Following the Money
An Analysis of Foundation Grantmaking for Community and Economic Development

TOTAL GRANTMAKING
Nearly 169,000 grants to support local community and economic development efforts were made by the largest foundations during the study period. These grants totaled almost $15 billion.

169,000 TOTAL GRANTS
$15 billion

ACTIVITIES FUNDED
Grants were directed to a wide variety of activities to promote community and economic development, enhance human capital, and improve residents’ quality of life. Educational activities accounted for roughly 30 cents of every dollar granted.

VARIATION ACROSS METRO AREAS
The typical metro area received roughly $3.3 million in community and economic development grant capital during the study period, or about $12.35 for every resident. In 18 metro areas, this figure fell below $1.00 per capita, while in another 18, it exceeded $100 per capita.

TOP 10
1. Battle Creek, MI ......................................................... $392.59
2. San Francisco–Oakland–Fremont, CA ........................ $216.79
3. Omaha–Council Bluffs, NE–IA ..................................... $214.78
4. Jonesboro, AR ............................................................ $157.80
5. Pittsburgh, PA ...................................................... $157.13
6. Flint, MI .............................................................. $150.75
7. New Orleans–Metairie–Kenner, LA .............................. $144.63
9. Durham–Chapel Hill, NC ............................................ $140.81
10. Memphis, TN–MS–AR................................................ $132.68

BOTTOM 10
357. Monroe, MI............................................................ $0.56
358. Mansfield, OH ...................................................... $0.49
359. Lebanon, PA ....................................................... $0.47
360. Warner Robins, GA ............................................... $0.32
361. Kankakee–Bradley, IL ............................................. $0.32
362. Sandusky, OH ..................................................... $0.31
363. Longview, TX ...................................................... $0.24
364. Williamsport, PA .................................................. $0.18
365. Hattiesburg, MS ................................................... $0.17
366. Lake Havasu City–Kingman, AZ ......................... $0.17

WHAT ATTRACTS GRANT CAPITAL?
Our research shows that metro areas that received a greater level of per capita grant support:
- are home to a large foundation
- have a dense nonprofit sector
- have 250,000 residents or more
- are more impoverished
- are located in the West

Dollar amounts are inflation-adjusted to 2013. For more information, read “Following the Money: An Analysis of Foundation Grantmaking for Community and Economic Development,” written by Keith Wardrip, Will Lambe, and Mels de Zeeuw and published by The Foundation Review (2016, forthcoming). An interactive tool to explore the results of this research can be found at https://www.frbatlanta.org/followingthemoney. The views expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Federal Reserve Banks of Philadelphia or Atlanta or the Federal Reserve System.