Three consecutive years of stock market losses and a sluggish economy have forced some high-profile foundations to reduce staff size in order to maintain grantmaking levels and preserve corpus. Yet the overall number of staffed foundations continued to rise in 2003. Total staff positions reported by surveyed foundations also increased, although at a slower pace than in recent years. This growth also occurred during a period when total U.S. non-farm employment decreased slightly. This modest gain in foundation staffing in a time of economic retrenchment may reflect in part the hiring of staff by more recently established foundations.

*Foundation Staffing*, 2003 Edition, provides the most comprehensive information available on the number of staffed U.S. grantmaking foundations and their staffing patterns. This report serves as an ideal starting point for understanding differences in staffing levels and characteristics based on foundation size, period of establishment, regional location, and type. *Foundation Staffing* is part of the *Foundations Today* Series of annual research reports on foundation growth and trends in foundation giving.

Information presented in *Foundation Staffing* comes from the Foundation Center’s annual surveys of the top 20,000 private and community foundations by giving, all remaining corporate and community foundations, and larger newly established foundations. This included approximately 26,400 foundations for the 2003 survey. To maintain consistency with historical Foundation Center data on staffing, the analysis in this report limits its scope to those 20,716 foundations in the latest sample with at least $100,000 in giving or holding assets of $1 million or more.

Of this sample, 3,360 foundations reported paid staff. These staffed foundations represent only a small cross-section (5.4 percent) of the nation’s nearly 62,000 active grantmakers, but account for close to three-fifths (58.2 percent, or $277.5 billion) of total foundation assets, and more than half (54.7 percent, or $16.7 billion) of overall foundation giving in circa 2001—the latest year for which fiscal data is available.

**Overview of Foundation Staffing**
- 3,360 surveyed foundations reported paid staff in 2003
- One-in-six surveyed foundations employed staff
- Number of staffed foundations rose by more than half since 1993
- Over the past decade, number of staff positions increased nearly 80 percent to 17,821
- Average number of staff fell just below 2002 level but surpassed 1993 level
- Number of full-time professional staff doubled since 1993
- Growth in foundation staffing lagged behind growth in the number of foundations

**Number of Foundation Staff**
- Foundations reported an average of 5.3 staff and a median of two staff
- Over three-fifths of staffed foundations employed two or fewer staff
- Only 30 foundations had 50 or more staff

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*For more information on this report, contact Josie Atienza, Research Analyst/Coordinator of the Foundations Today Series, at 212-620-4230, or e-mail, jsa@fdncenter.org. Foundation Staffing “Highlights” are also available at www.fdncenter.org.*
Over three-fifths of staffed foundations in 2003 reported two or fewer staff

Foundation Staffing by Asset Range

- Larger foundations were more likely to be staffed and employ full-time staff
- Three-quarters of foundations with assets of $100 million or more reported staff
- More than half of all staff positions were held by largest foundations

Foundation Staffing by Period of Establishment

- Foundations established before 1950 were more likely to report paid staff
- Pre-1950 foundations reported an average of 9.8 staff, compared to an average of 3.2 staff for foundations established since 1979
- Full-time professionals accounted for nearly half of the staff of pre-1950 foundations
- Regardless of age, foundations showed a median of two staff

Foundation Staffing by Region

- West reported highest share of staffed foundations
- Close to one-in-five Western foundations employed staff
- Northeast had the largest number of staffed foundations
- West had the highest number of staff positions and showed biggest average staff size
- Median staff size remained consistent across regions

Foundation Staffing by Foundation Type

- Community foundations were most likely to employ staff
- Independent foundations accounted for three-fifths of all staff positions
- Operating foundations reported the highest average number of staff
- Community foundations employed the highest median number of staff

Median staff size remained consistent across regions in 2003

Source: The Foundation Center, Foundation Staffing, 2003. Based on Foundation Center survey of 20,716 foundations with at least $1 million in assets or making grants of $100,000 or more.

ORDERING INFORMATION

The Foundations Today Series, 2003 Edition, includes five reports available exclusively through annual subscriptions. The series may be ordered by calling our toll-free number, 800-424-9836; by using our on-line order form at www.fdncenter.org/marketplace; or by mailing orders to the Foundation Center, Dept. NN19, 79 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003-3076. Prepayment of $95.00 is required. Discounts are available for multiple-subscription orders. Please call 800-424-9836 for details.

Source: The Foundation Center, Foundation Staffing, 2003. Based on Foundation Center survey of 20,716 foundations with at least $1 million in assets or making grants of $100,000 or more. A total of 3,360 foundations reported staff.

1 Foundations were ranked by number of staff, and the staffing figure for the foundation at the midpoint represented the median.
2 Figures include two staffed foundations based in U.S. territories.