



GRANTEE FEEDBACK SURVEY December 2022

Prepared by Karen Horsch, Ed.M., Consultant

Introduction

Established in 2003, the mission of the Foundation for Community Health (FCH) is to *work together with people and organizations to improve the health and well-being of residents in the community, especially those who have historically been under-resourced*. In 2021, the Foundation provided \$1,013,535 in grant funding to 33 different organizations.

Collaboration with nonprofit partners is critical to meeting FCH’s mission. Research has shown that good funder–grantee relationships are those in which grantees feel positively about their interactions with foundation staff and about the foundation’s communications. For FCH, attention to the quality of funder-grantee relationships fits into a broader commitment to trust-based philanthropy, an approach to addressing historical inequities in the foundation-grantee relationships that seeks to advance equity, shift power, and build mutually accountable relationships.

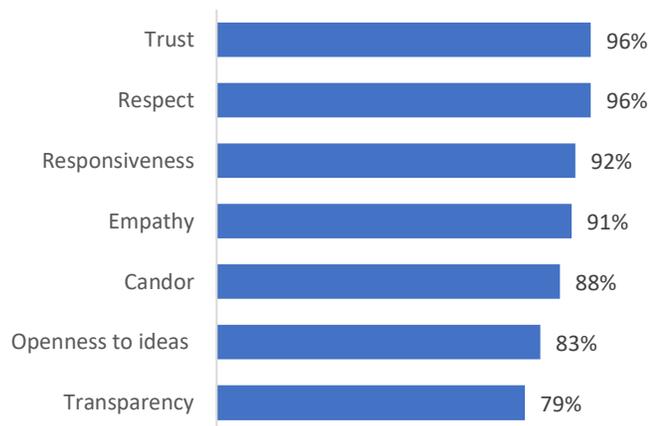
For the past two years, FCH has commissioned a survey to gather grantee feedback about its work with and support of grantee partners, with the goal of identifying what is working well and what the Foundation can do to improve. The results of the survey administered in 2022 to FY2021 grantees are shared here. Twenty-four individuals whose organizations received grants from FCH in 2021 responded to the on-line survey, a 73% response rate.

Key findings for all survey respondents are shared below; where appropriate, differences in responses by grant size and duration of grant funding are discussed.¹ Comparisons to 2021 survey results are discussed where appropriate, although it should be noted that survey respondents differed somewhat between the two years.

Foundation-Grantee Relationships

As in 2021, FCH grantees have a positive view of the Foundation and grantee-Foundation interactions, citing high levels of trust, respect, responsiveness, empathy, candor, openness, and transparency.² Over three-quarters of survey respondents

Grantees overwhelmingly strongly agree that FCH staff demonstrates key characteristics supportive of positive grantee-funder relationships²

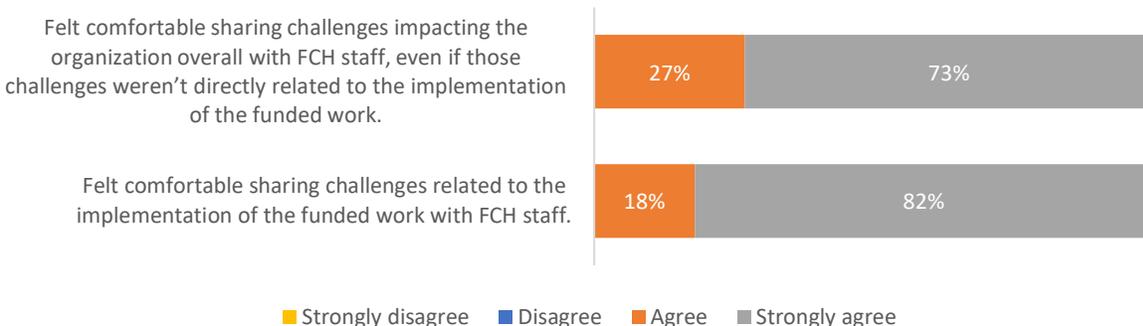


¹ Grant size: Small (\$15,000 or less) and Large (\$15,001+). Duration of FCH grant funding: Less than five years of funding and Five or more years of funding or multi-year grants. Last year, responses were also analyzed by whether grantees had received restricted or unrestricted grants. The Foundation moved to more unrestricted funding over the past year; as a result, there were far fewer survey respondents who received restricted grants and thus, this comparison was not done this year.

