Dear GMN Members, Supporters, Partners, and Friends:

For two decades, GMN has provided national leadership in advancing the “how” of philanthropy—the core practices funders use to make their grants and assess the impact of that funding. Grants management professionals and their work have become increasingly vital as funders seek to grow impact, increase transparency, and get the best possible return on their philanthropic investments.

There are more professionals in more organizations performing the grants management functions essential to effective philanthropy. And this function is changing, transforming from a process and compliance role to one that focuses on data, information, and knowledge. Grants Managers Network has been at the forefront of the changing role of grants managers, staying true to our vision of grantmaking practices that maximize philanthropic impact.

These practices are the foundation of effective, values-based philanthropy. I am pleased and honored to report on the progress we have made in making philanthropy more effective and impactful.

All of our achievements in 2015 are due in large measure to the support of our members, funders, and partners. Please know that we continue to work hard to merit your ongoing trust, confidence, and support. We appreciate your continued support as we lead grants management into the future.

Michelle Greanias
Executive Director

“...to the extent that funders get their grantmaking practices right, they gain the confidence and trust of grantees and the public, and they are able to lift their vision of what their grantmaking can achieve in the world.”

Michelle Greanias, Executive Director, Grants Managers Network

Accelerating the adoption of proven practices that bring added effectiveness, efficiency, and transparency to grantmaking

GMN believes that as funders become more efficient in their grantmaking practices, more resources can be shifted from administrative to mission-related activities by both grantmakers and grantseekers.

Our Effective Practices work is organized under three strategies:

1. Organizing, managing, using, and analyzing data more effectively (70 percent)
2. Improving grantmaking processes to make them more effective and efficient (66 percent)

The top two responses were:

- Organizing, managing, using, and analyzing data more effectively (70 percent)
- Improving grantmaking processes to make them more effective and efficient (66 percent)

In 2015, GMN engaged 193 participants in building their data skills and trained another 532 participants in improving Grant Applications and Grant Decisions.

GMN has responded to both the need for knowledge and the call for effective practices by creating the EPIcenter, a tool that enables grants managers to compare their practices against those of their peers and connect to resources to help them improve.

The EPIcenter will create the first-ever database of how funders are making grants now, track how practices are changing over time, and determine whether and how grantmakers are adopting effective practice. Learn more at www.gmnetwork.org/epicenter.
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Our Effective Practices work is organized under three strategies:

- Evaluating Practices: Grantmakers often make decisions about their grantmaking practices without information from stakeholders or a complete understanding of their current practice. GMN is working to bring greater focus on feedback and evaluating grant practices as a hallmark of an effective grantmaker.

- Changing Practices: With grantmakers better equipped to understand what to improve through our practice evaluation efforts, GMN is expanding the training, tools, resources, templates, guides, and examples that help grantmakers change. This work is focused in four areas: streamlining, data, compliance, and technology.

- Elevating the “How” of Grantmaking: GMN’s goal is to elevate the importance of grantmaking practices (the “how”) to the same level as program (the “what”) and relationships (the “who”) within grantmaking organizations.

Introducing the EPIcenter

A key method grantmakers use to evaluate practices is benchmarking, asking colleagues, “How do you do it?” Whether it’s financial due diligence, reducing response times, or going paperless, grantmakers are interested in learning from their colleagues what works.

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Forward Focus for Grants Managers

In 2015, GMN conducted research into attitudes and perceptions towards grants management. We listened to senior leadership, program staff, and operations colleagues about what they see as the greatest opportunities for grants managers to improve grantmaking in their organizations. The top two responses were:

1. Organizing, managing, using, and analyzing data more effectively (70 percent)
2. Improving grantmaking processes to make them more effective and efficient (66 percent)

In 2015, GMN engaged 175 participants in building their data skills and trained another 532 participants to streamline their grantmaking.

GMN has responded to both the need for knowledge and the call for effective practices by creating the EPIcenter, a tool that enables grant managers to compare their practices against those of their peers and connect to resources to help them improve.

