



**Maryland  
Philanthropy**  
NETWORK  
*Advancing Impact*

# Working your Guidelines and Communicating Funding Priorities

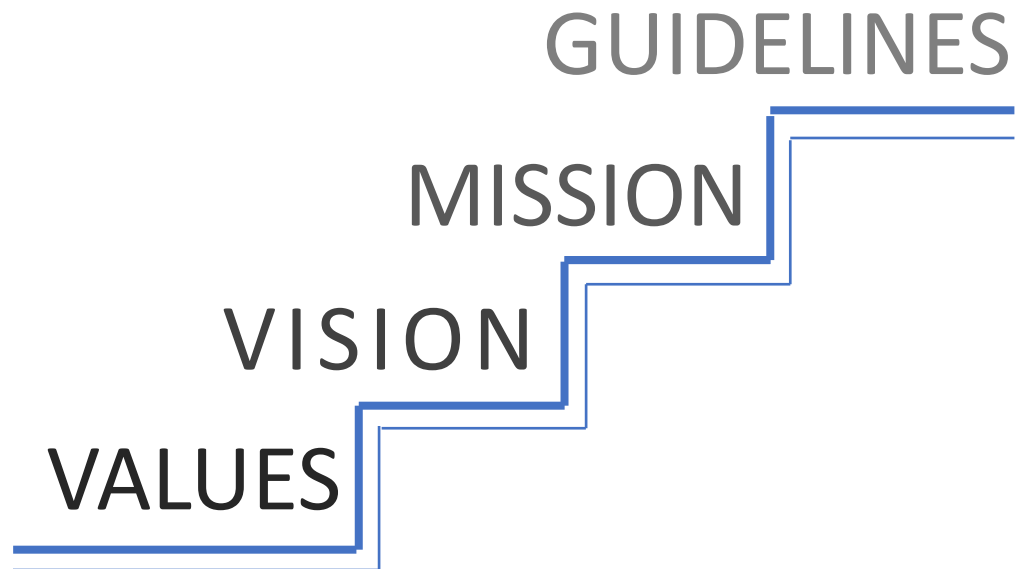
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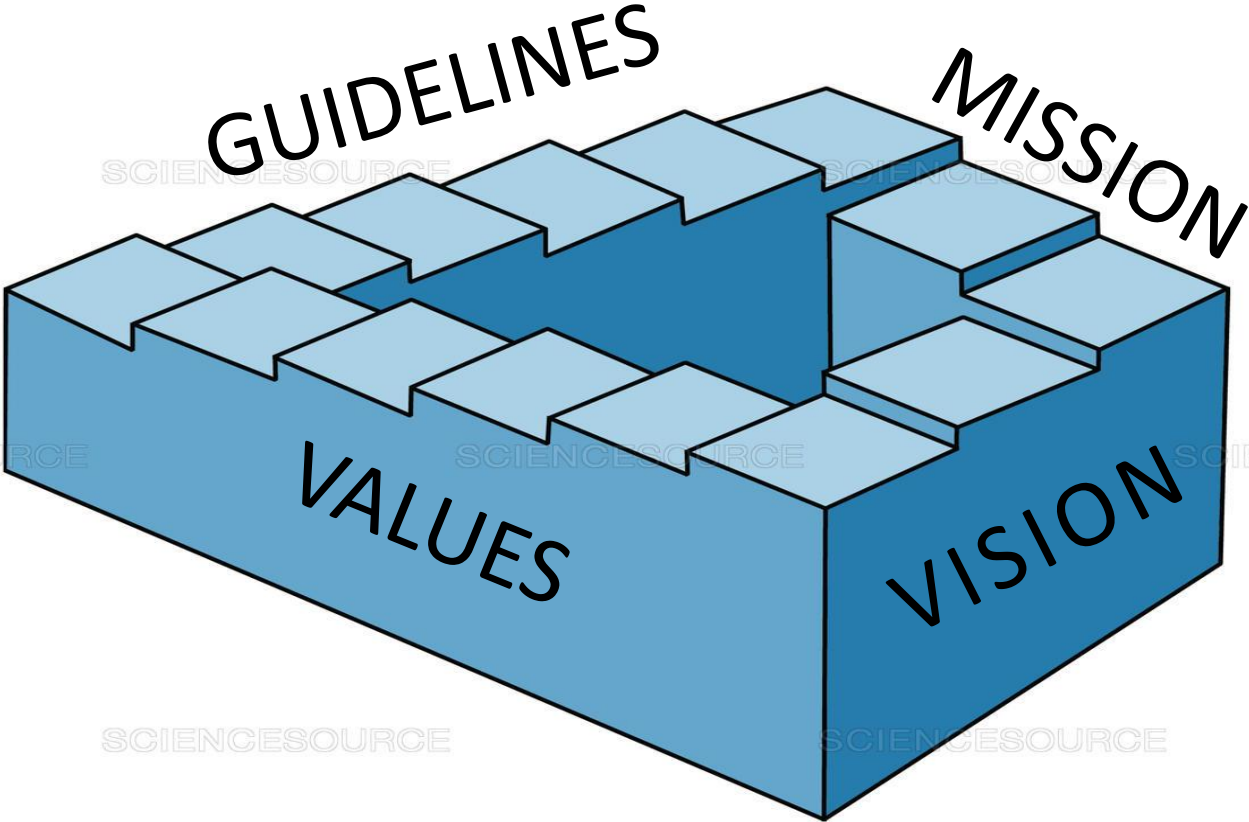
Michael W. Bigley  
*Venable Foundation*

