a non-government funding source, followed by community foundations (76%) and corporate grantmakers (68%). GS respondents also reported corporate gifts (36%) and funding from other sources (9%).



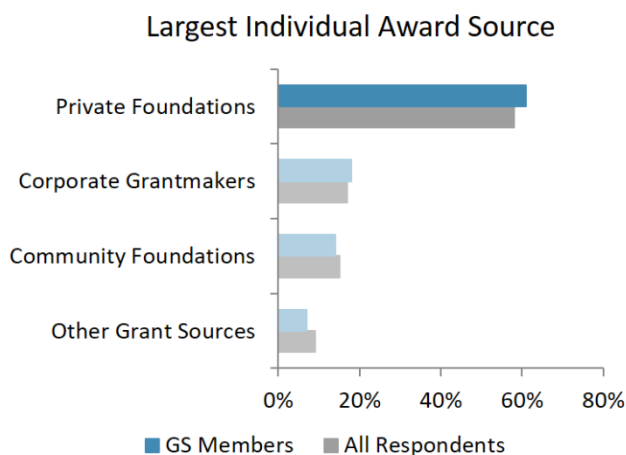
NON-GOVERNMENT LARGEST SOURCE OF TOTAL FUNDING

Private foundations (64%) were most frequently reported as the largest source of total non-government funding among those GS Members that reported non-government funding sources. This was followed by corporate grantmakers (17%), community foundations (12%), and other grant sources (7%).



NON-GOVERNMENT LARGEST INDIVIDUAL AWARD SOURCE

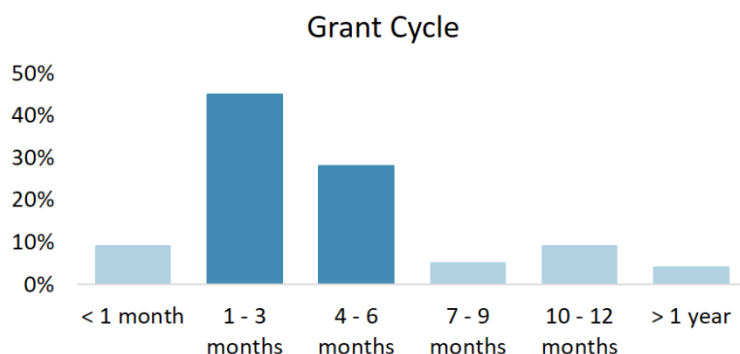
Among those GS Members that reported non-government funding sources, private foundations (61%) were most frequently reported as the largest individual award source, followed by corporate grantmakers (18%), community foundations (14%), and other grant sources (7%).



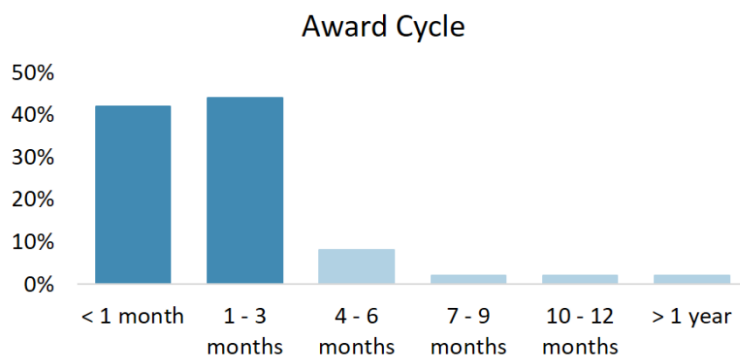
NON-GOVERNMENT LARGEST AWARD LOGISTICS

The non-government grant cycle length—from proposal submission to award decision—for the largest award was between one and six months for 73% of GS Members, while 9% reported a short grant cycle of less than a month. A longer grant cycle of seven months or more was reported by 18% of respondents. The shorter grant cycle reflects an application process that is often simpler than that of

government applications; the government application process took seven months or more for 38% of respondents.

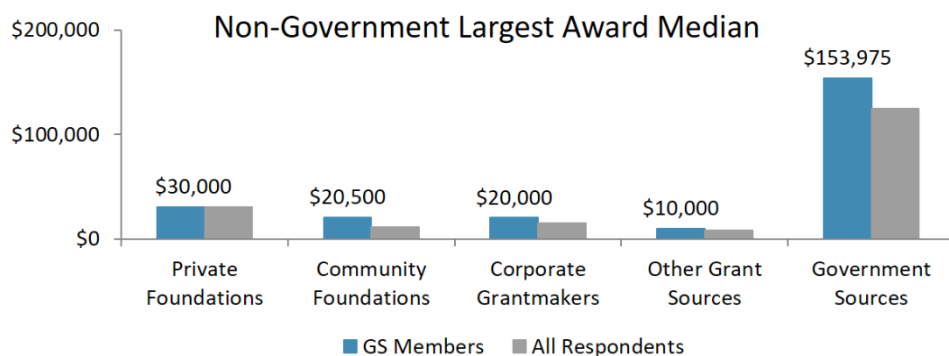


Once an award decision had been determined, non-government funders generally released the award monies within three months of notification (86%). Delayed receipt of award monies, taking four months or more, was reported by 14% of GS respondents. This timing is significant, as 60% of funds from government sources were released within three months of notification.



NON-GOVERNMENT LARGEST INDIVIDUAL AWARD SIZE

The largest individual award medians from non-government entities were lower than those from government funders, and were the same or higher for GS Members than for all respondents.

