

Proceedings from the first annual

ARNOVA/Council on Foundations/Foundation Center

**Researcher/Practitioner Forum on
The State of Research on Diversity in Philanthropy**

El Pomar Foundation, Colorado Springs, Colorado
September 27–28, 2007

We are pleased to present in this report the proceedings from the first annual Researcher/Practitioner Forum that took place September 27–28, 2007, in Colorado Springs, Colorado, on the topic of diversity in philanthropy. The forum was sponsored by the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), the Council on Foundations, and the Foundation Center.

The purpose of the Researcher/Practitioner Forum is to provide an opportunity for grantmakers (practitioners) and researchers to exchange ideas on key issues in philanthropy in order to help focus and generate research that improves the quality and effectiveness of grantmaking. Participants are invited based on their background or experience with the topic or their expertise as a researcher.

Why the focus on diversity at this inaugural convening of the forum? Increasingly, conversations in the philanthropic sector are converging around two key questions: 1) What are the participation rates and career opportunities in the field for individuals with diverse backgrounds? 2) How is philanthropy addressing the needs of diverse communities? Field leaders are increasingly grappling with such slippery concepts as “diversity,” “effectiveness,” and “impact” and attempting to understand the relationships among them.

Over one-and-a-half days, about 30 key grantmakers and researchers met to identify and prioritize the types of research most needed by the field with respect to the topic of diversity in philanthropy. Through a series of guided conversations, the group reached consensus on four key areas in which it felt research is most needed and began devising specific research strategies for examining this issue. Those areas were:

1. What is the relationship between internal commitments and practices around diversity and the external impact or effectiveness of a foundation’s service to its community?
2. What are the cultural or institutional obstacles to change regarding inclusion? What kinds of leadership, strategies and practices help to institute and sustain change? Who are the leaders of foundations? Who leaves and who stays in foundation philanthropy?

3. What is the relationship of diversity to equality, power, and democracy? What is or has been the role of foundations relative to issues of diversity and equality in the larger society?
4. How well do foundations relate to external constituencies?

The structure of this report closely follows the meeting agenda, summarizing the results of each session in the sequence in which they took place. In structuring the report this way we hope to give you a sense not only of the outcomes of the meeting but of the process by which those outcomes were reached.

We wish to thank the Lumina Foundation for Education for providing the funding that made this forum possible. We also wish to thank the El Pomar Foundation for its generosity in hosting the meeting and the Diversity in Philanthropy Project for its financial assistance to publish and broadly disseminate the report that follows.

Thomas Jeavons
Executive Director
ARNOVA

Judith Kroll
Director, Philanthropic Research
Council on Foundations

Lawrence McGill
Senior Vice President, Research
Foundation Center

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Introduction

The first annual Researcher/Practitioner Forum, developed through a partnership among the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), the Council on Foundations, and the Foundation Center, was designed to do the following:

1. Facilitate a conversation between grantmakers and researchers on pressing issues facing the field related to the topic of diversity in philanthropy.
2. Structure the discussion of how to define diversity so that differing definitions are efficiently heard and considered.
3. Provide grantmakers with an opportunity to describe to researchers the diversity issues on which they feel they most need research and data.
4. Prioritize the list of diversity issues for which research is most needed.
5. Provide researchers with an opportunity to suggest research strategies for addressing the diversity issues identified as most important by grantmakers.
6. Brainstorm mechanisms for moving the researcher/practitioner conversation forward on these issues.

To facilitate a conversation between grantmakers and researchers, we created a meeting agenda (see page 8) that alternated between large and small group discussions. In the large group discussions, we shared assumptions about the parameters of “diversity,” explored the range of issues that might be amenable to research, and worked to achieve consensus on top research priorities. In the small group discussions, we homed in on the specific research topics of greatest urgency and proposed strategies for conducting meaningful research on those topics.

