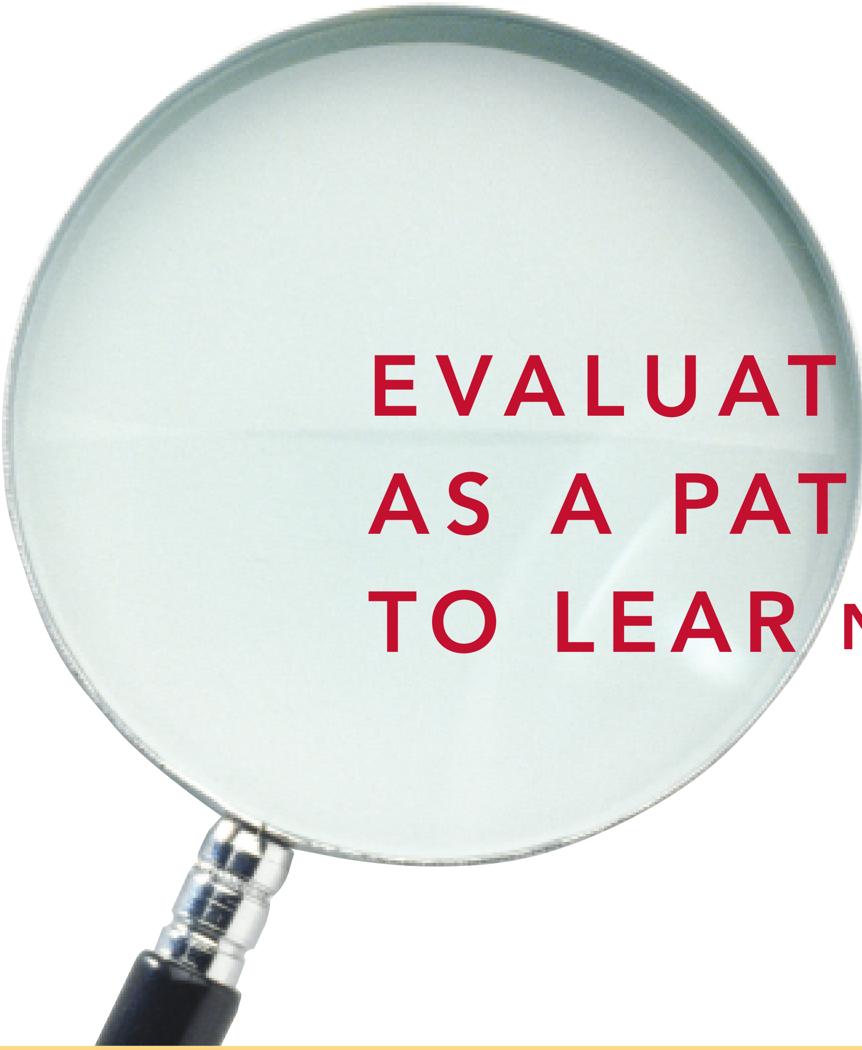
Current Topics in Evaluation *for* Grantmakers



EVALUATION AS A PATHWAY TO LEARNING

GEO
GRANTMAKERS for EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONS

A Report Informed by the Work of the **Evaluation Roundtable**

GRANTMAKERS for EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONS

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Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO) is a coalition of more than 500 grantmakers committed to building strong and effective nonprofit organizations. GEO's mission is to maximize philanthropy's impact by advancing the effectiveness of grantmakers and their grantees. The organization does this by

- **commissioning and contributing to research,**
- **developing programs and products, and**
- **building a community of practice that expands the resources available on nonprofit effectiveness.**

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EVALUATION AS A PATHWAY TO LEARNING

Current Topics in Evaluation *for* Grantmakers

by William H. Woodwell Jr.

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Introduction

Grantmakers are looking at evaluation in a new light. Traditionally, it has been a way to prove cause and effect, to show that a grantmaker and its grantees are delivering a promised result. Today, however, evaluation increasingly is viewed by grantmakers as a pathway to learning and greater effectiveness.

Evaluation is a way to get at what works — and what doesn't. It is a way to enhance the capacity of grantmakers and their grantees — as well as governments, communities and others — to understand and solve problems more effectively as time goes on.

This report draws on the work of the Evaluation Roundtable (see box below) to illustrate some of the most salient evaluation topics in philanthropy today. In three main articles, we explore the latest thinking about evaluation and grantmaker effectiveness; new models of "emergent evaluation" that emphasize learning; and the connection between evaluation and knowledge management in philanthropy. The report also presents several brief case studies of evaluation practices at some innovative foundations.

GEO is a funder of the Evaluation Roundtable and is committed to strengthening the role of evaluation as a tool for increasing effectiveness and learning in philanthropy.

About the Evaluation Roundtable

The Evaluation Roundtable is a group of evaluation executives and other senior leaders at the largest U.S. grantmaking organizations who have formed a peer network around evaluation issues. The goals of the roundtable are to explore the role of evaluation in grantmaking, draw attention to emerging and effective practices and advance learning through a case study approach.

In January 2005, the Evaluation Roundtable met in Miami for a meeting entitled "Emergence: Designing Evaluations When Systems Change Is the Focus and Field Building Is the Aim." This report draws on the discussions at that meeting, as well as a series of interviews with some of the participants.

Evaluation & Effective Grantmaking: Making the Connection

Evaluation Defined

"Evaluation in philanthropy is systematic information-gathering and research about grantmaker-supported activities that informs learning and drives improvement. Evaluation includes both intentional learning about the results of a grantmaker's work and applied research on supported projects."

GRANTMAKERS FOR EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONS

RESULTS. IMPACT. RETURN ON INVESTMENT. These and similar words have become part of the lexicon in grantmaking today. Among the reasons: calls for more accountability and transparency from policymakers and the public, as well as pressure from boards, the media and others to show quantifiable results — and fast.

It is a climate in which evaluation has attracted increasing attention in the philanthropic community. However, among grantmakers who are leading the way in evaluating their work, there is a growing sense that the purpose of evaluation is not only to track results and impact. Evaluation also can be a powerful tool for learning. It can lead to smarter, more effective and higher-impact philanthropy.

"Foundations need to do a better job of understanding their work — the failures as well as the successes," said Hodding Carter III, president and CEO of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. "Our job is to support the best work of this republic, and that is too important to be left to chance."

Smart and successful evaluations, according to Patricia Patrizi of Patrizi Associates, are based on an understanding that grantmakers need to, as Karl Weick calls it, "make sense" of what they are doing — both so they can invest more wisely in the future and so that others, whether in the philanthropic sector, in government or at the community level, can draw lessons from the grantmakers' work.

Viewing evaluation as a pathway to learning is the latest stage in grantmakers' thinking about the role of evaluation in philanthropy. The goal of evaluation, Patrizi explained, should be to support "purposeful learning" about what works — and what doesn't — to solve problems.

"Learning for the sake of learning is an exercise that grantmakers do not have the luxury of engaging in," said Patrizi, who works with a wide array of grantmaking organizations on evaluation and strategy issues.