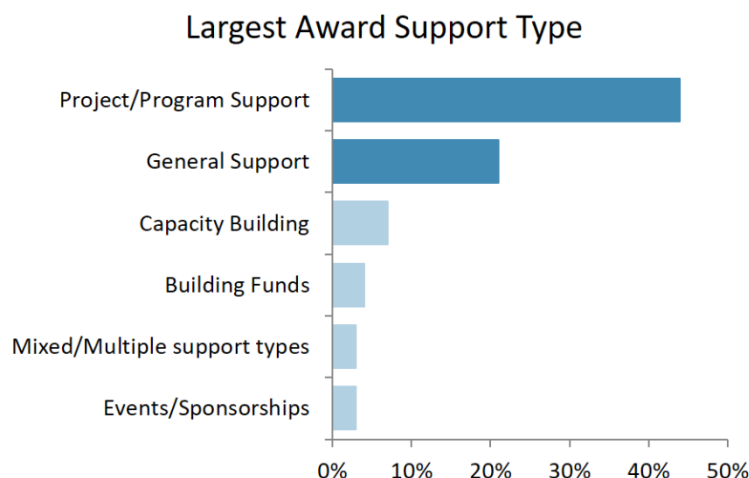


- For both GS Members and all respondents, the largest individual award median was \$30,000 for private foundations.
- GS organizations reported a largest individual award median of \$20,500 for community foundations, compared to \$11,000 for all respondents.
- GS Members reported a largest individual award median of \$20,000 for corporate grantmakers, compared to \$15,000 for all respondents.
- For GS respondents, the largest individual award median for “other” grant sources was \$10,000, compared to \$8,000 for all respondents.

Of note, the largest award median from government funders (Federal, state, and local government sources, in aggregate) was \$153,975 for GS Members and \$125,000 for all respondents.

NON-GOVERNMENT LARGEST AWARD SUPPORT TYPE

The largest non-government award received by 44% of GS Members was in the form of project or program support, which was followed by general support at 21%. GS respondents also reported the largest non-government award type as capacity building (7%), building funds (4%), and mixed/multiple support and events/sponsorships (each 3%). All other support types (18%) were individually reported at a rate of 2% or less.



SUMMARY

Among those GS Members that reported non-government funding sources, private foundations (90%) were most frequently reported as a non-government funding source, followed by community foundations (76%) and corporate grantmakers (68%). GS respondents also reported corporate gifts (36%) and funding from other sources (9%).

GS Members that reported non-government funders as the source of the largest award relied on grants to fund a smaller portion of their annual budgets. Of GS organizations with the largest award funded by non-government sources, 38% reported that grants comprised over one half of their

annual budgets, compared to 21% of GS organizations with the largest award funded by non-government sources.

The largest individual award medians from non-government entities were lower than those from government funders, and were the same or higher for GS Members than for all respondents. For both GS Members and all respondents, the largest individual award median was \$30,000 for private foundations. GS organizations reported a largest individual award median of \$20,500 for community foundations, compared to \$11,000 for all respondents. For GS Members, the largest individual award median for corporate grantmakers was \$20,000, compared to \$15,000 for all respondents. In addition, among GS organizations, the largest individual award median for “other” grant sources was \$10,000, compared to \$8,000 for all respondents. In comparison, the largest award median from government funders (Federal, state, and local government sources, in aggregate) was \$153,975 for GS Members and \$125,000 for all respondents.

The individual largest award was in the form of project or program support for 44% of GS Members.

The non-government grant cycle length—from proposal submission to award decision—for the largest award was between one and six months for 73% of GS Members, while 9% reported a short grant cycle of less than a month. A longer grant cycle of seven months or more was reported by 18% of respondents. The shorter grant cycle reflects an application process that is often simpler than that of government applications; the government application process took seven months or more for 38% of respondents.

Once an award decision had been determined, non-government funders generally released the award monies within three months of notification (86%). Delayed receipt of award monies, taking four months or more, was reported by 14% of respondents. This timing is significant, as 60% of funds from government sources were released within three months of notification.

As illustrated by *The Spring 2018 State of Grantseeking™ Survey* results, an organization's demographics can be defined by the source of the largest award. The following are typical GS Member organizations that received their largest award from each funder type.

ORGANIZATIONS FOR WHICH PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS WERE THE LARGEST AWARD SOURCE:

Eighty-four percent of GS Members from organizations for which private foundations were the largest award source (PFLAS) were directly associated with their organizations as employees (32%) or at an executive level (52%). Nonprofits comprised 93% of PFLAS organizations. PFLAS organizations most frequently reported employing one to five people (29%) or six to 25 people (29%). Thirty percent of PFLAS organizations reported annual budgets between \$100,000 and \$499,999; 25% reported annual budgets between \$1,000,000 and \$4,999,999. The median annual budget was \$978,475. PFLAS organizations were 11 to 25 years old (22%), 26 to 50 years old (30%), or over 50 years old (25%). Forty-four percent were located in a mix of service area types (rural, suburban, and urban), while 31% were located in urban areas. The most frequent geographic service reach for PFLAS organizations was multi-county (25%) or one county (13%). Human Services (24%), Education (13%), and Arts, Culture, and Humanities (12%) were the most frequently reported mission focuses. Fifty-three percent of PFLAS organizations reported a service population comprised of over 50% individuals/families at or below the poverty level.

ORGANIZATIONS FOR WHICH COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS WERE THE LARGEST AWARD SOURCE:

Seventy-nine percent of GS Members from organizations for which community foundations were the largest award source (CFLAS) were directly associated with their organizations as employees (23%) or at an executive level (56%). Nonprofits comprised 93% of CFLAS organizations. CFLAS organizations most frequently reported employing one to five people (38%) or less than one full-time equivalent (14%). Thirty-two percent of CFLAS organizations reported annual budgets between \$100,000 and \$499,999 and 67% reported annual budgets under \$1,000,000. Twenty-one percent reported annual budgets between \$1,000,000 and \$4,999,999. The median annual budget was \$571,075. Most CFLAS organizations were 11 to 25 years old (25%) or 26 to 50 years old (31%). Thirty-five percent were located in a mix of service area types (rural, suburban, and urban), while 27% were located in a suburban service area and 22% were located in an urban service area. The most frequent geographic service reach for CFLAS organizations was multi-county (25%) or one county (22%). Human Services (29%), Arts, Culture, and Humanities (15%), and Community Improvement (12%) were the most frequently reported mission focuses. Forty-seven percent of these organizations reported a service population comprised of over 50% individuals/families at or below the poverty level.

