

Key Points for Foundation Presidents and CEOs August 2015

We have heard from many of you that it would be valuable to have some points to reference as you speak to your colleagues and board about the value of your engagement with the Council on Foundations.

Only you can authentically speak about your experience and reasons to continue your membership with the Council. Whether you attended a training session, met new colleagues at a conference, utilized research tools, or received valuable guidance from the legal team, these interactions help convey your positive experience with the Council.

The following bullet points are intended to jump start that thinking and help you frame your own reasons/proof points. They are not intended to be read verbatim.

Why stay involved with the Council?

The Council supports and defends our sector.

- Informed by a team of seasoned attorneys and philanthropy experts, they have the legal and policy expertise needed to advocate for policy that advances the philanthropic sector. They have the longstanding relationships with policymakers, Capitol Hill, and public policy opinion-makers needed for effective advocacy on behalf of philanthropy. We need a strong voice for philanthropy, now, more than ever, as the country gets ready for comprehensive tax policy.
- The Council actively educates lawmakers on the unique and critical role of philanthropy that most do not understand: i.e. as a key incubator/investor in new ideas that advance the public good. They also address dangerous misperceptions that could cause policymakers to unwittingly harm the sector.
- We have a responsibility to play a role in the broader philanthropic community, and because of their depth, expertise and diligence, being a member of the Council is an excellent way to stand strong for our sector.

The Council helps us maximize our impact.

- They help us stay at the top of our game. They keep us moving forward by ensuring we are up to date on trends, best practices, and operational excellence. In a variety of ways, they help us benchmark ourselves against the rest of the field.
- We get a lot of good ideas from the Council. They bring together some of the best minds in the sector to elevate important conversations in philanthropy. They are constantly creating new opportunities to expand our thinking, support new forms of philanthropy, and cultivate great leaders.
- They are one of the few organizations that creates a space for colleagues in philanthropy to connect. They provide an important community for foundation leaders.

The Council saves our foundation time and money.

- They have an expert staff dedicated to providing direct services that we can access at any point, whenever we need them. We can call and speak with their attorneys who are steeped in legal aspects of running foundations, and their legal compliance resources keep us from having the run to our legal counsel every time we have a question.
- They have deep staff expertise on operational excellence for foundations, including funds management, impact investing, National Standards for Community Foundations, ESS (Essential Skills and Strategies), CCFE, etc.
- They produce some of the key information sources we use to inform and validate our own work – e.g. the annual salary survey, white papers on new ways to structure investments, etc.

The Council has helped me (and our staff) be stronger leaders for our foundation.

- They are a great source of professional development – across all functions and career stages. *(Need to cite your personal experience here, specific resources used)*
- We leverage what we get from the Council in multiple ways – across departments, different experience levels...*(cite a personal example)*

The Council understands the ins-and-outs of global grantmaking.

- Things get complicated quickly when it comes to making grants outside of the U.S. The Council has their finger on the pulse of the global grantmaking scene and they continually provide us with how to's and updates. In addition to programming at the annual meeting, the Council will be setting up a One Stop Shop for Global Grantmaking on its member's webpage, and reinstituting its Global Grantmaking Institute.
- They're also forming global partnerships that could prove to be very advantageous for us such as with the European Foundation Center, the China Foundation Center, and other global grantmaking organizations.

Members of the Council are foundations we want to know.

- I've always been impressed with the diversity of their membership in terms of foundation types and sizes and have found it to be valuable to be able to connect with and learn from other Council members. Their national vantage point and ability to bring foundations together from around the country that share interests is unparalleled. I have made powerful connections and friends at conferences and other forums where Council members get together.

Regarding the dues increase:

- In order to maintain our reputation as leaders in the field of philanthropy, I see great value in continued engagement with and membership in the Council. It provides an invaluable opportunity for us to improve our work and expand our reach. I would be happy to share regular updates regarding our Council membership throughout the year so that you have a better sense of the benefits we are receiving from the Council. Today, I strongly encourage you to support our continued membership as I'm confident that it is a sound investment in our organizational development.