

GUIDELINES FOR ORGANIZING GCIR MEMBER-SPONSORED BRIEFINGS

Why a Member-Sponsored Briefing?

Is there a topic you'd like to explore in depth with other grantmakers? Would you like to bring GCIR's programming to your community? Take charge and organize a member briefing.

GCIR member briefings provide an opportunity for you to create the programs on the topics you want, the way you want them. These educational sessions are designed and hosted by members around topics of interest with support from GCIR staff. They can be a short two-hour briefing or an in-depth, half-day, or daylong workshops. Member briefings enhance your learning and networking in many ways:

- You define the topic, format, and goals for the briefing.
- You deepen your ties with other grantmakers by working with at least two GCIR members to sponsor the session.
- You can build a shared knowledge base and ongoing network with grantmakers around the country who are engaged in your topic of interest and identify opportunities for co-funding or other collaborations.
- You can start a dialogue that will continue to inform your grantmaking for years to come.
- You will have the support and experience of GCIR's professional staff to help you execute your member briefing, assisting in both content development and logistics.

GCIR has the capacity to organize two to three member briefings per year, in addition to other programming. Briefing proposals are reviewed and approved by the GCIR Program Committee, which seeks briefings and workshops that:

1. Examine emerging or especially challenging issues facing immigrant communities;
2. Help promote effective immigrant-related grantmaking;
3. Showcase a diverse set of strategies and approaches, rather than focusing on the initiative of one foundation or grantee organization; and
4. Appeal to the interests of a large number members and other funders in a particular region.

A recent example of a successful member briefing was the October 2007 program, *The Changing Face of New Hampshire: The Role of Foundations in Promoting Immigrant Integration*. GCIR members in New Hampshire took the lead in organizing a one-day session to examine changing demographics, explore the immigrant integration framework, and identify practical roles that funders can play to promote newcomer integration and expand opportunities for all. The program drew a diverse audience of community, family, public, and corporate foundations, as well as public funders.

How Do I Organize a Briefing?

To organize a briefing, first find at least two additional GCIR member organizations that are willing to co-sponsor, help plan and attend the briefing. Alternatively, you can invite your regional association of grantmakers to become a cosponsor. Then, [contact Alison De Lucca](#), GCIR's program director, to discuss your idea. She will inform you of the next steps.

What's My Role as Cosponsor?

Once your session has been approved, you and your cosponsor colleagues have the following responsibilities:

- Coordinate planning with the GCIR program staff .
- Identify a topic that interests you and is likely to interest other funders and how this topic reflects the principles of GCIR's Immigrant Integration Framework. Decide on the outcomes you hope to achieve. Consider speakers and formats that can help you reach your learning outcomes and provide opportunities for audience interaction. GCIR staff is happy to help brainstorm ideas with you.
- Decide whom you want to invite. In addition to GCIR members, other funders in the region, e.g., members of the regional association of grantmakers, should be invited.
- Attend to the details (either yourself or by working with an event planner/consultant and/or GCIR staff). Reserve a venue and arrange for refreshments and audio-visual equipment well in advance. Make sure that all the co-sponsors are clear about speaker honoraria, travel, or expense reimbursements. GCIR is happy to provide in-kind support for some aspects of the planning (see below), but sponsoring organizations are responsible for all hard costs.
- Promote the event. Using a GCIR-developed flier, spread the word to your colleagues, identify individuals who should receive phone calls, and be active and creative in your outreach.
- Prepare speakers. Make sure the speakers are clear about the goals of the briefing, nature of the audience, and logistics of the session. GCIR typically works with cosponsors to develop a session guide. Also, you'll want to ensure that nonprofit presenters understand that this is not a fund-raising opportunity, although they are welcome to talk about their organizations in the context of the conversation.
- Reflect and evaluate. A post-briefing evaluation call is held with all the cosponsors to assess the program and discuss follow-up.

What Support Does GCIR Provide?

With an approved member briefing, GCIR staff will provide full program support including:

- Work with cosponsors to identify topics, set goals, and identify speakers.
- Providing feedback about the timing of the member briefing to ensure the program is relevant and not duplicative of recent or future events.

- Preparing the promotional flier with input from cosponsors.
- Promoting the member briefing on our website, through our listserv, and (if time allows) in the GCIR newsletter and e-newsletter.
- Providing sample planning materials, including an announcement, speaker confirmation and thank you letters, and evaluation forms.
- Collecting RSVPs, creating an attendance list and supplying nametags.
- Serving as fiscal agents for work that is contracted out to writers, event planners, etc.
- Attending briefings whenever possible (budgetary constraints may preclude on-site participation).
- Conducting an online evaluation of the program, using our standard program evaluation form.
- Organizing a debrief and evaluation call.

GCIR can provide these basic forms of support to members at no cost. Members who need more active event planning and management assistance (such as securing a location, recruiting and preparing speakers, developing an agenda, generating and mailing invitations, coordinating on-site logistics, documenting the meeting) may need to provide additional resources to cover expenses and staff time and/or to hire a separate event planner/consultant. Please see the sample budget form for details on the expenses relating to organizing a member-sponsored briefing.

Many thanks to our colleagues at Grantmakers for Education for helping us to conceptualize the guidelines for member guidelines.