Funders are increasingly looking to engage the communities they serve in the grantmaking process, but there are few resources about how to do so. In this guide, we explore how funders can engage in participatory grantmaking and cede decision-making power about funding decisions to the very communities they aim to serve. *Deciding Together: Shifting Power and Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking* illustrates why and how funders around the world are engaging in this practice that is shifting traditional power dynamics in philanthropy. Created with input from a number of participatory grantmakers, the guide shares challenges, lessons learned, and best practices for engaging in inclusive grantmaking.

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You can also read our press release here.
Download a Word version of the guide here.

What's in the guide?

- **Nothing About Us Without Us.** This vignette shares an example of why and how participatory grantmaking became the approach for an international effort to fund persons with disabilities.

- **Participatory Grantmaking: What Is It?** There is no formal definition for participatory grantmaking, but there are agreed-upon tenets that distinguish this approach. We begin this guide by providing context about the practice and defining the underlying values.

- **The Core Elements of Participatory Grantmaking.** This section outlines the core elements of participatory grantmaking and describes the ethos and values that support this approach.

- **The Benefits of Participatory Grantmaking.** Here, we explore the rationale leading funders to embrace this practice. For many, the values and core elements are a part of the benefits.

- **The Challenges of Participatory Grantmaking.** All philanthropic approaches have challenges, and participatory grantmaking is no exception. Recognizing and iterating on these challenges is part of the approach itself.

- **Who Decides and How?** This section presents the decisions that are made along the way and shares how different participatory grantmakers assign roles and determine who has power over what.

- **The Mechanics.** No two foundations look exactly the same—take a look at a few models of participatory grantmaking and review questions to guide conversation about structure.
Evaluation. Participatory grantmaking is process-oriented, iterative, and difficult to codify. Yet, participatory grantmakers seek to achieve and evaluate outcomes. This section outlines the hurdles and approaches that exist.

Walking the Talk: Embedding Participation Internally. This section explains why a participatory ethos should be embedded in processes beyond just grantmaking decisions.

Getting Started. Funders can begin their journey to embracing the values and practice of participatory grantmaking through a variety of strategies, touched on here.

Appendix and Endnotes. These resources support information found throughout the guide and can be used to explore in greater depth.
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