In preparing for this convening, we recognized that the concept of diversity could lend itself to multiple agendas regarding both research and practice, and we were concerned that much time might be spent wrestling with just what diversity means to different people. To forestall this possibility, we asked participants to prepare written definitions of diversity, which were shared with the group in advance of the meeting. Those definitions were presented by each participant without elaboration or discussion during the first session of the forum. (See Appendix B for these definitions.) This allowed the group to acknowledge the range of definitions represented in the room, and to gain a sense of the degree of like-mindedness among participants. This process also highlighted the important point that diversity in philanthropy is, at minimum, a three-dimensional issue involving:

1. Diversity of individual backgrounds and perspectives
2. Diversity of organizational culture and practices
3. Diversity of organizational types and focus of activity

The precipitating idea for the Researcher/Practitioner Forum was to bring grantmakers and researchers into closer contact with each other in the hopes of improving the applicability of research to the needs of practitioners. Clearly, researchers operate within particular theoretical frameworks and schools of thought that shape their research agendas in ways that maximize the value of research from an academic perspective. We wanted to make sure that the pragmatic frameworks within which grantmakers operate were made explicit during the meeting, so that points of possible connection could be made between the research agendas of academics and the needs of practitioners.

To accomplish this, we felt it was important to include space in the agenda for practitioners to explain to researchers what sorts of issues were most salient to them. The second half of Session I (Grantmakers' Agenda: What Are the Big Issues Facing the Field?) provided this opportunity. The diversity issues of greatest relevance to practitioners coalesced into nine areas of concern (see page 9), dealing with themes such as the relationship between internal foundation diversity and grantmaking effectiveness, how to work with grantees on issues of diversity, and clarifying the relationship between research and practice.

In response, researchers were given an opportunity to explain how various research strategies might illuminate the questions raised by grantmakers. They suggested some key research considerations to keep in mind:

1. To what extent is research needed that treats diversity as an independent (or causal) variable that leads to particular (desired) outcomes? To what extent is research needed that treats diversity as a dependent (or outcome) variable that results from particular inputs?
2. Looking at diversity strictly from the perspective of numbers and demographics may be inadequate to address issues such as social justice, power, or inequality.
3. We need to specify what types of diversity ought to be looked at (gender, race/ethnicity, foundation type, etc.)
4. How do we operationalize "effective grantmaking"?
5. Should we prioritize research that examines internal foundation diversity or research on how foundations can best achieve diverse external outcomes?

Subsequently, the large group was divided into four smaller groups, with equal representation in each group among researchers and grantmakers. Each group was charged with the task of identifying the four highest priority issues for research. The various issues that emerged from the small group discussions were consolidated into a list of eight research questions, five of which focused primarily on the internal aspects of foundations and three of which dealt mostly with the external efficacy of foundation grantmaking.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the biggest question begging for an answer was how diversity (or inclusiveness) at the board and staff levels in foundations might lead to more effective grantmaking. Researchers candidly questioned whether a feasible research strategy could be designed that would begin to answer this question. How extensive and potentially costly, they asked, would such a program of research be?

Other questions that rose to the top:

- How does organizational culture and organizational leadership contribute to or inhibit the diversification of boards, staffs, and decision-making practices at different foundations?
- What determines whether foundations are successful or unsuccessful at retaining staff members of color?
- What do we actually know about the people who govern the activities of foundations—where do board members come from, what kinds of diversity do they represent, and how do they make decisions?

Strategies for initiating research into these questions were proposed (see Research Priorities and Strategies on page 16), leading into a discussion of what steps should be taken to keep the conversation between grantmakers and researchers moving forward. Recommendations that emerged included:

1. Establish links between the Researcher/Practitioner Forum and the annual conferences of ARNOVA and the Council on Foundations. Disseminate the forum proceedings at both conferences. Include a panel session at each conference that reports on the work done at the forum. ARNOVA should consider institutionalizing a diversity in philanthropy forum for researchers and grantmakers.
2. Post the forum proceedings on the websites of ARNOVA, the Council, and the Foundation Center.
3. Establish links between the Researcher/Practitioner Forum and the national Diversity in Philanthropy Project (DPP) (see Appendix D). Report on the work done at the forum at DPP advisory committee meetings. Post the forum proceedings on the DPP website: www.diversityinphilanthropy.org
4. Consider establishing a research roundtable on diversity (involving key infrastructure organizations such as ARNOVA, the Council, and the Foundation Center, and reaching out to others such as Grantmakers for Effective Organizations) that would advocate for funding and create mechanisms for sharing resources.

