

The Weingart Foundation as Viewed by Applicants and Grantees of the Regular Grant Program:

GRANTEE FEEDBACK ON THE WEINGART
FOUNDATION'S REGULAR GRANT PROGRAM (III)

Weingart Foundation
Surveys of Regular Grant Applicants and Recipients
June 2012

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I. Introduction

The Weingart Foundation (WF) is committed to providing excellent service to the nonprofits it serves in seven Southern California counties. The scale of the Weingart Foundation's grantmaking and its leadership role in the region make the Weingart Foundation an extremely important resource for Southern California nonprofits. The Weingart Foundation's policy of awarding grants responsive to the needs of its applicants makes WF funding even more valuable to nonprofits than the dollar amount alone.

The Weingart Foundation takes tremendous pride and effort to ensure that its program staff, all of whom have had nonprofit experience prior to joining WF, works responsively and respectfully with their applicants and grantees. However, there is a realistic concern throughout philanthropy, that even well-trained staff may miss critical feedback from applicants and grantees due to the distorting influence of the foundation-applicant power dynamic. This power differential sometimes shields foundations from negative constituent feedback for fear, correct or not, that candor may jeopardize a nonprofit's chances of receiving a grant.

To correct for the potential bias of the power imbalance and add to the feedback provided directly to the Foundation, the WF has requested Learning Partnerships to undertake activities that allow grantees to give anonymous feedback that they might be hesitant to provide directly to the Foundation. All survey respondents are assured that their individual responses will not be communicated to the Foundation.

This is the third report about the experiences of applicants to and grantees of the Weingart Foundation's Regular Grant Program (RGP¹). The WF also has a Small Grant Program that makes awards up to \$25,000², however this report does not include applicants to and grantees of the Small Grant Program given the different application and grantmaking process. Since January 2011, 193 grantees and 22 applicants have completed this survey. In this report we also make some comparisons with the applicant groups surveyed in January and June 2011. Because WF staff engages in conversations

¹ The Foundation's Regular Grant Program makes awards above \$25,000.

² A separate survey of Small Grant Program grantees and applicants was conducted in 2010. Survey findings are available on the Weingart Foundation Website: <http://www.weingartfnd.org/small-grant-program-survey>

with many applicants when they are invited to submit proposals, these conversations often lead to proposals that are well focused to the priorities of the Foundation. One result of this is that there are a relatively small number of applicants submitting proposals that are not successful. The three applicant surveys have yielded a total of 22 responses from applicants (from a pool of 35 applicants), and we include comparisons to this applicant group where appropriate. Applicants denied at the Letter of Inquiry (LOI) stage were not surveyed because applicants denied at the LOI stage often have very limited interaction with WF staff.

II. Research Approach

To learn about the experiences of successful and unsuccessful applicants to the Regular Grant Program, Learning Partnerships conducted two surveys of the nonprofits that had submitted applications to the RGP between April and November 2011. One version of the survey was directed to the 111 organizations that received grants and one to the 15 applicants whose proposals had been declined. Protocols for both surveys were designed by Learning Partnerships in collaboration with Weingart Foundation staff. All survey responses are anonymous to the Foundation. The surveys were sent to nonprofits on March 15, 2012 for an April 22nd response deadline. Grantee surveys were designed to take approximately 20 minutes to complete, and surveys of unsuccessful applicants about 10 minutes. The survey was timed to reach RGP applicants and grantees at least three months after the grant decision had been made, at a time when their experience with the Foundation was still fresh in their minds, but the positive excitement or strong disappointment that come with receiving a grant award or a denial may have dimmed.

Responses to Surveys

Surveys were sent to 111 grantees and 15 unsuccessful applicants. Ninety-four grantees and nine unsuccessful applicants completed them, resulting in response rates of 85% for grantees and 60% for applicants with declined proposals. A 60% response rate is considered successful for this type of survey, making the response rates for grantees unusually high³. This high response rate itself can be considered a reflection of respondents' high regard for the Weingart Foundation and their motivation to help the Foundation by providing feedback. Among the respondents, sixty-two percent were either CEOs or in the number two positions in their organizations; twenty percent were development professionals; and seventeen percent of surveys were filled out by people in "other" positions, including, for example, a research and contracts manager and an operations manager.

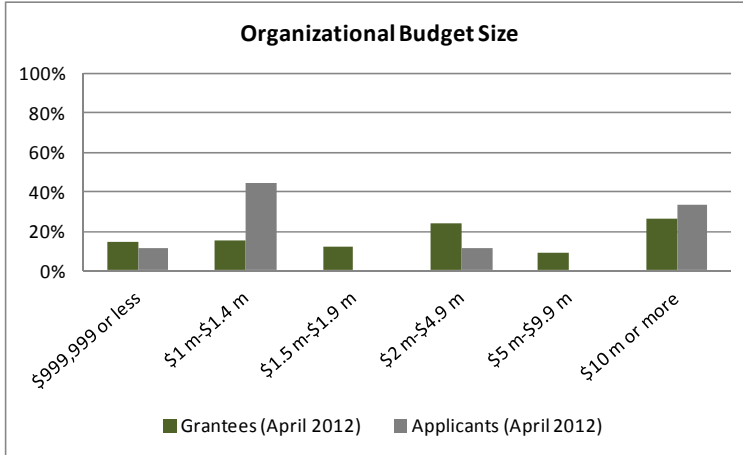
High Response Rate:
85% of Regular Grant
Program grantees
responded to the survey.

³ This reflects informal industry knowledge as there is no published industry standard.

III. Profile of Respondents

This section asks: Who are the Regular Grant Program grantees and unsuccessful applicants, and what is their prior experience with the Weingart Foundation?

Budget Size

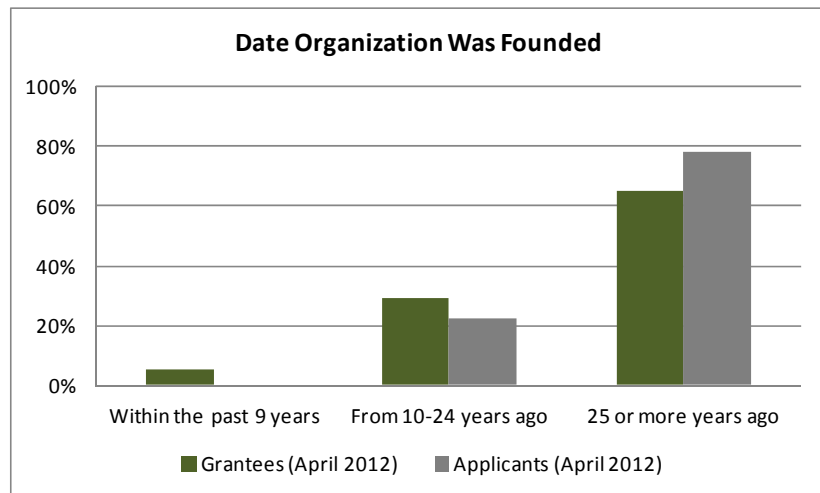


Half of the grantees responding to the survey are moderate sized organizations with budgets between \$1 million and \$5 million. In sharp contrast to grantees, many applicants – 55% – had budgets under \$1.5 million. Compared to grantees whose budget sizes were quite evenly distributed over the mid-ranges of the organizational budget scale,

