

Grantee Perception Report®

prepared for

The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation

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THE CENTER FOR
EFFECTIVE PHILANTHROPY

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Key Findings

The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation (“GBMF”) has improved significantly since 2004 on a number of major measures, including the Foundation’s impact on grantees’ fields, communities, and organizations. Grantees are also significantly more satisfied with their relationship with GBMF than they were in 2004, and several grantees comment that the Foundation has “improved over the years.” While this trend is positive, the Foundation continues to receive below-typical ratings on many measures.

GBMF, while significantly improved, is still rated below the median funder on grantees’ comfort approaching the Foundation if a problem arises and on its responsiveness to grantees. Additionally, the Foundation is rated below the 25th percentile for the fairness of its treatment of grantees. Grantees with which GBMF is more highly engaged tend to rate the Foundation more positively on this measure. But, the line is fine: While some grantees suggest the Foundation should provide more interaction, other grantees comment that the Foundation’s “micro-managing” prevents them from developing a sense of “partnership” with their program officer. Indeed, GBMF is rated higher than ninety percent of philanthropic funders on the level of pressure grantees feel to modify their priorities to receive funding.

Similarly, GBMF’s improved ratings are still below the 25th percentile among funders in CEP’s dataset for the clarity and consistency of communications. Grantees attribute the lack of consistency to changes in funding priorities and to the “constant staff turnover” at GBMF. The negative ramifications of this turnover may be exacerbated by grantees’ reliance on information from their program officer to understand GBMF’s goals, strategies, and processes; they rate GBMF’s written communications and website as not very helpful to them.

GBMF’s 2008 grantees rate the helpfulness of the Foundation’s selection and evaluation processes at the 75th percentile – again, a statistically significant jump from its 2004 ratings (which were below the 25th percentile). Despite these above-average ratings, grantees are also split in their comments. Some speak positively about how the processes help them “[assess] progress for us” and “define metrics for evaluation of [our] program.” Some are more negative about both processes, calling them “time-consuming,” “rigid,” and “burdensome.” At the median, grantees spend 120 hours on administrative work over the course of the grant. Although grantees receive more grant dollars per hour of administrative work than is typical, some grantees wonder whether it is worth the “opportunity cost” to their organization.

A larger than typical proportion of grantees report receiving non-monetary assistance, receiving a site visit, and discussing their completed evaluation with Foundation staff. These grantees rate the Foundation higher on a number of measures, including the Foundation’s understanding of their organization’s goals and strategies.

Methodology (1)

- ◆ The Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) has surveyed almost 60,000 grantees of 222 philanthropic funders since spring 2003. Please see the Appendix for a list of all funders whose grantees CEP has surveyed.
- ◆ This Grantee Perception Report® (GPR) contains data collected over the last three years, and includes almost 20,000 grantee responses about 124 philanthropic funders.¹
 - CEP surveyed 436 fiscal year 2007 grantees of the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation (“GBMF”) during May and June 2008. CEP received 296 completed responses, a 68 percent response rate. The average and/or median rating for these respondents is shown throughout this report.
 - CEP surveyed 71 fiscal year 2002 and 2003 grantees of GBMF during September and October 2004. CEP received 56 completed responses, a 79 percent response rate. Whenever possible, these grantees’ responses are shown.
 - Grantees submitted responses via mail and the Web.²
- ◆ GBMF provided grantee contact information.
- ◆ Selected grantee comments are shown throughout this report. This selection of comments highlights major themes and reflects trends in the data. These selected comments over-represent negative comments about the Foundation in order to offer a wide range of perspectives. Negative comments accounted for less than 15% of all comments from grantees.

1: The average response rate for individual funders over the last three years of surveys is 71 percent.

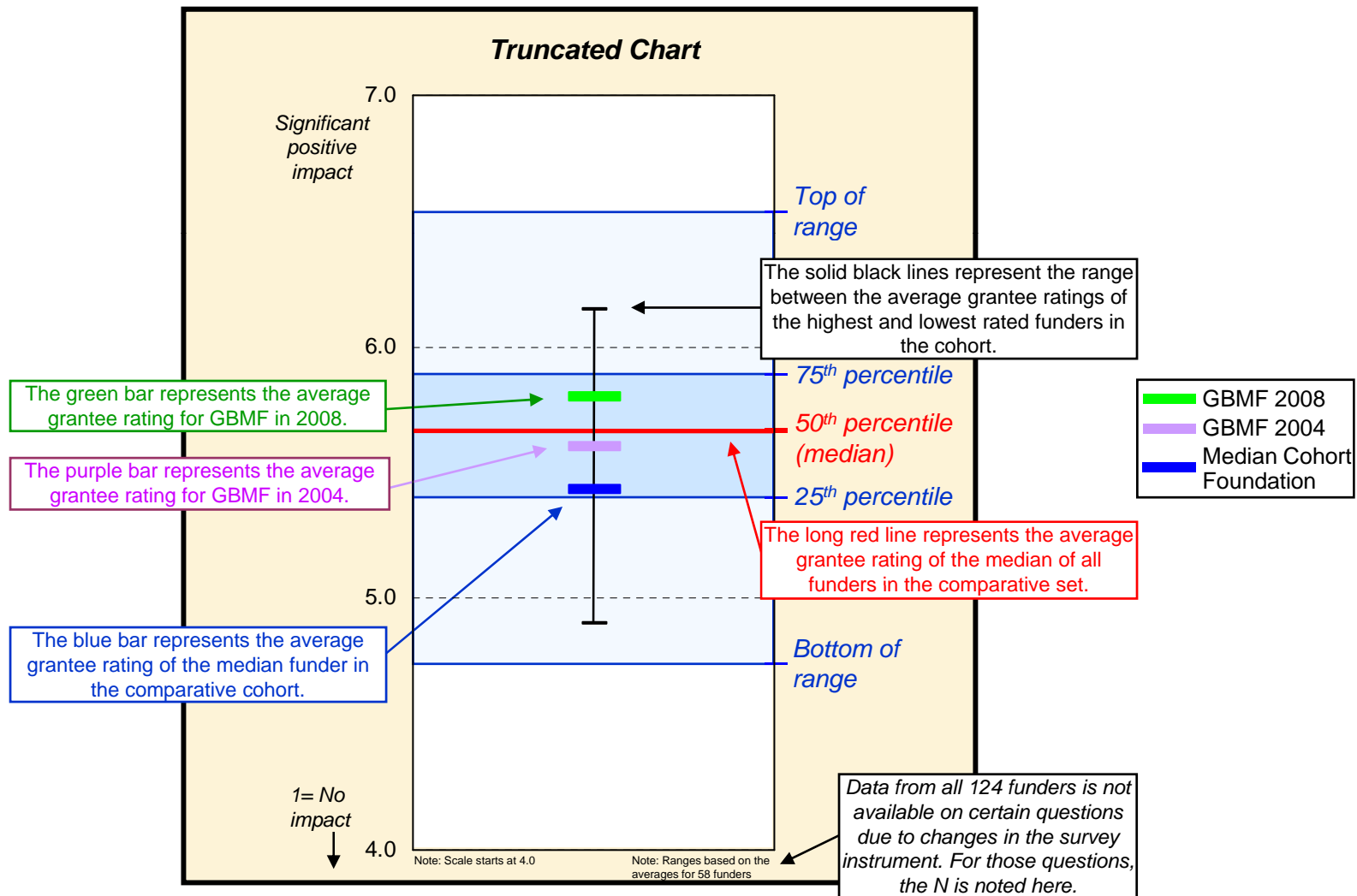
2: Across CEP’s dataset, there are no differences of meaningful magnitude between responses received via the mail or the Web.