MORE THAN A MEASURING STICK

Viewed in this way, evaluation is about more than merely weighing whether or not a specific initiative was a success. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation, in its *Evaluation Handbook*, observed:

> We … believe that evaluation should not be conducted simply to *prove* that a project worked, but also to *improve* the way it works. Therefore, do not view evaluation only as an accountability measuring stick imposed on projects, but rather as a management and learning tool for projects, for the foundation, and for practitioners in the field who can benefit from the experiences of other projects.[1]

Another grantmaker that is committed to the power of evaluation as a learning tool is The Wallace Foundation. Five years ago, the New York–based grantmaker launched a major project

[1] www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub770.pdf

to support state efforts aimed at improving the effectiveness of school leaders throughout the country. The theory was that strong principals and school superintendents can play a crucial role in improving teaching and learning across the board.

After an initial round of grants, the foundation took a closer look at what was happening in 15 states and didn't see a whole lot of innovation or forward progress. One reason: the states' governors and other senior officials — those with the authority to make changes happen — were not involved. In addition, many of the state activities were limited in scope and lacked a real focus.

Based on their evaluation of what was happening, the foundation's staff designed a second phase of the project — including more ambitious goals for the states, larger roles for senior leaders, new kinds of technical assistance and new grants to additional states that had demonstrated an openness to using innovative approaches to support school leaders.

All of these were major changes, according to Edward Pauly, the foundation's director of evaluation. He added that Wallace's embrace of new strategies after an analysis of what was happening on the ground shows how evaluation can help grantmakers increase the likelihood that their work will make a difference by allowing for midcourse adjustments. The Wallace Foundation's experience also shows how evaluation can be a capacity-building tool for both grantmakers and grantees.

"Evaluation has become an integral part of everything we do," added Pauly, noting that evaluators at the foundation work side by side with program and communications staff to design, implement and learn from the initiatives supported by the foundation.

CHALLENGES APLENTY

Of course, evaluation can be a significant challenge for grantmakers. One obvious hurdle: not every grantmaker has the financial and staff resources to make evaluation a priority. Proponents of evaluation, however, point out that grantmakers can adopt a results orientation without having to spend a lot of time or money. The key, they suggest, is to frame the organization's work around results and to put the process in place to learn as you go along.

Resource questions aside, grantmakers traditionally have been reluctant to embrace evaluation. Even as the pressure for documented results has grown, many observers say that the culture in many grantmaking organizations is not one in which a rigorous approach to evaluation can flourish.

"There seems to be a character about foundation programming that is terribly impatient, anti-intellectual and resistant to incorporating into planning what we know from sociology and political science," observed Ricardo Millett, president of the Woods Fund of Chicago.

In Millett's view, grantmakers may be thinking in new ways about the role of evaluation, but in reality they have made little progress integrating the evaluation function into the grantmaking process. Among the reasons he cites for this lack of progress is that program officers and foundation leaders lack a formal understanding of evaluation methods. "In many cases, they view it as restricting," he said.

Of course, some of the fault lies with evaluation itself — or, more specifically, with the traditional ideas and ideologies associated with it. Millett said that conventional approaches to evaluation often do not deliver useful information to grantmakers and their grantees in a timely fashion. "The heavy methodological approach that everyone thinks about when they think about evaluation is in many cases not suited to the reality of what grantmakers are doing," Millett said.

An added problem is that grantmakers and others often look to evaluation to create a cause-and-effect narrative. When the evaluation is unable to establish a clear connection between a grantmaker's investment and a specified result — for example, higher student achievement — board and staff begin to wonder if it is even worth trying to measure results. What's the point of evaluating if we can't reach a conclusion about whether or not we made a difference?

Patrizi and evaluation expert and author Michael Quinn Patton wrote a paper for the Evaluation Roundtable in which they argued that a fundamental premise of effective evaluation is that you measure what you can control. "There are times when foundations, in reality, have little control over the situations they fund," Patrizi and Patton wrote.[2]

As a result, they noted, evaluations often "assume away" other factors that might influence the outcomes they are seeking. In addition, grantmakers often ignore the many complexities inherent in the systems that are the focus of much of their work — such as health care or education.

[2] Michael Quinn Patton and Patricia Patrizi, "Performance Evaluation and Indicators," a paper prepared for the Evaluation Roundtable, January 2005.

DOING IT RIGHT

In light of these and other challenges, the broader issues of accountability, results and return on investment can be seen applying as much to evaluation as to a grantmaker's funding initiatives. The questions are: How do you do it effectively? And how do you ensure that your evaluation work produces timely, useful and actionable information?

Gale Berkowitz, director of evaluation at the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, noted that a key to successful evaluation is making it a part of a program's design.

"Evaluation is often seen in foundations as an afterthought, something you do once a program is over and done," she said. Instead, grantmakers should use evaluation techniques from the get-go to help clarify the purpose of an initiative, the hoped-for results and the model of change.

Another key to successful evaluation, according to Patrizi and Patton, is to select the appropriate indicator or indicators — in other words, something that the grantmaker's work can reasonably be expected to influence. They also encouraged grantmakers to develop more clarity around the connection between their work and desired outcomes by articulating a "theory of change" (see sidebar). Last but not least, Patrizi and Patton urged grantmakers not to shy away from initiatives for which they cannot identify specific outcomes or indicators at the start.

"A lot of these are enormously complex issues," Patton said. "And it may cut against the grain, but you can't stay focused on goal attainment all the time, or you will miss a lot of important things."

Millett agreed, advocating a change in evaluation methods as well as a shift in the broader mind-set that has guided mainstream thinking about evaluation. "We need to develop new methods of evaluation that are less conventional — ways of doing this that are less concerned with attribution and more focused on contribution," he said.

In other words, grantmakers should not always look to evaluation to provide incontrovertible proof that their grantmaking made a difference. Rather, as a tool for learning, evaluation can shed light on the full range of factors that might influence a specific endeavor's success or failure, how those factors interact and what is happening on the ground.

"A lot of these are messy issues we are working on," said Pauly of The Wallace Foundation. "We need to use all the creativity and flexibility we can muster to advance our learning as time goes on."

Of Logic Models and Theories of Change

Do we need a logic model or a theory of change? There is a great deal of confusion among grantmakers and the organizations they support about the difference between the two.

A **logic model** is a conceptual picture of how a program or intervention is intended to work. The logic model links outcomes with program activities and strategies and provides a roadmap to desired results.

"Basically, a logic model is a systematic and a visual way to present and share your understanding of the relationships among the resources you have to operate your program, the activities you plan to do, and the changes or results you hope to achieve," according to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's *Logic Model Development Guide* **(www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf).**

A **theory of change**, by contrast, is a systematic assessment of what needs to happen in order for a desired outcome to occur. Theories of change should be designed to explain how and why change happens, as well as the potential role of an organization's work in contributing to its vision of progress.

"The theory of change is the organization's take on how social value is created," explained David Hunter, director of evaluation and knowledge development at the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation.

