



How Are We Doing?
Findings from the Grantee Perception Study
August 2011

*In August 2010 Northern Rock Foundation commissioned an independent Grantee Perception Study from the Center for Effective Philanthropy (CEP). The idea of the study was to provide us with **comparable** feedback from our grant holders about the way we work and the difference we make.*

A copy of the summary report from the Center for Effective Philanthropy is available on the resources page of the Foundation's website.

The survey, completed during September and October 2010, covered all 350 organisations who had received funding from the Foundation in 2009. CEP got 272 responses (78%) which they compared with responses from the grantees of over 260 other Trusts and Foundations in the US and UK.

The report showed that the Foundation received higher than average ratings in the majority of dimensions CEP studied. In particular, we were rated highly for the impact we have on the organisations we work with, on their fields of work and on their local communities. Grantees said that our "stronger than typical relationship" and our "higher engagement" with them produced better results. We were especially pleased of the feedback from CEP that said 'when describing the Foundation, grantees frequently comment that the Foundation is "exemplary", "a significant player in the field" and a "generous and committed funder"'.

*For the Foundation, the **key findings** included:*

- The Foundation is perceived as a strong force in grantees fields and local communities*
- Grantees have stronger relationships with the Foundation than is typical for other trusts and foundations*
- Grantees appreciated our flexible and responsive ways of working, and the 'non-monetary' support we provide*
- Grantees indicated that our higher engagement with them produces greater impact*

And

- That we have a higher than typical impact on our organisations (we rank almost at the top of the scale)*

The table below is CEP's summary of their key findings.

Review of Findings

Chart shows the percentile rank of Northern Rock (◆) and the median corporate funder (◇) among all funders in the comparative set.

Indicator	Percentile Rank on Indicator					Description of Indicator
	0th	25th	50th	75th	100th	
Impact on the Field			◆		◇	Grantees were asked to rate the funder's impact on their fields.
Impact on the Community			◆		◇	Grantees were asked to rate the funder's impact on their local communities.
Impact on the Grantee Organisation		◆			◇	Grantees were asked to rate the funder's impact on their organisations.
Satisfaction			◆		◇	Grantees were asked to rate their satisfaction with their funder.
Quality of Relationships			◆		◇	This summary includes grantee ratings of funder fairness, responsiveness, grantee comfort approaching the funder if a problem arises, clarity of funder communication of its goals and strategy, and consistency of information provided by its communications resources.
Selection Process			◆		◇	Grantees were asked to rate the helpfulness of the funder's selection process for their organisations.
Reporting and Evaluation Processes			◆		◇	Grantees were asked to rate the helpfulness of the funder's reporting and evaluation processes for their organisations.
Pound Return on Grantee Administrative Hours		◆		◇		This summary is the calculation of number of dollars received divided by the time required of grantees to fulfill the funder's administrative requirements.
Percent Receiving Field or Comprehensive Non-Monetary Assistance		◆		◇		The funder's percentile rank on the proportion of grantees receiving higher impact field-focused or comprehensive assistance.
Assistance Securing Funding from Other Sources	% Receiving		◆		◇	The funder's percentile rank on the proportion of grantees receiving assistance securing funding from other sources.
	Impact		◆		◇	Grantees were asked to rate the impact of the funder's assistance securing funding from other sources.

Next steps

These findings are reassuring but there is always room for **improvement**. In difficult times it is important for the Foundation to learn and respond to feedback from our grantees. CEP suggested that:

- *Ratings for communication with our grantees could be improved. We are updating our website, launching a new newsletter and running more network sessions and training events as part of a new 'information strategy'*
- *Despite high ratings for our impact on and understanding of grantees organisations, grantees rated the impact of the Foundation on their ability to sustain their work in the future as average. We are working on new ways to support our organisations to be more sustainable through training and links with other organisations*
- *A smaller than typical number of grantees receive more active forms of support, especially in assistance beyond simply suggesting other potential funders. We are working to improve links between our organisations and key funders.*

The study has produced invaluable learning for the Foundation. We will use it to continue to improve how we work with the organisations we support.