ORGANIZATIONS FOR WHICH CORPORATIONS WERE THE LARGEST AWARD SOURCE:

Eighty-three percent of GS Members from organizations for which corporations were the largest award source (CLAS) were directly associated with their organizations as employees (20%) or at an executive level (63%). Nonprofits comprised 97% of CLAS organizations. CLAS organizations most

frequently reported employing one to five people (33%) or 11 to 75 people (29%). Thirty-one percent of CLAS organizations reported annual budgets between \$100,000 and \$499,999; 19% reported annual budgets between \$1,000,000 and \$4,999,999. The median annual budget was \$600,000. Most CLAS organizations were 11 to 25 years old (22%) or 26 to 50 years old (34%). Fifty percent were located in a mix of service area types (rural, suburban, and urban), while 26% were located in suburban areas. The most frequent geographic service reach for CLAS organizations was multi-county (26%), one county (14%), or international (14%). Human Services (20%), Education (13%), and Arts, Culture, and Humanities (11%) were the most frequently reported mission focuses. Forty-four percent of these organizations reported a service population comprised of over 50% individuals/families at or below the poverty level.

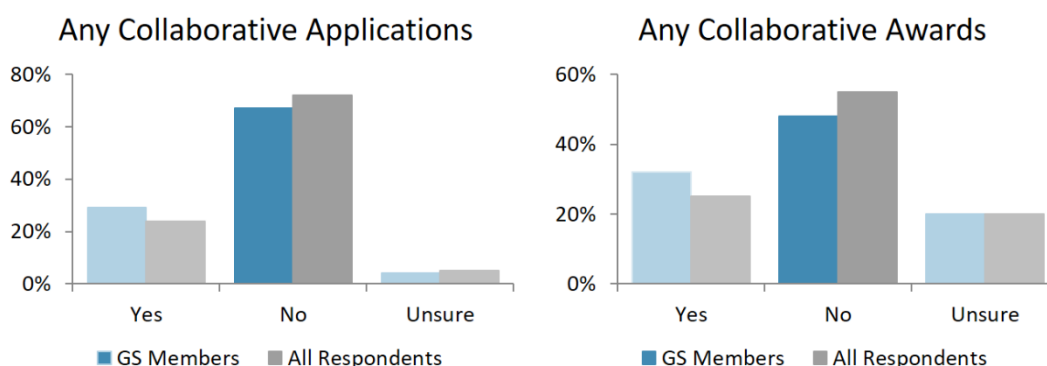
ORGANIZATIONS FOR WHICH “OTHER” SOURCES WERE THE LARGEST AWARD SOURCE:

Eighty-one percent of GS Members from organizations for which “other” sources (including religious organizations, the United Way, donor-advised funds, civic organizations, and tribal funds) were the largest award source (OLAS) were directly associated with their organizations as employees (11%) or at an executive level (70%). Nonprofits comprised 85% of OLAS organizations. OLAS organizations most frequently reported employing one to five people (38%), or being staffed by volunteers (23%). Fifty-five percent of OLAS organizations reported annual budgets under \$250,000, and 23% reported annual budgets between \$1,000,000 and \$4,999,999. The median annual budget was \$262,100. Most OLAS organizations were less than five years old (19%), 11 to 25 years old (26%), or over 50 years old (26%). Fifty-eight percent were located in a mix of service area types (rural, suburban, and urban), while 17% were located in suburban areas. The most frequent geographic service reach for OLAS organizations was multi-county (23%), one state (17%), or multi-city/town (13%). Human Services (15%), Education (12%), and Arts, Culture, and Humanities (12%) were the most frequently reported mission focuses. Fifty-one percent of these organizations reported a service population comprised of over 50% individuals/families at or below the poverty level.

COLLABORATIVE GRANTSEEKING

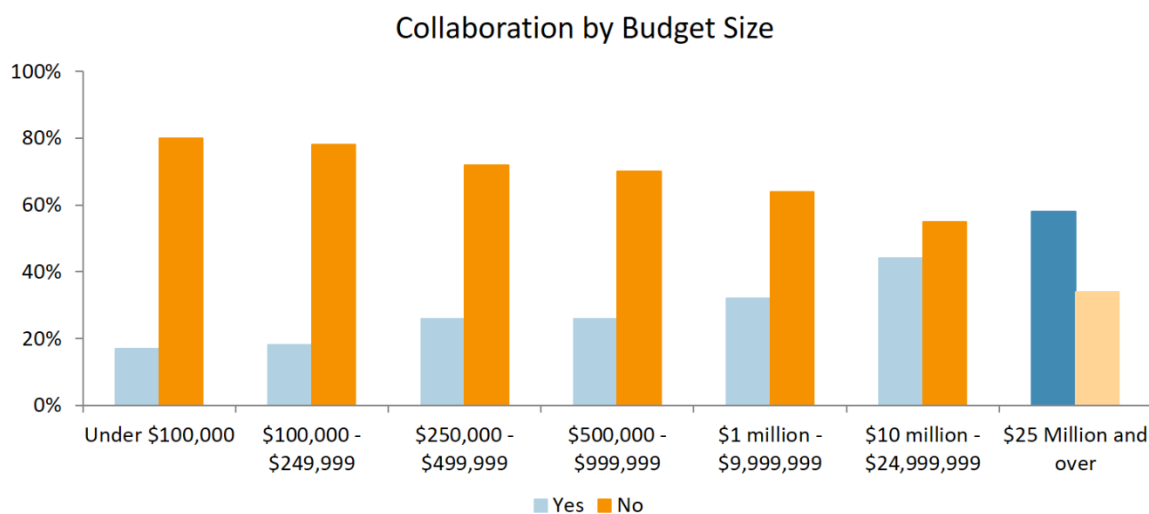
PARTICIPATION AND AWARDS

Collaborative grantseeking—several organizations joining together to submit grant applications for joint activities or programs—is a trending topic. Most GS Members (67%) did not participate in collaborative grantseeking in the last six months of 2017. Thirty-two percent of those GS Members that did submit a collaborative grant application reported winning an award, compared to 25% of all respondents.