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Advancing Greatmaking Through Insight
GMN is helping lead conversations in the field through topics presented in our GMNsight: Advancing Greatmaking journal, published quarterly around different themes. With more than 16,000 page views in 2015, the journal is a popular destination not only for GMN members but for anyone working in the philanthropy sector who wishes to stay current on trends and new issues. As the readership and reputation of GMNsight grow, more people will connect GMN and our writers with thought leadership in elevating the “how” of grantmaking. In 2015, we produced issues focused on: Collaboration, Learning and Evaluation (in partnership with Grantmakers for Effective Organizations), and Streamlining and Beyond. For more about GMNsight, visit the journal online at www.gmnsight.org.

GMN Voices
“Being a volunteer for the GMNsight journal is not only a great way to connect with other grant managers in a more regular way, but it’s also kept me on the forefront of what’s happening in philanthropy and how changes affect grant managers. Whether it’s brainstorming on topics like social media or data or connecting with leaders in the field for articles on these topics, I never cease to learn something or expand my professional network. The great thing, too, is your commitment to publication. It’s a real honor to participate.”

Joanna Willis, Grants Manager
The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Blogging for the People of Grants Managers Network
Recognizing the power of timely and informative content that helps our members learn and participate in the discussions happening across the philanthropy sector, GMN has devoted significant effort to building our blog into a key source of information and opinion. Our readers respond best to blog posts written by practitioners who have unique experiences to share, and topics of high interest include collective impact, diversity and inclusion, and grants management systems, as well as grants management as a profession. The blog is another avenue for demonstrating thought leadership in the sector. In 2015, we continued our popular Weekly Reader series, which highlights a new article each day that is relevant to the work of grants managers or to the field of philanthropy as a whole. And we introduced GMN In the Loop, a Friday newsletter digest of the week’s top articles. Learn more on our blog at www.gmnetwork.org/blog/.

Making the Perfect Pitch
GMN held our first Perfect Pitch contest in 2015, and the winning pitch was presented by Lisa Stegman, Senior Manager for Business Capabilities at PetSmart Charities. A perfect pitch is a combination of compelling words, enthusiastic presentation, and action-provoking ideas. It’s based on the idea that a three-minute elevator ride may represent the best opportunity a grants manager will ever have to capture the imagination of their senior leadership about what they do in order to elevate the “how” of grantmaking. If they can achieve that, they’ve created the perfect pitch.


Building the Bench for Grants Management
Ask most grants managers how they came to the profession and you’ll get a similar answer: “I just fell into it.” Grants managers enter the field with backgrounds and education ranging from the arts to law; there’s no single profile that fits those in the profession. In fact, most don’t even know it is a profession until they “fall into it.”

Joanna Willis is out to change that as part of GMN’s Thought Leaders project. A 2006 graduate of St. John’s University in Queens, New York, with a bachelor’s degree in biology, Joanna may have seemed like an unlikely grants manager herself, but her first job out of college was working for a nonprofit fundraising consultant.

She’s been in the nonprofit sector ever since, currently as a grants manager at the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Now she wants to bring more new graduates and young professionals to grants management. “I wish I had known that working in philanthropy was an option when I left school. There is a stigma against nonprofit work that I want to dispel. I want graduates to be fully informed about the viable career options that exist within the sector. There is a place to apply your skills and passion to build community and create a better future for all,” Joanna says.

“Working in grants management I have found the harmony between mission and delivery. I am living my truth, but I am also ensuring that what I believe in will become concrete and measurable.”

GMN expects to see more of Joanna as she explores the idea of building the bench for grants management.


Inspiring Thought Leaders to Speak Up
GMN’s innovative Thought Leaders project now includes nine members who are working to become known thought leaders in their chosen areas of interest. This project is unlike any that we know of at similar organizations and has the potential to generate awareness for and build the reputation of GMN while also raising the visibility of participants in their organizations and throughout the sector.

GMN’s thought leaders are connecting to their passions through research, outreach, original writing, and peer group discussion. Topics among the group include knowledge management, personal knowledge management, values-based grantmaking, elevating the reputation of grants management, and outcomes and evaluation.

