

# Grantee Perception Report<sup>®</sup>

Summary Prepared for

## The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati

June 2004



THE CENTER FOR  
EFFECTIVE PHILANTHROPY

- ◆ Since February of 2003, the Center for Effective Philanthropy has conducted surveys of grantees on their perceptions of their foundation funders both on behalf of individual foundations and independently. The purpose of these surveys is two-fold: to gather data that is useful on a field-wide basis – forming the basis of research reports such as *Listening to Grantees: What Nonprofits Value in Their Foundation Funders* (April 2004) – and to provide individual foundations with Grantee Perception Reports.
- ◆ The Grantee Perception Report (GPR) reports perceptions of grantees. Although perceptions will not provide definitive evidence of a foundation's end social impact, they can provide important insights into aspects of performance.
- ◆ Grantee perceptions must be interpreted in light of the unique strategy of the foundation.
  - The survey covers many areas in which grantees' perceptions might be interesting to a foundation. Each foundation should place emphasis on the areas covered according to the foundation's specific priorities.
  - Low ratings in an area that is not core to a foundation's strategy may not be concerning to a foundation. For example, a foundation that does not focus efforts on public policy should receive low ratings in this area if it is adhering to its strategy.

- ◆ The Center for Effective Philanthropy surveyed 5,268 grantees of 29 foundations from March 2004 – April 2004. Grantees could respond to the survey via mail or the web. 3,513 completed responses were received, representing a 67 percent response rate.
  - 79 grantees of The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati (The Health Foundation) were surveyed.
  - 59 completed responses were received, representing a 75 percent response rate.
- ◆ Contact information for fiscal year 2003 grant recipients was provided by The Health Foundation.
- ◆ Throughout this report, The Health Foundation's results are compared to those of seven other health foundations<sup>1</sup> that were included in this study:
  - The Assisi Foundation of Memphis (TN)
  - Baptist Community Ministries (LA)
  - Connecticut Health Foundation (CT)
  - Endowment for Health (NH)
  - Maine Health Access Foundation (ME)
  - Quantum Foundation (FL)
  - Rose Community Foundation<sup>2</sup> (CO)

1: For a ratio of foundation giving to population served, see page 59.

2: Rose Community Foundation is a health foundation that also builds its assets through active fundraising, much like a community foundation.

29 foundations were included in this survey round. This is the group against which The Health Foundation is compared throughout this Grantee Perception Report. In general, the Center has found very few systematic differences in ratings based on asset size or focus of a foundation.

## Assets of more than \$500MM – Nationally Focused

Charles Stewart Mott Foundation  
The David and Lucile Packard Foundation  
Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation  
Surdna Foundation  
W. K. Kellogg Foundation

## Assets of less than \$500MM – Nationally Focused

Omidyar Foundation  
Wilburforce Foundation

## Assets of more than \$500MM – Regionally Focused

The Ahmanson Foundation (CA)  
Bush Foundation (MN)

## Assets of \$250MM - \$500MM – Regionally Focused

Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund (CA)  
The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation (DC)  
The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation (DC)

## Assets less than \$250MM – Regionally Focused

The Assisi Foundation of Memphis (TN)  
Baptist Community Ministries (LA)  
Bradley-Turner Foundation (GA)  
Connecticut Health Foundation (CT)  
Eden Hall Foundation (PA)  
Endowment for Health (NH)  
The GAR Foundation (OH)  
Victoria Foundation (NJ)

## **The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati (OH)**

Kalamazoo Community Foundation (MI)  
Maine Health Access Foundation (ME)  
New Hampshire Charitable Foundation (NH)  
Paul G. Allen Foundations (Pacific Northwest)  
Quantum Foundation (FL)  
Rose Community Foundation (CO)  
The William Stamps Farish Fund (TX)

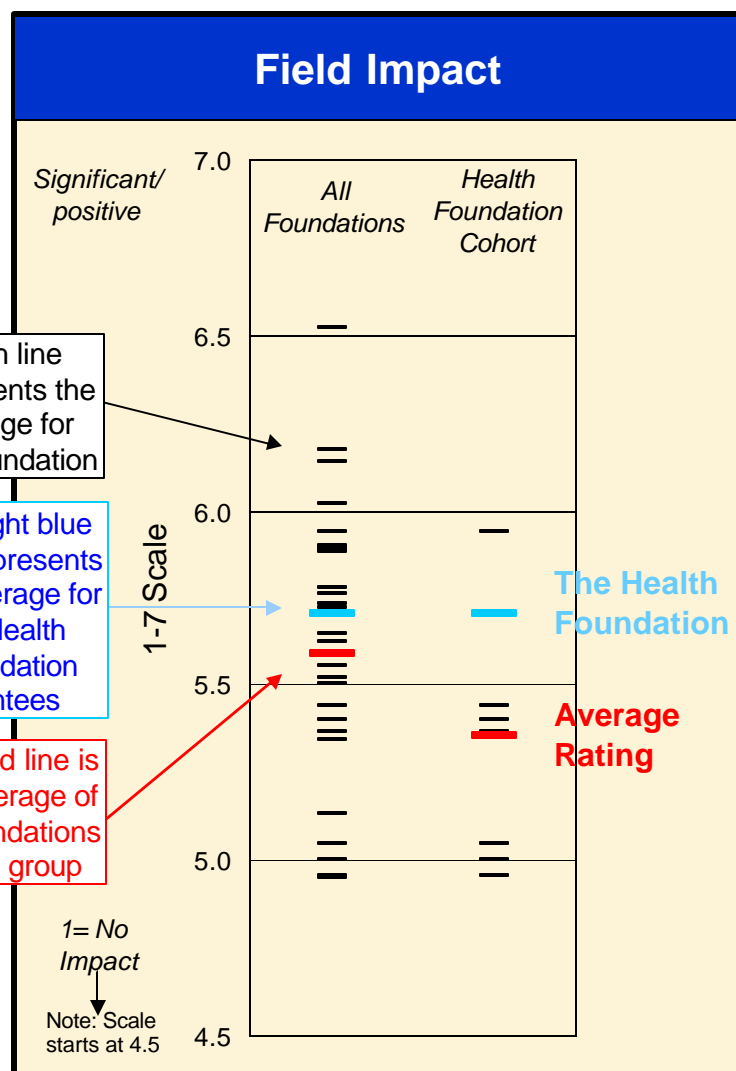
- ◆ Overall above average – especially relative to other health foundations
- ◆ Non-monetary assistance is a real strength
  - Almost all grantees report receiving non-monetary assistance
- ◆ Measures of impact on the field are average – but rising?
- ◆ Selection and evaluation processes are helpful to grantees
  - Evaluations are perceived as thorough and accurate
- ◆ Satisfaction and impact on the grantee organization ratings are average

The Field Impact Measure describes grantees' perceptions of a foundation's impact on the issues associated with the fields in which grantees operate.

