A First Look at the Program Officer Competency Model©

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Program Officer Competency Model©

We're delighted to be able to provide this first look at the Program Officer Competency Model! A full, web-based version will be released in the first quarter of 2021.

The model begins with defining some terms:

Competencies	The knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) that are required for effective performance in a particular job or profession
Competency Model	A collection of competencies that are relevant to performance in a particular job, job family, or functional area
Competency Diagram	A graphic or visualization that summarizes the model to enable users to understand the features and connections of the model
Competency Dimension	A cluster of closely related competencies
Sub-competencies	The competencies that comprise or are related to connected to a particular competency
Behaviors	The observable activities demonstrated by individuals proficient in a particular competency
Stakeholder Groups	Partners, grantees, communities, foundation management and governance, individuals, and community groups impacted by the work/investment of a foundation

Sources: Campion et al., 2011; Shippmann et al., 2000

Competency Dimensions

In our model, there are three major sets of competencies, plus a fourth set of cross-cutting competencies that show up across the other three major areas of **Relationships & Field Building, Grantmaking: Proposals and Due Diligence,** and **Grant Implementation: Strategy and Evaluation.**

Cross-Cutting	Relationships & Field Building	Grantmaking	Grant Implementation
Inclusive Practice	Communication	Proposal Solicitation & Review	Strategy Development & Implementation
Grantmaking Philosophy & Approach	Collaboration	Financial Analysis	Evaluation Design & Management
Analytical Thinking	Grantee-Grantmaker Relationships	Organizational Assessment	Monitoring & Reporting
Ethics & Accountability	Grantee Capacity Building	Power Sharing	Sharing Learning
Advancing Learning	Sector Knowledge	Risk Management	

An Example of a Cross-Cutting Competency

There was significant focus and feedback during our focus groups and in dialogue with content experts about how to articulate/demonstrate competency related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). DEI was clearly important as a cross-cutting competency but not specific enough to measure competency through specific behaviors within disparate competencies. As a result, the cross-cutting competency related to DEI became *Inclusive Practice. Inclusive Practice* is defined below and will be demonstrated through listed behaviors.

INCLUSIVE PRACTICE	
DEFINITION	**BEHAVIORS**
The routine practice of intentionally including diverse stakeholders and perspectives, <u>fairly</u> and <u>equally</u>, throughout the grantmaking cycle, both internally and externally.	1. Recognizes the benefits of inclusive practice. 2. Exhibits awareness of and addresses one's own filters, privileges, biases, and cultural preferences. 3. Employs a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens to assess foundation's policies, practices, and activities both internally and externally 4. Builds relationships within and between stakeholder groups through inclusive behavior. 5. Identifies, partners and leverages relationships with external stakeholders to accurately represent and respond to diverse perspectives. 6. Identifies characteristics of implicit and explicit bias and employs strategies to effectively respond to them. 7. Actively seeks to create the conditions for inclusion. 8. Integrates principles of diversity and inclusion in all aspects of their role.

The behaviors that represent *Inclusive Practice* are further represented and defined throughout the model and in relation to other cross-cutting competencies. For example, under *Grantmaking: Philosophy and Approach,* program officers should be able to advocate for approaches and practices that are appropriately aligned to the size, infrastructure, history, systemic challenges, and organizational capacity of their grantees. And within the cross-cutting competency of *Advancing Learning,* program officers should be able to recognize, leverage, and facilitate opportunities to engage diverse perspectives in learning and innovation.

We hope this brief view into the model has you excited about learning more, using the model in your own work, and letting us know about your experiences and your suggestions for its refinement.