
2017 GRANTEE PERCEPTION REPORT®
&
2017 APPLICANT PERCEPTION REPORT
SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

PREPARED FOR

The Paul Hamlyn Foundation



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Key Findings and Recommendations from The Paul Hamlyn Foundation 2017 Grantee & Applicant Perception Report

Prepared by The Center For Effective Philanthropy

In September and October of 2017, The Center for Effective Philanthropy conducted a survey of The Paul Hamlyn Foundation (“PHF” or “the Foundation”) grantees and declined applicants, achieving 70 and 39 percent response rates respectively, higher than typical response rates. The memo below shares key findings and recommendations from PHF’s Grantee Perception Report (GPR) and Applicant Perception Report (APR).

This is the Foundation’s third GPR (surveys conducted in 2017, 2013, 2009) and second APR (surveys conducted in 2017 and 2013). More information about the survey, analysis, and methodology can be found in the appendices.

Introduction

Assessing foundation performance is challenging, and a range of data sources is essential. The GPR and APR provide two important sets of perspectives that can be useful in understanding philanthropic performance – from grantees and declined applicants. The comparative benchmarking available for these two groups via the GPR/APR – from grantees of more than 300 foundations and applicants of nearly 50 foundations – can help illuminate PHF’s unique strengths and opportunities for improvement, relative to grantees and applicants of other foundations CEP has surveyed. (See Appendix C for more information about CEP and the GPR/APR.)

The results of these assessments should be interpreted in light of the Foundation’s particular context, goals and strategy. Context matters – both in terms of interpreting results and planning for future action based on these results. While the surveys cover many areas in which grantees’ and declined applicants’ perceptions might be useful to the Foundation, low ratings in an area that is not core to the Foundation’s strategy may not be concerning. It is our hope that this set of feedback will inform planning and learning efforts by providing perspectives of some of your crucial stakeholders.

It is important to bear in mind some inherent differences between grantees and declined applicants. For grantees, the experience of receiving funding is intrinsically positive and grantees overwhelmingly use the positive side of the 1-7 scale; the comparative data helps normalize and control for this positivity. For declined applicants, however, the experience is often more mixed – their ratings tend to be less positive than those of grantees. Bearing these dynamics in mind can be helpful as you interpret and act on this feedback.

Unless otherwise noted, this memo compares PHF grantee and declined applicant ratings to grantee and declined applicant ratings of all funders in CEP’s datasets based on percentile rank. PHF ratings are described as “higher than typical” when they fall above the 65th percentile, and “lower than typical” when they fall below the 35th percentile.

Selected respondent comments are shown throughout this memo and highlight key themes.

Overview of GPR/APR Findings

Grantee Perceptions: Across GPR measures, PHF grantee ratings tend to be either similar to the typical funder or lower than the typical funder in CEP's GPR dataset. There are some notable statistically significant improvements since 2013 related to aspects of field impact. There are also some statistically significant declines from 2013 related to aspects of the selection process.¹ PHF also selected a "custom cohort" – a secondary comparison comprised of a group of 20 funders selected by the PHF to represent funders more similar to PHF in size, scope and approach. With few exceptions – which are noted below – PHF's ratings are the same when compared to this cohort and CEP's full benchmarking dataset. (The custom cohort is available only for the GPR and further information is available in Appendix A.)

Applicant Perceptions: As with grantee perceptions, declined applicant ratings tend to be similar to or lower than the typical funder in CEP's applicant dataset. On most measures, ratings are similar to PHF's 2013 APR results, though ratings have significantly improved on field focused measures since 2013.

Subgroup Differences: CEP extensively analysed results within subgroups of PHF respondents. This memo references notable significant differences and trends, focusing on differences by grant strategy (current and old) and grant type (Ideas and Pioneers; Youth Fund; Explore and Test; More and Better). A summary of differences for 9 GPR/APR subgroups is available in Appendix B.

In many of these subgroups, ratings by these smaller groups of respondents do vary measure to measure, sometimes substantially and widely, though statistical differences tend to be inconsistent and no one group uniformly rates higher or lower than others.

There is one, exception, however: one group provides consistently different ratings relative to PHF overall, across most survey measures: Ideas and Pioneers grantees.

- Ideas & Pioneers grantees provide significantly less positive ratings on field related measures, and ratings that trend less positively for the funder-grantee relationship and *some* organisational related measures. They also experience the selection process somewhat differently than others – it is less time consuming and faster, with even less PHF involvement.

Further, responses from Youth Fund and More and Better grantees, and Ideas and Pioneers applicants, tend to stand out a bit more than other groups: They differ from PHF overall on multiple, but not all, GPR/APR dimensions (e.g. field, organisation, relationships, processes). More specifically:

- Youth Fund grantee ratings trend more positively on some field related measures, on measures of the funder-grantee relationship (particularly quality of interactions) and on some aspects of the reporting process. They also receive more intensive non-monetary assistance.
- More and Better applicant ratings trend more positively on most field and organisation related measures, and while they spend more time than others on the selection process, they find it more helpful and rate the reasons for declination as more honest.
- Ideas and Pioneers declined applicants provide ratings that trend less positively on field-related measures. Ratings for the selection process trend less positively, though it is less time-consuming. Their ratings trend even lower than others for the overall relationship quality.