Methodology (2)

- ◆ GBMF is also compared to a cohort of philanthropic funders chosen by the Foundation to represent its peers. The 10 funders and GBMF that comprise this group are:
 - Carnegie Corporation of New York
 - Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
 - The David and Lucile Packard Foundation
 - Doris Duke Charitable Foundation
 - Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation
 - John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
 - The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
 - Rockefeller Foundation
 - Surdna Foundation, Inc.
 - W. K. Kellogg Foundation
 - The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

Reading GPR Charts

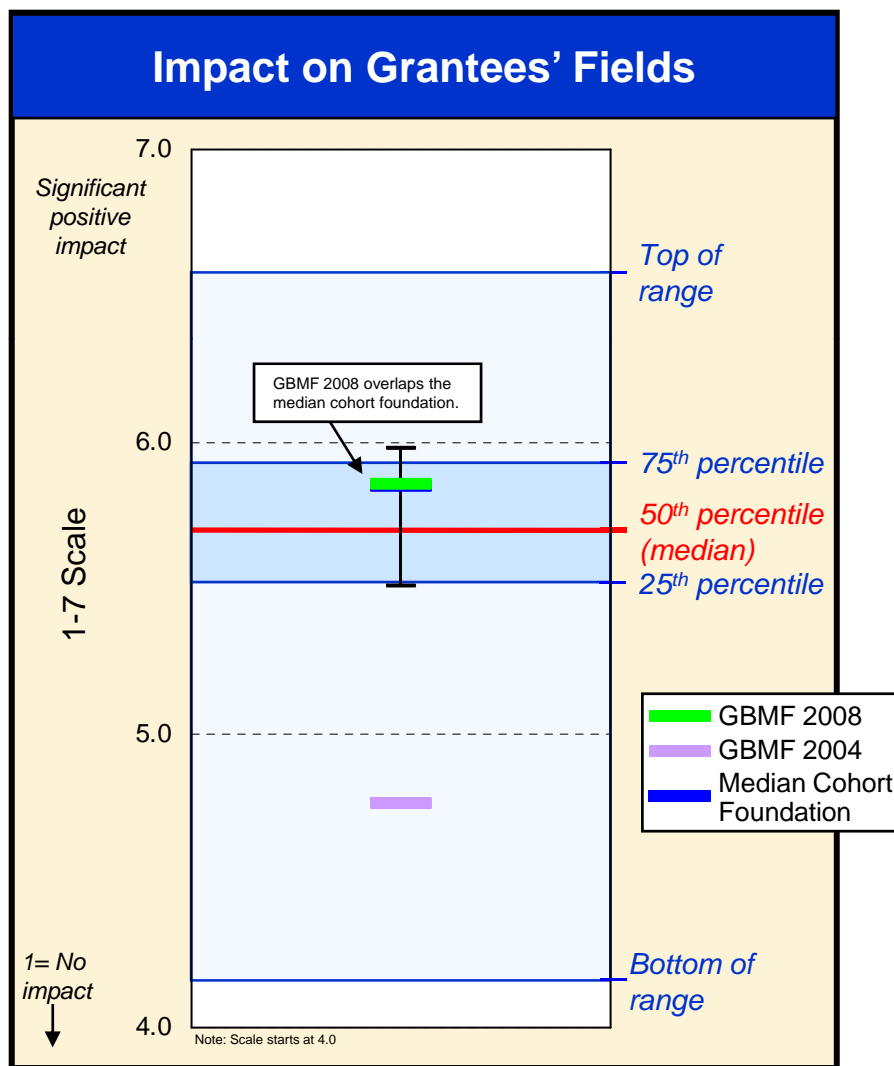
Much of the grantee perception data in the GPR is presented in the format below. These graphs show the average of grantee responses for GBMF, over a background that shows percentiles for the average ratings for the full comparative set of 124 philanthropic funders. **Throughout the report, many charts in this format are truncated from the full scale because funder averages fall within the top half of the absolute range.**



Impact on Grantees' Fields

On impact on grantees' fields, GBMF is rated:

- above the median funder
- similarly to the median cohort funder



Selected Grantee Comments

- ♦ *“By anticipating the changing directions of the field... GBMF was able to accelerate scientific progress very significantly, perhaps putting the field 5 years or more ahead of where it would have been.”*
- ♦ *“Foundation support for salmon conservation has been absolutely instrumental in the field. However, at times it would appear that the Foundation is supporting science without a clear strategy for employing those findings to effect critical changes in public policy.”*
- ♦ *“[The Foundation] has enabled us to push back boundaries and develop entirely new approaches to difficult problems. It is unlikely that such support could have been found elsewhere for these pioneering phases.”*
- ♦ *“The Moore Foundation has had a substantial impact on the progress and understanding of marine microbial ecosystems as well as [on] increased public awareness.”*
- ♦ *“The Foundation did not understand academia and universities very well. They did generate wonderful support for nursing in the community and put a spotlight on the need for faculty.”*
- ♦ *“[The Foundation has played] a very positive role in stimulating innovation and adaptation of new technology.”*

Note: This question includes a “don’t know” response option; 5 percent of GBMF respondents answered “don’t know” in 2008 compared to 8 percent at the median funder, 16 percent of GBMF respondents in 2004, and 5 percent at the median cohort funder.

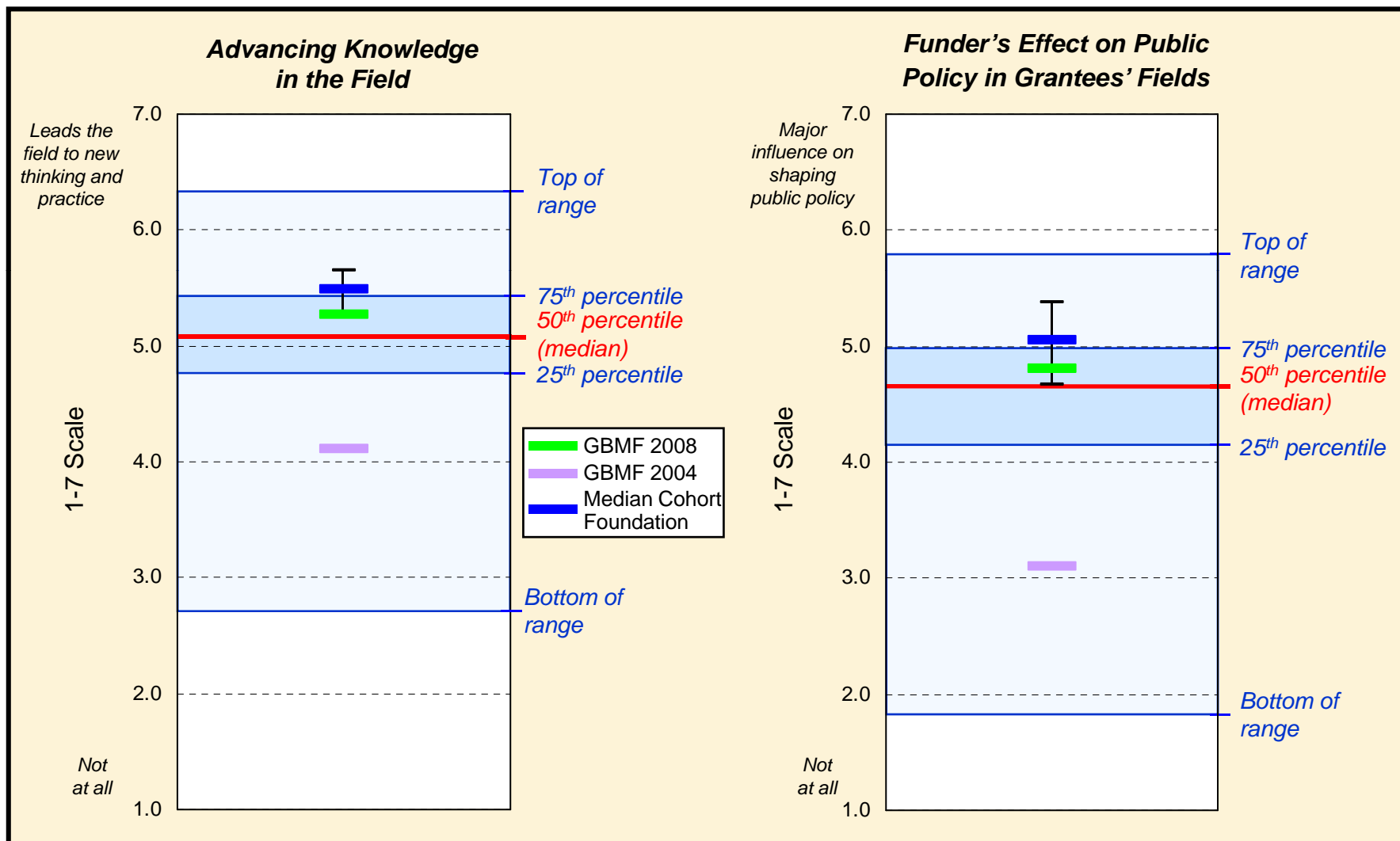
Advancing Knowledge in Fields and Effect on Public Policy

On advancement of knowledge in grantees' fields, GBMF is rated:

- similarly to the median funder
- lower than all other cohort funders

On effect on public policy in grantees' fields, GBMF is rated:

