

EITC Funders Network

2009 Membership Survey Findings

The EITC Funders Network Survey was launched on January 22, 2009. It was developed to gather information on the types of organizations that belong to the Network, the general level of member satisfaction, what services members like and dislike, and what changes the members would like the Network to make in the future.

Participation: Forty-five (45) EITC Funders Network members completed the survey. As 300 individuals were invited to participate in the survey, this gives an overall response rate of just 15%. However, we have realized that there are a large number of people on our mailing list with whom we have little to no contact. The “active” number of Network members (those who have ever participated in an in-person meeting, conference call, event, or have reached out to Network staff) is closer to 120 members. Using “active” members as a base gives us a response rate of 37.5%

Findings: We asked survey respondents to tell us about their organization type and focus, their participation with the EITC Funders Network, and levels of satisfaction with Network activities.

Organization Type

- Out of all of the different types of organizations that responded, community foundations made up the largest portion (28%).
- Regional foundations made up the second largest portion (24%).

EITC Funding Focus

- The majority of Network members (83%) provide EITC outreach.
- 79.1% of member organizations support groups creating links between EITC and asset building.

Geographic Focus

- Most network members provide local (69.5%) and/or regional (73.9%) support.

Investment Size

- Nearly one third (28%) of network members provided less than \$10,000 in grants in 2008.
- 24% provided grants of \$100,000-\$499,999.

Duration of Membership

- 28% of member organizations have been part of the Network for one to two years.
- 24% of member organizations have been part of the Network for two to four years.

EITC Funders Network Satisfaction

- The three major activities of the EITC Funders Network—conference calls, in-person meetings, and website/information exchange—all received equal support as the Network activity that members find most useful.
- On a five point satisfaction scale (1=“very dissatisfied” to 5=“very satisfied”):
 - both conference calls and in-person meetings received scores of 4.8 out of 5.
 - the EITC website received a satisfaction score of 4.4 out of 5.
 - the newsletter received a satisfaction score of 4.3 out of 5.
- 52% of respondents reported that they were “satisfied” with the topics of conference calls and meetings. (Although some respondents noted that they had not been to enough to form a very strong opinion.)

Most Valuable Aspects of EITC Funders Network Events/Services

- Social networking opportunities
- Communications/meetings
- Current events/policy information

Network Members made many specific comments including:

- I wish I could attend more of the in-person meetings! Great information & I got so much out of the meeting I attended in North Carolina.

- Updates on policy and information via conference calls, events, & communication are great.

- Newsletter is very good.

- Current and proposed action at the federal level.

- I appreciated networking opportunities--both virtual and in person.

- Sharing of knowledge in this field and new innovations discussed.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Respondents offered a wide variety of suggestions on ways to improve our services. Excerpts from responses include:
 - Increase access to communities of color by increased outreach. Clarify your role in the Asset Building movement.

 - Targeting emerging issues, challenges and opportunities -- especially as the new administration rolls out its plan

 - An EITC Funders group supported/financed project could potentially move the group from actively engaged to taking action and co- signing a set of results.

 - Host them in the Midwest occasionally - to keep travel costs down.

- Posting summaries or meeting minutes on your website would be helpful for those who can't attend in person.
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- Unfortunately a lot of the meetings are far away, so just wish I could go to more events/activities.
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Future Programming

- When asked what topics we should focus future efforts on, respondents showed the most interest in:
 - Links between EITC and other supports of low-wage workers.
 - Evaluation
 - Rural issues

- 56% of respondents were interested in a “rural issues” sub-committee. Comments included:
 - This was just done in rural MD on the service delivery/providers/EITC site side - perhaps this provider’s network could be connected to the funders network in this area for a regional rural MD roundtable.

 - Would be good to tie this in with new/emerging rural network sponsored by Neighborhood Funders Group and National Rural Funder Collaborative

 - The issues would have to be of interest to grantee partners in priority states for us.

 - location and timing would affect ability to attend but I'm very interested in this topic.

 - This would be of interest to some of our (association) members.

 - XX foundation is exploring ways to expand our anti-poverty portfolio to address rural poverty. EITC would be part of that work.

- 56% were interested in regional EITC Funders Network gatherings. Comments included:
 - It would be best to coordinate this with Philanthropy Northwest which sponsors informal, topic-based discussions for Alaska funders on a quarterly/regular basis

 - Very important for the NW Community!

 - also of interest since many of our members are regional/local

Overarching Themes

- Variety of kinds of members, but most are community or regional foundations and focus support on EITC outreach efforts
- Respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the core aspects of the EITC Funders Network—conference calls, in-person meetings, and the newsletter.

- Respondents stressed the importance of virtual and in-person events/communication.
- Some members would appreciate the Network being more active—following an idea over a longer period of time, creating a funding collaborative, doing proactive work like “asset mapping” and creating data tools, etc.