

THE MEDIAWORKS INITIATIVE REPORT: “MEDIA FUNDING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE”

The MediaWorks Initiative is delighted to present the following survey of media funding for social change. The original impetus for this work came out of a meeting of the National Network of Grantmakers Working Group on Funding Media in October 2001. The Patriot Act had just passed with one dissenting vote, the nation was preparing to attack Afghanistan, and nowhere in the media were questions being raised about whether these were appropriate responses to 9/11.

We decided to see what could be done to increase the investment of donors, investors and foundations in building media that contribute to a fair, inclusive and sustainable democracy. We spent a year locating and conversing with our allies learning about other emerging initiatives and organizations that shared some of our goals. In December of 2002 we created the MediaWorks Initiative, with the mission of increasing funding for social change media. Our first step was to commission a study to determine how much money was going to independent media, why there appeared to be so little support, how funders thought about media projects, what the obstacles were to more and better media funding, and what funders thought could be done to strengthen social change media. “Media Funding for Social Change” is the outcome of that study.

AN INVITATION

We welcome feedback about the report and your suggestions about the next steps MediaWorks can take to increase funding for social change media. We are interested in hearing from others who are doing funding or research related to the issues raised in this report. We’d like to hear from you if you are interested in staying connected to MediaWorks activities, information streams, networking, etc. We invite you to contact us if you would like to explore active involvement in a range of emerging MediaWorks committees and projects.

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FUNDING MEDIA FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

COMMISSIONED BY THE MEDIAWORKS INITIATIVE

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A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

In January 2003 The *MediaWorks Initiative*, which grew out of the Working Group on Funding Media of the National Network of Grantmakers, circulated a Request for Proposals looking "to document and quantify the need for increased strategic funding of progressive media."

Specifically, the project asked to:

1. Demonstrate to donors and foundations that media projects in and of themselves can and do have positive impact on the goals of building social justice.
2. Demonstrate to donors and foundations that support for media projects has direct relevance to the priorities and concerns of their own issues.
3. Through such concrete evidence, build a persuasive and compelling argument for increasing donor and foundation funding for a wide range of media activities.

Because the initial outline for the project was rather broad, it was necessary to redefine the goals of the project and the key questions to be answered. Eventually, the project was narrowed to focus on –

- Framing the larger question of what constitutes funding for progressive media;
- Providing a comprehensive overview of what is happening overall in the field of media funding;
- Relating perceptions and experiences that funders have with their media projects;
- Identifying obstacles that keep funders from supporting media activities.

I hope that this report addresses these goals. The findings and conclusions derive from information gathered from a wide variety of sources:

- Statistical analysis of foundation grantmaking based on detailed Foundation Center reports;
- More than three dozen formal interviews with foundation staff, donors and others involved with grantmaking;
- A wide range of informal conversations with funders and media organizations at conferences and other gatherings;
- Extensive review of publications, literature, articles, websites, and similar materials published by foundations, affinity groups, grantee organizations, and others.

Finally, the analysis and conclusions were drawn in part from the informed perspectives and observations of more than 50 years of experience working in media organizing, media activism, and media funding that Sharon Maeda and I collectively brought to the project.

While not exhaustive, I believe this presents a fair reflection of the current state of foundation funding for media activities and accurately identifies a number of key issues that, if addressed, would encourage more funders to support media projects for social change.

This report was possible only with the concerted effort of my colleague, Sharon Maeda. I would also like to thank Sarah Stranahan and Jan Strout for their ongoing efforts on behalf of the work; Steering Committee members Kathy Partridge and Peter Kent for their oversight and coordination; and Steering Committee members Amanda Berger, Gita Drury, Meg Gage, Anna Lappe, Peggy Law, Anna Lefer, and Laura Livoti for their comments and input during the editorial process. Finally, a special note of appreciation goes to Melissa Bradley for her commitment, responsiveness and patience in seeing this through.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|---------------|
| SUMMARY OF FINDINGS | 4 |
| REPORT TO THE FIELD | 6 |
| THE SURVEY | 7 |
| 1. DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY | 7 |
| 1. WHO IS FUNDING MEDIA PROJECTS? | 8 |
| 2. WHAT PROJECTS ARE BEING FUNDED? | 14 |
| 3. WHAT FUNDERS ARE SAYING ABOUT MEDIA FUNDING | 23 |
| 4. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS | 29 |
| APPENDIX A: PUBLICATION REVIEW | 31 |
| B: PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE | 33 |
| C: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE | 36 |
| D: SURVEY RESPONDENTS | 37 |
| E: MAJOR ORGANIZING STRATEGIES | 39 |

MEDIA FUNDING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Today, groups organizing for social justice are facing a long, uphill battle. In the current political, cultural and economic climate, the role of the media in framing issues and shaping ideology is having a deep and long-term impact on our democratic system. Organizing to meet this challenge has become paramount in our struggle to keep social justice values on the public agenda. Our goal is to raise awareness, build capacity, and increase funding for groups working to improve the capacity of the media to support participatory democracy and social justice values. Because of this, we want to educate the funding community about the full range of organizing being done around media and, by demonstrating its importance in building movements for social justice, strengthen support for strategic media-related projects.

MediaWorks Initiative

THE SURVEY

In the spring of 2003, the *MediaWorks Project* commissioned research on media funding by foundations and others. It was to focus on --

- Exploring the attitudes of funders, especially social change funders, toward media in general and the projects they support in particular.
- Identifying the types of media projects being supported, especially by social change funders.
- Ascertaining if funders thought media was having an impact on other issues being funded.
- Assessing the degree of interest in more education and support to increase media funding.

With this in mind, a study was designed to ascertain the attitude of foundations towards funding media projects; find out what kinds of projects they were funding; relative levels of funding; and identify factors that would encourage foundations to increase their funding for media.

- An analysis was made of the aggregate funding reported for 'media' using the Foundation Center database of 62,000 foundations in the U.S.
- A literature search was made that identified more than two dozen reports, articles and publications produced by funders to assess various aspects of their media support.
- Information was gathered directly from more than 50 national foundations, funding affinity groups, and individual donors.
- Interviews were completed with more than 35 program officers or other foundation personnel.

THE FINDINGS

Many of the findings were expected, but some were surprising.

- Only about 700 foundations make grants in the category of *media and communications* -- slightly more than 1% of all foundation.
 - The aggregate annual media and communications giving is roughly \$ 4 billion +, in a context of general foundation grants totaling more than \$ 30 billion.
 - There is a VERY wide range of projects funded in this category -- everything from independent film production and policy research, to scholarships and journalism programs.
 - The largest proportion of funding goes to public radio and television, primarily to local stations.

- Many foundations also support strategic communications, p.r. and 'messaging' for grantee groups and issues, journalism programs, and development communications.
- Most funding goes to producing content. Technology, organizing, new media and policy issues have far fewer supporters.
- By and large, alternative, progressive and independent media projects are not major beneficiaries.
- Many foundations are funding media as part of other program areas or embedded in larger projects.
 - Projects ranging from training and educational videos to community newspapers are funded this way.
 - Funders do not consider this to be "funding media."
- Youth funding seems especially supportive of funding media, where it is seen as part of a core organizing strategy.
- Funders are generally satisfied with the media projects they are supporting, but there is little evaluation of most media projects. Many foundations do not know how to assess their impact or effectiveness.
- Funders do not always see their media projects fitting into their own strategic funding goals. Instead, media projects are considered 'stand alone' and not tied to other program goals.
- Funders do not see media activism as a coherent 'sector.' They don't know how to recognize which are key priorities, and they don't understand how the many disparate issues on the media agenda are connected.
- There are a number of collaborative efforts that advocate for more funding, from established groups like G-FEM (Grantmakers in Film and Electronic Media) to new groups focusing on technology and media policy.

THE CONCLUSIONS

Based on the overall picture that emerged, the study drew the following conclusions.

- Whether or not their own institution supports media projects, respondents had nearly unanimous agreement that **organizing around media issues right now is critical.**
- Even so, **foundation funding is not catching up to the rapid changes in the current media environment.** Funders don't have the 'silos' for responding to the radical changes underway.
- **Funders want to be educated about the issues** in the broader media landscape and learn about relevant projects. They are looking for a handle to understand the 'big picture.'
- By and large, **foundations are not clear about political strategies** that work *through* media, and those that work *on* media. They want to understand how various approaches work and what grantee groups are trying to accomplish.
- The message from funders is that **media support should function as "part of an overall social change strategy."**
- **Funders would like tools to evaluate these projects.** They want help judging the effectiveness and impact of what they are supporting.

While the media landscape is having a fast-growing impact on groups engaged in social change, funders have not kept up. In addition, they have been slow to recognize the emergence of a number of media and communications issues as being important in and of themselves, especially in a globalized, interconnected world.

Helping the foundation community understand these critical developments would go a long way towards increasing support for media-related projects and strengthening groups grappling with the larger social justice issues effected by these changes.

MEDIA FUNDING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

REPORT TO THE FIELD

TODAY'S MEDIA ENVIRONMENT IS SHAPING OUR FUTURE

The shape of the media today, how it operates and who controls it, is having a deep and long-term impact on the issues we care about and our core democratic values.

We live in an environment where media is ubiquitous. We rely on it not only for our news and information, but also to entertain us, bring us culture and impart social values. Yet, as a handful of major corporations have continued to consolidate media ownership and control, the public's ability to interact with, use and believe the media has sharply declined. A pervasive climate of fear and conformity, amplified by the media, has limited political debate on critical issues facing our country and the world. More and more Americans are now "viewers" of the political process, rather than actors in it. Instead of playing a watchdog role, the dominant media has been compliant, if not complicit, in the redefinition of American power, identity and values.

This powerful media environment is reframing issues across the board –foreign policy, taxation, education, health care, the environment, civil rights, housing and immigration. Donors and advocates, who have worked for years toward a just, secure and sustainable future, are struggling to defend their policies and values. Public interest organizations and foundations cannot afford to continue to focus on narrow single-issue agendas. Unless we can act in concert to support and disseminate resonant messages that engage the American public, the future of our democracy is at risk.

