

SUPPORT

2016 TABLE HOTSPOT RESOURCE: TECHNIQUES FOR PROVIDING HIGH QUALITY SUPPORT AND ADVICE



For grantmakers, high quality support spans:

- Program guidelines
- Communication
- Feedback
- Contact with applicants
- Organisational policies
- Acquittal processes

"Analyse trends in unsuccessful grants. If you notice certain trends – (for example) a high number of homelessness organisations applying for funds – suggest that organisations combine resources, or even think about changing your program to be more responsive to community needs."

"If an application doesn't align with program guidelines, grantmakers should suggest other more fitting opportunities."

"Be honest with applicants about their chances so they don't waste their time. Provide honest feedback so groups can refine their pitch or apply for something different."

TOP TAKEAWAYS

To support applicants

- Put relevant, up-to-date information on your website.
- Reduce the size of your guidelines.
- Offer a grants hotline featuring familiarity (same staff) and accessibility (know your applicants).
- Ensure clear internal communications so you are all on the same page.

What do you do when an application doesn't quite align with guidelines

- Suggest to grantseekers more fitting funding opportunities.
- Be honest with applicants about their chances. They can then make informed decisions about how to proceed.
- Provide honest feedback to applicants so they can refine their pitch or apply for something different. Make clear what you don't fund, be broad about what you do fund.

Grantees' projects going over time – what can you do?

- Have a clear organisational policy so individual staff are not "on their own" dealing with errant grant recipients.

- Have clear guidelines covering what happens when certain issues arise.

- Link the grantee with the project manager – have them communicate directly.
- Try to help applicants succeed. Have funder and grantee work as partners.

Strategies for unsuccessful applicants

- Make eligibility guidelines clear.
- Provide meaningful, honest feedback.
- For a good initiative not funded, suggest partnerships with other programs or other possible funders.
- Invite unsuccessful applicants to view applications so they can see what worked.

Acquittals

- Consider face-to-face acquittals.
- Talk about what has happened – what has worked and what hasn't.
- Share learnings with each organisation, and within the organisation, to strengthen organisational policies.