Participants have been focused on building their personal brands and connecting with existing thought leaders, with the goal of amplifying their own voices, as a way of elevating the voice of all grants managers and of GMN. Developing thought leaders who exemplify the depth and breadth of grants managers’ expertise and knowledge will ultimately lead to greater awareness of the profession. Learn more at www.gmnetwork.org/thoughtleaders.
Melissa Boilon, Grants Manager & Senior Program Associate, The Marcled Foundation

encourage anyone to experience this unique volunteer opportunity. It is completely flexible, so you can take on the volunteer work you’re comfortable with. I’d definitely like to learn something or expand my professional network. The great thing, too, is your commitment to being a volunteer for the GMN journal is not only a great way to connect with other grant managers in a more regular way, but it’s also kept me on the forefront of what’s happening in philanthropy and how changes affect grant managers. Whether it’s brainstorming on topics like social media or data or connecting with leaders in the field for articles on these topics, I never cease to learn something or expand my professional network. The great thing, too, is your commitment is completely flexible, so you can take on the volunteer work you’re comfortable with. I’ll definitely encourage anyone to experience this unique volunteer opportunity.

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Listening to Learners

GMN’s education program is built on the core areas required for a rich learning environment:

**CONTENT**

GMN establishes and fosters an integrated set of learning resources and opportunities that allow members to master knowledge according to their own needs and interests, and learn about emerging issues in the field of grants management.

**CONNECT & COMMUNITY**

GMN’s online community has been transformed into MyGMN, a virtual learning “hub” or portal in which members can create personal professional development plans, locate resources and opportunities, track their progress, and connect with other grants management professionals. Through the community, GMN members are able to find other members who share their professional development priorities and interests.

**CHANNELS**

Recognizing that adults learn in many and varied ways, the GMN Learning Program encompasses a diverse suite of delivery channels from which members may choose to achieve their learning goals and objectives. Content is repurposed as needed to fit a variety of ways in which members want to access it.

**GMN Voices**

“As a member of the new Learning Advisory Committee, I’m confident that GMN is responding to members’ needs and their desire to have a place they can go to find resources on the topics that matter to them in the moment, beyond just the online discussions, for in-depth learning. So far the committee has reviewed projects like GM101 Online, nearly twenty learning modules, and more. Being part of the group is so valuable to me as an individual—it keeps me connected to the major trends that are happening in the field and to the work of GMN in delivering content about those trends. It’s also a way for me to refresh my own learning after many years in the field.”

Jamie Amagai, Grants Administrator, The Summit Foundation

Developing experts and leaders in grants management

Grants management is a distinct profession which requires specific knowledge, skills, and abilities. As more grantmakers realize the connection between practices and outcomes, and work to share more about what they are doing, they need experts to guide this work. GMN prepares grants management professionals to not only meet their organization’s current needs, but to anticipate and drive how grants are made in their organizations in the future.

Perspectives 2015 — GMN’s 10th Annual Conference

Perspectives on the why, what, and who of grants management are changing. The connections between grant practices and the ultimate success of those grants are becoming better understood and valued. The depth and breadth of the work that makes up grants management is more fluid than ever, placing grants management professionals at the nexus of knowledge and learning in organizations.

A Member’s Perspective

The opening plenary at GMN’s 2015 conference was one of the best that I have heard. The featured speaker was Patty Stonesifer, president and CEO of Martha’s Table and former founding CEO of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Ms. Stonesifer’s presentation was so compelling because she has sat on both sides of the table, so she has a unique view and spoke to the perspectives of both funder and grantee. Here are a few key takeaways on being a better funder:

- The power dynamics between funders and grantees is off. We’d be naïve to think we can change this, but funders can and should build trust with their grantees and allow good ideas to flow.

- Find and develop “truth seekers” — people who will be honest and address the difficult issue and problems not just say what they think the funder wants to hear.

- Measuring impact — Some grantees will have different measures for different funders. Everyone has a different idea of how a program should be measured. There should be common indicators. Collaboration between those working on the same issues with the goal of collective impact is essential.

- Advocacy/public policy — Funders have a voice and should use it for people who are trying to make a change. Otherwise, it’s like letting all your capital sit in the bank doing nothing.

