



## PROJECT GRANTSMANSHIP

— A capacity building collaboration of Los Angeles County Foundations & The Grantsmanship Center —

PROJECT GRANTSMANSHIP provides underwriting for nonprofit leaders in Los Angeles County to attend the *Grantsmanship Training Program*. The project's mission is to increase the capacity of small to medium-size nonprofits serving Los Angeles County to fulfill their mission by:

- planning programs that deliver results
- increasing impact through collaboration
- identifying and working in partnership with funders who share their goals.
- articulating clear and logical arguments for financial support,

The project is supported by the Annenberg Foundation, California Community Foundation, Dwight Stuart Youth Fund, The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, and the S. Mark Taper Foundation, in partnership with The Grantsmanship Center.

Since the core component of Project Grantsmanship is the 5-day *Grantsmanship Training Program*, the project's evaluation data address the effectiveness of that training.

In addition to assessing the amount of additional funding secured by participating organizations, the evaluation measures other factors critical to funding success. These factors include participants' ability to: design effective programs; build collaborations with colleagues; target appropriate funding sources; develop better program evaluations; and work with grantmakers as partners in change.

Over eight years of independent evaluation, data show that PROJECT GRANTSMANSHIP produces significant positive impact.

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### Project Grantsmanship Summary of Evaluation Findings

The Project Grantsmanship (PG) multiyear program evaluation has been conducted by independent consultants, Drs. Ron Jacobs and Mark Tucker of San Diego State University. The December 2016 evaluation included 946 participants enrolled in 39 five-day training sessions beginning with the first PG training in March 2008.

The evaluation approach focused on (1) pertinent information regarding the participants and their organizations, (2) measures of participant performance and perceptions over the five-day training period, and (3) participant accomplishments and perceptions of the PG program six months after completing the training.

The evaluation yielded numerous findings that have relevance for individuals and organizations when considering the benefits of participating in the Project Grantsmanship program:

***The 946 Project Grantsmanship participants:***

- Years of professional experience for this group ranged from none at all to 60 years, with an average of 3.6 years for the entire group.
- Prior proposal development experience ranged from none at all (17%) to 10 or more years (8%).
- 31% of participants listed job titles that specifically referenced program development and proposal writing and 69% listed titles that referenced other roles such as 'board member' or 'service provider'.
- 73% of participants stated that their motivation to attend was partly or entirely personal, while 27% stated that attending the training was a required assignment related to their professional role.

***The participants' organizations:***

- 80% of the annual budgets were at or below \$673,160. 18 participants reported a \$0 annual budget for their organization.
  - The average number of paid staff was 33. The most frequently reported number of paid staff was seven. 63 organizations reported no paid staff.
  - The average organization age was 28 years and the most frequently reported age was 11 years. The three youngest organizations were founded in 2015.
  - Participants' organizations represented a broad range of missions: Social Services, Education, the Arts, Health, and the Environment.
- *In summary, among the 941 training participants and their organizations there was a broad range of professional experience, experience in proposal development, organization size in terms of annual budgets and size of paid staff, as well as organization history and service mission.*

***Participant performance and perceptions over the five-day training period:***

- Participants were pre- and post-tested with an instrument linked to the seven components of the five-day PG training curriculum. The average pre-to-post gain for the entire group was 47.5%. Of particular interest, the participants with little or no pre-PG proposal development experience kept pace with the more experienced participants, earning comparable post-test scores.

- On the final day of training, participants completed a *Grantsmanship Training Program Feedback Form* that provided an opportunity to rate the program on a scale from 1 (low) to 10 (high) regarding 'met expectations'. The average of the ratings was 9.55. 69.0% of the participants assigned a rating of 10.
- *In summary, all participants made remarkable gains regarding mastery of the PG training curriculum. The training was appropriate for all participants, regardless of prior experience in proposal development. Participants assigned high scores for the five-day training in terms of meeting expectations, regardless of prior proposal development experience.*

***Alumni productivity and perceptions of the Project Grantsmanship program six months following the five-day training experience:***

Alumni were invited to complete an on-line survey that addressed: 1) use of and satisfaction with the Trainer review of draft proposals, 2) productivity regarding development and submission of proposals and LOIs, 3) success in obtaining funding, number of awards, and dollar amounts, 4) perceived impact as change agents within their organizations, 5) perceived impact as collaborators and team builders, 6) overall satisfaction with the features and benefits of PG and feelings about recommending PG to other colleagues. Survey responses yielded the following points:

- 85.3% individuals submitted one or more proposals to funders. The average number submitted was 7.92.
- Within six months of completing the five-day training, 54.3% of the responding alumni reported success in receiving funding while only 7.2% had received 'denial' notifications. The remaining applicants were still waiting for funding decisions during that time frame.
- The average number of awards received per recipient was 2.43. The average dollar amount received per participant was \$155,824. Among alumni who received awards, there was a 46.2% success rate for those with no pre-PG development experience and a 56.6% success rate of those with less than a year of pre-PG experience. This compares very favorably with the 55.3% success rate for the entire group of awardees. Even more noteworthy, those with no pre-PG development experience procured the largest average amount of funds - \$426,496.
- Using a scale of 1-10, to answer this question, "How little or how much of this funding success after the workshop do you attribute to your participation in Project Grantsmanship?" (1 = "very little" and 10 = "very much"). The average response score was 6.84, indicating that they attributed much of their funding success to PG participation.

- Project Grantsmanship alumni assigned high ratings (3.74 on a 5-point scale) to a series of nine questions that focused their success in improving the daily operations of their respective organizations as effective program planners, leaders and agents of change within their own agencies, as well as inter-agency collaborators.
- *In summary, the Project Grantsmanship alumni demonstrated a high level of productivity and a record of funding success within a 6-month period. In addition to funding success, they stated agreement that they had successfully functioned as agents of change and collaborators within their own organizations and allied programs.*



A note from The Grantsmanship Center:

*We hope this assessment of PROJECT GRANTSMANSHIP and the Grantsmanship Training Program, which is its core, helps you to decide whether this training is a good fit for you and your organization. We're happy to talk with you if you have any questions or need more information. Email: [info@tqci.com](mailto:info@tqci.com) or call: (213) 482-9860.*