An example of GEO's theory of change can be found at **www.geofunders.org**.

Different Needs: Five Kinds of Evaluation

Cluster evaluations look across a group of similar projects to identify commonalities or unique contributions that can inform planning and policy development.

Developmental evaluations take place in situations in which goals and outcomes are not preset but emerge as learning occurs.

Formative evaluations are carried out while a project or program is implemented to provide timely, continuous feedback as work progresses.

Project evaluations focus on the results of specific projects.

Summative evaluations assess the overall impact of a project — often reporting on a completed program for an external audience, such as a group of funders.

Perspectives on Evaluation

"Evaluation is the process of clear thinking in a structured way. It is part of an ongoing strategic and organizational planning process and can be an effective tool for strengthening the way in which organizations operate. We view evaluation as a tool to improve our own work and that of the organizations we fund." — "The Foundation's Evaluation Philosophy," J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, **www.mcconnellfoundation.ca/pubs.e/eval.html.**

"Effective evaluation is not an 'event' that occurs at the end of a project, but is an ongoing process that helps decision makers better understand the project; how it is impacting participants, partner agencies and the community; and how it is being influenced/impacted by both internal and external factors." — *W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook*, 1998. Available at **www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub770.pdf.**

"In contrast with other kinds of research, evaluation seeks to be useful; it is not 'pure research' conducted for the sake of research. Peter Senge, author of *The Fifth Discipline*, has said that evaluation requires researchers who are sincerely interested in the world of practice and are highly respectful of that world, and practitioners who are sincerely interested in research and seek to use it to better their work." — Edward Pauly, "The Role of Evaluation in the 21st Century Foundation," a paper prepared for the International Network on Strategic Philanthropy (2005). Available at **www.geofunders.org.**

"We view evaluation as a tool to improve our own work and that of the organizations we fund."

J.W. McCONNELL FAMILY FOUNDATION

DORIS DUKE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION: GETTING AN EXPERT VIEW

The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation was established in 1996. After five years of grantmaking, the foundation took time to reflect, with the help of outside experts, on how and whether its program strategies were succeeding.

In the words of the foundation's director of strategy and planning, Betsy Fader, it was time to "stand back, evaluate our work, and look ahead to the needs and opportunities for the future in each of the program areas we support."

To conduct this analysis, the foundation turned to a group of expert outsiders, including other grantmakers, scholars and practitioners in the fields that are the focus of the foundation's grantmaking. These include the performing arts, environmental conservation, medical research and child abuse prevention. Referred to as "wise persons," the experts were not affiliated with the foundation and were not seeking grants from it.

"The idea was to gain an unbiased, high-level view of what was changing about these fields and whether our strategies remain appropriate given changes in the fields," Fader explained.

Separate groups of six or seven experts were assembled to assess each of the foundation's program areas. Their charge was to review the foundation's grant strategies and initiatives and address five key questions:

1. Are we addressing critical opportunities and needs in the field?
2. Have we devised appropriate strategies for perusing these opportunities and meeting these needs?
3. Have we effectively implemented our strategies?
4. What should we consider doing differently in the future?
5. What do you think has been the role and/or contribution of the foundation as a funder in this field? How are the foundation and its grants perceived?

The groups met between January and March 2003 after reviewing an extensive packet of background material prepared by the foundation staff. For a full day and evening, the groups engaged in in-depth discussions about the foundation's programs and strategies, as well as key issues in the fields. An outside "rapporteur" summarized the groups' conversations with a focus on consensus views and proposals for the future.

What did the foundation learn from the wise-person reviews? Overall, it learned that it was addressing important needs and opportunities and was having a significant impact in its chosen fields. Where the wise persons had suggestions for doing things differently, they generally urged the foundation to stay true to each program's mission (and, in one case, to gain greater clarity around its mission). The experts also identified what Fader calls "outliers," or initiatives they felt the foundation should not be supporting.

"Each program area had an 'aha' in the form of a critique of the program or advice to the foundation," Fader said. As an example, she cited the advice of the wise persons assessing the foundation's performing arts program. This group counseled the foundation to remain a strong supporter of jazz. Noting that few other funders were supporting jazz and that the foundation had become a leading funder in the field, the wise persons advised against dropping jazz as a priority, a step that was under serious consideration due to budget constraints resulting from poor market performance.

"We received strong counsel in each area and have made changes as a result," Fader said, noting that the wise-person reviews formed the basis of a strategic planning effort that shaped the foundation's current strategies and priorities.

Fader noted that the foundation plans to do more wise-person reviews in the future. She said they are helpful as "field analysis" of the foundation's work. She added that the reviews complement other ongoing evaluation efforts at the foundation, including the monitoring and assessment of individual grants, as well as independent, external reviews of clusters of grants or particular initiatives.

"The wise persons are one approach, and we are fairly intentional about coupling it with other evaluation strategies," Fader said.

To learn more, visit **www.geofunders.org** to download information on the wise-persons project.

BILL AND MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION: LONGITUDINAL STUDY LOOKS AT IMPACT OF $1 BILLION SCHOLARSHIP INITIATIVE

Since 2000, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has invested $2.3 billion in education in the United States. The work has focused on preparing young people for the working world and increasing access to postsecondary education in traditionally underserved communities. The foundation runs three scholarship programs, designed to fill tuition gaps left by other grants and financial aid, from which more than 10,000 students have benefited.

The Gates Millennium Scholars program was established in 1999 to provide outstanding African-American, American Indian/Alaska Natives, Asian Pacific Islander Americans and Hispanic-American students with an opportunity to complete college and pursue graduate studies in mathematics, science, engineering, education or library science. The goal of the program is to "promote academic excellence and to provide an opportunity for thousands of outstanding students with significant financial need to reach their fullest potential." The program enables award recipients to attend institutions of their choice and prepares them to assume important roles as leaders in their professions and in their communities.

The program is a 20-year, $1 billion initiative. Funded by a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the program is administered by the United Negro College Fund, in partnership with the American Indian Graduate Center, the Hispanic Scholarship Fund and the Organization of Chinese Americans. It awards 1,000 scholarships each year, in addition to providing opportunities for leadership development for the selected students.

About the Evaluation

The Gates Foundation launched the scholarship program in 2000 and immediately began an evaluation effort. Designed by foundation staff, the evaluation will continue for the length of the initiative.

According to Victor Kuo, program officer for evaluation and policy research at the foundation, the Millennium Scholars evaluation includes a longitudinal study based on surveys of individual scholarship recipients as well as a comparison group of students who did not receive the scholarships. The scholarships are available to African-American, American Indian/Alaska Natives, Asian Pacific Islander Americans and Hispanic-American students with demonstrated financial need.

"This is a major investment, and the foundation wants to know what impact it will have on the lives of these students," Kuo explained.

In evaluating the program, the foundation is looking at a number of questions. At the individual level, evaluators are assessing key outcomes for the students, from "college persistence" and graduation rates to degrees, work and graduate school experience, and broader measures of citizenship. The Gates Foundation has contracted the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago to administer the student surveys.

