2022 Perception Survey

Background:
As part of its commitment to centering community voices and continuous improvement, SVCF commissioned a survey to assess perceptions of the foundation among local nonprofits including, but not limited to, its own grantees. The responses collected help us understand our past and current performance, and will inform our future work. This year’s survey sets a baseline of perception for regular, future surveys.

The survey was designed by SVCF’s Evaluation and Learning team in coordination with staff across the organization and SVCF’s Community Advisory Council. It was administered by FM3, a third-party opinion research firm with knowledge of SVCF’s goals and the local nonprofit landscape. The survey was administered online and received responses from 230 nonprofit organizations between March 2 and May 13, 2022. Respondents were compensated for their time.

Profile of Respondents
Over 90 percent of respondents serve the Silicon Valley region (San Mateo or Santa Clara counties), with 8 percent only serving other Bay Area counties and 1 percent only serving regions of California outside the Bay Area. Annual budgets of respondents range from less than $250,000 to over $5 million. Respondents had relationships with SVCF that ranged from less than one year to six years in duration. Twenty-one percent of respondents had no current or prior funding relationship with SVCF. Fifty-two percent identified as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, or people of color)-led and seventy-eight percent identified as organizations that serve these communities.
SUMMARY FINDINGS

Key Findings:

1. Connections to Community and Impact

- Respondents view SVCF’s community work as highly important, and 3 out of 4 see SVCF as committed to advancing racial and economic equity.
- Among respondents at organizations led by people of color, a higher share (4 in 5) see SVCF’s work as advancing equity.
- Respondents are overall most familiar and most satisfied with SVCF’s work supporting organizations led by people of color and addressing emergencies and disasters.
- Respondents familiar with SVCF’s work in specific areas are also highly satisfied with SVCF’s work fostering community connectedness and promoting healthy early childhood development.
- More current grantees than past grantees rate SVCF as effective in accomplishing its priorities for community impact.
- Over two-thirds of respondents see funder as SVCF’s primary role in the community, and say SVCF is effective in this role.

2. Perceptions of Relationship and Trust

- 90 percent of current grantee partners, and 78 percent of past grantee partners say they trust SVCF.
- 90 percent of current grantee partners, and 59 percent of past grantee partners report a positive relationship with SVCF.
- Common descriptors associated with SVCF are respectful, improving, ethical and visible in the community.
- Respondents with more recent and less transactional relationships have a more positive impression of SVCF.
- A majority of grantee respondents say that recent changes made at SVCF have positively impacted their relationship with SVCF.
- Minimizing reporting requirements, streamlining the application process, and providing general operating support were cited as the most helpful of the recent changes made.

3. Opportunities for Improvement

- Respondents are least familiar with SVCF’s renewed strategic initiative areas; 1) expanding affordable housing, 2) promoting early childhood development, and 3) helping local individuals and families enjoy financial stability.
- Respondents say SVCF is least effective as a connector to other philanthropic avenues.
- Over 40 percent of respondents rated SVCF as not effective at providing access to other philanthropic funders or making direct connections to donors.

For more information or to see the complete survey results, please reach out to SVCF’s Director of Learning and Evaluation, Shamsah Ebrahim, Ph.D., at sebrahim@siliconvalleycf.org.