COLLABORATION BY ANNUAL BUDGET

Increases in annual budget size, with the implied increases in staff and infrastructure, influenced collaborative activities. Fifty-eight percent of GS organizations with budgets of \$25,000,000 or more participated in collaborative grantseeking in the last six months of 2017, whereas only 17% of GS respondents with budgets under \$100,000 participated in collaborative grantseeking during this period. Not shown in this chart are the 4% of GS respondents who were unsure if their organizations participated in collaborative grantseeking.



RESPONDENT COMMENTARY

As always, we asked survey respondents to share their experiences, expertise, and opinions. There were many similarities in comments from those who participated in collaborative grantseeking and those who did not. Many comments focused on the additional staff and time required to manage collaborative grantseeking, and some questioned the cost versus the benefit.

A SAMPLE OF REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS FROM RESPONDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN COLLABORATIVE GRANTSEEKING FOLLOWS:

- I believe that it increases the chances of receiving awards but decreases the amount of funding for the individual organization.
- It's helpful in getting the grant, but more difficult to manage a shared project.
- Partnering with other organizations strengthens our capacity. Therefore, it is a positive aspect in grantseeking.
- Collaboration is the best way to secure funding at the state, city, and federal level.
- It can be helpful to bring grant money to the community, but it can be restrictive as to how it must be spent.
- It's a powerful way to leverage expertise and resources for impact.
- Collaboration makes us more competitive for grants but it also makes the grantwriting and application process much more challenging. Therefore, we are able to apply for fewer collaborative grants overall.

A SAMPLE OF REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS FROM RESPONDENTS WHO DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN COLLABORATIVE GRANTSEEKING FOLLOWS:

- It can be complicated in terms of who writes for what and how to divide the award.
- I'm ambivalent. It depends on the collaborator.
- I believe it is essential because of limited resources, and to avoid duplication of services.
- If the collaboration is genuine, and a strong case can be made, grantmakers seem to like collaboration as a way to encourage community-wide approaches to addressing needs.
- If it fits, it's great. However, if it's mandated as part of the grant, then it usually takes longer to put together and causes organizations to miss application deadlines due to the lack of sufficient notice.
- It's challenging. It is hard to coordinate to plan, and to prepare and collect the documentation required for most grant submissions.
- They can be a fine thing when they are not pushed on us by the foundation(s). Otherwise, it can feel like the foundation is creating more work for us, so they can spread the funds in a way that is better for their bottom line.

SUMMARY

Most GS Members (67%) did not participate in collaborative grantseeking in the last six months of 2017. Thirty-two percent of those GS Members that did submit a collaborative grant application reported winning an award, compared to 25% of all respondents.

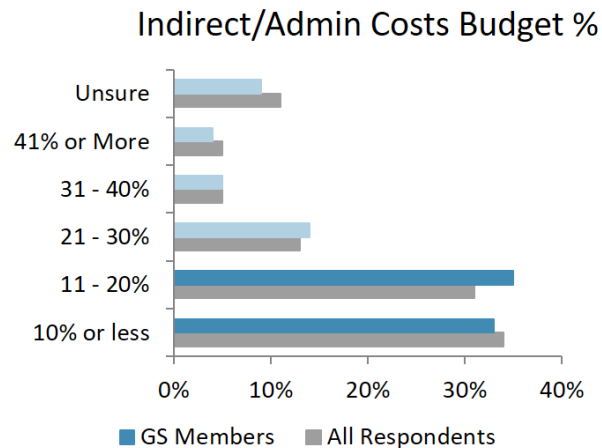
Increases in annual budget size, with the implied increases in staff and infrastructure, influenced collaborative activities. Fifty-eight percent of GS organizations with budgets of \$25,000,000 or more participated in collaborative grantseeking in the last six months of 2017, whereas only 17% of GS organizations with budgets under \$100,000 participated in collaborative grantseeking during this period (compared to 11% of all respondents).

According to respondent commentary, collaboration, when natural with unforced partnerships, results in larger, capacity-building awards. However, the increased management and reporting involved with collaborative grantseeking can be a challenge to incorporate within busy organizations.

INDIRECT/ADMINISTRATIVE COST FUNDING

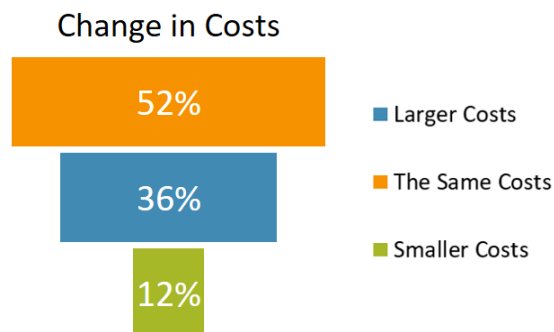
INDIRECT/ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF BUDGET

GS Members generally kept their costs low; 68% reported indirect/administrative costs as 20% or less of their total budgets. Only 23% of GS respondents reported these costs as over 20% of their budgets, while 9% were unsure of the budget percentage of their organization's indirect/administrative costs.



