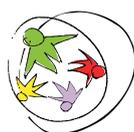


# GRANTS IN AUSTRALIA

Annual research findings  
for Australian grantseekers  
and grantmakers, July 2017

[#GrantsInAustralia2017](#)



An enterprise of:

[ourcommunity.com.au](http://ourcommunity.com.au)

Where not-for-profits go for help



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Special thanks to all of our survey respondents. Our Community, The Innovation Lab, and the Australian Institute of Grants Management will continue to draw on this knowledge as we pursue our grantmaking reform agenda.

We are always keen to hear from you: Send your feedback, ideas and suggestions to [service@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:service@ourcommunity.com.au).

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# INTRODUCTION

This is the ninth *Grants in Australia* research report, a resource for Australian grantmakers and grantseekers produced almost every year since 2006.

An output of Our Community's **Innovation Lab**, the report is part of an ongoing research project that charts the development of the field of grantmaking in Australia from the grantseeking community's perspective.

Results are drawn from a survey of not-for-profit groups across Australia, who are invited to share their experiences of grantseeking, as well as their interactions with grantmakers and grantmaking systems.

The survey is the biggest of its type in Australia. It is designed to inform the work of Our Community and its enterprises, most notably the **Australian Institute of Grants Management (AIGM)** and the **Funding Centre**.

It also provides important data and key reference points for Australian grantmakers and grantseekers, academics, social sector enablers, and others interested in the field.

A total of 1227 people completed the 2017 survey, which was conducted online from November 2016 to February 2017. Only grantseekers who had applied for at least one grant in the previous 12 months were eligible to complete the survey.

As part of Our Community's aim to ensure that the data we collect is not just interesting but useful, not-for-profit organisations can compare themselves on a range of metrics to organisations of their size or sector by going to [www.ourcommunity.com.au/grants2017](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/grants2017). Grantmakers can download a list of takeaways at the same webpage.

## Your reaction to the research:

Feel free to post your observations about this report, and read what others are saying, with the [#GrantsInAustralia2017](https://twitter.com/GrantsInAustralia2017) hashtag on Twitter.

Send your comments, ideas and suggestions about this report to: [service@ourcommunity.com.au](mailto:service@ourcommunity.com.au)

## #GrantsInAustralia2017

# THE CONTEXT

Grants make up a large and growing part of the Australian economy.

Approximately a fifth of state and federal government expenditure is in the form of grants: grants to welfare agencies and not-for-profit groups, grants to businesses, research grants, or miscellaneous grants.

The Our Community **EasyGrants database** tracks around 3000 grants programs in Australia. It's a multi-billion dollar industry.

The national government, the eight states and territories, 700 cities, towns, municipalities and shires, and their innumerable departments and agencies are almost all involved in grantmaking. Philanthropic and corporate grantmaking bodies add variety and independence, while local government authorities and community foundations provide the bulk of grassroots grants.

The proportion of government spending directed to grant funding has been rising steadily and that trend can be expected to continue. Governments want to steer, not row. Increasingly, wherever possible they choose to pass their direct responsibilities on to other organisations.

Governments believe – in the main, correctly – that not-for-profit and business groups with closer connections to the community will deliver desired outcomes more effectively than bureaucrats can; often with increased flexibility, stronger motivation, greater responsiveness, more sensitivity, deeper commitment, and lower wage rates.

However, good outcomes are not guaranteed, and countless auditors' reports have shown that billions of grantmaker dollars have been wasted on projects that did not work or whose lessons were not heeded.

Common problems include poor program design, inadequate technical and administrative systems, and too much outside interference with grantmaker autonomy.

Good grantmaking contributes in meaningful ways to the creation of a fair, just, democratic and prosperous society. At its best, grantmaking strengthens democracy by responding to the needs of those with the least wealth, opportunity and power, while catalysing economic and social reforms. Facing all these challenges, grantmakers must be accountable, efficient, and effective. That requires them to be reflective, and accountable.

# TOP 10 FINDINGS

## 1. Big organisations are picking up smaller grants, and seeking more help

The larger the not-for-profit organisation, the more grants it is likely to have applied for. Large organisations are not just winning large grants, they're scooping up many of the small grants (less than \$5000) on offer as well. Large organisations are also more likely to seek help from a grantmaker.

## 2. Local governments are shouldering more of the grants load

State and territory governments are the most relied-upon source of grants, but their importance is declining over time, while local government is becoming a more important source of grants over time. Local government is particularly important for small organisations. The larger the organisation, the more likely it is to rely on the Federal Government as its primary source of grants.

## 3. Corporates continue to lag as a funding source

Corporate grantmaking in Australia was building as an important source of funds for not-for-profits between 2007 and 2010, but fell away since then, and has not yet recovered to 2010 levels.

## 4. Grantseekers report increasing success

Not-for-profit organisations are reporting either stable or increasing grantseeking success. Whether that's a reflection of more grants being available, or organisations getting better at getting grants is a moot point. Sport and recreation-based groups, and arts and culture organisations apply for fewer grants than organisations from other segments of the not-for-profit sector.

## 5. Unsubmitted applications are still a huge waste of time

Ideally, anyone who made a decision to apply for a grant would proceed to submission, but a huge amount of time is being wasted on applications that are started then abandoned. More than half (54%) of the organisations we surveyed said they'd started an application that they didn't end up submitting.

## 6. There's lots of room for improvement in good practice grantmaking

Multi-year grants and grants for core costs are getting harder to get, despite ongoing campaigns to encourage more of this type of funding, while a third of grantseekers report difficulties in forming a meaningful relationship with a grantmaker. It's hard to see how these things might improve, given that very few grantseekers are invited to provide feedback to grantmakers on how their constituents rate their performance.

## 7. Grantmakers, if you only do one thing this year ...

The standout area for grantmaker improvement is in giving feedback to unsuccessful applicants. After a decade of taking the pulse on this issue, grantseekers still highlight this as a key pain point.

## 8. Grantmakers like outcomes reporting. Paying for the reports ... not so much

Grantmakers' enthusiasm for outcomes measurement is not matched by their enthusiasm for funding it. Grantseekers are overwhelmingly funding their own outcomes measurement activities.

## 9. Online forms are the future

Grantseekers' preference switched from offline electronic forms to online electronic forms around 2013, but the shift to online electronic grant application forms is not yet complete. While these types of forms are now the most favoured and most encountered forms, a good chunk of grantmakers are continuing to use offline electronic forms (fillable PDFs and Word documents) to collect applications.

## 10. Habits of successful grantseekers

Successful grantseekers are more likely than unsuccessful grantseekers to form a relationship with grantmakers. Successful grantseekers are less likely than unsuccessful grantseekers to start an application form they don't take through to completion.

### **Grantseekers:**

Benchmark yourselves and download a list of survey takeaways

### **Grantmakers:**

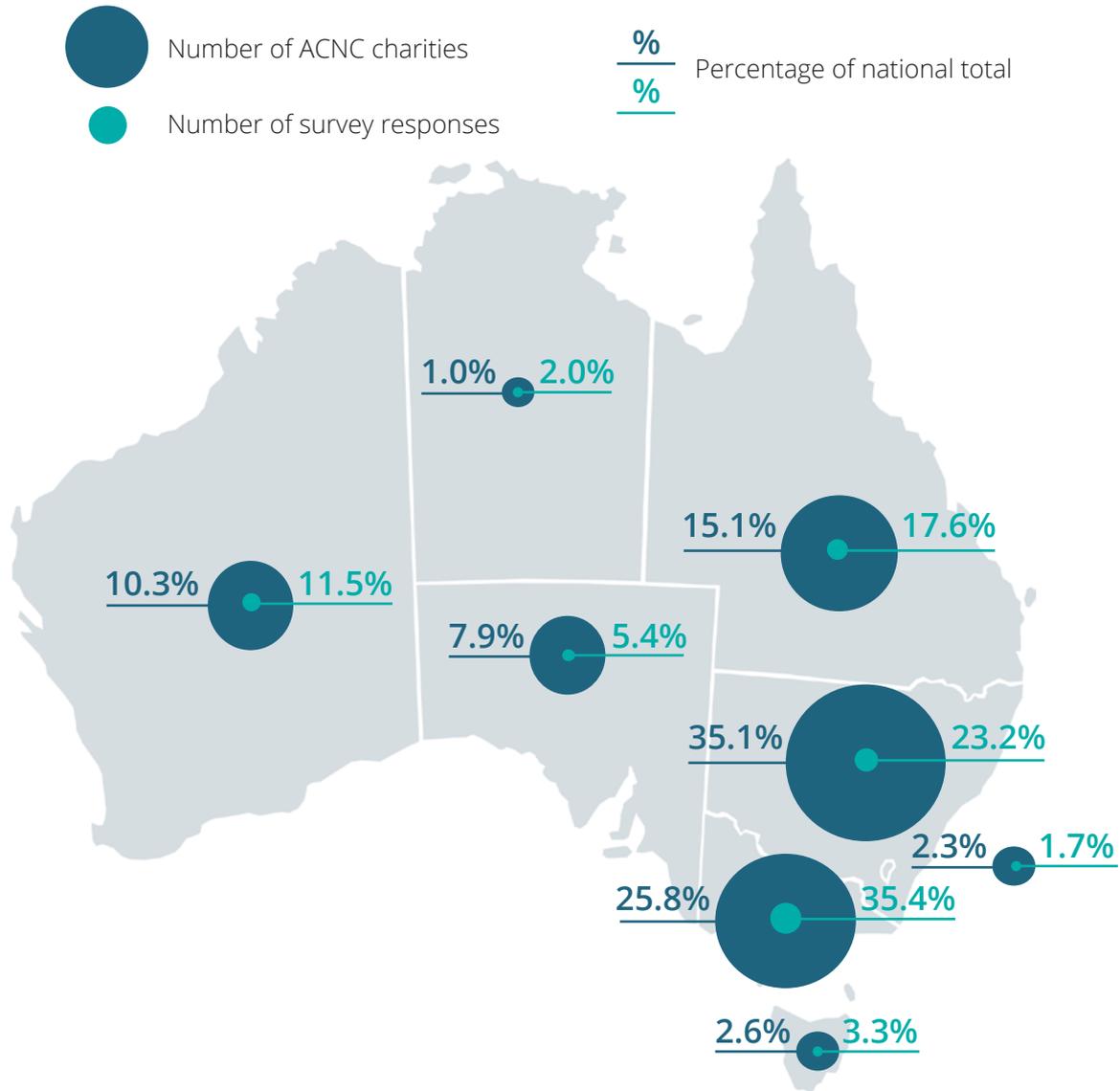
Download a list of survey takeaways

### **For details:**

[www.ourcommunity.com.au/grants2017](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/grants2017)

# OUR SAMPLE

Our survey generated 1227 responses, with respondents from all states and territories of Australia. Compared to the number of charities registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)<sup>1</sup>, Victorian groups were slightly over-represented, while our share of organisations in New South Wales is slightly smaller than the percentage of charities in this state. Across all other states, the percentages are approximately equal.



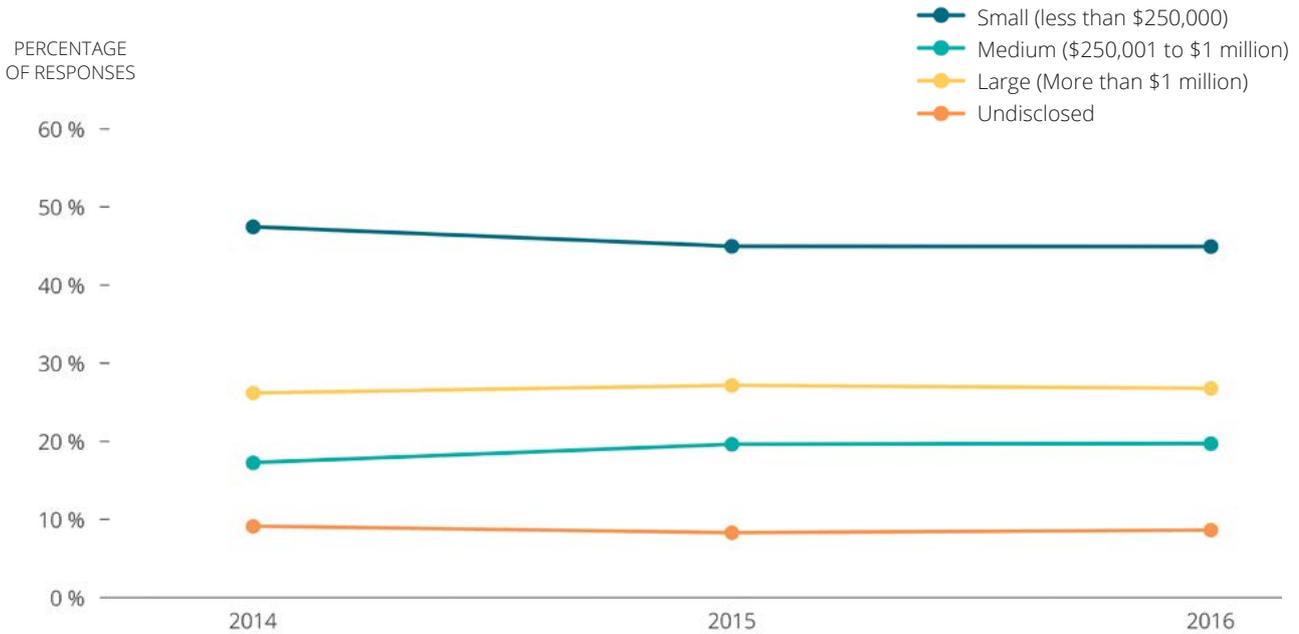
Small organisations were well represented in our sample, with 45% of respondents coming from organisations with annual revenue of less than \$250,000. These comprise 67% of organisations on the ACNC database.

Representatives of large organisations (which we've defined as those with an annual revenue of more than \$1 million) were our second biggest group of respondents, representing 27% of our sample. These comprise 17% of the ACNC's database.

Comparing this year's cohort with 2014 and 2015, the sample is nearly identical in terms of organisation size.

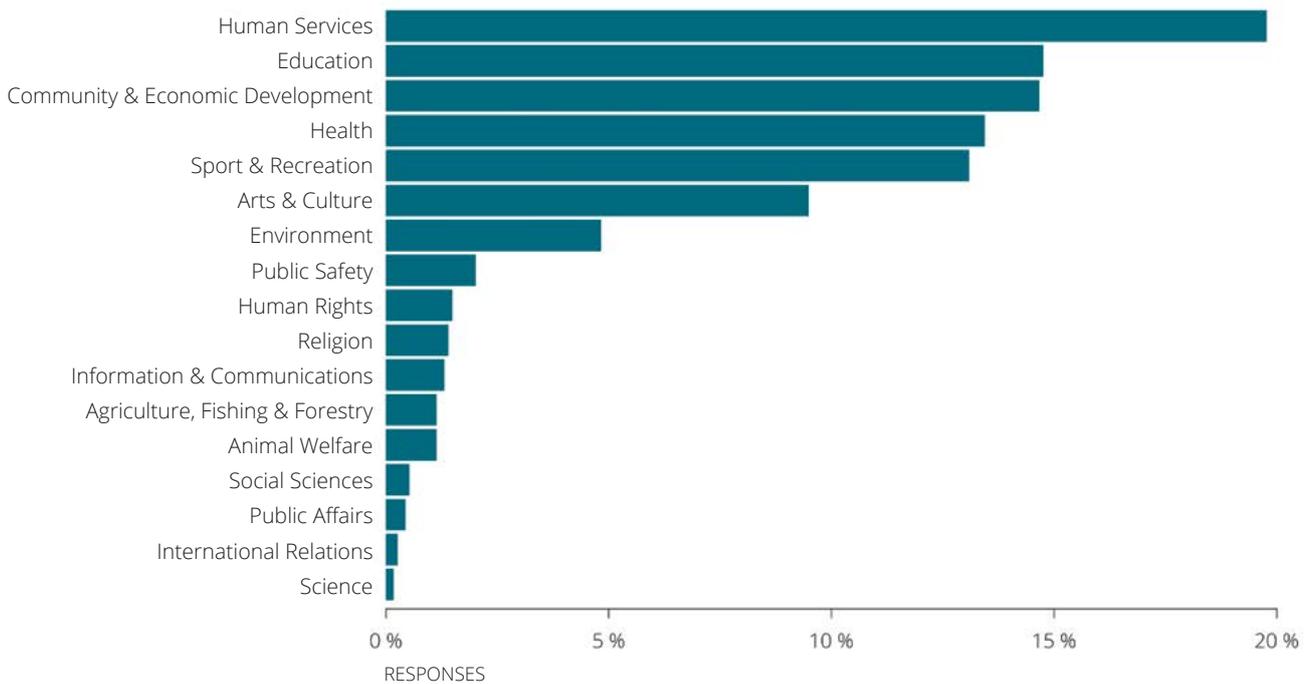
<sup>1</sup>The ACNC figures are not directly comparable with our sample as the ACNC database includes only charities, whereas our sample includes charities and other not-for-profits.

