

GRANT MAKING WITH A GENDER LENS

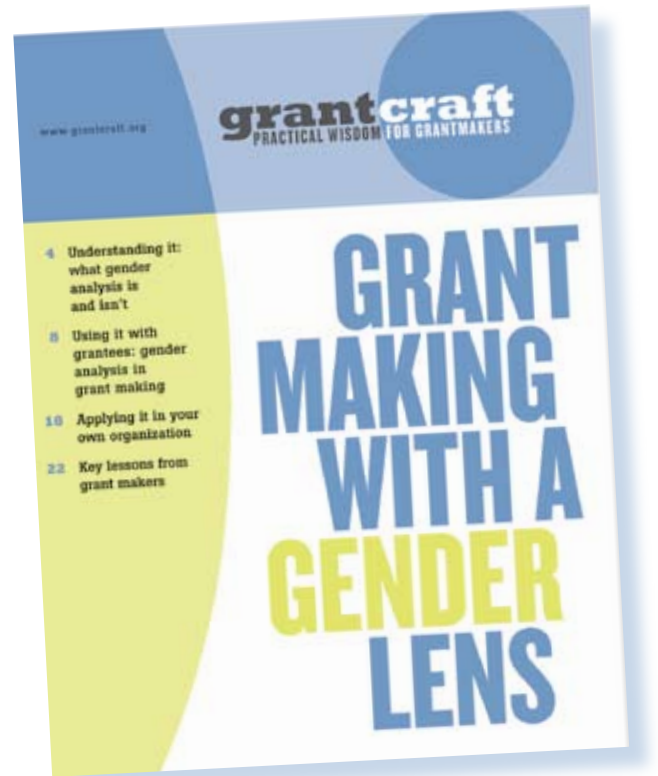
Why do some grant makers use gender analysis? And how can you apply it to your own work?

IN THIS GUIDE

Grant makers and grantees describe the experience of using a “gender lens” in their practice. Learn what gender analysis is and isn’t – and why it can help shape more effective programs and organizations. Contributors to this guide describe how gender analysis has led to new thinking in fields as diverse as public health, international development, juvenile justice, and youth services.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **What is gender analysis**
- **Using it to help grantees be more effective**
- **Applying it to your own organization**



“The heart of the matter is whether you’re conscious and critical of the gender assumptions.”

—Grant maker reflecting on the notion of gender neutrality

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A sample from the guide:

Key Lessons from Grant Makers

- **Consider the basic proposition:** *Men and women have different social positions; their different roles and upbringings can give them different skills, opportunities, resources, and, very often, different amounts of power.* If that seems reasonable to you, consider learning more about using gender analysis in your grant making. Gender analysis is a way to understand how programs and organizations can unintentionally affect men and women, or boys and girls, differently.
- **Gender analysis is necessary but not sufficient.** Because social position (and therefore ability to benefit from programs and organizations) is not a function of gender alone, gender analysis is never sufficient by itself. Class, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious beliefs – these and other aspects of social position need to be given their fair weight in the development of effective programs and organizations.
- **Don't forget boys and men.** The status quo has tended to disadvantage women and girls, which is why gender analysis often focuses on understanding their needs and situations. Yet as suggested by recent developments in health care (where men use services less often than women) and education (where some researchers have raised questions about how well boys function in the typical classroom), the needs of men and boys have sometimes been overlooked as well.
- **Encourage grantee curiosity.** When you ask grantees to factor gender into their proposal development, you run the risk of having them treat gender analysis as one more hoop to jump through. Try to position gender analysis as a form of creative intellectual inquiry, then think along with grantees about how it might be important in a given program.
- **Mind the power dynamics.** If your foundation wants to encourage diversity in the organizations you fund, you have to walk a fine line. On the one hand, you need to make clear that diversity (including gender equity) is an important value for your institution. On the other hand, you want to avoid imposing your values on grantees. The best course is to be clear about your values but recognize that even grantees who share them in principle might need encouragement, help, and time to change their organizations.
- **Listen to people in the field.** The insight that leads people to reexamine a supposedly “neutral” assumption often originates with someone working on the frontline – in AIDS prevention or after-school programming or faculty recruitment – who notices a problem. By listening well to evidence from the field, you can affirm the value of unconventional thinking, encourage the search for more equitable solutions, and be an ally for proponents of diversity within the organizations that receive your support.