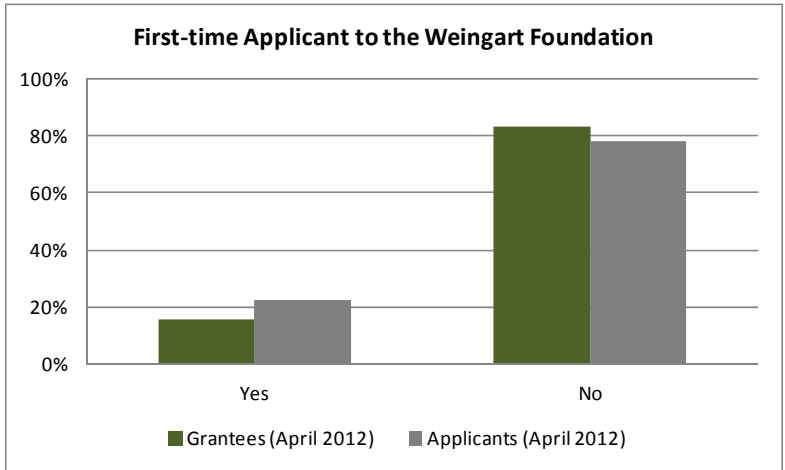
applicants tended to cluster at the tails of the scale with 55% under \$1.5 million and 30% greater than \$5 million.

Age of Applicant Organizations

Reflecting the Foundation’s current criteria to support organizations that are established and have a track record of operating effective programs, most grantees and applicants to the Regular Grant Program are mature organizations. 95% of grantees were founded over 10 years ago. Of the five grantees younger than ten years-old, only two were established within the past five years.

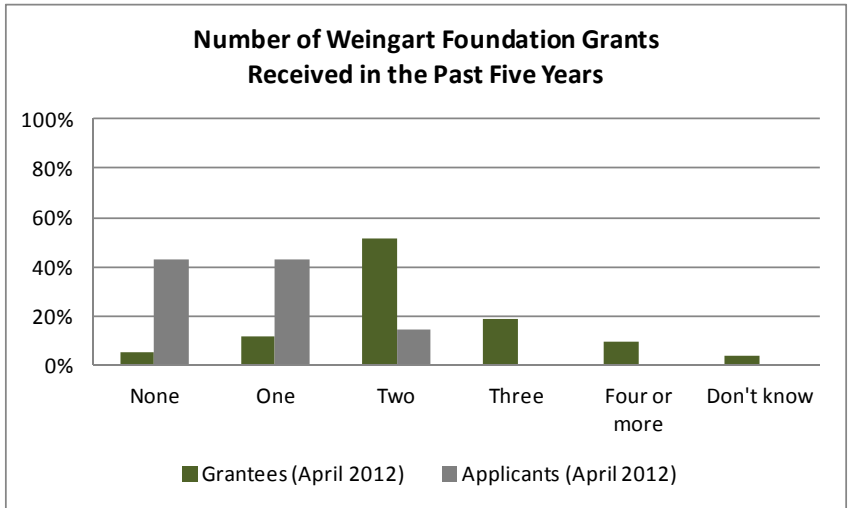


Prior Experience with the Weingart Foundation



It is notable that even in the current financially challenging era when many foundations have reduced grant budgets and are working only with organizations they have previously funded, the Weingart Foundation is making grants to organizations new to the Foundation in each of its granting cycles. Of 16

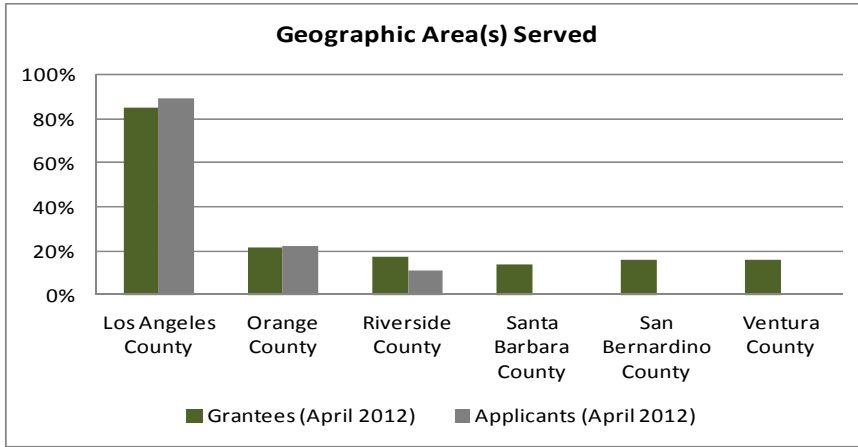
first-time applicants to the Foundation, 14 were awarded grants and two were turned down. At the same time, the Weingart Foundation is able to maintain its role as a trusted source of continuing support for many nonprofits that have received past grants from the Foundation.



The WF grant process is very competitive. The Foundation has a long grantmaking history in Southern California, supporting a broad range of organizations. It is likely that in its more than thirty years of grantmaking, the Foundation has supported many, if not most of the

established nonprofits, large and small, working in the areas of health, education and human services. Each request is reviewed on its own merits and the process is always competitive given the high demand for the Foundation’s grant dollars relative to the need. It is therefore not surprising that since introducing core support funding in January 2009, many of the organizations that applied for this funding have been past grantees of the Foundation. What this has meant, given the overwhelming demand for these dollars, is that the Foundation has declined many past grantees. Over 50% of the applicants that the Foundation was not able to fund for the granting period covered by this survey had received a grant in the past five years. It is also worth noting that most declinations happen at the LOI stage and this survey includes only those declined at the proposal stage.

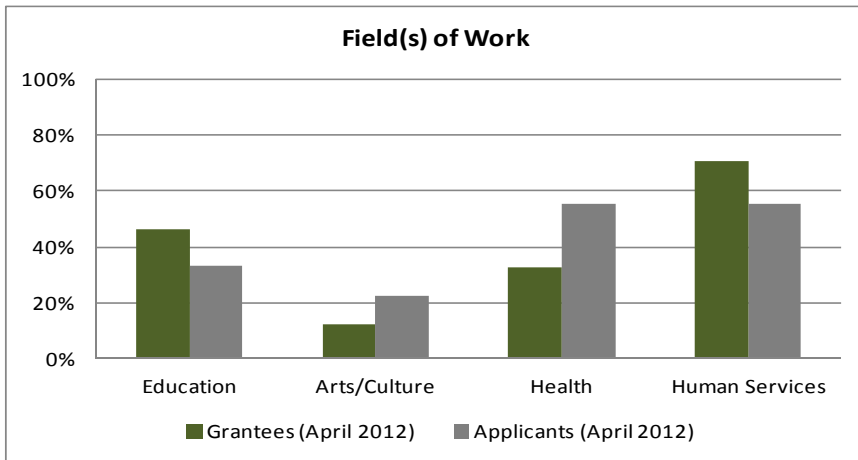
Counties Served



The percentages of grantees and applicants closely mirror each other in most counties (with the exceptions of Santa Barbara, San Bernardino and Ventura counties for which there were no applicants in the April 2012 survey). Given its relative size, Los

Angeles is understandably the county where the most grantmaking activity occurs, with over 80% of grantees and applicants providing services in Los Angeles County⁴.

