

# 3.27.20 Live Discussion Chat Log

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## Speakers:

Heidi Dusek and Marne Keller – something, JJ Keller Foundation

Don Doering, JRS Biodiversity Fund

Lindsay Majer, Tzedek Social Justice Fund

- Curious if this is a foundation with a perpetuity mandate or not?
- Can you share the survey questions again?
- Houston conducted a survey as well in partnership with the United Way and the Greater Houston Community Foundation. Data is available to the Greater Houston Grantmakers Forum. I'm happy to share the dashboard if anyone is interested.
- We also did a survey at the Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin (Wausau) and aligned with United Way which has been wonderful.
- We asked our grantees what resources they had that they might have to share to try to connect within the NP community and were pleased to see some connections happen within our community.
- [www.disasterplaybook.org](http://www.disasterplaybook.org) a resource for funders for short-, mid-, and long-term needs that funders should think about.
- For community foundations working with United Ways (ie. both contributing to the fund and grantmaking review/decisions): If the fund is held by one (CF or UW) who has signature authority to release grants from the fund?
- Their questions are: Best way to contact you; what concerns facing your clients; concerns facing your staff; concerns facing your operations; greatest needs in immediate, short, long term
- We're working with United Way, they hold the fund we (CF) manage the grantmaking.
- Does anyone have a positive experience they can share in your working with one of the large international relief orgs such as WHO where you felt your support was impactful?
- Can anyone provide guidance on the quickest / easiest way to shift to ACH payments? Does Exponent Philanthropy already have a resource guide on this?
- If anyone needs an example of a Succession Plan, I'm willing to share. Email [John@lovellfoundation.org](mailto:John@lovellfoundation.org)
- Do you fund blood banks like Red Cross? How can foundations weigh in to help when blood drives are shut down?
- We do ACH electronic transfers and was told by our security firm to NOT collect grantee banking info via email. It is NOT secure and hacking can occur. We needed a voided check mailed to us or over the phone.

- Has anyone changed their grant application to make it easier to fill out during this time, and added a section about COVID19?
- We waived the application for our grantees since we just recently received their final reports.
- We're using Foundant for grants management and have added fields for the info we need for ACH to our grant agreement. We're also significantly streamlining applications, intending to make all 2020 grants by end of June.
- We have established a streamlined COVID-19 Response fund application format which asks for basic organizational and financial information, one paragraph describing services being provided and one paragraph describing the immediate financial need and how funding will support their services
- I've given people extra time on their progress reports that are due in March or April. Funders in Houston are considering a common grant application for COVID response grants
- Have any of you brought on new grantees for a one-year "get to know you" grant and are now unsure of how to move forward? We fund internationally and like to do site visits in the first year, which may not happen in 2020. So I am interested in engaging with others who are thinking about how to handle new grantees -- are you giving them another year of support (even if you hadn't necessarily planned to)? Or are you holding steady with your timelines? Feel free to contact me to chat more. Thank you!
- Listening to our grantees and developed a streamlined COVID 19 request to meet recent agency needs in infrastructure and technology needs. We announced it on Tuesday, sent out the 1 page forms that afternoon and have received requests already. We're doing rolling acceptances and the first funds will go out on Monday. The board gave the staff permission to grant up to \$40,00 for each emergency grant.
- We're holding pretty steady with our timelines, but telling our grantees (most of whom we know already) that we are willing to open up to more operational funding than usual to help support salaries, for example. We collaborated with the local community foundation and another private foundation in our area to each contribute to a shared fund that we will all advise.
- Survey from JRS Biodiversity Fund: <https://jrsbiodiversity.org/jrs-biodiversity-foundations-covid-19-grantee-survey/>
- i would be interested in learning if any of the foundations are collaborating and how they found other foundations to collaborate with. .
- Our foundation is located in Boston and both the City of Boston and The Boston Foundation (a community foundation) are mobilizing with response funds that have been widely publicized. We have a DAF at The Boston Foundation.