- similarly to the median funder
- below the median cohort funder

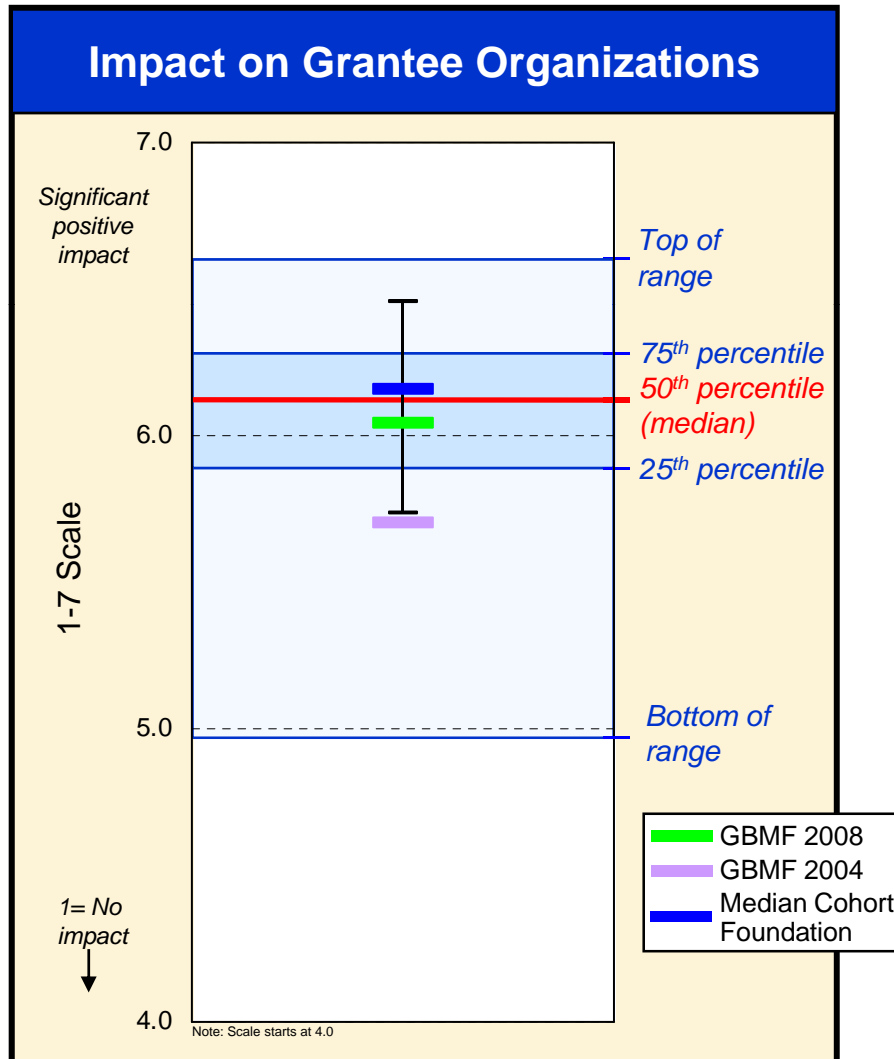


Note: The questions depicted on these charts include a "don't know" response option. In the left-hand chart, 12 percent of GBMF respondents answered "don't know" in 2008 compared to 23 percent at the median funder, 31 percent of GBMF respondents in 2004, and 11 percent at the median cohort funder. In the right-hand chart 25 percent of GBMF respondents answered "don't know" in 2008 compared to 36 percent at the median funder, 43 percent of GBMF respondents in 2004, and 22 percent at the median cohort funder.

Impact on Grantee Organizations

On impact on grantee organizations, GBMF is rated:

- similarly to the median funder
- similarly to the median cohort funder



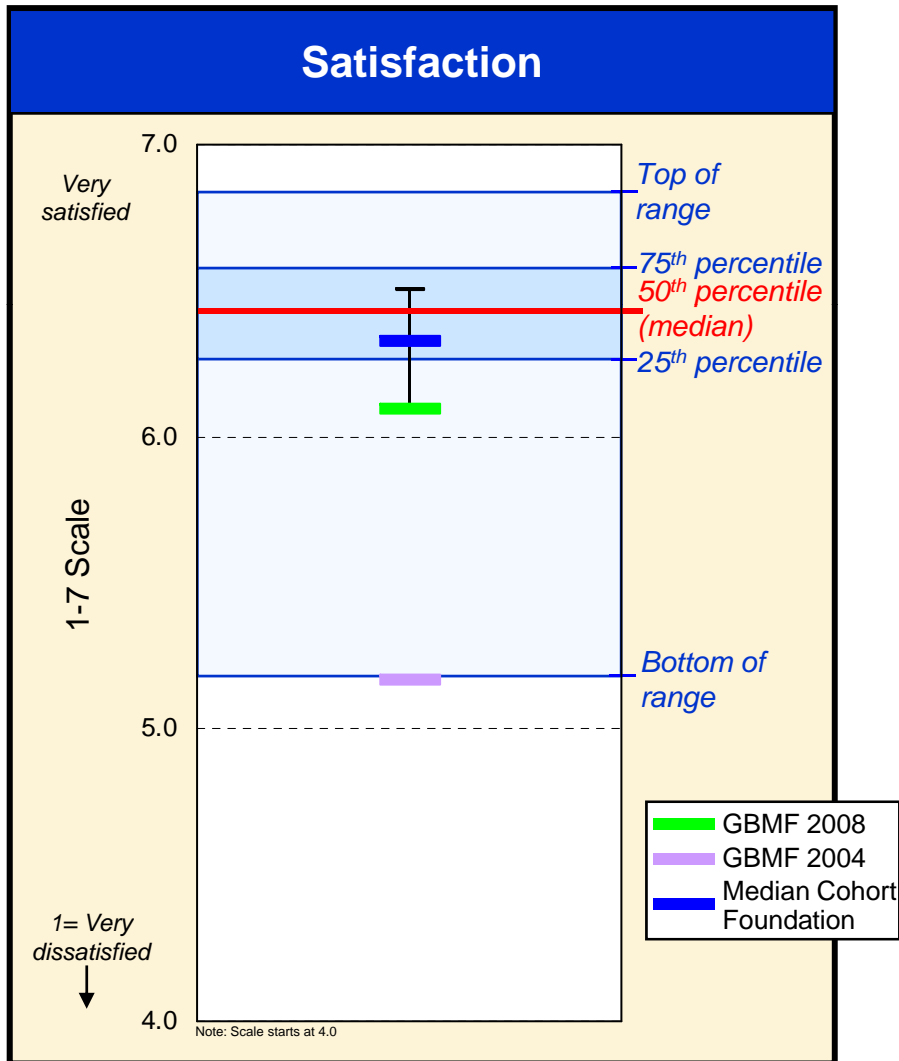
Selected Grantee Comments

- ♦ *“The strategic thinking necessary for successfully completing a project proposal and then implement[ing] it, at the necessary quality level required by the Foundation, takes the organization to a much higher level of strategic planning and performance.”*
- ♦ *“We were... able to grow our new program because it aligned with Moore’s interests, but we have found it difficult to diversify funding for this new program – as it was created in alignment with Moore’s interests, and not in collaboration with other funders. This will prove challenging when Moore expects us to diversify, [because] other funders aren’t interested in supporting what Moore started and invested in.”*
- ♦ *“The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation is a real partner in our work. They provide funds that help us do things that have never been tried before. This partnership is one of our most valuable assets.”*
- ♦ *“Without a doubt, this was the most significant grant in our organizational history.”*
- ♦ *“[The Foundation] squeezed us on the budget and we are going to spend more to finish the project than we received.”*

Satisfaction

On overall satisfaction, GBMF is rated:

- lower than ninety percent of funders whose grantees CEP has surveyed
- lower than all other cohort funders