² Proportion of respondents who reported they “strongly agree” FCH staff demonstrated this during the grant funding period.

indicated that they “strongly agree” that Foundation staff practices these values. These perspectives were very similar to those shared in the 2021 survey, with trust, respect, and responsiveness being the characteristics most highly rated in both years. In 2022, as in 2021, grantees also reported feeling very comfortable approaching FCH staff with concerns, including those related to their organizations that were not connected to their grants. There were no notable differences in responses by grant size or duration of FCH grant funding.

Grantees are comfortable sharing information about organizational challenges with FCH staff



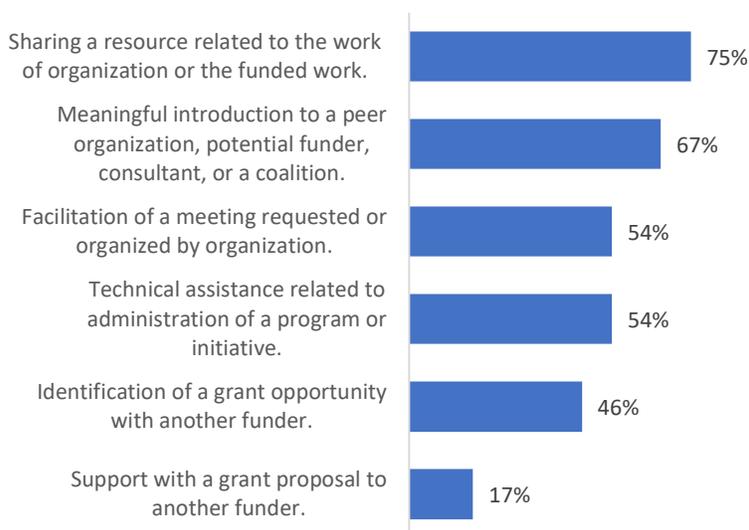
As in 2021, grantee survey respondents in 2022 expressed positive views of their relationships with the Foundation. For example:

“We value the relationship we have with FCH staff, who have always been open and supportive. Regardless of which staff we engage with or their area of responsibilities, we are treated as colleagues, partners and human beings in a shared experience.”

“FCH stands out as a leader in understanding the needs, challenges and recognizing strengths of nonprofit work. They engage as true partners.”

Research shows that nonprofit partners also benefit from the non-grant support that foundations provide. As in 2021, this year FCH grantee survey respondents reported that they most often received support from FCH in the form of resources and introduction to peer organizations, potential funders, consultants or coalitions; they were least likely to report receiving support related to a grant opportunity. These results were largely similar to those from 2021, although a lower proportion of respondents in 2022 (17%) than 2021 (37%) reported that they received FCH’s support with a grant

Grantees most often received informational resources and introductions from FCH staff



proposal to another funder. Grantees who received multi-year support were more likely to report receiving various types of non-grant support (introductions, support with a grant proposal, technical assistance) than grantees who did not receive multi-year funding. Those who received large grants were more likely to report receiving meaningful introductions, information about grant opportunities, grant proposal support, and technical assistance than those who received small grants. Grantees who received non-grant support rated it highly; among survey respondents who received non-grant support, meeting facilitation was rated most helpful.

Grantees report that non-grant support is helpful



Foundation Communication Support

Beginning in 2020, FCH set out to better support the communication efforts of grantee partners through the development of promotional materials which included interviews with Robin Hood Radio, promotional videos, scheduling time with a professional photographer, and other multimedia content (e.g. Grantee Profiles on FCH’s website). The 2022 survey asked for grantee feedback about this support (this was not asked in 2021). Seventeen of the 24 survey respondents (71%) in 2022 reported that they participated in this communication support.