Today, groups organizing for social justice are facing a long, uphill battle. In the current political, cultural and economic climate, the reactionary role of the media in framing issues and shaping ideology is having a deep and long-term impact on our democratic system. Organizing to meet this challenge has become paramount in our struggle to keep social justice values on the public agenda. The goal of the MediaWorks Initiative is to raise awareness, build capacity, and increase funding for groups working to improve the capacity of the media to support participatory democracy and social justice values.

MEDIA FUNDING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

THE SURVEY

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This report is based on the goal of MediaWorks to educate the funding community about the full range of organizing being done around media. By demonstrating its importance in building movements for social justice, we hope to strengthen support and attract more funding for strategic media and media-related social justice projects.

With this in mind, in the spring of 2003, MediaWorks commissioned research on media funding by foundations and others. The primary researcher on this project was community media specialist Nan Rubin, who is responsible for the most of the research design, the majority of the findings and preparation of this report. She was assisted by Sharon Maeda, who collected and analyzed the foundation statistics. Considerable work was also completed by Sarah Stranahan and Jan Strout, who conducted interviews and coordinated project communications.

The goal of the project was to:

- Highlight the importance and impact that media has in the current climate of organizing for social change.
- Help funders recognize how much media funding is already in place.
- Encourage the growth of financial support for media by building a compelling argument to increase funding for a wide range of media strategies.

The survey itself was designed to --

- Ascertain the attitude of foundations towards funding media projects;
- Find out what kinds of projects are being funded and relative levels of funding;
- Identify factors that would encourage foundations to increase their funding for media.

Quantitative Analysis -- Using the extensive database of 65,000 foundations available from the Foundation Center, the research compiled a snapshot of 'media' funding in the US. Numbers were gathered, both for how many foundations and for how many dollars allocated, based on foundations that reported 'media' or 'communications' as a discrete funding area.

This overview was then broken down into rough categories by type of recipients, based on groups reported. Rough figures were also compiled in the broad category of 'civil rights,' to offer a simple gauge of how media support compares with a clear 'social justice' issue. This was supplemented by a random sampling of larger foundations from both categories, and by reviewing a sample of two dozen individual foundation reports, to check actual lists of grants made.

Publication Search -- Under the assumption that foundations would be encouraged to give more funding to media if there were adequate assessments of grantee impact, a search was conducted to discover how much evaluation was being done on media projects. It was assumed that this kind of material would be difficult to find, since it was specialized, often commissioned for private use, and not always published. The search identified more than two dozen reports, articles and publications that funders have produced to assess various aspects of their media support. Most of the materials listed were collected.

More in-depth research was done on-line using subject topics, foundation links, and occasionally grantee groups, all of which led to appropriate materials. Funders, especially those known to fund media, were asked directly for any reports they might have or that they knew about, which garnered a number of relevant listings. A few materials were located through list-serves, informal conversations and referrals volunteered by individuals.

Foundation and Donor Interviews -- A survey was conducted in order to learn about the attitudes and experiences of the foundations themselves, based on a simple questionnaire.¹ The funders selected for the survey were drawn from several different groups –

- National foundations known to fund media, such as members of G-FEM.
- National foundations not known for funding media.
- Members of the National Network of Grantmakers and other 'social change' foundations known to fund media.
- Affinity groups representing networks of foundations and donors.

Altogether, more than 60 national foundations were identified ranging in size from small (distributing less than \$ 1 million annually) to very large (giving away between \$500 million - \$1 billion a year.) Information was gathered directly from more than 50 foundations, donors and affinity groups, and interviews were completed with more than 35 program officers or other foundation personnel. Most of the interviews were done on the telephone, but a few were done in person and a small number were completed via email.

The intent of the survey was to report a broad sample of foundation attitudes and experiences among those that do fund media projects, or conversely, to find out the rationales for not funding media projects. However, the actual completed surveys were skewed more towards smaller funders and those already funding media projects of various kinds. Those foundations not supporting media activities in its own category are not as well represented in the sample.

In addition to being asked about their funding for media, foundations were also asked if they might be interested in more collaboration between them on media issues. They expressed strong interest in having more information about issues and in learning more about possible grantees, but there was ambivalence about supporting creation of an intermediary organization. To them, the most important need was for a better understanding of the media landscape right now and the activists working in it.

¹ See Appendix B for questionnaire.

WHO IS FUNDING MEDIA PROJECTS? NOT MANY FOUNDATIONS

The following data was collected from the Foundation Center's FC/Search, the largest and most comprehensive database of grantmaking philanthropy in the United States. The Foundation Center has 40 full time staff that update information on an ongoing basis. They sometimes carry changes in funding priorities before the grantmaker gets its own new brochures or changes its web site.

The database used to generate these figures is a dynamic database updated monthly to reflect regular changes in the foundation world. Information in the database itself is categorized in hundreds of different subject areas. The following categories are the only categories, which relate directly to the scope of this research, and were utilized alone or in combination with each other. The totals do not completely match because some grants were reported in more than one category; some figures were taken from different reporting years; and there was difficulty extrapolating some of the data between categories.

Foundation Center Categories

A broad scan was conducted on the following key words to identify those foundations that might be included as supporting *progressive and/or social justice* goals.

Civil Rights

Media - communication (includes all types of media not listed below, OR a broad range of kinds of media)

Media - film and video

Media - journalism and publishing

Media - radio

Media - television

Telecommunications

2000 TOP FOUNDATIONS AWARDING GRANTS FOR MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS²

| | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. The Ford Foundation | \$31,828,360 |
| 2. John S. & James L. Knight | 31,089,370 |
| 3. David & Lucile Packard | 20,997,088 |
| 4. Pew Charitable Trusts | 15,597,000 |
| 5. James Irvine Foundation | 9,870,000 |
| 6. Open Society Institute | 9,859,497 |
| 7. Freedom Forum | 8,821,914 |
| 8. Lilly Endowment | 8,615,759 |
| 9. Annenberg Foundation | 7,396,768 |
| 10. Robert R. McCormick Tribune | 7,203,534 |
| 11. Florence and John Schumann Foundation | 7,065,000 |
| 12. John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation | 6,988,000 |
| 13. Alfred P. Sloan Foundation | 6,955,292 |
| 14. Donald W. Reynolds Foundation | 6,251,117 |
| 15. Park Foundation, Inc. | 6,197,004 |
| 16. Andrew Mellon Foundation | 5,637,000 |
| 17. Rockefeller Foundation | 5,233,495 |

² Source: *The Foundation Center Statistical Services reports 2002.*

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 18. William and Flora Hewlett Foundation | 4,860,000 |
| 19. William S. Paley Foundation | 3,958,000 |
| 20. J. Roderick MacArthur Foundation | 3,465,000 |
| 21. Charles Stewart Mott Foundation | 2,954,549 |
| 22. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation | 2,775,064 |
| 23. Doris Duke Charitable Foundation | 2,604,821 |
| 24. Atlantic Foundation of New York | 2,583,000 |
| 25. Northwestern Mutual Foundation | 2,350,000 |

How many foundations altogether are funding **MEDIA**? Using this filter, in 2002 there were –

- **717** foundations fund **MEDIA** (all categories within media) out of a total of **62,000 foundations**, which the Foundation Center uses to prepare information for its Annual Reports.
- This is approximately **1%** of the total number of foundations. [Over the period of time when this report was being written, the total number of foundations in the database increased from 65,000 to 70,000.]
- Among this group, **26** foundations support **TELECOMMUNICATIONS**, which is less than .04% of the total number of foundations.

How many are funding other social justice issues? By comparison, we found –

- **573** foundations fund **CIVIL RIGHTS**, which is .9% of the total number of foundations.
- The combined giving in this category from all foundations that fund **CIVIL RIGHTS** was **\$ 2,953,976,557**.

Grantmakers Who Fund both Media and Civil Rights

To see if media funding corresponded in any fashion with a clear social justice commitment, we looked at these areas together. When cross referencing foundations that fund **both CIVIL RIGHTS and MEDIA**, the total number of grantmakers is minuscule. This does not mean that these are the *only* foundations that support these categories, but they are the funders that specifically list support for both these areas.

| Media Funding* | | Combined Giving |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 289 | Media – Communications | \$ 1,791,736,413 |
| 120 | Media – Film & Video | \$ 1,688,677,279 |
| 83 | Media- Journalism & Publishing | \$ 596,760,937 |
| 119 | Media – Radio | 105,704,897 |
| 186 | Media – Television | 149,965,421 |
| | | |
| Civil Rights Funding | | |
| 573 | Civil Rights | \$ 2,953,976,557 |
| | | |
| Both Media and Civil Rights** | | |
| 22 | Communications & Civil Rights | |
| 12 | Film/Video & Civil Rights | |
| 4 | Journalism/Publishing & Civil Rights | |
| 2 | Radio & Civil Rights | |
| 3 | Television & Civil Rights | |

* There is no total for Combined Media Giving because there is too much overlap among categories to be accurate.

** This figure represents only the number of foundations that make grants in both categories, not the amount of giving.

Random Sampling

In addition to identifying foundations that fund in media categories, we looked at a random sample of larger foundations within the total cohort of media funders to see if any *social justice grants* appeared.

MEDIA FOUNDATIONS: A scientific sampling (every 24th foundation in the alpha list of 717 foundations which fund media) of 30 foundations produces only one, the *Schumann Center for Media & Democracy, Inc.*, which also funds social justice. In this case, they fund FCC advocacy, low power radio stations, and research for investigative documentaries.

CIVIL RIGHTS FOUNDATIONS: A scientific sampling of every 24th foundation in the alpha list of 573 foundations that fund civil rights produces a list of 24 foundations that primarily fund basic services such as housing, job training, education, and health services in low income communities. Among this small sample, only the *Public Welfare Foundation* of Washington, D.C. has a decidedly social justice bent. In addition, the *Lutheran World Service* does considerable social justice work in developing countries.

- This simple scan seems to indicate that there is no direct relationship between funders who might support social justice goals, and those who fund media.
- But it also points out that the very broad categories used by foundations to identify their grants are not good indicators of the actual nature of the grantees.