INDIRECT/ADMINISTRATIVE COST TRENDS

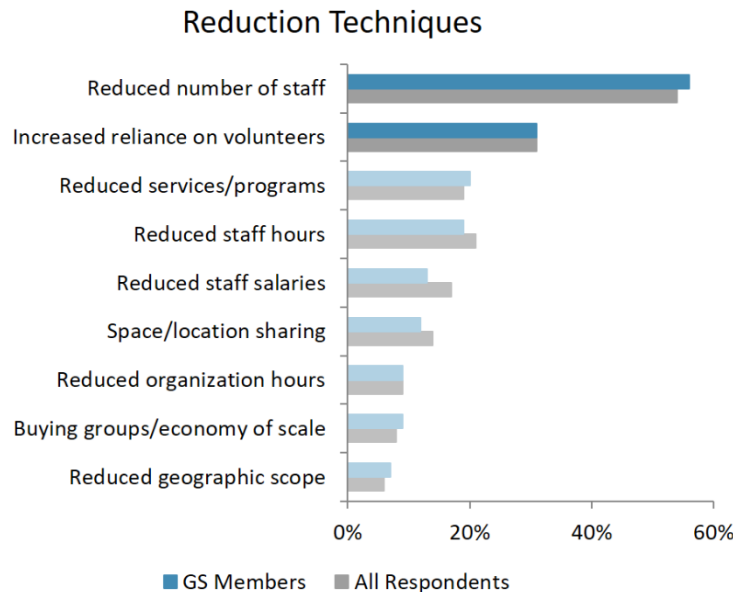
Compared to indirect/administrative costs for the prior year, 52% of GS Members reported that these costs had remained the same, while 36% reported that these costs had increased. Indirect/administrative costs decreased for 12% of GS Members.



INDIRECT/ADMINISTRATIVE COST CONTROLS

GS Members were asked, "How did you reduce your indirect/administrative costs?" Over half (56%) reported that they had reduced indirect/administrative costs by eliminating staff, while 31% reported increased reliance on volunteer labor.

Reductions in services and programs (20%), staff hours (19%), and staff salaries (13%) reduced indirect and administrative costs. In addition, GS Members reduced these costs by participating in space or location sharing (12%), reducing their organization's hours (9%), participating in buying groups (9%), and reducing their organization's geographic scope (7%).



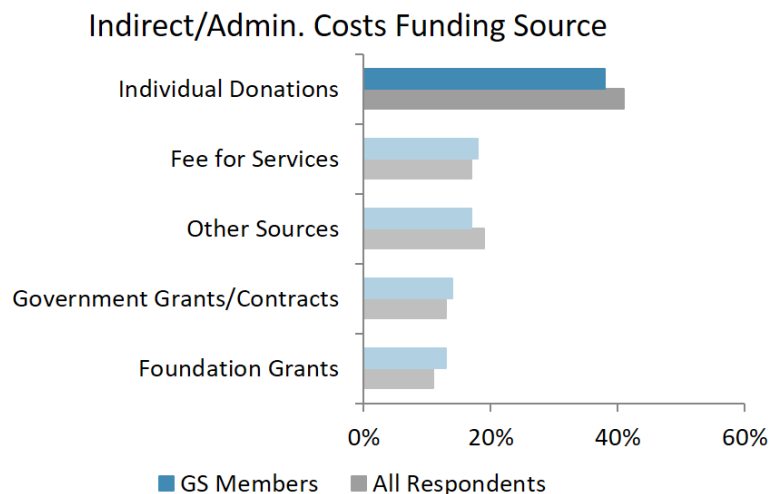
A SAMPLE OF REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS FROM SURVEY RESPONDENTS FOLLOWS:

- Administrators now perform multiple functions, such as HR, accounting, legal, IT, and even data processing and some building cleaning and maintenance. Administrators now work six to seven days.
- We reorganized staff job descriptions and replaced the retiring executive director and program coordinator with people we could pay less.
- We reduced the size of physical office space, moved to reduce rent, and reduced staff.
- We had key administrative staff leave and did not replace them.
- In order to reduce costs, we changed several vendors and negotiated lower costs for services.
- Most of our volunteers live where we operate and live within their own means; we also receive interns at times who demand no payment or incentives. This kind of arrangement is not good as it offers no benefits.
- The idea of administrative costs is complete idiocy. You can't execute the program portion of a nonprofit's mission if the power has been turned off.
- We reduced administrative positions (i.e. the HR department).
- Our organization didn't replace or add office equipment.
- We reduced staff hours.

- The executive director increased the number of hours in direct services and increased revenue for services compared to administrative costs, thus increasing administrative and organizational efficiencies.
- We are cutting the very little fat we have by not taking part in as many professional development opportunities, not travelling to conferences, and working to streamline our travel to and from conservation properties. We are also in a transitional period while seeking a new executive director, which has wildly skewed our budget numbers from "normal" years.
- We had an executive director resign, and had two board members who volunteered their time and effort to keep our soup kitchen open and improve the service.
- Our organization cut costs by not providing annual wage increases and freezing all wages.
- We cancelled non-necessary items such as an expensive phone/fax system and went with cheaper options.

INDIRECT/ADMINISTRATIVE COST FUNDING SOURCES

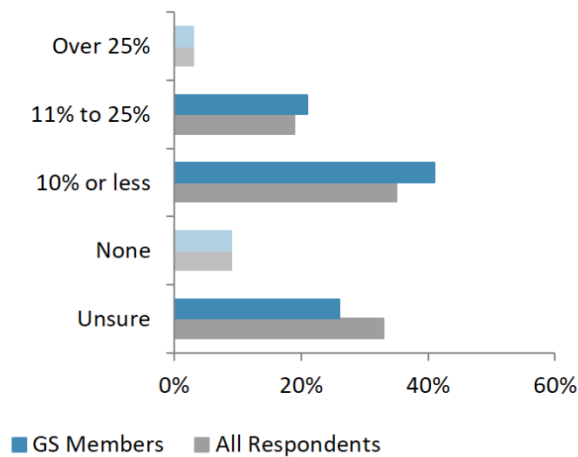
Individual donations (38%) were the most frequent source of indirect/administrative funding for GS Members, while foundation grants (13%) were the least frequent source. Fees for services (18%); “other” sources (17%), including fundraisers, tax revenue, major donors, and general funds; and government grants and contracts (14%) were also frequent sources of funding for these costs.