Fields of Work



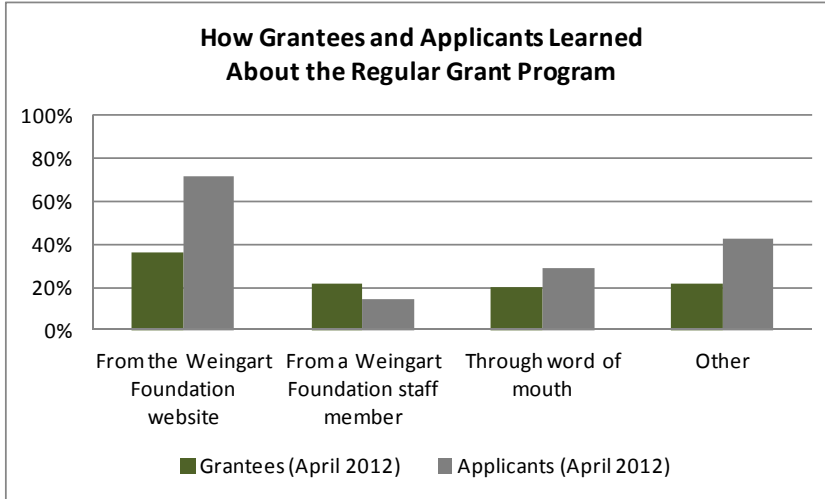
More grants were awarded in human services and education than in other fields. Applicants in health and arts/culture were more likely to be turned down than awarded a grant.

⁴ Because some nonprofits work in multiple counties, the columns sum to greater than 100%.

IV. Experiences Applying to the Regular Grant Program

In this section we ask the question: How do applicants and grantees experience the Foundation’s grantmaking processes and staff?

How applicants learned about the Regular Grant Program⁵

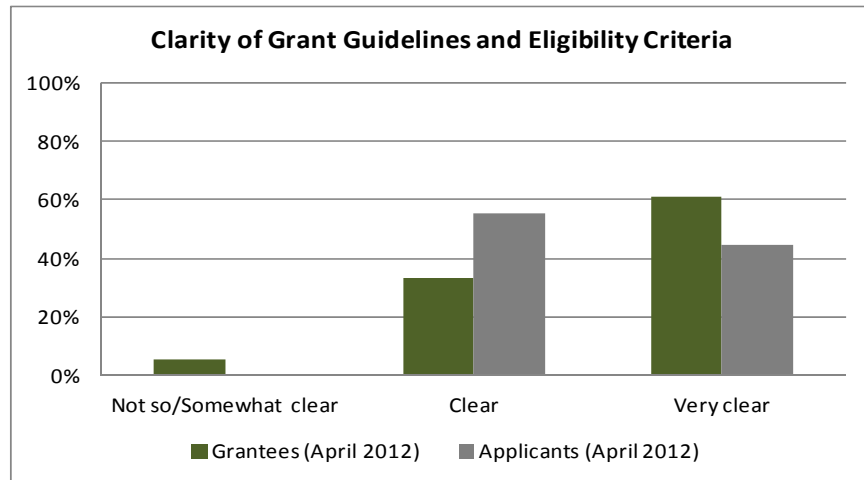


Weingart Foundation staff frequently responds to informational requests from applicants and potential applicants even before they submit Letters of Inquiry. The Foundation’s website is also an important means of learning about the Foundation. Nearly 40% of

grantees learn about the RGP from the website. Word of mouth is the third most important means of learning about the Foundation, identified by 20% of grantees as a communication channel through which they learned about the RGP.

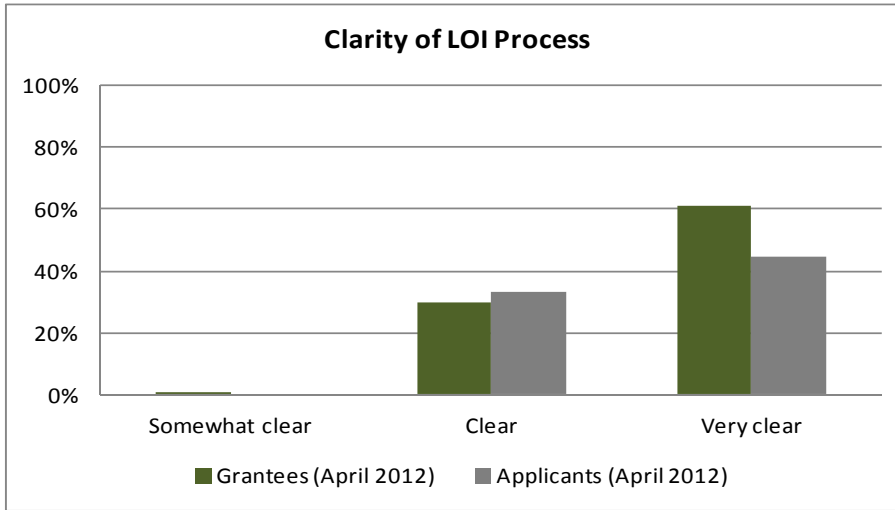
Clarity of grant guidelines and eligibility requirements

The first “touch” that applicants to the Weingart Foundation have with the Foundation’s grant guidelines and processes is deciding whether they are likely candidates to receive funding from the Foundation. 94% of grantees and 100% of applicants indicate that the eligibility guidelines and criteria are clear or very clear.



⁵ Respondents were instructed to check as many different methods of learning about the Regular Grant Program as appropriate, resulting in columns totaling more than 100%.

Clarity of LOI Process

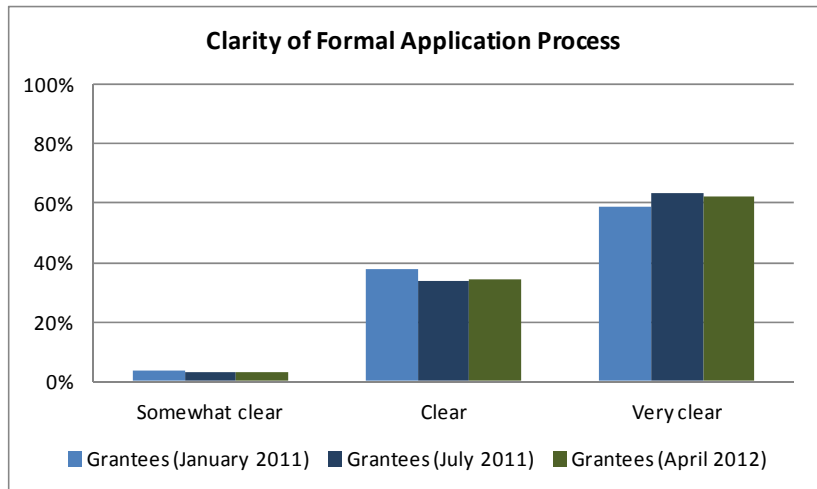


The LOI process is also clear to grantees and applicants with 77% of applicants and 91% of grantees indicating the process was either clear or very clear. One grantee suggested, “A more clearly

worded monetary cap, or guidelines on the amount to request would have been helpful.” The remaining 23% responded “not applicable,” so it is likely that the person answering the survey did not write the LOI or does not remember the details of the process.