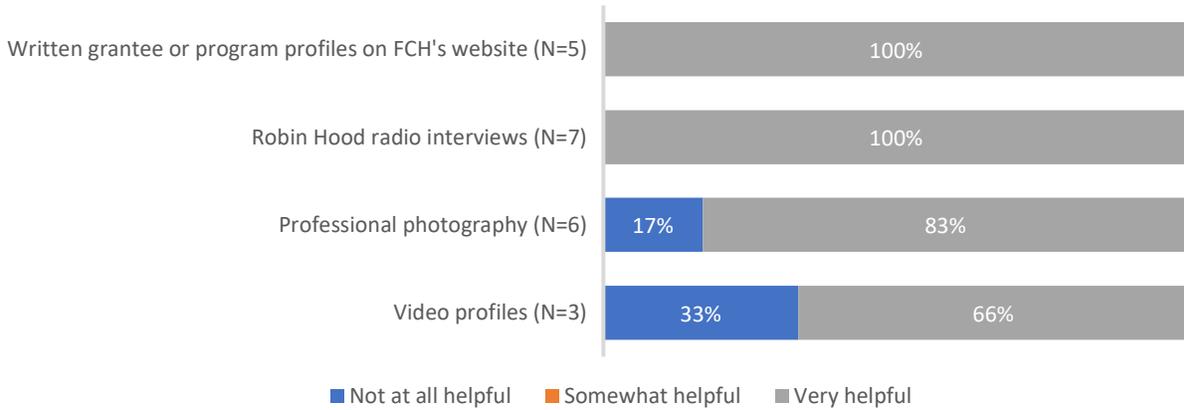
Of the four types of communication support provided, survey respondents most often reported participating in Robin Hood radio interviews. They were least likely to report participating in video profiles. While all survey respondents who participated in communication support found written profiles and radio interviews to be “very helpful,”

Grantees most often participated in radio interviews as part of FCH's communications support



experience with professional photography and video profiles was more mixed. One respondent who participated in photography reported that it was “not at all helpful” and one respondent participating in video profiles reported this. Comments about communication support largely revolved around the burden of this support for nonprofit staff. As one respondent commented, “We liked the idea of having, for example, our profile and video on the FCH website, but in reality, fitting in the recording of the video in particular created extra work.” When asked if they used any promotional materials created in conjunction with FCH, 56% of those who participated in FCH’s communication support reported they were able to use some or all of what was created in conjunction with FCH, while 38% reported that they had not yet done so, but planned to in the future. One respondent reported that they did not use any of the created materials and do not plan to use it in the future.

Grantees report that FCH's support for written profiles and radio interviews was most helpful



Of the grantees who reported receiving FCH communications support, many agreed that information about the projects were clear, expectations were created in partnership, and FCH staff supported and added value to the work. However, some respondents reported that engaging in the projects was more challenging than expected, in large part, as noted above, due to the burden on grantee staff.

Most grantee respondents reported positive experiences with FCH communications support