• What do you need now and how will it help? Conference reporting by Anela Shimizu, Operations Manager, Hau’oli Mau Loa Foundation

The Art of the Fast Pitch

Andy Goodman, director of The Goodman Center, presented on The Art of the Fast Pitch. While tailored to nonprofit organizations, the topic is relevant to just about anyone. When you’re in an elevator, buffet line, or speed dating activity and someone asks “what do you do,” can you give them a full and impactful answer in three minutes or less? Mr. Goodman provided essential questions one must address in those three minutes:

- Who are you (personally in the organization)?
- What problem does your organization tackle?
- Who do you serve?
- What is distinctive or innovative about your program?
- If you didn’t exist, what would happen?
- What evidence can you offer of impact and sustainability (just a couple of examples with how you measure that impact and sustainability)?
- What do you need now and how will it help?
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- Advocacy/public policy – Funders have a voice and should use it for people who are trying to make a change. Otherwise, it’s like letting all your capital sit in the bank doing nothing.

With this idea of changing perspectives at the heart of GMN’s 10th Annual Conference, more than 460 participants shared three days of learning, networking, and fun aimed at understanding the continuing evolution of the job and the people doing it, exploring new perspectives about how grants get made and who is engaged in this profession.

The Art of the Fast Pitch

Andy Goodman, director of The Goodman Center, presented on The Art of the Fast Pitch. While tailored to nonprofit organizations, the topic is relevant to just about anyone. When you’re in an elevator, buffet line, or speed dating activity and someone asks “what do you do,” can you give them a full and impactful answer in three minutes or less? Mr. Goodman provided essential questions one must address in those three minutes:

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- If you didn’t exist, what would happen?
- What evidence can you offer of impact and sustainability (just a couple of examples with how you measure that impact and sustainability)?
- What is distinctive or innovative about your program?
- What does your organization measure as “success”?
- What problem does your organization tackle?
- Who do you serve?
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- What does your organization measure as “success”?
- What do you need now and how will it help?”
Connecting grants management professionals and the organizations they represent so they can learn from peers and work together to advance the field

Grants management professionals are playing increasingly important roles in the success of their organizations and in philanthropy as a whole. Creating more spaces where the profession can come together to share challenges and solutions is essential to its continued growth and impact. GMN is intensifying its efforts to grow the network of grants management professionals, strengthen connections among members, and help them develop their leadership abilities and voice in philanthropy.

Growing the Network

GMN is building and growing the network of grants management professionals—those numbers nearly 3,000 people—by investing in efforts to attract new members at all levels in their careers. A strong and ever-expanding network of grants management professionals connects GMN members and organizations to more information and resources, better ideas and, ultimately, better results. Our membership grew by 425 new members in 2015, and we retained 87 percent of members, which is 8 percent higher than the industry average.

What’s amazing about GMN’s growth to nearly 3,000 members is that we’ve done it without actively recruiting members. In late 2015, we launched our first-ever campaign to reach out to grants managers doing the same work as our members but who aren’t yet connected to GMN.

The campaign focused on organizations with two or more grants management employees representing private foundations, corporate foundations, and public charities in the U.S. Prospects received information on the value of joining and learned about member benefits, such as participating in regional chapter meetings, the online discussion community, and GMN’s Annual Conference, as well as how their organizations can support GMN.

Regional officers across all chapters were encouraged to participate and recruit new members for their chapter. This volunteer work added a personalized touch as they contacted known colleagues on the list and shared testimonials on becoming a GMN member and remaining engaged in the network.

GMN Voices

“As a new member, I love GMN for the ability to network with peers. Through connections I’ve made at GMN I have a whole list of contacts I can reach out to when something comes up in my job. I like to benchmark what we’re doing against what others are doing. GMN is a wonderful way to stay abreast of what’s happening in the field, and what’s changing.”

Anne Marie Young, Grants Manager, The Commonwealth Fund

GMN Voices

“Working in grants management today cannot be solo. There are lots of changes and challenges that constantly emerge and we may not necessarily know how to address them. The good news is that some of the questions we have and the answers we seek have often already been asked or provided by others facing similar issues. This is where the GMN regional chapters can be valuable. The chapters provide us with a strong network of people who work in the same field and can provide us with valuable insights. Most of us get very busy with our daily tasks, it can be difficult to step back sometimes and reflect on some key practices that could make our work even more effective. Joining the GMN regional chapter really provides members with local resources and a reliable network to help us be successful professionals in grants management.”

Meschak Gervais, Program and Community Manager, One World Children’s Fund

Connecting Members Where They Live and Work

The ability to connect with and learn from peers is the primary reason why members join GMN. GMN is building innovative ways for members to connect to each other, both virtually and in person. Examples include new features within GMN’s learning portal to connect to others with shared interests (June 2016 launch), new practice groups and learning circles, and creative opportunities for networking at GMN conferences and events.