- ◆ *The Health Foundation grantees believe the Foundation has an average impact on its fields of funding.*

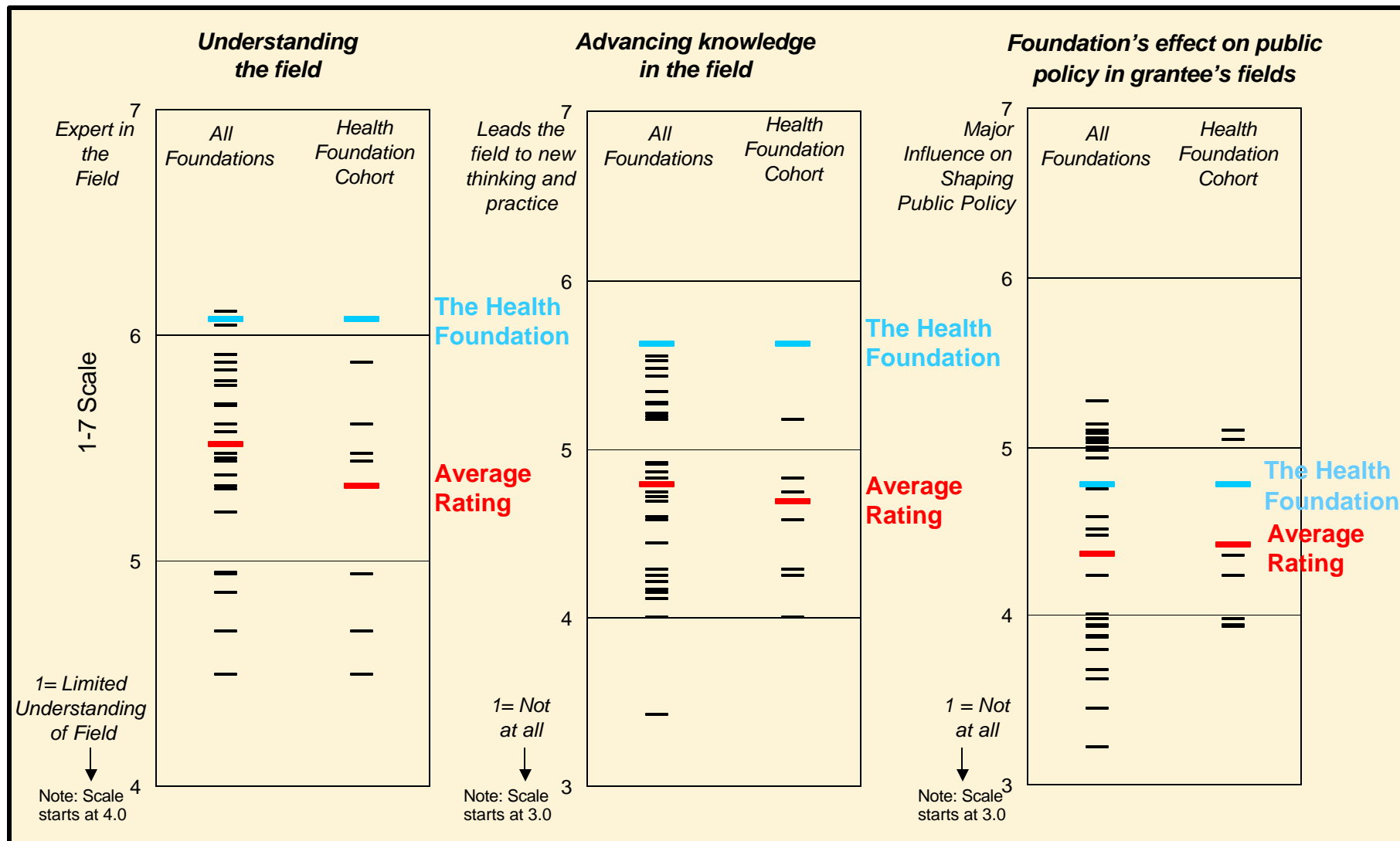
## Selected Grantee Quotes

- ◆ *"The quality of the Health Foundation's operations, processes, interactions and communications are excellent. The staff is incredibly friendly, knowledgeable and willing to help."*
- ◆ *"They maintain a current awareness of activities related to the grant and changes in the local communities and national trends that should be considered relative to ongoing operations."*
- ◆ *"[Impact on the field] has yet to be seen."*
- ◆ *"Widely respected input on public health issues in the community."*
- ◆ *"The Health Foundation is well versed and knowledgeable in the field of chemical dependency and mental health."*
- ◆ *"They've had a positive impact in many ways. For example, they're the third largest funder of substance abuse treatment in the nation and one of only a handful that have any interest in criminal justice issues. But I'm skeptical they've impacted public policy and I'm not sure they've advanced much more than a hodge-podge of 'best practices' that are not always well-refined or useful."*



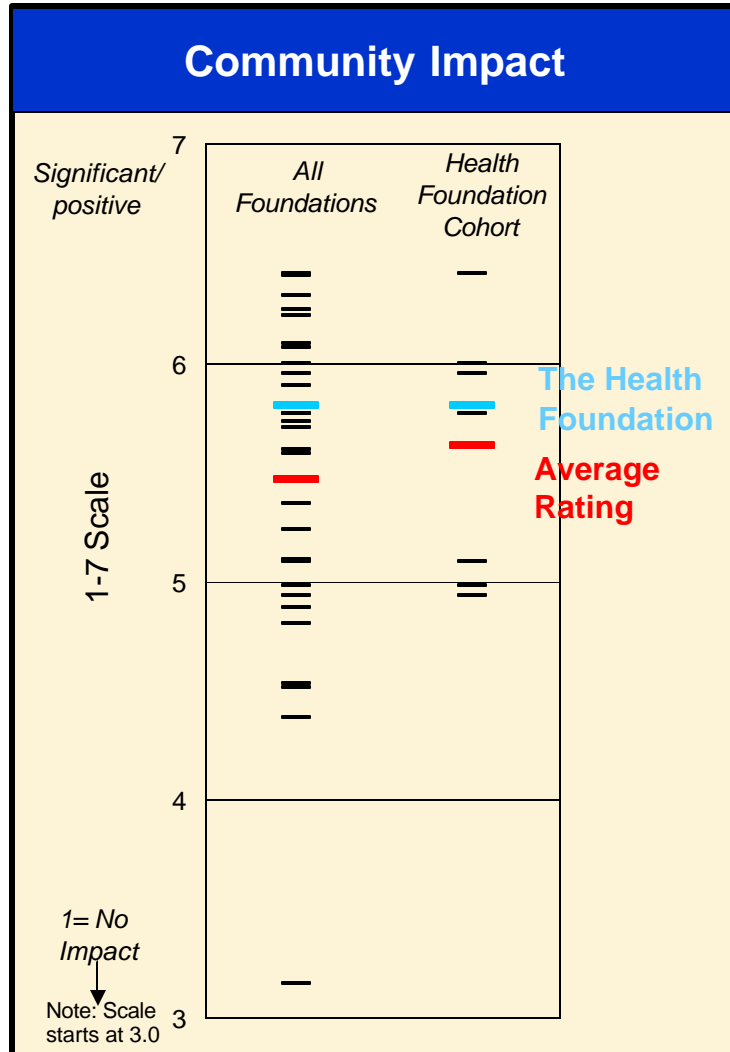
# Field Impact Measures

Grantees rate The Health Foundation very positively in its understanding of its fields of funding, effect on advancing knowledge, and influence on public policy.