Selected Grantee Comments

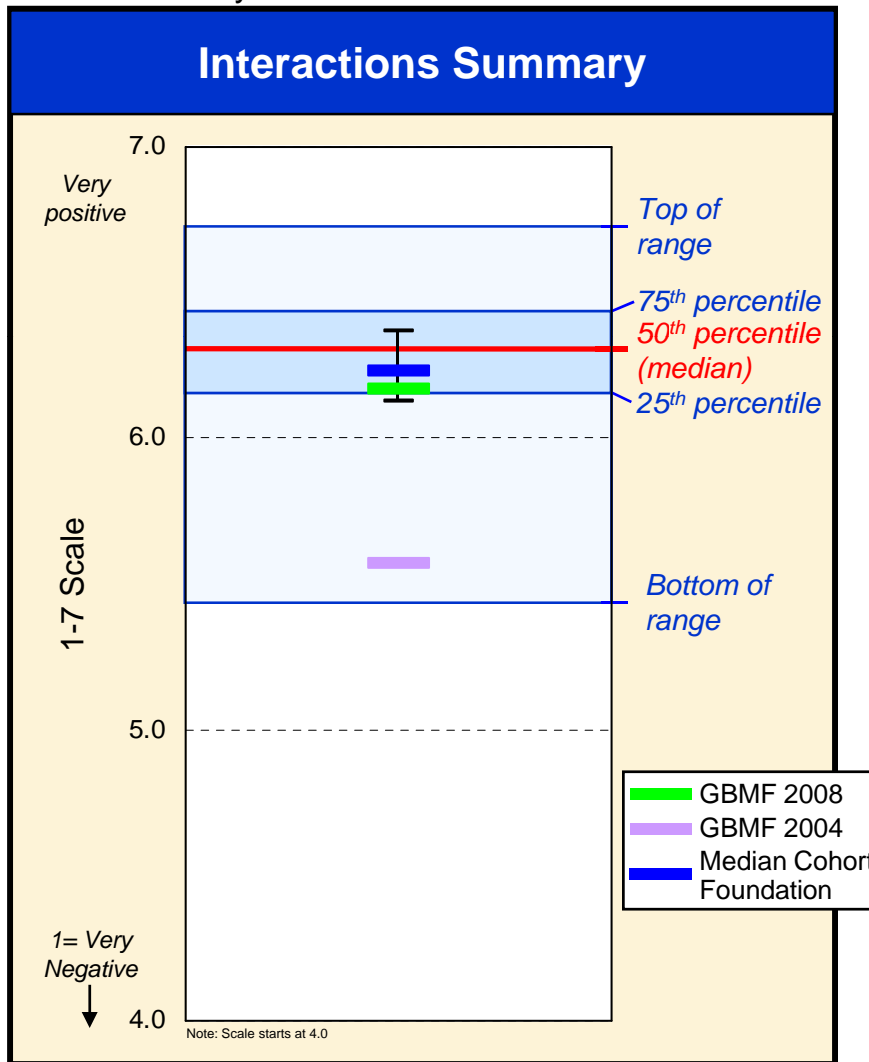
- ♦ “[The Foundation’s] funding priorities changed twice during the three year grant term. Overall quality of experience was poor.”
- ♦ “The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation has been tremendous. They are unfailingly professional, helpful, and go out of their way to provide any and all support needed.”
- ♦ “The Foundation is one of the most difficult, time-consuming and frustrating Foundations we work with.”
- ♦ “Overall, Moore is widely regarded as clueless and arrogant.”
- ♦ “[The Foundation is] very professional and focused on maximizing investment to make a difference.”

Survey-Wide Analysis Fact: Three dimensions best predict grantee perceptions of satisfaction with their philanthropic funders: 1) *Quality of Interactions with Foundation Staff:* fairness, responsiveness, approachability; 2) *Clarity of Communication of a Foundation’s Goals and Strategy:* clear and consistent articulation of objectives; 3) *Expertise and External Orientation of the Foundation:* understanding of fields and communities of funding and ability to advance knowledge and affect public policy. For more on these findings and resulting management implications, please see CEP’s report, *Listening to Grantees: What Nonprofits Value in Their Foundation Funders.*

Grantee Interactions Summary

On this summary that includes grantees' comfort approaching the Foundation if a problem arises, responsiveness of Foundation staff, and fairness of the Foundation's treatment of grantees GBMF is rated:

- below the median funder
- similarly to the median cohort funder



Selected Grantee Comments

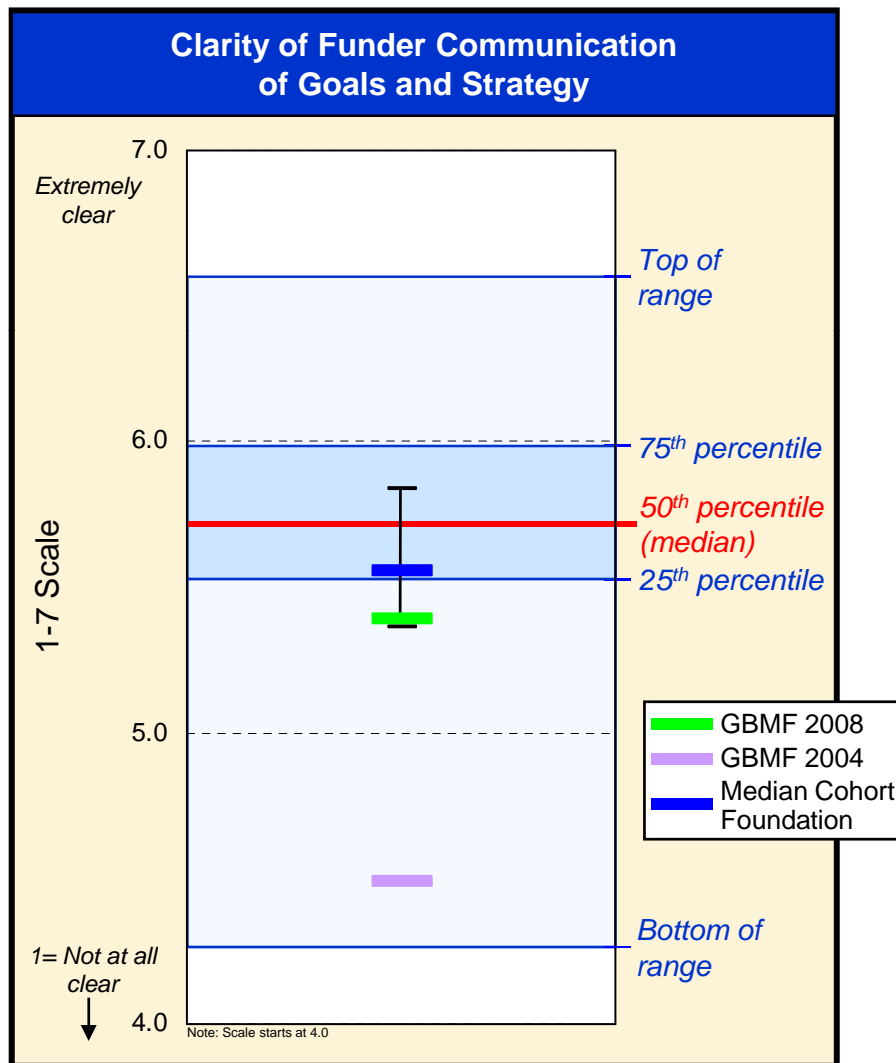
- ◆ *"The Foundation staff is very knowledgeable and eager to provide assistance at all stages of the grant process."*
- ◆ *"Foundation staff were supportive but there was such turnover that it was difficult to maintain relationships and maintain consistency."*
- ◆ *"The individuals are all very helpful and the operations are fair and business-like. Interactions are typically positive."*
- ◆ *"I always felt like we were being scrutinized as if we were novices or children. There was too much interference."*
- ◆ *"Foundation staff have consistently been open, honest, and extremely helpful while writing the grant and helping us realize our goals for the grant. They are problem-solvers who are there to help."*
- ◆ *"Over the last few years, I have seen a great improvement over the quality of the Foundation's operations and interactions with grantees."*
- ◆ *"There seems to be a temptation to tell recipients how to do what they have been awarded to do rather than revealing what the issues and questions are and letting the recipients use their proven approaches to address the issues."*

Note: Index created by averaging grantee ratings of comfort approaching the Foundation if a problem arises, responsiveness of the Foundation staff, and fairness of the Foundation's treatment of grantees – ratings that are highly correlated.

Communication of Goals and Strategy

On clarity of the Foundation's communication of its goals and strategy, GBMF is rated:

- below the median funder
- below the median cohort funder



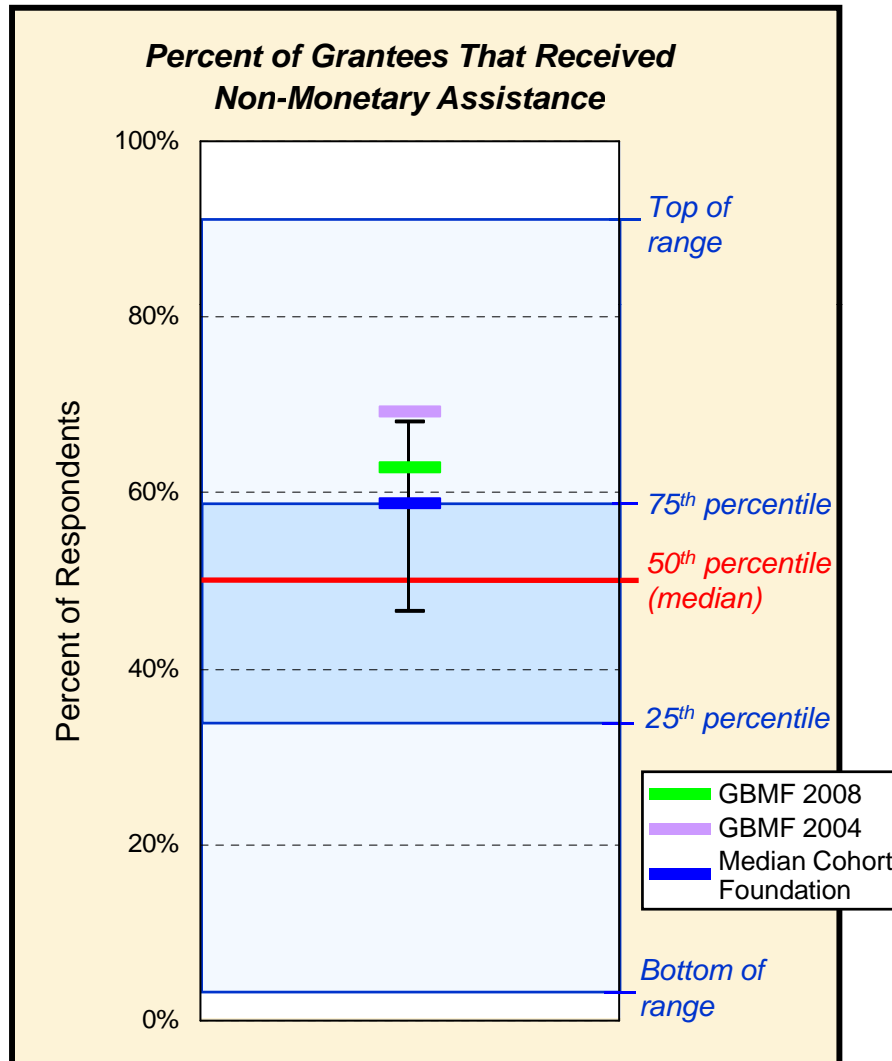
Selected Grantee Comments

- ♦ “Since our award, the program officer in charge of the program has changed. During these transitions between staff and programs, communications between our project and the Foundation have been slow and inconsistent. Our program would have greatly benefited from more consistent communications.”
- ♦ “Communication is generally very clear and helpful.”
- ♦ “Communications with the Foundation have dramatically improved over the past five years from highly complex to very straightforward and helpful.”
- ♦ “Foundation is well-organized and expectations are clearly stated and consistently followed. Changes are communicated clearly and in a timely manner.”
- ♦ “For the most part they were helpful, but at times I felt a lack of complete openness, as if there were key issues not being shared with me, which left me trying to guess what was going on.”
- ♦ “Very helpful and thorough in communications.”
- ♦ “The Foundation has tried to be helpful but gave confusing signals that caused considerable difficulties.”

Non-Monetary Assistance

The proportion of GBMF grantees receiving any non-monetary assistance is:

- larger than that of the median funder
- larger than that of the median cohort funder



Selected Grantee Comments

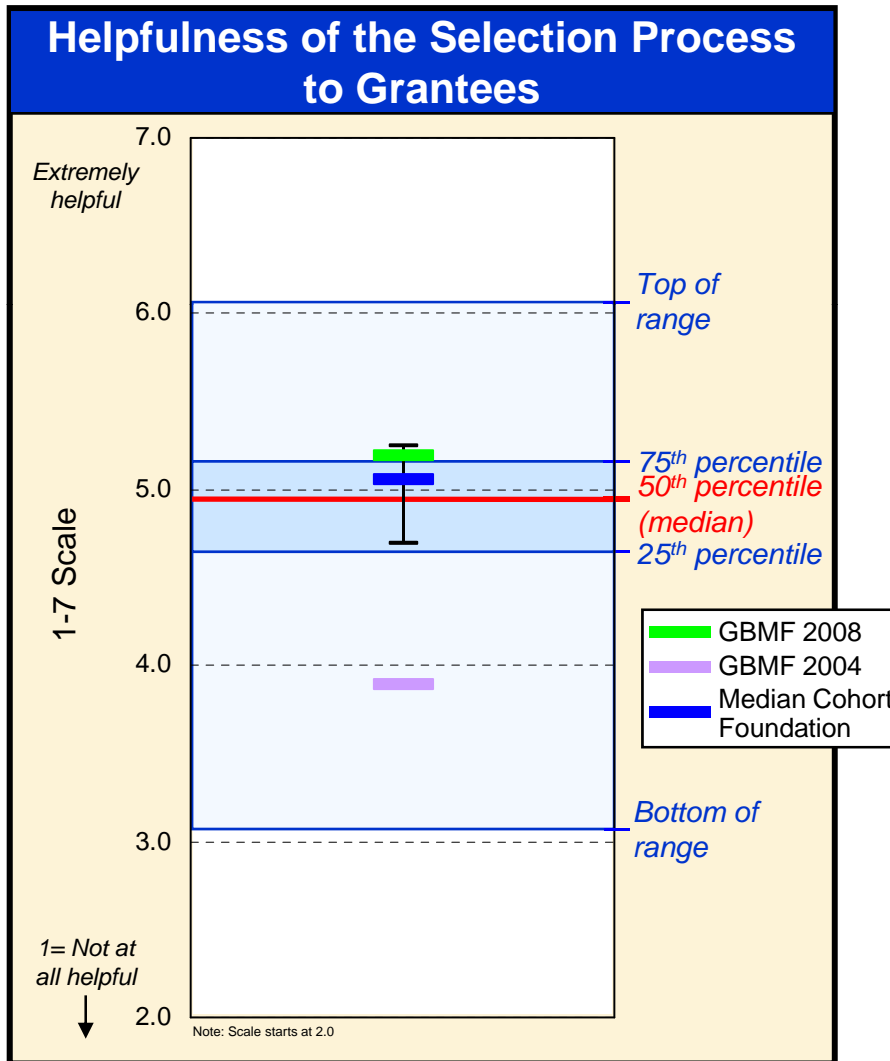
- ♦ “Annual meetings for Moore fellows are well-organized and educational.”
- ♦ “The Foundation has been instrumental in bringing together leaders in the field to share best practices and learn from one another.”
- ♦ “The Foundation... held a meeting of grantees in the Wild Salmon Initiative that really helped all of us better understand how our individual projects integrate into a huge footprint.”
- ♦ “We have complained in the past about the lack of effort by the Foundation to foster links among its projects in the macro-region. This year the Foundation is sponsoring the first meeting among its partners....that is a positive step forward.”
- ♦ “[The] Moore Foundation organized workshops and discussion session with other grantees, which were very illustrative and helpful.”

Grantees who report receiving any non-monetary assistance rate the Foundation higher on almost every major measure, including: the Foundation's impact on and understanding of their fields, local communities, and organizations; their overall satisfaction with the Foundation; the quality of their interactions with the Foundation; and the clarity of the Foundation's communications.

Helpfulness of Selection Process

On helpfulness of the Foundation’s selection process in strengthening the grantee, GBMF is rated:

- above the median funder
- above the median cohort funder



Selected Grantee Comments

- ◆ “Big money, big pain.”
- ◆ “The detailed process required to develop our proposal... included many conversations with our Foundation program officer, [which] helped us to clarify our project strategies, activities, and outcomes.”
- ◆ “We found program staff at the Foundation to be highly constructive in working to define outcomes, processes, and intermediate objectives.”
- ◆ “Of all the Foundations I work with, the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation is by far the most time-consuming and demanding... The Foundation’s outcomes table format and budgeting process makes their thinking narrow and rigid, and gives them a strong desire for certainty about outcomes often years away that in fact [have] a lot of uncertainty, particularly at the level of detail they are tracking... While it is a good use of our time to explain a project thoroughly to them, it is not time well spent to figure out and justify projected expenses over a multi-year period down to the dollar... Overall, while the individuals at the Foundation are nice and well-intentioned, the systems they have in place are onerous and oblivious to the realities of the non-profit organizations they are intended to serve.”