INDIRECT/ADMINISTRATIVE COST FUNDING LIMITATIONS

GS Members reported that non-government funders will generally assist with indirect/administrative costs, although they limit the amount that they are willing to cover. Forty-one percent of GS respondents reported an allowance of 10% or less for these costs, and 21% reported an allowance of 11 to 25% for these costs. Nine percent of GS respondents reported that non-government funders would not cover indirect/administrative costs, while 26% were unsure of the coverage level. Only 3% of respondents reported that over 25% of these costs were paid by non-government funders.

Non-government Indirect/Admin. Cost Allowance %



SUMMARY

GS Members generally kept their costs low; 68% reported indirect/administrative costs as 20% or less of their total budgets. These costs rarely decrease; compared to indirect/administrative costs for the prior year, 52% of respondents reported that these costs had remained the same, while 36% reported that these costs had increased.

Reductions in staff are the main cost-control technique. GS Members were asked, “How did you reduce your indirect/administrative costs?” Over half (56%) reported that they had reduced indirect/administrative costs by eliminating staff, while 31% reported increased reliance on volunteer labor. Individual donations (38%) were the most frequent source of indirect/administrative funding. Grantmakers tend not to fund these costs (13%); only 3% of GS Members reported an allowance of over 25% for indirect/administrative costs.

CHALLENGES TO GRANTSEEKING

We asked, “What, in your opinion, is the greatest challenge to successful grantseeking?” Twenty percent of GS Members reported that grantseeking’s greatest challenges stem from the lack of time and staff for grantseeking activities. Adherence to varying funder practices and requirements (13%), competition for finite monies (13%), and difficulty in finding grant opportunities that matched with specific missions, locations, or programs (12%) were also frequently cited by GS Members as the greatest challenge to successful grantseeking. Other challenges included building funder relationships (9%), reduced funding (8%) and the need for a grantwriter (6%).

The remaining challenges were each reported by 5% or fewer of respondents.



RESPONDENT COMMENTARY

The majority of respondents shared their frustration with greater expectations placed on fewer staff members, resulting in little time to devote to grantseeking. This lack of time and staff increases the perception that funder practices are arduous, and adds to the sense of disconnect between organizations and funders, the government, and the community as a whole. Many respondents across all focus areas stated that there was limited funding for their specific mission, and many respondents told us that there is a greater need for non-restricted funding, regardless of mission focus. Some respondents also referenced the changing political landscape and the proposed state and Federal funding reductions and resulting confusion. GS Member commentary on grantseeking challenges stretched to 81 pages.

We asked GS Members to tell us more about their organizations' challenges to grantseeking. This word cloud, which gives greater prominence to words that appear more frequently in source text, was formed with those answers.



A SAMPLE OF REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS FROM SURVEY RESPONDENTS FOLLOWS:

- We seek grants in two of the most popular grant areas, education and the environment, so competition is fierce.
- Our greatest need is for general operating costs (salaries), and most grants available are for specific programs. Little to any funding is available for staff salaries, particularly for religious organizations.
- Funders want to tie to new programs, when what we generally need is operating support.
- The amount of staff time required to research, write, and do post-award reporting versus the actual award amounts available make most grants not worth the trouble.
- There is a lack of communication across the whole organization, and no planning. We have just been chasing money with no goals or long-term thought behind it.
- We're already seeing the impact of the current political administration's policies towards funding human services. Unfortunately, our private funders are also feeling unsure about their own economic stability for much the same reasons.
- Our main challenge is staffing to maintain operations and administration, and to seek funding for growth.
- Given the political climate, foundations are tightening or changing their priorities, and it is making it harder to break into new funders.
- Finding larger donors with other tools than grants is our biggest challenge.
- Writing grants to appeal to grant reviewers who change from grant period to grant period is a challenge.
- Funders need to be more accessible and more transparent about their practices (as they ask of us). Funders also need to make the process easier. Why ask the same budget questions

year over year when you already have the information; just ask if there are significant changes. Also, if you ask a nonprofit to put in the hours to fill out a lengthy application year after year (some are ridiculously long and repetitive), then I expect you to put in the hours to actually read what I wrote or to actually get to know my organization, and come for a visit when I've asked every year. It's insulting when you realize they didn't read your details or know the scope of your work. Finally, the insistence of funders to fund projects and not general funding is outdated and needs to be challenged more. I wish more grantmakers would positively influence each other on the importance of general funding.

- In a transglobal community, arbitrary geographic boundaries by funders are counterproductive.
- We employ a single grantwriter and it is often difficult for her to find grant opportunities that do not exclude our nonprofit due to geographic location as well as other grant guideline exclusions related to our mission statement and operations.
- With many other in-house deadlines, it is difficult to find sufficient time to devote to grants.
- Funders are adding requirements that add time and expense to the grantseeking process, including more follow-up questions and more demands for the same size grants.
- Being an effective, highly relevant, and innovative organization with an established track record is actually a challenge. There are still no forward thinking (not just claiming) grant funding entities that support such organizations in a meaningful, transformative way.
- The funders have evolved to support the mega-charities, with classic solutions, in sustainable numbers. They have moved away from supporting effective innovation at impactful levels for small charities.
- There is a lack of funding available for general operating costs and administrative work.
- Reduced funding due to political policies is a challenge.
- One of the main challenges we have is trying to establish financial donations to manage the operations of the nonprofit.
- I am the only one seeking grants and I still have to manage all the other work that needs to be done.
- Over the next ten years, the number of people we serve will grow by 25% and yet the funding sources have not continued to grow, even though they know what we do will save federal and state dollars in the end.
- We are seeing federal and state grants changing or being eliminated and we have taken a significant hit in public funding.
- Several of our long-term funders have changed their priorities and are focused on geographic or program priorities that do not match our organization.
- Our staff is maxed out due to the time spent serving the public. Despite grantwriting being a professional expectation, it is difficult to find the time to establish relationships with funders

ahead of the grant deadline in order to ensure success and sustainability. We are stretched too thin, personnel-wise.

