

Sharing Power, Sharing Visions for Change: Funder/Global South Advisor Collaboration

Global Fund for Women
Global Greengrants Fund
Fund for Nonviolence
and
Appleton

BENEFITS

x	x	x	Contribute to increasing funding to areas of need in their communities.
x	x	x	Advisors are much more than just a mechanism for grantmaking; they are the strength and the heart of our programs enabling us to assess real needs and fund culturally sensitive and responsible responses to those needs.
x		x	The process helps us as a foundation develop and clarify our criteria and funding priorities in a way that is grounded in a Latin American perspective
	x		Participation in grant recommendation processes serves to build the capacity of the advisors' networks as well as the capacity of grantees
	x		Advisors can play an important role helping foundations mentor and monitor grantee progress from afar (GGF)
x	x	x	Localized knowledge informs grantmaking
	x		Strengthens advisor's movement, network or organizational links to grassroots groups
x	x	x	Combines the experience of many & taps the strength of social networks
	x	x	Promotes the ability to work with fellow advisors to make grants strategically
x	x	x	Opportunity for advisors to endorse good work or organizations
			Challenges
x	x	x	Advisors are often present or past grantees. It's a big challenge to handle this effectively—to have a process that works and doesn't impact relationships.
x	x	x	Once advisors are affiliated as a grantmaker or connected to northern groups, that can change an advisor's relationships in their community as activists.
x	x	x	Being an advisor to US foundations is a huge responsibility to have as activists.
x			The grantmaking process makes it hard for advisors to see what of their input is used in making the granting decision
x		x	Challenge of cultural shock—even though advisors and foundation staff may have similar goals and values—sometimes it's a challenge to communicate across cultures.
x	x		Many Advisors are full time activists- not always enough time to mentor and/or recommend (applying for?) grants to small groups

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x	x	x	Diversity of the network is a real added benefit, but at times there are conflicting ideas about approaches (e.g., some groups want to engaged with the World Bank, while others do not choose to dialogue with the World Bank); there may also be differences of viewpoints/positions on specific issues, which may impact on the grant-making decisions
x	x	x	Conflict of interests must be fairly handled (e.g. an application coming from the advisor's organization or close relationships).
x	x	x	How do advisors manage the power (privilege?) they have as advisors?
x	x	x	Finding a balance of work that is comfortable for different advisors (e.g.: the volume of communication/requests they are able/willing to receive will vary)
			Important things we have learned
x	x	x	It's important to have diversity within the team of advisors so that the information is complimentary—that not all come from one perspective (human rights, fair trade, etc.); However, it also important to have cohesion of standpoint/position and some common, shared values.
x	x	x	It's important to have clarity about how you will involve advisors and about what their role is. Questions that can arise: What is the process of decision making re: funding and how do advisors influence the ultimate decision to fund or not fund? Do advisors represent the funder?
x	x	x	Foundations need to have clarity about what support and tools advisors will need to support the grantmaking process.
x			Important to keep in mind the level of competition for funding among groups that work on similar issues or in the same countries sometimes (particularly in the case of 'split off' groups)
x			Including peer organizations has proven critical in many cases of advisor guidance and expanding on the coverage that other advisors in the region might not have.
x	x		Important to foster exchange/learning between advisors through regional advisors meetings – especially important in building network among the advisors