Clarity of Formal Application Process

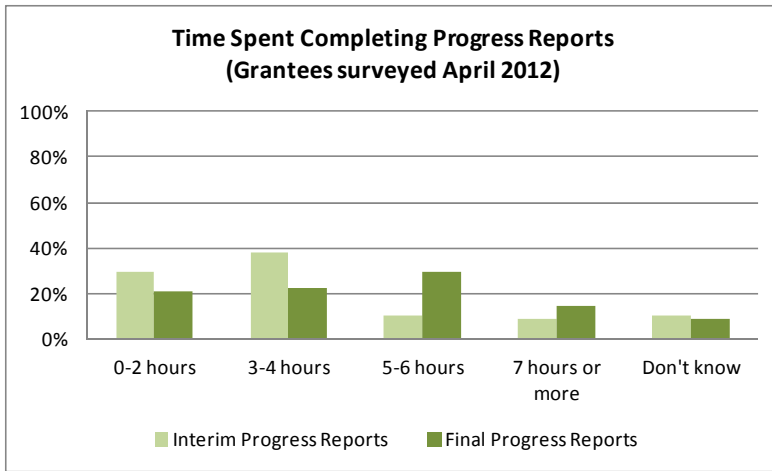
All but three grantees in the April 2012 survey believed that the formal application process was clear or very clear. These results are consistent with the results of previous surveys. One grantee said, “The process was very clear; what the foundation was looking for was clear, but our program officer helped refine our application to be aligned with the foundation’s areas



of concern.” Suggested improvements that grantees proposed include allowing more space to answer questions and clarifying the budget requirements. One grantee proposed, “The Foundation requested that all answers remain on the same page, which is easy to understand but perhaps they could create a fill-in PDF so that there are simple fields that we can work within to meet their guidelines.” Another grantee pointed out, “The budget summary page was a little confusing concerning how we reported some income versus expenses, so that took time to correct with direct discussion with the grant administrator.” Because financial reporting is challenging for many nonprofits, the very small number of comments about difficulties is a sign of affirmation for the effort expended by WF staff to make the financial reporting process as user-friendly as possible.

Clarity of Reporting Process

Grantees that had received previous grants from the Weingart Foundation reported on



their experiences completing progress reports. Approximately half spent between 3 and 6 hours completing interim progress reports and final progress reports. Nearly all grantees indicated that the reporting requirements are either very clear or clear, with only four grantees responding that they are somewhat clear. Because this survey was sent to grantees when

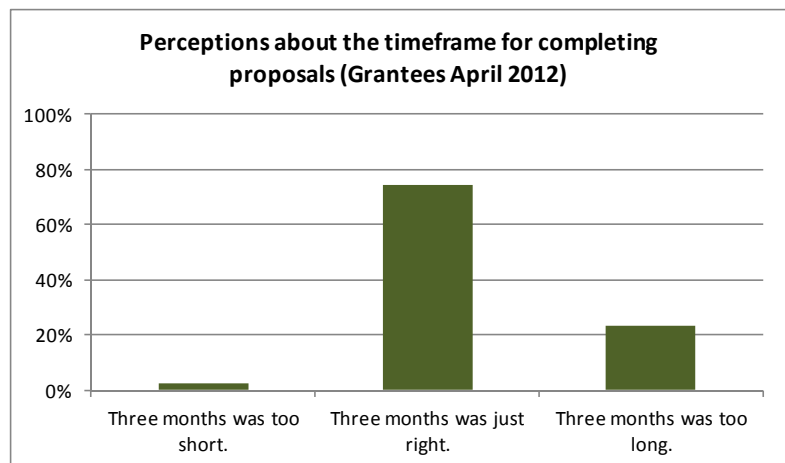
their grants were relatively new and they had not yet submitted progress or final reports, some grantees may have more to say about the clarity of the process later.

Issues of Timing

Applicants and grantees were asked how the timing of different segments of the grant making process worked for them.

Timing for WF to respond to LOIs

Ninety-six percent of grantees and nearly 80% of applicants responded that they felt the Foundation responded to their LOIs in a timely manner.⁶ Typical of this positive response was the grantee who elaborated, “The Foundation responded to the Letter of Intent quickly and also responded quickly to the proposal. The response time was much quicker than most foundations.”



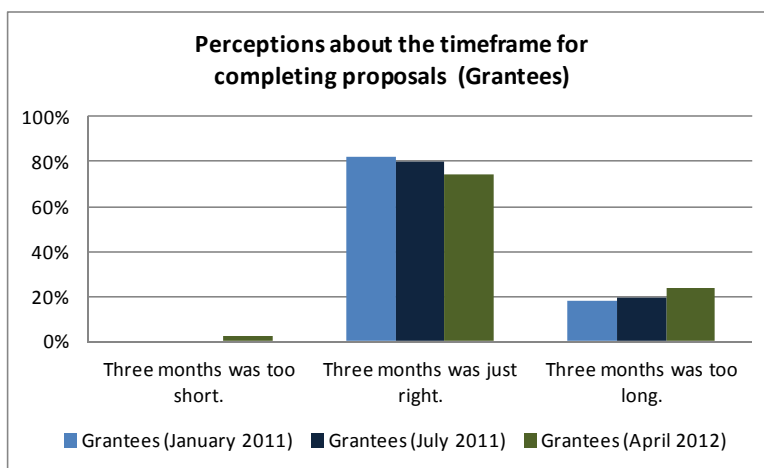
Timing – Amount of Time to Write Proposal

Applicants are given three months by the WF to write a proposal. 67 organizations (74 percent) responded that this

⁶ Four grantees and one applicant did not know about the timeliness of the Weingart Foundation’s response to their LOI. This may be the result of staffing changes or indirect involvement with the grant application process.

was the right amount of time, 21 indicated it was too long and 2 indicated that it was too short.

Thirteen grantees wrote comments to this question. Among the many positive responses, one grantee commented, “The Foundation responded to our application more quickly than we expected. This was great!” Another said, “We had no problem with the timeframe. I suppose you always wish responses were quicker, but we're used to waiting a long time in this field.” Those who suggested a shorter timeline also wanted the decision process to be accelerated, reflecting a common frustration among nonprofits that they experience a lag between when they need funds and when a check appears. Even though WF’s timing is perceived as much better than most funding sources’ the turn-around from initial request to decision is not as immediate as some grantees would wish.



There is some indication that the feeling that three months is longer than necessary to write a proposal is growing in the grantee community. This can be seen in the chart on the left and may also reflect an increasing desperation for funds. In response to these concerns, the Foundation has revised

its Frequently Asked Questions sheet (FAQs) to clarify that applicants can submit a proposal as soon as it is complete and it will be acted on as soon as the Foundation receives it.

Time and Effort Allocated to the Application Process

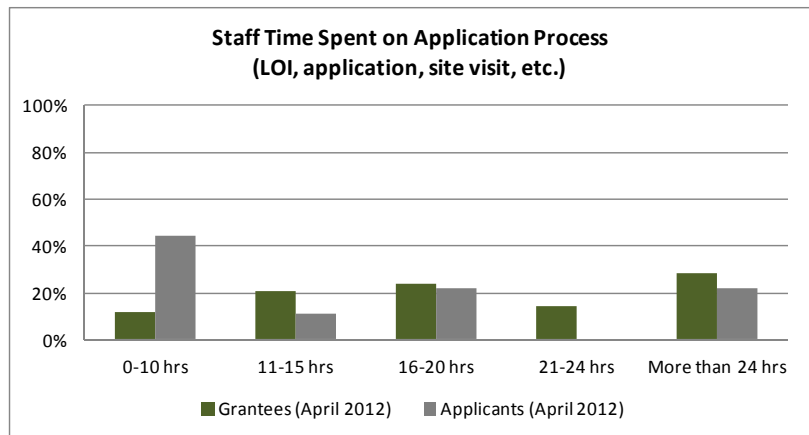
The ratio of effort to reward is an important consideration for nonprofits and seems to have hit a positive nerve with respondents to both the applicant and grantee surveys. Grantees and applicants were asked whether they felt that the amount of effort that they devoted to the grant proposal process was appropriate for the size of the grant they were seeking. 97% of grantees and 100% of applicants felt the effort was appropriate.