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*Maryland Philanthropy Network*

# Burning Questions?

- ▶ What burning questions do you have around mission statements and guidelines?
- ▶ What challenges do you have around communicating your guidelines or decisions?





# Values: *Your Beliefs*

- ▶ Embody principles, not practices
- ▶ Are stable and stand the test of time
- ▶ Ground your vision, mission and guidelines
- ▶ Can be internal (operational) or external (grantmaking)
- ▶ Take shape by asking:
  - Why does our organization exist?
  - What moves us the most?
  - How would we like to be remembered?
  - What guiding forces should inform our decision-making?

# Vision: *Your Dream*

- ▶ Summarizes what the world would look like if the issues important to you were perfectly addressed
- ▶ Inspires and motivates you past challenges
- ▶ Can be as short as a tag phrase: “healthy children,” “caring communities” or “safe streets, safe neighborhoods”
- ▶ Takes shape by asking:
  - What is something our organization wants to change?
  - What would a better world look like?
  - How would we describe success in 10 words or less?

# Mission: *Your Purpose*

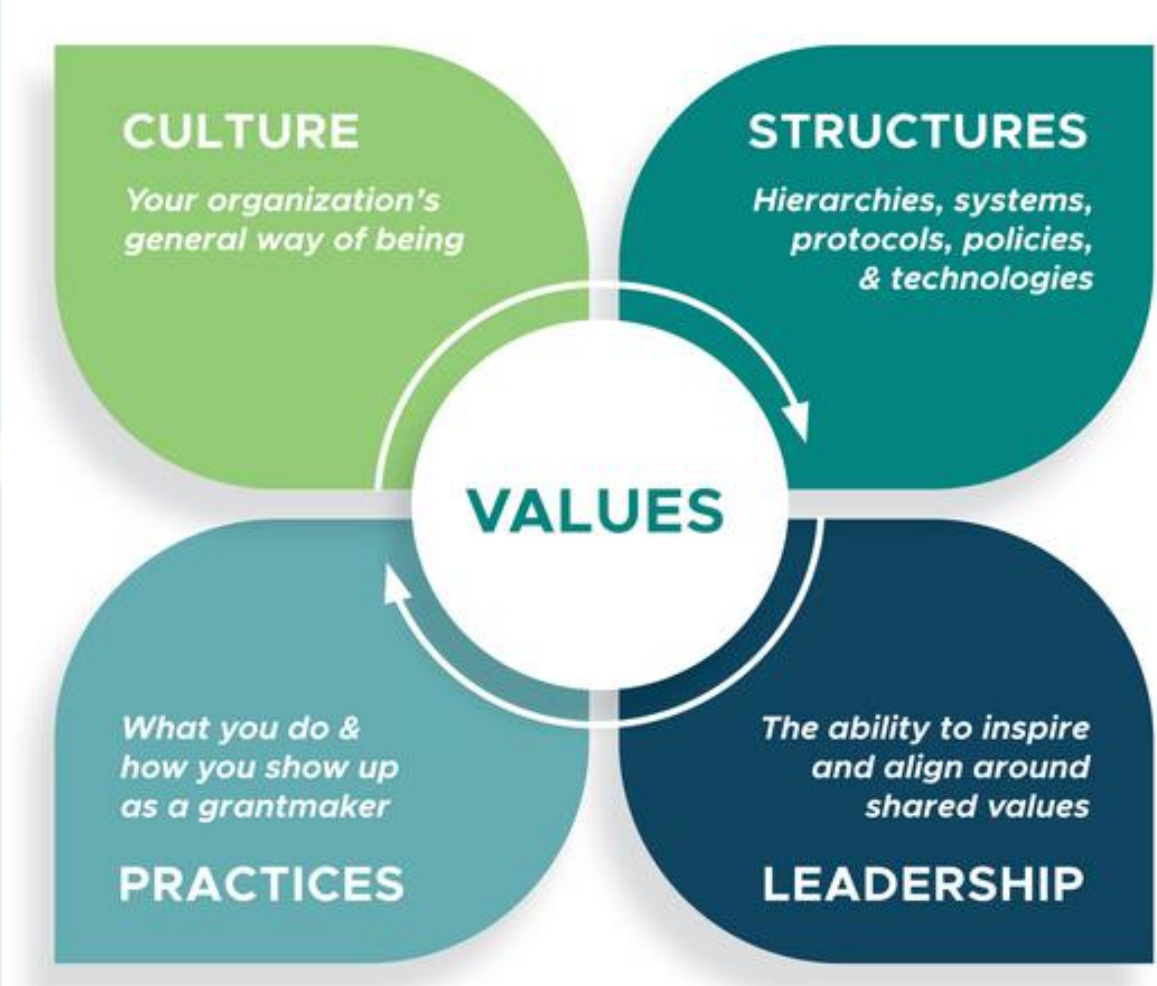
- ▶ Describes what you do and how you do it
- ▶ Is not set in stone and can be refined over time
- ▶ Can be broad and flexible, or specific and focused
- ▶ Takes shape by asking:
  - What are our grantmaking interests and priorities?
  - What types of organizations are eligible for funding?