This measure highlights grantees' perceptions of foundations' impact on their local communities.

- ◆ *The Health Foundation is perceived by grantees to have an average impact on grantees' communities.*



## Selected Grantee Quotes

- ◆ *“The foundation's staff is very knowledgeable, motivated and skilled in encouraging development of needed programs in the community.”*
- ◆ *“The Foundation is... one of the pioneer organizations working to advance the field of substance abuse, mental illness and criminal justice issues in the community.”*
- ◆ *“Small by comparison to the resources it has available.”*
- ◆ *“The foundation is a key player in making school-based health a reality in the greater Cincinnati area.”*
- ◆ *“[Our program officer] has an excellent understanding of the drug court program and the local needs of Campbell County.”*

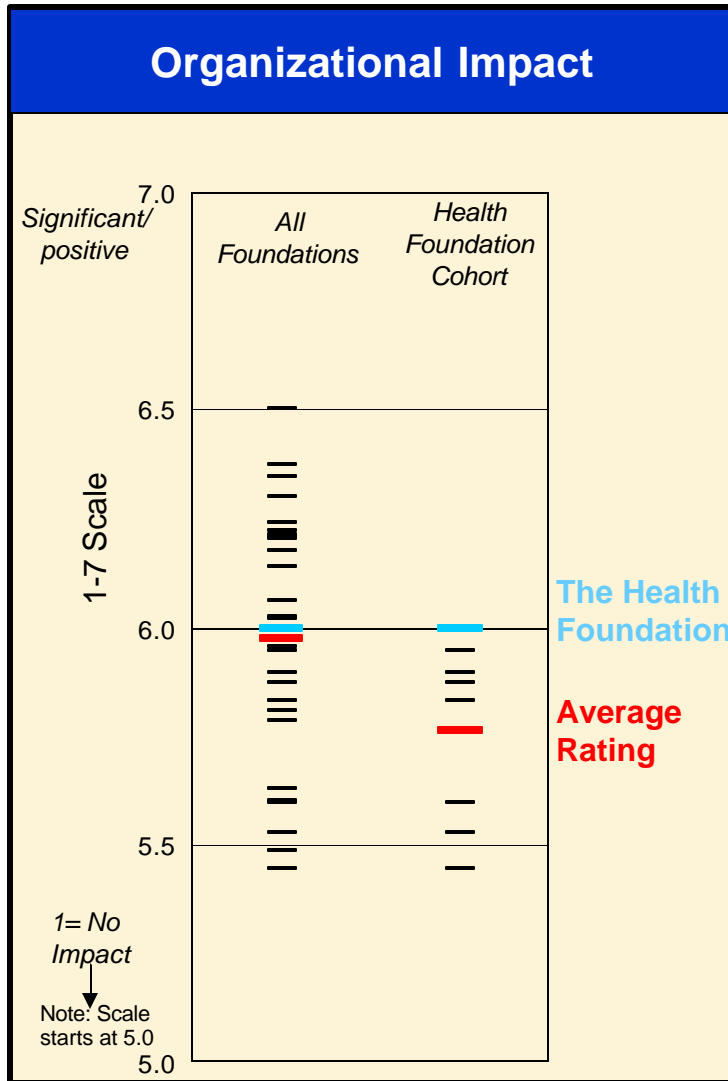
**Survey-wide Analysis Fact:** Survey results show a trade-off between field and community understanding. Higher understanding of the field correlates strongly with lower understanding of (and impact on) grantees' communities.



# Organizational Impact

The Health Foundation grantees rate the Foundation's impact on their organizations average, and the highest compared to the health foundation cohort.

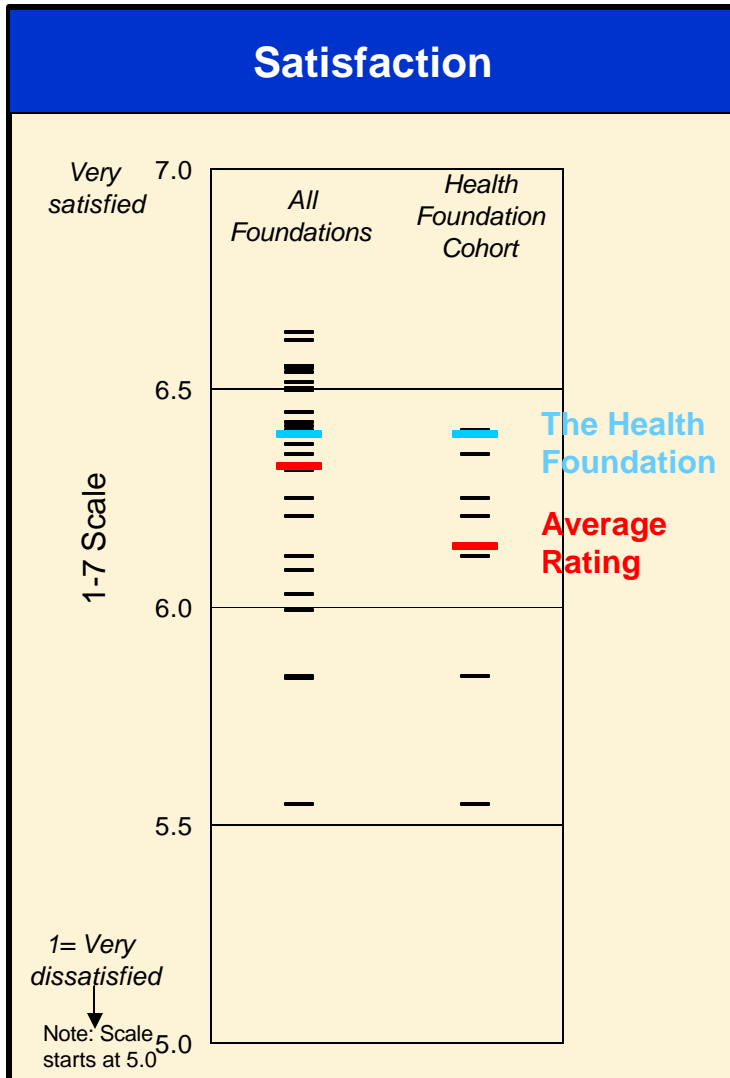
## Selected Grantee Quotes



- ◆ *“Foundation grants and staff have inspired us to develop new services, to think about creating new lines of business, and to develop best practices in service delivery.”*
- ◆ *“The Foundation has helped our organization fund new programs that might have gone unfunded because the programs were new and innovative.”*
- ◆ *“The Health Foundation is extremely responsive to the needs of our organization: all we have to do is call if we want to run something by them with regard to assistance and they can either respond themselves or point us in the right direction.”*
- ◆ *“There is a tension between ‘assistance’ and trying to satisfy the foundation in order to receive funding.”*
- ◆ *“We would not exist at all without the Health Foundation!”*
- ◆ *“Frustration.”*
- ◆ *“We have become guarded about approaching initiatives of the HF due to sustainability and HF - established goals.”*

# Satisfaction with the Foundation

On average, The Health Foundation grantees are as satisfied with the Foundation as grantees of other foundations, and is above average compared to the health foundation cohort.



