

Strategic Grantmaking in Higher Education

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Abstract

Resources are scarce relative to the colossal task of tackling the barriers to higher education. Delineating a grantmaking program- given the social, political, and economic dynamics in higher education- offers a substantial challenge to the nonprofit sector. The choice of strategy, implementation, and measurement are paramount considerations in effective grantmaking. Such choices include the grantmaker's role in community and geographical contexts, allocation of grants according to location and size, engagement in partnerships and networks, and goal setting and measurement.

This study investigates best practices in strategic grantmaking in the field of higher education. Through analysis of a literature review and case study interviews, this study identifies effective strategies of grantmaking organizations in addressing barriers to higher education. Such strategies include defining organizational purpose and identity, utilization of innovative techniques, adaptation to changing systems, catalyzing research, collaboration with co-funders and grantees, "big picture" goal setting, and identification and measurement of impact. The knowledge gained from this study offers grantmakers the tools needed to heighten the impact of the organizational mission under the most effective terms.