Given PHF's recent strategic changes, as well as the many grant and fund types, each with different context, goals and strategy, CEP encourages PHF to explore subgroup differences.

¹ Of note, in 2017, unlike 2013, PHF's grantee survey population excluded PHF's India grantee portfolio. They were a small proportion of the total 2013 respondent group and their ratings, in many areas, were similar to PHF overall ratings.

Foundation Context

This set of grantee and declined applicant feedback comes following a number of changes at PHF, including a different context than the 2013 and 2009 surveys. This includes, but is not limited to, a relatively new foundation strategy, closing previous programmes, the introductions of new funds with various approaches, a recent organisational restructure, staffing growth, new applicant processes and intended relationships that vary across grant funds and grant types, and evolving grant decision making arrangements. As noted above, it is important to interpret results in light of this context, and CEP suggests this set of results serve as a new PHF baseline.

Even in light of these contextual changes, though, PHF's grantmaking characteristics broadly resembles that of the typical funder. Importantly, PHF's grantmaking patterns influence grantee perceptions.

- Requests to and grants from PHF are typical in size and type, though PHF provides much more core support than in 2013, a proportion in line with the typical funder (24 percent, compared to six percent in 2013).
 - Grantees receiving large, 2+ year, and/or core support grants – across all grantee subgroups – provide more positive perceptions of PHF on many GPR measures. This is consistent with CEP's broad research.
 - **Key Subgroup Findings:** Ideas and Pioneers grantees report receiving smaller, shorter grants, and More and Better grantees report receiving larger and longer grants. Youth Fund grantees report receiving more core support, and Explore and Test grantees report receiving more project funding.
- PHF, however, receives requests from and funds smaller organisations than typical.

Key Grantee Findings

Continued Relative Strength in Grantees' Fields

As in 2013, a relative PHF strength, overall and across most subgroups, relates to the Foundation's impact on the fields in which grantees work.

- **Key PHF-wide Findings:** Ratings are typical for PHF's impact on and understanding of the fields in which grantees work. Ratings have increased significantly since 2013 for the extent to which PHF has advanced the state of knowledge in grantees' field and for the extent to which it has affected public policy in grantees' fields. Ratings for both measures, at the aggregate, are similar to the typical GPR funder.
- **Key Subgroup Findings:** Ratings from Explore and Test, Youth Fund, and More and Better grantees trend more positively than other grant types for most field-related measures, and are significantly more positive – and higher than typical – for the extent to which PHF advances knowledge and understands grantees' fields. Ratings from Ideas & Pioneers are significantly lower than other grant types for field-related measures. There are no significant differences by grant strategy on these measures.
- Grantees comment about the Foundation's impact in their fields, in open-ended responses, sharing comments like: "It is clear that PHF is positioning itself as a key player in making the case for arts-based learning at [a] policy level" and "[The Foundation] has worked hard at creating something that is more than the sum of its parts."



"PHF is a thoughtful and strategic funder, providing resources, contacts and encouragement to develop our sector's understanding of itself and its ability to communicate its impact more widely."

Continued Relative Strength for Impact on Grantee Organisations

Key PHF-wide Findings: PHF receives one of its highest comparative ratings for its impact on grantee organisations – in the top 40 percent of CEP’s comparative dataset and similar to 2013.

- Despite this relative strength, however, grantees’ perceptions of how well PHF understands their organisations’ goals and strategies are lower than typical and similar to 2013. Further, ratings are lower than typical for the extent to which PHF is aware of challenges facing grantee organisations.
- **Key Subgroup Findings:**
 - There are no significant differences by grant type for PHF’s impact on grantee organisations. However, More and Better grantees rate significantly more positively than most other grant types for PHF’s understanding of their organisations *and* for PHF’s understanding of their challenges; ratings from Explore and Test and Ideas and Pioneers trend less positively for these two measures.
 - Current strategy grantees rate significantly more positively than old strategy grantees for PHF’s understanding of their organisation’s goals and strategy, though there are no significant differences on other organisational related measures.

Nonmonetary Support

One way funders can strengthen grantee organisations is through non-monetary supports.

Key PHF-wide Findings: As in 2013, a typical proportion of PHF grantees report receiving intensive patterns of nonmonetary support from the Foundation, defined, generally, as receiving more than a few types of support.

Key Subgroup Findings: Youth Fund and More and Better grantees receive more of these intensive supports than is typical, while Explore and Test grantees receive less than typical. There are no significant differences by grant strategy.