FURTHER ANALYSIS

When looking at the foundations that do fund either media or telecommunications, a significant number are among the largest foundations in the country. But the fact stands out that for most of them, this is not an especially large category of funding within their overall categories of grantmaking. At the same time, many 'social change' funders also allocate funding for media projects, but most of these foundations are small. So, even when these small funders are supporting social issue or social change media, their capacity to fund major projects is limited. Large funders really are necessary to support major production and distribution projects.

- The *John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation* and the *Ford Foundation* have been among the most visible media funders among large foundations supporting independent film and video documentaries.
- Other large media funders, such as *Pew*, *Knight*, *Schumann* and *Freedom Forum*, put large grants towards journalism programs, scholarships and other activities related specifically to the press.
- A number of larger foundations in this category support conservative media efforts, including *Scaife*, *Olin*, and *Starr*.

MEDIA - COMMUNICATIONS: There is no surprise that the *Ford Foundation* and the *John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundations* are two of the top grantmakers in this category, known for their leadership in media funding for years associated with strong support for independent producers.

MEDIA - FILM & VIDEO: Joining *Ford* and *MacArthur* as strong supporters are *Lilly Endowment*, *Open Society Institute*, *Rockefeller Foundation*, and *Annenberg*.

MEDIA - JOURNALISM & PUBLISHING: The *Pew Charitable Trust* has the largest total giving, followed by the *Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation*. Many of the foundations making grants in this category were created by newspaper owners or founders, such as *John S. and James L. Knight Foundation* (Knight-Ridder), and *Freedom Forum* (formerly the *Gannett Foundation*.)

MEDIA - RADIO: When looking at funding for content, television and film are the big winners. The overall funding by foundations for radio is in much smaller amounts, and it appears that a major amount of radio support, such as it is, comes from corporate funders. The top two radio funders are the *Northwestern Mutual Foundation* and *Bridgestone/Firestone Trust Fund*.

MEDIA - TELEVISION: *The Freedom Forum, Inc.*, which is funded by the Gannett newspaper fortunes, has by far the largest total giving. Next, is the *Park Foundation* of Ithaca, New York. Below that, the total giving drops dramatically. This seems to indicate that many of the large major foundations are not funding even public television productions.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS: Excluding the \$1.1 billion total annual giving of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (whatever telecom projects they do fund are computer technology, NOT media) the top two foundations in this category grant only the following amounts:

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Community Technology Foundation of California | \$6,217,500 |
| Landmark Communications Foundation | \$2,401,361 |

It should be noted that both of these foundations are directly related to the telecommunications industry. The first is a public charity created to provide telecommunications and telephone services to underserved populations, and the other is a telecommunications company, making contributions in its own field.

With those foundations, which fund *MEDIA* or *TELECOMMUNICATIONS* and *CIVIL RIGHTS*, the *Ford Foundation* is the one consistent funder. Following well behind are the *Pew Charitable Trusts*. The other major funders are very location specific and fund only within their local region -- they do not fund throughout the country. In addition, this support generally focuses more on minority journalism scholarships and does not focus directly on more general social justice issues.

Declining Fortunes for Media Grants

For the Top 10 foundations awarding grants in *Media* and *Communications* (out of the Top 50 list) there is disturbing decline between 2000 and 2001. During this period, there was a serious contraction in the stock market that had a tremendous impact on the economy overall, but that was an especial problem for foundations. Many of them saw their endowments decline radically, and because of this, media funding took a big hit. The few funders that *increased* their allocations were an exception.

2001 DECREASE IN MEDIA FUNDING AS PERCENTAGE OF 2000 GIVING ³

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-----|
| Ford Foundation | \$7,131,114 | 77% |
| John S. & James L. Knight | 17,205,370 | 45% |
| David & Lucile Packard | 5,577,582 | 73% |
| Pew Charitable Trust | 4,183,000 | 73% |
| James Irvine Foundation | 7,610,000 | 23% |
| Open Society Institute | 317,216 | 97% |
| Freedom Forum | 5,801,290 | 34% |
| Lilly Endowment | 759,764 | 91% |
| Annenberg | 2,296,768 | 69% |
| Robert R. McCormick Tribune | 2,652,971 | 63% |

³ Source: *The Foundation Center annual reports 2000 and 2001*.

2001 INCREASE IN MEDIA FUNDING AS PERCENTAGE OF 2000 GIVING⁴

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|------|
| John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur | \$3,374,000 | 148% |
| William & Flora Hewlett Foundation | 3,187,000 | 166% |
| Alfred P. Sloan Foundation | 19,791 | 100% |
| Park Foundation | 249,811 | 100% |

From these figures, it appears that *MacArthur* and *Hewlett* made clear decisions to increase grantmaking for **Media and Communications** in 2001. *Sloan* and *Park* gave approximately the same amount both years and moved up into the Top Ten by virtue of others dramatically *decreasing* their giving in this category.

The following year, 2002, wasn't much better, because foundation assets decreased by another 10-12%. Total giving in 2002 remained about the same, at an estimated \$30.3 billion. While 2003 foundation giving is likely to continue to decrease, it is expected to be less than originally projected.⁵

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Source: *Foundation Yearbook*, 2003 edition.

WHAT KINDS OF MEDIA PROJECTS ARE BEING FUNDED?

From the figures presented above, we can see that only a small amount of total grantmaking is classified as 'media' support. But media projects, like any broad funding category, cover an extremely wide range of activities -- many are not connected to an overtly progressive political agenda, and some are actually tied to right wing interests.

Only some of these projects are explicitly engaged with progressive or social change concerns. The discussion here will try to differentiate between media support that is non-ideological, and that which has explicitly progressive social change goals.⁶

To Funders, "Media" Covers A Very Wide Spectrum – But Mostly It's About Making Content

Among all foundations, the most common understanding is that media funding supports the creation of *content*. To most of these foundations, no less among the social change funders, the concept of 'funding media' is all over the map -- everything from independent film, news and documentary programs, to progressive media infrastructure and advocacy. A few funders see media as an organizing tool or as a way to popularize messages or conduct public education campaigns. Primarily, though, they address the concept of the *message* and not the *media* themselves.

- While there is some support for and recognition of independent infrastructure, policy work, and strategic communications, *making content* is the primary image of 'funding media.'
- This falls largely in traditional modes of producing individual documentary films and television programs, with some radio and print.
- Another important area is funding for public relations and strategic communications to help groups get their messages to the public.
- New Media and web-based interactive projects are almost never included.
- There is a small cohort that includes watchdog groups, investigative journalism, privacy and freedom of information within their media concerns.
- There are only a few groups currently funded to work on regulatory and policy issues, and fewer still engaged in issues relating to communications technologies or the Internet.

At the same time, some shifts in media support are underway.

- With a continuing public spotlight shining on the FCC's efforts to dismantle the media regulatory structures and allow more corporate consolidation, some funders are beginning to look for ways to support constituencies fighting this and related policy battles.
- Funding is going into a wide range of media projects embedded in existing foundation program categories. Foundations themselves do not consider or identify this funding as 'media funding', but they accept various media activities as integral to supporting their programmatic priorities.
- They are especially supportive if the media activities are part of the central goals of the grantee's project. Grantees are growing more conscious of incorporating media in their work, leading to such diverse projects as short training videos, program partnerships with community radio stations, publishing community-based newspapers, and PSA's (public service announcements) for airing on commercial broadcast outlets.

⁶ Here, the terms "social change" and "progressive movement" refer to creating a political and social system based on an equitable distribution of wealth and power, mutual respect and self-determination for all peoples. Because progressive activists want to alter the basic nature of existing institutions of power, their positions are oppositional to and in conflict with these institutions. Generally, this does not encompass social service projects.

- Many of these projects are part of public education and organizing campaigns in social justice issues of longstanding foundation involvement, such as community development, health education, environmental protection and nuclear disarmament.
- There is a growing acceptance among some funders to support on-line projects that primarily use the Internet as the center for outreach, communications and programmatic work.
- A strong multi-foundation initiative supporting youth organizing has understanding media, producing media, and using media as a top priority. Much of this effort is reflected on-line, reflecting the reality that the Internet is the primary media used by young people.

The Largest Support Goes to Public Radio and Television

Right now, among funders, operating support for local public radio and television stations garners the most support.

- Many local foundations contribute support to their local public radio and TV stations, which is considered 'public service' media.
- Primarily operating support, this funding is comparable to contributing to a local United Way campaign or other local civic contributions.
- A few funders provide the relatively high profile funding for national underwriting of public radio and television programs.
 - Most program underwriting of public radio and television comes NOT from private foundations, but from *corporate support*. Corporations take such funding out of their advertising budgets, not necessarily from their corporate philanthropy.
- There is some private foundation support for individual program projects --
 - Some general support for specific public TV series
 - Radio support goes to NPR [National Public Radio] and PRI [Public Radio International] which are both national radio production and distribution entities
 - Sponsorships of programs specific to foundation interests, for example -
 - Lilly Endowment - *"Religion and Ethics Newsweekly"*
 - Robert Wood Johnson -- *"Sound Partners"* health issues via local radio stations
 - Schumann Foundation -- media beat on *"NOW with Bill Moyers"*
 - Independent national radio productions, i.e. *"Living on Earth"* etc.
 - Program underwriting to promote image/priorities of the foundation itself
- Most of the foundation support for public broadcasting programming goes to public television. Significantly less money goes to public radio.
 - Most radio support goes to National Public Radio and Public Radio International, followed by support to local stations.
 - These are two of the three largest public radio program distributors.
 - Independent radio producers tend to be invisible and have little success in winning foundation support.
 - Most community and local public radio stations get no foundation support, except from very local foundations.
 - Because they don't know how the public radio system is structured, funders have a hard time recognizing that there is a difference between NPR and their local station operations. (The same problem exists in public television between PBS and local stations.)
- While supporting public radio and television is clearly funding media, very little of it can be considered media supporting *social change*.

- Most funding goes to local broadcast stations. While these stations consider themselves important community institutions, by and large they are not engaged in actively promoting social change actions, either through their programming or their community events.
- Most public radio and television production removes itself from being media that is 'movement building.'
- However, funders support some individual programs and program series aired on public television that can be categorized as social change productions. These include some programs within the *P.O. V.* series, productions from the Minority Consortia, and episodes within weekly series like *Frontline* and *NOW with Bill Moyers*.