- For Henry or others—do we need to require Grant Agreements for Rapid/emergency response funding?? It sounds like Lindsay didn't.....?  
Thanks
- Are any foundations in Northern Michigan working together? I'd be interested in learning if any are. Please reach out to me.
- Here is a link to The Philanthropic Initiative that has lots of resources for funders, including guidance and resources:  
<https://www.tpi.org/resources/covid-19-response>
- Are any foundations in Georgia working in arts funding?
- Related to the above chat question on Grant Agreements. What about international grants? What is the most important due diligence needed for emergency response to international organizations?
- We work with all the local community foundations but also other family foundations and corporate foundations. There are funder meetings to explore, discuss, plan. Several of these are quite tight relationships. The sharing can be hugely beneficial
- Happy to add a little note on grant agreements after Lindsay
- I'm finding the greatest need among our grantees is HR consulting. I am thinking about finding someone and pay the fee on behalf of our grantees. Any issues or concerns if I did this?
- I am interested in chatting with more funders making grants internationally to continue to learn from each other. Send me a message if you'd like to connect. Or email me at [amelia@prestonwernerventures.com](mailto:amelia@prestonwernerventures.com). Thanks! (No pressure to have a call anytime soon, but just putting this out there while so many of us are on this call).
- Exponent Philanthropy hosts an International Discussion Community for members; please connect with each other.
- I was wondering about international grant makers as well. I work at Thousand Currents; we fund grassroots groups in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Mostly women, youth, and/or Indigenous communities working on climate justice and food sovereignty. I've been a bit taken aback by the lack of reporting on how the pandemic is impacting these regions, at least in the media I consume (BBC, NPR, NYTimes, WaPo). Thousand Currents launched an emergency fund to move additional grants to our current 62 grassroots partners (what we call our grantees). I would be interested in talking to other folks about (1) international funding in this time, and/or (2) how to bring a justice and equity focus to emergency/crisis grant making. [Jessie@thousandcurrents.org](mailto:Jessie@thousandcurrents.org)
- Our foundation didn't have an unallocated budget line or a contingency fund when Hurricane Harvey hit us in 2017. We decided to start a contingency this year. It just wasn't very large yet due to some prior commitments. It was scheduled to grow in 2021

- I make international grants through my private foundation The Invest in Her Foundation and would be interested in connecting.
- Our UW/CF COVID Fund evaluates past grantee performance in previous disasters during their review process. We've had a few disasters in recent years to know who managed their past grants well and those who didn't.
- Question to Lindsay: I like the idea of a uniform amount of general operating grants to multiple organizations that we have relationships. A discussion point that we have had is that there is a variety of organizations that we fund, although all in the arts they really vary in size. Was there a discussion about the variety of needs among the 19(?) organizations that received \$15,000?
- Question too Marne to followup on her response: can you say more about how you "expect" your grant dollars to be used, and what the underlying misalignment might be with your grantees such that the way they are deploying the funds - presumably in the best way they think they should be used - is not a decision you agree with or trust?
- Response: In the example I used we allocated funds to mental health programming for hurricane disaster. WE later found that our funding was being offered to religious charities that had nothing to do with mental health.
- Our accountant told us years ago that all nonprofits could receive a one time grant and show that would be "an exception" on their 990, so it would NOT tip a small org. But it could only be one time from us.
- Any mention of merger funds that are out there for nonprofits looking to, or needing to combine in these times being useful?
- Some of the foundation toolkit I see out there. Would love to know what you'd add! 1. Adapt to remote work and assess COVID 19 impact upon operations, 2. Ensure current grantees of continuing support and adaptation, 3. Divert programmatic funds to address the causes and local impact of COVID19, 4. Donate funds to aggregated emergency funds, 5. Advocate for COVID19 support within the philanthropic/ community, 6. Create emergency funding collaborative, 7. Extend the period of grantee support and relax reporting requirements, and 8. Sponsor remote work infrastructure for grantees.