KEY FACTS on U.S. FOUNDATIONS
2014 EDITION
Growth. All signs point to continued ambiguity in the U.S. economy for at least another few years. Strong stock market performance has boosted the assets of many foundations and will undoubtedly encourage more individuals to create foundations. But some endowments are still recovering from the Great Recession, and not all foundations have achieved the rates of return suggested by market averages. Nonetheless, overall giving by the nation’s private and community foundations reached $54.7 billion in 2013, surpassing previous record levels even after adjusting for inflation.

Outlook. According to Foundation Center’s annual “Foundation Giving Forecast Survey,” overall foundation giving will continue to grow a few points ahead of inflation in 2014. Independent and family foundations will likely show an even higher rate of growth.

1 Figures include all independent and family, corporate, community, and operating foundations that reported giving. Excluded from these figures are approximately 17,000 foundations that did not report giving in their latest fiscal years.

2 “Family foundations” are not legally defined entities, so there is no way to determine a definitive total.
TYPES OF FOUNDATIONS

- **INDEPENDENT**: Includes most of the nation’s largest foundations. Generally established by individual donors or donor families.
- **OPERATING**: Primarily run their own programs, but some also make grants. Generally established by individual donors or donor families.
- **CORPORATE**: Established by businesses ranging from major corporations to family-owned shops, although legally separate entities.
- **COMMUNITY**: Raise funds from the public. Engage in grantmaking primarily within a defined geographic area.

**TOTAL NO. OF FOUNDATIONS: 86,192**

- **91%** (78,582) INDEPENDENT
- **5%** (4,218) OPERATING
- **3%** (2,629) CORPORATE
- **1%** (763) COMMUNITY

**TOTAL ASSETS: $715 BILLION**

- **82%** ($584.0 B) INDEPENDENT
- **6%** ($43.3 B) OPERATING
- **3%** ($23.2 B) CORPORATE
- **9%** ($64.9 B) COMMUNITY

**TOTAL GIVING: $52 BILLION**

- **68%** ($35.4 B) INDEPENDENT
- **12%** ($6.0 B) OPERATING
- **11%** ($5.5 B) CORPORATE
- **10%** ($4.9 B) COMMUNITY

2013 GIVING ESTIMATE: $54.7 BILLION

- **+5%** ($37.1 B) INDEPENDENT
- **+7%** ($6.4 B) OPERATING
- **+5%** ($5.7 B) CORPORATE
- **+11%** ($5.5 B) COMMUNITY

**GRANT FOCUS**

**IN 2012**

A SUBSET OF THE NATION’S LARGEST FOUNDATIONS AWARDED NEARLY 154,000 GRANTS TOTALING $22.4 BILLION

**Priorities.** Foundations have the flexibility to determine the what, where, who, and how of their grantmaking activities. They are actively funding in nearly every issue area across the globe, from reforming public education in the United States to securing access to safe drinking water in the developing world. Some foundations see making a small number of very large, targeted grants as being most effective in achieving their goals. Others emphasize providing many smaller, unrestricted grants to a variety of organizations. Similarly, some grantmakers focus their giving on specific populations, such as the economically disadvantaged, LGBT populations, or Black men and boys, while others believe impact will be achieved by targeting populations generally. This range of priorities and approaches illustrates the role of foundations as a critical source of support for new strategies and opportunities throughout the social sector.

**BY ISSUE FOCUS**

- **Health**
  - 22% ($5 B)
- **Education**
  - 22% ($5 B)
- **Human Services**
  - 16% ($3.5 B)
- **Public Affairs/Society Benefit**
  - 12% ($2.7 B)
  - Highest number of grants: 42,037
- **Arts and Culture**
  - 10% ($2.2 B)
- **Environment and Animals**
  - 7% ($1.6 B)
- **International Affairs**
  - 5% ($1.1 B)
- **Science and Technology**
  - 3% ($606 M)
- **Religion**
  - 2% ($468 M)
- **Social Sciences**
  - 1% ($243 M)

**DID YOU KNOW?**

- The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation made the single largest grant: $207.7 million to the Aeras Global TB Vaccine Foundation.
- The median grant amount was $30,000.
- Nearly 58,000 unique organizations worldwide received grants from these large foundations.
- Highest number of grants: 42,037

1. Includes civil rights, economic and community development, philanthropy, and public affairs.
2. Includes international affairs, peace and security, and human rights. Does not include all international giving by U.S. foundations.
BY TYPE OF SUPPORT

- **Program Support**: 52% ($12 B)
- **General Support**: 23% ($5.2 B)
- **Research**: 16% ($4 B)
- **Capital Support**: 10% ($2.3 B)
- **Unspecified**: 17% ($3.9 B)
- **Student Aid Funds**: 4% ($948 M)
- **Other**: 2% ($469 M)

WHAT’S INCLUDED

Foundation Center reports on how foundations give by collecting and coding grants awarded by a set of the largest U.S. foundations. Following are details on what the 2012 set included:

- 1,000 of the top U.S. foundations by giving
- All of their grants of $10,000 or more
- Domestic and international grants
- Full authorized 2012 grant amounts (if available)
- Grants from unrestricted and donor-advised funds at community foundations

NEARLY HALF OF U.S. FOUNDATION GIVING EACH YEAR

- **49%** Giving by foundations in set
- **51%** Giving by all other foundations

* Excludes giving by operating and corporate foundations created by pharmaceutical corporations to distribute medications.