## Selected Grantee Quotes

- ◆ *“This is not the most approachable foundation we deal with, tending to be more interested in its own approach to things than that of grantees or potential grantees.”*
- ◆ *“Very good people. Sometimes mixed messages from various staff which make it difficult to meet expectations.”*
- ◆ *“My interactions with all foundation officers and staff have been cordial, professional, business-like, and productive. They are easy to work with, clear and direct in their communications, and reasonable in their expectations.”*
- ◆ *“Communication with Foundation staff has been effective and efficient. Almost all interactions have been wonderful.”*
- ◆ *“Helpful, activist staff. A pleasure to work with.”*

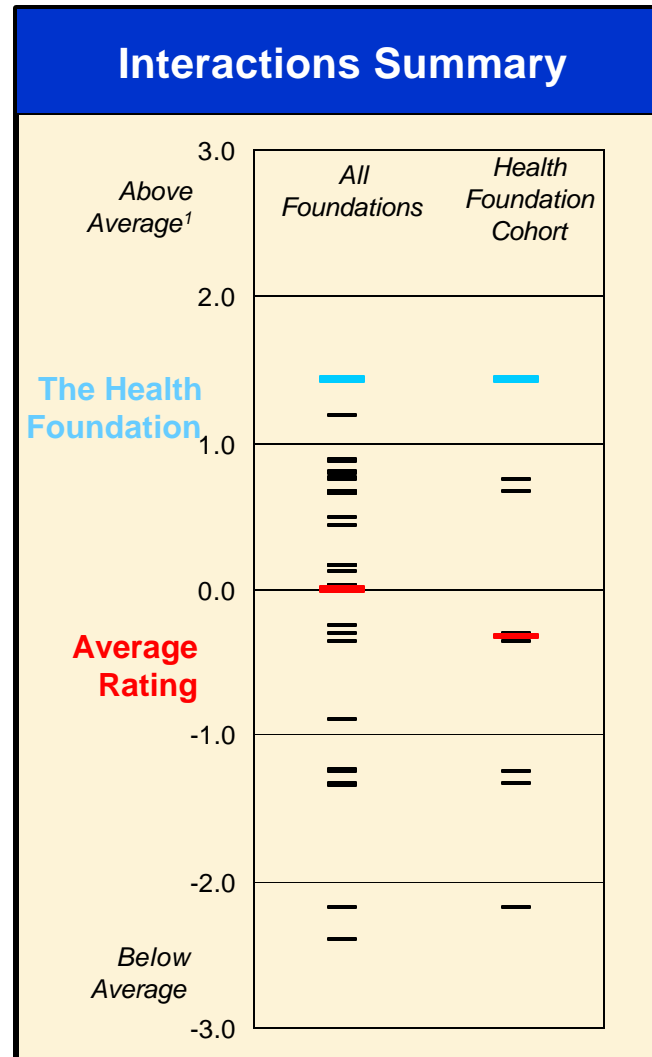
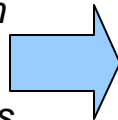
# Grantee Interactions Summary

The Grantee Interactions Summary describes grantees' perceptions of their interactions with foundations.

- ◆ Grantees rate The Health Foundation highest among foundations in our sample in terms of quality of interactions.

This composite measure includes:

- How comfortable grantees feel approaching the foundation if a problem arises
- Overall responsiveness of the foundation staff
- Overall fairness of the foundation's treatment of grantees



## Selected Grantee Quotes

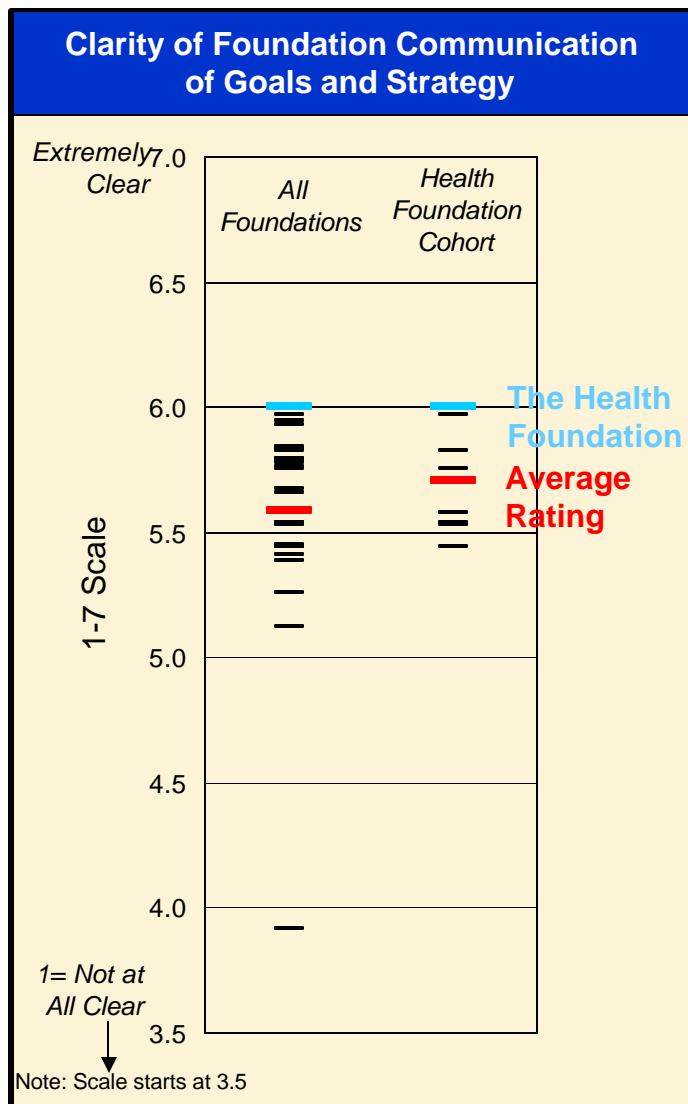
- ◆ "I have been extremely impressed with the Foundation in every aspect. Not only the willingness, but the eager disposition of the staff is refreshing."
- ◆ "The Health Foundation provides quality service and is available to talk about issues as they occur. They stay in touch throughout the grant process and are open to making a variance if things change as the program develops."
- ◆ "Foundation staff are all extremely friendly and helpful - from receptionist to CEO."
- ◆ "Questions are always answered clearly and in a timely manner. We are able to speak openly about occasional program implementation problems or the need to seek a variance to the original grant agreement."