- Grantees receiving these intensive patterns of nonmonetary assistance rate more positively on nearly every GPR survey measure.
- Further, grantees receiving at least one form of nonmonetary support – across all subgroups – rate significantly higher on a number of measures in the report, including their perceptions of PHF’s impact on and understanding of their organisations.
- In their open-ended comments, grantees request more nonmonetary support, specifically convenings and opportunities for networking with other grantees. One grantee suggests that PHF “Help facilitate more forums to help disseminate best practice and shared learning around programmes.”
- Relatedly, in responding to a custom question, asking which of five potential supports grantees would find most valuable, grantees report the most interest in “support for their organisation to influence other organisations and people in their field.”

“*[PHF’s funding] has significantly transformed our approach to working with people in [our town] and has helped us to increase our reach, range of opportunities and depth of engagement to new and diverse audiences.*”

“*Perhaps there could be events that honestly shares information from past grant holders as a way to develop skills and networks in the sector.*”

Ongoing Opportunity to Improve Interactions & Communications

CEP's research finds that strong funder-grantee relationships – defined by high quality interactions and clear and consistent foundation communications – are critical to high-performing funders. Grantees who have strong relationships with their funders perceive those funders to have significantly greater impact on their organisations, communities, and fields.

More tangibly, grantees that can approach funders with challenges, get answers to important questions in a timely fashion, and clearly understand what a funder is trying to achieve are more likely to efficiently execute work on shared goals and draw on funder resources beyond the grant funding – amplifying the impact of grantees.

Key PHF-wide Findings: Although some grantees have positive perceptions of their relationship with PHF, describing PHF staff as “clear and helpful,” “supportive,” and “positive,” grantees, on average, report more strained relationships with PHF than is typical of other funders, particularly with regard to the quality of interactions.

Key Subgroup Findings: Current strategy PHF grantees provide significantly more positive ratings than old strategy grantees on aspects related to the funder-grantee relationship. With regard to grant type, there are some differences, though no consistent patterns; ratings from Explore and Test, More and Better, and Youth Fund trend more positively than some other grant types on some aspects related to the funder-grantee relationship, while ratings from Ideas and Pioneers grantees trend less positively.

Perceptions of PHF Communications


- **Key PHF-wide Findings:** Ratings for the clarity and consistency of PHF's communication are similar to the typical funder, trending up from 2013. Specifically, grantees place the Foundation in the top half of CEP's comparative dataset for the clarity to which the Foundation communicates its own goals and strategies. Further, ratings for overall PHF transparency are in the top 40 percent of CEP's comparative dataset.
 - However, ratings are lower than typical for the extent to which PHF is open to grantees ideas about its strategy.
- **Key Subgroup Findings:**
 - There is substantial though not consistent patterns of variation by grant type with regard to perceptions of PHF communications.
 - There are almost no significant differences by grant type for clarity or consistency of PHF communication. However, ratings for clarity of communication are higher than typical for Explore and Test, Youth Fund, and More and Better grantees. Further, Explore and Test grantees provide higher than typical ratings for the consistency of PHF communication.
 - More and Better and Youth Fund grantees rate PHF higher than typical for the Foundation's overall transparency, while Ideas and Pioneers grantees provide ratings that are lower than typical on this measure.
 - Explore and Test and Ideas and Pioneers grantees provide ratings that are lower than typical for the extent to which PHF is open their ideas about its strategy.
 - Current strategy grantees rate significantly more positively than old strategy grantees for the clarity and consistency of communications, though there are no differences between these groups for PHF's overall transparency or openness to grantees' ideas.


Quality & Quantity of Interactions with PHF

Key PHF-wide Findings: Grantee perceptions of interactions with PHF are mixed. While there are some areas of improvement and some decline from 2013, ratings for these measures are all lower than typical. Perceptions vary based on patterns of interaction.

Key Subgroup Findings: There is substantial variation by grant type with regard to perceptions of PHF interactions, with Youth Fund grantees providing ratings that are more positive than some other grant types. As with the overall quality of relationship, current strategy grantees report higher quality interactions than old strategy grantees.