  - Will our giving be geographically restricted to a certain community, region, or state?

# Guidelines: *Your Rules*

- ▶ Are your “rules of engagement”
- ▶ Inform grantseekers on multiple levels:
  - Eligibility criteria: who can apply
  - Funding priorities: what will be considered
  - Application process: how to apply
- ▶ Can be affirmative (what you will fund) and nullifying (what you won't fund)
- ▶ Take shape by asking:
  - What types of organizations and projects do we want to fund?
  - What is our geographic focus?
  - Is there anything we don't want to consider?

# Trust-based Philanthropy

trust-based philanthropy project





# Trust-based Philanthropy



- ▶ Give Multi-Year Unrestricted Funding
- ▶ Do the Homework
- ▶ Simplify & Streamline Paperwork
- ▶ Be Transparent & Responsive
- ▶ Solicit & Act on Feedback
- ▶ Offer Support Beyond the Check

[www.trustbasedphilanthropy.org](http://www.trustbasedphilanthropy.org)

# Adopt an Asset-Based Frame

Reframe core questions in grant applications to encourage grant applicants to center the assets of community members

## Deficit-Based

Our mission is to give voice to the voiceless.

The communities we serve are strong and powerful.

We provide youth with jobs in order to prevent them from committing crimes.

## Asset-Based

Our mission is to amplify the voices in our community.

The communities we partner with are strong and powerful!

Youth in our community are our future. We must invest in them as leaders.

