

*CONFIDENTIAL*

# Grantee Perception Report®

prepared for

**The Clowes Fund**

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EFFECTIVE PHILANTHROPY

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# Executive Summary – Key Findings

Since 2005, grantees' ratings of the Clowes Fund ("Clowes") have improved on most measures within this report, including impact on grantee organizations and funder-grantee relationships. Grantees describe the Fund as "extremely helpful, kind, and clear" and "a leader in good grantmaking practices." Overall, Clowes grantees rate the Fund very positively on most measures, giving the Fund ratings that place Clowes higher than 90 percent of funders in CEP's dataset on measures from impact on grantees to quality of relationships to helpfulness of processes.

## **Compared to their ratings in 2005, grantees rate the Clowes Fund higher on most dimensions within this report.**

Grantees rate the Fund's impact and understanding of their fields, communities, and organizations higher than in 2005, and Clowes is now rated above 90 percent of funders CEP has surveyed for its impact on grantee organizations. Grantee ratings of the Fund's evaluation process also improved dramatically, from the 35<sup>th</sup> percentile in 2005 to above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile in 2010.

**Grantees rate the Fund highly on all dimensions of strong funder-grantee relationships, despite relatively infrequent interactions.** The clarity of the Fund's communications is now rated substantially higher than in 2005, and one grantee reports receiving "very helpful, supportive, clear guidance" from Clowes staff. While the quality of the Fund's interactions with grantees are rated highly, grantees report interacting with the Fund relatively infrequently. Grantees that report interacting with the Fund yearly or less frequently rate lower on measures relating to the Fund's impact, relationships with grantees, and the selection process.

**Clowes provides non-monetary assistance to a third of its grantees, but does so in what CEP has found to be a less helpful pattern.** CEP experience indicates that non-monetary assistance is only associated with higher impact ratings when given in intensive "field-focused" or "comprehensive" patterns. Across the field, CEP finds that providing only a few types of assistance, however, appears to have little impact on grantee ratings of a funder's impact on their organization. The Fund also provides a smaller than typical proportion of grantees with assistance securing funding from other sources, and less than it did in 2005, though grantees find this assistance helpful.

**Clowes grantees in Greater Indianapolis rate the Fund higher than do grantees in Greater Boston/Northern New England on several key dimensions.** Compared to grantees in New England, Indianapolis grantees give the Fund higher ratings for its impact on their fields and local communities, as well as its understanding of their communities and organizations. Grantees in Indianapolis also indicate feeling more comfort approaching the Fund if a problem arises, and rate higher on the clarity and consistency of the Fund's communications, as well as the helpfulness of the selection process.

# Background

- ♦ Since February 2003, the Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) has conducted surveys of grantees on their perceptions of their philanthropic funders both on behalf of individual funders and independently. The purpose of these surveys is two-fold: to gather data that is useful to individual funders and to form the basis for broadly applicable research reports.<sup>1</sup>
- ♦ **The Grantee Perception Report® (GPR) shows an individual philanthropic funder its grantee perceptions relative to a set of perceptions of other funders whose grantees were surveyed by CEP.**
  - Assessing funder performance is challenging and a range of data sources is required. The GPR provides one set of perspectives that can be useful in understanding philanthropic funder performance.
  - It is important to note that, on most questions, grantee ratings cluster toward the high end of an absolute scale. Grantee perceptions must be interpreted in light of the particular strategy of the funder.
    - The survey covers many areas in which grantees' perceptions might be useful to a philanthropic funder. Each funder should place emphasis on the areas covered according to the funder's specific priorities.
    - Low ratings in an area that is not core to a philanthropic funder's strategy may not be concerning. For example, a funder that does not focus efforts on public policy would likely receive lower than average ratings in this area if it is adhering to its strategy.
  - Finally, across most measures in this report, structural characteristics – such as funder type, asset size, focus, and age – are not strong predictors of grantee perceptions, suggesting that it is possible for all funders to attain high ratings from grantees.

# Methodology – The Fund’s Grantee Survey

- ♦ The Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) surveyed the grantees of The Clowes Fund (“Clowes”) during September and October 2010. CEP has surveyed Clowes’ grantees in the past. Where possible, ratings from these surveys are also shown in the report. The details of Clowes’ surveys are as follows:

Survey	Survey Period	Fiscal Year of Surveyed Grantees	Number of Grantees Surveyed	Number of Responses Received	Survey Response Rate <sup>1</sup>
Clowes 2010	September and October 2010	2009	96	74	77%
Clowes 2005	September and October 2005	2004	108	92	85%

- ♦ Selected grantee comments are also shown throughout this report. This selection of comments highlights major themes and reflects trends in the data. These selected comments over-represent negative comments about the Fund in order to offer a wide range of perspectives.