Fully 22 grantees made optional comments to this question, likely reflecting its significance to them. Many reflected positively on what many applicants and grantees perceive to be the very high quality review process that the WF staff undertakes. A number of the free responses made the point that the application process is a very serious commitment of time and energy, but that it is a very worthwhile process. Of particular note, several indicated that their time commitment to Weingart proposals is particularly

high compared to their effort for other funders, and this is due to the Weingart Foundation’s high standards. For example:

- Putting in the time to submit a quality LOI and proposal, and meeting the requirements of the grant guidelines was effort well spent. We received a core operating support grant for \$200,000 over two years.
- Compared to the value of the grant, 24 hours or so of effort is a minimal amount. We work a lot more on most of our fundraisers for a much smaller return.
- Our first grant from Weingart was \$30,000 - the effort to apply, educate Weingart staff, execute the grant and report was completely outsized by the dollars involved. On the other hand, the grant built a relationship and credibility which laid the groundwork for more significant grants. I would suggest simplifying the small grants⁷; the larger grants are appropriate in terms of time.

Grantees and applicants reported on the actual amount of time that they committed to writing proposals. Nearly 70% of successful grantees spent over sixteen hours on the application process compared to 44% of unsuccessful applicants. These numbers may be slightly confounded because WF staff may take more time working with strong applicants compared to those that are weaker. However it appears that there is a general lesson for applicants in these numbers – a significant commitment of time and energy to write a strong proposal apparently pays off.



Experiences with Weingart Foundation Staff

As the chart on the following page indicates, grantees on the whole believe that the review process conducted by program officers was appropriate and that program officers developed a good understanding of the programs they were assessing. While the feedback from grantees and applicants was overwhelmingly positive, there was one grantee in the April survey who felt that the review was superficial.

⁷ The Weingart Foundation has a modified application process for its Small Grant Program for grants of up to \$25,000.

Based on the review process of your proposal, how much do you agree with the following statements on the following scale? (Grantees Surveyed April 2012)				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
I felt the program officer spent an adequate amount of time getting to know our organization and our needs.	85%	14%	1%	0%
The review was superficial.	1%	0%	1%	98%
I felt the program officer's questions were appropriate.	81%	18%	1%	0%
I felt the program officer developed a solid understanding about our request.	84%	15%	1%	0%

That grantees even took the time to write a comment can be viewed as a sign of respect for the Foundation. Representative comments about staff include:

- Weingart's willingness to invest in "keeping the lights on" and their ENTIRE staff's dedication to making change in our community are far and beyond any other foundation. (Staff person's name) is incredibly helpful, professional and willing to learn about what our community needs most. She doesn't overstep bounds or mislead, yet at the same time is informative, asks the right questions and is an incredible listener. She genuinely cares about making a difference.
- Staff support was exceptional, the best I have ever received. THANK YOU!
- Our Program Officer was exceptional through the review process. She engaged in a very thoughtful review of our application and took the time to follow up with additional questions to best present our application. I believe that her due diligence had a significant role in our grant being approved.

Comparison to Prior Application Experiences with the Weingart Foundation

The following chart compares grantees' perceptions of the application process in April 2012 and July and January 2011. The overwhelming story is that most grantees report that the application process was the same as or better than prior applications. All measures went up or stayed the same between July 2011 and April 2012, and only one grantee in the April 2012 survey reported that the process was worse.

How did your most recent application process through the Regular Grant Program compare to your previous experience(s)?									
	Better			Same			Worse		
	Jan 2011	July 2011	April 2012	Jan 2011	July 2011	April 2012	Jan 2011	July 2011	April 2012
Clarity of guidelines	24%	21%	30%	71%	58%	57%	5%	4%	1%
Responsiveness of staff	33%	33%	35%	67%	46%	54%	0%	2%	0%
Guidance from staff	52%	35%	35%	48%	42%	54%	0%	2%	0%
Response time	33%	26%	29%	67%	56%	56%	0%	4%	0%

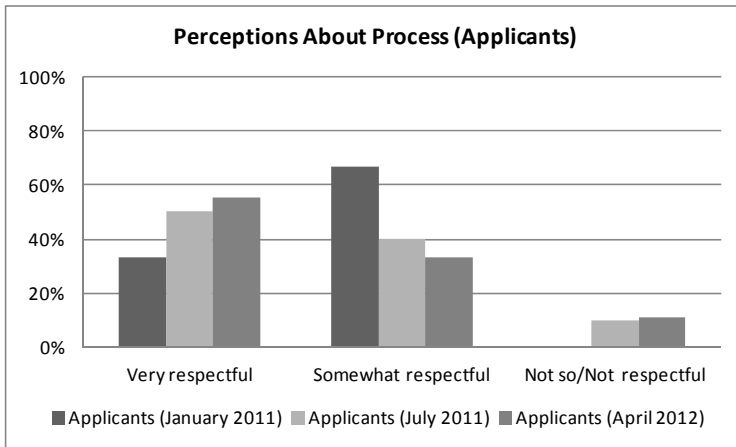
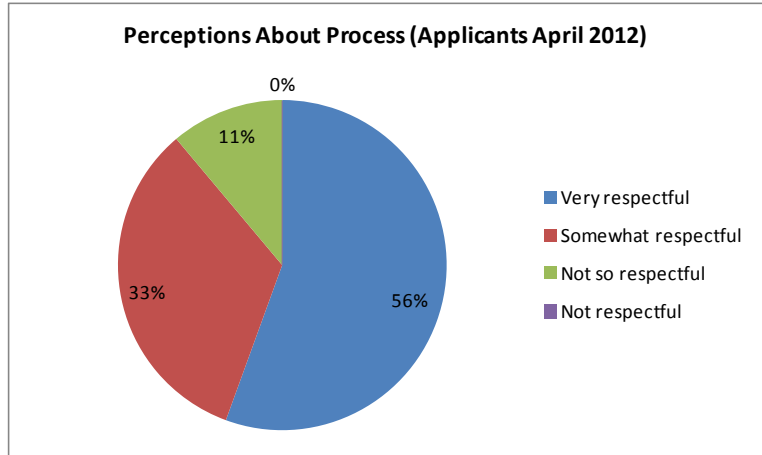
In comparing this application process to previous experiences, comments from grantees included:

- Time frame from initial LOI to award was much shorter on the second application process, especially from submission of application to the notice of award. It was extremely helpful to be told what the amount of the potential award would be before we developed the full detailed application.
- I say the ‘same’ because it was excellent the first time. Very clear, very professional, very responsive and timely.
- Weingart Foundation provides very clear information regarding funding opportunities and application guidelines. With the upgrade of their website it is much more user friendly. I marked the Staff responses as “same,” since the Program staff that we have had the pleasure of working with have in all processes been very knowledgeable, professional, clear and timely with communication and thorough with information gathering in relation to application and program.
- Core support application questions were a little difficult to understand because they are so different than the types of questions we typically are asked to answer for program grants. (There was) so much about our financial strength and capacity that we had to think a lot more about it. We were prepared to provide more program-related information until we actually saw the application.

Even though denied applicants might be expected to have a sour grapes attitude about their experiences, six of the seven applicants with prior application experiences reported that the process of applying to the Weingart Foundation this last time was better than or equal to their earlier experiences.