Note: Index created using factor analysis, a statistical technique useful in aggregating separate rating questions into one "rating" that represents the combination of unique variation from the inputs.

1: "Above" and "Below" average scores are units of standard deviation.

# Communication of Goals and Strategy

The Health Foundation grantees report having an above average perception of the clarity of the Foundation's communications of its goals and strategy – the highest rated among foundations in our survey sample.



## Selected Grantee Quotes

- ♦ *“The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati is an incredible organization. They set a clear agenda with targeted program areas, and they really work with you to help you be successful.”*
- ♦ *“Foundation is excellent in communicating the details of the grant application process. Mental health and substance abuse program officers are really excellent in availability and helpfulness.”*
- ♦ *“In general, they are quite helpful. Between verbal communications, letters, their website, and their weekly email, we usually have a pretty good idea of what's going on and what they consider to be important.”*
- ♦ *“Foundation staff have provided excellent education about grant process and ongoing feedback and communication.”*

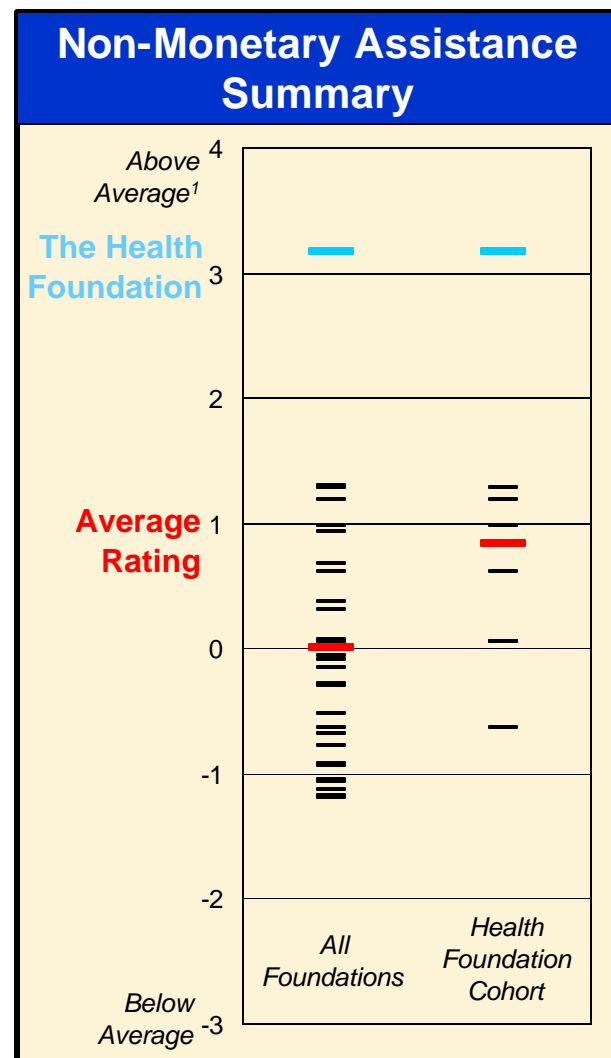
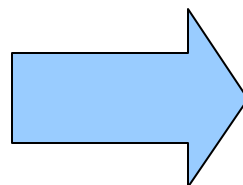
# Non-Monetary Assistance Summary

The Non-Monetary Assistance Summary describes the frequency and value of a foundation's provision of assistance beyond the grant check.

- ♦ *The Health Foundation is the highest-rated foundation in our sample on this measure.*

This composite measure includes:

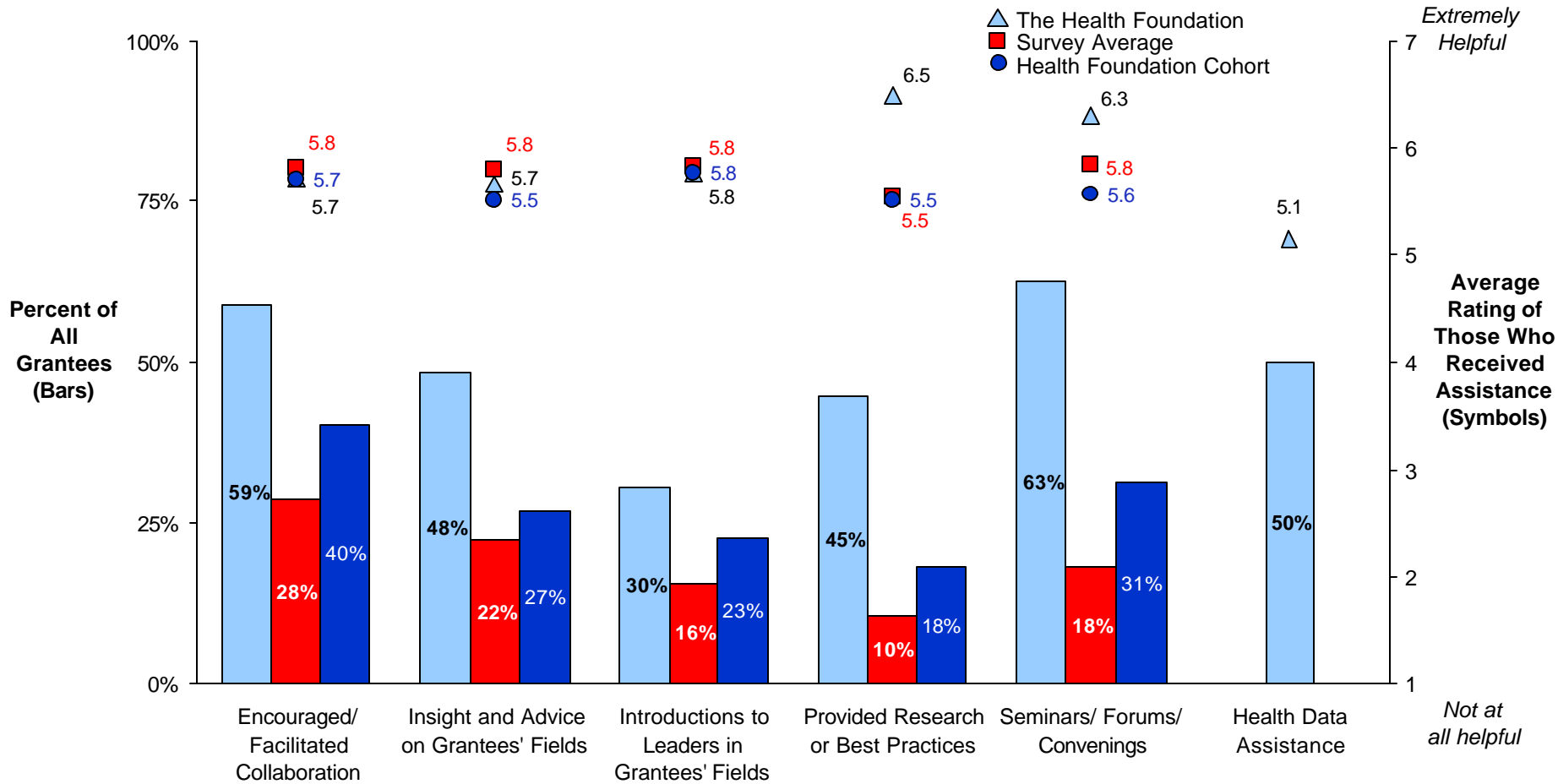
- *Whether grantees received assistance from the foundation*
- *How helpful that assistance was to them*



# Field-Related Assistance Activities & Helpfulness

The Health Foundation grantees are much more frequently provided all types of field-related assistance. The Health Foundation's field-related assistance is seen to be average to above average in helpfulness.