Looking beyond the impact on individual students, the Gates Millennium Scholars program is founded on a broader theory of change. The theory is that supporting these students will have a positive impact on the fields that are the focus of the scholarships: mathematics, science, engineering, education and library science. In addition, the foundation hopes to identify lessons learned from the program for educators, policymakers and others.

"One theory behind the project is that government and school policies on financial aid, admissions and other issues need to be rethought and reworked in order for more minority, low-income students to be able to enroll in these institutions and succeed," Kuo said.

While evaluation activities are not necessarily designed to prove or disprove these aspirational statements, the foundation is intent on gathering as much useful information as possible. To gather more qualitative information about the scholars and their experiences, for example, the foundation has hired the American Institutes for Research to conduct focus groups and student interviews. In addition, Gates has established a panel of highly regarded scholars to serve on its Research Advisory Council for the program. Council members provide research as well as guidance on broader evaluation approaches.

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BILL AND MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION *(Continued from page 9)*

Lessons Learned So Far

Evaluation data highlight the need for increasing the access of postsecondary education to underrepresented student groups. The policy shifts in education over the last 30 years, away from need-based grants toward loans and tax credits, has caused the cost of attending college to increase more steeply for lower-income students, regardless of their academic prowess. The Gates Foundation has commissioned longitudinal studies to track students, both award recipients and nonrecipients, to assess the impact of the program.

Early data from longitudinal studies following both scholarship recipients and nonrecipients show that while scholars have to overcome significant barriers to get into college, they are not more likely to experience adjustment problems once they get to college.

Data also show that scholars have fewer financial concerns and are more academically engaged than nonrecipients.

- Gates Millennium Scholars took out significantly less money in student loans, worked fewer hours per week, and were more likely to live on campus than nonrecipients in the first year of college.
- Gates Millennium Scholars were more likely to spend more time on extracurricular activities.

"This next round of research is when we will begin to see some real impact from the program," Kuo said, noting that the foundation looks forward to following these students for many years to come.

HOWARD HUGHES MEDICAL INSTITUTE: "PEER CLUSTER" APPROACH AIMS TO BUILD GRANTEE CAPACITY FOR EVALUATION

"Ongoing program evaluation is the most powerful and underused tool for enhancing the ability of an institution to create lasting change in its community."

This is the premise behind a three-year-old initiative to help grantees of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute do a better job at evaluation. Called "Critical Friends," the program links grantees in "peer clusters" so they can work together on evaluation issues and receive technical assistance from evaluation experts on an as-needed basis.

Critical Friends, according to HHMI Program Officer Debra Felix, is a response to the grantmaker's dissatisfaction with the program evaluation information it was receiving from many grantees. "We would get reports back that the grantee held a workshop and everybody loved it," said Felix. "But there was no sense of real evaluation, no analysis of what worked and why. It was a lot of output and no outcomes."

HHMI launched Critical Friends in 2003 with 12 grantees of its Precollege Science Program, which makes grants to medical research institutions, science museums and other organizations involved in science education. Program directors from each of the grantees were assigned to one of three groups of four. After receiving instruction in basic evaluation concepts and tools (from a professional evaluator) the teams spent a year working together.

Critical Friends participants visited one another's program sites to discuss evaluation challenges and suggest possible solutions. A typical site visit, according to Felix, lasted two days. Team members spoke with program participants (typically teachers or students), internal or external program evaluators, program staff and others. Following each visit, the team collaborated on a report to summarize participants' suggestions.

Each group was accompanied on its first site visit by a professional evaluator from TCC Group, the consulting firm hired by HHMI to assist in the implementation of the Critical Friends project. TCC Group also organized the initial training for team members and provides ongoing technical assistance at the request of the teams.

Peter York, vice president and director of evaluation at TCC Group, referred to Critical Friends as “an interesting experiment.” Many grantmakers, he said, encourage and support peer exchange among grantees, but rarely do these types of initiatives focus so squarely on a specific topic such as evaluation.

TCC Group currently is conducting a thorough evaluation of Critical Friends. The focus: changes in evaluation practice at the participating organizations based on their participation in the program. While the evaluation is still under way, York’s initial take on the results is that Critical Friends is making a positive contribution.

“Many of the team members were a little hesitant at first, but once they got into it there was a real transformation,” he said. “They are developing new skills and new ways of thinking, as well as a new network of colleagues who can help them address evaluation challenges.”

Felix added that HHMI’s evaluation of the Critical Friends effort shows that participating organizations are “moving up a level” in evaluating their own programs.

“This has given them a platform for thinking about evaluation in a much more critical way and for developing evaluation plans that can hopefully become ingrained in these institutions,” she said.

Based on the success of the initial group of clusters, HHMI shepherded a second group of four teams through the Critical Friends process in 2003 – 2004. Another three teams began working together in October 2004.

More information is available in the GEO-Fieldstone Alliance publication *A Funder’s Guide to Evaluation: Leveraging Evaluation to Improve Nonprofit Effectiveness.* See Suggested Resources, p. 22.

Emergence: Evaluation's New Frontier

"Newton's third law of motion states that for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. Newton never worked for a foundation."

Newton's third law of motion states that for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. Newton never worked for a foundation.

In the mid-1990s, the leaders and staff of the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation decided they wanted to do something to strengthen the voluntary sector in Canada. The foundation settled on a joint program with Montreal's McGill University to provide graduate-level education for national voluntary sector leaders. By the end of the project, the McGill-McConnell Program had enrolled 120 individuals from across the country for 60 days of intensive learning over an 18-month period. In addition, all participants received funds to design "anchoring projects" — initiatives that would put their learning into action addressing an important issue or challenge facing the organizations where they worked.

A traditional evaluation of the McGill-McConnell Program would try to capture its effect on the participants and their organizations, most likely through personal interviews with those involved. But measuring progress toward the foundation's broader goal of strengthening the sector presented more of a challenge.

"There was really no plan for what happened next, how these groups might or might not connect, or what they would go forth and do," said Michael Quinn Patton, who designed an evaluation of the program for the foundation. "The idea was to set things in motion and see how it goes."

Welcome to the world of emergence — the new frontier in evaluation for grantmakers. The basic premise of emergence, as explained by John H. Holland in his 1999 book, *Emergence: From Chaos to Order*, is that traditional, linear models of cause and effect do not always apply in the real world. Sometimes, the whole is more than the sum of its parts. And sometimes, as author Malcolm Gladwell describes in his best-selling book, *The Tipping Point*, small things can lead to something big.

What does this have to do with grantmaking? Well, many grantmakers are finding that the traditional model of evaluation and measurement doesn't always cut it in today's world.

Linear, cause-and-effect evaluations will forever play a crucial role in demonstrating results and advancing learning in cases in which grantmakers and their grantees are able to correlate inputs and outputs in a systematic way — for example, when a project seeks to boost participation in health prevention or after-school programs. But for grantmakers working on complex, multifaceted issues such as health care or education reform (or the reform of the voluntary sector, as in the McConnell Family Foundation example), it is not always easy saying that a + b = c.