Experiences of the Denied Applicants

An important question for applicants is whether they feel that they were treated respectfully. The following chart indicates that over half of the 9 denied applicants felt they were treated very respectfully and one-third somewhat respectfully. One applicant indicated that they felt they were treated, “not so respectfully” and commented, “The site visit, at which time we were told we would be denied, seemed patronizing. Our later telephone follow-up was better, and left us feeling we might try again.”



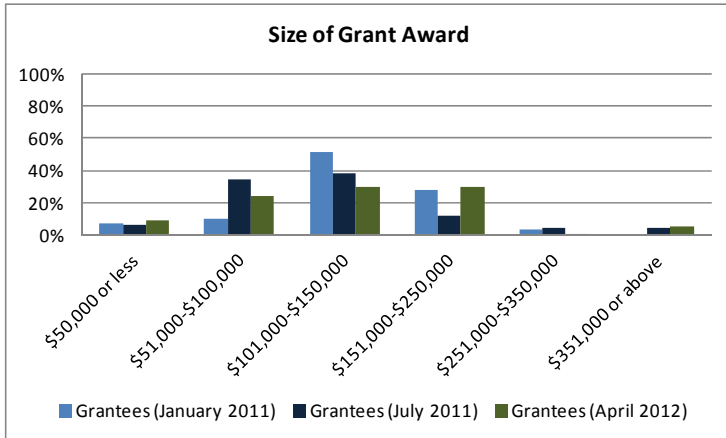
Looking at trends over the three surveys, there is a clear trend for applicants to feel that they have been treated very respectfully.

It is a puzzle to many foundations that applicants that are turned down often do not follow up to find out why their request was not granted. Although there are no industry standards, the 85% of applicants (although representing a small pool) that report they did call the Weingart Foundation to ask why they were denied appears to be a high number, reflecting a high level of trust with the Foundation.

Plans to Reapply to the Weingart Foundation

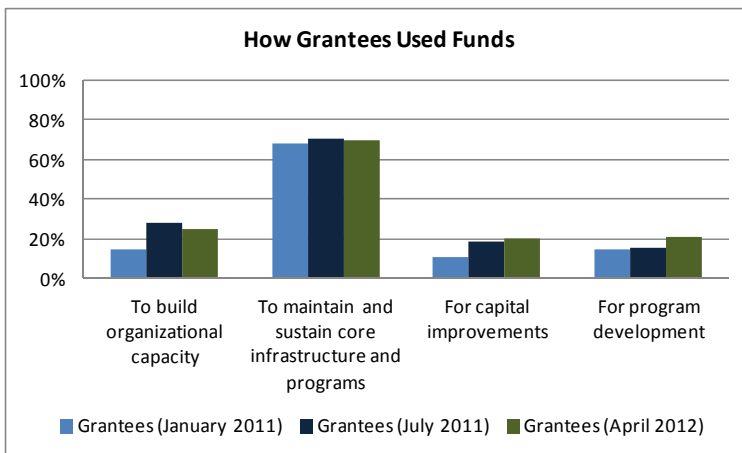
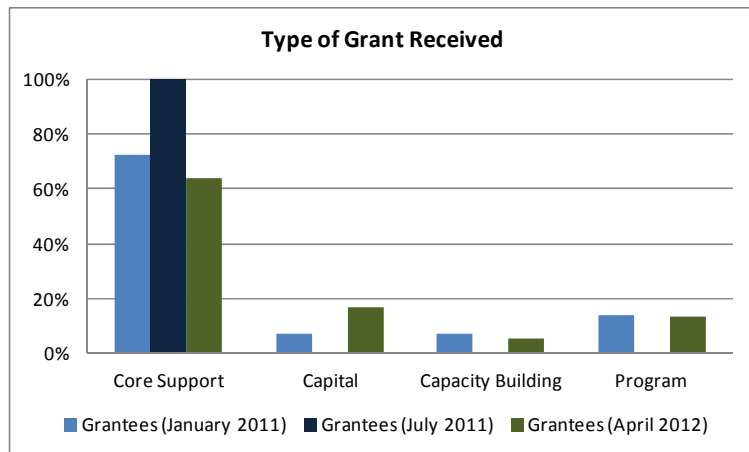
As a possible indication that the application process was fair and respectful to them, 100% of applicants and nearly 95% of grantees indicated that they are planning to reapply, with only five grantees reporting that they do not know yet whether or not they will reapply. Approximately half of grantees plan to reapply immediately after their grant ends, 20% plan to reapply one year after their current grant ends, and another 20% were unsure when they would reapply.

V. Grant Size and Use



Sixty percent of grantees surveyed in April 2012 received grants between \$101,000 and \$250,000. This is consistent with results from earlier surveys.

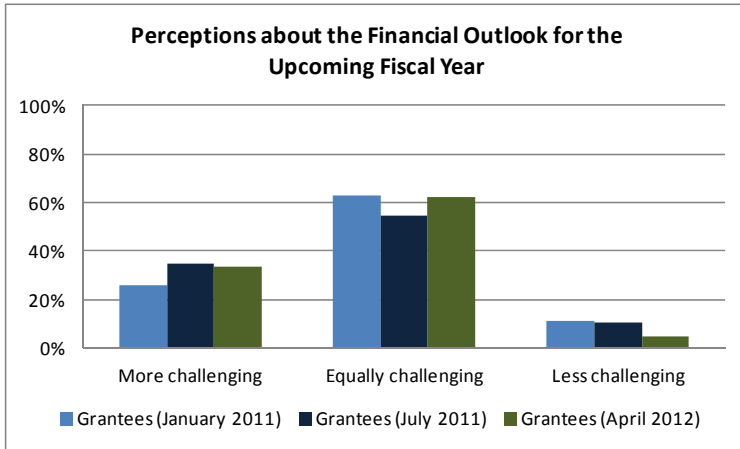
The Weingart Foundation makes four types of grants: core support, capital, capacity building and program. Over 60% of respondents in April 2012 received core support grants, which is reflected in the chart on the right. Grantees do not always use the same terminology as the Foundation’s categories of grants to explain how they use their funds. While the type of grant received corresponded quite closely to how the funds were used for grantees in April 2012 (see the following chart), this was not always the case in previous surveys.



Seventy percent of grantees surveyed in April 2012 reported using their grants to maintain and sustain core infrastructure and programs.⁸ This response is consistent with previous surveys. Capacity building was also the second most frequent use of funds in the last two surveys (July 2011 and April 2012).

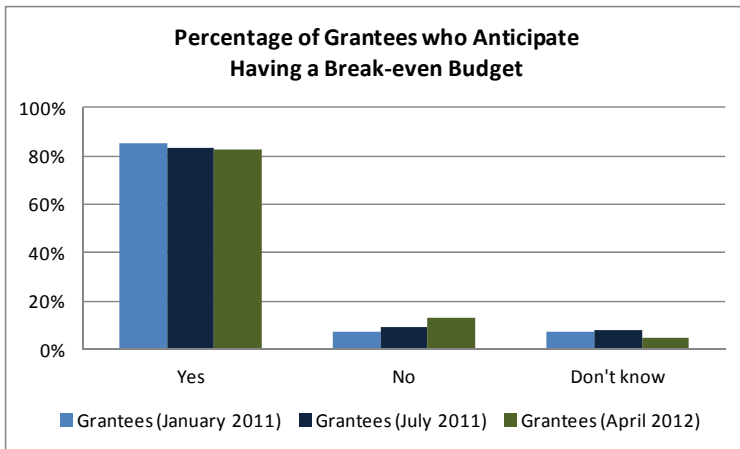
⁸ For the April 2012 survey, the phrase “for unrestricted core support” was changed to “maintain and sustain core infrastructure and programs” to better reflect how core support funds are used. Since core support is unrestricted, funds can be used for any purpose that could include: maintaining and sustaining, building capacity, and capital improvement.