5. Create a repository of learning for scholars and grantmakers to share available research on diversity.

The consensus among forum participants was that there is a strong need for work to be done in this area. We expect the discussions at the annual conferences of ARNOVA and the Council to stimulate further refinement of both the key research questions identified during the forum and the strategies for investigating them, leading to the development of fundable research proposals.

ARNOVA, the Council on Foundations, and the Foundation Center have committed to allocating time and resources to moving the field forward in this area. For additional information and updates on initiatives growing out of the Researcher/Practitioner Forum, please see www.arnova.org, www.cof.org, www.foundationcenter.org, and www.diversityinphilanthropy.org.

**ARNOVA / Council on Foundations / Foundation Center
Researcher/Practitioner Forum**

The State of Research on Diversity in Philanthropy

El Pomar Foundation, Colorado Springs, Colorado
September 27–28, 2007

Thursday, September 27, 2007

- 8:30 a.m. **Welcome**
Steve Gunderson, President and CEO, Council on Foundations
- 8:45 a.m. **Session 1**
Introductions and Diversity Definitions
Practitioners' Agenda: What Are the Big Issues Facing the Field?
- 10:45 a.m. **Session 2**
Research on Diversity in Philanthropy: The Knowledge Base and the Knowledge Gap
- 1:30 p.m. **Session 3**
What Are the Priority Issues and How Might They be Addressed through Research?
 A. Breakout Groups
 B. Group Reports
- 4:15 p.m. **Session 4**
Moving Towards Consensus: What Priorities Have Emerged from Today's Work?

Friday, September 28, 2007

- 8:30 a.m. **Welcome**
William J. Hybl, Chairman and CEO, El Pomar Foundation
- 8:45 a.m. **Remarks**
Renee Branch, Director, Diversity and Inclusive Practices,
Council on Foundations
- 8:50 a.m. **Session 5**
Review of Research Priorities (Second Thoughts?)
- 9:15 a.m. **Session 6**
Outlining Research Strategies for Priority Topics (Breakout Groups)
- 10:45 a.m. **Session 7**
Group Reports and Discussion of Next Steps

Defining Diversity

While the forum participants' definitions of diversity were largely compatible, there were important differences among them. Most of the participants understood diversity to be about including individuals of varied backgrounds and perspectives regarding race, ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, class, sexual orientation, and other characteristics.

Although diversity in the abstract was generally discussed as including all differences, a few participants felt that, in practice, certain differences tended to receive little attention. Some participants argued that class was often overlooked. Another participant felt the same about religion. One participant stated that aggregate statistics about people of color masked the under-representation of Hispanics in foundation leadership positions. He added that we also needed to consider gender simultaneously because the Hispanics in foundation leadership positions tended to be female.

For many of the participants, however, the meaning of diversity goes beyond demographics and also includes organizational culture and practices. Participants spoke about respecting differences and being empathetic. Others argued that the organizational structure and culture must foster inclusion. One grantmaker spoke about the need for the people affected by policies to be included in developing those policies.

In addition to demographics and organizational practices, a few participants spoke of diversity with respect to organizational forms and activities. In other words, diversity in philanthropy would refer to diversity among foundation characteristics and diversity in forms of philanthropy. Further, an arts grantmaker, for example, could practice diversity by funding diverse forms of art.

It is precisely because of the breadth and flexibility of the term "diversity" that a few of the participants saw limits to its utility. One participant argued that a definition of diversity that includes everything is not helpful in getting people to focus on issues of social and racial justice. Some participants felt that issues of power, racism, and discrimination are lost or diminished under the rubric of diversity.

Grantmakers' Agenda: What Are the Big Diversity Issues Facing the Field?

The grantmakers or practitioners* were, not surprisingly, very practical in their research needs. They wanted research that would help them do their work better. There was overlap in many of their concerns, which may be summarized, as follows:

1. How can foundations achieve their diversity goals internally, on their boards and staffs, and externally, in effective grantmaking? What are the obstacles to achieving these diversity goals? What are effective models (or stories) about implementing diversity?

* Many of the participants were both practitioners and researchers. "Practitioner" and "researcher," therefore, refer to perspectives as much as they do to particular individuals.