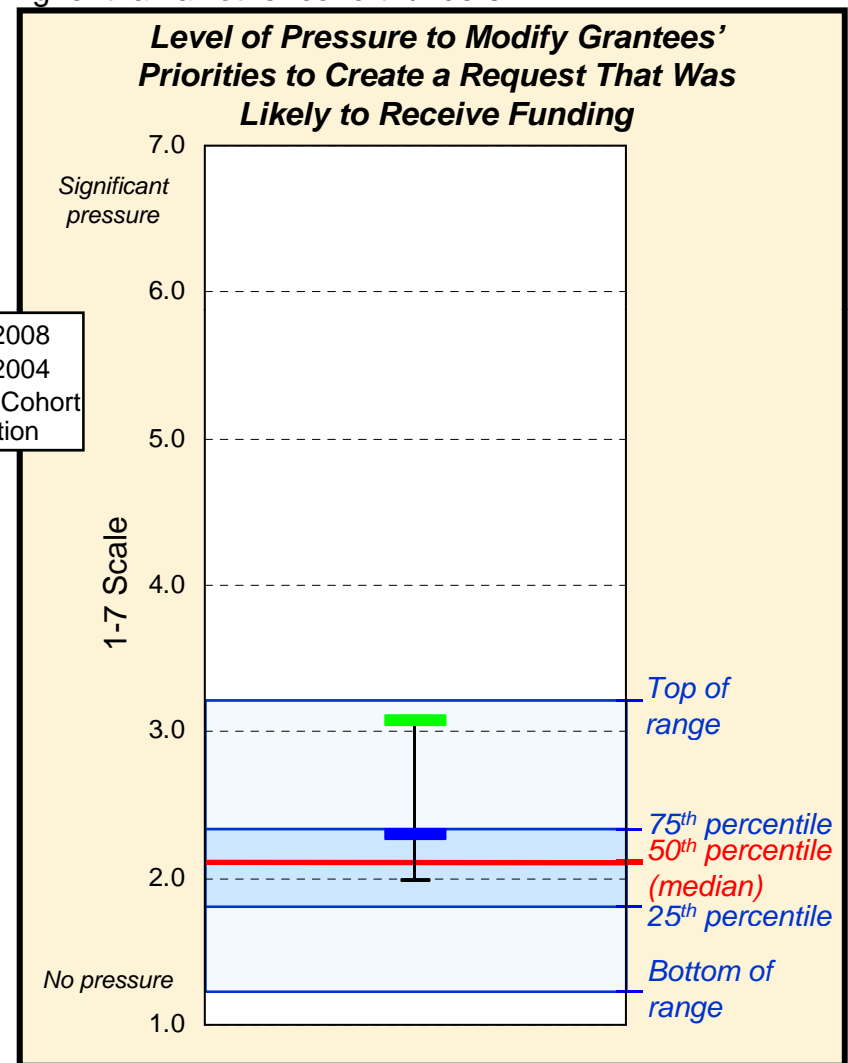
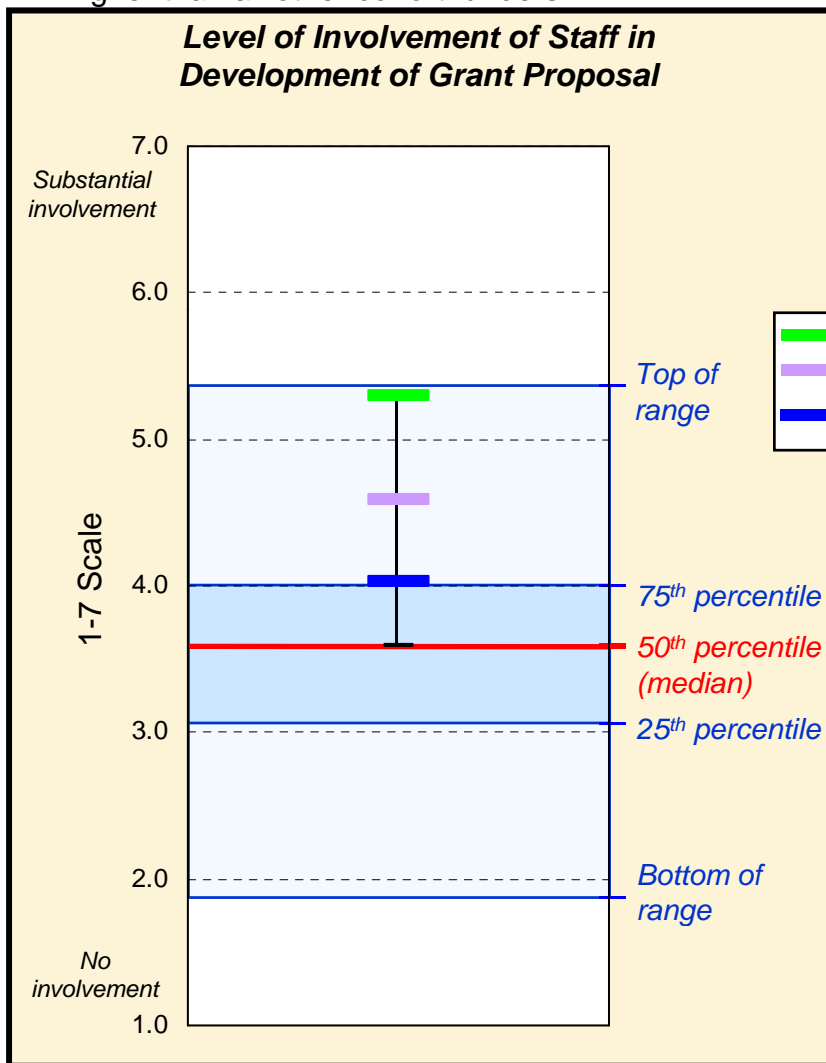
Funder Involvement and Pressure in Selection Process

On the level of involvement in the development of grantees' proposals, GBMF is rated:

- higher than ninety percent of funders whose grantees CEP has surveyed
- higher than all other cohort funders

On the level of pressure grantees feel to modify their priorities to create a proposal that was likely to receive funding, GBMF is rated:

- higher than ninety percent of funders whose grantees CEP has surveyed
- higher than all other cohort funders



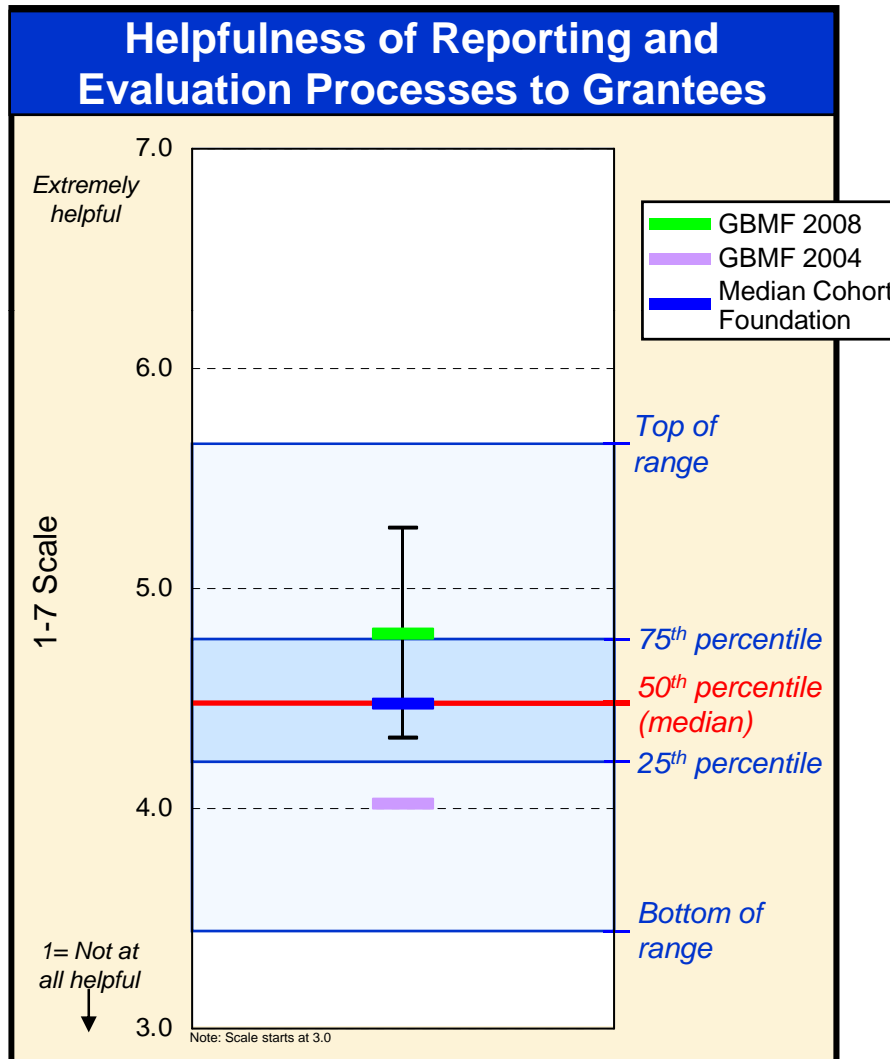
█ GBMF 2008
█ GBMF 2004
█ Median Cohort Foundation

Note: In the right-hand chart, GBMF 2004 data not available due to changes to the survey instrument.