# Methodology – Comparative Data

- ◆ Clowes's average and/or median grantee ratings are compared to the average and/or median ratings from grantees in CEP's dataset, which contains data collected over the last seven years. Please see Appendix B for a list of all funders whose grantees CEP has surveyed.

Full Comparative Set	
Grantee Responses	38,081 grantees
Philanthropic Funders	262 funders

- ◆ Clowes is also compared to a cohort of 12 small, private funders. The 12 funders that comprise this group are:

Small, Private Funders	
The Clowes Fund	Nord Family Foundation
The Hyams Foundation, Inc.	The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation
Jacob and Valeria Langeloth Foundation	The Raymond John Wean Foundation
Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation	Shelton Family Foundation
Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health	Woods Fund of Chicago
Medina Foundation	Zeist Foundation, Inc.

# Grantmaking Characteristics

- ♦ This table is intended to provide context to the Fund in thinking about its GPR results relative to its grantmaking practices. The information is based on self-reported data from grantees about the size, duration, and types of grants that they received.
- ♦ Compared to the typical funder, Clowes awards smaller but longer grants.

Survey Item	Clowes 2010	Clowes 2005	Full Dataset Median	Small, Private Funder Median
<b>Grant Size</b>				
Median grant size	\$40K	\$36K	\$60K	\$41 K
<b>Grant Length</b>				
Average grant length	2.5 years	2.8 years	2.1 years	2.1 years
Percent of grantees receiving multi-year grants	80%	70%	49%	56%
<b>Type of Support</b>				
Percent of grantees receiving operating support	15%	19%	20%	24%
Percent of grantees receiving program/project support	66%	63%	64%	61%
Percent of grantees receiving other types of support	19%	18%	16%	15%

# Structural Characteristics of Grantees

- ♦ This table is intended to provide context to the Fund in thinking about its GPR results relative to the structural characteristics of its grantees. The information is based on self-reported data from grantees about the characteristics of their organizations.
- ♦ Clowes grantees are similar in size and length of establishment as compared to grantees of the typical funder. A smaller than typical percentage of Clowes grantees are first-time grant recipients of the Fund.

Survey Item	Clowes 2010	Clowes 2005	Full Dataset Median	Small, Private Funder Median
<b>Budget of Funded Organizations</b>				
Typical organizational budget	\$1.0MM	\$1.0MM	\$1.4MM	\$1.0MM
<b>Duration of Funded Program and Grantee Organization<sup>1</sup></b>				
Programs conducted 6 years or more	40%	N/A	33%	N/A
Median length of establishment of grantee organizations	20 years	26 years	24 years	22 years
<b>First-Time Grantees<sup>2</sup></b>				
Percentage of first-time grants	12%	N/A	30%	N/A

1: Represents data from 45 funders. Clowes 2005 and Small, Private Funder data on "Programs conducted 6 years or more" not available due to changes to the survey instrument.

2: Clowes 2005 and Small, Private Funder data on "First-time Grantees" not available due to changes to the survey instrument.

Note: In most cases, the structural characteristics of grantees are not strong predictors of how grantees perceive funders, suggesting that it is possible for funders with even a unique set of grantees to attain high ratings. For additional information on grantee characteristics related to these survey items refer to part B of the Appendix.

# Structural Characteristics of Funders

- ♦ This table is intended to provide context to the Foundation in thinking about its GPR results relative to its grantmaking and staffing. This information is based on IRS filings and data supplied by philanthropic funders that have subscribed to the GPR.
- ♦ The number of grants awarded per professional program staff full-time employee at Clowes is similar to that of the typical funder.

Survey Item	Clowes 2010	Clowes 2005	Full Dataset Median	Small, Private Funder Median
<b>Program Staff Load</b>				
Dollars awarded per professional program full-time employee	\$1.8MM	\$2.9MM	\$3.5MM	\$1.4MM
Applications per professional program full-time employee	55 applications	86 applications	38 applications	52 applications
Grants awarded per professional program full-time employee	27 grants	67 grants	30 grants	38 grants
Active grants per professional program full-time employee	49 grants	122 grants	49 grants	46 grants

Note: Funders of different sizes and focuses choose to structure their organizations differently – so, as with all the information contained in this report, the Fund should interpret data in this section in light of its distinctive goals and strategy. For additional information on funder characteristics related to these survey items, please refer to part B of the Appendix.