- Many of the diversity questions the practitioners raised were about achieving diversity in foundations. Practitioners felt that there were obstacles to the recruitment and retention of specific groups in philanthropy. Some of these obstacles might be subtle and unconscious actions, such as requiring an unnecessary Ph.D. for certain foundation positions that might have the unintended effect of excluding certain groups. There was also interest in what characteristics of a foundation's culture and structure might facilitate or inhibit diversity. Practitioners wanted to know what could be done to further diversify the field.
 - Diversity was strongly linked to concerns for effective grantmaking in practitioners' minds. Although effectiveness was not defined, grantmakers were very interested in being both effective and diverse in their work. Practitioners hoped or assumed that diversity would lead to more effective grantmaking but acknowledged that the research linking these concepts has not been done and needs to be done.
2. How can we help grantmakers work more effectively with grantees on issues of diversity?
 3. How can we involve unstaffed foundations in conversations about diversity in grantmaking?
 4. How do grantmakers use research? How can grantmakers be persuaded to be more reflective about their own practices?
 5. How can we use non-grantmaking tools (program-related investments, etc.) to achieve our goals?
 - For example, poor communities may also be impoverished in terms of the number and capabilities of local nonprofits. Traditional grantmaking may therefore be a rather weak tool to assist these communities since it depends on the existence of nonprofits to receive foundation grant dollars. One grantmaker wondered whether there were resources other than grantmaking available to foundations that could help them achieve their goals for impoverished communities.
 6. How can we make nonprofits stronger and more successful?
 - What can foundations do in communities to increase the number of nonprofits that will further the goal of diverse grantmaking and to help existing nonprofits survive and thrive?
 7. How can research help foundations achieve their missions and programmatic goals?
 - Grantmakers need research to guide their programmatic funding decisions. They are also interested in political frame analysis and public education so that they can better persuade others to support their causes.

8. How can research guide policy decisions in order to minimize unintended consequences?
9. There has been a large increase in the ranks of the very wealthy. How can we help and educate new donors?

The Researchers' Responses to the Grantmakers' Agenda

The researchers were highly sympathetic to the practitioners' needs but also aware of their own needs as researchers. They raised caution about pursuing studies that seem to expect predetermined conclusions, or work that might sidetrack them from their academic agendas. Nevertheless, the practitioners' questions and issues raised new questions and issues for the researchers.

Definitions and Priorities

1. Is "diversity" an independent (cause) or a dependent (effect) variable? Is it both? Neither? How should we operationalize "diversity" so that we can determine when there is more or less of it?
 - The definition of diversity was discussed again, but in different ways. From a researcher's perspective, should it be studied as the cause of outcomes (e.g., more or less effectiveness) or the result of certain actions? To determine if one entity is more or less diverse than another we will need to develop acceptable concrete definitions. There was disagreement over whether and how a demographic definition of diversity should be used. Some participants felt that a demographic definition would be too narrow. Others worried that without the proper disaggregation a definition could obscure as much as it reveals.
2. Can we create a definition of diversity that will allow us to examine issues of power and inequality in foundations and grantmaking?
 - A numerical and demographic definition of diversity would not make explicit issues of power and inequality that are of concern to those with a social justice perspective.
3. We need to talk about the diversity of who or what. For example, the pattern of ethnic and racial diversity in nonprofits dramatically differs from the pattern of gender diversity in nonprofits.
4. Foundation type matters. Corporate and community foundations have shown more interest in diversity than have independent foundations.
5. Does diversity improve foundation effectiveness? What is the practice-based evidence? How do we operationalize "effective" grantmaking? How do we best develop benchmarks for effective grantmaking?

- Recognizing effectiveness as a key issue, researchers wondered how would one define and measure “effectiveness.”
6. If one had to prioritize, should the priority be research on internal foundation diversity or on achieving diverse external outcomes?