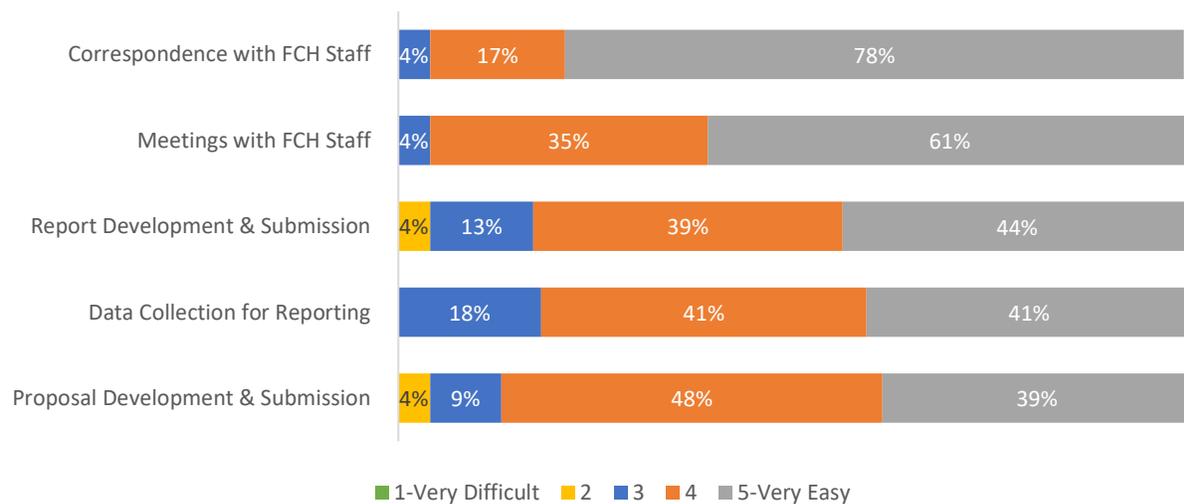


Those who participated in FCH’s communication support were also asked about their overall use of the promotional materials. Slightly over half (53%) reported that their organization used the promotional materials created with FCH through their own communication channels (e.g. organization newsletter, website, Facebook page) while 27% reported that the promotional materials created with FCH helped their organizations meet some of their communication goals. Twenty percent reported that the promotional materials created with FCH did not help their organizations meet communication goals.

Experience with FCH’s Processes and Grantee Portal

Grantees rated FCH’s application, management, and reporting processes as relatively easy, with over 75% reporting that correspondence with FCH was “very easy.” These results are similar to those in 2021. For a few, report development and submission and data collection was difficult. Ratings of correspondence and meetings with FCH staff were similar across grantees of all types. Long-standing grantees and grantees with larger grants were slightly more likely to report that data collection and report development and submission were “very easy” than newer grantees or those with smaller grants.

Grantees see FCH processes and communication as easy overall



As in 2021, 2022 survey results show that grantee respondents perceive that the information asked for by the Foundation in grant applications and reports is relevant.

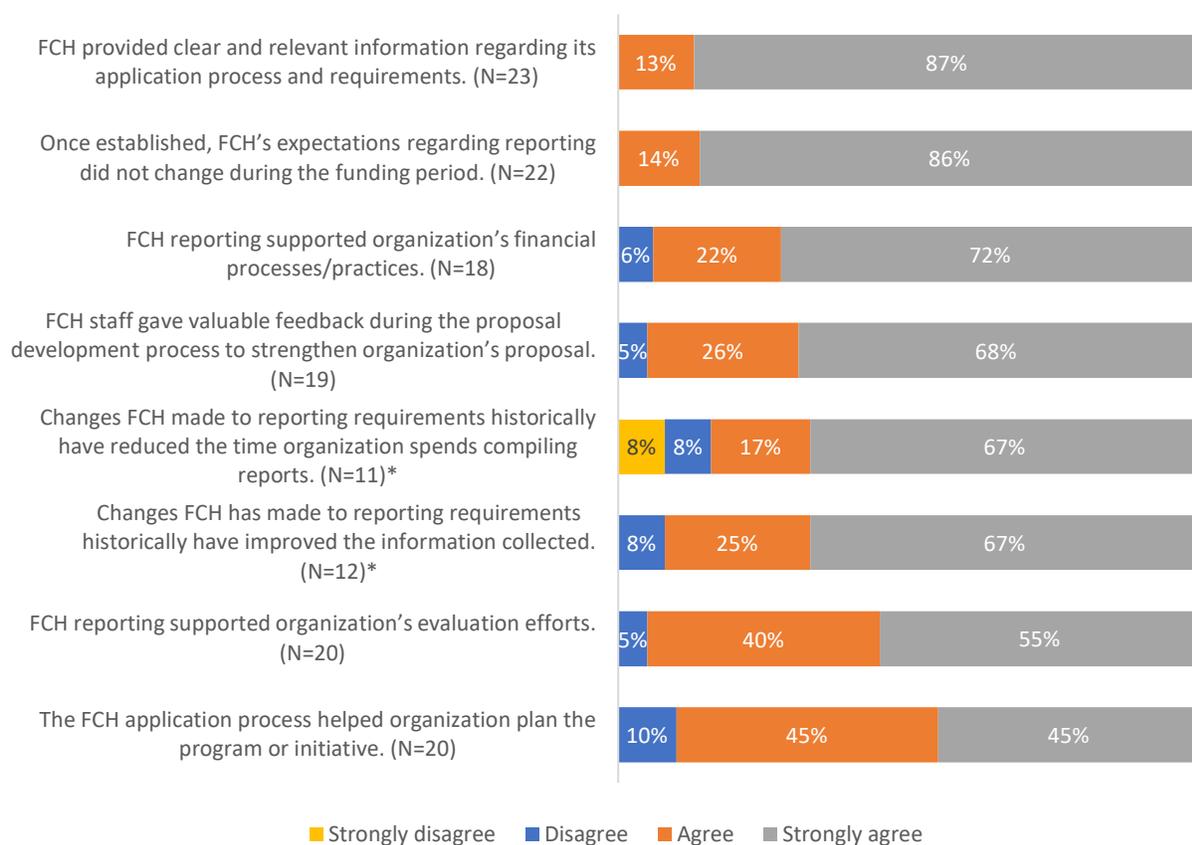
	Information requested was not relevant to funded work	Information requested was relevant to the funded work	NA
Application – Program or initiative’s budget	0	100%	0
Reporting – Program or initiative’s expenditures	0	100%	0
Application – Details that were requested about program or initiative	0	100%	0
Reporting – Details that shared about progress or results	4%	96%	0