# Foundation Examples

- ▶ The Kresge Foundation  
<http://kresge.org/how-we-operate>
- ▶ Durfee Foundation  
<https://durfee.org/who-we-are/our-mission/>
- ▶ Robin Hood Foundation  
<https://www.robinhood.org/what-we-do/>
- ▶ Schott Foundation for Public Education  
<http://schottfoundation.org/about/our-framework/model-impact>
- ▶ Blandin Foundation  
<https://blandinfoundation.org/>



# Types of Grants

Grant Types	Descriptions
<b>General Operating Support</b>	A grant made to further the general purpose or work of an organization, rather than for a specific purpose or project. Also called an unrestricted grant or basic support.
<b>Relational Grants</b>	Grants to an organization that is essential for either helping advance our core work or positioned to potentially be a barrier to our core work succeeding.
<b>Capacity Support Grants</b>	Grants that support building the capacity of grantees to more effectively achieve their mission.
<b>Learning/Research Grants</b>	Grants that focus on exploring new ideas or capturing learning from past work. This often includes support for the development of white papers and more formal published reports.

# Types of Grants - continued

Grant Types	Descriptions
<b>Legacy Grants</b>	Grants that are often inherited from another program officer that is funded because of past relationships and previous Foundation strategies. These grants often are perceived by the new owner as non-essential. If there were perceived as essential, they would be categorized in one of the above categories.
<b>Capital Support</b>	Funds provided for endowment purposes, buildings, construction, or equipment.
<b>Challenge Grant</b>	A grant that is paid only if the grantee organization is able to raise additional funds from other sources. Challenge grants are often used to stimulate giving from other donors. (related to a matching grant)
<b>Demonstration Grant</b>	A grant made to establish an innovative project or program that will serve as a model and, if successful, may be replicated by others.

# Match that Grant Poll

1. Better Lives for Children – nonprofit that supports at-risk youth through after school programs – grant is to be used to support salaries and benefits.
2. Forward Focus – Organization that helps nonprofits evaluate activities and strategically apply lessons learned. The Foundation asks them to develop a report to capture lessons learned from the Foundation’s long-running Families at Work initiative, which can be applied to the development of future initiatives.

# Match that Grant Poll

3. Children First – nonprofit that provides early intervention services to at-risk families. The Foundation grant is to support improved data tracking and reporting systems to enable better communication among partners
4. The Friends of Booker T. Washington High School – This arts-focused magnet school is undergoing a campaign to raise funds for a new auditorium. The Foundation makes a grant in support of that project.
5. SureStep Agency – grantee of 10 years that organizes volunteer reading tutors in libraries in Illinois. The Foundation has supported them for 10 years and your director has asked you to manage the grant and develop an exit strategy.

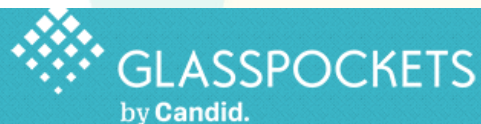
# What Grantees Want

- ▶ Consistency and clarity of communications
- ▶ High-quality interactions with, and responsiveness of, staff
- ▶ Selection, reporting and evaluation processes that are helpful to grantees

*The Center for Effective Philanthropy*



# Transparency



Bringing transparency to the world of philanthropy

GOT GLASSPOCKETS?

TRANSPARENCY TOOLS

WHY TRANSPARENCY

NEWS



## Transparency helps overcome injustice

Learn how opening up demographic data can move people to action to improve equity and inclusion.

LEARN MORE

# 109

foundations have glass pockets



## Transparency Challenge

90% of foundations don't even have a website. Find out what else we know about the field.

EXPLORE NOW



## Who Has GlassPockets?

We're tracking 27 indicators of foundation transparency, now including open licensing, strategic plan, and diversity data.

VIEW PROFILES



Does your foundation have glass pockets?