Researcher and Research Needs

1. We need better, more complete, and more systematized data collection. We need information on small grants and on non-foundation-based philanthropy. We need information on small foundations because some small foundations can have big local impacts.
2. Researchers need to have access to the inner workings of foundations to conduct qualitative research.
3. Researchers need to be able to conduct theoretical work in conjunction with more applied practitioner-directed work, and foundations need to support this theoretical work.
4. Since foundation funding is only one part of nonprofit funding, we need to understand how diversity relates to other forms of funding, like government funding.
5. We need a census of what foundations and other philanthropic entities are doing regarding diversity.
6. How are donors changing and how are these changes affecting foundations and philanthropy in general?
7. What do people in philanthropy who are not represented at this meeting think about diversity?
 - Some participants expressed the view that many smaller foundations did not see diversity or effectiveness as particularly relevant to their concerns. How might these grantmakers be brought into the diversity conversation?

Finally, some grantmakers noted that foundations may be more interested in funding research on diversity that would only be used internally, so that potentially negative information would not be made public.

The Question of Advocacy-Oriented Grantmaking

There was disagreement in the group about whether foundations do, can, or should engage in advocacy-oriented grantmaking. Everyone was clear that foundations face restrictions on lobbying, but some felt that progressive foundations should engage in the kind of advocacy-oriented work that they believe conservative foundations do. One person felt that larger foundations were doing more of this type of work and that it was an attempt to make foundations more effective in bringing about social change. Others felt that few foundations do this type of work and that they are doing less now than in the past. One person felt that it was inappropriate for foundations to engage in advocacy.

What Are the Priority Issues and How Might They Be Addressed through Research?

In four small groups, practitioners and researchers developed a list of four priority issues.

Group 1

1. What is the relationship between inclusiveness and how well organizations serve the public?
2. What aspects of institutional culture within foundations tend to foster or inhibit inclusiveness?
3. How can we develop a diverse cadre of researchers who study and are engaged with diverse communities?
4. How can we help the field of philanthropy reposition itself on issues of diversity during a period of increased legislative scrutiny?

Group 2

1. What are the possible audiences for this research and what questions have the highest impact for each?
2. What are the best possible measures of the external impact of diversity policies and practices within foundations?
3. What are the best ways to understand the possible forms of foundation diversity initiatives and to measure their impact?
4. What are the best possible measures of diversity initiatives on the part of foundations?

Group 3

Pre-research:

We need an examination of grantmaker and nonprofit organization needs, grantmakers' awareness of their limits, and nonprofits' perceptions of foundations.

We need an inventory of the current practices of grantmakers and nonprofit organizations and of the literature.

Research issues:

1. We need research on the demographics of individuals who either leave or persist in philanthropy and on the feelings of institutional belonging among individuals of different backgrounds.
2. We need case histories of leadership styles that lead to successful and unsuccessful efforts to popularize and institutionalize diversity.
3. We need to know whether/how diversity, equality, power, and democracy are connected.

Group 4

1. What are the obstacles to diversifying the foundation field (workforce, governance, grantmaking)?
2. What is the relationship between a foundation's approach to diversity (its policies and practices) and its performance?
3. What is the role of foundations/philanthropy in affecting issues of inequality in the larger society?
4. How can foundations help create a stronger democracy?

Can Common Priorities Be Agreed Upon?

The groups came back together and attempted to decide on a set of common priorities. The discussion moved in several different directions and a broad set of questions relating to the internal aspects and the external effects of foundations were decided upon.

The question of whether researchers and practitioners could be engaged in a common research enterprise rose again. It is important to note that this debate occurred mainly among the researchers, not between researchers and practitioners. The issue was whether the practitioners really wanted advocacy or journalism as opposed to detached, independent research that addresses big issues. Other researchers felt that it was a mistake to dichotomize pure research and applied research. They thought that applied research can be of a high quality and theoretically informed, but it would be up to the researcher to find the theoretical issue behind an applied question. Another part of this issue, according to one researcher, may be the need to frame research differently for different audiences and purposes.

One grantmaker argued that grantmakers do want unbiased research. It is very important and useful for them to obtain accurate information. The grantmaker stated that many

people want to please funders and therefore do not provide them with truthful information.

One researcher noted that it was not realistic to expect research to ward off impending legislation. Once legislation is being considered, it is too late. Foundations need to fund research before a crisis occurs, so that they have the information ready when they need to respond.