## Approximate annual revenue



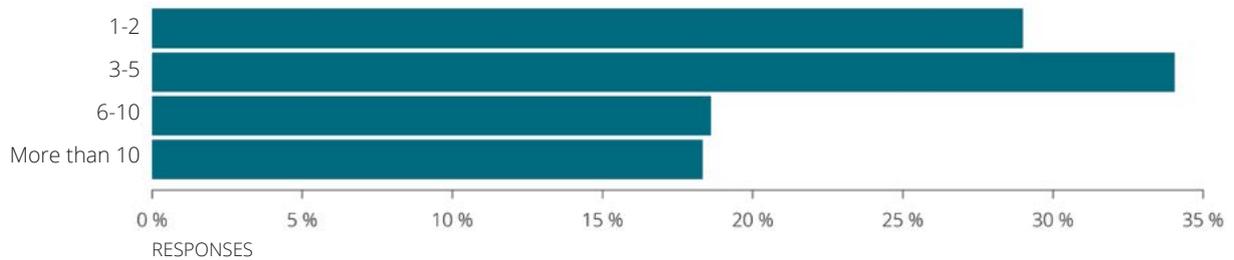
Respondents were drawn from across the not-for-profit sector, with human services the most commonly represented segment. Other well-represented segments were: education, community and economic development, health, sport and recreation, arts and culture, and environment. These seven sectors represent the highest proportion of our respondents, and are the ones that are most commonly depicted in the graphs used in the remainder of this report.

## Organisation sector



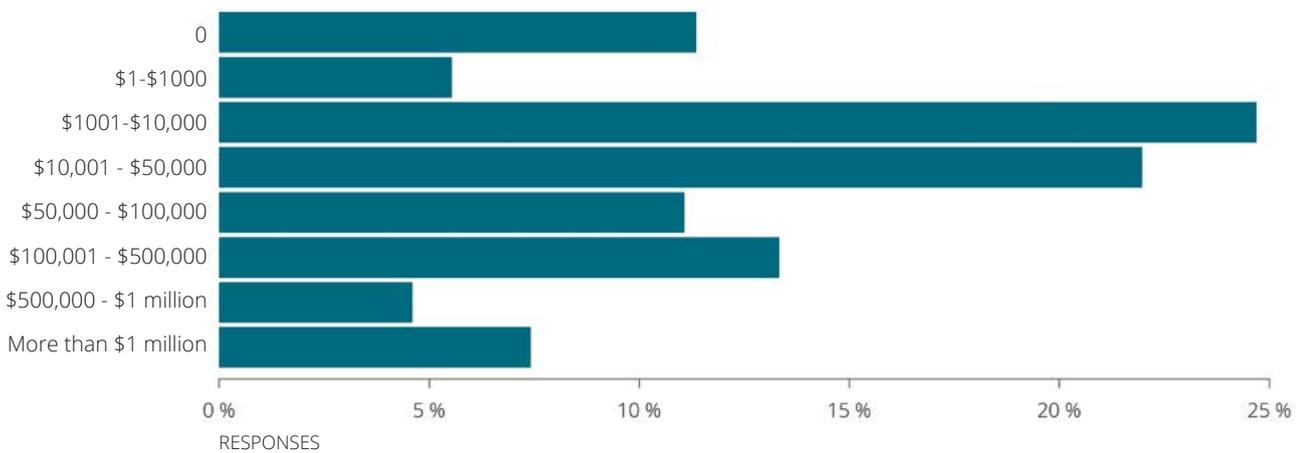
The majority of our respondents could be classed as small-scale grantseekers, applying for fewer than five grants in the previous 12 months, though a sizeable minority (37%) applied for more than six.

### Number of grants applied for in the past 12 months



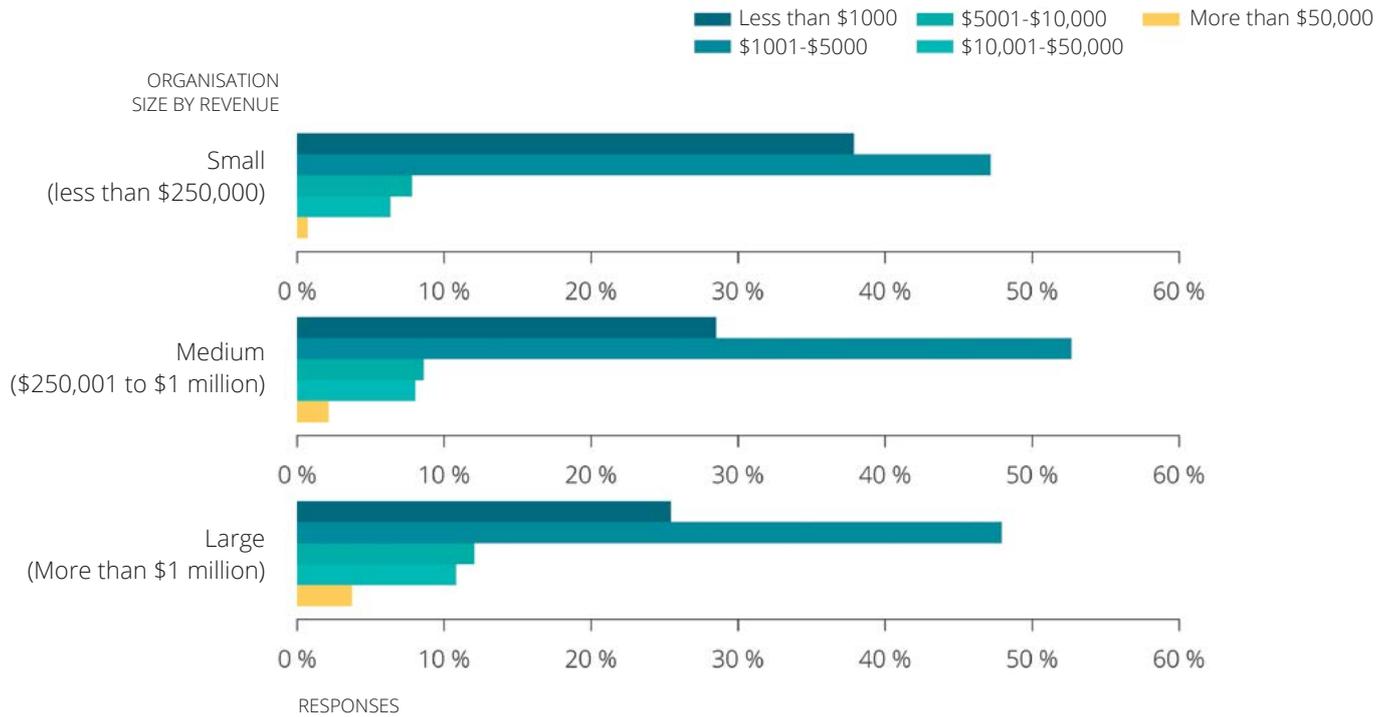
A significant proportion of our sample – 29% – could be considered very small-scale grantseekers, having applied for only one or two grants in the 12 months leading up to the survey. More than 40% of grantseekers received less than \$10,000 in grants in that time.

### Value of grants received in the past 12 months

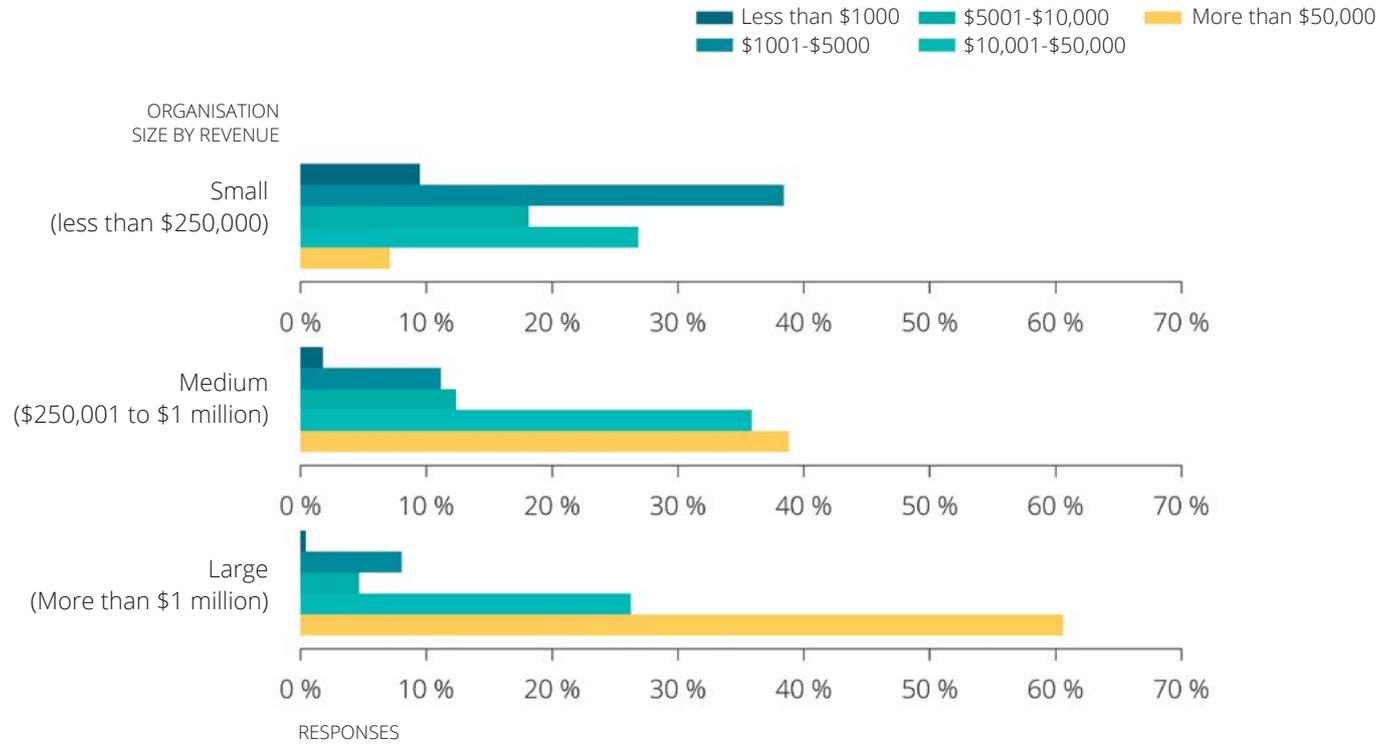


As you might expect, our data shows that the larger the organisation, the more grants it is likely to have applied for. We were somewhat surprised to note that large organisations are not just winning large grants, they're scooping up many of the small grants (less than \$5000) as well.

### Value of smallest grant received



### Value of largest grant received



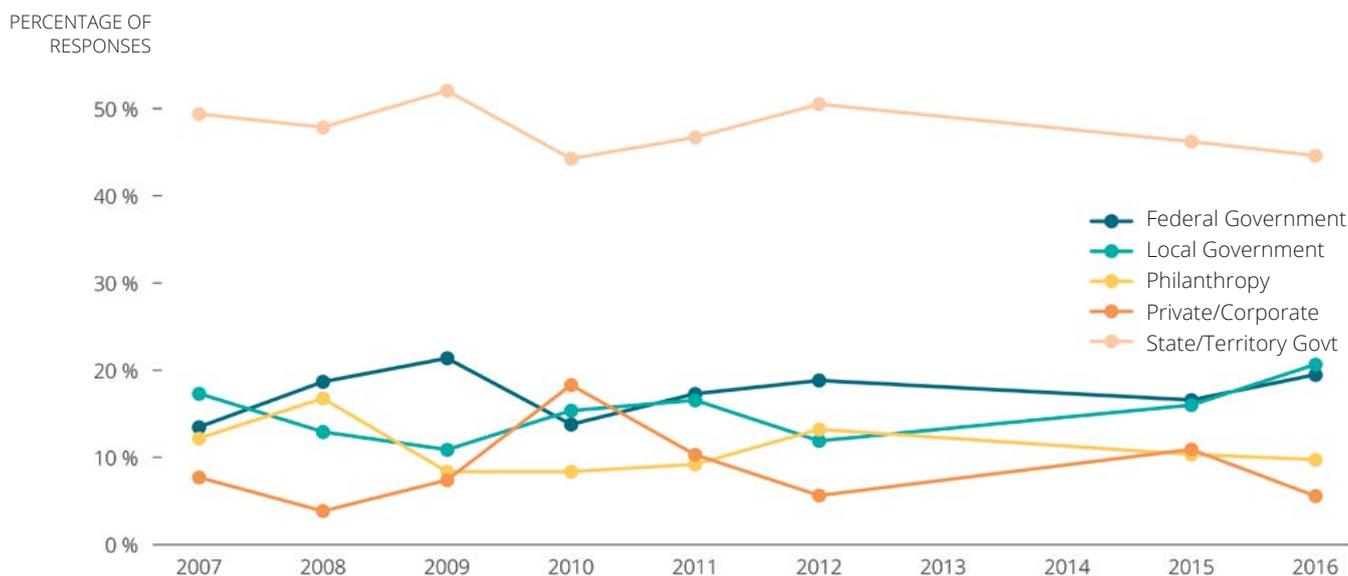
# WHO PROVIDES THE GRANTS?

State and territory governments are the most relied upon source of grants for Australian grantseekers, though our year-by-year analysis shows that the importance of that tier of government appears to be declining.

Interestingly, despite the great disparity in budgets between the very top and the very bottom tiers of government, local and federal governments are almost equally important for the Australian grantseeking community. Indeed, in what may be considered worrisome for cash-strapped local councils, our survey reveals that reliance on local government as a primary source of grants fund is on the rise.

Our survey also shows corporate grantmaking was building as an important source of funds for not-for-profits between 2007 and 2010, outstripping local and federal funding at its peak before a dramatic drop, possibly in response to the 2009 global financial crisis. It has not recovered to 2010 levels.

## Primary source of grants funding

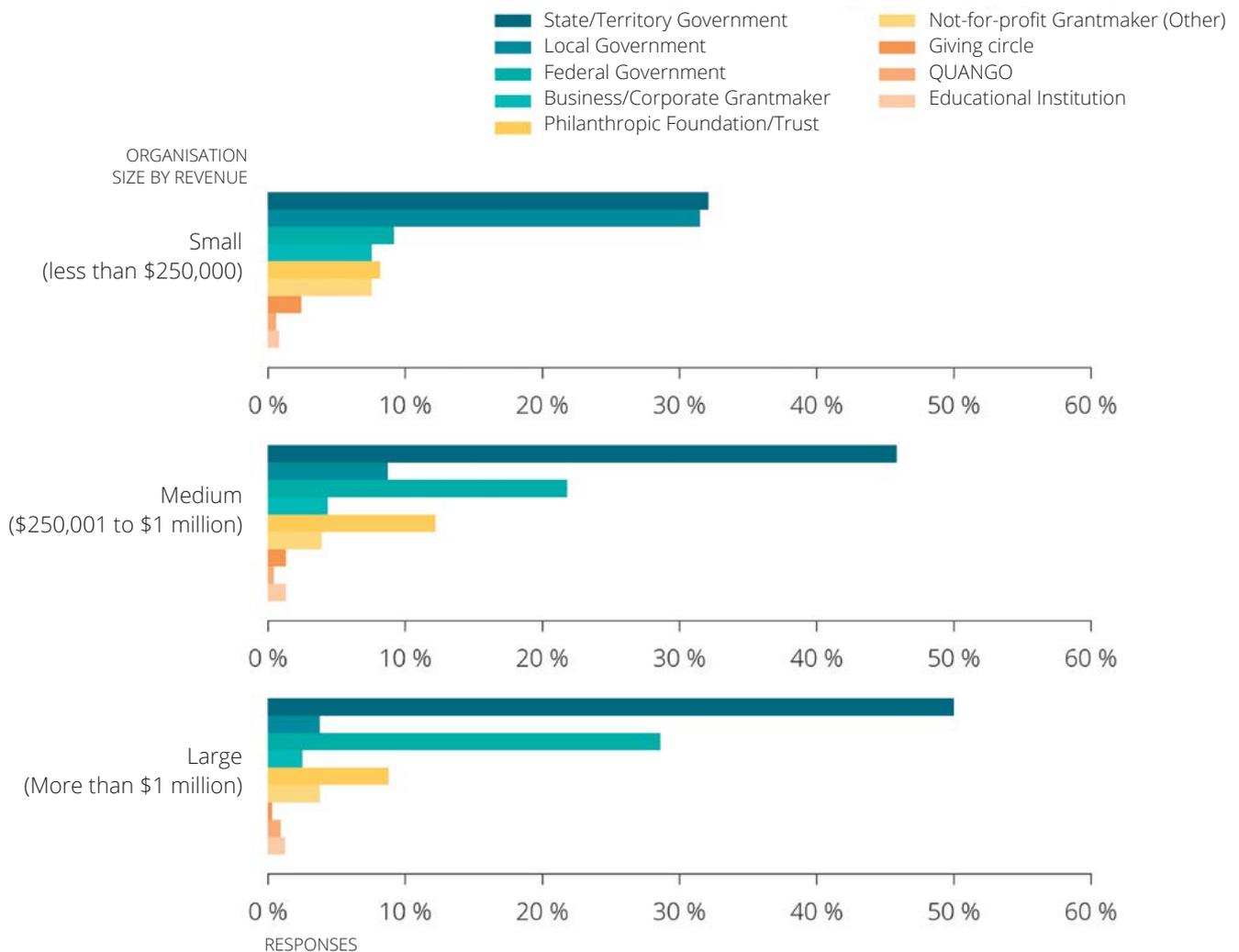


## Split by organisation size

When the results of our survey are split by organisation size, we can see that (predictably) small organisations rely a lot more on local government grants than medium and large organisations. The larger the organisation, the more likely it is to rely on the Federal Government as its primary source of grants.