Helpfulness of Reporting and Evaluation Processes

On helpfulness of the Foundation's reporting/evaluation process in strengthening the grantee, GBMF is rated:

- above the median funder
- above the median cohort funder



Selected Grantee Comments

- ♦ *"GBMF is widely considered a Foundation with great, creative ideas and yet one of the worst Foundations to work with.... The Moore Foundation asks its staff to micromanage projects and grantees.... The message to grantees is, 'We don't believe in you and we don't trust you.'"*
- ♦ *"[GBMF] helped to define metrics for evaluation of [our] program."*
- ♦ *"The requirements are extremely detailed, especially financial reporting, and at times it seems the reporting is more important than the actual research being done."*
- ♦ *"Involved in every detail and inflexible about outcomes."*
- ♦ *"Outcome-oriented proposal process is well-designed and thought-provoking."*
- ♦ *"The only minus [in dealing with the Foundation] was the burdensome budgeting process that was rigid and inflexible, which resulted in an unnecessary amount of additional Foundation staff time and effort."*
- ♦ *"We found the format of the budget a little difficult in the beginning; but eventually came to love it and it has proven a valuable tool for assessing progress for us and our sub-grantees."*
- ♦ *"The bulk of our interaction with the Foundation staff centered around grants management and reporting."*

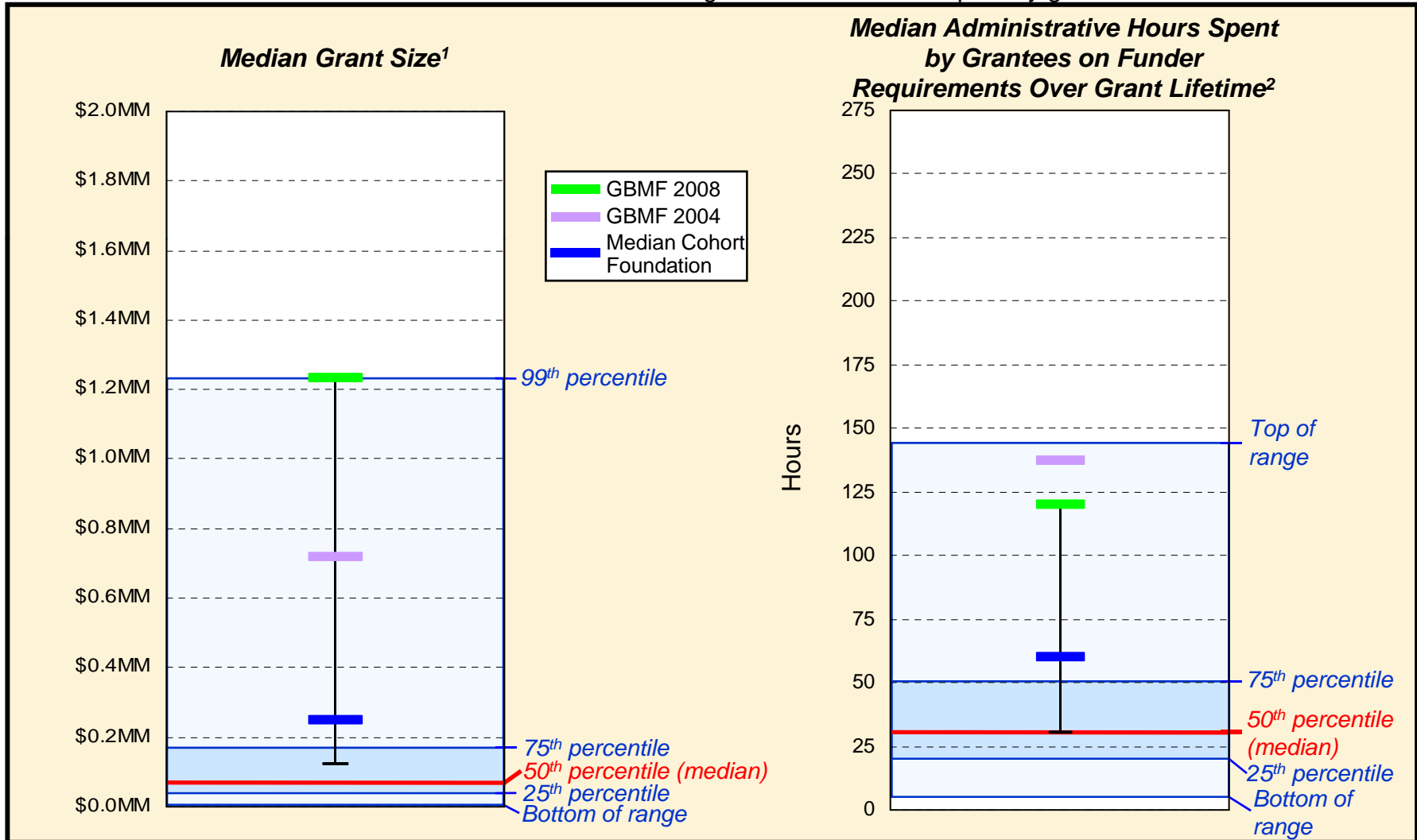
Grant Size and Administrative Time

At the median, the grant size reported by GBMF grantees is:

- larger than that of ninety percent of surveyed funders
- larger than that of all other cohort funders

At the median, the number of hours of administrative time spent by GBMF grantees during the course of the grant is:

- greater than the time spent by grantees of ninety percent of surveyed funders
- greater than the time spent by grantees of all other cohort funders

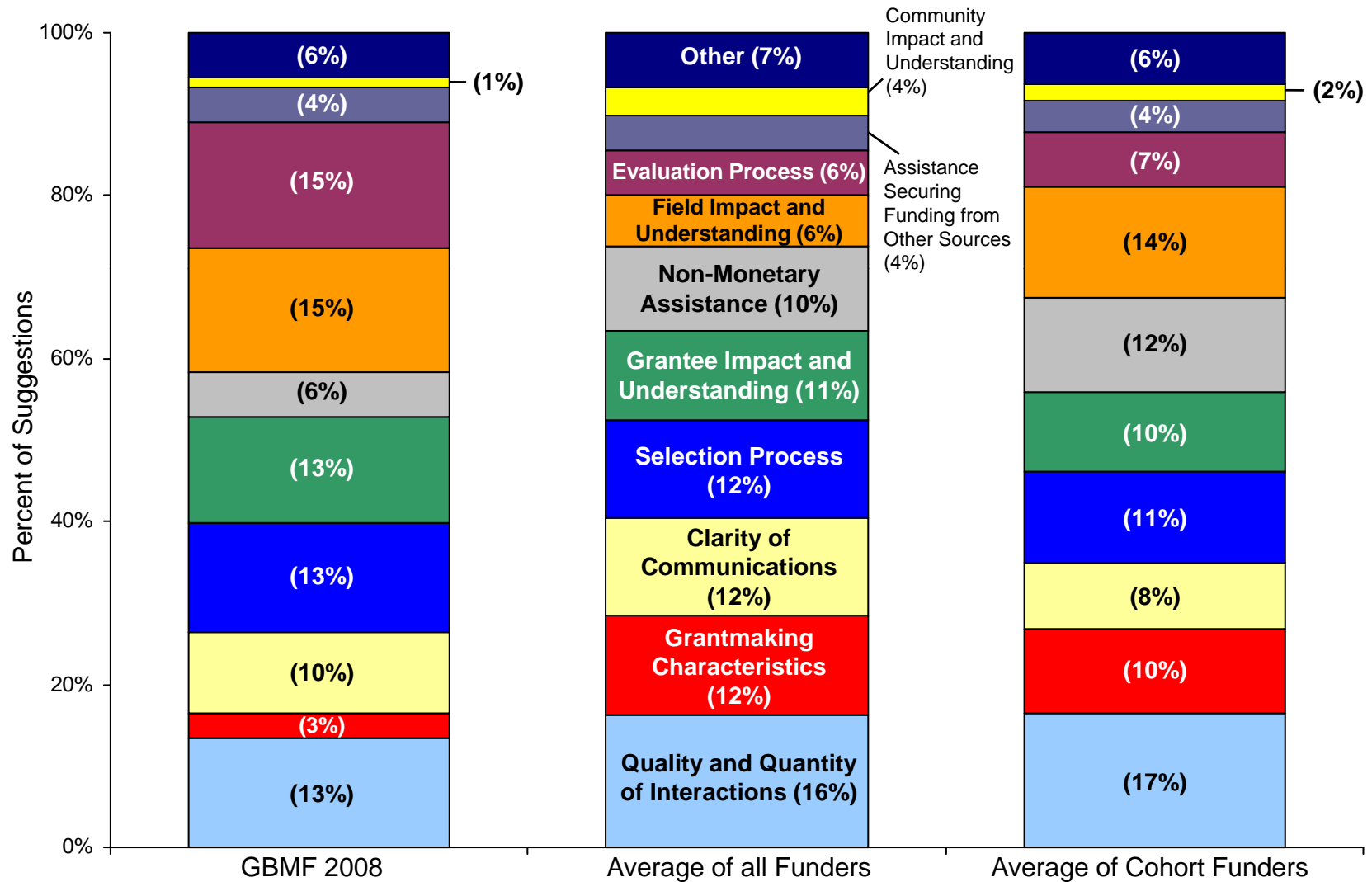


1: Chart does not show data from one funder whose median grant size exceeds \$2.0MM.
 2: Chart displays total grant proposal creation, evaluation, and monitoring hours spent over the life of the grant; each of these events did not necessarily occur for each individual grantee. Chart does not show data from one funder whose median administrative hours exceeds 125 hours.