The Most Visible Support Goes to National Film and Video Productions

Independent film and video projects are the most common image of what 'media funding' supports. It is the area with the highest demand for funding and one of the largest collective investments. Yet, because these tend to be 'one-up', free-standing projects, they generally represent the vision of the individual filmmaker alone -- which could be connected to a political or social change agenda, but just as easily could be artistic, historical or cultural.

Requests for independent films tend to strike fear in the hearts of foundations. They are generally costly, so it is rare that any single funder can cover the costs, which is why there is often a long list of sponsors at the end. And because funders generally do not know how to evaluate these projects or assess their outcomes, they are sometimes seen as "black holes." Consequently, to many funders, it is easier not to deal with them at all -- "we don't fund media".

Those lucky film and video projects that do get funding have some common characteristics.

- Most such projects are designed for high profile, national distribution on television, cable or theatrical release. This makes them high budget.
- They must have distribution and marketing plans to ensure they reach an audience. It has taken a long time for foundations to ask for distribution plans along with production funding.
- National release can be either commercial or non-profit. Many times, it is both.
- Documentary productions are generally not tied to social justice or movement projects. They cover a wide range of topics, and most are not controversial.
- Some of the productions are geared to public television, but there are much greater distribution opportunities in place now, so public TV is not necessarily where they are first seen.

Other Types of Video Production

Many funders are supporting video and other media production that is incorporated into program funding for non-media organizing and service projects, which is far different than funding independent films.

- A growing number of social issue organizations are producing short videos NOT designed for national distribution, but for purely local uses.
 - There is substantial foundation support for many of these projects.
 - Some of these videos are aimed at specific education and social impact campaigns around such issues as women's health, AIDS, voter education, etc.
 - There is significant production being done by activist groups using videos for their organizing, training, promotion, and outreach.
 - Foundations do not separate out these projects as 'media production.' Rather, they are funded as a key activity within the overall project.
 - As such, video is seen solely as a mechanism to serve a programmatic priority, not as a project to be funded in and of itself.

- Similarly, a small number of grants go to *technical assistance providers*, distribution cooperatives, and outreach projects with a goal of helping productions reach target audiences.
 - These projects are funded as infrastructure or outreach activities
 - Only a few foundations are involved.
 - Most funding supports film distributors.
 - Many of the networks, coops and membership organizations were created specifically to support and distribute media on social justice issues and for movement building.
 - Unfortunately, support for electronic distribution networks, i.e. satellite distribution, station membership organizations, community media networks, is almost nil.
 - There appears to be some new interest in this area among foundations, as they start to realize that such distribution networks can ensure that diverse voices will actually be heard.

Strategic Communications and Public Relations

Another major area of foundation and donor support is strategic communications -- using media and telecommunications outlets to educate people about particular issues, conduct advocacy campaigns, and sway public opinion. Some grants that support strategic communications are specifically for social change campaigns and issues, but many are not. They support other types of messages, for example, public health, child welfare, electoral issues or the environment. Conservative foundations also support similar campaigns on conservative political issues.

Most of this funding is specifically earmarked for 'messaging,' 'public relations', 'promotion campaigns,' and 'strategic communications.'

- Considerable support has gone into helping groups do better PR on their own issues -- for skills building, technical assistance, training, and other skills.
- Typical among social change funders is support for *SPIN (Strategic Press Information Network)* and similar projects that help grassroots organizations successfully promote their activities in the press.
 - Some foundations support progressive PR firms directly. Then they send their grantee groups to these firms to plan campaigns on their behalf.
 - Funding also goes to support media campaigns on specific issues aimed at the public, such as campaign finance reform. These are generally tied closely to the program priorities of the foundation.
 - Most campaigns rely on familiar promotion-type methods, like producing public service announcements, producing press kits and cultivating press contacts.
 - Some of them also include buying paid advertising, in newspapers or on radio and television.
- Some funding goes to PR efforts to promote work of foundations themselves.
- Occasionally foundations support promoting philanthropy in general.

Journalism Programs and Scholarships

Some of the very largest foundation grants in this category support journalism schools and journalism training. This includes support to programs to improve journalistic ethics, scholarships, and to support projects related to minority and ethnic journalists.

- Most of these grants are made to academic programs and journalism schools.
- Funders are often corporate foundations from large media conglomerates, such as *Gannett* and *Knight*.
- They would not be considered 'social change' projects.

Development Communications

A few funders, notable among them is the Rockefeller Foundation, have long-term commitments to communications projects focused on building economic development outside the United States.

Classified as *development communications*, these grants support media activities engaged in health education, literacy and similar basic needs in developing countries.

- Despite efforts to attract support for domestic development communications projects such as Low Power Radio, these funds are directed almost exclusively to projects outside the U.S.
- They often work in tandem with major international development efforts supported by the U. N. or other international donors.

Research on Media Issues

Some funders support academic and similar research on media issues. This can cover everything from "the future of social issue media" or "the impact of video games on children" to "the state of public broadcasting."

- Funding that is allocated to conduct this kind of research might not fall into the 'media funding' category. It might show up in social science, policy or similar areas.
- It generally goes to think tanks, like the *Aspen Institute* and the *Heritage Foundation*, or to universities or academic institutes.
- The research itself is often published as books or reports.
- Only some of this research addresses issues of media for social change.
- There is growing support for research on issues relating to the social impact of technology, but some of it is commissioned by industry or corporate funders.

Government and Corporate Accountability

These categories fall outside the explicit area of media and into communications. Support for them is weak and the issues are not high profile. But in the face of the explosive corporate influence peddling cultivated by the Bush administration and Congress, some foundations are investing in campaign finance reform and media accountability projects.

- There is growing interest in government accountability, but it is still very small.
- Examination of media regulatory and structural issues have a very little support.
- Privacy and technology issues are becoming more visible.
 - Most of these areas are left largely in the hands of DC lawyers, but there is strong public interest building on this topics due to the recent FCC decision allowing more media consolidation.
- There are only a small number of watchdog groups.
- There is a tiny bit of money going to support technology projects for social change organizations.

Media Literacy

This is a small but up-and-coming issue. At the moment it rests largely with academics, who are doing research and developing curricula. But media literacy is starting to attract more attention from funders as an extension of media accountability and education programs, and as a response to the increasing commodification and commercialization of media content.

Media within Other Program Areas: *Youth Organizing*

There is one outstanding contrast to this picture of reluctant funding for media -- and that is in the field of support for *Youth Organizing*. Over the last few years, a number of funders engaged with youth issues have formed the **Funding Collaborative on Youth Organizing**, which has actively expanded both the visibility and legitimacy of youth-oriented projects and the collective resources going into the field.

To youth, it is impossible NOT to include media as central to organizing -- it is far too important in shaping their overall environment. Youth projects are focused on developing young people as leaders while pushing forward positive social change. Surrounded by and targets of electronic culture, youth respond directly to media; as a result, youth organizing projects have embraced different aspects both of using media and understanding it as central to their mission. To funders, these are not 'media' projects -- they are 'youth' projects. But the funders see them as some of the most dynamic programmatic work emerging from their portfolios.

There are significant resources being directed to youth media - defined as media produced by youth -- and it comes from a range of foundation programs, such as *youth organizing, media* and *youth leadership*, and *youth development* donors. In addition, some projects are supported by issue specific funders, such as *Benton* with respect to health. Other foundations include *MacArthur*, *Kellogg* through its youth development area, and *Rockefeller* in its arts area. The field is also a prime subject for corporate foundations in the media industry, such as *AOL/Time-Warner*, *MTV* and *Salesforce*.

- Foundations including the *Surdna Foundation*, *Open Society Institute*, *Kellogg Foundation* and the *Edward W. Hazen Foundation* are active participants in the youth organizing collaborative.
 - While not all of the projects include media, many of them do.
 - Youth projects are aimed at reinforcing identity, giving voice and taking part as a political actor.
 - Youth projects include radio, video and other electronic production.
 - Productions serve for education and training, to express personal and political positions, and as self-expression. All of it provides an opportunity to experience the issues directly from the youth's point of view.
 - This includes support for groups like *Youth Radio* in Oakland, *Baltimore Youth Television* in Maryland, and *Street Level Youth Media* in Chicago.
 - Dozens of youth media projects around the country have hooked up with each and created their own networks and collaborations.
 - As well as attending their own gatherings, youth producers are being invited to participate in non-youth festivals and conferences.
 - Their work is highlighted and often wins prizes.
 - As the natural venue for young people is to go on-line, many projects are internet-based.
 - Most of the youth media projects have their own, dynamic web sites.
 - Often, websites will serve as the primary communication mode for the project, instead of print materials, newsletters, etc.
 - Many of the sites are designed, produced and maintained solely by young people.
 - The Internet is a venue that youth are completely comfortable with exploring, experimenting, and playing with.
 - Some projects are more analytical and look at the media environment itself.
 - The *Youth Media Council* in Oakland has produced a number of workbooks for other youth on how to analyze local media coverage of youth, challenge it, and hold it accountable.
 - *Conexiones* in Arizona promotes bilingual language literacy as well as proficiency in technology skills.
 - The *Ghetto Film School* in the South Bronx teaches Screenwriting, Critical Studies and Working with Actors, as well as narrative cinematic storytelling.

Among funders, there is a tremendous amount of enthusiasm for these projects, which generate their own energy and high profile. At the same time, media is only one element in the larger agenda for youth empowerment which is not necessarily tied into parallel organizing in movement building or social justice.

Internet Projects and Other New Technologies

While still very recent, there is some funding being invested in internet-based projects. Many funders are uncertain about this arena, because it is unfamiliar and risky. But a few funders, like OSI, understand the importance of the Internet as a global information and networking tool, and they are supporting internet-centered projects as such efforts rapidly become central to movement building.