- Perceptions of staff responsiveness have declined significantly and are now in the bottom 10 percent of CEP’s comparative dataset.
 - **Key Subgroup Finding:** Youth Fund grantees rate significantly more positively than other grant types for PHF responsiveness, and current strategy grantees rate significantly more positively than old strategy grantees for PHF responsiveness.
- Ratings for PHF approachability if a problem arises remain lower than typical – even though ratings have significantly improved since 2013. Of note, ratings on this measure are similar to that of the median custom cohort funder.
 - **Key Subgroup Finding:** Current strategy grantees rate significantly more positively than old strategy grantees for PHF responsiveness and approachability.
- PHF patterns of interaction influence grantee perceptions. Broadly, Paul Hamlyn grantees report less frequent contact than is typical. Those with more frequent contact provide more positive ratings. Importantly, grantees who report interacting with the Foundation at least a few times a year – across all PHF subgroups – provide significantly higher ratings for nearly every aspect of their relationship with PHF, and on other GPR survey dimensions.
 - **Key Subgroup Finding:** Current strategy grantees report slightly more frequent contact than old strategy grantees. Youth Fund grantees report slightly more contact with PHF than other grant types, though still less than that of the typical funder.
- It’s also important to note that *who* initiates contact matters. A larger than typical proportion of grantees – 44 percent – report that they most frequently initiate contact with Foundation staff. These grantees rate significantly lower on many GPR measures than other grantees.
 - **Key Subgroup Finding:** More than 50 percent of Ideas and Pioneers report that they are most frequently initiating contact. On the other hand, Youth Fund grantees report more balanced initiation of contact, which is more similar to the typical funder. Patterns of interaction vary substantially and not consistently by grant strategy.
- A typical proportion of grantees, a significant drop from 2013, report receiving a site visit. Those who received a site visit – across all PHF subgroups – during the course of their grant provide significantly higher ratings throughout the report.
 - **Key Subgroup Finding:** Old strategy grantees receive significantly more site visits than current strategy grantees. Explore and Test and Ideas and Pioneers grantees report receiving fewer site visits than is typical.
- A typical proportion of grantees (19%), a drop from 2013, report experiencing a contact change in the past six months. These grantees – across all PHF subgroups – rate significantly lower for many aspects of their relationship with PHF.
 - **Key Subgroup Finding:** No differences by grant type. Old strategy grantees report significantly more contact changes than current strategy grantees.

 *“The first grant officer we had was very responsive and approachable, however she left and our new grant officer is difficult to get hold of and usually doesn’t answer our emails.”*

 *“More opportunities to meet, for staff to visit projects and work, would be useful - particularly when our primary contact has changed.”*

Helpful Reporting & Evaluation Processes, Less Helpful Selection Process

Ratings for PHF's reporting and evaluation processes are some of the highest comparative ratings in the report. However, qualitative and quantitative data point to challenging aspects of PHF's selection process, and grantees offer numerous suggestions for improvement.

Evaluation Process

- **Key PHF-wide Findings:** Ratings are particularly positive with regard to the evaluation process, which 39 percent of grantees report participating in. For the extent to which the evaluation design incorporated grantee input, resulted in grantees making changes to the work that was evaluated, and generated information that grantees believe will be useful for other organisations, ratings are higher than typical.
 - A larger than typical proportion of these grantees report that they chose an external evaluator (as opposed to one selected by PHF).
 - Eighty-six percent of these grantees – relative to 48 percent at the typical funder – report that the evaluation's costs were fully or partially covered by PHF.
 - Finally, when asked to select which PHF provided supports have been most helpful, grantees most frequently select "Direct practical help and/or conversations with Foundation staff on evaluation."
 - However, fewer grantees than in 2013 – though still a typical proportion – report engaging in an idea exchange about how they will assess the results of the grant funded work. Those that do have this conversation – across all PHF subgroups – provide significantly more positive ratings on a number of GPR measures.
- **Key Subgroup Findings:**
 - Ratings from Youth Fund grantees trend less positively and lower than typical on all measures of the evaluation process – and fewer of these grantees report that they selected their evaluator and that PHF covered evaluation costs. On the other hand, ratings trend more positively for Explore and Test and More and Better grantees for aspects of the evaluation process.
 - There are no significant differences by grant strategy with regard to perceptions of the evaluation process.
 - Lower than typical proportions of Explore and Test and Ideas and Pioneers report engaging in conversations about how they will assess the results of the grant funded work. More old strategy grantees are having these conversations than current strategy grantees.

Reporting Process

- **Key PHF-wide Findings:** Ratings are higher than typical for the extent to which grantees experience the reporting process as a helpful opportunity to reflect and learn. And, ratings are in the top half of the comparative dataset for the extent to which the reporting process is adaptable, relevant, and aligned appropriately to the timing of grantees' work.
 - However, ratings are lower than typical for the extent to which the reporting process is straightforward.
 - Of note, a higher than typical proportion of PHF grantees report having a substantive discussion with the Foundation about their submitted reports. Those that have had

these conversations – across all PHF subgroups – rate significantly higher on nearly every GPR measure.

- **Key Subgroup Findings:**
 - Perceptions of the reporting process vary widely by grant type, though Youth Fund grantees provide consistently more positive ratings on these measures and significantly more positively for how straightforward the reporting process is.
 - Current strategy grantees provide significantly more positive ratings on some aspects of the reporting process, specifically the extent to which it is straightforward and aligned appropriately to the timing of their work. There are no differences by grant strategy with regard to having discussions about the submitted report.

Selection Process

Key PHF-wide Findings: Grantees are spending a longer than typical amount of time on the Foundation’s selection process (35 hours, relative to 20 at the typical funder).