Grantee Suggestions for the Foundation

Grantees were asked to provide any suggestions for how the Foundation could improve. A larger than typical proportion of GBMF's suggestions concern the reporting and evaluation processes and field impact and understanding.

Topics of Grantee Suggestions



Note: There were a total of 163 grantee suggestions for GBMF. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Review of Findings

Chart shows Moore's 2008 (◆) percentile rank, Moore's 2004 (◇) percentile rank (where available) and the percentile rank of the median peer group funder (◆) among all funders in the comparative set.



XI. Review of Findings and Analysis and Discussion

Indicator	Percentile					Description
	0th	25th	50th	75th	100th	
Impact on the Field	<p>Moore 2008 overlaps the median peer group funder.</p>					Grantees were asked to rate the funder's impact on their fields.
Impact on the Community	<p>Moore 2008 overlaps the median peer group funder.</p>					Grantees were asked to rate the funder's impact on their local communities.
Impact on the Grantee Organization						Grantees were asked to rate the funder's impact on their organizations.
Satisfaction						Grantees were asked to rate their satisfaction with their funder.
Quality of Interactions						This summary includes grantee ratings of funder fairness, responsiveness, and grantee comfort approaching the funder if a problem arises.
Clarity of Communication of Goals and Strategy						Grantees were asked to rate the clarity of the funder's communication of its goals and strategy.
Non-Monetary Assistance						This summary includes the frequency of provision and ratings of helpfulness of 14 individual activities, including management and field-related assistance.
Assistance Securing Funding from Other Sources						This summary includes the frequency of provision of assistance in obtaining funding from other sources, and ratings of the impact of those efforts.
Selection Process						Grantees were asked to rate the helpfulness of the funder's selection process for their organizations.
Reporting and Evaluation Processes						Grantees were asked to rate the helpfulness of the funder's reporting and evaluation processes for their organizations.
Dollar Return on Grantee Administrative Hours						This summary is calculated by dividing the dollar value of individual grants by the time required of grantees to fulfill the funder's administrative requirements.

Analysis and Discussion (1)

◆ Significant Improvement Since 2004

- The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation received significantly higher ratings ¹ in this survey than it did in 2004 in several areas, including:

Measure	GBMF 2008	GBMF 2004
Impact on grantees' fields	5.9 (68 th percentile)	4.8 (4 th percentile)
Understanding of grantees' fields	5.5 (27 th percentile)	4.4 (0 th percentile)
Advancement of knowledge in grantees' fields	5.3 (60 th percentile)	4.1 (4 th percentile)
Effect on public policy in grantees' fields	4.8 (61 st percentile)	3.1 (3 rd percentile)
Impact on grantees' communities	4.8 (16 th percentile)	3.8 (0 th percentile)
Understanding of grantees' communities	4.9 (13 th percentile)	4.2 (0 th percentile)
Impact on grantees' organizations	6.0 (42 nd percentile)	5.7 (12 th percentile)
Overall satisfaction	6.1 (8 th percentile)	5.2 (0 th percentile)
Grantees' comfort approaching the Foundation if a problem arises	6.1 (37 th percentile)	5.6 (3 rd percentile)
Responsiveness of Foundation staff to grantees	6.2 (37 th percentile)	5.5 (2 nd percentile)
Fairness of treatment of grantees	6.3 (13 th percentile)	5.6 (0 th percentile)
Clarity of communication of goals and strategy	5.4 (18 th percentile)	4.5 (1 st percentile)
Helpfulness of selection process	5.2 (78 th percentile)	3.9 (2 nd percentile)
Helpfulness of evaluation process	4.8 (75 th percentile)	4.0 (15 th percentile)

- *What changes to the Foundation's processes, structures, philosophies and/or values led to these higher ratings?*
- *How can the Foundation continue this positive trend?*

Analysis and Discussion (2)

♦ Engagement, Interactions and Fairness

- Compared to GBMF's other grantees, grantees who give the Foundation the highest possible rating on both impact on their organization and on their overall satisfaction tend to receive more site visits and more non-monetary assistance, and are awarded larger, longer-term grants. They indicate the Foundation was more involved in the development of their proposals, but they also rate GBMF lower on the level of pressure they felt to modify their priorities to create a proposal that was likely to receive funding. These grantees also spend less time on the Foundation's reporting and evaluation process.
- Grantees who report that both they and their program officer initiated contact with equal frequency rate the Foundation higher on most major measures, including the quality of their interactions and overall satisfaction with the Foundation.
- When asked to rate the value of several Foundation processes in achieving grant objectives, GBMF grantees rate their interactions with program officers as the most valuable.
- However, overall, the Foundation is rated below the median on the quality of its interactions with grantees – especially on the fairness of its treatment of its grantees. Some grantees comment that their relationship with the Foundation is “not... truly collaborative,” and that they feel “micromanaged.” They comment that staff “wanted to tell us how to do what we do best,” and that they “ask endless, detailed tactical questions; [in order] to second-guess every single thought, idea and decision of the grantees.”
- Grantees rate the Foundation higher than ninety percent of funders whose grantees CEP has surveyed on its involvement in the development of grantees' proposals and on the level of pressure grantees feel to modify their priorities to create a proposal that was likely to receive funding.
 - *GBMF uses a process that is very different from that of most foundations. Some grantees will probably always feel it is meddlesome and pressureful – or at best, neutral. Can the Foundation be clearer upfront about its unique approach, and what that means for its grantees?*
 - *Some grantees have a positive experience, characterized by higher “partnership-like” engagement that includes appropriate non-monetary assistance, in-person visits and give and take. How does the Foundation distinguish which grantees are engaged this way? Or is it the result of a personal match between grantee and program officer?*
 - » *Can the Foundation move more grantees to this “partnership” model?*

Analysis and Discussion (3)

♦ Clarity and Consistency of Communications

- GBMF is rated below the 25th percentile for the clarity of the Foundation's communications of its goals and strategy. The Foundation is also rated below the 25th percentile for the consistency of its communications. Grantees comment that GBMF has undergone "several major leadership... changes" which has resulted in "change[s in the] direction and role of [the] Foundation" and "reduced... transparency." Grantees also note the Foundation's problematically frequent staff turnover and its negative impact on their understanding of their relationship with GBMF.
- While the Foundation's personal communications (individual communications and group meetings) are rated as being typically helpful, GBMF's written communication resources (website, published funding guidelines, and annual report) are rated as being less helpful to grantees than is typical.
- When asked how the clarity of the Foundation's communications about its outcome-based grantmaking has changed over the last two years, the largest group of grantees indicated the clarity has not changed.
 - *Can the Foundation improve the clarity of its written communications?*
 - *Can the Foundation increase communications and maintain greater consistency during staff turnover?*

Analysis and Discussion (4)

♦ Selection and Evaluation Processes

- Although grantees rate the helpfulness of the Foundation’s selection and evaluation process in strengthening their organization at or above the 75th percentile, some grantees speak very negatively about both processes. They describe them as, “too time-intensive,” “opaque,” “inflexible,” “onerous,” “bureaucratic,” “unrealistic,” and “contrived.”
- GBMF’s grantees report spending a median of 120 hours on the proposal and evaluation process – greater than 99 percent of surveyed funders. Although grantees also receive large grants, and therefore receive more grant dollars per hour of work they put in than is typical, several grantees say the process is simply too time-consuming. In fact, a few grantees confess that, “we have at times questioned whether [the grant is] worth the time and aggravation of meeting their excessive demands.”
- A larger than typical proportion of suggestions for how the Foundation can improve concern the reporting/evaluation process. Many of the suggestions about both the selection and evaluation process ask for reduced requirements, clearer instructions, or more training on how to complete the Foundation’s requirements.
- Grantees especially dislike the Foundation’s “constrained,” “burdensome” budgeting process. When asked about the value of several Foundation processes in achieving grant objectives, those processes related to budgets (development of outcome-based budgets, interactions with program finance offer [re: budget matters], and grant outcome budget reporting) were rated as least valuable.
 - *What, if any, aspects of the selection and evaluation processes can be reduced or eliminated without sacrificing the information the Foundation must have to make the best decisions?*
 - *The complexity of the Foundation’s processes make grantees dependent on assistance from staff. What can the Foundation do to empower grantees to move through the process with less technical assistance from staff so that staff can focus on content-oriented conversations with grantees?*
 - » *Can the Foundation offer more training on how grantees should complete its processes?*
 - *Does the Foundation expect a portion of its grants to be used to support monitoring and reporting time?*