Regional chapters continuously seek to enhance member experience and create new connection points. Best practices across the network went beyond the formal meetings structure to include more informal opportunities for members to connect. Now more than ever members have multiple opportunities to engage, learn, and share at the local level.

- GMN chapter leaders offered new member welcome orientations and social/happy hour events as a way to engage new and current members, and introduce those who recently joined to all that GMN has to offer.
- A focus on leadership was visible through regional chapter planning activities, recognition of team members, and events designed to encourage other members to volunteer.
- Enhanced efforts were made to distribute announcements about upcoming meetings and activities, including early save-the-date messages and posting events on chapter community discussion boards.
- Use of technology platforms such as webinars and teleconferencing were offered to maximize member participation.
- Chapters held meetings outside of the typical primary location areas to connect with more members, and most regional chapters held a regional membership meeting at the GMN Annual Conference.

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Regional officers across all chapters were encouraged to participate and recruit new members for their chapter. This volunteer work added a personalized touch as they contacted known colleagues on the list and shared testimonials on becoming a GMN member and remaining engaged in the network.

GMN Voices

"As a new member, I love GMN for the ability to network with peers. Through connections I’ve made at GMN I have a whole list of contacts I can reach out to when something comes up in my job. I like to benchmark what we’re doing against what others are doing. GMN is a wonderful way to stay abreast of what’s happening in the field, and what’s changing.”

Anne Marie Young, Grants Manager, The Commonwealth Fund

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**Connecting Members Where They Live and Work**

The ability to connect with and learn from peers is the primary reason why members join GMN. GMN is building innovative ways for members to connect to each other, both virtually and in person. Examples include new features within GMN’s learning portal to connect to others with shared interests (June 2016 launch), new practice groups and learning circles, and creative opportunities for networking at GMN conferences and events.

Regional chapters continuously seek to enhance member experience and create new connection points. Best practices across the network went beyond the formal meetings structure to include more informal opportunities for members to connect. Now more than ever members have multiple opportunities to engage, learn, and share at the local level.

- GMN chapter leaders offered new member welcome orientations and social/happy hour events as a way to engage new and current members, and introduce those who recently joined to all that GMN has to offer.
- A focus on leadership was visible through regional chapter planning activities, recognition of team members, and events designed to encourage other members to volunteer.
- Enhanced efforts were made to distribute announcements about upcoming meetings and activities, including early save-the-date messages and posting events on chapter community discussion boards.
- Use of technology platforms such as webinars and teleconferencing were offered to maximize member participation.
- Chapters held meetings outside of the typical primary location areas to connect with more members, and most regional chapters held a regional membership meeting at the GMN Annual Conference.

GMN Voices

"Working in grants management today cannot be solo. There are lots of changes and challenges that constantly emerge and we may not necessarily know how to address them. The good news is that some of the questions we have and the answers we seek have often already been asked or provided by others facing similar issues. This is where the GMN regional chapters can be valuable. The chapters provide us with a strong network of people who work in the same field and can provide us with valuable insights. Most of us get very busy with our daily tasks, it can be difficult to step back sometimes and reflect on some key practices that could make our work even more effective. Joining the GMN regional chapter really provides members with local resources and a reliable network to help us be successful professionals in grants management.”

Meschac Gervais, Program and Community Manager, One World Children’s Fund

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Developing Leaders
GMN is developing more leaders in the field by expanding our volunteer network at both the regional and national levels, and by creating new training opportunities for all volunteers. The result: more opportunities for more members to get involved in advancing the practice of grants management and mentoring those who are new to the profession. GMN had 255 active volunteers in 2015, a 15 percent increase from 2014.

GMN’s surveys show that 97 percent of our volunteers view the opportunity as a valuable experience and would encourage others to participate. So what is it about volunteering with GMN that gives our members the most satisfaction? Our members report the following benefits of volunteering with GMN:

- Meeting, working, and socializing with others in the profession
- Giving back to the profession/field
- Working with others towards a common goal
- Developing and/or improving professional skills
- Being a leader in the profession/leading a team or project
- Connecting to the mission of GMN

Listening to Members
GMN conducted a member survey in 2015 to assess members’ attitudes and opinions about Grants Managers Network and our service to the people and the profession of grants management. The survey results revealed widespread agreement on the value that GMN provides to members, but also suggested several ways to offer even more resources, tools and services that could help advance the “how” of grantmaking.

