



Improving Grant Application and Reporting

From website comments to national and local meetings to philanthropic blogs, the response to Project Streamline has spurred conversation, comment, and questions from both grantmakers and grantseekers. Project Streamline would like to share the feedback we've received on the four core principles outlined in the report as we work towards finalizing those principles.

Relieve the Burden on Grantees

Summarized by Taylor Kate Brown

It won't be easy relieving the burden on grant applicants, many grantmakers said, without simply transferring extra work to their own staff. Such a change would require a restructuring of the grant process - something they believe can be done effectively, for example, online - but not without significant challenges.

Grantmakers shared strategies for preventing too many irrelevant applications from wasting applicants and their own time. "I do not invite full proposals unless I'm certain of the likelihood of the request being funded." one grantmaker said. Eligibility screens were also discussed.

A popular suggestion across meetings on both sides of the grants process was creating a central repository of information that would be kept current by grant seekers, but would replace a major part of multiple grant applications. Examples included the Charities Research Council and Cultural data projects, a data collection and management tool for cultural organizations started in Pennsylvania, California, and Maryland.

A centralized repository would be helpful, grant seekers said, as long as technological problems wouldn't simply replace the problems solved by the move. "As an applicant, I have often been the first to discover that the application form doesn't work as it's supposed to" one comment to the website discussion page said. The best possible scenario would be a common application that would serve to easily get across standard information - items like mission statements, agency history, and trustee lists - and allow applicants to send the information to several sources of funding at once.