Websites have become an accepted requirement for non-profit organizations, though they are not always included as part of a grantee's overall outreach and education plan. Dedicated on-line initiatives go far beyond creation of a web site, but almost always, they are combined with non-internet activities as well. Internet projects take into account these unique characteristics of the digital environment –

- International and Instantaneous -- the Internet does not have any geographic boundaries, so it is not time bound or tied to any single location or political demarcation.
 - Organizing is no longer tied to meetings or reaching people at certain times of the day.
 - It has proven itself as a means of mobilizing people very quickly and cheaply.
- Portals -- these are sites that gather large amounts of information on a single subject and provide a clearinghouse or jumping off point to link to a vast range of resources.
 - One of the earliest examples of a centralized Internet portal for social change is the site for the *Institute for Global Communications*.
 - Part of the international *Association for Progressive Communications*, IGC was one of the very first organizations to promote and make accessible Internet use for political organizations.
 - Some well known examples include *Alternet*, *MediaChannel*, and *Media Reform*.
 - Major portals exist on a wide range of social change and movement-building issues, but few of them receive explicit funding.
- Web Publishing -- because of its cost effectiveness and broad access, web publishing has now become a basic expectation for many efforts, not just print, but multi-media, with audio and video content as well as text.
 - Many organizations are only publishing materials on-line.
 - They are also using e-newsletters, CD's and DVD's as primary outreach and education tools.
 - Funders are just beginning to recognize the shift away from print to digital publishing as a legitimate change in the landscape.
- Databases and Search Engines -- the Internet has opened up a vast array of information stored on databases and retrievable through search engines.
 - One of the best examples of this is the *Center for Public Integrity* and its various databases on such issues as media ownership and corporate donors to Congress, which funders like the *Ford Foundation* are using as to illustrate the value of their support.
 - Related issues in this arena include groups working on Internet privacy, surveillance, and technology in support of human rights, such as the *Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC)*. These issues are so new that most foundations aren't even aware of them as social justice concerns.

- Interactivity -- the Internet has proved to be an invaluable mechanism for interchange, dialogue and organizing on different terms from in-person interaction.
 - Email has become necessary, but extensions of the technology such as list-serves and conferences are fast becoming just as important.
 - The numbers of on-line newsletters, action alerts and similar news services are growing rapidly.
 - On-line petitions have also become common, though their impact varies widely.
 - *MoveOn.org* has become a model successful site for organizing on-line petitions, but the group gets their support directly from on-line donations and does not accept foundation funding.
 - Funders are wary of substituting on-line petitions for a strategy that encompasses traditional organizing activities.
- Digital Technology, Spectrum Use and Related Issues -- a fast-growing area of telecommunications is in the arena of digital technology. Very few funders are making any grants in this sector.
 - This is a newly emerging area, and not many groups are working on these issues.
 - This cluster of issues is both regulatory and technical. They are complex to understand and don't easily fit into the categories of 'media' or 'communications'.
 - Some groups are working in the context of 'digital copyrights' and 'intellectual property rights', while others are working on infrastructure issues such as broadband access and digital spectrum policy
 - Groups are trying to link these abstract concepts to ideas like 'communications rights' to demonstrate how they are tied to more familiar social justice values.

Alternative, Independent and Progressive "Social Change" Media

Most foundation support for progressive media comes from funders and individual donors who overtly fund 'social change', such as members of the Funding Exchange, the National Network of Grantmakers, and similar entities. While they are generally willing to support media projects, these funders follow similar patterns as larger foundations -- only a small percentage of their overall funding goes to media projects, and they are no more able to assess the impact of these projects than other funders.

Like other funders, progressive funders also tend to support production of media content. But they call this content 'alternative', 'independent' or 'progressive,' that is, content that does not reflect the issues and values of corporate-controlled media. This is an important distinction, because it is based on the underlying assumption that the content will be oppositional to existing power structures, including existing media structures.

Like other funders, progressive funders also do not provide much support for infrastructures, distribution networks and membership organizations that provide the political and technical backbone for 'alternative media' to reach audiences. In addition, there is little funding for new technology or internet-based projects.

And even though these funders provide consistent support, overall the amount of money that these funders can put into media projects is modest -- in the range of tens of thousands of dollars, as opposed to millions or even hundreds of thousands of dollars needed to sustain large projects. Because these grants are small, they are generally not significant enough to complete any single project -- grants of \$5,000-10,000 are hardly enough to support a one-hour documentary film production. On the other hand, large funders can make grant awards that are substantial enough to cover the entire cost of project or nearly so.

- Funders support various type of 'alternative media' content, including print, film, video and broadcasting. Hundreds of documentaries and other progressive films are supported each year.
- Print projects are high on the list -- *AlterNet*; *Independent Press Associations*, ethnic media.
- Some funding goes to individual documentary films for both television and theatrical release.
- A small amount goes to individual radio and television programs.
 - Biggest programs in radio are *Democracy Now!* *National Radio Project*, and *Pacifica Radio*.
- Social change foundations support their local community radio stations, Independent Media Centers (IMC's) and other local media outlets.
- Social change funding also supports media trainings, educational videos, and other media work as part of organizing on other issues.
- Some support goes to distribution and outreach -- *POV*; *Paper Tiger*; *WorldLink* direct TV satellite channel; *FSTV*, *Working Films*, *MediaRights.org*. But these groups struggle to win support even from progressive funders.
- Progressive funders also support videos for organizing, strategic communications projects and a range of media projects similar to the patterns of other funders.
- Progressive funders have also been slow to support issues relating to technology policy and digital infrastructure.

WHAT FUNDERS SAY ABOUT "FUNDING MEDIA"

This section is based largely on information gathered from the surveys of foundation and affinity group staff, plus a handful of individual donors. Interviews were conducted in person, on the phone, and via email, and 35 individuals were included. [*The survey and list of completed interviews is attached.*]

These conversations were extremely informative in ascertaining the experiences and attitudes of this small sample of funders. Overall, respondents expressed strong recognition for the growing danger of corporate media to social justice values, and general support for independent media and media projects related to organizing. However, some staff at foundations that don't overtly fund media were reluctant to respond, indicating that they were not interested in the subject or, because they did not see media as an important issue, had little to say about it.

By and large, these individuals represent funders who are 'converted' -- drawn in large part from organizations that are already making grants for social change and are already in the 'we fund progressive media' column. Moreover, as clearly illustrated in the section on *Who Is Funding Media*, most of these funders are small and so are their media grants. In some ways, these funders are the 'usual suspects' in this arena -- funders already committed to media support.

We had hoped to include a larger number of foundations that are NOT the usual suspects, but only a few of these interviews were completed. So, in a very key way, these survey replies do not answer the question of how foundations that 'do not fund media' see these issues, or how they approach media concerns. Nor do they speak to the reasons why so few larger funders have chosen to take up media support. Answering these questions, and finding the messages that resonate with these funders, is *crucial* to increasing the pool of support and the visibility of media activities.

These comments are most useful to inform us why funders think media is important to fund right now, and what experience they have had supporting media activities.

i. Organizing Around Media IS Important, but "Overall, the War Has Been Lost"

Despite different ideas about actual organizing strategies, there was nearly unanimous agreement among everyone who was surveyed that ***organizing around media right now is critical***. Nearly everyone responded that ***corporate media is a major problem, and that somehow, it should be addressed***.

At the same time, ***there was little agreement about how to have an impact on media issues***. Many respondents were very discouraged with the current media environment, and they made comments to the effect that the ability to use media effectively for social change 'has been lost.' Part of this is because, unlike the conservatives, "we [progressives] have not invested in media internally." Part of the issues is also that these funders do not think that social groups do not use media very well.

- "Corporate media is having an impact on every aspect of our society, as well as world cultures."
- "Don't be mesmerized by the power of the corporate media -- they are just reflecting and reproducing [the dominant ideology.] It is corporate economic power, not corporate media that's really the problem".
- "We can never win... if we try to get our messages into the mainstream. We don't connect our work to core values and messages about core values."
- "Funding for media advocacy is inadequate... and we are failing."
- "We are losing in the marketplace of ideas."
- "We need our own capitalists and opinion leaders...We need to pay more for good media, spend money on skilled professionals."

- "Media continues to be a way of getting policy makers attention, and it is important for real change. We need to use it to its fullest."
- "The right wing has framed messages around values, and their thoughts have now become the 'conventional wisdom'."
- "[Progressive media voices] are not very effectual right now."
- "There was never a coherent, integrated political strategy. "
- "There is very little money for long term efforts. Because of this, there is no cumulative message."
- "Short of changing the capitalist nature of media, fundamentally, ...how much of an impact can we have?... This is why we need alternative media."
- "In hindsight, it seems like we should have fought harder [around the Telecommunications Act] in 1996. But funders aren't very smart about media."

ii. "Media Should Be Used to Move a Political Agenda"

One of the sentiments reflected across the interviews was the ***importance of media being integrated into a larger issue agenda***. The message from funders is that ***media support should function as "part of an overall social change strategy"***. This opinion was shared, even though these funders do not ask how these projects address strategic organizing goals.

- As one respondent stated, "It's stupid to fund social change with out a media strategy."
- "If foundations don't support and include media strategies in their portfolios, they are shortchanging themselves."
- Another was even more forceful -- "I think we are wasting our money getting our messages into mainstream media...unless they are attached to an organizing strategy."
- "We don't fund media unless it is an integral component of a project or program area already underway."
- "We make a distinction between working THROUGH media, like messaging programs, and working ON the media, changing systems."
- "Media strategies are only valuable if they are tied to real power analysis and integrated into strategies to change power relationships."
- One foundation began to fund media work "as an extension of their issue funding."
- Yet for another "...wasn't sure how important media is in terms of building real power on the ground."

iii. "Our Media Funding is a Big Mish-Mash"

There were very mixed responses to the question of media strategies used by the foundations themselves. Some said they had a strategy that was tied directly to their grantmaking programs. A few said they wanted to promote their own work and the work of their grantees.

But the most typical sentiment was uncertainty or no special strategy at all. "I don't think our media strategy is clear, it's really a big mish-mash."

This vagueness was also reflected in responses to how satisfied funders were with their media funding. They were generally satisfied with their media support, and a few were downright enthusiastic. But many expressed mixed experiences with their projects and with the media field overall. They are not certain that groups are using media well, because ***they don't have tools to evaluate these projects***.