Philanthropic foundations and business/corporate grantmakers provide a modest contribution to the grants pool for organisations of all sizes.

## Primary source of funding for the organisation



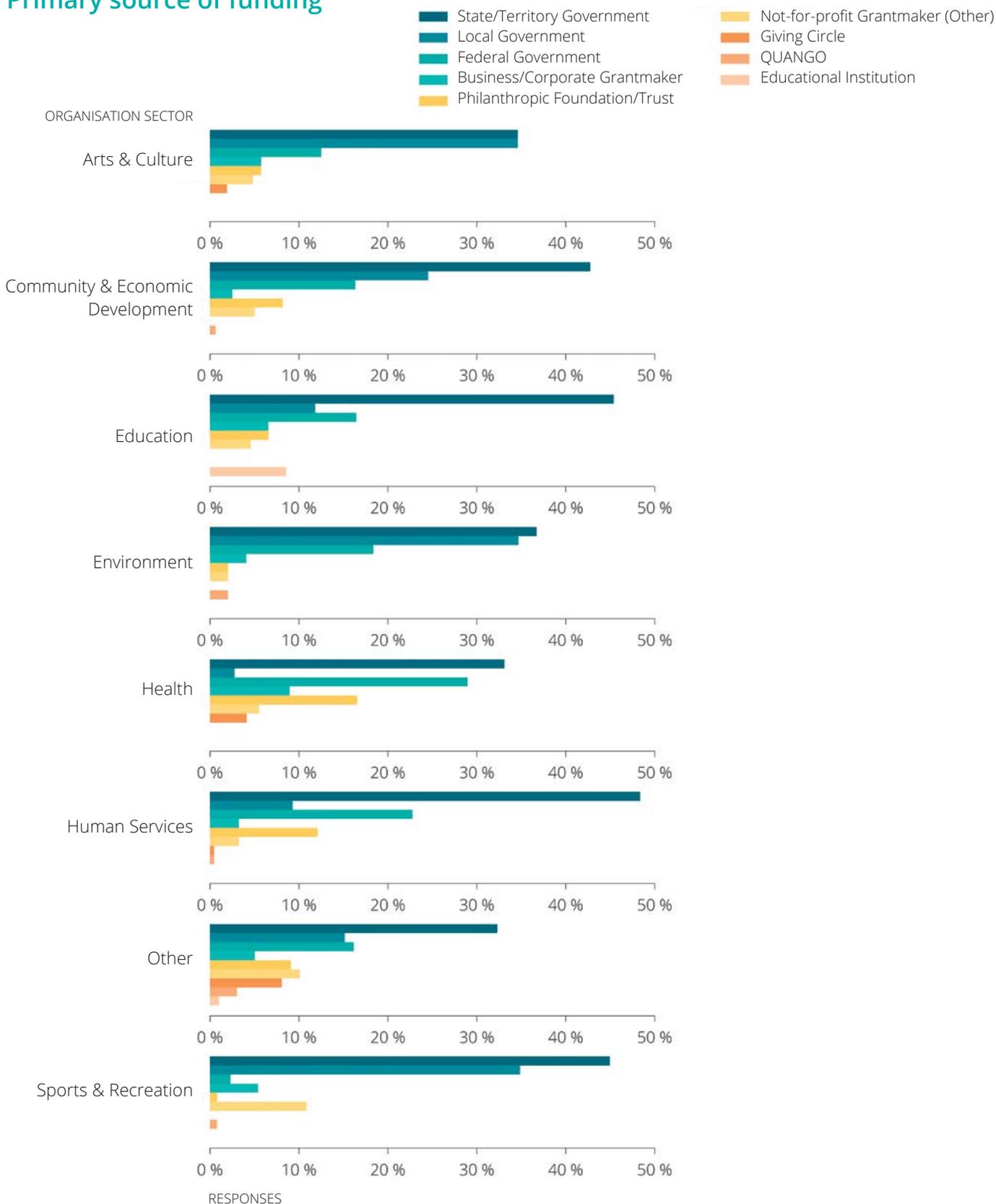
## Split by sector

Government funding is an important source of grants funds regardless of sector, but our survey reveals some important differences in grants between organisational type:

- **Education, human services and health organisations** are less likely than others to rely on local government grants, with the health segment of the not-for-profit sector having a tiny reliance.
- **Arts and culture, environment, and sport and recreation** sector organisations are more likely than others to have local government grants as their primary source.
- **Arts and culture** organisations rely equally on state/territory and the local government tiers of government as their primary source of grants.
- The **arts and culture** and **environment** segments are the only two segments that don't clearly favour state/territory government grants over all other sources.
- **Arts and culture organisations, community and economic development and environment organisations** follow similar patterns, where state/territory is the most dominant source of grants funds, local government second, and federal government third.
- For **education, health, and human services** organisations, the Federal Government is a more important source of funds than local government sources.

- Philanthropy is an important source of grants for organisations in the **health and human services** arenas, and is the primary source of grants for more than 10% of respondents in both cases.
- **Sport and recreation** organisations are the only sectors with a significant reliance (more than 10%) on “other not-for-profit grantmakers”. More investigation is needed to determine which funders are being referred to by organisations that pick this option as their primary source of grants.

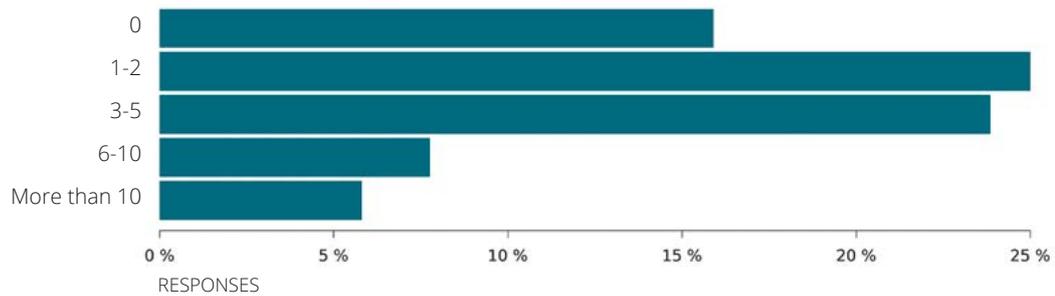
### Primary source of funding



# SUCCESS RATES

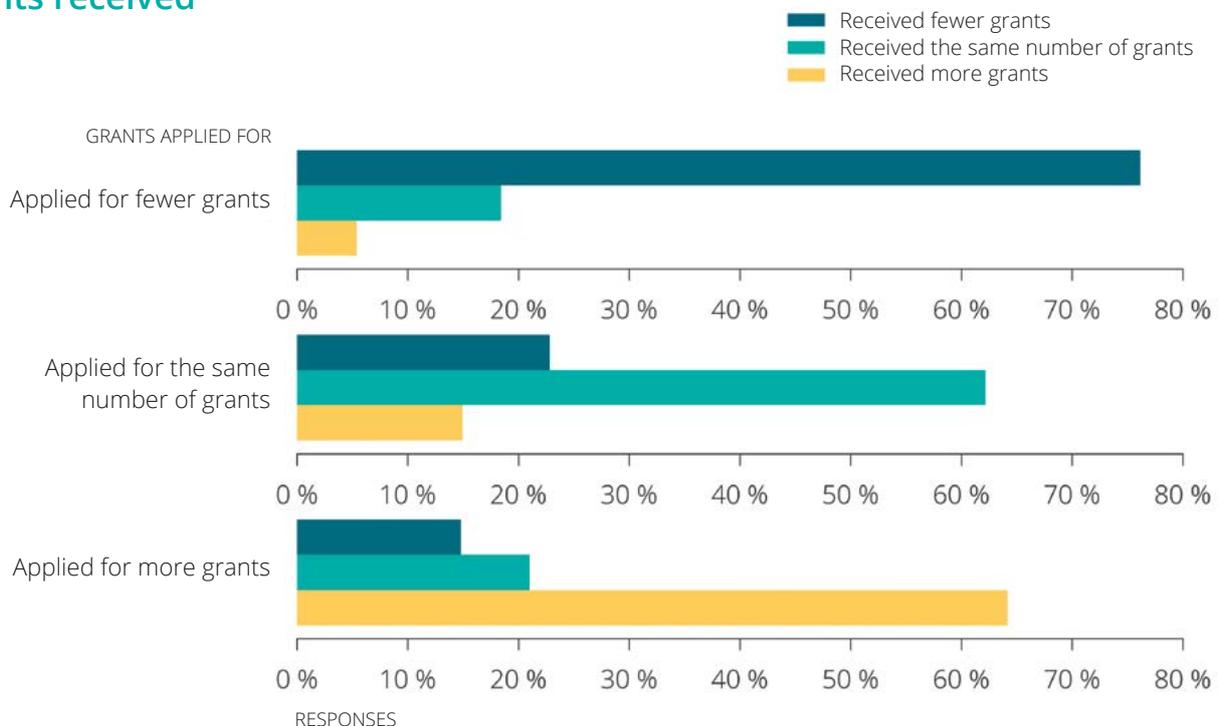
We asked grantseekers to tell us how many grants they had applied for in the previous 12 months and how many they'd received. The most dominant application rate chosen by respondents was three to five grants, and the most dominant success rate was one to two grants, suggesting, not surprisingly, that grantseekers tend to apply for more grants than they get.

## Number of grants won in the past 12 months



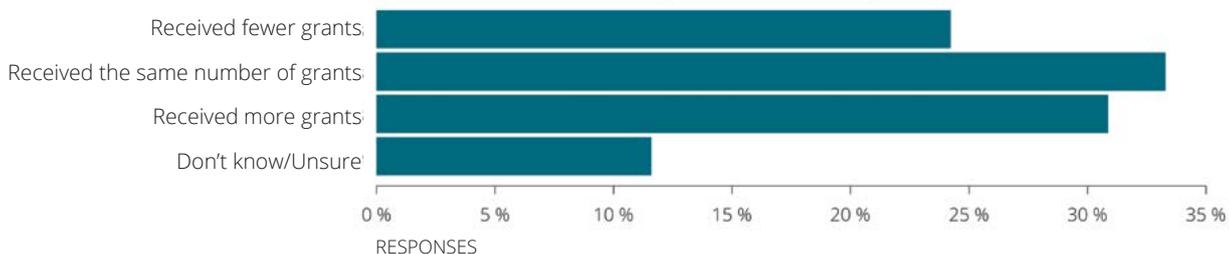
It seems obvious but it's worth restating – if you don't ask you don't get. Those who had applied for fewer grants received fewer grants, and vice versa.

## Grants received



Most (64%) of our respondents reported either stable or increasing grantseeking success – when comparing their success in the year leading up to the survey to the year prior to that, though it's worth noting that nearly a quarter reported a downturn in grants received.

## In the past 12 months, the organisation...



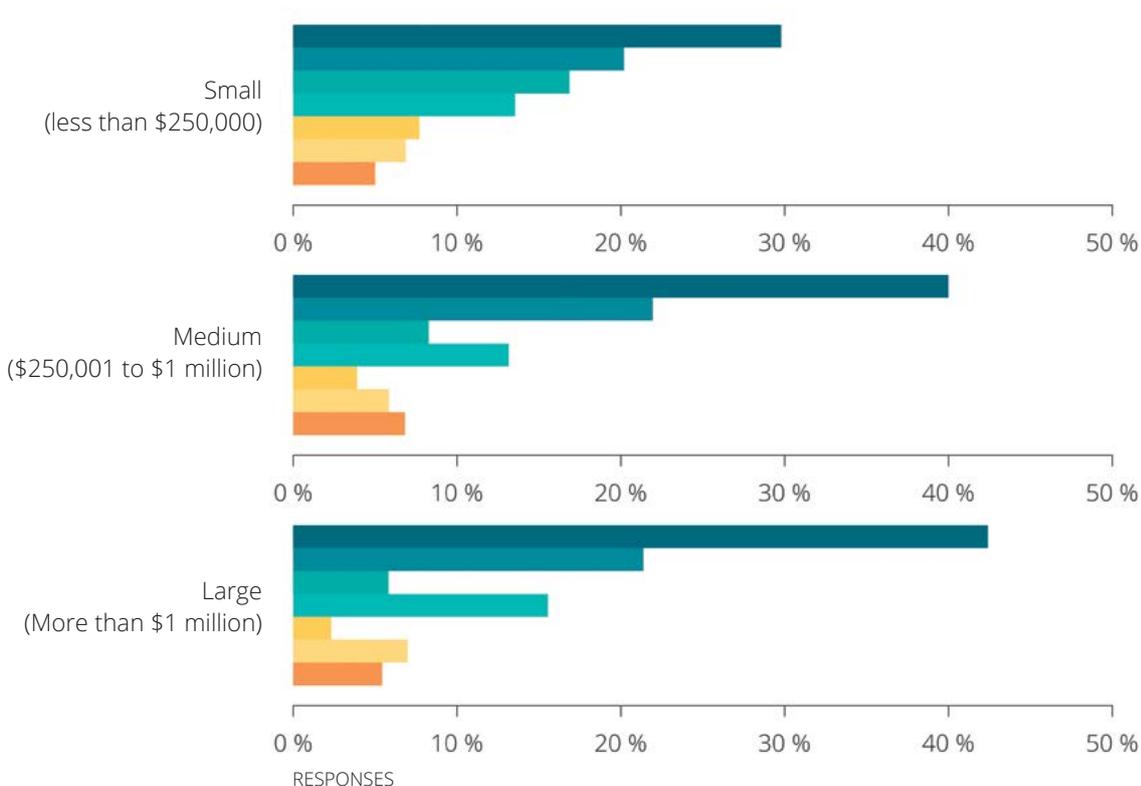
Lack of resources, staff and time are the most prevalent factors preventing organisations from applying for more grants across all segments of the not-for-profit sector.

The smaller the organisation, the more likely it is that inhibiting factors will include lack of knowledge about what grants are available and lack of expertise/training. On the other hand, small organisations are less likely to complain about lack of resources/staff.

Larger organisations indicate more pointedly to lack of resources/staff, lack of time, and, a lack of a suitable project/program as factors preventing them from applying for more grants.