The survey highlighted member satisfaction with GMN, with 96 percent of respondents reporting that they were moderately, very, or extremely satisfied with GMN. Nearly 70 percent of members surveyed said that they had expanded their knowledge of grantmaking and better grant compliance.

When asked what GMN could do to help them in their careers, members added activities like, “keep up the strong community of practice” and “learn the best elevator pitch about grants management and program operations.,” as well as “provide best practices documents and resources” and “connect more frequently with my national colleagues.”

To realize field-wide change, GMN can’t do it alone. We work with colleague organizations to spread the word about why effective practices are important and what works. In addition, we partner with organizations that can bring rich learning experiences to our members, either virtually or locally through regional chapters.

GMN develops project and communications collaborations that allow us to extend our reach to the constituencies served by our partners, access expertise in areas that complement our own, strengthen the work by including more perspectives in the product development, and, in some cases, share costs to make our work more affordable. Some highlights from 2015 include:

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GMN worked with the D5 coalition on a deep dive through the grants management lens into challenges and opportunities of collecting, sharing, and using demographic data to contribute to field-wide conversations on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The D5 Coalition is leading philanthropy associations and foundations to tackle diversity issues in a coordinated way. D5’s recognized expertise on this topic and the ability to reach beyond our membership to D5’s constituency made them a logical partner for this work, which included a GMN conference session, blog post, and webinar.

We both believe that, no matter your role, everyone has a part to play in helping to achieve this goal. Our partnership with GMN is critical; together we are working to ensure that grantee success is at the center of a grantmaker’s work.”

Heather Peeler, Vice President of Member and Partner Engagement, Grantmakers for Effective Organizations

We are partnering with Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO) on the intersection of grants management, knowledge, evaluation, and learning. This was a topic at the GEO learning conference in 2013, and the subject of a co-edited issue of GMN’s professional journal, GMNIGHT, on learning and evaluation. GEO is a natural partner for GMN on this work given their expertise helping grantmakers work more collaboratively together and learn from each other.

Additional partners include:
- Association of Corporate Contributions Professionals
- Center for Effective Philanthropy
- Data Analysts for Social Good
- Exponent Philanthropy
- Foundation Center
- Guidestar
- Internal Revenue Service
- LearnPhilanthropy
- National Network of Consultants to Grantmakers
- Regional Associations of Grantmakers
- CAF America
- Fluxx
- Foundant
- Good Done Great
- MicroEdge

GMN Voices
“GEO and GMN share a similar desire to change philanthropy for the better, from the inside out. We both believe that, no matter your role, everyone has a part to play in helping to achieve this goal. Our partnership with GMN is critical; together we are working to ensure that grantee success is at the center of a grantmaker’s work.”

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Collaborating to Advance the Sector
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When asked to choose GMN’s top three most important functions, members selected:

- Providing training/professional development to members
- Connecting practitioners within the field to each other
- Creating and disseminating standards of practice

As a membership organization, GMN prides itself on the service we provide to our nearly 3,000 members, and 86% of survey respondents characterized their interactions with GMN customer services as somewhat or very positive.

When asked what GMN could do to help them in their careers, members added activities like, “keep up the strong community of practice” and “learn the best elevator pitch about grants management and program operations,” as well as “provide best practices documents and resources” and “connect more frequently with my national colleagues.”

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We began work to update the Consumers’ Guide to Grants Management Systems (April 2016 release), collaborating with the Technology Affinity Group and Idealware. Partnering with TAG on technology-related projects strengthens the ultimate product by connecting the grants management and technology expertise of both organizations.

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Ensuring GMN has the resources and infrastructure to support network and program expansion and be accountable to members and funders

GMN is growing and serving more members than ever before, and we take seriously the responsibility to be a sustainable organization that is transparent about our operations and infrastructure growth efforts.