- "The impact is so hard to measure..."
- "Our experience has been a mixed bag. We have not had much satisfaction with national media projects that aren't linked to organizing."
- "Non-profits are not using the potential of the media they have access to. They have to challenge themselves to reach more communities in a more engaging manner."

- "We fail to make use of all the opportunities that already exist. When we obtain spectrum and don't fully develop it, we don't have a good argument asking for more."
- "We used to fund [a well-known organization] but we didn't have a good experience...we were on completely different wavelengths. We thought they were interested in building independent local voices, and they were interested in something else."
- "We need to learn from the corporate sector and improve the quality of our production."
- "Measuring results of media has been difficult....but is it important to do."
- "When we funds groups to run a media campaign...we can see an immediate impact."
- Within one of the networks of donors, some funds were pooled to support several media production projects. "As far as I know, these grants have never been evaluated."
- Some were "...skeptical that creating a 'communications department' is the right step for organizing."

The exception was expressed in funding for youth media, discussed above. All the funders engaged in youth organizing see media as part of a core organizing strategy that is having a genuine impact.

iv. Grantee Collaborations That Expand the Field are Attractive

Because of this "mishmash" and scattered approach to funding, much of the foundation funding in media appears opportunistic, as opposed to strategic -- without any criteria for judging, foundations support media projects regardless of whether they are serving any long-range foundation strategies.

Instead, funders seems to respond to proposals as they come in the door, or be "best shot" funding to a few prominent organizations. That said, some foundations did indicate interest in and support for a range of collaborative efforts that they consider to have strategic value.

- *Grantmaking for intra-movement media* -- the New World Foundation has a *Media Fund* that has been supporting efforts to build cooperation and collaboration among progressive print, electronic and broadcast media platforms, though the focus has been on print.
- *Grantmaking for Ethnic Media* -- typified by *New California Media* in California and *Voices that Must Be Heard* in New York, organizations and cooperatives that aggregate and serve minority and ethnic press are beginning to win attention from funders.
- *Networks of Progressive Media Activists* -- Within progressive media, some funders are supporting broad networks and affinity groups created by activists themselves to provide mutual support, training, information exchange, and outreach.
 - These include groups of individuals, like *the Network of Progressive Communicators*, engaged in training and providing PR, and content clearinghouses like *MediaRights.Org* and *Working Films*.
 - They also include networks of activists engaged with each other primarily on-line or in cyberspace, like *Planetworks*, the folks involved with tactical media, and the global network of *Independent Media Centers*.
 - A new national network focused on *Media Justice* is comprised of activists of color, many of them young people.
- *Big Tent Media Activism* -- this is an emerging strategy that has been expanding rapidly in response to the recent decisions of the FCC to allow greater consolidation of media ownership. The FCC chose to ignore public participation in their process, leading to loud and vocal opposition by new coalitions and partnerships such as *Media Diversity* and *Free Press*.
 - With the potential for building a very large base of public support, these groups are beginning to attract funding for their policy work.

V. Funder Collaborations Are Attractive, Too

While there was no overriding mandate to create a new intermediary, there are several initiatives already underway that focus on expanding collaborations and funding for media from both foundations and individual donors. Most of these are no more than a few years old.

- **G-FEM - Grantmakers in Film and Electronic Media (G-FEM)** -- this affinity group has been within the Council of Foundations for a number of years. It is an association of grantmakers committed to advancing the field of media arts and public service media funding, and it includes a number of large foundations.
 - GFEM serves as a resource for grantmakers who fund media programming and infrastructure, as well as those who may employ media to further their program goals.
 - For years, GFEM has been the strongest advocate among funders for more support for mission-driven media, including publishing their book *"Why Fund Media"*.
 - GFEM also organizes the Film and Video Festival held each year at the Council of Foundations Annual Conference.
 - Members include *Phoebe Haas Charitable Trust, The Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Maurice Falk Medical Fund, and the Charles H. Revson Foundation*, as well as *Ford Foundation, John T. and Catherine D. MacArthur and Rockefeller*.
 - They hope that they can generate more support for media activities now that limiting media consolidation and the need for diverse voices have become public mandates.
- **Technology Affinity Group -- TAG** is a new forum on technology for professionals working in philanthropy. Its focus is to advance the capacities of philanthropic organizations through the use of technology and to share information about technology-related nonprofit sector resources and grantees.
 - TAG also promotes funding for projects that use information and communication technology (ICT) to strengthen nonprofits and improve the lives of communities and people worldwide.
 - Serves as an advocate for best practices using technology in the philanthropic community.
 - Members are foundation staff who educate their colleagues about technology developments and uses among grantees.
 - Often members are asked to evaluate proposals that include technology components.
 - Members include corporate foundations like *Verizon Foundation*, as well as *Baltimore Community Foundation, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Houston Endowment, and Doris Duke Charitable Foundation*.
- **Communication Policy Funders Network-** This is a newly-created list-serve organized to facilitate conversations among grant makers who have a shared interest in communications and media policy.⁷ The goal is to encourage more funding for media policy projects.
 - Discussions focus on a broad range of policy, regulation and legislative issues, plus related telecommunications topics like spectrum management, internet privacy, and digital intellectual property rights.
 - Organized by the *Ford Foundation*, this list has about 50 participants from diverse foundations including *ARCA Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation, Nathan Cummings Foundation, and the Pew Charitable Trusts*, as well as *NY State Council on the Arts and the Belo Corporate Foundation*.

- **Media Justice Fund**- This is a new project positioned to regrant funds for media policy issues based in grassroots activism. It is housed at the *Funding Exchange* and aimed at supporting projects that will expand media organizing into broader social justice campaigns.
 - The *Media Justice Fund* will support local and national organizing aimed at media reform policies, open access to technology and accountability by media corporations.
 - It is developing grant guidelines in anticipation of a first round of funding in the Fall of 2003.
 - Initial funding is from the Ford Foundation, with expectation of attracting other funders.
- **Media Action Fund**- A project of the *Proteus Fund*, the Media Action Fund offers challenge grants to support advocacy advertising campaigns.
 - The funds are exclusively for grassroots groups to purchase advertising on environmental issues, primarily around local issues.
 - The fund disburses matching money, so other support must be generated.
 - This is not a funding collaborative, but an example of funds allocated for a specific media strategy.
 - Similar models have been pursued for issues like campaign finance reform, and anti-Iraq war messages.
- **Media Funders Collaborative Discussions** -- Another new development, this discussion group on *Media that Matters* began with more than 240 creative artists and funders who assembled in conjunction with the Sundance Film Festival to strategize ways to transform the mass media industry in order to stimulate more positive social change.
 - The focus, on "Investing in Media that Matters", drew a groundswell of interest from commercial and independent film as well as from television executives, producers, directors, screenwriters, creative artists, angel investors, venture capitalists, and foundations.
 - They are taking a think-tank approach to the challenge of investing, funding, marketing, and distributing mission-driven commercial cinema and television.
 - The group is working on developing a process to --
 - Pool funds (both philanthropic and for profit).
 - Address issues of distribution and marketing.
 - Demonstrate that media with a social message can be entertaining, informing and commercially viable.
 - Look for strategic partners to reduce risk and maximize viability.

vi. Funders Want A Lot More Information About Media

Many of these liberal to progressive funders did not respond directly to the question of what might be helpful to them as grantmakers in this field. Among those who did, there was no strong mandate for setting up a new funders collaboration. A few were strongly AGAINST setting up a new intermediary. They were also concerned about diverting funding from grantees into an intermediary, when so little money is going into the field as it is.

- What they do want is **information sharing**, reports on issues, background on grantee groups, and support from each other. This message came through very strongly -- **they want to be informed about the current issues in media organizing**, because they are simply not familiar with the complex contemporary media landscape.

- The strongest need they expressed is for **networking with other funders**. Most of them thought it would be very valuable to learn from the experiences of other funders, and be able to discuss and examine issues with support from peers. This includes both sharing information about grantee groups, and learning background on issues in the field.
- The second, almost equal interest is for **donor education**. Among their own staff members, boards, and donors, they expressed a strong desire for education around media issues, analysis of strategies, and ways to demonstrate how media is tied to the program priorities they have in place.
- "I support the idea of a donor structure...that would allow grantmakers to know more about what other grantmakers are doing, so they could locate allies."
- "Donor collaborative or networks need to include large and small grantmakers...it's important that the group not be identified with any funding world "ghetto" based on size, region, ideology, etc."
- "I'm not sure about another intermediary. What are we really trying to do? Do we agree on a strategy?"
- "I am resistant to the idea of an intermediary ...I think it is premature."

FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS: ORGANIZING AROUND MEDIA IS CRITICAL

Whether or not their own institution supports media projects, respondents had nearly unanimous agreement that **organizing around media issues right now is critical**. These are some concrete steps that can help turn this strong sentiment into more effective support for media for social change.

- Foundation funding for all categories of media projects is small compared to overall grantmaking. ***If organizing using media and directed at media issues is going to have a long-term impact, much larger amounts of money will have to be invested in these fields.*** There are a number of collaborative efforts that advocate for more funding, from established groups like G-FEM (Grantmakers in Film and Electronic Media) to new groups focusing on technology and media policy. ***They all need to give more visibility to media projects and become stronger advocates for increased support.***
- Funding supports a wide variety of media activities, primarily content production, but also public broadcasting outlets, scholarships and journalism programs, and strategic communications. All of these encompass 'traditional' media outlets and approaches. ***Foundation funding is not catching up to the rapid changes in the current media environment.*** Funders don't have the 'silos' for responding to the radical changes underway, and rapidly advancing areas like technology and internet policy are not on the funding radar screen. ***Funders need to be introduced to the many new projects that are responding to the fast-moving environment.***
- ***Funders want to be educated about the issues*** in the broader media landscape and learn about relevant projects. They are looking for a handle to understand the 'big picture.'
- Many foundations are funding media as part of different program areas or embedded in larger projects. Funders do not consider this to be "funding media". Funders do not always see their media projects fitting into their own strategic funding goals. Instead, the projects are considered 'stand alone' and not tied to other program goals. ***Funders can be helped to see that support for media activities is important in their overall funding strategies.***
- Funders are generally satisfied with the media projects they are supporting, but there is little evaluation of most media projects. Foundations do not know how to assess their impact or effectiveness, or gauge the strategies that are being followed. ***They are looking for tools to evaluate these projects.*** They want help understanding the strategic directions that media projects use, and ways to judge the effectiveness and impact of what they are supporting.