As an alternative, many grantmakers are weighing new approaches to evaluation founded on a simple six-word principle articulated by Patton: "Our world is not a machine."

BEYOND CAUSE AND EFFECT

Traditionally, grantmakers have viewed evaluation as a way to render definitive judgments of success or failure. It is a way to measure success against predetermined goals, a way to use linear, cause-and-effect logic models (see sidebar on page 15) to show that the grantmakers' actions produced a defined result — for example, when a grant to a mental health clinic leads to an increase in the number of people being served.

In many instances, however, grantmakers are not necessarily able to make definitive judgments about cause and effect. The reason: they often choose to focus their grantmaking on problems that do not lend themselves to easy answers.

Different problems, Patton said, require grantmakers to use different tools and approaches. He advised grantmakers to consider the difference between simple, complicated and complex problems:

- ***Simple problem: following a recipe.*** When baking a cake, one can be fairly certain of cause and effect. Follow the recipe correctly, and you'll get the results you want.
- ***Complicated problem: sending a rocket to the moon.*** A moon shot requires strict adherence to formulas and procedures. There may be uncertainty in the outcome, but sending one rocket successfully increases the chances that the next one will be OK.
- ***Complex problem: raising a child.*** Parenting is complex. There are no definitive rules or recipes to follow to guarantee success. What's more, you are never completely sure along the way of how things will turn out.

Grantmakers, Patton said, should not shy away from addressing complex problems — indeed, the philanthropic sector's most important contributions over time have been in moving the needle on an array of complex problems such as civil rights, social justice, poverty reduction and education. However, Patton warned grantmakers against managing or evaluating their work on these types of problems as if they could be understood or solved through the use of clear recipes and formulas.

"Complex problems take us into an arena where things aren't as predictable, and we need to understand that going in," he said.

SYSTEMS THINKING

Complex problems involve complex systems, Patton pointed out. These can include everything from the human immune system to the stock market — or, in the sphere of the social sciences, the U.S. system of public education. Complex systems are those that include many interconnected parts, often acting independently of each other. Action by any of the individual parts can affect the whole. The Newtonian model of causality — every action has an equal and opposite reaction — is turned on its head.

It is unlikely that grantmakers and their grantees can single-handedly transform complex systems, Patton said. Rather, what they can do is intervene in specific parts of the system. The McConnell Family Foundation, for example, could not hope with one set of grants to achieve wide-ranging reform in the voluntary sector in Canada, so it chose to provide education and training to key leaders in the sector and go from there.

"The distinction in complex systems is that setting things in motion is the aim," observed John Bare of the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation.

In other words, you may not know exactly what your work will lead to, but you take action with the idea that what you are doing has the potential to trigger positive change in the system. Then, as time goes on, you learn more about the system and how it works and are able to revisit your assumptions and, if necessary, change course.

EMERGENCE IN ACTION

In their book *Strategy Safari: A Guided Tour Through the Wilds of Strategic Management*, authors Henry Mintzberg, Bruce Ahlstrand and Joseph Lampel point out that organizational and management strategies emerge over time. As individuals and groups interact with messy, complex processes, they learn along the way and adapt their approaches as time goes on.

"A single action can be taken, feedback can be received, and the process can continue until the organization converges on the pattern that becomes its strategy," the authors write.

For grantmakers as well as other organizations, evaluation therefore becomes an essential part of strategy development — it is where the feedback comes from, where the organization gains a better sense of what is happening so it can fine-tune its approach. Seen in this way, evaluation drives learning by allowing grantmakers to remain in touch with what is unfolding on the ground.

"This gives us another option for thinking about evaluation — and another way to make this work useful and appealing for program officers and others who haven't seen real value in the traditional work we've done," said Gale Berkowitz of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION DEFINED

Patton calls it "developmental evaluation"; others have referred to it as "emergent evaluation." Broadly defined, it is a form of evaluation that can be used when goals and outcomes are not defined at the start of an initiative but become clearer over time.

"The evaluation function centers on monitoring what emerges from the work," Patton noted.

"It all comes down to the fact that there can be multiple factors in play, factors that we as funders simply can't control," added David Hunter of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. "And so evaluation in those instances becomes a matter of developing a better sense of what those factors are and how they interact — and then tracking what happens once an intervention occurs."

After a review of the literature on the evaluation of community interventions for poverty reduction or social change, Francis J. Schweigert of the Northwest Area Foundation identified "emergent evaluation" as a topic of interest to increasing numbers of grantmakers.

"Rather than trying to isolate particular program elements from contextual effects," Schweigert explained, "these efforts attempt to clarify and follow the interrelated dynamics and effects of program activities and contextual change as these unfold together."

Drawing on the work of Patton and others, Schweigert listed the following activities as elements of emergent evaluation:

- clarifying priorities, aims, expected outcomes and indicators;
- investigating and describing the interplay of context and program — treating context as part of the program;
- identifying key dynamics affecting change and patterns of behavior;
- tracking patterns of activity and effects over time;
- using time series analysis, thematic analysis or other means to organize information and follow trend lines; and

Traditional vs. Developmental Evaluations

Traditional Evaluations ...	Developmental Evaluations ...
Render definitive judgments of success or failure.	Provide feedback, generate learnings, support direction or affirm changes in direction.
Measure success against predetermined goals.	Develop new measures and monitoring mechanisms as goals emerge and evolve.
Position the evaluator outside to assure independence and objectivity.	Position evaluation as an internal team function integrated into action and ongoing interpretive processes.
Design the evaluation based on linear cause-and-effect models.	Design the evaluation to capture system dynamics, interdependencies and emergent interconnections.
Aim to produce generalizable findings across time and space.	Aim to produce context-specific understandings that inform ongoing innovation.
Are focused on accountability and directed to external authorities and funders.	Focus accountability on the innovators' deep sense of fundamental values and commitments.
Seek to control and locate blame for failures.	Seek to generate learning so innovators can respond strategically.

Source: Michael Quinn Patton, Frances Westley and Brenda Zimmerman, *Getting to Maybe.* To be published by Random House in 2005.

• documenting apparent lessons as the work proceeds and revising these as more information is gathered.

Developmental evaluation happens in real time as a project or initiative unfolds. Using site visits, interviews, grantee reporting and other activities, the goal is to keep close tabs on what is happening and to capture what Patton refers to as "transformative moments" — instances when one or more interactions contribute to a change in the system. This process of real-time evaluation and monitoring enables the grantmaker and its grantees to change strategies as necessary during the course of an initiative.

Hodding Carter III of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation explained it in simpler terms: "Sometimes you have to be willing to fly by the seat of your pants in this business. What makes it work is when you are evaluating and learning as you go — and making necessary adjustments along the way."

NOT THE ONLY ANSWER

Developmental or emergent evaluation, Patton emphasized, is not for every project — or even for every grantmaker. He suggested that grantmakers who are interested in applying some of these principles to their evaluation work dedicate a small portion of their portfolio to developmental evaluation and see how it goes — the equivalent of an emergent approach to emergence.

