



August 2, 2013

Fast Facts Survey: Partnerships 2013, was released on Wednesday, July 24 to all 2011 and 2012 grantees. Respondents were asked to respond by Wednesday, July 30. Thirty-one grantees completed the survey. The majority (93.1%) of the respondents were 2012 grant recipients.

- 61.3% of respondents have submitted interim grant reports
- 9.7% of respondents have submitted final grant reports

Respondents were asked to describe the most successful partnerships developed or expanded as a result of grant activities. Responses fell into three major categories. Below is a sampling of responses.

- *Education partnerships*: 61% of respondents identified an educational institution as a key successful partner in their grant program.
 - We have been thrilled to establish a new partnership with our local community college, helping them provide resources to new and financially struggling students.
 - The library's partnership with the university extension department was successfully expanded. We realized the wider range of programming opportunities and partnerships available which provided us with a broader range of resources, expertise and audiences to execute our Know Your Money series.
 - Our local school district has been the most successful partnership. They have hosted and promoted our programs to students and parents.
 - Partnering with the university extension office has exposed both the library and the extension to a broader audience than we reach independently. The partnership has allowed each organization to combine expertise and resources to create an outstanding program.
 - Our most successful partnership was with a team of instructors from the extension programs at three universities. The partnership offered the library access to instructional services and to already-developed financial curriculum.

- *Social services partnerships:*
 - Our partnership with a local women's center is new to our library system. The library provided the space and the marketing for programs while the Center provided the materials and the speakers. As the grant time progressed we learned a lot about each other and have identified other ways we can partner in the future.
 - We are in the early days of a partnership with members of the Human Services Collaborative (68 local nonprofits serving lower income residents). They have been receptive and accommodating as we offer workshops at their locations. We are also partnering with SCORE to offer workshops for Veterans, and they have been instrumental in pulling the marketing into many new venues.
- *Community organizations:*
 - We worked with the Chamber of Commerce to get the word out about the classes and programs. We gave a presentation at a Chamber meeting and the program/classes were featured in the Chamber's newsletter.
 - Our most successful partnership is our relationship with the local Ottawa County United Way. The library has been asked to participate in several meetings of local assistance program groups, an opportunity to spread the word about library programs.

Effective communication is the most-frequently identified element of successful partnership development. It's important to have an on-going process in place for conversation in order to nurture the relationship. This should include regular face-to-face meetings in addition to phone calls and email communications. It is important to identify one contact person at each partnership agency, and to clarify expectations from all participants. As one respondent noted, once a partnership is developed, it is easier to suggest and discover additional opportunities to partner on projects.

Some respondents indicated that their partners did not always meet expectations. Reasons noted include failure to follow through with commitments, and lower-than-expected quality of resources. However, 83.9% expect partnerships to endure beyond the length of the grant period.

- The partnerships we made have endured and enriched both groups. The friendships and knowledge of the organizations' offerings have made it easy to continue planning combined activities, to help each other with marketing, or to provide space or equipment. We LOVE partnerships, because they so greatly increase our reach. We won't let those relationships go!
- Most of our partners eagerly share our vision of a sustainable program after the grant expires. We see the first two years as the space shuttle solid rocket boosters, which provided most of the thrust to start, but were planned to fall away once momentum had been established.

- Most of the partnerships we have established will be nurtured for future success. We will continue to keep lines of communication open and find ways to work together throughout the year.
- We will continue to work together to promote and support each other's services through joint program development, marketing, and resource sharing.
- By establishing a good working relationship and by proving that we have the capacity to provide a top notch program, trust was built between the library and our community partners.

Grantees have enlisted the support of a wide variety of community groups, as indicated below. The numbers on horizontal axis indicate the numbers of respondents who selected each group.