Frequency and Helpfulness of Field-Related Assistance Activities<sup>1</sup>



1: The percentage of Health Foundation grantees that report receiving these field-related assistance activities is statistically different from the overall survey average at 90% confidence. Ratings of provision of research and best practices and seminars/ forums/ convenings are also statistically different.

Note: A question about "Health Data Assistance" was specifically added by The Health Foundation, so no comparative data is available.

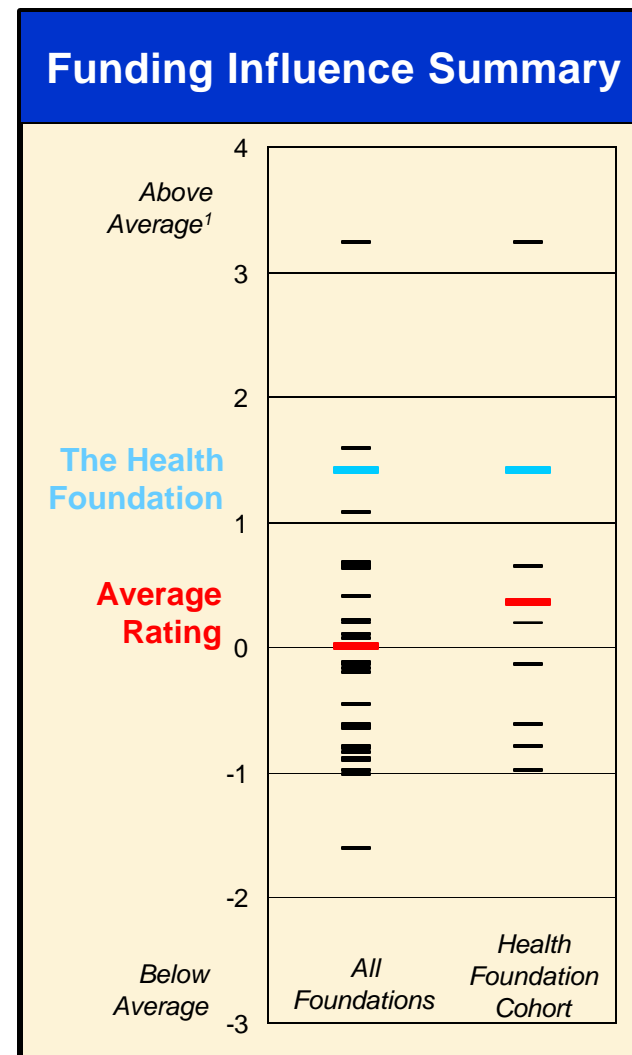
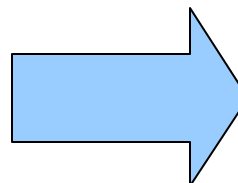
# Funding Influence Summary

This summary highlights grantees' perceptions of a foundations' help in grantees' efforts to secure additional funding from other sources.

- ◆ *The Health Foundation is above average on this measure.*

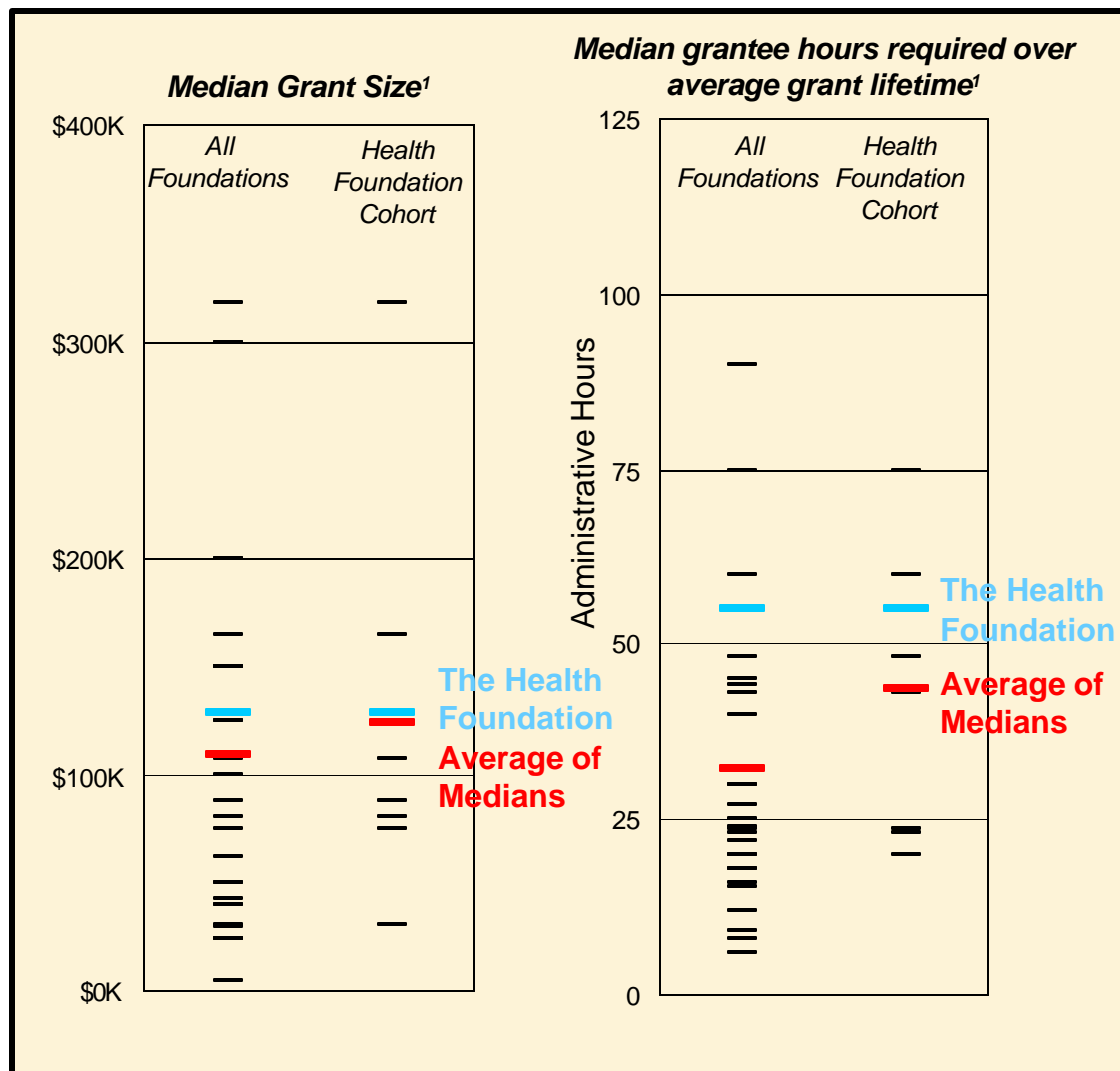
This composite measure includes:

- *Frequency of active foundation assistance in obtaining additional funding*
- *The impact of those efforts*



# Grant Size and Administrative Time Required

The Health Foundation makes similar size grants at the median relative to other foundations. The administrative time it requires of grantees is greater than average. Considering the fact that The Health Foundation tends to give somewhat longer grants, the amount of money grantees receive relative to the number of hours they invest in administrative processes is typical.