Patton also advised grantmakers to pay attention to the need to "detect signal from noise" in their work on these types of evaluations. In other words, it is counterproductive to exhaustively detail and analyze every development along the way. Rather, grantmakers should try to identify those developments and "transformative moments" that can drive learning as a project unfolds.

"Pattern recognition is a big part of this," added Patricia Patrizi. "You need to sit down with people who are implementing strategy and talk about what's happening and what patterns they see."

Collaboration with grantees is, in fact, one of the signature characteristics of developmental evaluations.

In order to capture useful information and insights in real time, grantmakers need to develop systems that enable grantees to share what they are learning in the course of their work.

"Strategy arises in the field," Patrizi said. "It is constantly emerging as grantees do their work and as they sit down with grantmakers and others to reflect on what's been learned."

Who Is Evaluating?

A 2003 survey by Grantmakers for Effective Organizations and the Urban Institute found that 44 percent of U.S. foundations with professional staffs said they formally evaluate the work that they fund. For more on the survey, go to **www.geofunders.org**.

What Kind of Evaluation to Use?

The following are examples of situations that might lend themselves to a traditional, logic-model type of evaluation:

• Efforts to boost childhood immunization rates in a specific neighborhood or community through targeted outreach, support for local clinics and other strategies

• A grant or grants that aim to help an arts organization or theater increase community attendance and participation in programs

• Projects to encourage poor families to take advantage of the Earned Income Tax Credit, free or low-cost health insurance and other support structures

These situations, on the other hand, might be appropriate for a developmental, or emergent, evaluation:

• An initiative to promote dialogue and collaboration among different racial or ethnic groups in a community

• A grant or grants to promote "school readiness" through increased coordination between schools and prekindergarten child care providers

• A project to develop strategies for engaging farmers in sustainable farming practices

SOCIAL VENTURE PARTNERS SEATTLE: NEW INDICATORS DRIVE CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

On the occasion of its fourth birthday in 2001, Social Venture Partners Seattle contracted with an outside consulting group to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of its work. The report from Blueprint Research & Design, provided a broad overview of the foundation's progress in achieving its two-track mission: to advance and accelerate philanthropy and volunteerism and to help local nonprofits become more effective through long-term capacity-building relationships.

The evaluation sought to assess the impact of SVP Seattle's work on selected "investees" by using the "Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool" created for Venture Philanthropy Partners by McKinsey & Co.; the tool looks at organizational capacity in areas ranging from mission and vision to fundraising, board governance and the nurturing of alliances. Now, SVP Seattle has adapted the tool and is developing its own outcome measures to track investees' capacity on an ongoing basis.

"The Blueprint study helped us figure out what and how to measure," said SVP Seattle Executive Director Paul Shoemaker. "It was a one-time snapshot of where we were, and now we're looking at the issue of how we measure for the long haul, ongoing, year to year."

The new indicators stem from SVP Seattle's efforts to develop a logic model and theory of change around key organizational capacity issues. The evaluation plan focuses on six targeted nonprofit outcomes, which include increasing financial stability; increasing clarity of mission, vision and strategic direction; stronger staff and executive leadership; stronger board governance; and improvement in capacity-building elements, which covers the organization's internal capacity-assessment work.

In each of these areas, the plan lays out indicators, as well as methods and tools for collecting data. For example, in the area of staff and executive leadership, indicators include the participation of staff in professional and leadership development opportunities and an annual performance appraisal process. SVP Seattle then uses the capacity assessment tool, as well as other methods, to judge progress toward all outcomes.

SVP Seattle has identified a separate set of outcomes and indicators to assess its work promoting philanthropy and volunteerism. Instead of focusing on organizations, the indicators in this case focus on the individuals, or "partners," whom SVP Seattle engages to contribute time, money and expertise in order to grow nonprofits' capacity. Desired outcomes range from an increased knowledge among partners about nonprofit management to a higher-level commitment to an issue or cause. All of this measurement is done in the context of a close working relationship between grantmaker and nonprofit.

Shoemaker said SVP Seattle has started gathering data and will have a first sense of where it stands on the new outcomes and indicators by the end of 2005. Then the grantmaker intends to track data on a year-to-year basis.

"All of this is a work in progress," Shoemaker explains. "What we really want to do is get a better handle on how we're doing so we can refine and improve our program and do a better job helping nonprofits become higher capacity. It's also a matter of walking our own talk."

To learn more, visit **www.geofunders.org** to download the full report.

From Information to Learning: Knowledge Management & Evaluation

In their influential 1999 *Harvard Business Review* article, "Philanthropy's New Agenda: Creating Value," Michael E. Porter and Mark R. Kramer urged grantmakers to view evaluation as a central part of their work. Evaluation, they argued, produces knowledge that grantmakers and others can use to improve their understanding of problems and the best strategies for solving them.

At the same time that evaluation has emerged as a priority for increasing numbers of grantmakers, the philanthropic sector also has embraced knowledge management as a pathway to greater impact and results. Knowledge management refers to an array of strategies and practices that grantmakers can use to capture and communicate the knowledge and information they generate in the course of their work.

In the corporate world, knowledge management is viewed as a strategy for improving efficiency and profitability. Companies try to leverage their knowledge, and that of their employees, to improve business results. Among grantmakers, however, knowledge management is not about the proprietary use of knowledge but about leveraging it for social good.

In the view of Roberto Cremonini, chief knowledge and learning officer at the Barr Foundation in Boston, evaluation and knowledge management go hand in hand.

"If you ask where knowledge is created in our foundations, evaluation is a pot of gold," Cremonini said. "It is one of the most knowledge-intensive things foundations do, and we need to recognize the role of knowledge management in realizing the potential of evaluation."

Knowledge management tools include everything from project reports and grantee convenings to foundation intranets, e-newsletters and public Web sites. The goal of knowledge management is to effectively share important and useful data, anecdotes and lessons learned with people both inside and outside the organization — people can use that knowledge to make better decisions.

ONE FOUNDATION'S APPROACH

One grantmaker that is making the connection between evaluation and knowledge management is the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. The foundation, according to David Hunter, director of evaluation and knowledge development, recently decided to shift from a focus on several strategic areas to just one. Its Youth Development Fund targets "high-performing youth organizations" that serve young people during nonschool hours. The goal is to help these organizations grow stronger and become more effective in providing high-quality programs to larger numbers of young people. The foundation created an Office of Evaluation and Knowledge

"If you ask where knowledge is created in our foundations, evaluation is a pot of gold."

ROBERTO CREMONINI,
BARR FOUNDATION

Development as part of its wholesale restructuring. According to Hunter, he and his staff are charged with ensuring that grantees develop rigorous theories of change and strong internal evaluation capacities to track and improve performance continuously while assessing client outcomes. In addition, the foundation uses external evaluators to assess how its own staff are (or are not) contributing to grantees' success in meeting their organizational goals and objectives. And finally, the foundation expects all its grantees who have not done so yet to undertake rigorous external evaluations of their programs' effectiveness when they have reached the level of organizational maturity that this requires. "Fundamentally, evaluation provides a foundation for our learning from the work of our grantees and is the basis of our knowledge development and dissemination," said Hunter.