- I've found that funder requirements and areas of focus are certainly changing, possibly based on the economic climate. Therefore, the competition is even stiffer than before, and applications are becoming more challenging. In order to find grants tailored to our educational/conservation/preservation efforts, research takes an enormous amount of my time. Because we are a small organization and very rural, yet cover an extremely large county, we are overwhelmed with too many necessary projects. Thus, we have a lack of manpower and time.
- Funders often have onerous requirements for grant administration after the award. (This is especially true of government grants, which is the largest source of our funding.) And yet they place unrealistically low restrictions on the amount of the grant that we can apply toward our administrative costs. We sometimes wonder if it's worth the administrative burden imposed by having the grant in the first place.
- One staff person is responsible for researching, building funder relationships, writing, submitting, and reporting, along with other fund development responsibilities.
- There are fewer grants and less funding available across the board.
- We are a small shelter in rural area with a huge need. For competitive grants, we can't provide the numbers of animals helped like larger shelters are able to.
- We seek funding for programming to serve local cancer patients of all types. Many of our funding sources have less money to grant.
- More and more foundations are proactively selecting the organizations they fund. They are accepting fewer unsolicited proposals, and it's very difficult to solve the puzzle of how our organization can become one of the chosen few for a non-competitive process.
- Our main challenges are time, competition, and reporting requirements for larger grants. Funding for "new and innovative" work does not support our core program of providing basic human needs.
- Complicated funder rules are a challenge. Examples of this include: moving targets for deadlines, having to take one year off after three years of grants, strict limits on the number of characters in online formats, needing to recreate financials many different ways for presentation requirements, and a lack of communication from some funders regarding questions.
- There are a lot of nonprofits in our metro area, so as a small organization we struggle with name recognition. We continue to see (mostly corporate) foundations that will not fund salaries or general operating expenses. Some civic and religious organizations in more affluent parts of the metro area only fund organizations in their immediate vicinity.

GS MEMBER DEMOGRAPHICS



ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATION

Of GS respondents, 91% were directly associated with the organizations they represented as executives (55%), employees (27%), board members (6%), or volunteers (3%). Consultants (7%) and government employees (2%) comprised the remaining 9% of respondents.

TYPE OF ORGANIZATION

Most GS respondents (97%) represented nonprofit organizations (89%), educational institutions (5%), or government entities and tribal organizations (3%). The remainder (3%) included businesses and consultants. Among respondents from educational institutions, 37% represented K-12 schools and 63% represented two- or four-year colleges and universities.

ORGANIZATIONAL AGE

GS organizations ten years of age or under comprised 24% of respondents. Organizational ages from 11 to 25 years old were reported by 23% of GS respondents, while 30% reported organizational ages of 26 to 50 years. Organizations from 51 to 100 years of age comprised 15% of GS respondents, and 8% of GS respondents were from organizations over 100 years old.

ANNUAL BUDGET

GS respondent organizations reported the following annual budgets: less than \$100,000 (19%), between \$100,000 and \$499,999 (25%), between \$500,000 and \$999,999 (13%), between \$1 million and \$4,999,999 (21%), between \$5 million and \$9,999,999 (7%), between \$10 million and \$24,999,999 (6%), and \$25 million and over (9%). The median annual budget of GS respondent organizations was \$812,500.

STAFF SIZE

All-volunteer organizations comprised 11% of GS respondents. Less than one full-time equivalent employee was reported by 7% of GS respondents. One to five people were employed by 28% of GS respondent organizations. Twenty-four percent of GS organizations employed six to 25 people, while 12% employed 26 to 75 people. Eight percent of GS respondent organizations employed 76 to 200 people, and 10% employed over 200 people.

STAFF ETHNICITY

Respondents were asked, “What percentage of your organization (staff, management, and board) self-identify as persons of color?” For 41% of GS respondents, less than 10% of their organization was comprised of persons of color. GS organizations reporting 11% to 50% persons of color comprised 31% of respondents, and 17% of GS respondents were from organizations with 51% or more persons of color on their staff, management, or board. This question was not applicable for 11% of GS respondents.

PRIMARY GRANTSEEKER

Most GS respondent organizations relied on staff members (72%) to fill the role of primary grantseeker. Board members (9%), volunteers (6%), and contract grantwriters (9%) were also cited as the primary grantseeker. Four percent of GS respondent organizations were not engaged with active grantseekers.

LOCATION

Within the United States, GS respondents came from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and three territories. In addition, GS respondents from four Canadian provinces participated, and 23 GS respondents were from countries outside of the United States and Canada.

SERVICE AREA

The State of Grantseeking Report utilizes the Census Bureau’s population-based area classification. Rural service areas containing fewer than 2,500 people were reported by 9% of GS respondents. Eighteen percent of GS organizations reported cluster/suburban service areas containing between 2,500 and 50,000 people. Urban service areas containing over 50,000 people were reported by 29% of GS respondents. In addition, 44% of GS organizations reported a service area comprised of a combination of these population-defined areas.