## What is the prime factor preventing you from applying for more grants?

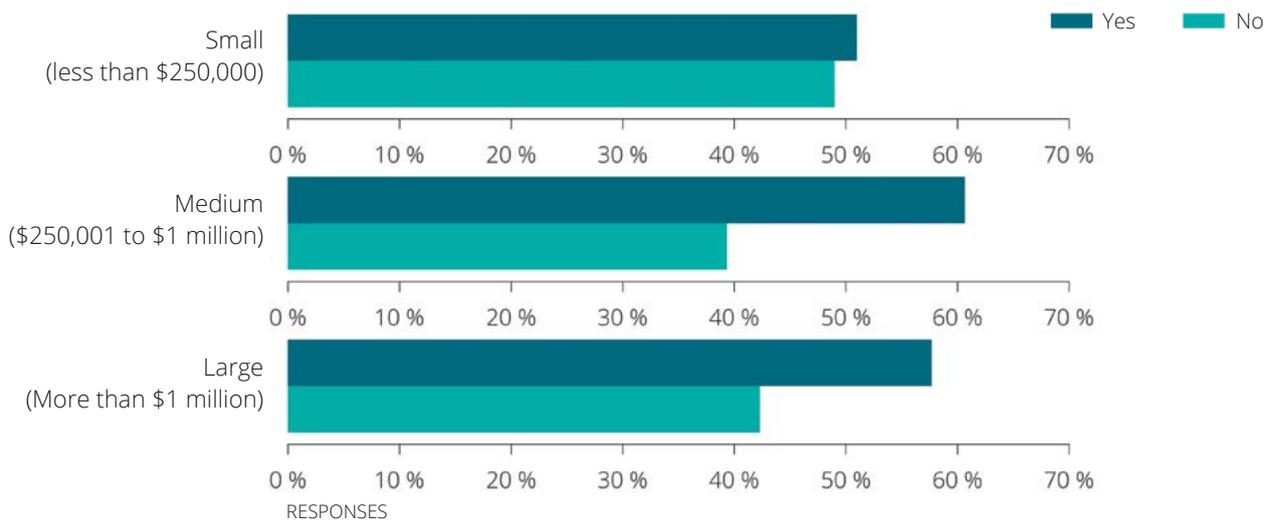
- Lack of resources/staff
- Lack of time
- Lack of knowledge of what grants are on offer
- Lack of a suitable project/program
- Lack of expertise/training
- Application and aquittal processes make it not worth the trouble
- Lack of money to cover the resources needed to apply



## Time wasters

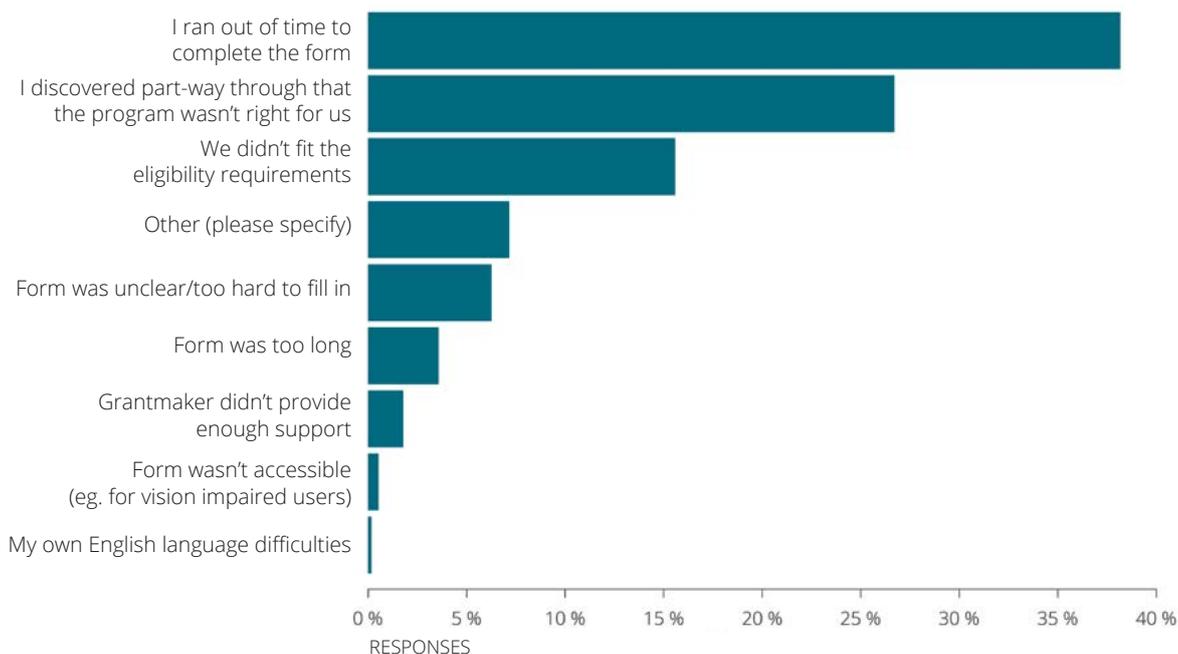
Our survey reveals that a huge amount of time is being wasted on unsubmitted applications. A whopping 54% of respondents said they'd started an application that they didn't end up submitting. A majority of medium and large organisations had started but not submitted an application over the previous 12 months, whereas smaller groups were more likely to proceed to submission.

## Did you start, but not submit, a grant application in the past 12 months?



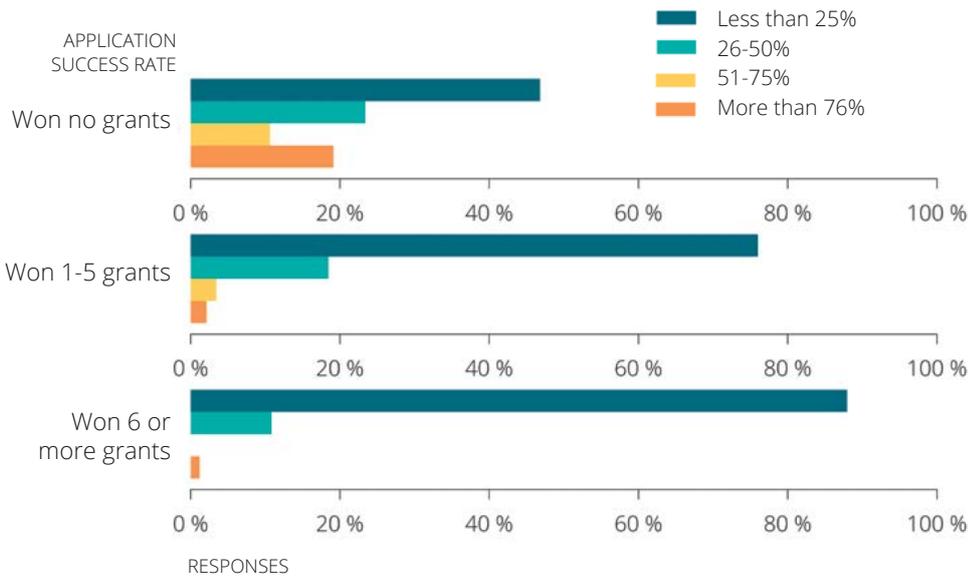
This year we sought to find out more about un-submitted applications with the aim of providing some advice to both grantseekers and grantmakers about how some of the wastage could be reduced. What we found is that largely, it's the grantseekers' fault – 38% of respondents told us they simply ran out of time.

## Main reason for starting, but not submitting, grant applications



We also found that successful grantseekers are less likely to have begun – and failed to submit – an application, suggesting that strategic grantseekers may be more deliberate about research before the application phase.

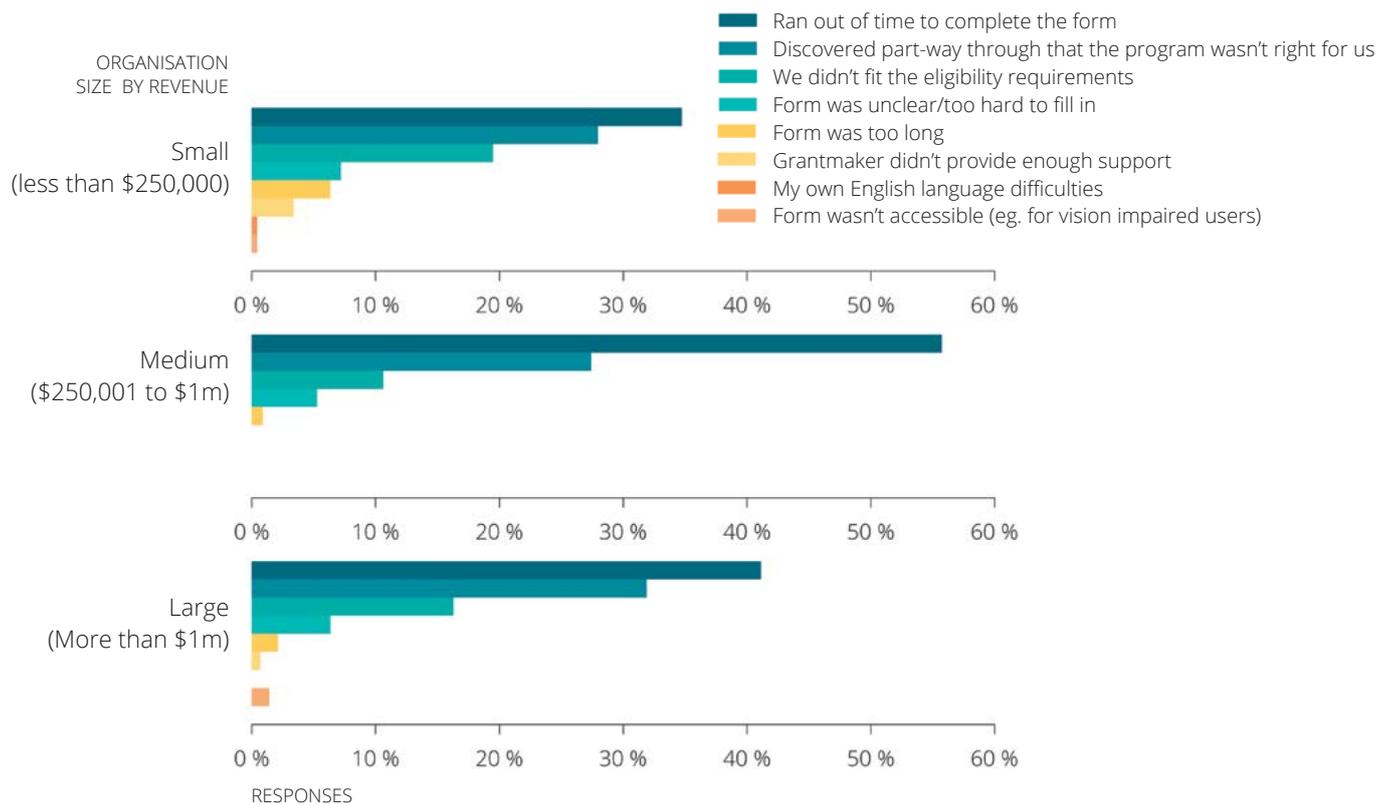
## Approximate percentage of applications started, but not submitted



There are some steps that grantmakers could take to prevent the time wastage – 16% of respondents told us they dropped out of the process after discovering that they didn't fit the eligibility requirements, while a further 27% said they discovered part way through filling out the form that the program wasn't right for them, indicating that more effort could be made to explain the program's purpose and eligibility. Grantmakers can do this by improving availability and clarity of guidelines, and by inserting an eligibility test into the application process.

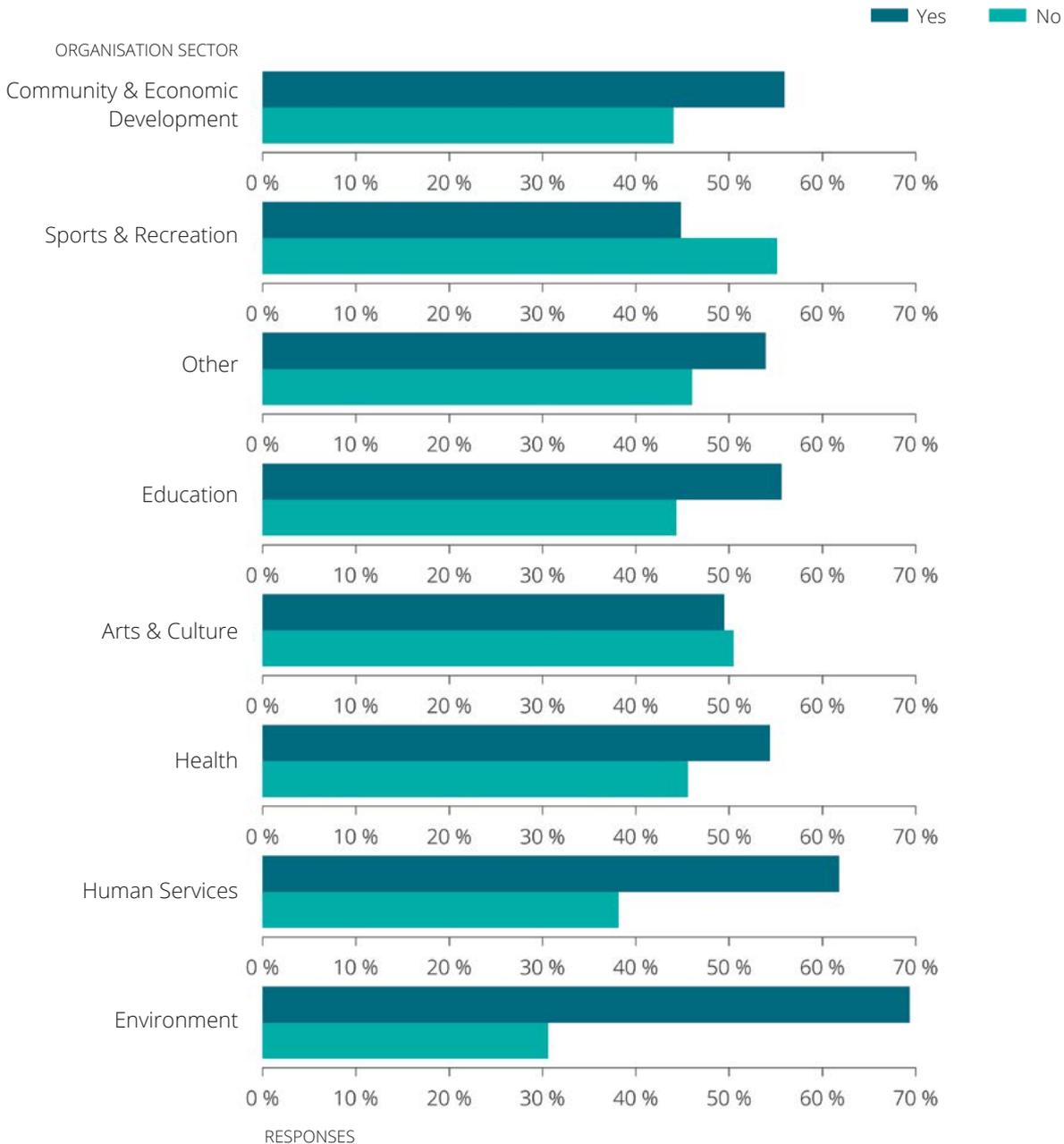
Medium-sized organisations are more likely than small or large organisations to run out of time, and are less likely to start but not submit an application due to ineligibility. Otherwise, the reasons for unsubmitted applications are similar across all organisation sizes.

## Main reason for starting, but not submitting, grant applications



Our survey found that organisations working in the environment and human services sectors were more likely than others to start but not submit applications. Sport and recreation organisations and arts organisations were less likely than others to abandon an application.

### Did you start, but not submit, a grant application in the past 12 months?

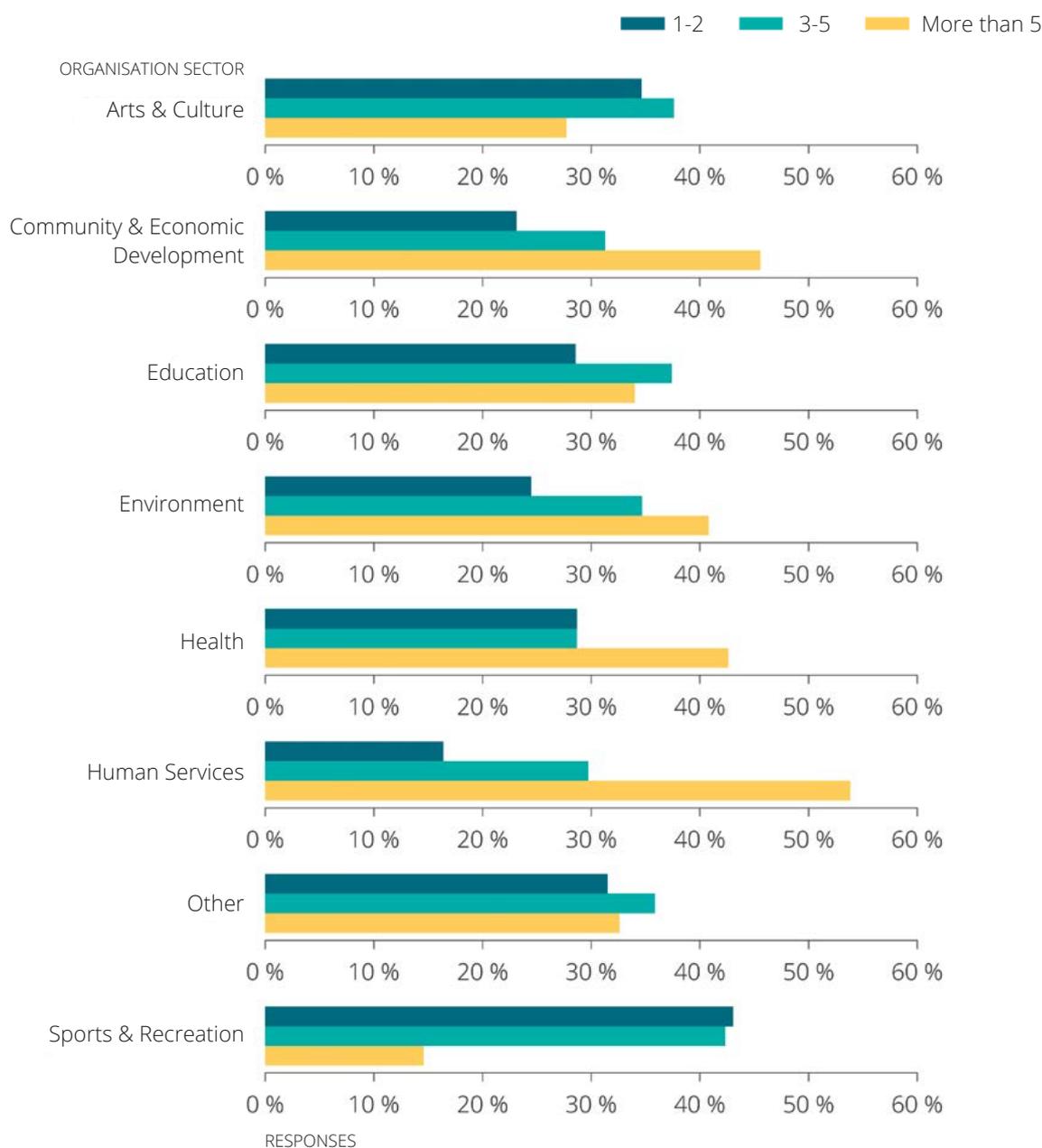


# GRANTSEEKING HABITS AND TRENDS

Our survey reveals that the grant-writing load is heaviest for those in the community and economic development, environment, human services and health segments of the not-for-profit sector. Twenty per cent or more of the organisations in these segments applied for more than 10 grants in the 12 months leading up to the survey.