Grantees rated FCH’s application and reporting processes highly. Over three-quarters of survey respondents stated that they “strongly agreed” that FCH provided clear and relevant information

regarding its application process and requirements and that once established, FCH’s expectations regarding reporting did not change. Fewer respondents reported that they “strongly agreed” that FCH’s reporting supported their organizations’ evaluation efforts or that the FCH application process helped their organizations plan the funded program or initiative. These responses are similar to those in 2021.

Grantees who were funded for five or more years or who received multi-year grants were asked about the impact of FCH’s changes to reporting requirements on their organizations. Most grantee survey respondents reported that these changes have reduced time spent on completing reports to the Foundation and improved the information that is collected; a couple of respondents, however, disagreed that this has resulted.

Grantees report positive perceptions of FCH's application and reporting processes



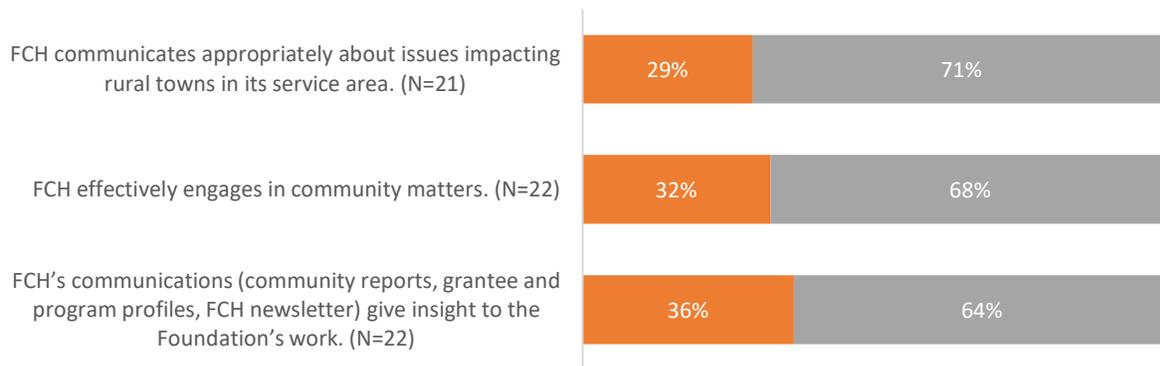
*Asked only of grantees who were funded for five or more years

FCH launched a new grantee portal in April 2020. Grantees were asked about their use of the portal. Most survey respondents (61%) reported that they had used the portal and rated it easy to use. The 30% of respondents who reported some challenges also reported that these were resolved quickly. Two survey respondents reported that they had not used the portal.

