

Key Facts on Family Foundations



January 2006 / THE FOUNDATION CENTER

Selected Grantmaker Data, 2004

The Foundation Center has identified more than 33,100 independent foundations with measurable donor or donor-family involvement. These “family foundations” represent more than half of all independent foundations and account for similar shares of independent foundations’ giving, assets, and new gifts and bequests from donors. If all of the nation’s family foundations could be identified, these shares would undoubtedly rise.¹

¹ Family foundations are not legally distinct from other independent foundations, requiring the Foundation Center to identify them using several objective and subjective criteria. These criteria include independent foundations with “family” or “families” in their name, a living donor whose surname matches the foundation name, or at least two trustee surnames that match a living or deceased donor’s name, along with any independent foundations that self-identify as family foundations on annual Foundation Center surveys.

Summary Statistics for Family Foundations 2000 and 2004

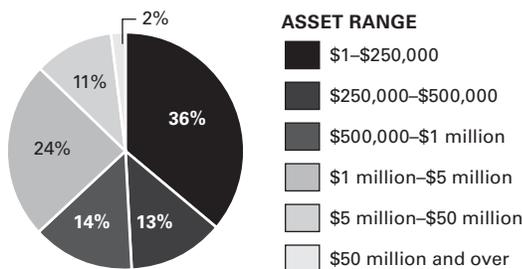
| | 2000 | 2004 | % change |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------|
| No. of Foundations | 24,434 | 31,347 | 28.3 |
| Total Giving | \$11,312,690 | \$12,665,722 | 12.0 |
| Total Assets | \$197,734,202 | \$209,164,430 | 5.8 |
| Gifts Received² | \$13,384,123 | \$9,283,452 | -30.6 |

Note: Dollars in thousands. Percent change represents current dollars. Excludes 1,791 family foundations that did not report giving in the latest fiscal year. These foundations held \$882.1 million in assets in 2004 and reported gifts received totaling \$341.9 million.

¹ Figures for 2004 are preliminary.

² The 2000 figure includes \$5.1 billion in new gifts to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

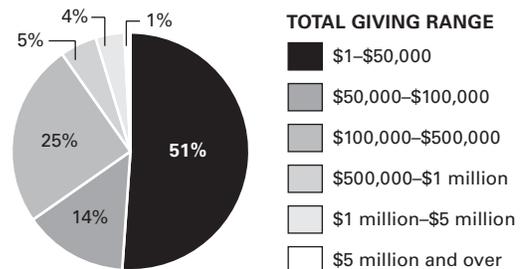
More than three-fifths of family foundations reported less than \$1 million in assets in 2004



PERCENT OF NUMBER OF FOUNDATIONS

Note: Based on 31,347 grantmaking family foundations. Excludes 1,791 family foundations that did not report giving in the latest fiscal year. Figures for 2004 are preliminary.

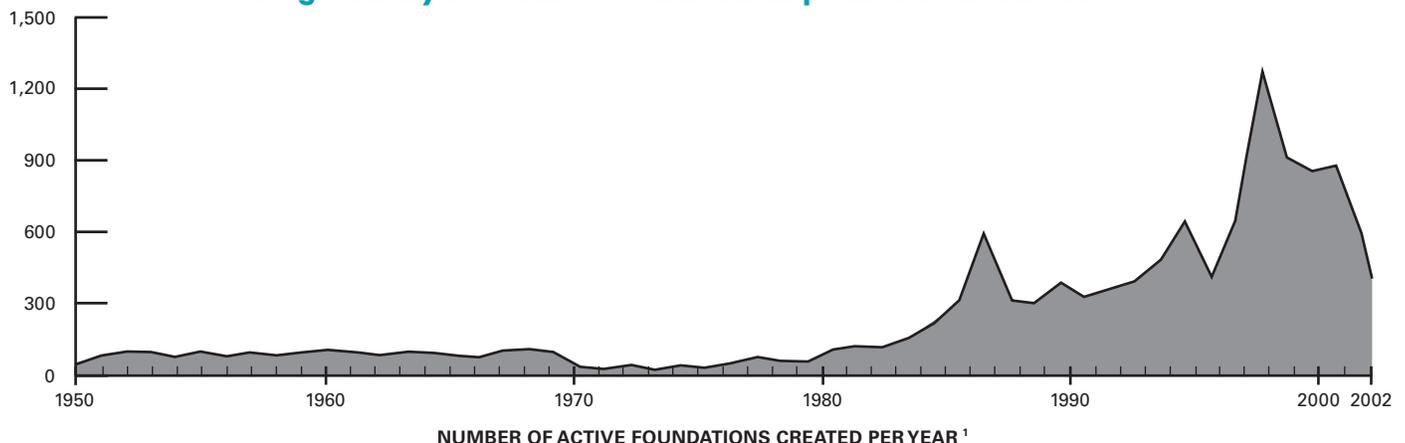
Over half of family foundations reported less than \$50,000 in giving in 2004



PERCENT OF NUMBER OF FOUNDATIONS

Note: Based on 31,347 grantmaking family foundations. Excludes 1,791 family foundations that did not report giving in the latest fiscal year. Figures for 2004 are preliminary.

