

# DIALOGUE

*A Periodic Newsletter for Development Officers*

-- Bill Somerville, Editor --

---

*Dialogue* is published to help improve relations between funders and development officers. *Dialogue* was started at the request of a development officer. Readers are invited to submit questions. Subscribing to *Dialogue* is free and it can be received by mail or E-mail.

---

**Q: What evidence is there that risk taking by agencies offers better results with social problems than proven methods?**

**A:** The common concern held by both funders and program directors is to be effective in addressing social problems. Funders lean towards new approaches which means taking risks whereas agency personnel want to continue with what they have. The Editor feels that in venturing into new program approaches lies the potential to be more effective and he is willing to tolerate some failures. How do readers feel about this issue? It comes up all the time.

**Q: How does a young grassroots non-profit go about introducing itself to foundations?**

**A:** Ask for support and in so doing give illustrative information about your program – not just a depiction of how bad things are that you want to address.

**Q: Do foundations hire people with disabilities?**

**A:** Yes, but one is hard pressed to find many of them working for foundations. It would be the Editor's guess that very few disabled persons apply for these positions.

**Q: What is the reaction to non-profits merging? Is this seen as a strength or a weakness? Is collaboration favored over merging?**

**A:** The issue is, did the merge bring more effectiveness? Size is not the issue because many larger entities lose their effectiveness. Effectiveness seems to be related to passion on the part of the staff, vision on the part of the board, and dedication on everyone's part. Collaboration is almost always welcome.

**Q: How are requests for funds by E-mail regarded?**

**A:** Poorly, so far. The Editor is receiving an increasing number of E-mail requests which give no address or location from which they came nor any background on the agency making the request.

**Q: What is the future of on-line proposal systems?**

**A:** According to Foundation News and Commentary, published by the Council on Foundations, the July/August 1999 issue states that Bell Atlantic, Daimler-Chrysler, and Hewlett Packard all accept on-line grant applications. Bell Atlantic responds within 48 hours.

The on-line process only works when the funder merely needs certain information that fits a given criterion.

**Interesting Reading**

The November – December 1999 issue of the *Harvard Business Review* has an article “Philanthropy’s New Agenda: Creating Value” by Michael Porter, Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School and Mark Kramer, founder of the Center for Effective Philanthropy ([www.effectivephilanthropy.com](http://www.effectivephilanthropy.com)). pp.121-130 reprint # 99610.

The article is critical of foundations and raises expectations of them. “Foundations create value in four ways: selecting the best grantees, signaling other funders, improving the performance of grant recipients, and advancing the state of knowledge and practice.”

**Useful Resources**

The Support Center for Nonprofit Management in San Francisco publishes *Board Cafe* - an electronic newsletter exclusively for members of nonprofit Boards of Directors offering ideas, information, opinion, news, and resources. It is co-published by the National Center for Nonprofit Boards.

To receive the newsletter by E-mail or fax contact: [mela@supportcenter.org](mailto:mela@supportcenter.org)  
Or call: (202) 736-5800

Past Copies of *Dialogue*, Numbers 1-17 are available as a unit for \$5 to cover the cost of copying and mailing. For a complete set send \$5 to:

**Philanthropic Ventures Foundation  
1212 Preservation Park Way  
Oakland CA 94612-1201**

# Web Sites on Researching Non-Profits & Doing Philanthropic Giving

## Philanthropic Search Engine:

[www.philanthropysearch.com](http://www.philanthropysearch.com)

## Web sites for researching non-profit organizations:

[www.give.org](http://www.give.org)

National Charities Information Bureau  
their mission – to promote informed giving

[www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org)

Philanthropic Research, Inc.  
Form 990's from the IRS and other info

[www.philanthropy.com](http://www.philanthropy.com)

Chronicle of Philanthropy  
news (free) & guide to corporation & foundation grants (fee)

[www.bbb.org/about/pas.html](http://www.bbb.org/about/pas.html)

Philanthropic Advisory Service (PAS) of the Council of  
The Better Business Bureau, Inc.  
Database of non-profits

<http://nccs.urban.org>

National Center for Charitable Statistics  
database of non-profits

[www.benefice.com](http://www.benefice.com)

Information, tools, resources

## Web sites for on-line giving:

[www.charitableway.com](http://www.charitableway.com)

on-line giving to charity of one's choice

[www.allcharities.com](http://www.allcharities.com)

not up yet  
on-line giving

[www.helping.org](http://www.helping.org)

AOL Foundation  
database of non-profits and on-line giving

## Shopping for charity (give to the charity of one's choice by shopping for consumer goods):

[www.greatergood.com](http://www.greatergood.com)

[www.4charity.com](http://www.4charity.com)

[www.charitymall.com](http://www.charitymall.com)

[www.shop2give.com](http://www.shop2give.com)

If you know of other web-sites on researching non-profits or for philanthropic giving, please let us hear from you and we will publish it in the next issue of *Dialogue*.

**Dialogue**

Philanthropic Ventures Foundation  
1212 Preservation Park Way  
Oakland CA 94612

Non Profit Organization  
U S Postage PAID  
Oakland CA Permit 962



If you would like to get Dialogue by e-mail, please send us your e-mail address. Otherwise, we'll send it via regular mail. The most current issue of Dialogue is also posted on our web-site.

Our E-mail address is [info@venturesfoundation.org](mailto:info@venturesfoundation.org)  
Check out our new Web-Site at [www.venturesfoundation.org](http://www.venturesfoundation.org)



The Aspen Institute in Washington, D.C. publishes Snapshots – Research Highlights from the Non-Profit Sector Research Fund. The Fund awards research grants and organizes convenings to expand knowledge of the non-profit sector and philanthropy, improve non-profit practices, and inform public policy related to non-profits. To subscribe: contact [nsrf@aspeninstitute.org](mailto:nsrf@aspeninstitute.org), or call (202) 736-5800.

**Fax your questions or comments for *Dialogue* to: (510) 645-1892**

---

---

---

---

---

---