GEOGRAPHIC REACH

Organizations with an international, continental, or global geographic reach comprised 10% of GS respondents, while organizations with a national geographic reach comprised 9%. Multi-state organizational reach was reported by 11% of GS respondents, and 12% reported an individual-state reach. A multi-county reach was reported by 27% of GS organizations, while a one-county reach was reported by 15%. Eight percent of GS respondents reported a multi-city organizational reach, while 7% reported a geographic reach within an individual city. In addition, 2% of GS organizations reported a reach comprised of other geographic or municipal divisions.

POVERTY LEVEL

Respondents were asked, “What percentage of your service recipients/clients/program participants are comprised of individuals/families at or below the poverty level?” Service to individuals or families in poverty was reported at a rate of 76% or more by 35% of GS respondents, while 17% reported serving those in poverty at a rate of 51% to 75%. Service to individuals or families in poverty at a rate of 26% to 50% was reported by 16% of GS organizations. Service to those in poverty at a rate of 11%

to 25% was reported by 14% of GS respondents, while 9% reported a service rate of 10% or less to those in poverty. This question was not applicable for 10% of GS organizations.

MISSION FOCUS

The 25 major codes (A to Y) from the NTEE Classification System, developed by the National Center for Charitable Statistics, were utilized as mission focus answer choices. Each mission focus choice had some respondents.

Almost half (49%) of GS respondent organizations reported one of three mission focuses: Human Services (25%), Education (13%), and Arts, Culture, and Humanities (11%). The next most frequent mission focus responses were Youth Development (9%), Health (7%), and Community Improvement (6%). Environment was reported by 4% of GS respondents. Housing and Shelter and Animal Related were each reported by 3% of GS organizations. Religion Related, Public Benefit, Mental Health, Employment, and Food, Agriculture, and Nutrition were each reported by 2% of GS respondents. The remaining eleven mission focuses, reported at a rate of under 2% by GS respondent organizations, were aggregated into the category of Other (9%).

METHODOLOGY

The Spring 2018 State of Grantseeking™ Report presents a ground-level look at the grantseeking experience, and focuses on funding from non-government grant sources and government grants and contracts. The information in this report, unless otherwise specified, reflects recent grantseeking activity during the last six months of 2017 (July through December). For the purpose of visual brevity, response rates are rounded to the nearest whole number; totals will range from 98% to 102%.

The Spring 2018 State of Grantseeking™ Survey was open from February 15, 2018, through March 31, 2018, and received 4,970 responses. In this report, we analyze the responses from the 1,392 organizations that self-identified as Members of GrantStation or GrantStation's Premium Licensing Partners (Altum/PhilanTrack, the Grant Professionals Association, and GrantHub).

The survey was conducted online using Survey Monkey, and was not scientifically conducted. Survey respondents are a nonrandom sample of organizations that self-selected to take the survey based on their affiliation to GrantStation and GrantStation partners. Due to the variation in respondent organizations over time, this report does not include trends. *The Spring 2018 State of Grantseeking™ Report* uses focused survey results, such as reports by mission focus or budget size, to provide a resource more closely matched to your specific organization.

This report was produced by [GrantStation](#), and underwritten by [Altum-PhilanTrack](#), [Foundant-GrantHub](#), the [Grant Professionals Association](#), [GrantVantage](#), and [TechSoup](#). In addition, it was promoted by many generous partner organizations via emails, e-newsletters, websites, and various social media outlets. Ellen C. Mowrer, Diana Holder, and Juliet Vile wrote, edited, and contributed to the report.

For media inquiries or permission to use the information contained in *The Spring 2018 State of Grantseeking™ Report* in oral or written format, presentations, texts, online, or other contexts, please contact Ellen Mowrer at ellen.mowrer@grantstation.com.

STATISTICAL DEFINITIONS

- Descriptive statistics: The branch of statistics devoted to the exploration, summary, and presentation of data. The State of Grantseeking Reports use descriptive statistics to report survey findings. Because this survey was not scientifically conducted, inference—the process of deducing properties of the underlying population—is not used.
- Mean: The sum of a set of numbers, divided by the number of entries in a set. The mean is sometimes called the average.
- Median: The middle value in a set of numbers.
- Frequency: How often a number is present in a set.
- Percentage: A rate per hundred. For a variable with n observations, of which the frequency of a certain characteristic is r, the percentage is $100 \times r/n$.
- Population: A collection of units being studied.

ABOUT GRANTSTATION



Serving over 30,000 individual grantseekers and hundreds of partners that represent hundreds of thousands of grantseekers, [GrantStation](#) is a premiere suite of online resources for nonprofits, municipalities, tribal groups, and educational institutions. We write detailed and comprehensive profiles of grantmakers, both private and governmental, and organize them into searchable databases (U.S., Canadian, and International).



At GrantStation, we are dedicated to creating a civil society by assisting the nonprofit sector in its quest to build healthy and effective communities. We provide the tools for you to find new grant sources, build a strong grantseeking program, and write winning grant proposals.

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Altum is an award-winning software development and information technology company with expertise in health information technology (IT), grants management, and performance management solutions. Since 1997, Altum has provided innovative software products and services to both philanthropic and government organizations.

Altum offers industry-leading grants management solutions. Altum's products include proposalCENTRAL®, an online grantmaking website shared by many government, nonprofit, and private grantmaking organizations; PhilanTrack® for Grantmakers, an online grantmaking website that streamlines the grants process for grantmakers and their grantees; and PhilanTrack® for Grantseekers, an online solution that helps grantseeking organizations better manage the grants they're pursuing.

Our work has received distinction and awards including: the Deloitte Fast 50 award two years in a row, the Inc. 5000 list for five years including 2016, an Excellence.gov finalist, and recognition as a 2015 Computerworld Premier IT Leader.

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Tracking tasks and grant deadlines



Streamlining the creation of new proposals



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