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• The National Grants Management Association provides tools and resources for grants professionals to support and maintain high levels of grants management competency and to establish standards of excellence for grants managers. Visit ngma.org

• The Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration is a focal point for public affairs education, research, and public service at the George Washington University. Visit tspppa.gwu.edu

• REI Systems provides grant management solutions, analysis and advice. We digitize government to produce healthier citizens, safer communities, and better lives. Visit reisystems.com
• **PURPOSE:** The purpose of the grants management survey and analysis is to inform the grants community of cross-cutting issues and trends so as to help improve grants management, and to support advocates for better grant management

• **SURVEY DESIGN:** GWU, REI, and NGMA developed a survey of grant managers in 2016 to help identify key practices, major challenges, and related topics that could help inform the grants management community. Few revisions were made to the survey for 2017 and 2018, so as to maximize the opportunity to evaluate the trend of responses over time

• **SURVEY ADMINISTRATION:**
  - During November 2018, we invited more than 5,000 professionals in grant management and related fields to take the survey online. Others (OMB, Grants.gov) also distributed the survey on our behalf
  - Those invited to respond included NGMA members, attendees of Grants Management Breakfast Forum events, and other grants professionals that REI and GWU have been able to identify. Those receiving the survey were encouraged to forward it to colleagues
  - Responses were anonymous
Respondents included a mix of federal, state/local and non-governmental grant managers.

440 Responses

- Total Count
- Grant Maker
- Grant Recipient
- Both

Years of Experience

- 0-2 Years
- 3-5 Years
- 6-10 Years
- More than 10 Years

- 58%
- 19%
- 14%
- 9%
How grant managers spend their time
Grant managers continue to spend the most time monitoring compliance... But less time helping improve performance.
Performance and grantee burden
Most S&Ls say performance improved. More Feds can’t measure or don’t know
Non-governmental entities fall in between

Outcomes Improved over the last 12 months

Federal

- 40% Yes < 5%
- 17% Yes > 5%
- 19% No
- 21% Don't Know

State, Local and Tribal

- 55% Yes < 5%
- 8% Yes > 5%
- 35% No
- 20% Don't Know

Non Government

- 53% Yes < 5%
- 14% Yes > 5%
- 35% No
- 18% Don't Know
Self reported quarterly data is the most common data collection mechanism.
Financial Data collected is the most timely, useful and reliable.
Strongly supported issues – and those that are not...
Of all survey topics, Respondents feel strongly about:

- **States and Feds Should Share Data and Automate Interactions More**
  - Score: 4.5 in 2017, 4.6 in 2018

- **Currently Use a Risk-Based Strategy to Monitor Grantees**
  - Score: 3.4 in 2017, 3.1 in 2018
Leadership is interested in data and analytics

Interest in data and analytics is higher across sectors and over time

Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non Government</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State, Local, Tribal</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Executive Leader Interest Program Manager Interest Executive Interest

Federal sector shows the highest interest, while the non-government sector shows the lowest. Interest has increased across all sectors and over time.
Respondents also seek improvement

**DISSATISFIED WITH DATA AND ANALYTIC SKILLS AVAILABLE FOR...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifying and managing risks that program goals will not be accomplished</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating performance of current grantees</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating and selecting grantees from amongst applicants</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determining best practices and lessons learned to share amongst grantees</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CONFIDENCE IN ABILITY TO MEET GRANT PROGRAM MISSION IS HIGH, BUT HAS SLIPPED A LITTLE**

How well equipped do you feel your organization is to successfully meet your grant program’s mission?

- 2016: 3.77
- 2017: 3.75
- 2018: 3.58
Feedback mechanisms for grant making and reporting count on mandatory reports rely on the annual reporting process

- 79% of respondents rely mostly on the annual reporting process for feedback from grantees (score: 4.1/5)
- 60% rely heavily on ad-hoc email exchanges (score: 3.6/5)
- 35% of respondents rely on regular calls or site visits (score: 3/5)
Grant Reporting automation still has some ways to go

- 74% of respondents said grantees still email in some or all grants documents for reporting
- 32% have a centralized system, while 39% have a program specific system to report into
- 29% said that a lot of data re-entry (more than 50%) is needed into the Agency database(s)
Satisfaction with Grants Systems is low

- Moderate satisfaction with **Access to Technology** (score: 3.1/5) and **Usage of Technology** (score: 2.9/5)

- Most dissatisfaction is with the ability of grantees (score: 1.94/5) and sub-grantees (score: 1.38/5) to cover the **costs of the software** needed to report into the Federal grants management system.

  - Breakout of score by Respondent type:
Significant challenges and success factors
Challenges are still daunting, but the uncertainty of 2017 has calmed a bit.

- Grantees who are inexperienced managing programs to support our mission: 25% (2016), 28% (2017), 22% (2018)
- Grantees who are inefficient financial managers: 25% (2016), 28% (2017), 23% (2018)
- Disconnect between grantee expectations/needs and an agency’s programs/priorities: 35% (2016), 30% (2017), 43% (2018)
- Attracting/retaining well-qualified grant making staff: 49% (2016), 54% (2017), 51% (2018)
- Inefficient/bureaucratic process, tools, and/or systems: 48% (2016), 48% (2017), 50% (2018)
- Funding uncertainty/susceptibility to politics: 62% (2016), 72% (2017), 62% (2018)
Qualified staff, tech assistance, and performance oversight are key to success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anecdotes/examples of people who have been helped by grants</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systematic evidence/data linking grants to improved mission results</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong processes for selecting grantees and avoiding risk</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear/persuasive communication about the mission or purpose of the grant</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear law/authorization to make the grant</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational structure to support agency-wide coordination and standard approach to grants...</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective/efficient methods for overseeing grantee activity/performance</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective training/technical assistance</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-qualified grant-management staff</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Takeaways
• Grant managers spend more time monitoring compliance than any other activity, and this increased in 2018

• 43% of federal respondents can’t measure performance, or don’t know if performance improved in 2018 (over 50% of state, local & NGO respondents say performance improved)

• Grant managers want data sharing/automated Fed-state interactions more than any other priority

• Grant managers aren’t happy with access to technology, and costs of software needed to report to the Fed gov’t
Grants directives are well-received, though CAP Goal 8 is not yet mature.
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