Participants pointed out that there has been a great deal of research on some of these issues. They wondered if the research was being read and whether research produced change. There were two main responses: (1) research only produces change if it is used; and (2) novel and shocking research does have an effect on practice.

One participant wondered what diversity lessons were available from foundation investments in leadership like the Leadership Learning Communities (<http://www.leadershiplearning.org>). This might be an important area for research.

There were questions probing the dynamics of grantmaking. To understand the effect of diversity on grantmaking, it is necessary to understand the grantmaking process. Some reports assert that staff diversity does not lead to more diverse grantmaking. One participant argued that staff diversity did lead to better connections with diverse communities. Some participants argued that a critical mass of staff may be necessary for diversity to have an effect on grantmaking. Others argued that the CEO and the board have the ultimate say over which organizations are and are not funded, and therefore CEO and board diversity may be related to diverse grantmaking. One person pointed out that program officers do, at least, have gatekeeping power.

There seemed to be broad agreement that more research is needed about the boards and CEOs of foundations. Who are they? What are their values? How did they come to have leadership positions in foundations?

One participant argued that board and staff diversity should be seen as ends in themselves and not merely as means to a type of grantmaking.

Another participant argued that foundation staffs reflect society, and if there are racists in society there are racists on the staffs of foundations.

The attendees noted that the Center for Effective Philanthropy has done work on nonprofit views of foundations. They also suggested that there is other work that has been and is being done in this area. But one participant raised the point that we still do not have information on organizations that do not decide to apply for foundation grants.

There were additional areas in which participants felt that more research was needed. One participant said that there was a need to understand foundations' relationships with government and other entities. Another said that we need to research foundations'

contracting (investments, consulting services, etc.) and its relationship to diversity because these practices can have a greater financial impact than grantmaking.

One participant stated that there was a great deal of research on the impact of foundations on society, but that it was mainly historical and probably not widely read.

The questions that emerged from the four groups were consolidated into eight. These questions were then divided into questions about the internal affairs of foundations and questions about the external effects of foundations.

Final Research Questions

Questions on Internal Aspects of Foundations

1. How do organizational culture and staff and board diversity relate to effective grantmaking?
2. What diversity practices have foundations put in place?
3. What do we know about the people who run foundations?
4. Who leaves and who stays in philanthropy?
5. What kind of leadership is successful at achieving diversity and what kind is unsuccessful?

Questions on the External Efficacy of Foundations

6. How does diversity/inclusiveness in foundations translate to external results?
7. Are foundations responsive to the needs of nonprofits?
8. What is the role of foundations relative to other engines of social change in terms of affecting issues of inequity and promoting democracy?

Research Priorities and Strategies

On the second day, the group reorganized and re-conceptualized the research questions into four clusters. The larger group broke into four smaller groups to develop research strategies to address the questions.

Group 1: What are the connections between internal commitments and practices around diversity and the external impact or effectiveness of foundations' service to their communities?

Group 1 argued that this question is best addressed as three separate but linked research questions:

1. What is the foundation's internal commitment to diversity?
2. Does the foundation's commitment to diversity affect the foundation's practices, policies, and performance?
3. Do the foundation's diversity practices, policies, and performance affect community outcomes?

Researchers addressing these questions must begin with the foundation mission, the group concluded. What diversity means for a foundation depends on the type of foundation and its mission. Diversity has to be relevant to the skills needed for the foundation to accomplish its mission.

The group suggested that exploratory case studies should be done on these research questions to further refine the issues. It also urged the development of a detailed conceptual model that articulates the hypothetical relationships among elements of internal foundation culture, grantmaking practices, and the effectiveness of grantmaking outcomes.

Group 2: What are the cultural or institutional obstacles to change regarding inclusion? What kinds of leadership, strategies, and practices help to institute and sustain change? Who are the leaders of foundations? Who leaves and who stays in foundation philanthropy?

Group 2 organized its questions into three areas of the internal life of foundations—organizational culture, leadership, and continuity and change—and then further refined the research questions.

A. Culture

1. How does a foundation's organizational culture help or hinder progress on diversity?
2. Does diversity change a foundation's organizational culture?

