



#7: Diversity

From the SDG Guiding Principles Purpose:

The principles "reflect our dedication to strengthening the field of philanthropy and increasing its effectiveness for the benefit of the community at large."

November 2008

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Bringing Guiding Principles to Life

Ways To Use this E-Newsletter:

- Quickly scan the list of suggestions below to see if there are some practices your organization might want to consider.
- Use each Guiding Principles newsletter, or the entire list of [SDG Guiding Principles](#) (pdf), to guide a board or staff meeting about your internal practices.

We have worked throughout this year to bring our newly-adopted set of Guiding Principles to life, so that they are not just words on a page but rather guidelines for action. Our objective is to provide you with a relevant and powerful framework to help you conduct your philanthropy according to the highest standards of effectiveness and accountability. One means by which we will do this is to focus on each principle in a monthly newsletter. This month, we continue with principle **#7: Diversity**.

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[Click here](#) (pdf) for the entire set of Guiding Principles. You can also [click here](#) to see the other Regional Associations of Grantmakers that have adopted Guiding Principles.

Several SDG members have let us know that they are bringing the Guiding Principles to their boards and engaging in conversation about how they apply to their organizations. Some members are considering formally adopting the principles themselves as a sign of commitment. [Let us know](#) if you are considering doing so, or if we can provide any additional resources to you as you discuss the principles.

SDG Guiding Principle #7: Diversity

We seek diversity and inclusiveness in order to reflect the communities served, to ensure that a range of perspectives inform our approaches, and to strengthen our ability to respond effectively to a changing society. We recognize that governance structures and bylaws might necessitate different practices of diversity within charitable entities.

SDG members have a notable history of responding to changing demographics in our diverse region and facilitating the inclusion of all people. To reflect this history and proactively advance the development of a diverse and responsive community, we establish diversity as a core issue and competency for philanthropic entities.

Suggestions for Practice

There are different ways to implement each of the Guiding Principles depending on the nature of your grantmaking entity. For example, what works for a corporate giving program may be different than what works for a small family foundation. By adhering to the spirit of these principles in a way that applies to your specific circumstances, you demonstrate your commitment to maintaining the public trust in organized philanthropy. Here, we share some suggestions gathered from our colleagues for implementing **Principle #7: Diversity**.

[Research](#) shows how groups that display a range of perspectives outperform groups of like-minded experts--so in other words, diversity improves outcomes and effectiveness.

[The Diversity in Philanthropy Project](#) recommends these principles: Mutual Respect, Freedom and Flexibility, Knowledge and Creativity, Strategic Approach, Transparency. To accompany the principles, here are some promising practices for the field as a whole:

- **Internal Diversity Assessments:** Conducting periodic assessments of board and staff appointments, grantmaking, and contracting to help institutional leaders identify priorities, recognize strategic opportunities, and enhance their diversity performance.
- **Diversity Plans:** Developing and implementing diversity plans to help leaders design

specific and concrete steps to expand representation and engagement from diverse communities in their mission and work.

- **Field Development and Coordination:** Supporting more integrated and coordinated planning, investment, and action to expand the field's overall capacity for change.
- **Peer Support:** Building peer networks, both formal and informal, to help individuals, their institutions, and the larger field achieve greater diversity.
- **Periodic Progress Reporting:** Tracking progress, communicating accomplishments, and sharing lessons learned to establish field-wide performance benchmarks and enhanced transparency and public accountability.
- **Public Leadership:** Exercising visible leadership by encouraging others to join, publicly promoting the benefits of diversity, and identifying new strategies that lead to greater effectiveness.

As an individual grantmaker, recognize that your organization can work toward diversity in several ways: as a funder, as an employer/board, as a civic participant, and as an economic entity.

Diversity as Funders:

- **Focus on diversity values:** Provide diversity training and promote ongoing learning for governing board members and staff to ensure that internal and external processes and practices are culturally competent.
- **Have diverse advisors:** Incorporate diverse people, perspectives, knowledge and experience--including subject matter experts or community representatives as speakers at board meetings, on committees or on advisory groups.

Diversity as Employers and Boards:

- **Build a diverse board:** Consider the demographics of the area you serve; utilize an advisory board to supplement diverse perspectives
- **Use proactive hiring policies:** Advertise new positions and board nominations broadly. Utilize traditional forums for advertising positions. In addition, utilize search firms and groups that specialize in reaching qualified, diverse, multicultural candidates. Also reach out to national groups such as Hispanics in Philanthropy, Emerging Practitioners in Philanthropy, Association of Black Foundation Executives and Women in Philanthropy, as well as their local/regional networks, to assure the broadest possible pool of qualified and diverse candidates.

Diversity as Civic Participants:

- **Learn from the community:** Invite grantees and other community representatives to help with a periodic review of grantmaking and/or to serve on advisory boards.
- **Establish singular initiatives:** Create diversity-focused projects.

Diversity as Economic Entities:

- **Leverage monies:** Seek diversity in your vendors; and ask grantees, contractors, vendors to sign nondiscrimination forms.
- **Fund diverse partnerships:** Bring communities together in collaborative efforts.

Thanks to [Minnesota Council on Foundations](#), [Washington Grantmakers](#), [Diversity in Philanthropy Project](#), and [Northern California Grantmakers](#) for these suggestions.

Related Resources

- [SDG Members-Only Diversity & Philanthropy webpage](#) (login required)
- [Embracing Diversity: Foundation Giving Benefiting California's Communities of Color](#) (pdf) (Foundation Center Diversity Report commissioned by SDG, NCG, and SCG)
- [Diversity in Philanthropy Project](#)
- [Philanthropy in a Changing Society: Achieving Effectiveness through Diversity](#) (pdf) (Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors report)
- [COF Resources on Diversity and Inclusiveness](#)
- [The State of Research on Diversity in Philanthropy](#) (Foundation Center report)
- [Essentials for Diversity in Giving Toolkit](#) (Changemakers)
- [Bibliography of Resources Related to Diversity Within the Philanthropic and Nonprofit Sectors](#) (Foundation Center)

Upcoming SDG Programs

[Click here](#) for a complete list of SDG programs.

[The Current Economic Storm: How Grantmakers Can Respond](#)

December 4, 2008

9:00-11:00am

Location: United Way of San Diego County, 4699 Murphy Canyon Rd, San Diego, CA 92123

[Profiling San Diego Unified School District: The Facts and the Challenges](#)

December 11, 2008

9:00 am - 11:00 am (A light breakfast will be served)

Location: The San Diego Foundation, 2508 Historic Decatur Road, Ste 200, San Diego, CA 92106

Working Group Meetings

[Workforce Funders](#): **December 10**

[Homelessness Working Group](#): **December 22**

[Child Welfare Funders](#): **December 16**

[San Diego Neighborhood Funders](#): **December 5**

[Click here](#) for more information about all of these SDG programs. All programs are free for SDG members except where indicated. To RSVP, please call (619) 744-2180 or email programs@sdgrantmakers.org.

FUNDRAISING STIPULATION:

SDG was developed so that grantmakers (staff and trustees) could talk candidly with their peers about the challenges they face. With that in mind, we wish to impress upon members and potential members that fundraising or marketing is not allowed at any of SDG's programs, meetings, or other events.

This online newsletter is published by [San Diego Grantmakers](#) to help SDG members meet the challenges of philanthropy today. Our mission is to connect, educate, develop, and inspire a diverse group of foundations and corporations to stimulate effective philanthropy in the San Diego region. Copies of past editions are archived [here](#).

Contact Nancy Jamison, 619/744.2180 or nancy@sdgrantmakers.org to suggest article ideas or submit news items.