Major Gifts Received
- Surdna Foundation
- Kresge Foundation
- Ford Foundation
- Leadership Gifts Received
  - The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
  - Kresge Foundation
  - Surdna Foundation

Campaign for Excellence in Grants Management
GMN’s impact has been impressive, even more so given that we have served nearly 3,000 members with an extremely lean staff of five and without the latest technology and systems used by organizations of our size and type. While highly productive, GMN and its systems have been stretched to capacity. GMN has reached a critical point where large, upfront investment is needed for us to keep pace with the evolving needs of this growing sector.

To address our capacity needs, we launched the Campaign for Excellence in Grants Management, a core support campaign designed to accelerate and deepen the knowledge base of grants management professionals and help grantmakers deliver more resources directly to mission-driven activities, leading to better outcomes for grantmakers and the nonprofits they fund. Through the support of our leadership and major gift contributors, GMN will be able to expand our core capacity and scale our programs to fit the growing field and the deeper needs of our members.

Grants Managers Network is the only professional organization serving the people who do this work in philanthropy. With a growing base of members and a plan to strengthen, expand and sustain its operations and program, GMN is positioned to lead the grants management profession—and the field of philanthropy—to a more successful future.

Now is the time to invest in GMN’s plans to maximize philanthropic impact. To the extent that the Campaign for Excellence in Grants Management is successful, it will mean more resources for the causes philanthropy supports and great results for people and communities across the nation. Please contact Michelle Greanias to participate in the campaign.

Expanding GMN’s Professional Staff
As part of our three-year strategic plan to address the growth in grants management and increased need for GMN’s resources, we also developed a plan to grow our professional staff to support expansion of our learning programs, membership services, and operational support such as enhanced communications.

In 2015, we added a content manager to our Education Department to manage content and community engagement for the association, helping members find resources and tools they need to learn what they want to learn, when and how they want to learn it.

We also hired a chapter relations manager to work directly with GMN’s 14 regional chapters on programming and events, providing training to national and local volunteer leaders and assisting in chapter governance and volunteer recruitment and retention.

In 2016, GMN will complete staff expansion by hiring a chief operating officer to oversee operations and strategy for the organization; an education program manager to plan and execute learning events such as the conference, workshops, and webinars; and a marketing coordinator to focus on raising visibility of GMN and its resources among members, the profession, and the field. This will bring our staff capacity to ten full-time professionals.

Updating GMN’s Business Model
In order to generate sufficient, repeat, and sustainable revenue to support increased operating expenses, GMN updated its business model last year. Following a year-long effort to educate GMN members on the need for and the particulars of the new business model, changes took effect in 2015.

We have:
- Increased and re-structured member dues levels to better reflect the cost of providing benefits to members.
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These changes have allowed GMN to remain the only association in our space with a voluntary dues structure designed to facilitate open access to the organization’s resources and programming.

Carolyn Sosnowski, Content Manager, Grants Managers Network

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“Vastly thrilled to become a member of GMN staff in November. I could easily see that GMN is poised for growth, and it’s exciting to be a part of that process. Our staff size is doubling, which greatly increases our capacity to meet GMN’s strategic goals, act on member feedback, and improve existing products and services, while creating new ways for members to learn and network. I’ve enjoyed my interactions with members and look forward to continuing to connect with members and develop a deeper understanding of their content needs.”

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New Technology and Systems
To improve the ability for members to learn and share through a virtual online environment, GMN selected a new association software and online community platform. Research took more than five months to find the best solutions to meet operational needs and exceed member expectations. Implementation will take place in Q2 2016.

The combined upgrade will make it easier for members to log into their profiles, find and register for education events, locate resources, and connect with colleagues and thought leaders. The best feature is the enhanced discussion boards that will allow members to participate right from their email inboxes and easily find past discussion threads and documents shared by grants management colleagues, along with experiencing better access to all of GMN’s tools.

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GMN Staff
Michelle Greanias, Executive Director
John Wilson, Chief Operating Officer
Elizabeth Beier, Education Director
Leah Farmer, Marketing Coordinator
Miriam Hankins, Membership Director
Sari Houston, Education Programs Manager
Nikki Powell, Communications & Practices Director
Carolyn Sosnowski, Content Manager
Nicole Washington, Member Services Coordinator
Kashae Williams, Chapter Relations Manager

Access GMN’s financial statements on our website at gmnetwork.org/about/annualfinancialreports/.