- **Key Subgroup Findings:**
 - This is particularly the case for More and Better grantees. The single exception is Ideas and Pioneers grantees, who spend less time than most other grant types on the selection process.
 - Old strategy grantees report spending significantly more time on the selection process than current strategy grantees.
- Grantees experience the selection process as not particularly helpful. They rate the helpfulness of PHF’s selection process in strengthening the grant-funded organisation/programme significantly lower than in 2013 (a rating that was in the top twenty-five percent of CEP’s comparative dataset) and in the bottom 30 percent of CEP’s comparative dataset.
 - **Key Subgroup Findings:**
 - Current strategy grantees experience PHF’s selection process as significantly less helpful than old strategy grantees.
 - However, More and Better grantees experience the section process as significantly more helpful than most other grant types.
- In open-ended comments, grantees describe the selection process as “confusing” and “unclear.” They suggest a clearer, more streamlined process with more communication and more specific guidelines.
- Further, compared to 2013, PHF staff are significantly less involved in the proposal development process. This is important because greater staff involvement – across all subgroups – is associated with significantly more positive ratings on many GPR measures, including aspects of the selection process.
 - **Key Subgroup Findings:**
 - Of note, More and Better grantees report significantly more involvement than most other grant types. Explore and Test, Ideas and Pioneers, and Youth Fund grantees report lower than typical staff involvement.
 - Old strategy grantees report significantly more PHF staff involvement than current strategy grantees.

- Finally, overall, PHF’s decision making process is slower than typical. More than half of PHF grantees report waiting 4+ months between submitting their grant proposal and a clear commitment of funding, compared to 38 percent at the typical funder.
 - **Key Subgroup Findings:**
 - Of note, Ideas and Pioneers and Explore and Test grantees report receiving clearer commitment of funding more quickly than other grantees, which is in line with the typical funder.
 - Old strategy grantees experienced the process as slightly slower than current strategy grantees.



“The amount of work we have had to put in [the application] and the time this demanded meant a significant drain on our fundraising (and wider) resources over a significant period of time during the two stage process. As a small organisation we found this a struggle...”



“The process of application is grueling and long-winded. The new application form is worse than the old one and extremely time consuming to fill in. It is very difficult to express the proposed project clearly because of tight word limits and repetitive questions. It really is a major undertaking now to apply to PHF.”

Key Declined Applicant Findings

Perceptions of PHF's Impact on Applicants' Fields and Organisations

- **Key PHF-wide Findings:** Ratings for both the Foundation's impact on and understanding of applicants' fields have significantly improved since 2013 and are now in line with the typical funder in CEP's applicant dataset.
 - However, as with grantee feedback, ratings are lower than typical for PHF's understanding of applicant organisations' strategy and goals – similar to 2013 – and for PHF's awareness of challenges that applicants face.
- **Key Subgroup Findings:**
 - Explore and Test applicants rate significantly higher than Ideas and Pioneers and Youth Fund applicants for the extent to which PHF is having impact on applicants' fields. More generally, Ideas and Pioneers and Youth Fund applicants rate lower than typical relative to other applicant grant types on field related measures.
 - Ratings from More and Better applicants are more positive than other grant types for PHF's understanding of their organisation and awareness of challenges their organisation is facing. Their ratings also trend more positively for field impact and understanding.

Opportunities for Improved Communication and Interactions with Applicants

Key PHF-wide Findings: Similar to grantees, applicants experience less positive relationships with PHF than typical. This influences their perceptions of the selection and declination process, discussed below.

- Ratings for the clarity of PHF's communication are typical and trending up from 2013.
- However, applicant perceptions of the consistency of PHF's communication and of the Foundation's overall transparency are lower than typical. In open-ended suggestions applicants frequently describe shifting and unclear expectations and changing points of contact. They suggest "far more transparency and explication about changing priorities," as well "clearer guidance."
- Further, similar to the grantee experience, ratings for overall staff responsiveness – across all applicant grant types – are in the bottom 20 percent of CEP's comparative applicant dataset, with Ideas and Pioneers ratings trending even lower.
- Finally, when asked to provide open-ended suggestions for improvements that would make PHF a better funder, 39 percent of applicant suggestions relate to improving PHF communications and interactions. Applicants request more communication and assistance in the selection process, clearer, more consistent and more transparent communication, as well as better and more frequent interactions during the selection process.
- **Key Subgroup Findings:** There are no significant difference by applicant grant type on measures of interactions; ratings for all groups are lower than typical. There are no significant differences by applicant grant type on measures of communications, though ratings from Ideas and Pioneers applicants trend even less positively. Youth Fund applicants, however, do rate significantly more positively than Ideas and Pioneers applicants on the single measure of overall PHF transparency.



"Have a system for informal discussions before a charity puts a massive amount of work into a Stage 1 application which gets a one-sentence turn-down."



"Improve the 1-2-1 relationship with staff so that applicants can feel equally treated in all cases."

Ongoing Opportunities to Improve Selection & Declination Process

Key PHF-wide Findings: Similar to grantee feedback, and as in 2013, qualitative and quantitative data point to challenging and unclear aspects of PHF’s selection process, and the selection process is the most frequent suggestion for improvement from applicants, who offer numerous suggestions for improvement.

