

Breaking Down Barriers Between Grantmakers and Grantseekers

More family foundations are reaching out to nonprofit organizations than in the past, but grantseekers and grantmakers are still often isolated from one another. Neither knows enough about the other and when they do talk, they tend to talk only about matters related to proposals. In doing so, they miss the opportunity to exchange information about their larger body of work and experience. As a grantmaker, you can learn about the bigger issues by:

- Visiting grantees midway through the grant. On the second visit, grant proposals are not on the line and grantees can be more relaxed and more forthcoming about their work and the challenges they face.
- Hosting meetings or going to meetings sponsored by community groups or state associations of nonprofits where you can meet grantseekers.
- Serving on panels on which trustees and grantseekers are seen as equals.
- Hosting meetings with grantees to talk about program areas and to hear their ideas of how to address community needs.