The foundation explains the connection on its Web site:

> Our evaluation and knowledge development activities are intended to help improve the work of our grantees and of the foundation. In addition, we routinely share what we learn over the course of our grantmaking with other funders, youth development practitioners, nonprofit groups, policymakers and researchers so that our knowledge can similarly further their efforts to improve the life prospects of young people from low-income backgrounds and extend the impact of the foundation's work.

As part of its effort to strengthen the field of youth development, the foundation has committed itself to sharing lessons learned along the way.

"We are constantly communicating with other funders about our grantees, and now we have built a big enough portfolio to be able to do some rigorous evaluation about what is working and what is not working as these organizations try to grow and do a better job," said Hunter.

Currently, the foundation features a number of resources on its Web site that it believes might be useful for other organizations working in the youth development field. In the future, Hunter said, the foundation hopes to post and disseminate detailed evaluation data tracking the results of its grantmaking activities and describing lessons learned.

"A NATURAL FIT"

Knowledge management, according to the Packard Foundation's Gale Berkowitz, provides "the essential link" between evaluation and learning. Grantmakers, she observed, gather reams of information through evaluation and other activities — and, in many cases, much of the information is left unused.

Before joining Packard, Berkowitz worked at the Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation as director of evaluation and organizational learning, a post she assumed after working as an evaluation officer. As she became more familiar with the practice of knowledge management, Berkowitz began to see "a natural fit" with evaluation.

"Knowledge management is about capturing and providing information in ways so that people can actually use it," Berkowitz said. "For evaluation, that's an important thing to think about. It requires a different set of very complementary skills."

The Barr Foundation's Cremonini added that knowledge management should be viewed by grantmakers as a "useful servant" and support function for evaluation. "Knowledge management can provide important methods and tools for funders to become more efficient and more effective in producing and disseminating data and information," he said.

LEARNING AS JOB ONE

Like many other grantmakers, the Barr Foundation has embraced learning as an organizational priority. (The foundation's tagline is "Using knowledge, networks and funding to build a better Boston for all.")

"The idea at the foundation is to develop a way of working that is reflective and that constantly looks at information from evaluation and other sources and then uses that to improve strategies and grantmaking," Cremonini said.

Viewed in this way, the marriage of evaluation and knowledge management is an essential step to becoming a learning organization. In addition, knowledge management provides a pathway for grantmakers to realize the potential of new models of "developmental evaluation" — evaluation methods that try to capture real-time data and information to support innovation and learning as a project or initiative unfolds.

"If you are dealing with complex emerging problems, there is a real need to have your sensors out there all the time," Cremonini said. But simply collecting information is not enough. With knowledge management, grantmakers can make sure that the information they are gathering becomes the basis for better decision making, continuous improvement, greater impact and results.

THE ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON FOUNDATION: SCORECARD MEASURES FOUNDATIONWIDE PERFORMANCE

For most grantmaking organizations, evaluation efforts focus on specific projects or clusters of projects. At The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the board and staff are going a step further and measuring the grantmaker's overall performance.

The mission of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is to "improve the health and health care of all Americans." Since 1993, the grantmaker has used the "RWJF Scorecard" to detail its performance in achieving this mission. But the scorecard looks at more than just program impact; it also provides data and information on the foundation's performance in areas ranging from grantee service to staff development and asset management.

According to the foundation's vice president for research and evaluation, James R. Knickman, the scorecard is prepared once a year for the RWJF board of directors. It is based on an array of performance measures, as well as surveys of staff, grantees, thought leaders and others.

"This is a response to the board's demand for good information about how we are doing overall in meeting our mission and objectives," Knickman said. "It gives the board a new way to manage and interact with the staff and to focus on strategic priorities."

The RWJF scorecard is for internal use only. "The board wants this to be hard-hitting — a frank and honest portrait of how we're doing," Knickman explained. He added that there is some discussion about creating an external scorecard for the foundation that might be a slimmed-down version of the internal document.

Knickman also pointed out that the scorecard is just one part of a three-level approach to evaluation at RWJF. At the individual grant level, the foundation conducts ongoing evaluations to measure the success of funded projects, as well as any "social science lessons" that can be gleaned from the work. In addition, RWJF regularly conducts cluster evaluations in key grantmaking areas to generate learnings across a number of similar grants. And, at the top level, the foundation uses the scorecard to look at broader organizational performance issues.

Knickman said the use of the scorecard has had a "tremendous impact" on the foundation. "It really keeps everyone, board and staff, focused on strategy and why we are doing what we do," he said.

To learn more about RWJF's balanced scorecard approach, go to **www.geofunders.org.**

LEARNING FROM A CASE STUDY: W.K. KELLOGG FOUNDATION

During its January 2005 meeting, the Evaluation Roundtable discussed a case study of an evaluation conducted by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The case, prepared for the roundtable, focused on the foundation's evaluation of its Devolution Initiative.

The Devolution Initiative was launched in 1996 to create a base of objective information about the impact of the federal government's shifting of powers, responsibilities and funding for key responsibilities to the state and local level. A key goal of the initiative was to promote public understanding of and, in turn, public participation in the devolution debate.

The Kellogg Foundation contracted with the Harvard Family Research Project to conduct an evaluation of the Devolution Initiative. The evaluation, which was based on a logic-model framework, used a wide variety of methods to try to capture what was happening as the initiative progressed. In other words, evaluators were less focused on the overall impact of the initiative (i.e., outcomes) than on capturing knowledge and information that could be used by the foundation to refine its logic model and grantmaking strategies.

The Evaluation Roundtable's discussion of the case elicited a number of observations that apply broadly to the evaluation work of grantmakers. These included the following:

- Grantmakers should be wary of attempting a "big bang" approach to change and instead embrace strategies to achieve smaller changes that can accumulate over time, while using evaluation to inform program development along the way.
- It can be dangerous for evaluators to become "co-managers" of an initiative. Their role should be to champion the evaluation, not the project.
- The value of ongoing formative evaluations is that they produce information in real time throughout the life of a project. Grantmakers need to pay attention to what these evaluations are telling them about the success or shortcomings of an initiative and act accordingly.
- Evaluation can suffer when program goals and strategies are not clearly defined — or when there is a lack of agreement on what a project is about.
- Communication and evaluation are closely linked. Evaluation results need to be packaged and communicated effectively to key audiences both inside and outside the foundation so that evaluation can inform practice.
- Grantmakers need to be ready to accept what evaluators are telling them, even if it means revisiting core assumptions about an initiative.

The full WKKF case study will be available later this year at **www.geofunders.org**.