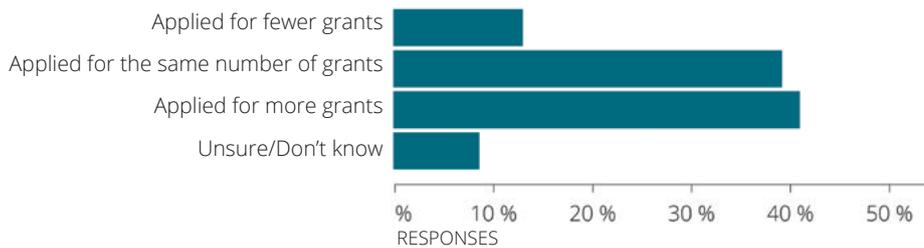
On the other side of the ledger, sport and recreation and arts and culture organisations apply for fewer grants than others.

## Number of grants applied for

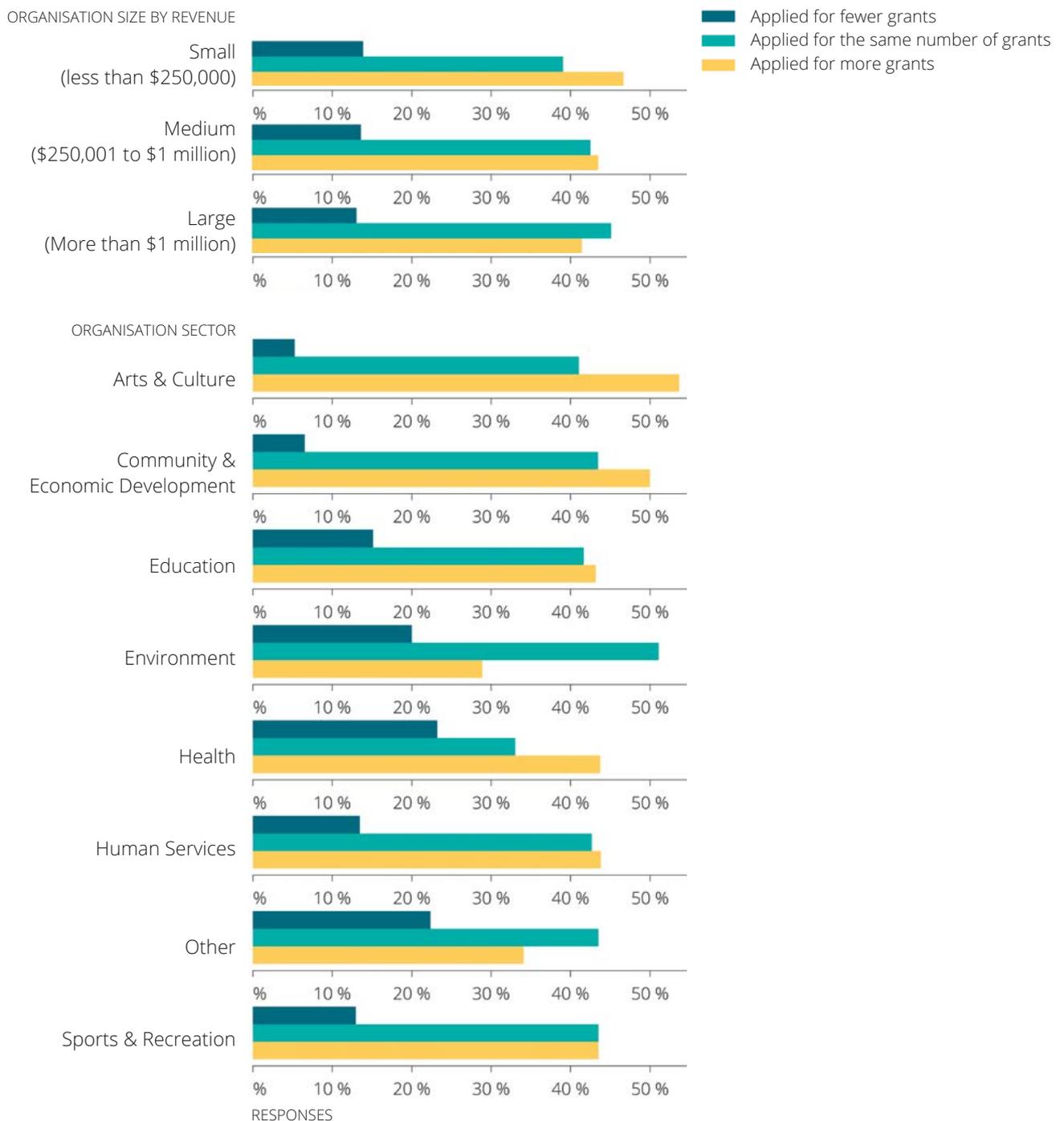


The majority of our respondents (79%) said they had applied for the same number or more grants than they did in the year before the survey period. Only 13% of respondents had scaled down their grantseeking efforts, while 40% had scaled up.

## In the past 12 months, the organisation...



The trend for increasing grantseeking activity holds true regardless of the organisation's segment (excluding the environment segment, which bucks the trend) or size, though the smaller the organisation, the more likely it is to have ramped up its grantseeking efforts in recent times. Organisations in the arts and culture, and community and economic development segments, were more likely than others to have done more grantseeking.



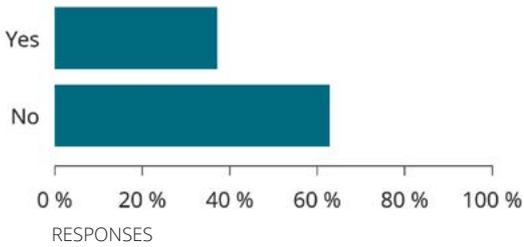
# FUNDING FOR CORE COSTS

The majority of grantseekers in our survey (62%) said they had not applied for a grant for core costs in the previous 12 months, indicating they are finding other ways to fund their administrative overheads.

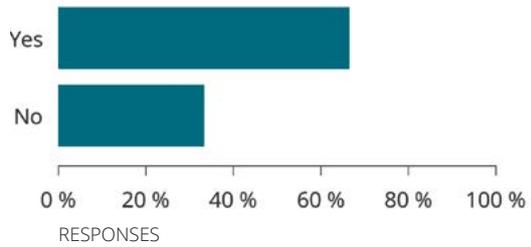
Of those that did apply for a grant for core costs, the majority (67%) were successful, though it's worth noting that almost a third missed out.

Our survey suggests that grants for core costs may be becoming harder to get, with 43% of respondents saying they believe grantmakers are offering fewer of these kinds of grants than they have previously (and only 7% believing they are becoming more common). This is a surprising and somewhat worrying finding given ongoing campaigns, particularly out of the UK and the US, designed specifically to encourage more of this type of funding.

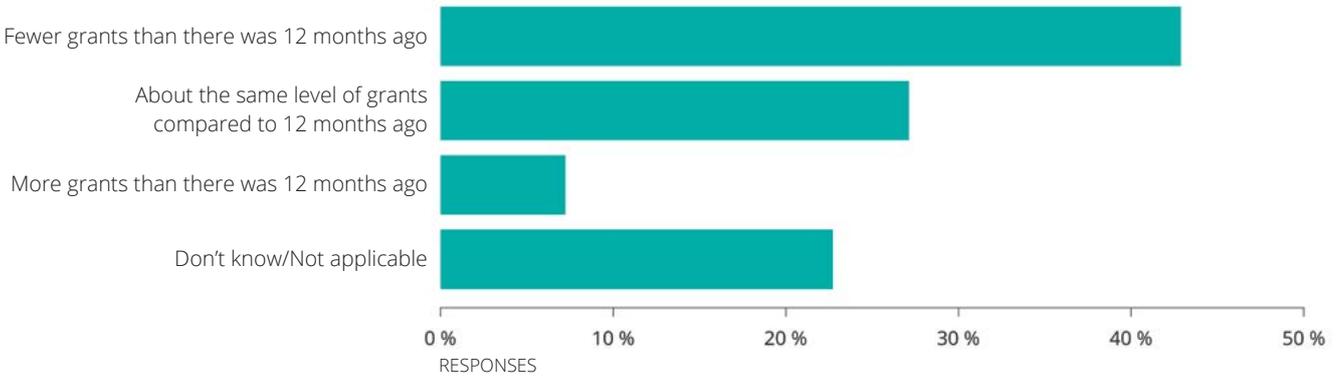
## Applied for indirect/core cost grant?



## Received indirect/core cost grant?



## When it comes to grants that fund indirect/core costs, grantmakers are offering...



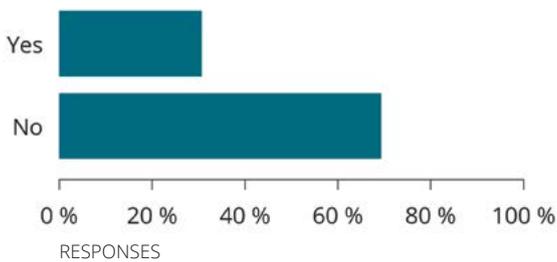
# MULTI-YEAR GRANTS

Most grantseekers (69%) apply for single-year grants (though that’s quite possibly more to do with what’s on offer than what’s preferred).

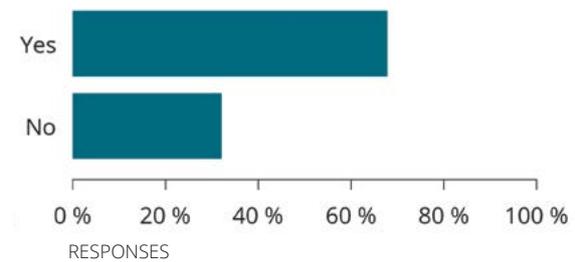
As is the case with grants for core costs, nearly a third of organisations that applied for a multi-year grant missed out, though the majority were successful in their bid.

Grantseekers believe that multi-year grants are becoming harder to get, another troubling finding given the accepted wisdom among those who support not-for-profit organisations that the more stability and predictability you can offer these organisations, the better.

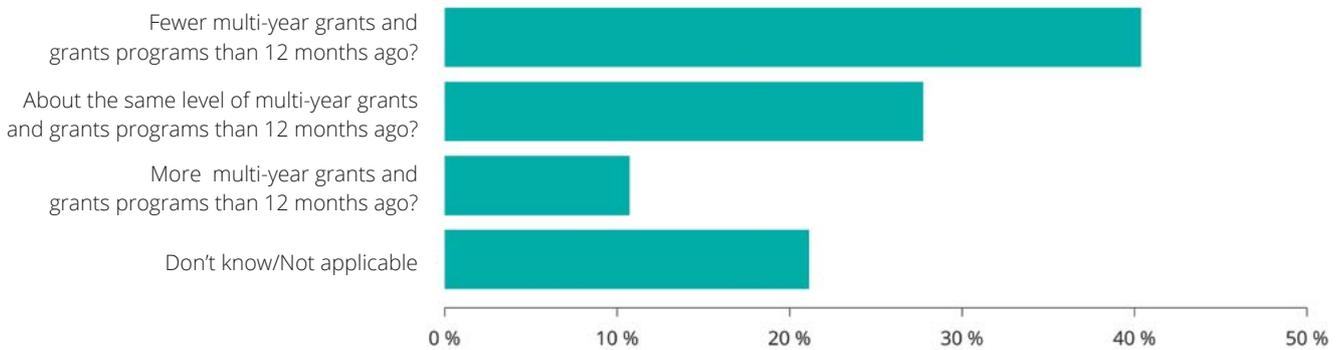
## Applied for multi-year grant?



## Received multi-year grant?



## When it comes to multi-year grants, grantmakers are offering ...



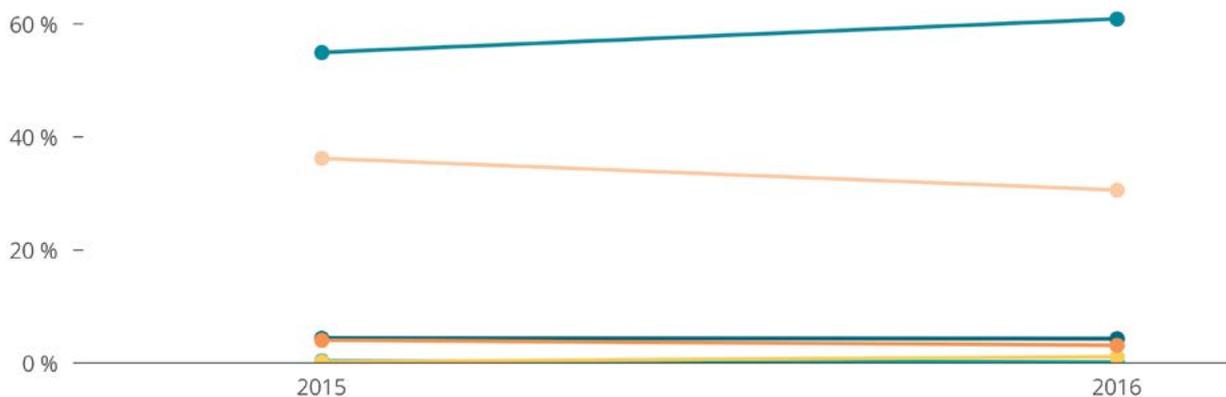
# THE SHIFT TO ONLINE FORMS

The shift from hard copy to online electronic grant application forms is not yet complete, with many grantmakers continuing to use offline electronic forms to collect applications.

While online electronic forms (like SmartyGrants) are the most commonly encountered by grantseekers, and the upward trend is continuing, it's worth noting that 31% of grantseekers say the format they most commonly encounter is a PDF/Word-based form.

