

What are Regional Associations of Grantmakers?

- A regional association of grantmakers is a type of philanthropy-serving organization that brings together funders who make grants in a specific geographic area.
- They offer professional development, philanthropic advocacy, educational programs, information, and more to increase the effectiveness or impact of philanthropy in a given region.
- They generally do not make grants themselves.

Regional associations of grantmakers are membership-based, philanthropy-serving organizations that bring together institutions and individuals who give money to nonprofits in a specific geographic area. Regional associations of grantmakers don't typically make grants themselves, but rather support and inform those who do.

So what do they actually do?

Regional associations bring together institutions and individuals that make grants in a specific geographic area. Sometimes there is a minimum threshold for membership. For instance, members of Southern California Grantmakers are individuals or institutions who give at least \$25,000 to nonprofits in Southern California. Some regional associations also welcome as members consultants that work with eligible grantmakers or nonprofits in the region.

Regional associations vary in size, influence and activities, but some typical services they provide include networking and professional development opportunities, educational programs, and events. Some regional associations offer members expert advice on legal, financial and compliance matters. Some keep members informed about legislation and policies that might affect philanthropy in the region. Some offer DEAI resources to promote and increase diversity, equity, access and inclusion across the philanthropic sector in their region. In addition to building relationships among funders, regional associations also often build connections between funders, nonprofits, government agencies, and other partners in their region.



By bringing together funders who may focus on different issues and communities, regional associations can provide opportunities to think holistically about funding to better the region as a whole. Regional associations can also help to bring a local analysis to national or global issues. They can be helpful in mobilizing resources to respond to an urgent need like disaster relief. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, some regional associations gathered, vetted and shared information about rapid response funds in their region.

The national organization United Philanthropy Forum brings together regional associations of grantmakers from across the United States.

I'm a fundraiser. Why should I pay attention to regional associations of grantmakers?

While regional associations don't generally make grants themselves, a fundraiser could benefit in a few ways from paying attention to them. For one thing, looking at the list of members of the regional grantmakers association in your area might help you identify new potential prospects. Keeping an eye on what's being featured at association events may also provide insight into the interests and priorities of grantmakers in your region. And some regional associations highlight high-impact nonprofits to their membership, or invite nonprofit leaders and fundraisers to events where they might meet program officers and others from grantmaking organizations.

You may also want to check out:

- What is a funder affinity group?
- What is a philanthropy-serving organization?
- What is a donor collaborative?