While the media landscape is having a fast-growing impact on groups engaged in social change, funders have not kept up. In addition, they have been slow to recognize the emergence of a number of media and communications issues as being important in and of themselves. This means they are also not aware of many of the groups and projects that are involved in addressing these concerns.

Helping the foundation community understand these critical developments would go a long way towards increasing support for media-related projects and strengthening groups grappling with the larger social justice issues affected by these changes.

APPENDICES

PUBLICATION REVIEW: ASSESSMENTS OF IMPACT OF MEDIA PROJECTS FROM A FUNDERS POINT OF VIEW

There is a great volume of accessible material in general on the evolution of media and its impact -- scans of different media environments, histories of broadcasting, research on social impact of media genres, and many, many more studies and reports that dissect media as a field.

But very little of it assesses *the effectiveness or impact based on the expectations of funders*. Considering the long-term investments that some foundations have made, it is rather striking how little actual evaluation there has been on the impact of the different media strategies they support.

We identified just over two dozen reports and publications that provide political analyses of various media activities or offer studied assessments of funded projects. The studies themselves reflect a handful of approaches to evaluating their subjects.

1. **Assessments of Strategic Communications projects** -- Strategic communications is one of the major areas of media funding, and in some ways, one of the easiest to assess. With a large investment in helping groups use the media to get their message out, foundations have also made an effort to evaluate these efforts. Often the assessments include rigorous analysis based on theories of sociology and human behavior, and some are quite extensive in analyzing why aspects of a campaign did or did not work. These studies cover concepts for planning and creating strategic communications campaigns as well as evaluations of the campaigns themselves.
2. **Case Studies of outreach and organizing campaigns using individual programs, films, stations, or media projects organizing around a single topical issue** -- Because 'media funding' often means 'production funding,' some research explores how effective independent productions have been in reaching audiences. But this area is harder to evaluate than 'messaging,' and the assessments that examine independent production generally take a case study approach. Some of these reports assess "mission-driven media" which has an overt issue orientation or social-change goal. These case studies may or may not examine methods of distribution and quantifiable audience figures.
3. **Reports from Conferences and Meetings in the field** -- Some of the evaluations of media projects is done informally and presented as papers or talks at conferences, meetings and professional gatherings. Proceedings, reports, minutes and transcripts are then published in some detail, and those parts that are assessments can be extracted from the proceedings as a whole. Some of these papers are printed as books, but on-line publishing is now widely available and we found most of this material on the internet.
4. **Academic research** -- there are many academic conferences that allege to assess media, but many of them are quite divorced from the activist organizations or 'media makers' who are responsible for creating the actual media under discussion. Much of this research seems conceptual, but there are occasional reports that have practical evaluations of funded projects. [As this is being written, there is currently a spurt of academic research assessing and contextualizing some media strategies. Some of these reports should be available in 2004.]

5. **General assessments of the field** -- There are a few studies commissioned by foundations specifically to examine or gauge a particular aspect of its media funding. Often they are part of a feasibility study, or take the form of a survey or overview "report about the field". These reports are designed specifically to assist the foundation itself with its own grantmaking strategies, and a few foundations have used them to craft public statements about their media goals. While this type of report is generally proprietary, they are sometimes shared with other funders who are supporting the same or similar work.
6. **Personal Opinion pieces** -- Although these are not formal assessments, we have included a few articles or essays written by involved individuals who express opinions about media funding that provide a challenge to how funders evaluate their support.

These materials lead to the following conclusions:

- **Many foundations are not evaluating their media support.** With the two exceptions of public education campaigns/strategic messaging, and looking at case studies of individual productions, very few other types of media projects are being evaluated.
- **The assessments that are being done are seen with a narrow point of view.** They don't put the projects in the context of the larger and more complex media environment in which they function.
- **While organizing in media, telecommunications and technology has been racing ahead, funders have not even begun to evaluate its impact.** They don't seem to know how to approach assessing what they are funding in media.
- **Funders need tools to help them understand the wide range of strategies and goals being pursued in the explosion of media activities.**

With help, funders can start to evaluate these projects and strengthen their effectiveness.

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

The various documents listed in the chart below represent recent materials available. Some are private or proprietary, but most are publicly available.

| Title | Author | Summary | Comments |
|--|---|---|---|
| <i>Communications for Social Change</i> | Rockefeller Foundation | Conceptual piece on communications for development, | 2 pps. Rockfound.org/documents/summary |
| <i>Social Justice Communications Assessment Project</i> | Phoebe Eng Ford Found. | Resources guide; best practices for strategic communications | Currently Underway |
| <i>Why Fund Media: Stories from the Field</i> | K. Hirsch Grantmakers in Film and Video/ Council on Foundations | Evaluation of impact of this book | Currently Underway |
| <i>Independent Press</i> | L. Jue Rockefeller Found | Influence of indie press on social justice movements and vice versa | Currently underway Scheduled for Dec 2003 |
| <i>Collaborations between progressive media and social change groups</i> | N. Rubin Veatch Program | Use of progressive media by social change groups, and collaborations between media groups. | 5 pps. 1996 www.nanrubin.com |
| <i>Communications for Social Change</i> | Rockefeller Found. | Position paper and conf. report on impact of communications development projects | 55 pps. Pamphlet 1996 |
| <i>Moving Public Policy Agenda: The Strategic Philanthropy of Conservative Foundations</i> | National Council for Responsive Philanthropy | Summary of analysis of conservative foundations approach to shifting public policy thru media support | 2 pages Report available for sale 1997 www.ncrp.org/psr/publication.htm |
| <i>Conservative Foundations and their Activist Grantees</i> | National Council for Responsive Philanthropy | Summary of strategies of conservative founds. | 4 pps. 1997 www.ncrp.org/psr/publication.htm |
| <i>Media Advocacy Efforts and Organizations</i> | P. Aufderhiede | Essay on history of media reform groups | 11 pps. 1999 |
| <i>Why "Independent" Matters</i> | B. Schulman | Essay on independent producers | 4 pps 2000 www.towardfreedom.com/may00/indy_press |
| <i>Is Social Change Media a Delusion? California Newsreel at 30 and 2000</i> | L. Deressa California Newsreel | Argues that indie films have little relevance | 7 pps. 2000 http://www.newsreel.org/articles/socialme.htm |

| | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <i>Making Waves: Stories of Participatory Communications</i> | Rockefeller Found. | Case studies of community/local radio projects from around the world | 352 pps. Book 2001 In English, Spanish, French |
| <i>Mapping Progressive Media</i> | D. Hazen New World Found. | Survey of independent and progressive media organizations, with focus on capacity building | 38 pps. 2001 Not available for public circulation |
| <i>Establishing a Media Center in Washington DC</i> | Center for Defense Information | Feasibility study with section on non-profit groups use of video and broadband | 5 pps. 2001 Not available for public circulation www.laddmedia.com/dcmedia.html |
| <i>Media for Social Change: Partnership</i> | Center for Social Media | Examination of non-broadcast videos for organizing around specific issues | 10 pps. 2002 www.centerforsocialmedia.org/documents/ |
| <i>Free Press/Media Reform Proposal</i> | R. McChesney; J. Nichols | Section in proposal on "State of the Movement" | Not available for public circulation 2002 |
| <i>Highlander Media Justice Gathering Report</i> | N. Rubin | Section on "Strategic Organizing Directions" | 57 pps. 2002 www.nanrubin.com |
| <i>Progressive Media: Key Issues</i> | N. Rubin | Preliminary research on major Issues in the field | 5 pps. 2002 www.nanrubin.com |
| <i>Future of Independent Media</i> | M. Bradley | Discussion of support for "mission driven media" in the commercial marketplace | 18 pps. 2002 www.newcapitalist.com |
| <i>Why Fund Media: Stories from the Field</i> | K. Hirsch GFEM/Council on Foundations | Case studies of impact of film, video, radio projects | 58 pps. Glossy book; on line 2002 www.fundfilm.org |
| <i>Media as a Social Tool: Conference Report</i> | Center for Social Media Rockefeller Found. | Assessment of "environment of film, video and web streaming used for social justice and civil society" | 30 pps. 2002 www.centerforsocialmedia.org/documents/conference-report.pdf |
| <i>Mission Driven Media: Not Just Survival, but Success</i> | Aspen Institute | Conference report with focus on commercial and private media marketplace | 38 pps. Booklet 2002 |
| <i>Listening Project: State of the Media Advocacy Field</i> | OMG Ford Found. | Assessment of media advocacy groups as "a field" | Currently underway 2003 www.omgcenter.org/listen/ |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| <i>Lessons in Evaluating Communications Campaigns: 5 Case Studies</i> | Harvard Family Research Project | Part of a larger evaluation project being done by Communications Consortium | 42 pps. 2003 www.mediaevaluationproject.org |
| <i>Mobilizing Public Will For Social Change</i> | Michigan State U. | Part of a larger evaluation project being done by The Communications Consortium | 47 pps. 2003 www.mediaevaluationproject.org |
| <i>Understanding Social Justice Philanthropy</i> | National Council for Responsive Philanthropy | Theoretical framework and role of psychology in social justice philanthropy | 31 pps. 2003 www.ncrp.org/psr/publication.htm |

ASSESSMENT OF THE FIELD: QUESTIONS FOR FOUNDATIONS AND DONORS

Today, groups organizing for social justice are facing a long, uphill battle. In the current political, cultural and economic climate, the reactionary role of the media in framing issues and shaping ideology is having a deep and long-term impact on our democratic system. Organizing to meet this challenge has become paramount in our struggle to keep social justice on the public agenda.

The goal of the MediaWorks Initiative is to educate the funding community about the full range of organizing being done around and with media. By raising awareness, strengthening capacity, and increasing funding for groups, we want to promote media that builds a progressive movement, supports participatory democracy and promotes social justice values. Your cooperation in answering a few questions will be greatly appreciated.