# Reasons to Communicate

- › Spread promising practices and attract new ideas
- › Encourage more giving
- › Enhance grantee's learning and success
- › Earn champions and engage more partners and stakeholders
- › Increase accountability about what you say you believe in
- › Inform decision-makers about issues you care about and the role and impact of philanthropy
- › Join foundations in combatting the awareness deficit among public and government leaders
  - *Philanthropy Awareness Study*: Only 4 in 10 influential Americans can name a foundation.

# Communication Barriers to Confront

- › Concerns about privacy
- › Reliance on the adage, “The work will speak for itself”
- › Messaging that focuses on dollars rather than impact
- › Failure to engage staff, trustees and partners as ambassadors
- › Lack of outreach/relationships with media and decision-makers
- › Humility

# Best Practices in Communicating “Yes” Decisions

- ▶ Be clear what yes means – amount, terms, etc.
- ▶ Be clear about negotiations/stipulations.
- ▶ Express any important concerns, but do not give a laundry list.
- ▶ Honor them with a personal phone call.
- ▶ Put it in writing.
- ▶ Invite questions. Express thanks.

# Do you Give an Explanation with “No” Decision?

- ▶ There are different opinions about whether to explain why a grant has been denied.
- ▶ Poll: Which best represents your organization’s approach?
  - Give full explanation in writing
  - Give explanation if grantseeker asks
  - Sometimes give explanation
  - Do not give explanation all or most of the time
  - Other

# Best Practices in Communicating “No” Decisions

- › Empathize, but be firm.
- › Refer to goals and guidelines.
- › Be prompt.
- › Offer clear helpful explanation, e.g.:
  - Categorical no (does not fit guidelines)
  - Policy no (fits guidelines but we don't agree with the approach)
  - Judgment no (felt it was unlikely to succeed due to weakness such as management, resources, etc.)
  - Limited resources no (would have funded but no resources)
- › Be polite and sensitive to the power differential.
- › Put the decision in writing.

# Discussion

What is your experience of delivering a “no” decision? What are the challenges?

What advice would you give about saying no? About saying yes?

Other questions?



# Menu of Communication Tools

- › Website
- › Blog
- › Annual report
- › Newsletters
- › Print media
- › IRS Form 990-PF
- › External Websites
  - Foundation Directory Online
  - GuideStar
- › Social Media
  - Facebook
  - Twitter
  - Linked In
- › Philanthropy WV Member List
- › Teleconferencing and webinars
- › Community events
- › Convenings
- › Site visits
- › Donor history publication or video
- › *You, your staff, and your trustees*



# Resources

- 21/64 – Strategic philanthropy through the generations <http://2164.net>
- **Grantmakers for Effective Organizations** - GEO promotes strategies and practices that contribute to grantee success [www.geofunders.org](http://www.geofunders.org)
- **Center for Effective Philanthropy** – Improving foundation performance through data and insight [www.effectivephilanthropy.org](http://www.effectivephilanthropy.org)
- **GrantCraft** – Practical wisdom for funders [www.grantcraft.org](http://www.grantcraft.org)
- **Project Streamline** – Improving grant application and reporting [www.projectstreamline.org](http://www.projectstreamline.org)
- **Glasspockets** – Bringing transparency to the world of philanthropy [www.glasspockets.org](http://www.glasspockets.org)
- **The Communications Network** – Supporting foundations to improve lives through smart communications [www.comnetwork.org](http://www.comnetwork.org)
- **Beth Kanter's Blog** – Nonprofit social media expert [www.bethkanter.org](http://www.bethkanter.org)

# Roles of a Grantmaker

- › Accountability officer
- › Administrator
- › Advocate
- › Ambassador
- › Analyst
- › Bridge builder
- › Collaborator
- › Connector
- › Consultant
- › Convener
- › Decision giver
- › Disturbance generator
- › Facilitator
- › Fundraiser
- › Idea mover
- › Impact assessor
- › Matchmaker
- › Mediator
- › Organizer
- › Rescuer
- › Sounding board
- › Strategist
- › Talent scout
- › Translator
- › Validator
- › Voice amplifier



# Session 2

## Funding Recommendations and Due Diligence Legal and Ethical Issues

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*April 28, 2022, 9:30 – 11:30 AM*