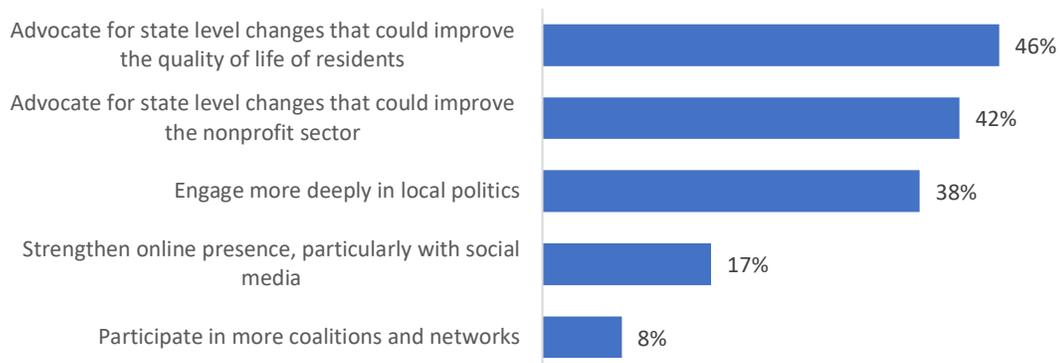
FCH Community Leadership & Equity

FCH's communications are seen as effective. Over two thirds of grantee respondents indicated that they believed FCH communicates appropriately about issues impacting rural towns in its service area and that FCH effectively engages in community matters. These results are similar to those in 2021. When asked about other ways the Foundation could deepen its community engagement, the most frequently mentioned was state-level advocacy. Far fewer survey respondents reported that the Foundation should participate in more coalitions or networks or strengthen its online presence. These results are also similar to those in the 2021 survey.

Grantees rate FCH's communication highly



Grantees see a role for FCH in advocacy

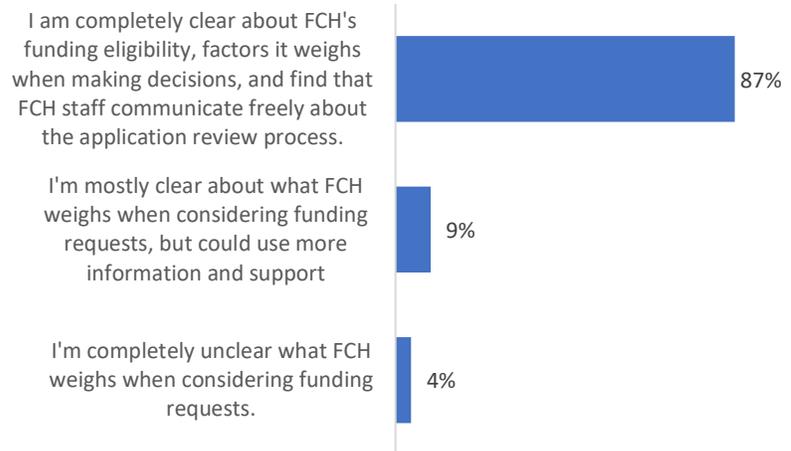


Clarity about grant making decisions is an important priority for FCH. When asked about their understanding of how FCH decides on grant awards, nearly 90% of 2022 survey respondents reported that they were completely clear about FCH's grant decision processes.³

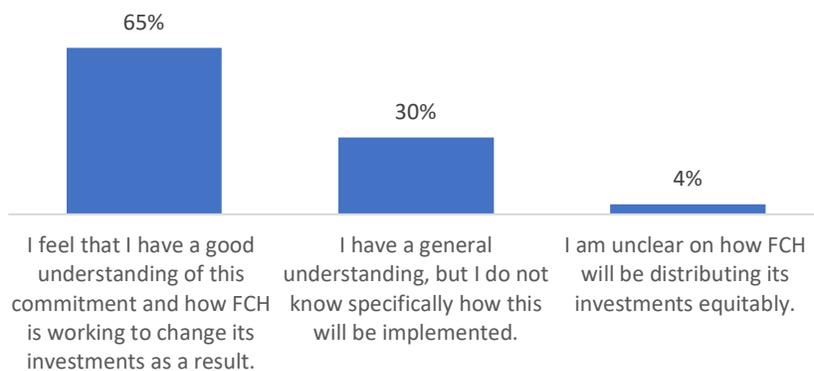
FCH launched a new strategic plan in 2021. In this plan, the organization committed to being more equitable in its grantmaking processes, especially as it relates to investing more in the historically under- resourced communities in its service area and simplifying its application and reporting

processes. When asked about this in the 2022 survey, almost two thirds of respondents reported that they felt they had a good understanding of this commitment and FCH's efforts to change its investments

