

## Ideas on Communications for the New or Small Family Foundation

- Consider how communications can facilitate your own internal operations, such as communication among trustees via email, a “family” page on a website (probably by password), and communications with contractors and advisors.
- Look at ways to get out the important messages to be found in your Mission Statement and grant guidelines: issue an announcement, a press release, or a brochure; go on community television; create a listserv for grantees.
- Develop an annual reporting mechanism that complements your Form 990-PF and is right for your family foundation style. For example, you can send a photocopy of the annual report to those you hope to involve or to those who request information. A photocopy saves time and money.
- Talk with other founders and trustees in your community who share funding interests, and ask for ideas on how to get the word out.
- If you do not accept unsolicited proposals, say so. Many family foundations begin by funding organizations they know, while researching new ones.
- Think about how communications can help your grantees and add “bang to your grant dollars.” Draft procedures for and standard language on how nonprofit organizations can and cannot use your foundation name in their communications.
- Develop a strategy for responding to press inquiries before it’s an issue.
- Consider the advantage of a communications advisor as an ad hoc or retained consultant or firm. Such a professional can help you during the startup phase and be available later, as needed.