



Equity in Grantmaking: A Review of Barriers and Strategies for Funders Considering Improvement Opportunities

SUMMARY

In 2023, the Chief Evaluation Office (CEO) partnered with the [Employment and Training Administration \(ETA\)](#) and commissioned contractor Westat Insight to conduct a study to explore approaches to measure and increase equity in ETA's discretionary grantmaking programs. This study sought to explore how grantmakers – such as Federal agencies, State and local government agencies, and philanthropic organizations – define, assess, and increase equity in their grantmaking process.

This study explores research and strategies related to equity in the discretionary grantmaking process based on a review of publicly available literature and Federal agency Equity Action Plans as well as interviews with Federal and philanthropic grantmakers. The report describes **how funders define equity** in the context of awarding grants, common **barriers and promising action steps to increase equity** in each stage of the grantmaking process (preaward, collection of applications, funding of awards, and postaward), and **measurement strategies to help funders track their progress**.

This report can support a variety of grantmakers examining equity, whether at government agencies (including at Federal, State, and local levels) or foundations. Recognizing that grantmaking organizations vary in size, policy area, and scope, the study team provides findings and suggestions that funders can tailor to meet their context and goals. The findings focus on domestic (U.S.-based) grantmaking, though international or transnational grantmakers may also find useful insights.

This Department of Labor-funded study contributes to the labor evidence-base to inform [data, methods, and tools](#); [employment and training](#); and [equity](#) programs and policies as well as addresses Departmental strategic goals and priorities.

[SEE FULL STUDY](#)

TIMEFRAME: 2023-2024

SUBMITTED BY: Westat

DATE PREPARED: August 2024

PARTNER AGENCY: Employment and Training Administration

SPONSOR: Chief Evaluation Office

CEO CONTACT: ChiefEvaluationOffice@dol.gov

The Department of Labor's (DOL) Chief Evaluation Office (CEO) sponsors independent evaluations and research, primarily conducted by external, third-party contractors in accordance with the [Department of Labor Evaluation Policy](#). CEO's [research development process](#) includes extensive technical review at the design, data collection and analysis stage, including: external contractor review and OMB review and approval of data collection methods and instruments per the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA), Institutional Review Board (IRB) review to ensure studies adhere to the highest ethical standards, review by academic peers (e.g., Technical Working Groups), and inputs from relevant DOL agency and program officials and CEO technical staff. Final reports undergo an additional independent expert technical review and a review



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for Section 508 compliance prior to publication. The resulting reports represent findings from this independent research and do not represent DOL positions or policies.