## Selected Grantee Quotes

- ♦ *“Their operations and processes are efficient and well-managed. Their interactions and communications are high quality and professional.”*
- ♦ *“The Health Foundation has perfected the grant process by being very thorough, and having the time, skills, and facilities to provide training on the process. The staff support has been absolutely phenomenal and valuable.”*

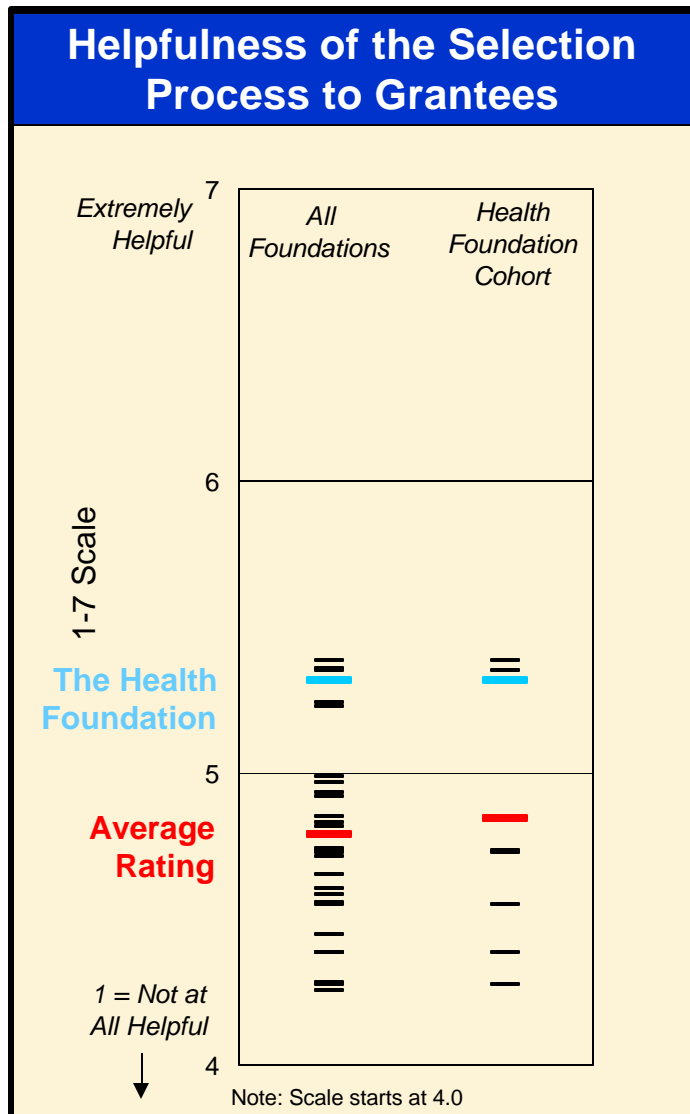
*Survey-wide Analysis Fact: Neither increasing grant size nor dollar return on grantee administrative hours – except at the extremes – predict increased ratings of impact on the grantee or satisfaction as well as improved interactions and communications.*

<sup>1</sup>: Chart displays total grant proposal creation, evaluation and monitoring hours spent over the life of the grant; each of these events did not necessarily occur for each individual grantee.



# Helpfulness of Selection Process

Grantees rate the The Health Foundation selection process as above average in helpfulness.

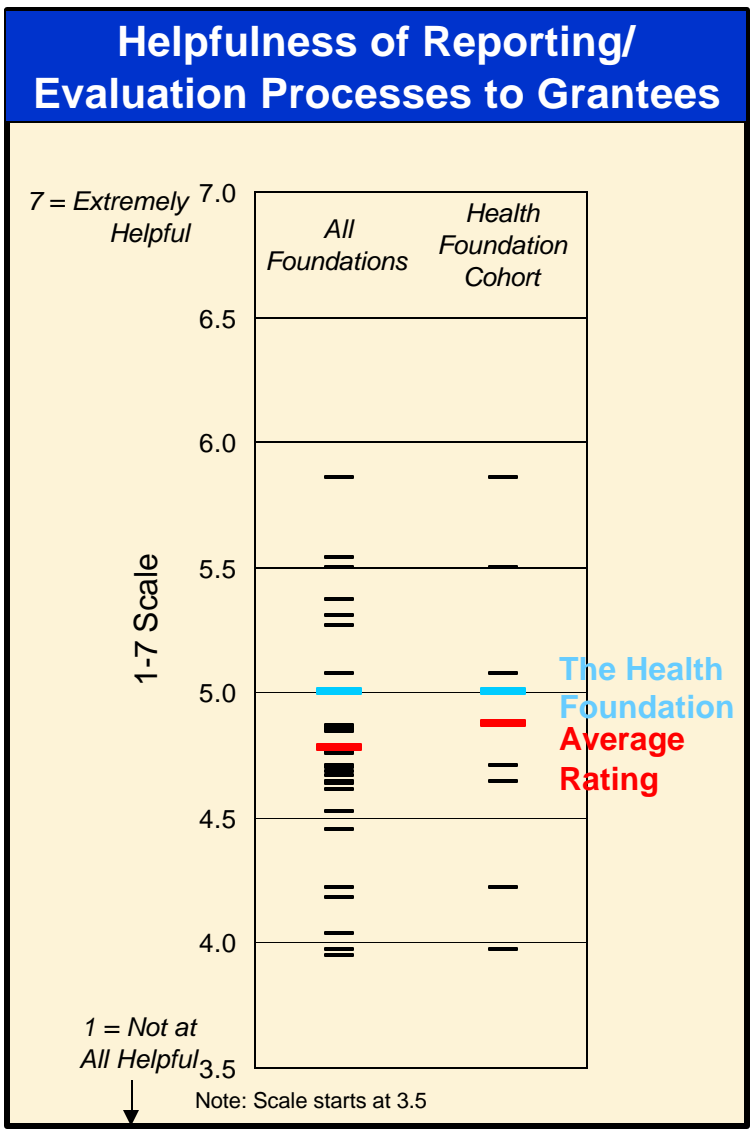


## Selected Grantee Quotes

- ♦ *“The quality of the Foundation's operations, processes, interactions and communications has been excellent. The Foundation's staff are always available to work with you and to provide guidance in making sure you produce a quality application for funding.”*
- ♦ *“The Health Foundation's operations are exceedingly professional. Grant opportunities are offered in a way that actually makes completing the application process a pleasant experience. Foundation staff are exceptionally knowledgeable about the behavioral healthcare field, are courteous and always helpful.”*
- ♦ *“It's clear that the Health Foundation WANTS you to succeed and helps you tailor your funding requests to suit YOUR purposes in every way. They have been unbelievably helpful in getting funds to organizations and allowing them to use the funds as the organizations see fit, rather than setting a parameter that organizations need to find a way to fit. I can't say enough about working with them: a breath of fresh air in the foundation funding arena!”*
- ♦ *“[They were] very involved with proposal development.”*

# Helpfulness of Reporting and Evaluation Processes

The Health Foundation's evaluation<sup>1</sup> process is reported to be of average helpfulness to grantees.