- Ratings for the helpfulness of PHF’s selection process in strengthening the organisation/programme to which the grant funding would have been directed are in the bottom 20 percent of CEP’s comparative dataset, similar to 2013.
 - **Key Subgroup Finding:** Ratings from More and Better declined applicants trend more positively and are in the top half of the APR dataset.
- Overall, applicants spend more time than typical on the application process (30 hours, up from 25 hours in 2013, and relative to 21 hours at the typical funder).
 - **Key Subgroup Finding:** There is real variation by grant type, however; More and Better declined applicants spend 50 hours on average; this is significantly more time than other grant types. Of note, Ideas and Pioneers declined applicants spend less time, 16 hours on average.
- The overwhelming majority of applicants received a reason for their declination – with the exception of Ideas & Pioneers.
- Further, ratings for the honesty of the provided reason are lower than typical. Ratings from More and Better applicants trend more positively and are typical with regard to the honesty of the reason provided.
- Additionally, in responding to a custom question, applicants disagree that PHF clearly explained why the proposal was declined. Seventy percent of applicants rate a 4 or below on the 1-7 scale. Ideas and Pioneers applicants, on average, provide a rating of 2.1, indicating strong disagreement.
- Of note, relative to 2013, more applicants are requesting and receiving feedback from the Foundation after their request was denied. At the same time, however, more applicants (27 percent), a higher than typical proportion, are reporting that they requested but did not receive feedback.
- Further, ratings are lower than typical, trending down from 2013, for the helpfulness of the feedback and advice received from PHF in terms of strengthening future proposals to this funder.
 - This is noted in comments, with one applicant stating “I was honestly saddened at the low quality of the feedback – it seemed to have simply been cut and pasted and was not congruent with my beliefs about the Foundation's concerns and mission.”
 - Nevertheless, applicants who receive feedback from the Foundation – across all applicant subgroups – rate significantly higher than those who did not on many measures in the report.
- When asked a custom question about their experience with the PHF process, applicants provide neutral feedback on a number of statements, including that the amount of time and effort required to make the application was appropriate given the amount of money and type of work they proposed, and for receiving clear guidance from PHF during the application process.
- Nevertheless, 86 percent of applicants report they would consider applying for future funding from PHF. A smaller than typical proportion of Ideas and Pioneers applicants (63%), however, are likely to consider applying for future funding.

“Please assess us on the guidelines we applied under and not ones brought in subsequently. Moving the goalposts is not fair, and it wastes the precious resources of small organisations.”

“[Make] the process a bit lighter touch... for example both parts of the process took a similar amount of time, and there were a lot of questions.”

CEP Recommendations

Based on grantee and applicant feedback, CEP recommends that The Paul Hamlyn Foundation consider the following in order to build on its strengths and address areas for improvement:

Grantee & Applicant Recommendations

- **Consider where differences reflect intentional variations in context and strategy** and whether more relative internal strengths can be incorporated more broadly across PHF's work.
- As a strategy to build **more effective relationships with applicants and grantees**, assess the ways in which PHF interacts and communicates with its grantees and applicants. More specifically:
 - Work with staff to develop clear and concrete expectations for interactions – particularly responsiveness – between staff and applicants and grantees
 - Move toward a more reciprocal pattern of interaction with grantees
 - Seek to be increasingly approachable and open to ideas
 - Provide clearer, more consistent and more transparent communications, specifically regarding what is expected in the selection process, such as the timeline for grant approval and information about PHF funding priorities and guidelines.
 - Review and improve the process for managing contact changes and knowledge transfer during moments of staff transition.
- Seek to **improve aspects of the selection process**, including communications and interactions during this process. Specifically:
 - Consider how the selection process, in addition to providing information needed for PHF decision-making, can be a tool for strengthening grantee and applicant organisations/programmes.
 - Consider where the selection process could be streamlined.
 - Consider more staff involvement with grantees and applicants in the selection process.
 - Provide more applicants with specific, honest feedback, particularly those requesting it.

Grantee Focused Recommendations

- **As strategies to increase PHF's impact on grantees' organisations:**
 - Deepen and demonstrate understanding of grantee's organisations and challenges.
 - Building on the valuable provision of non-monetary assistance, consider the role of and possibilities for expanding these supports, particularly given grantee interest in convenings.
 - Consider providing PHF's most-aligned grantees with more of the grantmaking characteristics grantees request and that are associated with more positive perceptions, specifically larger, multi-year, core support.
- Consider expanded engagement in the reporting and evaluation processes, particularly more substantive discussions about grantees' reports and conversations about how they will assess the grant-funded work. Consider which aspects of the relatively more valuable reporting and evaluation processes could translate to improvements in the selection process.