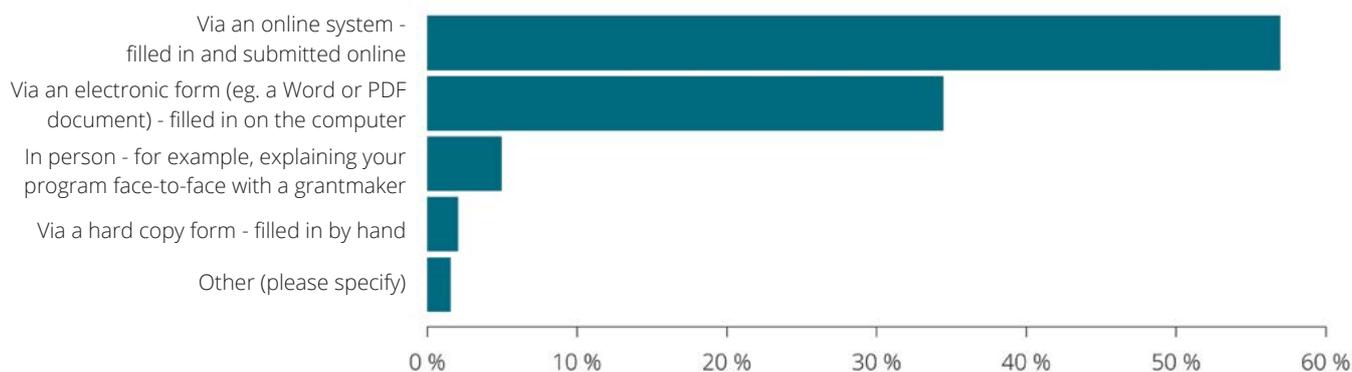
## Most commonly encountered application formats

- Via an online system - filled in and submitted online
- Via an electronic form (eg. a Word or PDF document) - filled in on the computer
- Via a hard copy form - filled in by hand
- In person - for example, explaining your program face-to-face with a grantmaker
- At a "live pitching" event, where a number of grantseekers pitch projects to a panel or audience
- A combination of two or more of the above through a process involving stages and/or shortlisting of applications



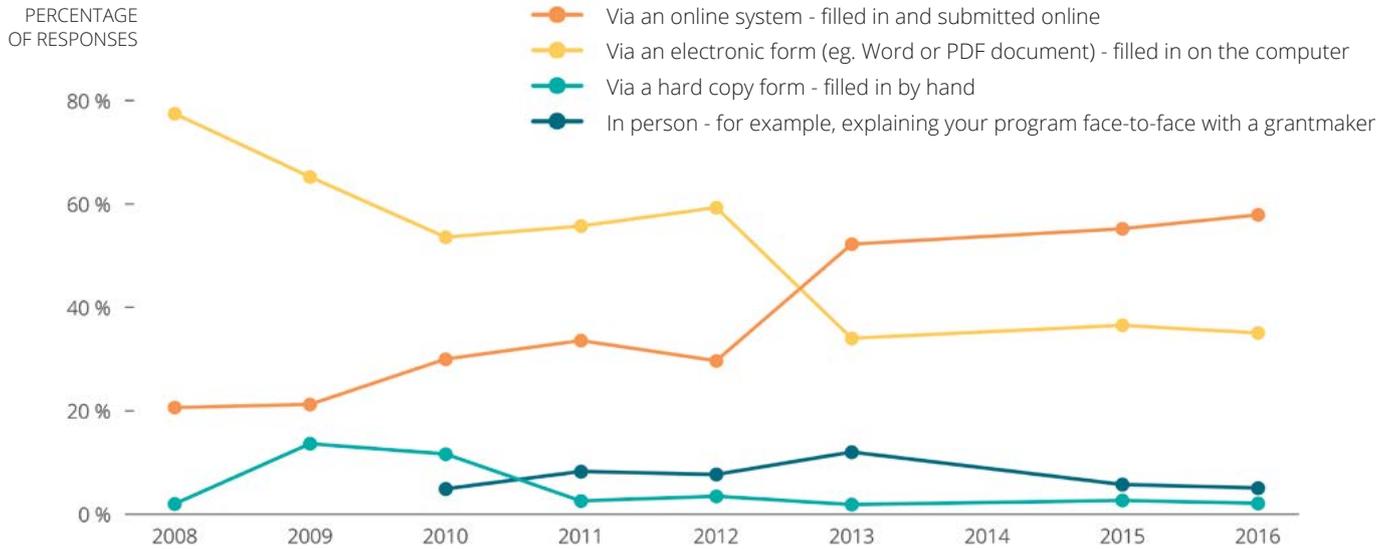
The majority of grantseekers prefer online systems, though it's worth noting that 35% favour offline (PDF, Word) electronic forms that they can download and fill in on their own computers. This may have something to do with grantseekers' desire, uncovered in other areas of our survey, to collaborate when filling in forms.

## Preferred method to apply for grants



Our year-by-year analysis shows that grantseekers' preference switched from offline electronic forms to online electronic forms around 2013.

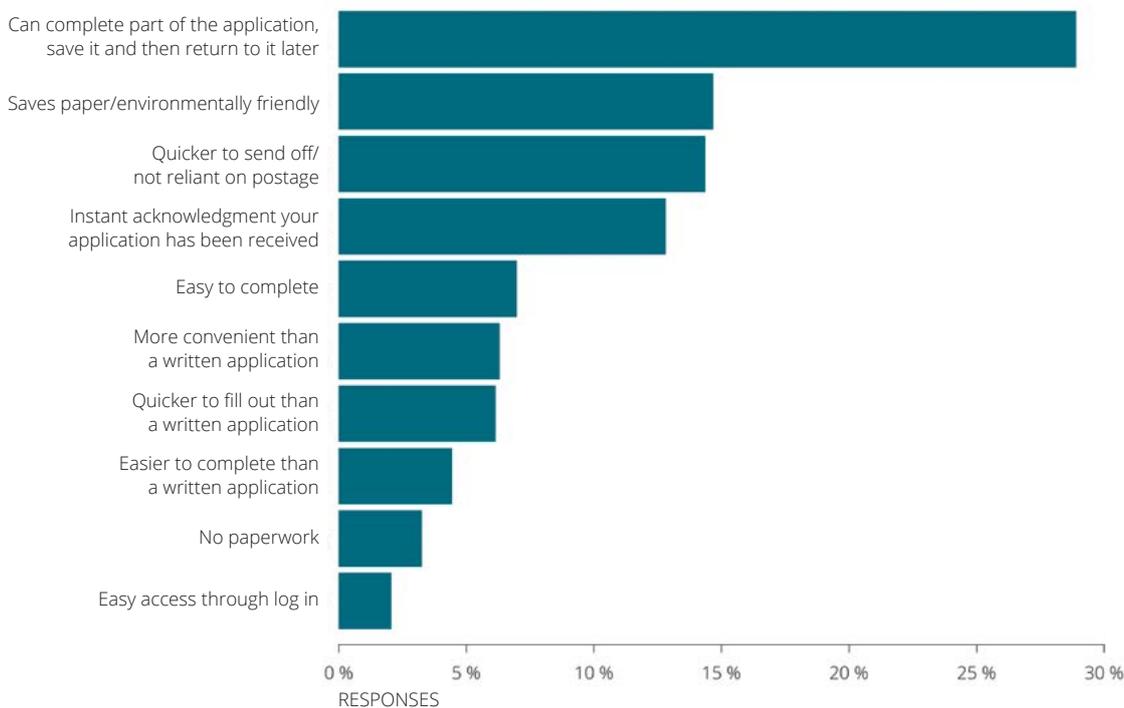
### How do grantseekers prefer to apply for grants?



### What do grantseekers like most about using online forms?

- They like that they can complete the application in stages (so grantmakers should make sure you have a “save” functionality);
- They like that it is more environmentally friendly (so grantmakers should avoid nullifying that by printing out the forms at the other end);
- They like that they get instant acknowledgement that their application has been received (so grantmakers should make sure you have that functionality enabled).

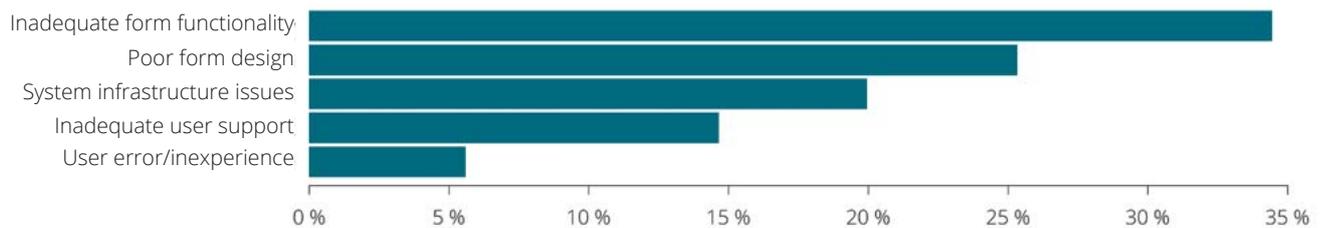
### Benefits of applying via an online application system



The most commonly encountered problems with online forms include space constraints (“not enough room to express my answers properly”), confusing forms, inability to copy in information from other documents, and page time-outs.

A significant number of respondents highlighted concerns with their inability to collaborate when using online forms. Other problems mentioned in comments included: respondents concerns about an inability to view the whole application before starting it; lack of formatting freedom; and restrictive word counts.

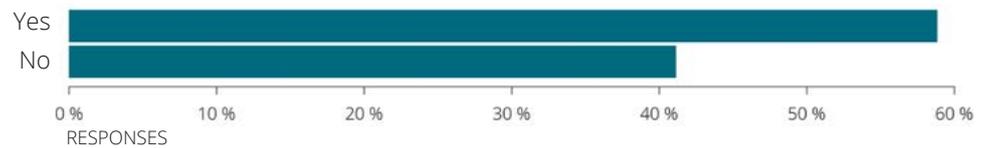
## Problems with applying via an online application system



# GETTING HELP

A large minority of respondents (41%) had not attended a pre-application grant briefing in the past 12 months.

## Attended pre-application briefings or information sessions

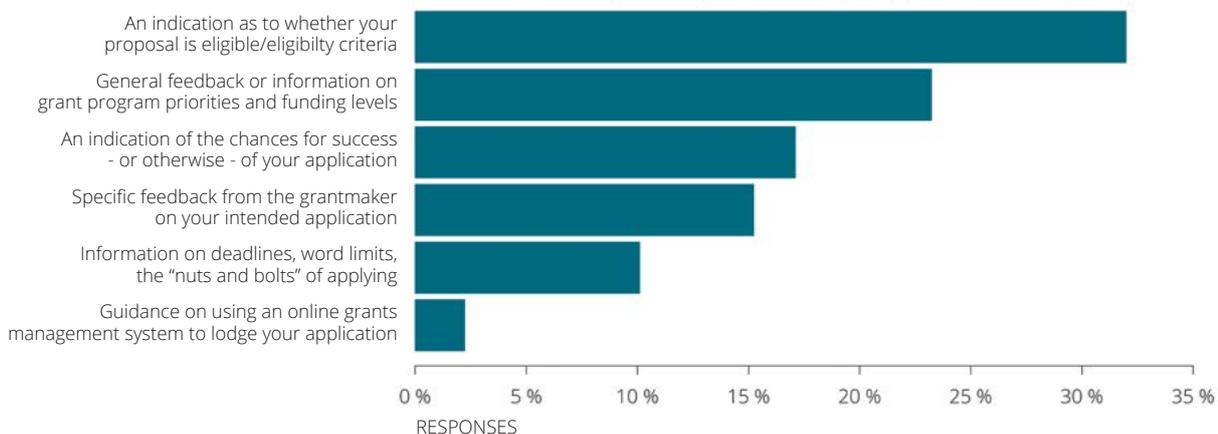


Those attending a pre-application briefing were most commonly hoping to take away an indication as to whether their proposal would be eligible for a grant, and a vast majority found the briefing to be useful and helpful.

## Opinion of pre-application briefings or information sessions

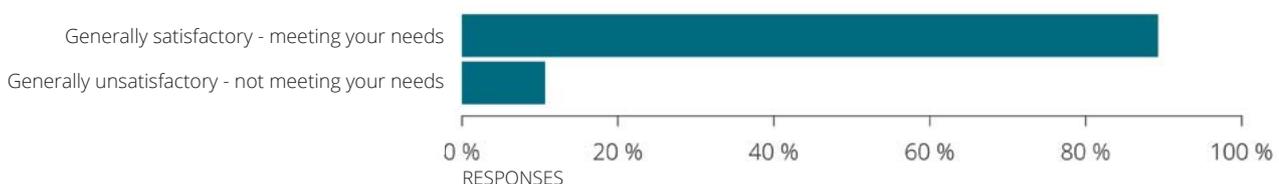


## Information sought in pre-application briefings or information sessions



Grantseekers are generally pretty happy with the help they've received.

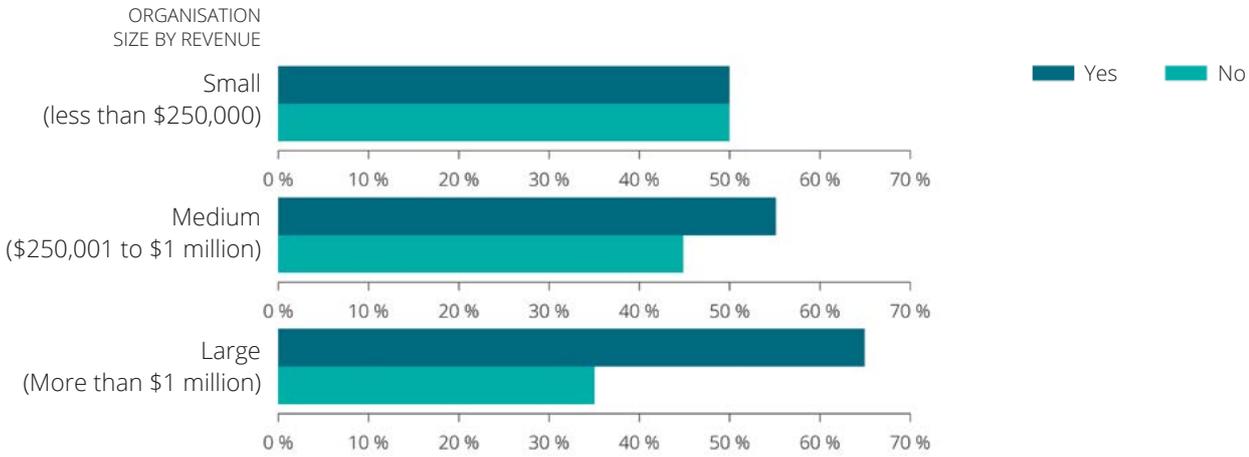
## Opinion of assistance provided by the grantmaker in completing the application



Just over half of respondents (55%) had sought assistance from grantmakers in completing their application. In a somewhat surprising finding, larger organisations were more likely to have sought help. This may indicate

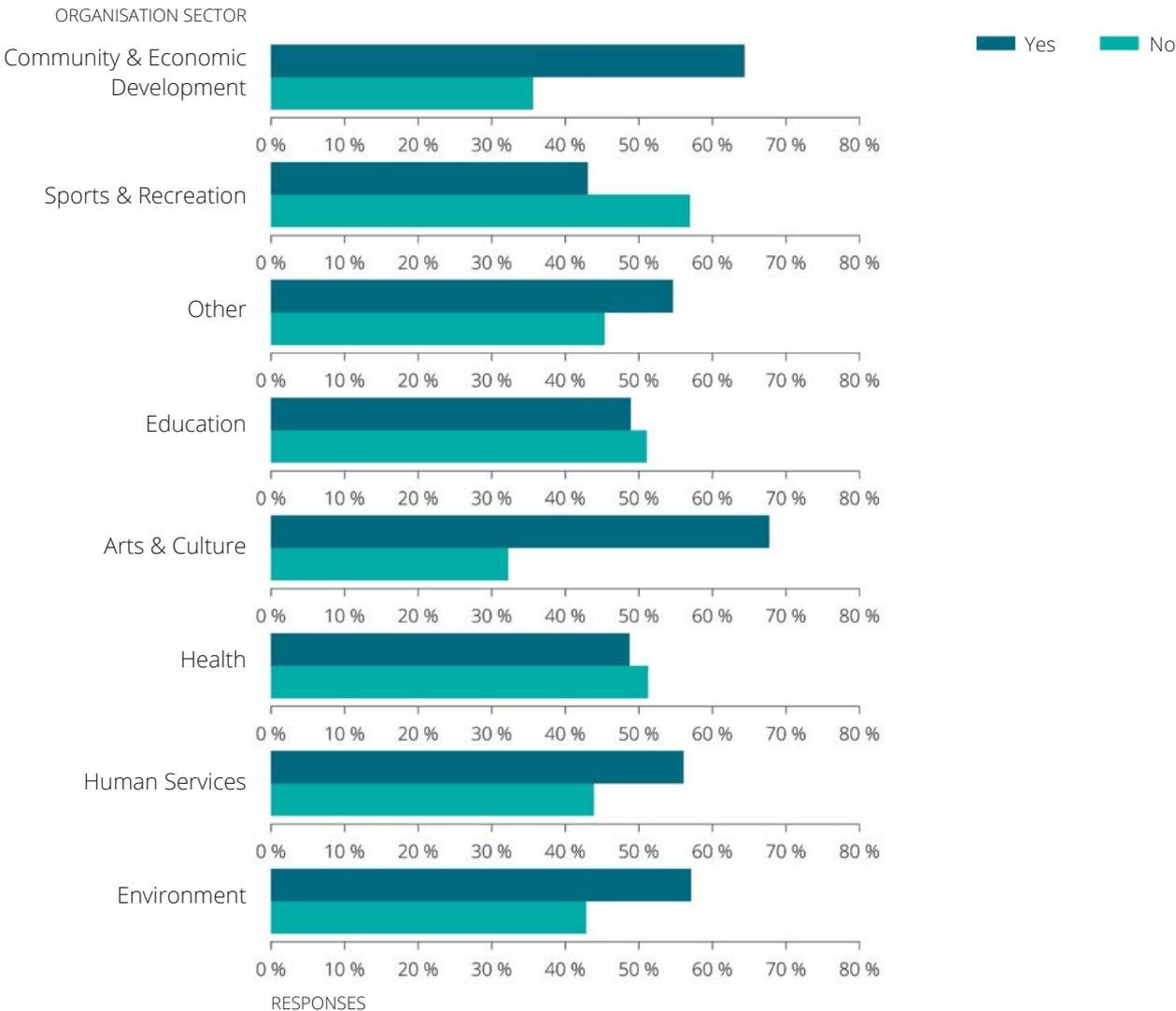
a strategic approach to being well informed before applying, and/or ensuring they're known to the grantmaker before they apply, or it may be an indication of the complexity of grants that appeal to larger organisations.

### Sought assistance from a grantmaker?



Arts and culture and community and economic development organisations were more likely than organisations working in other parts of the not-for-profit sector to have sought help from a grantmaker.