B. Leadership

1. What leadership styles are the most and least effective in addressing issues of foundation diversity?
2. What factors lead to increased foundation diversity?
3. What roles do board members, CEOs, staff members, and others play with respect to issues of foundation diversity?
4. What are the core competencies required of leaders in dealing with issues of diversity?

5. How do we track the roles of allies and networks in foundation diversity?

C. Continuity and Change

1. How can we best track the dynamics of foundation staff turnover or longevity from a diversity standpoint?
2. Can foundations address diversity issues while minimizing conflict—and if so, how—or is conflict inevitable and even healthy?

To address these questions, Group 2 called for improved data on internal foundation characteristics. There is also a need for qualitative data. Case studies, focus groups, and confidential or anonymous testimonies could all be useful techniques for obtaining these qualitative data.

Group 3: What is the relationship of diversity to equality, power, and democracy?

Group 3 rephrased its question into three narrower research questions:

1. How have foundations addressed issues of racial equality in the larger society (historically and currently)?
2. What has been the role of foundations in promoting more democratic power structures?
3. To what extent have foundations promoted systemic change to existing power structures that block equal access to resources?

The group operationalized “racial equality” to mean: Did the grantmaker use, ask about, or consider issues of racial equality in funding? “Promoting more democratic power structures” was defined as targeting funding for increasing the participation and influence of historically marginalized groups in initiatives aimed at influencing government policy. (Confused by the term “affect the government”...realizing that since the group did not have enough time to take up this issue, further elaboration may not be possible, but this question seemed out of place). The group did not have enough time to fully address question three, but they began to approach it from the issue of increasing access to higher education.

This research would require a review of the relevant literature and assessments of the applicability of the standard methodologies. The groups saw grants analyses, internal documents, and interviews as useful data sources.

Group 4: How well do foundations relate to external constituencies?

Group 4 concluded that the diversity issues of greatest salience with respect to the external activities of a foundation could not be determined *a priori*. For example, an arts foundation may have very different types of external activities and diversity issues

than a health foundation has. One could go even further and imagine that a health foundation focusing on advancing medical research and treatment may differ significantly in its external relations and associated diversity issues from another health foundation that focuses on improving the poor's access to health care.

The first step for a researcher would therefore be to understand the foundation's external activities by engaging in exploratory research using surveys and interviews. Once these activities were understood, then a researcher would have to find out what the specific diversity issues are in the foundation's activity areas. At this point, a researcher could then make evaluations and recommendations regarding how the foundation addresses the diversity issues in its sector.

For this research, it would be important to collect data from the foundation and the nonprofits in the field of activity. Also, data should be gathered from people at multiple levels within the foundation and the nonprofits. Understanding how the foundation attempts to bring about social change and how it works to maintain its legitimacy would be key areas of investigation.

Next Steps

The conveners of the meeting asked the participants what they thought the next steps for research on diversity in philanthropy should be.

One participant called for researchers to further develop the research agendas. He wanted researchers to specify and elaborate upon the presumed causal models or develop alternative models. These models would have to be systematically tested. Researchers would have to determine whether it made sense to test the model in a quantitative, large-dataset approach or in a qualitative, case-study approach. Another participant argued for developing models from an analysis of exemplary case studies.

Some participants thought that the next step should be building the resource base for conducting research on diversity in philanthropy. One participant called for developing a research roundtable on diversity that would advocate for funding and also create mechanisms for sharing resources. Another wanted to see an increase in the number of scholars of color working in this area.

Sharing and teamwork, many participants agreed, would be essential for the advancement of research on diversity in philanthropy. Another suggested that ARNOVA should institutionalize a diversity in philanthropy forum for researchers and grantmakers. Researchers would also need to attend grantmaker meetings for the research to continue to advance. A participant proposed having a conference of researchers and grantmakers that included non-U.S. foundations. Funders would have to commit to providing resources to sustain such exchanges. Funding would also be necessary to draw more researchers to the topic.

One researcher called for a dynamic repository of learning for scholars and grantmakers to share and be aware of current diversity research. Diversityinphilanthropy.org was suggested as a repository.

[Appendix A: Attendees/Invitees]

[Appendix B: Definitions of Diversity]

[Appendix C: Recommended Research/Approaches to Diversity]

[Appendix D: About the Diversity in Philanthropy Project]