Respondents report clarity about FCH's grant decision processes



Grantees report varying awareness of FCH's approach to equitable grantmaking as outlined in its strategic plan



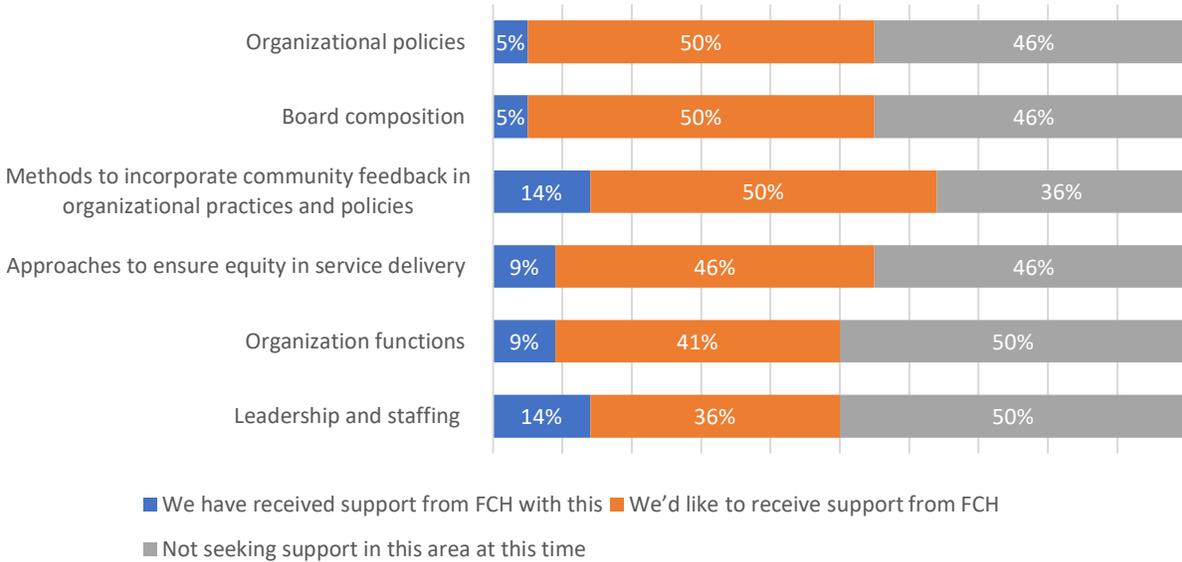
to align with this commitment. In 2021, about 50% of respondents reported this. Long-term grant recipients were more likely to be clear about this than newer grantees; grantees who received larger grants were more likely to be clear about this than those who received smaller grants.

When asked about support they received from the Foundation to advance diversity, equity and inclusion

(DEI) initiatives, a few respondents reported that their organizations had received this support, most often related to leadership and staffing and methods to incorporate community feedback in organizational practices and policies. Many grantees are not seeking support from FCH in these areas at this time. These results are similar to 2021. A higher proportion of grantees receiving large grants reported that they would like to receive support these areas compared to grantees receiving small grants.

³ Question was asked differently in the 2021 survey and thus, cannot be compared.

About half of grantees are seeking FCH support with DEI initiatives



Conclusions and Recommendations

As in 2021, the results of the 2022 FCH Grantee Survey indicate that FCH is perceived as an excellent partner to grantees, with respectful and supportive processes, helpful non-grant support, and valuable communication. The Foundation should continue its current practices and perhaps review and modify current data collection and reporting requirements in terms of both burden and information collected as some grantees—particularly newer grantees and those with smaller grants—were more likely to report difficulty with these tasks.

Survey results do indicate that there may be opportunity to improve the communications support it began providing in 2020, with a particular focus on ensuring clarity of expectations and burden on grantee staff; ensuring this support supports grantees’ communication goals is also important.

Survey results also point to opportunities for the Foundation to enhance its advocacy efforts, particularly at the state level. This was identified in 2021 as well.

As noted last year, The Foundation may wish to consider how to raise awareness about the importance of DEI and begin some support to grantees in a focused way. The greatest need identified by survey respondents was related to organizational policies, board composition, and methods to incorporate community feedback in organizational practices and policies.