HR&A + **SACOG**

Engage, Empower, Implement (EEI) Program

Community-Based Organization Roundtable Feedback

April 2023

CBO BREAKOUT GROUP DICUSSION KEY FINDINGS

Applying for a Grant

Grant applications are often **too long**, **complex**, and have **strict organizational or budget requirements** that preclude smaller CBOs from participating.

- Grant funding opportunities may not align with a CBOs or community's mission and values.

- Not hearing about a grant opportunity early enough or having enough turn around time to complete an application is limiting.

- Smaller staffed or volunteer-based CBOs may not have the capacity or bandwidth to go through a long and complex application process with technical assistance and support.

- Funding requirements are too strict and required funding match or budget is often too high.

- Pre-made application forms or templates would help to expedite the application process and ensure the correct information is given the first time around.

Sample Participant Responses

What has kept us applying in the past: 1. misalignment of funder and agency values and approach to the work. 2. Award amount isn't enough to fully fund the proposal

Admin costs are always a challenge for us, considering we're a small org

What has kept me from applying for grants in the past was having the time to apply and also the rate of approval of grants when applying.

Q2: Not having enough bandwidth to apply- small orgs often cannot afford grant writers to come in and meet grant deadlines

The details of the grants are often difficult to breakdown. Staffing limitations are a factor.

Receiving the Funds

Grant management and reporting is **labor intensive** and there are often delays that result in CBOs front loading costs and **getting paid late for work**.

- Reimbursement grants that require CBOs have enough cashflow to cover initial costs are limiting and where possible upfront funding or advances are helpful.

- Grant management and reporting is labor intensive, especially when there are changes in invoicing requirements throughout the process resulting in CBOs having to resubmit billing and reports.

- There should be a dedicated point of contact at the funder's finance department to address questions and provide technical assistance needed.

- Funders are often slow to execute contracts and process invoicing which lead to late payments to CBOs for work executed.

- Funders needs to be clear about insurance requirements and connect CBOs to no or low-cost insurance opportunities.

Sample Participant Responses

It is helpful to have a specific point person at the govt agency assigned to our grant as the first point of contact

Having the funding upfront would be fantastic! Where we then provide invoices for all deliverables.

Overall, grants don't always include an easy way to claim grant management costs. The writing and reporting is very labor intensive.

We have experienced a change in invoicing requirements mid-grant, resulting in re-working billing and reports

There should be insurance clarifications upfront or a vehicle to obtain low cost or no cost insurance if applicable.

Creating a Meaningful Impact

There are opportunities for the EEI Program to **increase collaboration between CBOs and government agencies** to ensure community voices are heard throughout a project planning process.

- CBOs may not have existing connections to government agencies or other types of partners. Helping CBOs expand their network of potential partners based on their mission and project ideas would be helpful.

- Effective CBO and government partnerships occur when government agencies acknowledge and respect CBOs' expertise on local issues.

- Government grant funded projects can be an opportunity for government agencies to help with capacity building and training for CBOs.

- Successful projects that create a meaningful impact on communities are grounded in robust and inclusive community engagement, which must be budgeted for.

Sample Participant Responses

For CBOs who may have an idea but not partners, would it be possible to host "pitch parties" to share ideas and possible prospective partners?

Q1: good communication, clarity on scope of work (who does what), activities are identified by strength of each partner

Successful partnerships: minimize barriers, cultivate a relationship between community and gov't, community residents are engaged in the process

Getting the word out about new programs can sometimes be challenging. EEI program support in this area would be useful.

An effective partnership relies on the CBO to be the expert on the area. Many ideas come out that are not effective in all neighborhoods.