# Review of Findings

Chart shows the percentile rank of Clowes 2010 (◆), Clowes 2005 (◇), and the median small, private funder (◆) among all funders in the comparative set.

Indicator		Percentile Rank on Indicator					Description of Indicator
		0th	25th	50th	75th	100th	
Impact on the Field			◆	◆		◆	Grantees were asked to rate the funder's impact on their fields.
Impact on the Community			◆	◆	◆		Grantees were asked to rate the funder's impact on their local communities.
Impact on the Grantee Organization				◆		◆	Grantees were asked to rate the funder's impact on their organizations.
Satisfaction					◆	◆	Grantees were asked to rate their satisfaction with their funder.
Strength of Relationships					◆	◆	This summary includes grantee ratings of funder fairness, responsiveness, grantee comfort approaching the funder if a problem arises, clarity of funder communication of its goals and strategy, and consistency of information provided by its communications resources.
Selection Process				◆	◆	◆	Grantees were asked to rate the helpfulness of the funder's selection process for their organizations.
Reporting and Evaluation Processes			◆		◆	◆	Grantees were asked to rate the helpfulness of the funder's reporting and evaluation processes for their organizations.
Dollar Return on Grantee Administrative Hours			◆	◆			This summary is the calculation of number of dollars received divided by the time required of grantees to fulfill the funder's administrative requirements.
Percent Receiving Field or Comprehensive Non-Monetary Assistance		◆		◆			The funder's percentile rank on the proportion of grantees receiving higher impact field-focused or comprehensive assistance.
Assistance Securing Funding from Other Sources	% Receiving	◆	◆	◆			The funder's percentile rank on the proportion of grantees receiving assistance securing funding from other sources.
	Impact	◆		◆		◆	Grantees were asked to rate the impact of the funder's assistance securing funding from other sources.

# Funder Change Over Time

CEP has worked with 68 funders that have subscribed to the GPR at least twice. The table below shows the change in grantee perceptions of Clowes compared to the typical level of change we see across the first to second GPRs of repeat funders.

Measure		Clowes 2005 to 2010 Change	Typical Level of Change
Impact on the Field		0.4	0.2
Impact on the Community		0.6	0.1
Impact on the Grantee Organization		0.5	0.2
Satisfaction		0.0	0.1
Strength of Relationships		0.1	0.1
Selection Process		0.2	0.1
Reporting and Evaluation Processes		0.8	0.3
Dollar Return on Grantee Administrative Hours		\$167	\$167
Percent Receiving Field or Comprehensive Non-Monetary Assistance		0%	1%
Assistance Securing Funding from Other Sources	% Receiving	-7%	2%
	Impact	2.3	0.3

## Differences by Geographic Area

Clowes' survey results were tested for systematic differences in ratings between grantees in different geographic areas. Indianapolis grantees rate the Fund higher than do New England grantees on several key dimensions. The following table lists average ratings on measures on which Indianapolis grantees rated statistically significantly higher than did New England grantees.

Measure	Clowes 2010 (N=74)	Greater Indianapolis (N=33)	Greater Boston/ Northern New England (N=38)
Impact on Grantees' Local Communities	6.1	6.6	5.6
Understanding of Grantees' Communities	6.0	6.5	5.4
Impact on Grantees' Fields	6.0	6.3	5.7
Advancing Knowledge in the Field	5.0	5.3	4.7
Understanding of Grantees' Organizations	6.1	6.4	5.8
Grantee Comfort Approaching the Fund if a Problem Arises	6.5	6.7	6.2
Clarity of Communication	6.4	6.6	6.1
Consistency of Communication	6.5	6.7	6.3
Helpfulness of the Selection Process	5.1	5.5	4.7
Level of Involvement of Fund staff in Development of Grant Proposal	3.4	4.0	2.9

Note: Significance tested at a 90% confidence interval. Seattle grantees not shown because fewer than five responses were received.