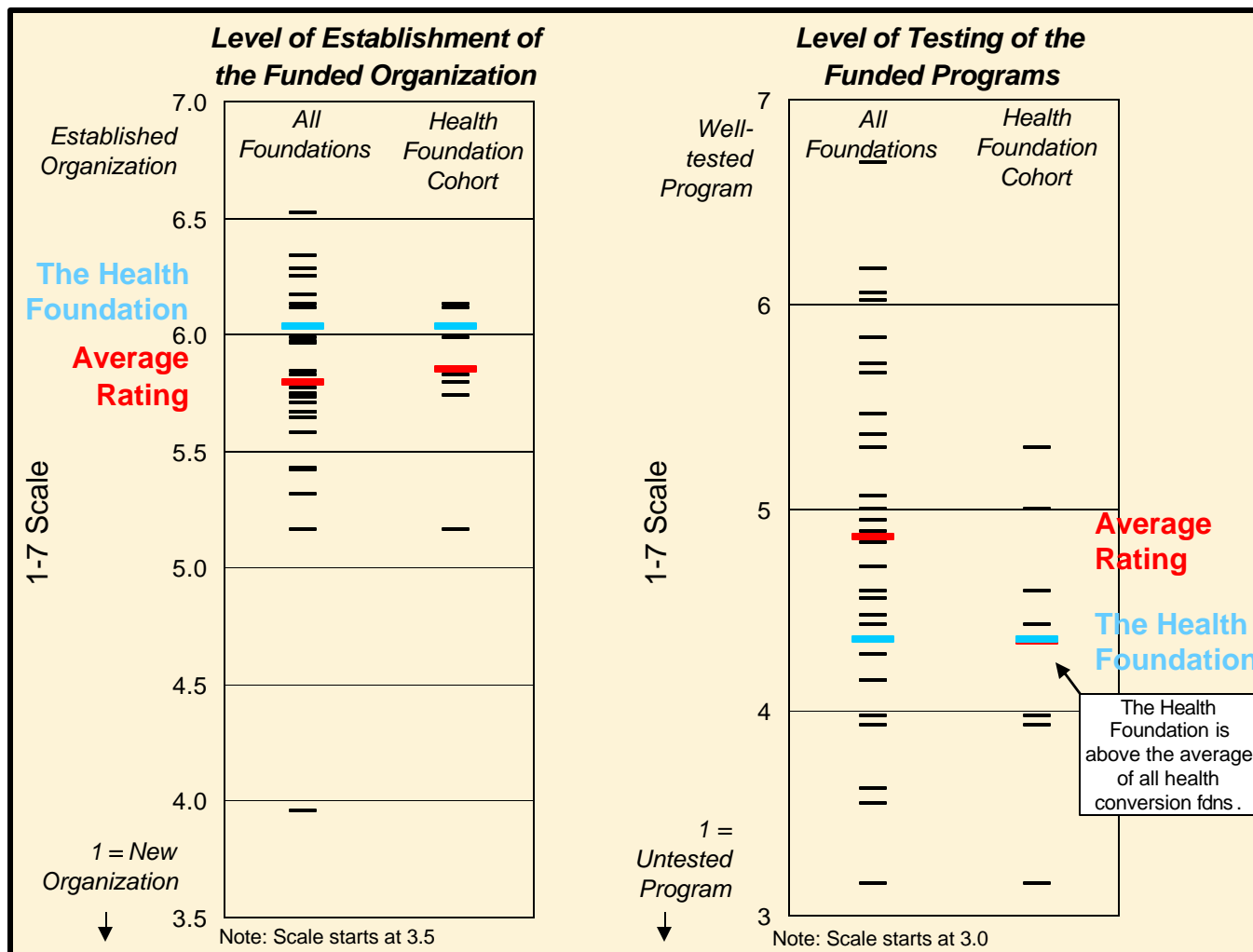
## Selected Grantee Quotes

- ♦ *“The organization as a whole has gained knowledge of the process, for example the logic model. The evaluation outcomes process has served many of our departments well. The assistance made the work bearable. It is a massive process and really quite overwhelming if assistance is not provided.”*
- ♦ *“Their guidelines have forced us to think more about sustainability issues and about collaborating with others in the community. Although the evaluation requirements are useful, they are more extensive (and sometimes more nitpicky) than I think they need to be.”*



# History of Grantee Organizations and Programs

The Health Foundation grantees describe their organizations as well-established, like the grantees of most foundations. Grantees describe their programs as less well-tested than average compared to all foundations, and as well-tested as the grantees of other health foundations.



## ◆ Overall, an exemplary funder

- The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati (The Health Foundation) is viewed extremely positively on many measures. It is the highest rated foundation in our sample on measures of quality of interactions with grantees, provision of non-financial assistance, and clarity of communication of its goals and strategies.
- The Health Foundation also consistently requests and discusses reports and evaluations; all grantees surveyed state that their grant includes a report or evaluation (the highest proportion among foundations in our sample), and discusses these reports and evaluations with nearly 90 percent of its grantees, the highest proportion in our sample.

## ◆ Administrative processes

- The Health Foundation is reported to have more time-intensive administrative requirements than many other funders, especially in the area of reporting and evaluation processes. Although The Health Foundation grants tend to be of median or slightly larger size than average, the dollar award of grants is offset by the relative time-intensity of the foundation's processes – making the dollar return on grantee administrative hours about average.
- While the grant proposal creation process and reporting/evaluation processes are seen to be above average in utility, the foundation also asks for much more information than average.
  - *The foundation may wish to consider whether all data collected during the selection and reporting processes are necessary and whether the process could be streamlined while remaining helpful to the grantee.*

## ◆ Organizational impact and grantee satisfaction

- Of the few negative comments from grantees, several focus on grantees' hesitation to work with the Foundation based on a perception that the Foundation is more interested in pushing forward its own goals via grantees rather than supporting grantees' missions for the long term.
  - *Staff may want to be more upfront with potential grantees that support might only be for a limited duration and where the mutual interests of the Foundation and grantee overlap. Managing these expectations may help grantees plan more appropriately.*