V. Optional Questions about Grantees' Financial Condition and Outlook



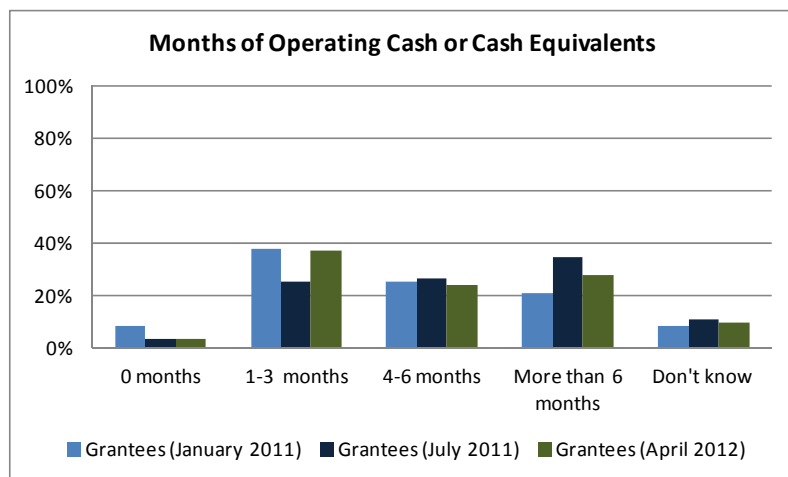
In addition to soliciting feedback about its own performance, the Weingart Foundation uses the opportunity of this periodic survey with its grantees to learn how the economic crisis and subsequent recession have affected them, the amount of buffer they have to withstand economic hardships, and to understand how they are viewing their

economic futures. Of those surveyed in April 2012, only four thought the next year would be less challenging than the previous year. Since January 2011, most grantees report that their financial futures would be equally or more challenging than in the previous year.

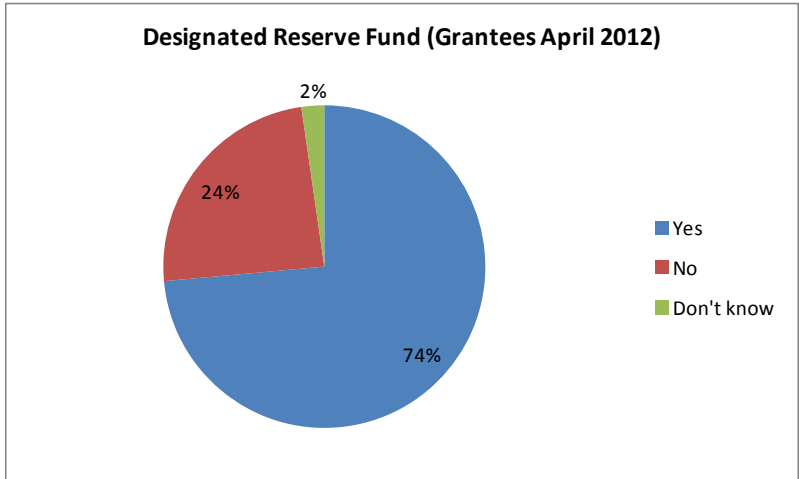


The percentage of grantees reporting that they will have a break-even budget has also very slightly decreased since January 2011. WF staff observes that these numbers are below pre-recession reports when a higher percentage of grantees anticipated break-even budgets.

Grantees were also asked about their holdings of operating cash or cash equivalents. In a positive trend, the number of organizations with no months of cash or cash equivalents is lower than during the first survey in January 2011, and the number of organizations with more than 6 months of



cash or cash equivalents is greater. It is possible that these positive trends may reflect that organizations are adjusting to new fiscal realities in the wake of the turbulence in the closing years of the first decade of the 21st century.

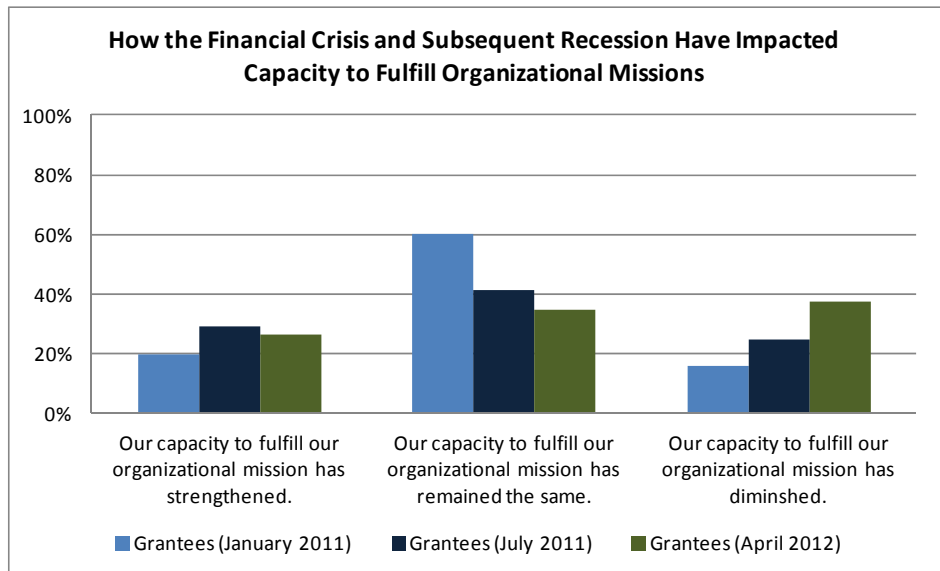


In April 2012, Weingart Foundation staff introduced a new question asking if grantees had a designated reserve fund. Nearly three-quarters of grantees have a designated reserve fund. Of those without reserve funds, one grantee explained, “We did until this year - we have needed to use our reserve funds to deal with

the state cuts to our services for the past four years.” Another grantee used its reserves to purchase a building, “Reserves are critical and one of our strategic goals,” they explained, “we spent years building our reserves and we used those reserves to achieve another strategic goal (acquiring a permanent home)...now we are in the process of re-building our reserves to exceed our prior level. This is essential to intelligently manage our organization.”

An important bottom line for nonprofits is whether the financial crisis has resulted in an organization that is better able to fulfill its mission. In a disturbing trend, more

organizations are likely to report that their capacity to fulfill their missions has decreased. There was a 21% increase (from 6% of respondents in January 2011 to 37% in April 2012) that report their capacity to fulfill their organizational missions has decreased and, for the first time, more



