



BUILDING A FIELD OF PRACTICE

As a foundation with an ambitious policy agenda and a limited time frame, Beldon pushed the envelope in several areas: funding sophisticated nonpartisan civic engagement activities, encouraging collaboration among grantees, and reaching out to new allies. To help ensure this work would continue after Beldon's exit, the foundation sought to build support among other funders for specific approaches to policy advocacy. Here's what we learned:

1. **Establish Leadership.** Leadership based on expertise and demonstrable results can attract other funders to your work.
2. **Cultivate Other Funders.** Peer-to-peer networking helps position other funders to take over as field leaders and supporters of key grantees.
3. **Invest in Funder Networks.** Funder networks will provide important infrastructure that can sustain your work after you're gone, so invest in them early on.
4. **Invest in Grantee Networks.** Provide peer learning opportunities that will foster productive relationships among grantees.
5. **Capture Stories and Distill Lessons.** Sharing what you learn along the way builds the field's knowledge base and will help strengthen your own and other funders' grant making.