FEEDBACK

2016 TABLE HOTSPOT RESOURCE:
HOW TO PROVIDE HONEST FEEDBACK TO UNSUCCESSFUL GRANTS APPLICANTS

Grantmakers were concerned about putting too much of their feedback in writing.

- They questioned its effectiveness, and were worried that anything put in writing might come back to haunt them.

- Others faced difficulties in providing candid feedback because of lack of resources and the volume of applications received.

> "We don't give written feedback any more, only verbal. People were lodging complaints!"

> "Resourcing is a big problem. Too many grant applications, not enough people to process them – that leads to inadequate feedback."

> "It is good to put certain amounts in writing, but agree that written feedback can come back (to haunt you)."

TOP TAKEAWAYS

- Have the assessment panel collect and note down feedback at the time of assessment. It can be hard to revisit an application at the end of the process in order to offer specific feedback.

  - This process also keeps assessment panels accountable, with specific reasons behind grant application refusal noted at the time of assessment.

- Make offering specific feedback a mandatory part of the assessment process.

- Assign a specific person or group of people to provide feedback after grants round results are released.

- Invite applicants to speak face-to-face with your grants team. There, grantmakers can provide more detailed feedback.

- After a grants round, post statements of general round-wide feedback on your website. You can then supplement this with specific feedback.

- Provide support and ongoing feedback to applicants before and during grant application submission.

  - Review draft applications and provide feedback so applicants can refine them through an expression-of-interest process or after pre-application briefings.

- Resourcing is vital. Appropriate resources must be in place to support all of the above.