




Meaningful Measurements

An adaptable framework to help funders understand the true value of their grants and grantees.

Funders learn the most when grantees can share what their work actually looks like, not just what can be easily measured. Traditional reporting has rarely made room for that kind of honesty or depth. This framework shifts the focus from evaluation to learning—supporting more trusting relationships and offering funders richer insight into the effects of funding, as well as the challenges and opportunities grantees are navigating.

-  Ask yourself
-  Ask your grantee
-  Share with grantee

1. Clarify intention: co-develop or share with grantees

- Who is this information for?
- How will it be used/acted upon?

2. Determine cadence: grantees choose from predetermined frequency options.

Recommended

- Annually
- End of the funding period

Alternatives

- End of grant
- Quarterly

3. Agree on format: grantees choose from funder-selected options

Recommended

- In conversation with foundation staff virtually or in person, with staff taking written notes that the grantee approves
- Written report
- Optional supplemental materials (e.g. documents, video)

4. Ask open-ended questions: surface a real picture of wins and struggles.

Recommended

- What have been the effects of this funding/partnership?
- What is your staff proud of/excited about?
- What is feeling most alive in your work right now?
- Share a story of change you're witnessing.
- What do you need to get from where you are now to where you want to be?
- Are there struggles or challenges you would like us to know about to better understand your work?

5. Analyze and reflect

- What am I hearing from grantees?
- What surprised me (good and bad) about what is shared?
- What have I learned that I didn't know before?
- How will I take action on these learnings?

6. Share, adapt and take action

Report your learning back to grantees to check for understanding, and take/share action steps— including adjustments for future reporting.