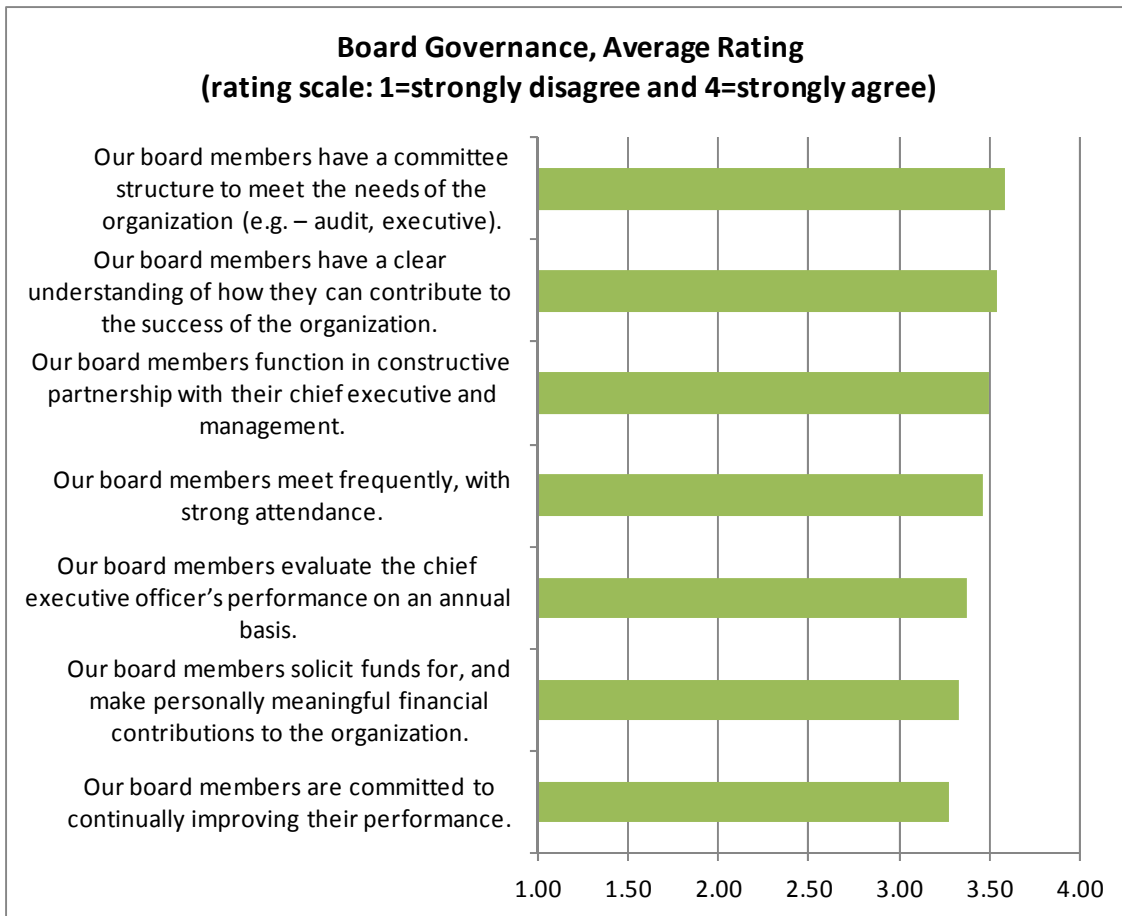
organizations indicate their capacity has decreased than stayed the same or strengthened.

V. Optional Question about Board Governance

In April 2012, WF staff introduced a new question about board governance to this periodic survey. This new question reflects the importance that the Foundation attaches to organizational leadership in assuring the ongoing viability and sustainability of the organization. As the Foundation explains on its website, “The Weingart Foundation believes that a strong, engaged and knowledgeable board is a critical factor in a nonprofit organization’s ability to be effective, self-sustaining and achieve impact.” Weingart Foundation staff has extensive discussions with applicants about the role and function of the governing board, recognizing that all nonprofits are unique, are at different stages of their organizational development, and may have regulatory requirements regarding governance matters.⁹ Leadership at both board and staff levels is an important component of the grant review process and reflected in the recommendations that go to the Weingart Foundation board.

This survey asked the organizational leaders that responded to the survey to rate their boards on seven different performance indicators. Responses to this new question about board governance are provided below, arrayed from most enthusiastic at the top to least enthusiastic at the bottom. Overall, boards received high ratings from executive leadership, especially in terms of how they are structured, their understanding of the contribution they can make to the organization and their constructive partnership with the chief executive and management. Within this overall positive context, respondents expressed the least degree of enthusiasm (at the bottom) about concrete tasks such as raising funds, evaluating the executive director, and assessing their own performance. The overall very positive findings about the effectiveness of board governance were not a big surprise because the role of boards is an important element in every grant application review.

⁹ Additional information about the Weingart Foundation’s perspectives on board leadership, is included on their website at : <http://www.weingartfnd.org/nonprofit-board-governance>



Comments about board governance included:

- The board tends to be more engaged by program work than fund development, which is where we need their involvement more. This is a common challenge for non-profit boards and we continue to struggle with this issue. We have 100% of our board giving, but the next level of engagement is fundraising through their networks and that has been tough to get at.
- Many of our board members are founding members and of an older generation and are not as familiar with more recent best practices.
- Our board has been actively involved in an on-going investigation and analysis for the past 9 months of the various forms of affiliation, partnership, possible merger/acquisition. My board is more involved now than they have ever been!

VI. Conclusion

The final survey question asked applicants if they had anything else they wanted to say. This type of question often picks up lingering issues or concerns that respondents have, or is simply not answered because it takes too much effort to do so. In the case of the Weingart Foundation, this question elicited a lot of responses. Select responses to this question are included below.

Several respondents offered constructive suggestions to the Foundation:

- Please streamline the reporting forms.
- Please reconsider the funding guidelines/restrictions; limiting an organization to apply for no more than 10% of its annual operating budget is reasonable - as long as any potential grant award does not ultimately translate in a dollar grant award that is spread out over a two year period, in effect making the award represent a maximum of 5% of the agency's annual budget.

There was a back-handed compliment:

- Weingart Foundation is one of the least neurotic organizations out there! Thank you!

And most comments amplify the appreciation and positive regard in which the Foundation is held by its constituents that have been heard earlier in this report:

- The core operating support from Weingart has been unbelievably helpful. We were spending a lot of cash in fixing our outdated technology and we now have completely up-to-date computers, servers and telephones. Also, we were able to hold four consecutive days of "learning and reflection" as a whole staff. It was the first time in our nearly 35 years that all staff came together for peer-learning, team building, training, reflection and sharing. We will continue our OD work over the next year and focus more on strengthening our ability to effectively evaluate our impact. Thank you!
- We love Weingart Foundation. If anything, it would be good to have a better idea up front of what the trustees will and will not fund. Thanks so much!
- Our Program Officer was exceptional through the review process. She engaged in a very thoughtful review of our application and took the time to follow-up with additional questions to best present our application. I believe that her due diligence had a significant role in our grant being approved.
- The Weingart Foundation routinely asks for feedback from the "stakeholders"/those funded. This is much appreciated and a unique step compared to other foundations.
- We highly value the partnership we have with the Weingart Foundation and the support they have provided our agency over the years. Their staff is great, knowledgeable and helpful and they are willing to provide a lead grant for larger projects so we can attract other funders - a terrific strategy!

There could be no better conclusion to this report than the voice of one of the Foundation's grantees:

- In my dealings with various foundations and government organizations, I place the WF in first place in terms of making transparent what they value -- this is clear from the Website, the LOI, the interim report template and the final report template -- all much appreciated.

In summary, this third survey of Regular Grant Program applicants and recipients has reinforced the need and value of the Foundation's new grantmaking strategy that emphasizes maintaining and strengthening the capacity of the nonprofits it serves. This

strategy appears even more important in the context of the challenging economic environment grantees describe as creating obstacles and challenges to their ability to maintain current levels of capacity. The Foundation's review process that is designed to support the success of grantees is perceived by those who have experienced it – and even applicants who have been turned down – as overwhelmingly fair, timely, responsive, rigorous, and even helpful to them. The candid comments and suggestions for improvement to the Foundation will help Foundation staff in their ongoing efforts to understand – and improve – the experiences of the nonprofits with which they work.