Conclusion

In *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*, Malcolm Gladwell writes about "social epidemics" and how they happen. Social epidemics, he observes, include everything from a fashion trend to a precipitous drop in crime. And, more often than not, what "successful" social epidemics have in common is a small core of dedicated people behind them. Gladwell adds:

> Those who are successful at creating social epidemics do not just do what they think is right. They deliberately test their intuitions.

In philanthropy, evaluation is the means for testing intuitions. It is a critical component of any effort to effect change. It can help grantmakers figure out if what they are doing is indeed right, and if they need to tweak, modify or overhaul their chosen approach. Last but not least, evaluation can help the wider world learn from a grantmaker's work, provided the grantmaker is able to package and share what it is learning in a strategic way.

The following questions can help grantmakers as they consider the current and future role of evaluation in their work:

- Are you using knowledge management and communications strategies to ensure that your evaluation work drives learning both inside and outside the foundation?
- How do your evaluation efforts work to inform your ongoing strategy and progress?
- Does your evaluation program feed your learning goals and needs? If so, how?
- Do you feel that your current evaluation practices and approach are accessible to the organization's staff — and that staff understand the role of evaluation in your work? If not, what are some changes that would be beneficial?
- Are your evaluation techniques and tools aligned with your organization's mission? Or do you find yourself trying to make your projects fit into your evaluation model?
- What is the link between the evaluation reports produced by your grantees and your organization's evaluation needs? How could these two be better aligned?
- What forms of evaluation are you currently using? What works about your current approach? Where might you incorporate or experiment with new evaluation approaches?
- How effective is your organization at using evaluation findings to inform programmatic approach or grantmaking strategy?
- When might an emergent approach to evaluation be appropriate? When might it not?
- Are you collaborating with other organizations to maximize the learning from evaluation data?

As a tool for more effective philanthropy, evaluation may be on the verge of reaching a tipping point of its own. If and when it gets there, it will be because a critical mass of grantmakers saw its potential as a pathway to learning, impact and better results.

"Those who are successful at creating social epidemics do not just do what they think is right. They deliberately test their intuitions."

MALCOLM GLADWELL
THE TIPPING POINT

SUGGESTED RESOURCES ON ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING

The following are some suggested resources on organizational learning. In addition to these recommended resources, thousands of resources on effectiveness issues are available on the Web site of Grantmakers for Effective Organizations, **www.geofunders.org**.

Bare, John. "Risk." *The Evaluation Exchange* 8, no. 2 (Fall 2002).
John Bare of the Knight Foundation shares his foundation's definition of the term "risk" when it comes to investing in initiatives, borrowing from the language of money managers. Available online at ***www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/eval/issue19/pp3.html****.*

Bernholz, Lucy. "Spending Smarter: Knowledge as a Philanthropic Resource." San Francisco, CA: Blueprint Research & Design, June 2001.
This paper is part of the Project on Foundations in the Knowledge Economy. Project leaders are Lucy Bernholz, Blueprint Research & Design; Laura Breeden, Laura Breeden and Associates; and Rochelle Lefkowitz, ProMedia Communications. Available online at ***www.blueprintrd.com/text/spendsmarter.pdf.***

Braverman, Marc T., Norman A. Constantine and Jana Kay Slater (Eds). *Foundations and Evaluation: Contexts and Practices for Effective Philanthropy.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004.
This book explores the intersection between organizational effectiveness and evaluation and demonstrates the need for commitment to evaluation throughout the foundation. Available at ***www.josseybass.com****.*

McDermott, Richard and Carla O'Dell. "Overcoming the 'Cultural Barriers' to Sharing Knowledge." Houston: American Productivity & Quality Center, January 2000.

This paper is based on a study of companies that were known to have a corporate culture that supports sharing knowledge; the report offers advice on how other organizations can create cultures supportive of knowledge sharing. Available online at ***www.apqc.org****.*

Patrizi, Patricia. "The Inside Perspective: An Assessment of the Current State of the Evaluation Field." Wyncote, PA: Patrizi Associates, 2002.

This paper is a summary of the 2002 Evaluation Roundtable. Independent consultants Patricia Patrizi and Michael Quinn Patton facilitated the meeting. Patrizi used information from this discussion and additional interviews with funders to write this description of evaluation in philanthropy. Available online at ***www.geofunders.org/_upload/documents/live/results%20PP%20paper.doc.***

Patton, Michael Quinn. *Utilization-Focused Evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996.

This book offers readers a full-fledged evaluation text addressing identifying primary users of an evaluation, focusing the evaluation, making methods decisions, analyzing data and presenting findings. Each chapter contains a review of the relevant literature and case examples to illustrate major points. Available at ***www.sagepub.com****.*

SUGGESTED RESOURCES ON ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING *(continued)*

Williams Group. "Marketing Your Knowledge: A Report of Philanthropy's R&D Organizations." Grand Rapids, MI: Williams Group, 2003.

Philanthropic organizations struggle to get their knowledge used because they rely on the traditional "dissemination" model (i.e., creating knowledge, identifying potential recipients and sending it to them). As an alternative, the report proposes a "knowledge marketing" approach. Knowledge marketers focus on knowledge demand rather than supply, seek informed action rather than information access and employ a long-term, ongoing process rather than one-time products. Available online at ***www.geofunders.org.***

W.K. Kellogg Foundation. *W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook.* Battle Creek, MI: W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998.

This handbook is guided by the belief that evaluation should be supportive and responsive to projects, rather than become an end in itself. It provides a framework for thinking about evaluation as a relevant and useful program tool. It is written primarily for project directors who have direct responsibility for the ongoing evaluation projects. Available online at ***www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub770.pdf.***

Woodwell, William H. Jr. "Leveraging What You Know: Knowledge Management Strategies for Funders." Washington, DC: Grantmakers for Effective Organizations, 2004.

Knowledge management strategies empower grantmakers to amass both the financial and nonfinancial assets necessary to better inform and align their work. In addition to offering an overview of the topic and reporting on key issues such as technology-supported taxonomies, organizational culture assessment and effective communication, this report presents short case studies and lessons learned from the diverse group of grantmakers who are putting knowledge management strategies to work in their own organizations. Available online at ***www.geofunders.org/_uploads/documents/live/GEO2004KMReportFinal.pdf.***

York, Peter. *A Funder's Guide to Evaluation: Leveraging Evaluation to Improve Nonprofit Effectiveness.* Saint Paul, MN: Fieldstone Alliance, 2005.

This GEO-Fieldstone Alliance funder's guide promotes the concept of using evaluation as an organizational capacity-building tool. It includes examples and suggestions of ways grantmakers can partner with grantees for evaluation learning. For ordering information, visit ***www.geofunders.org.***

Grantmakers for Effective Organizations is a community of grantmakers dedicated to building strong and effective organizations. GEO's mission is to maximize philanthropy's impact by advancing the effectiveness of grantmakers and their grantees. Through research, conferences, its Web site, publications and other activities, GEO highlights knowledge and practices in the field that advance the organizational effectiveness movement. More information about GEO and a host of resources and links for grantmakers are available at *www.geofunders.org*.

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