BY POPULATION FOCUS

- **Economically Disadvantaged**: 31% ($6.8 B)
- **Children and Youth**: 20% ($4.4 B)
- **Ethnic or Racial Minorities**: 10% ($2.0 B)
- **Women and Girls**: 7% ($1.6 B)
- **People with Disabilities**: 4% ($871 M)

* Figures based on grants awarded to organizations that could be clearly identified as serving specific populations or grants whose descriptions indicated a benefit for a particular population. Grants benefiting multiple population groups are counted in each applicable category. The chart excludes groups that were the focus of less than 4 percent of grant dollars. Finally, 52 percent of grant dollars could not be coded for a specific population group.

IN 2012
A SUBSET OF THE NATION’S LARGEST FOUNDATIONS
AWARDED NEARLY 27% OF GRANT DOLLARS IN SUPPORT OF INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Geography. The vast majority of U.S. foundations focus their giving on the communities in which they are located. Some also focus their grantmaking at the regional or national level. At the same time, a number of the nation’s largest foundations—as well as a few smaller foundations—engage in international grantmaking, whether directly to organizations in other countries or through support for international programs conducted by organizations based in the United States. As the many thousands of newer foundations established by younger, more globally focused donors come of age, the number of foundations that incorporate an international focus in their work will undoubtedly continue to grow.

DOMESTIC INTERNATIONAL

DID YOU KNOW?

DOMESTIC

Organizations located in California received the most domestic foundation grant dollars ($2.4 billion).

INTERNATIONAL

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has been the top international funder since 2004.

Massachusetts-based Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund was the top recipient of domestic grant dollars.

The Switzerland-based World Health Organization was the top recipient of international grant dollars.

11 Public Affairs/Society Benefit (Domestic): Includes civil rights, economic and community development, philanthropy, and public affairs.

12 Public Affairs/Society Benefit (International): Includes grants for public affairs, philanthropy, and general grants to promote civil society. Some civil society grants are captured in other categories, such as human rights and international development.
### By Geography

#### Domestic

- **Recipient Location**
  - Northeast: 30% ($4.9 B)
  - South: 29% ($4.8 B)
  - West: 22% ($3.6 B)
  - Midwest: 19% ($3.1 B)

  **Note:** Funding may support local, regional, or national projects.

#### International

- **Geographic Focus**
  - Sub-Saharan Africa: 24% ($1.4 B)
  - Asia and the Pacific: 20% ($1.2 B)
  - Latin America and Mexico: 11% ($638 M)
  - Western Europe: 7% ($426 M)
  - North Africa and the Middle East: 5% ($302 M)
  - Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Russia: 2% ($145 M)
  - Canada: 1% ($74 M)
  - Caribbean: 1% ($58 M)

  **Note:** International grants often benefit a specific country or region. However, as grants with a focus on multiple regions do not specify the share of support that targets each region, the full value of these grants is counted in the totals for each specified region. In addition, foundations made human rights grants not reflected in this graphic focused on “developing countries” and on providing a global benefit (21% and 31% of the number of international grants awarded, respectively).

### Top Funders

#### Domestic

- **W. K. Kellogg Foundation**: $321 M
- **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**: $299 M
- **Ford Foundation**: $254 M
- **Walton Family Foundation**: $251 M
- **Lilly Endowment**: $241 M
- **Silicon Valley Community Foundation**: $215 M
- **Andrew W. Mellon Foundation**: $206 M
- **Wells Fargo Foundation**: $194 M
- **Simons Foundation**: $175 M
- **Foundation to Promote Open Society**: $163 M

#### International

- **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**: $2.6 B
- **Ford Foundation**: $217 M
- **William and Flora Hewlett Foundation**: $202 M
- **Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation**: $199 M
- **Walton Family Foundation**: $167 M
- **Open Society Institute**: $117 M
- **David and Lucile Packard Foundation**: $115 M
- **Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation**: $98 M
- **Foundation to Promote Open Society**: $92 M
- **John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation**: $84 M

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Key Facts on U.S. Foundations provides you with what you need to know about the scale of the nation’s foundation community and the grantmaking priorities of the largest foundations. This report is produced annually by Foundation Center’s research team.


For more information contact Steven Lawrence, director of research, at sal@foundationcenter.org or (212) 620-4230.

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