Larger family foundation establishment peaked in the late 1990s

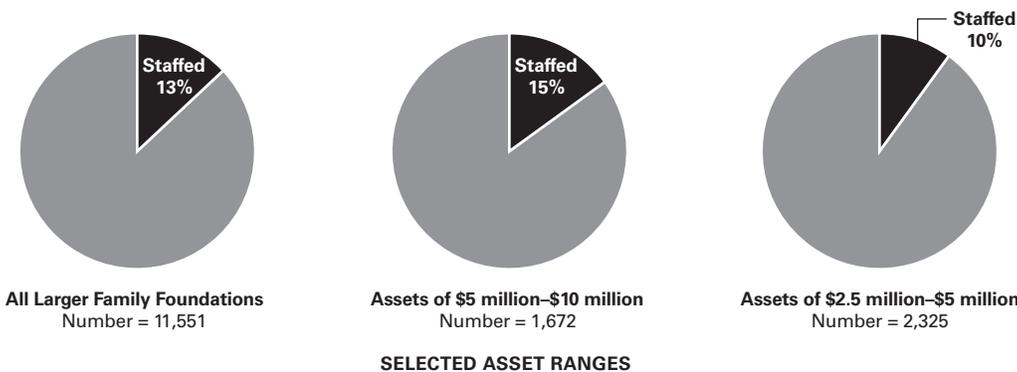


Note: Based on grantmaking family foundations with at least \$1 million in assets or making grants of \$100,000 or more in 2003-2004.

¹ Data incomplete after 2001. A total of 301 grantmaking family foundations established in 2003 or 2004 are currently included in the Foundation Center’s database.

[more on back >>>](#)

Roughly one-in-eight larger family foundations reported staff in 2005



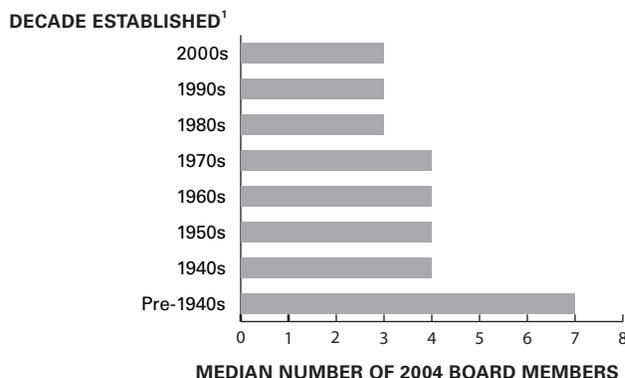
Note: Based on Foundation Center survey of family foundations with at least \$1 million in assets or making grants of \$100,000 or more. A total of 1,524 foundations reported staff.

Selected Giving Patterns, 2004

Larger family foundations included in the Foundation Center’s 2004 grants sample² were more likely to provide funding for health, education, science and technology, and religion than independent foundations overall. They were less likely to give for human services, public affairs/society benefit, international affairs, and the social sciences. By types of support, family foundations directed nearly identical shares of giving for general support and capital projects compared to independent foundations overall.

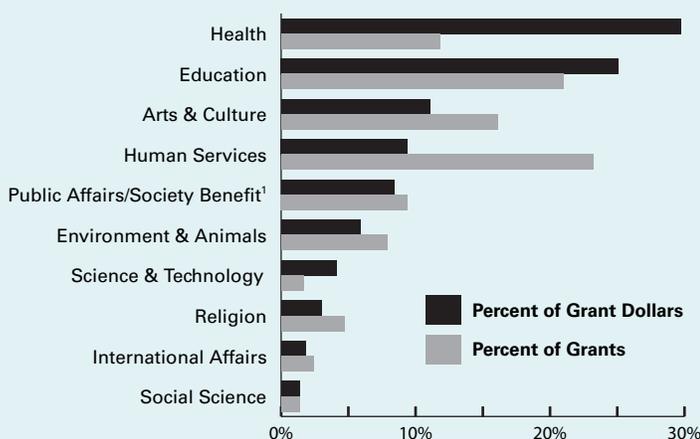
² The Foundation Center’s 2004 grants sample database included the grants of \$10,000 or more awarded by close to 1,200 of the largest U.S. foundations and accounted for roughly half of grant dollars awarded by all 66,000+ U.S. foundations.

Family foundation board size tends to increase over time



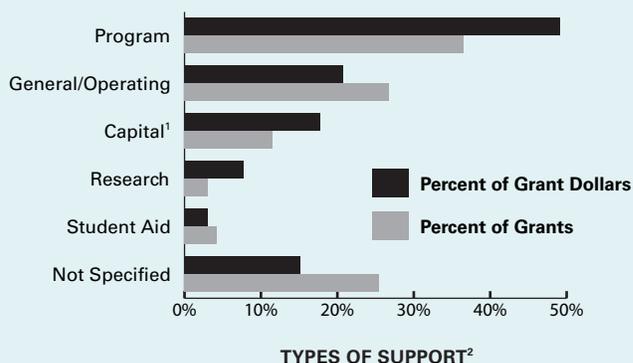
Note: Figures are preliminary.
¹Excludes family foundations lacking establishment information.

Family foundations favored health and education in 2004



Note: Based on grants of \$10,000 or more awarded by a sample of 529 larger family foundations.
¹ Includes civil rights and social action, community improvement and development, philanthropy and voluntarism, and public affairs.

Family foundations directed the largest share of their 2004 giving for programs



Note: Based on grants of \$10,000 or more awarded by a sample of 529 larger family foundations.
¹Capital support includes endowment funds.
²Types of support representing at least 3 percent of grant dollars.

Source for all data: The Foundation Center

For more information, contact Steven Lawrence, Director of Research at the Foundation Center, at 212-620-4230, or e-mail, sal@fdncenter.org. “Key Facts on Family Foundations” is available at www.foundationcenter.org.