# Analysis and Discussion (1)

## Improvement on most measures since 2005

- ♦ Compared to their ratings in 2005, grantees rate the Clowes Fund substantially higher on most dimensions in this report. In particular, grantees rate the Fund's impact on and understanding of grantees' fields, local communities, and organizations higher than in 2005. The Fund is now rated higher than typical on these measures and above 90 percent of funders for the impact it has on grantees' organizations. In one grantee's words, "Clowes is helping us to have a broader, deeper impact, and to leverage additional resources."
- ♦ The Fund also receives improved ratings on the helpfulness of the selection and evaluation processes. The evaluation process in particular, which was rated at the 35<sup>th</sup> percentile in 2005, receives substantially higher ratings, and is now rated above 90 percent of funders in CEP's dataset. One grantee notes that "reporting is not burdensome - the whole process is really helpful for our organization...."
  - *Has the Fund documented and distilled the practices, strategies, and values that may have led to these improved ratings?*

## Highly Rated but Infrequent Interactions

- ♦ Clowes is rated very highly by grantees on each of the five key components of strong funder-grantee relationships: fairness of treatment of grantees, grantees' comfort approaching the Fund if a problem arises, responsiveness of Fund staff, and the clarity and consistency of the Fund's communications. In particular, grantees now rate the clarity of the Fund's communications substantially higher than in 2005. One grantee describes contact with staff as "fantastic, informative, timely and consistent."
- ♦ While grantees rate their interactions with the Fund positively, they report relatively few interactions; a higher than typical proportion of grantees report interacting with the Fund only yearly or less frequently. These grantees rate the Fund lower on several measures relating to its impact on grantees' fields and communities, its relationships with grantees, and the selection process. Additionally, though the Fund visits a typical proportion of grantees, the second most frequent grantee suggestion was for more site visits.
- ♦ The grant caseload for Clowes program staff has been greatly reduced since 2005. After a 60 percent reduction in the number of active grants per professional program full-time employee, the caseload at Clowes is now similar to that of the typical funder.
  - *How has the Fund built and maintained strong relationships with grantees while interacting relatively infrequently with them?*
  - *Considering the reduction in caseload for Clowes staff, are there opportunities to increase the Fund's frequency of interactions with grantees, including site visits?*

# Analysis and Discussion (2)

## Opportunities to Provide More Helpful Nonmonetary Assistance

- ♦ CEP's report, *More Than Money: Making a Difference with Assistance Beyond the Grant*, finds that grantees receiving non-monetary assistance in intensive "field-focused" or "comprehensive" patterns have a more positive experience. This research also finds that providing just a few types of assistance, what CEP calls "little assistance," does not make a substantial difference on grantees' experience. While around a third of Clowes grantees receive some non-monetary support, nearly all of it comes in this "little assistance" pattern, and almost no grantees receive assistance in the more intensive patterns.
- ♦ Ratings on the helpfulness of several forms of Clowes' nonmonetary assistance have fallen since 2005. The proportion of Clowes grantees receiving assistance with collaboration has doubled, but grantees now rate this assistance as less helpful than in 2005, and less helpful than typical. Similarly, grantees now rate the helpfulness of Clowes' strategic planning advice and general management advice substantially lower than in 2005.
- ♦ Clowes provides a smaller than typical proportion of grantees with active assistance securing funding from other sources, and now provides less of this assistance than it did in 2005. Despite this decrease in provision, the impact of such assistance is rated higher than typical, and substantially higher than in 2005.
  - *What is the Fund's strategy for the provision of non-monetary assistance?*
  - *Considering the Fund's reduced caseload since 2005, are there opportunities for the Fund to provide field-focused or comprehensive assistance to a larger proportion of grantees?*
  - *What might explain lower ratings since 2005 on the helpfulness of certain assistance activities? How can the Fund make these forms of assistance more helpful to grantees?*
  - *Can the Fund provide a larger proportion of grantees with its helpful assistance securing funding from other sources?*

## Differences by Geographic Area

- ♦ Clowes grantees whose work primarily focuses in Greater Indianapolis rate the Fund higher than do grantees in Greater Boston/Northern New England on several key dimensions. Compared to New England grantees, Indianapolis grantees give the Fund higher ratings for its impact on their fields and local communities, as well as its understanding of their communities and organizations. Grantees in Indianapolis also indicate feeling more comfort approaching the Fund if a problem arises, and rate higher on the clarity and consistency of the Fund's communications, as well as the helpfulness of the selection process.
  - *What are the policies and practices that have been most effective in working with Indianapolis grantees? Are there opportunities to build on these successes in other regions?*
  - *Taking into consideration the geographic constraints, how can the Fund ensure that staff's understanding of and relationships with grantees are consistent across geographic areas?*