Sport and recreation, education and health sector organisations bucked the general trend, with fewer than half of respondents from these segments saying they'd asked for help.



# GRANTMAKER FUNDAMENTALS

We asked grantseekers to rate the performance of the grantmaking community in a number of areas.

## Grantmakers, give yourselves a tick:

- Availability of guidelines: 97% approval – stable
- Acknowledgement of applications: 94% approval – and improving all the time
- Clarity of guidelines: 93% approval – and improving all the time

## Not bad, but room for improvement:

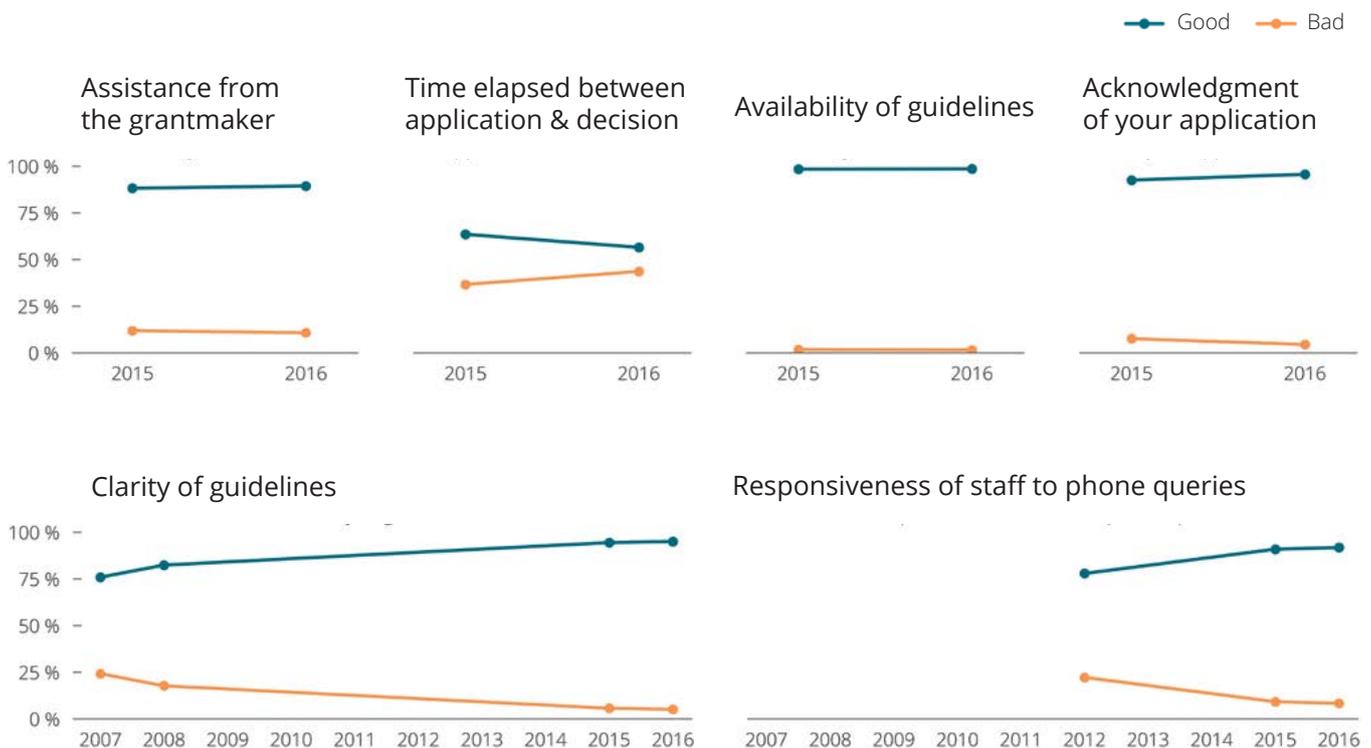
- Responsiveness of staff to phone queries: 79% approval – and the long-term trendline is heading in the right direction
- Timeliness of communication regarding the result of application: 69% approval – but things seem to be slipping

## Grantmakers, you (still) suck at this:

- Providing useful, relevant feedback on unsuccessful applications: 38% approval – improving (but not quickly enough)

Thankfully, the grantmaking community does seem to be getting better at providing feedback to grantseekers on why they failed to win a grant. However, we must point out that after a decade of taking the pulse on this issue, more grantseekers still think grantmakers are doing a bad job of this than think they're doing okay at it.

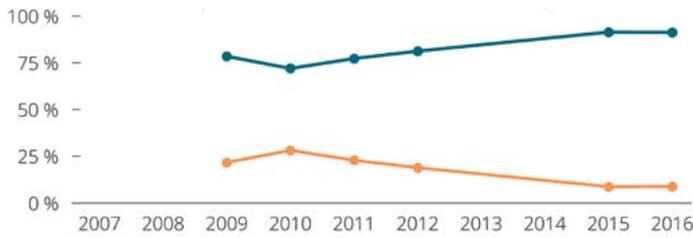
## How do grantseekers rate grantmakers' efforts in these categories?



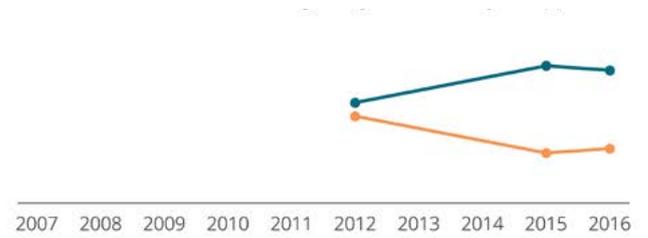
## How do grantseekers rate grantmakers' efforts in these categories?

— Good — Bad

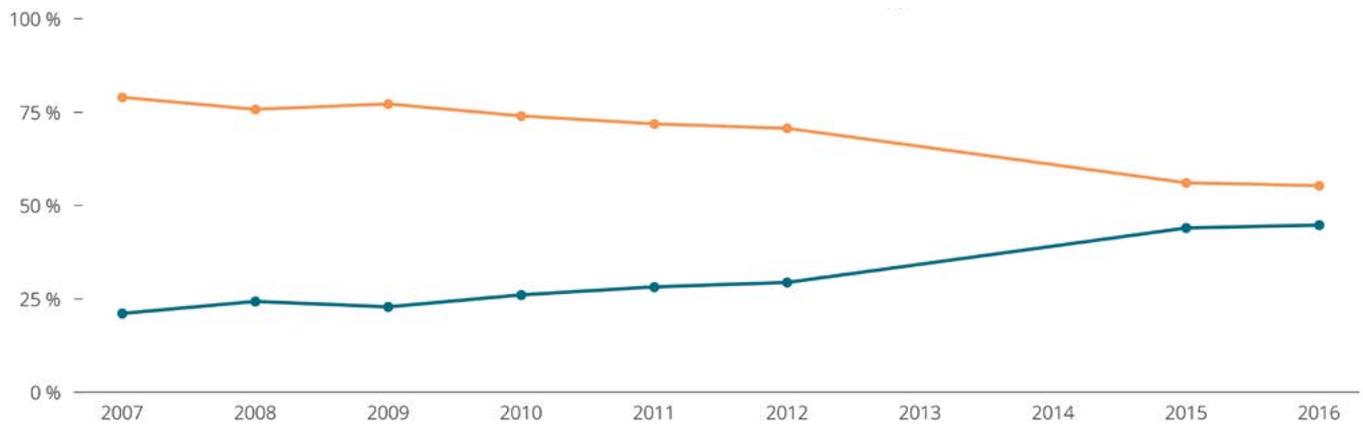
Responsiveness of staff to email/website queries



Timeliness of communication regarding the result of your application



Useful, relevant feedback of an unsuccessful application

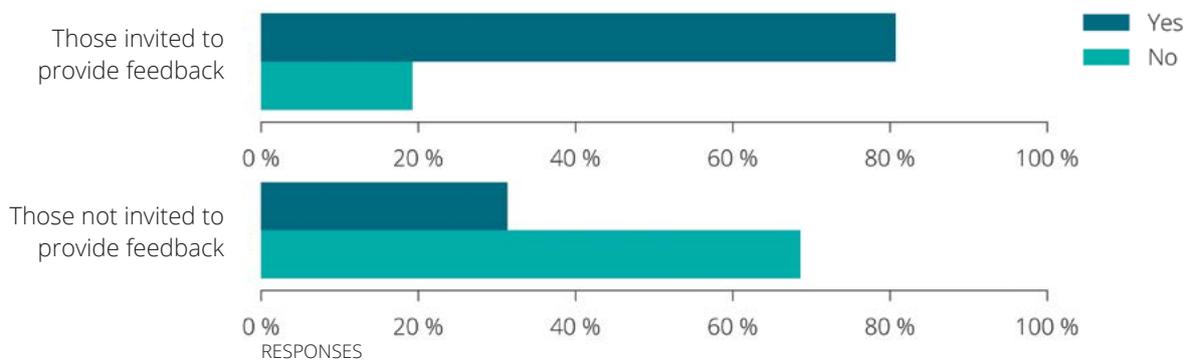


# HOLDING UP A MIRROR

Grantmakers do not appear to be particularly interested in rating their own performance, with 77% of surveyed grantseekers saying they had not been invited to provide feedback to grantmakers in the past 12 months.

The grantseeking community is generally sceptical about whether any feedback they give will make any difference to the grantmakers they interact with. However, it should also be noted that most (80%) of those who had been invited to provide feedback, actually assumed grantmakers would note and act on it.

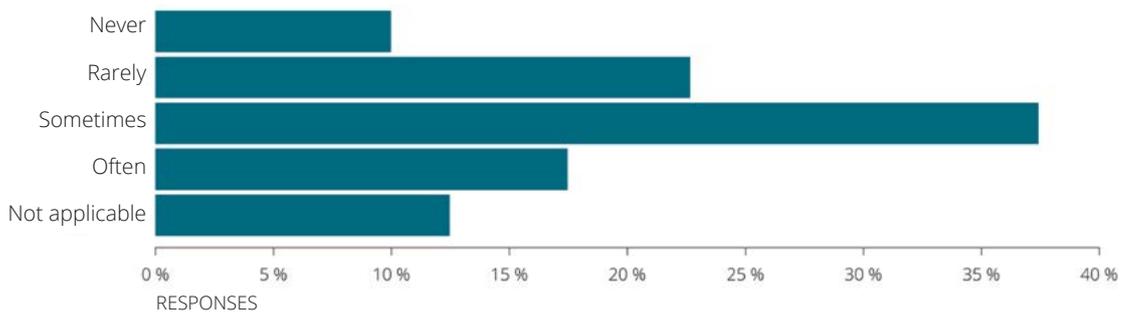
## Do you believe grantmakers take note of, and act on, feedback that applicants and grantees provide them about their programs and processes?



# FORMING RELATIONSHIPS

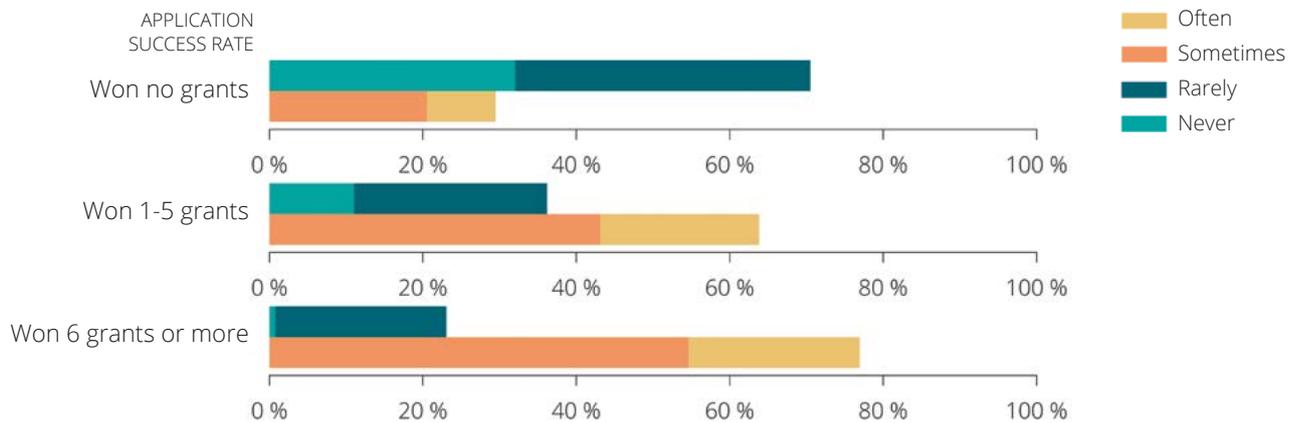
Most grantseekers find grantmakers to be approachable and accessible, and a small majority say they have either “often” or “sometimes” been able to form a meaningful relationship with the grantmakers they interact with. That said, if you believe that grantmaker-grantee relationships help drive better results, it’s somewhat troubling that 33% say this occurs “rarely” or “never”.

## How often was a meaningful relationship with the grantmakers and/or its staff developed?



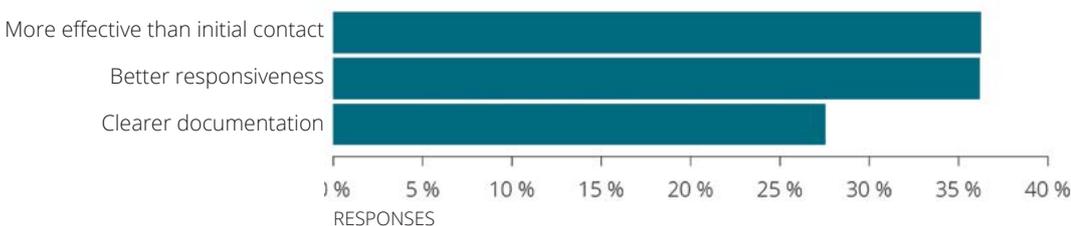
What is clear from our analysis is that successful grantseekers are more likely than unsuccessful grantseekers to form a relationship with grantmakers. It may be that those who pursue relationships with their funders are more likely to become successful grantseekers, or, it may be that successful grantseekers seek out relationships as part of their strategy.

## Developed a relationship with the grantmaker?



Our results suggest that grantmakers wanting to improve their communication with grantseekers should consider being more honest in their feedback to unsuccessful grant applicants, and provide a single person for grantseekers to contact for help.

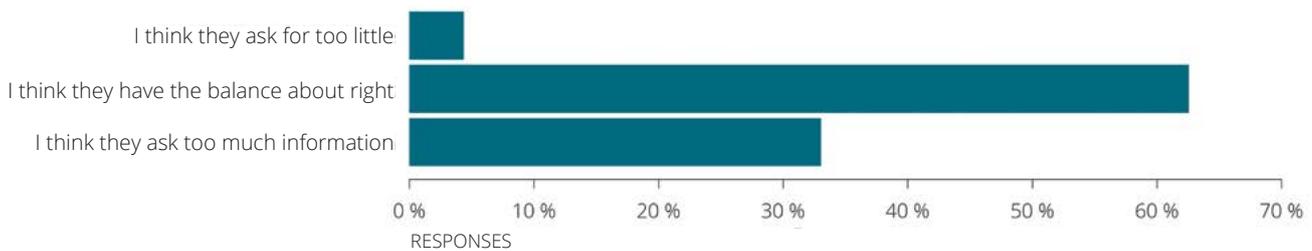
## Suggestions for the grantmaker to improve communication



# DATA COLLECTION

Grantseekers are generally satisfied with the amount of data they're being asked to provide in application forms and acquittals, with 63% saying grantmakers have the balance about right (though it's worth noting that a third of respondents think grantmakers ask for too much data).

## How do you feel about the amount of data grantmakers ask for in applications and acquittals?



Around a third of grantseekers think grantmakers are asking for more data lately than they did in the past, while 46% believe grantmakers' expectations are fairly static.

Most grantseekers understand why grantmakers ask for the data that they request, though a strong minority – more than a third – believe the opposite is true.

As one grantseeker put it: "Grants seem to be a black hole that information disappears into and never comes back. Feedback and other relevant information makes us understand the grant process better and so improve our grant(seeking)."

Another noted: "I wish they told me more about the use of our data, and why they asked for certain information," a sentiment reflected in a number of responses. The key take-away here seems to be that if a grantmaker asks for a piece of information, the grantseeker wants to know why.

Grantseekers are also keen for more information about themselves, and their peers. In this year's survey we asked what type of information would be of interest to them. Grantseekers told us they are interested in learning more about similar organisations:

- What are their success rates?
- Where did they get their grants from?
- What did their successful applications look like?
- Are there opportunities to collaborate?
- How successful are their projects in the long run?

They'd also like to know more about grantmakers' patterns – for example, what subjects/beneficiaries particular grantmakers have funded in the past.