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Appendix A – Paul Hamlyn Foundation Custom Cohort

PHF selected a set of 20 funders to create a secondary benchmark, a smaller comparison group for the grantee data that more closely resembles PHF in scale and scope. The PHF custom cohort includes the following funders:

1. Arcus Foundation
2. City Bridge Trust
3. F. M. Kirby Foundation, Inc.
4. LankellyChase Foundation
5. Margaret A. Cargill Foundation
6. Marguerite Casey Foundation
7. Northern Rock Foundation
8. Paul Hamlyn Foundation
9. Rockefeller Brothers Fund
10. Surdna Foundation, Inc.
11. The Ian Potter Foundation
12. The Jim Joseph Foundation
13. The John A. Hartford Foundation, Inc.
14. The Kendeda Fund
15. The Nathan Cummings Foundation
16. The Paul G. Allen Family Foundation
17. The Pears Foundation
18. The Wallace Foundation
19. Trust for London
20. Yad Hanadiv

Appendix B – Paul Hamlyn Foundation Data Subgroups, Methodology & Differences

CEP provided PHF with four GPR and five APR data subgroups, which includes the following. More detail about the composition of these groups is available upon request.

GPR	APR
1. Old or Current Strategy Grantees	1. Grant type
2. Grant type	2. Fund
3. Fund	3. Grant type/Fund - Detailed
4. Grant type/Fund - Detailed	4. Stage of Application Decline - All Applicants
	5. Stage of Application Decline - 2 stage process only

PHF GPR/APR Subgroups: CEP Analysis and Summary of Subgroup Differences

CEP analyses data to determine whether there are differences by subgroup. The summaries below identify both statistically significant differences between groups as well as where ratings in one subgroup tend to be consistently at least 0.3 points higher/lower than the Foundation overall. As noted below, ratings by subgroup differ widely across survey measures. Therefore it is important that PHF explore differences by subgroup and consider it's aspirations on various survey measures and dimensions relative to each group's unique goals, strategy and context.

Grantee Ratings – Summary of Differences by Subgroup

Old or Current Strategy Grantees: Ratings do not consistently differ when segmented by grant strategy. However, "Old Strategy Open" grantees rate significantly lower than "Current Strategy Open" grantees on most aspects of their relationships with PHF, including the overall quality of the funder-grantee relationship. At a higher level, "current" strategy grantees provide significantly more positive ratings than "old" strategy grantees on aspects related to the funder-grantee relationship (e.g. communications, interactions).

Grant Type: There are fewer differences when segmenting results by Grant Type relative to other PHF data subgroups. However, as indicated above, ratings from "Ideas and Pioneers" grantees trend lower than other grantees. Ratings from "Old Strategy Open" grantees also trend lower, and at times significantly lower, than other grantees, including aspects of their relationship with PHF.

Fund: On the whole, grantee ratings vary widely, though not consistently, when segmented by Fund. Below are notable differences.

- Ratings from grantees receiving a "25th Anniversary Gift," a grant from the "Arts and Access Participation" fund, the "Arts-Based Learning" fund and those categorized as "Other," trend higher and are, in some cases, are significantly more positive than other fund types. Specifically, "Arts and Access Participation" and "Arts-Based Learning" grantees rate significantly higher than "Arts" and "IPF - Ideas and Pioneer" grantees on most aspects of understanding (e.g. the Foundation's understanding of grantees fields, and organisations), as well aspects of their relationship with PHF.
- Ratings from "IPF - Ideas and Pioneer" grantees trend lower, and at times significantly lower than other grant "funds." Of note, "IPF - Ideas and Pioneer" grantees report receiving

significantly fewer site visits than most other grant "funds." Additionally, ratings from "Arts" grantees trend lower than PHF's overall ratings on most GPR measures, notably on every aspect of their relationship with PHF.

Grant type/Fund - Detailed: In many places, ratings from grantees of varying Grant types/Funds differ widely, though not consistently. Below are notable differences.

- Ratings from grantees receiving a "25th Anniversary Gift," "APF² - Explore and Test" grant, "ABL³ - More and Better" grant, or a "APF - More and Better" grant are consistently higher, and at times significantly higher, than other grant types on aspects of PHF's understanding (e.g. the Foundation's understanding of grantees fields, and organisations).
- Ratings from "IPF - Ideas and Pioneers" grantees trend lower and at times significantly lower than other grant "types." Specifically, "IPF - Ideas and Pioneers" grantee ratings are significantly lower than other grant "types" for how well PHF understands grantees' respective fields.

Applicant Ratings – Summary of Differences by Subgroup

Grant Type: Applicant ratings do not consistently vary when segmented by Grant Type, with few statistically significant differences. However, ratings from "More and Better" applicants trend higher than other applicants, particularly when compared to "Ideas and Pioneer" and "Youth Fund" applicants.

Fund: Applicant ratings do not consistently and significantly vary when segmented by Fund, with few statistically significant differences. Ratings from "Shared Ground" applicants trend higher than other applicants, while ratings from "IPF - Ideas and Pioneers" applicants trend lower than other applicants.