1. What comes to mind when asked "do you fund media?"
What do you think of as "media funding"? To you, what falls into this category?
2. Do you think organizing on media issues is important right now?
3. There are 3 basic progressive media organizing strategies --
 - a. Building alternative and independent media structures and institutions, such as alternative press, and community broadcasting.
 - b. Using and/or confronting corporate media, including corporate accountability and PR campaigns.
 - c. Changing the underlying structures, policies, and regulatory frameworks that govern media.

Are you or your foundation funding any media projects now? If so, what kinds of projects?

[This can include a promotional campaign for an issue or organization.]

Do you know the strategic goal(s) of the(se) projects?

[Are you making any program-related investments in media projects?]

If you are not funding anything now, have you funded any in the past? If so, what kinds of projects?

4. Has this experience been satisfactory? Why or why not?
5. What is your foundation trying to accomplish through its media funding?
6. If you are not funding any media, what keeps your foundation from funding it?
7. Do you know about any media projects -- in any category -- that impress you?
8. Is corporate media having an impact on the issues and groups that you support? If so, how?
What do you think can be done about it?
9. Are there any particular services as a grantmaker that would be helpful to you to support increased funding relative to the communications environment? (i.e., clearinghouse of strategic projects; re-granting organization; liaison between grantees and funding entities; donor briefings, etc.)
10. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

The following is a list of the survey respondents and foundations from which additional information was gathered. Most of these interviews were conducted on the telephone, but some were completed in person and a few were sent in as written responses via email.

| Website | Name | Respondent | Interviewer |
|--|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| Fdncenter.org/grantmaker/listfdn | Albert A. List Foundation | Helen Brunner | SS |
| -- | Angelina Fund | Richard Healy | SS |
| www.arcafoundation.org | ARCA Foundation | Donna Edwards | SS |
| www.benton.org | Benton Foundation | Andrea Taylor | NR |
| www.gatesfoundation.org | Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation | Jaime Garcia | JS |
| www.changemakersfund.org | Changemakers Affinity Group | Laura Loescher | SS |
| www.mott.org | Charles Stewart Mott Foundation | Christine Doby | SS |
| -- | Eastman Foundation | John Eastman | SS |
| www.emcf.org | Edna McConnell Clark Foundation | A. Chung | SM |
| www.fordfound.org | Ford Foundation | Becky Lentz | SS |
| www.fordfound.org | Ford Foundation | Margaret Wilkerson | SS |
| www.factservices.org | French American Charitable Trust | Laura Livoti | SS |
| www.epic.org/fcg | Fund for Constitutional Government | Conrad Martin | SS |
| www.globalfundforwomen.org | Global Fund for Women | Dorothy Abbott | SS |
| Www.internationaldonors.org | Grantmakers Without Borders | John Harvey | JS |
| www.hiponline.org | Hispanics in Philanthropy | Diana Compoamore | JS |
| www.hkhfdn.org | HKH Foundation | Harriet Barlow | SS |
| www.wkkf.org | Kellogg Foundation | Karen Lane | JS |
| Www.lilly.com/about/community/foundation/endowment.html | Lilly Endowment | G. Wolfram | SM |
| www.nathancummings.org | Nathan Cummings Foundation | Lance Lindblom | SS |
| Www.ncrp.org | National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy | | SS |
| www.nng.org | National Network of Grantmakers | Nicole Trombley | SS |
| www.newwf.org | New World Foundation | Colin Greer | SS |
| www.soros.org | Open Society Institute | Anna Lefer | SS |
| -- | Park Foundation | Adelaide Gomer | SS |
| www.funder.org | Proteus Fund | Meg Gage | SS |
| www.publicwelfare.org | Public Welfare Fund | Joe Wilson | SS |
| www.rwjf.org | Robert Wood Johnson Foundation | Mark Sachs | NR |
| www.rockfound.org | Rockefeller Foundation | Brian Byrd | SS |
| Www.barbrastreisand.com/bio/streisand_foundation.html | Streisand Foundation | Marge Tabankin | SS |
| www.surdna.org | Surdna Foundation | Vince Stehle | SS |
| www.surdna.org | Surdna Foundation | Robert Sherman | NR |
| www.tidesfoundation.org/index_tf.cfm | Tides Foundation | Ron White | JS |
| www.utne.com | Utne Reader | Nina Utne | SS |
| www.uucsr.org/veatch | Veatch Program | Marjorie Fine | SS |
| www.williampennfoundation.org | William Penn Foundation | David Haas | NR |

| | | | |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------|----|
| Www.womendonors.org/ | Women's Donor Network | Amanda Berger | SS |
| www.wfnet.org | Women's Funding Network | Mary Alex | JS |
| Www.workingforchange.com/ | Working Assets | Michael Kieschnick | JS |

Interviewer Key:

JS - Jan Strout

SM - Sharon Maeda

NR - Nan Rubin

SS - Sarah Stranahan

| Information from Additional Foundations | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| www.carnegie.org | Carnegie Corporation of America | | |
| www.revsonfoundation.org | Charles H. Revson Foundation | | |
| www.efaw.org | Educational Foundation of America | | |
| www.gundfdn.org | George Gund Foundation | | |
| www.grdodge.org | Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation | | |
| www.macfound.org | John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation | | |
| www.lannan.org | Lannan Foundation | | |
| www.normanfdn.org/ | Norman Foundation | | |
| www.nwaf.org | Northwest Areas Foundation | | |
| www.pewtrusts.com | Pew Charitable Trusts | | |
| www.fdncenter.org/grantmaker/gerbode | Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation | | |
| www.haassr.org | Walter & Elise Haas Foundation | | |
| www.hearstfdn.org | William Randolph Hearst Foundation | | |

MAJOR ORGANIZING STRATEGIES USING MEDIA TO PURSUE SOCIAL JUSTICE GOALS

There are progressive groups working in each of these arenas, and each assumes a different approach and strategy aimed at using media to make social change. This is an attempt to begin categorizing these strategies to highlight them, assess their impacts, and strengthen their focus and effectiveness, especially because many of these strategies are not "traditional" media categories.

-- N. Rubin

- 1) **Building, owning and operating alternative, community, and independent media production and distribution outlets**
 - a. Independent media producers in film, radio, TV, etc.
 - b. Community radio, LPFM and television stations
 - c. Progressive satellite channels
 - d. Cable access centers
 - e. Independent distribution networks and organizations
 - f. Indy media centers, internet portals, clearinghouses
 - g. Community technology centers
 - h. Independent and alternative press
 - i. Media arts and exhibition centers
 - j. Technical Assistance Providers
 - k. Media for training, educating and organizing
 - l. Storytelling, radio and video diaries, expressive media
 - m. Witnessing and documentation
 - n. Open source projects, WiFi and creating new technologies
- 2) **Engaging with, using, understanding, confronting and transforming corporate media**
 - a. Watchdog groups
 - b. Media Mapping
 - c. Corporate accountability campaigns
 - d. PR and strategic communications projects
 - e. Media diversity activities
 - f. Opportunities for using mainstream distribution outlets and vehicles
 - g. Buying paid ads
 - h. Media literacy and education
 - i. Analysis, research and critiques
 - j. Culture Jamming
- 3) **Changing the underlying structures, policies, and regulatory framework**
 - a. Legal efforts to address FCC and other regulatory structures
 - b. Changing Technology and technical policy activities
 - c. Electronic privacy and other rights issues
 - d. Intellectual property, culture and other digital 'trade' issues
 - e. Consumer protection and access issues
 - f. Government accountability
 - g. Local and national legislative lobbying
 - h. Think Tanks

ADDENDUM: ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Like all good inquiries, this survey raised as many questions as it answered. MediaWork's mission is primarily donor education and donor organizing, and we have no plans to commission additional research at this time. However, we wanted to share our observations about additional research and analysis that would help us increase and improve media funding. We hope that others will help us answer the many questions raised by this report.

- The astounding total of \$4 billion dollars granted to media and communications projects begs the question, "Where is all that money going?" Although there are clearly some big categories; public broadcasting capacity and content, journalism training, independent film production, and development communications, it would be useful to have a better understanding of who is funding what at what levels.
- This survey focused on foundations and a few individual donors. Yet, our conversations with practitioners suggest that individual donors and angel investors play a critical role, especially on the production end. More qualitative research on the role of individual donors and investors would be useful.
- A robust independent media sector requires sustainable business models and risk capital; however this report does not examine the state of social venture capital for media projects. What is the investor profile for these ventures?
- The list of foundations with the largest media grants raises question, "How much of their granting could be categorized as media that supports social change?" It would be useful to be able to pull out a list of the foundations that explicitly fund social change media, and to examine their grantmaking goals and practices.
- Another question raised is whether media is an under-reported category. Some foundations ask all their grantees to include media and public relations strategies in their proposals. How many resources are going into the internal media work of non-profits, and how much of that is reported as media funding?
- The survey does not tell us much about the universe of foundations that do not fund media, as they did not respond as well to our requests for interviews. It would be useful to identify the most common institutional barriers to media funding, and find leverage points for educating foundations about the opportunities to integrate media into their existing programs.
- Since these interviews were conducted, there has been a groundswell of grassroots mobilization against the FCC's latest attempts to deregulate limits on ownership and consolidation. Is this an opportune moment for dialogue between funders and practitioners and to build support for a longer-term proactive agenda around media reform?
- Many minorities and immigrants feel that the mainstream media support and reinforce state sanctioned racism and violence against people of color. Will the media reform movement fully include these issues and leaders, or will there be a separate field, with its own funding stream, for media justice? Is this an important issue to examine?
- In the aftermath of the McCain Feingold campaign finance reform bill, 'soft' money is pouring into (s) 527s, much of it designated for media campaigns. Where is this money coming from? Where is it going? Is any of it building infrastructure and capacity that will outlive the elections?

- While we struggle to build a national movement for meaningful media reform at home, the global spread of media commercialization and centralization continues at a rapid pace. We are facing a future where the right of any nation to define, protect and invest in the public interest, whether in energy, agriculture, education or media and telecommunications, is limited by trade rules that view public investments and regulations as anti-competitive subsidies that interfere with free trade. How does media fit into the agendas of movements to reform globalization?