



Engaging Other Funders

A key part of Beldon's mission was to bring more funders to the table. Its success accomplishing this goal was due in large part to the foundation's hiring of experienced program officers with good reputations in their fields and the funder community.

In its state-based work, Beldon cultivated local and regional funders by seeking their advice, sharing what the foundation was learning from its grant making, and co-funding some of their projects. But Beldon carefully avoided pressuring other foundations to support its strategies. The idea was to demonstrate the viability of new approaches and let other funders determine if these programs might be worthwhile investments for them as well.

Here's what we learned:

1. Hire senior program staff who are seen as knowledgeable leaders in their field and can draw in other funders.
2. Position your foundation as a resource on trends in the field and effective grant making strategies.
3. Serve as a convener to bring funders together to share knowledge and promote collaboration.
4. Assume a leadership role in field-building funder networks.
5. Avoid the hard sell. Demonstrate through your grant making how change can be achieved with a specific approach.
6. Build strong and effective grantee organizations that are better positioned to attract other funding.
7. Seek synergistic funding opportunities where your grant making can complement other funders' giving.
8. Share your impact stories – what worked well and less well- with other funders.