Grant type/Fund - Detailed: As with grantee perceptions, ratings from applicants of varying Grant types/Funds differ widely, though not consistently. Below are notable differences.

- Ratings from applicants who applied for "APF - More and Better" funding trend higher, and at times significantly higher, than other applicants. "APF - More and Better" applicants provide higher ratings than others for PHF's impact on their respective communities.
- "IPF - Ideas and Pioneers" applicants rate consistently lower, and at times significantly lower, than other applicants. Specifically, "IPF - Ideas and Pioneers" applicants rate significantly lower than "ABL - More and Better," "APF - More and Better," "ABL - Explore and Test," and "APF - More and Better," for their perceptions of PHF's field impact.

Stage of Application Decline - All Applicants: Applicant ratings do not consistently vary when segmented by Stage of Application Decline. However, ratings from "2nd Stage Declined (two stage process) - Youth Fund" applicants are significantly higher than "1st Stage Declined (two stage process)" and "Declined (no 2nd Stage applicants)" on aspects of the Foundation's communications and relationships.

Stage of Application Decline - 2 Stage Process Only: Applicant ratings, when segmented by Stage of Application Decline- More and Better and Youth Fund only, those that are a two stage process, are similar to the findings of "Stage of Decline - All Applicants" – they do not consistently vary. Of note however, ratings from 2nd Stage applicants are broadly more positive than applicants who were declined following the 1st stage. Further, ratings from "More and Better - 2nd Stage Declined" applicant trend lower than "Youth Fund - 2nd stage decline" applicants on aspects of PHF communications.

² Access and Participation Fund

³ Arts-based Learning Fund

Appendix C – About CEP and the GPR/APR

About CEP: Improving Foundation Performance through Data + Insight:

[The Center for Effective Philanthropy](#) (CEP) is a nonprofit organization focused on the development of data and insight to enable higher-performing funders. CEP’s mission is to provide data and create insight so philanthropic funders can better define, assess, and improve their effectiveness – and, as a result, their intended impact.

This mission is based on a vision of a world in which pressing social needs are more effectively addressed. It stems from a belief that improved effectiveness of philanthropic funders can have a profoundly positive impact on nonprofit organizations and the people and communities they serve.

About the Grantee & Applicant Perception Reports

The Grantee Perception Report (GPR) is a customizable and extensively tested survey of foundation-funded grant recipients. The GPR provides funders with actionable benchmarking and insights based on responses to an online grantee survey on a number of important dimensions. The Applicant Perception Report (APR) is a complement to the GPR. Based on a separate, shorter survey, the APR allows funders to understand the candid perspectives of declined applicants. They are the most widely used grantee and applicant surveys, and are based on extensive research and analysis – and they are the only surveys that provide comparative data.

In using comparative, benchmarking data, the GPR shows an individual funder the perceptions of its grantees relative to a set of perceptions of over 250 funders whose grantees were surveyed by CEP, representing a comparative dataset of more than 50,000 grantees. The APR shows an individual funder the perceptions of its applicants relative to a set of perceptions of nearly 50 funders whose declined applicants were surveyed by CEP, representing a comparative dataset of more than 4,000 declined applicants. Funders of all types and sizes have commissioned these tools. CEP has surveyed grantees in more than 150 countries and in 8 different languages.

The GPR/APR is a management tool to help foundation leaders, staff, and boards make the best choices about how to use their resources to create impact. The GPR’s quantitative and qualitative data helps foundation leaders evaluate and understand their grantees’ perceptions of their work and effectiveness, and how that compares to their philanthropic peers.

All grantee and declined applicant responses are confidential. It’s only through a confidential third-party survey that these stakeholder groups can give funders the honest, positive, and constructive feedback they need.

Key Dimensions Covered in the GPR/APR

The GPR includes approximately 50 standard questions, the APR includes approximately 35 standard questions and cover the following key dimensions:

- GPR/APR:
 - Perceptions of impact on and understanding grantees' and applicants' fields and communities
 - Understanding of context, intended beneficiaries and challenges
 - Interactions and communications with grantees
- Asked of grantees only:
 - Impact on grantees' organisations
 - Application, reporting, and evaluation processes
 - Assistance beyond the grant
- Asked of applicants only:
 - Application and declination processes

Examples of GPR/APR questions include the following.

- "Overall, how would you rate the Foundation's impact on your field?"
- "How well does the Foundation understand your organisation's strategy and goals?"
- "How aware is the Foundation of the challenges that your organisation is facing?"
- "Overall, how responsive was the Foundation staff?"
- "How clearly has the Foundation communicated its goals and strategy with you?"
- "How helpful was participating in the Foundation's selection process in strengthening the organisation/ program funded by the grant?"
- Time spent on processes

In addition to the standard, core survey questions that create the basis of CEP's comparative data, CEP works with funders to add custom questions, questions unique to their context that are seen by only their grantees and applicants. For this survey, PHF added 8 custom questions to the GPR and 2 to the APR.