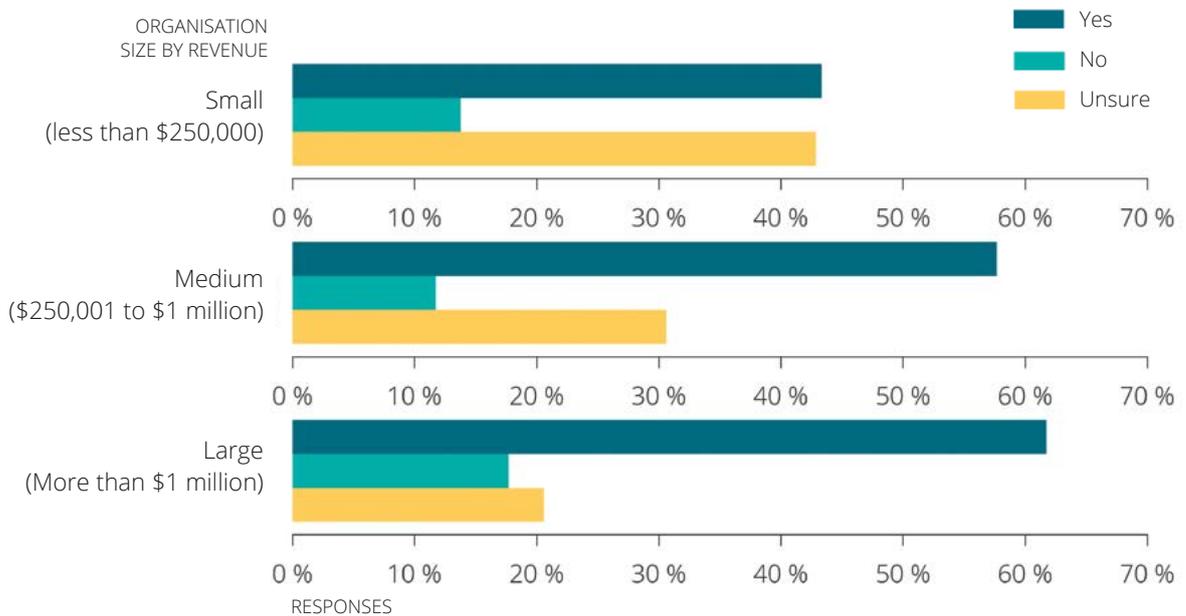
Our Community will use these results to inform future years' survey questions (and other activities) in a quest to fill this knowledge gap in future. In the meantime, we draw grantseekers' attention to our benchmarking "slider" comparison tool. Visit: [www.ourcommunity.com.au/grants2017](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/grants2017)

# OUTCOMES

From Our Community's vantage point, it seems clear that there's been a big shift in funding in favour of evidence-based practice. (We're talking here about demands from "professional funders" – people who give away money for a living. There's little evidence yet that the same trend is true of personal donors.)

Grantseekers have also noted this trend. Just over half of our respondents said they believed grantmakers were putting more emphasis on outcomes measurement and evaluation than they used to, while only 14% disputed this trend. The larger the organisation, the more likely their representative was to believe that outcomes measurement was becoming more prominent.

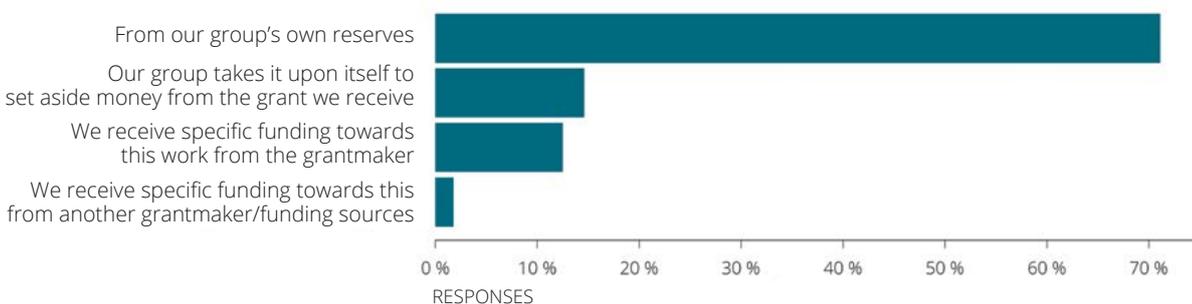
## Compared to 12 months ago, are grantmakers putting a greater emphasis on outcomes measurement and reporting/evaluation from funding recipients?



Grantmakers' enthusiasm for outcomes measurement is not, however, being matched by their enthusiasm for funding it. Our survey shows that grantseekers are overwhelmingly funding their own outcomes measurement. Only 12% of respondents reported having received specific funding for this purpose, while 15% said they took it upon themselves to set aside part of a grant to fund their measurement and evaluation activities.

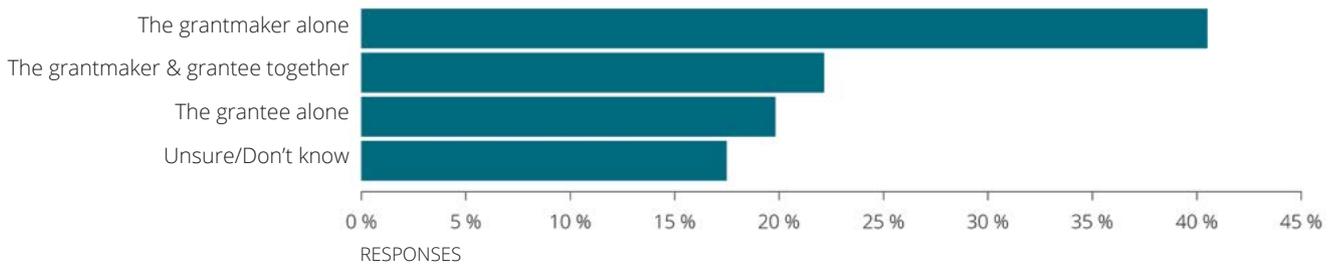
It's not surprising to learn, then, that 40% of grantseekers believe grantmakers' provision of funding for outcomes measurement and reporting/evaluation is inadequate, compared with 22% who think it's acceptable.

## How is outcomes measurement and reporting/evaluation funded?



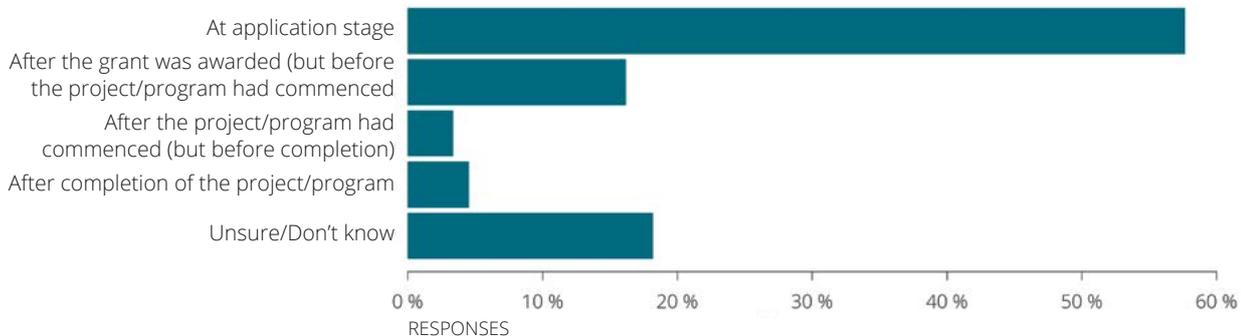
As the old saying goes, she who pays the piper calls the tune. Our survey shows that grantmakers are more responsible than any other party for determining how outcomes will be measured, reported or evaluated, accounting for 41% of our sample responses, while they were involved (though not singly responsible) in a further 22% of cases. Only 20% of grantseekers said they alone determined how the outcomes of their funded project would be evaluated.

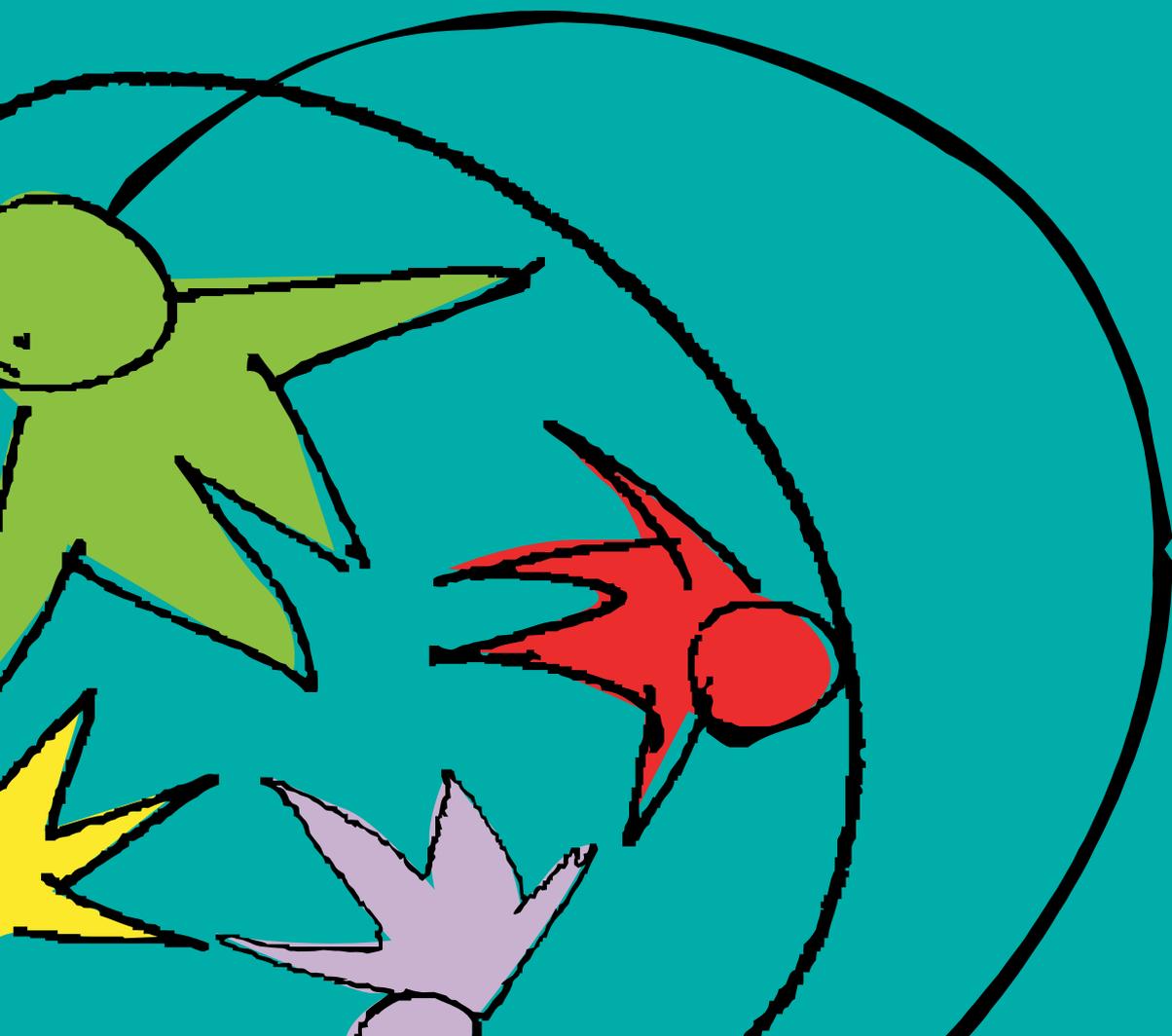
## Who decided how outcomes would be measured, reported on or evaluated?



In the majority of cases (74%), the evaluation plan was determined before the project commenced (which is good practice – grant recipients need to know from the outset what evidence they need to collect as their initiative progresses).

## When was it decided how outcomes would be measured, reported on or evaluated?





# ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY

The *Grants in Australia 2017* research report is an initiative of Our Community, a social enterprise and Certified B Corporation that provides advice, connections, training and easy-to-use tech tools for people and organisations working to build stronger communities.

Our partners in that work are not-for-profit organisations and social enterprises; government, philanthropic and corporate grantmakers; donors and volunteers; enlightened businesses; and other community builders.

A Certified B Corporation and multi-award-winning social enterprise, Our Community's offerings include:

- **OurCommunity.com.au** – Australia's centre for excellence for the nation's 600,000 not-for-profits and schools: where not-for-profits go for help
- **Institute of Community Directors Australia** – the best-practice governance network for the members of Australian not-for-profit boards, committees and councils, and the senior staff who work alongside them
- **FundingCentre.com.au** – the best place to go to get information on grants and fundraising in Australia
- **GiveNow.com.au** – commission-free online donations for not-for-profits, and philanthropy education and tools for businesses, families and individuals
- **Good Jobs** – Connecting good people with social sector jobs, board vacancies and internships
- **Communities in Control** – Australia's most inspiring annual community sector gathering: thought leadership for the not-for-profit sector
- **Australian Institute of Grants Management** – information, inspiration and education for government, philanthropic and corporate grantmakers
- **SmartyGrants** – software and data science for revolutionary grantmakers
- **Australian Institute for Corporate Responsibility** – creating and facilitating authentic connections between enlightened businesses and their communities
- **The Innovation Lab** – the engine room for sharing ideas and mobilising data to drive social change

Our vision centres on social inclusion and social equity. Our dream is that every Australian should be able to go out their front door and stroll or wheel to a community group that suits their interests, passions and needs – or log on and do the same.

We want to help make it easy for people to join in, learn, celebrate, worship, plant trees, play a game, entertain and be entertained, care and be cared for, support others and be supported, advocate for rights and celebrate diversity. To get involved. To be valued.

## Our Community's grants agenda

The Australian Institute of Grants Management, a division of Our Community, has for more than a decade been at the forefront of innovation in grantmaking in Australia. As well as producing the country's only cross-sector best practice grantmaking publication, the AIGM also convenes and coordinates a number of grantmaking affinity groups and events, and has developed a best practice online grants management system, SmartyGrants, which is streamlining and standardising grantmaking across the country.

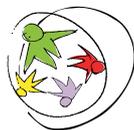
The AIGM is active in seeking and documenting best practice lessons and examples. We are codifying what we are learning through our website and tools, and embedding forward-thinking practices in our software.

Our Community also oversees Australia's most comprehensive grants listing newsletter and database, EasyGrants, and goes face to face with thousands of grantseekers across the country every year through an extensive grants training program.

## The Grantmaking Manifesto

We believe:

1. **Grantmaking is an absolutely central element in the Australian economic system.** Not one dollar should be wasted on poorly designed, poorly articulated, poorly evaluated, or inefficient grants programs and systems. Grantmakers should maximise resources by sharing lessons, and seeking and learning from lessons shared by others.
2. **Australia needs more and better professional grantmakers.** The job of grantmaking should be afforded appropriate professional status, training and recompense.
3. **Grantmakers should listen to the communities they serve.** Grantmakers should be driven by outcomes, not process. They should trust and respect their grantees and offer programs, systems and processes appropriate to their needs and capacities.
4. **Grantmakers should be efficient.** Wastage is indefensible. Skimping on systems, technology and professional staff is equally wicked.
5. **Grantmakers should be ethical.** Grantmakers should ensure that the process of grantmaking is fair, unbiased, and transparent.



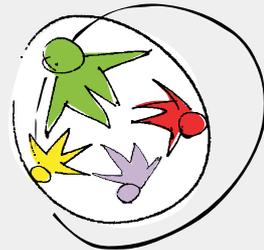
An enterprise of:

**ourcommunity.com.au**

Where not-for-profits go for help



# Our Community Manifesto



## WHAT WE BELIEVE:

- ▶ We believe in the power of the community sector
- ▶ We believe in human capital
- ▶ We believe in equality
- ▶ We believe women have equal rights to leadership roles
- ▶ We believe technology is a key to accelerating our reform agenda
- ▶ We believe laughter is good
- ▶ We believe work can be a place to make friends for life
- ▶ We believe business is good and can do good
- ▶ We believe treating people with respect gains respect
- ▶ We believe mayhem is not only healthy but critical

## WHAT WE DO:

- ▶ We build stronger communities
- ▶ We create, curate and share knowledge and experiences
- ▶ We listen, then we act
- ▶ We revolutionise markets
- ▶ We ignite and accelerate
- ▶ We convene and connect
- ▶ We put back into the community that we work with

## HOW WE WORK:

- ▶ We strive for fairness
- ▶ We are failure tolerant
- ▶ We take risks
- ▶ We question authority
- ▶ We use our balance sheet to create social change
- ▶ We believe in a work environment that allows for an authentic life balance
- ▶ We accept increments, but strive for revolution
- ▶ Ethics, inspiration and innovation are at our core
- ▶ We value our structure: we share the cleaning as well as the decision-making
- ▶ We celebrate success and learn from our mistakes
- ▶ We are dogmatic and passionate

## OUR IDEAL ENVIRONMENT - THE EDGE OF CHAOS:

*‘The estuary region where rigid order and random chaos meet and generate high levels of adaptation, complexity and creativity’*

## READY, FIRE, AIM

