

FINDINGS FROM THE 2006-2007 ASSESSMENT

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT GOALS AND PRIORITIES OF THE OFFICE OF FOUNDATION LIAISON?

The Office of Foundation Liaison (OFL) was established in April 2003 to identify opportunities for partnerships between state government and philanthropic entities. Originally focusing on early childhood development and land use management, OFL priorities have expanded to include workforce development, health outcomes, and education. To guide OFL's work, the following key goals have been determined:

1. To increase state officials' understanding of philanthropy and to identify opportunities for partnering with state government.
2. To support models that will improve efficiency and/or effectiveness of state government.
3. To respond to opportunities for new local and regional public/private partnerships to serve people in the implementation of government programs.
4. To attract new national grants and federal funds to Michigan.
5. To establish and quantify the work of the state office.

Since 2003, OFL has assisted in negotiating and facilitating over \$40 million of foundation funds to support priority initiatives.

WHY CONDUCT AN ASSESSMENT?

Research has been undertaken to determine the extent to which key stakeholders working within state government and philanthropic arenas are currently utilizing OFL. The purpose of this assessment is to create a "snapshot" of how OFL currently distributes resources to accomplish tasks among various priorities, and to use this information to anticipate future changes.

HOW WAS THE RESEARCH CONDUCTED?

The report reflects work that was conducted from June 2006 to May 2007. Methods included administering and analyzing a survey, listing funded initiatives, and tracking the functions OFL serves. Stakeholders working in state government, philanthropy, and related sectors described their participation with OFL in a web-based survey. A list of initiatives and associated funding was provided by OFL. OFL tracked the time they spent on projects, using a database created by the Community Research Institute (CRI). In this brief, findings are grouped by objective. The method used to evaluate the office was developed using a logic model grounded in the OFL's goals.

GOAL 1. INCREASE UNDERSTANDING AND IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES

OFL promotes understanding of philanthropy among state officials and identifies opportunities for partnership. Twenty-seven percent of survey respondents worked for the state and 28% categorized their involvement with OFL as “state government”. All of these respondents indicated that it is important to be involved with state government/philanthropic sector partnerships. Eighty-four percent of state government workers “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they had an understanding of partnering opportunities between state government and the philanthropic sector, while 78% felt that they had a better understanding of these opportunities than they had four years ago. Seventy-seven percent agreed that OFL has increased the government/philanthropy partnerships over the last four years (Exhibit 1). This perception is a decrease over the 2005 OFL assessment, in which 88% agreed that OFL has increased partnerships, and 4% disagreed.

More than half of all respondents indicated that they were more involved in shared philanthropy/state government initiatives than they were four years ago (Exhibit 2).

By looking at the number and amount of funded projects, the Liaison Office can determine the areas in which they are increasing understanding. Table 1 examines the projects by priority for 2006 because 2007 is not yet complete. The Office already has seven funded projects in 2007, totaling nearly \$10 million. Additionally, there are pending projects in workforce development and in education. Anticipated funding for these projects totals over \$15 million.

Exhibit 1: State Government Responses to the Statement, "I feel that OFL has increased the government/philanthropy partnerships in the last two years."

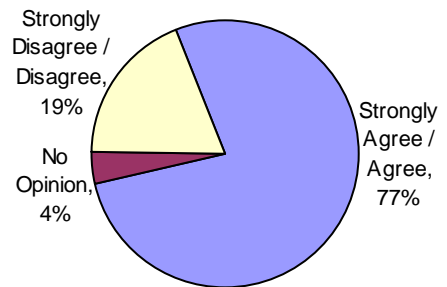


Exhibit 2: Respondents' Ratings of Their Involvement in Shared Philanthropy/State Government Partnerships Compared to Four Years Ago.

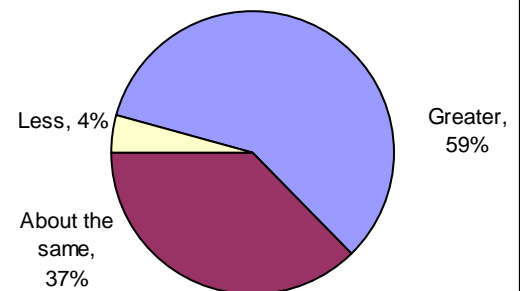


Table 1 - Number of and Funding for Projects by Priority for 2006

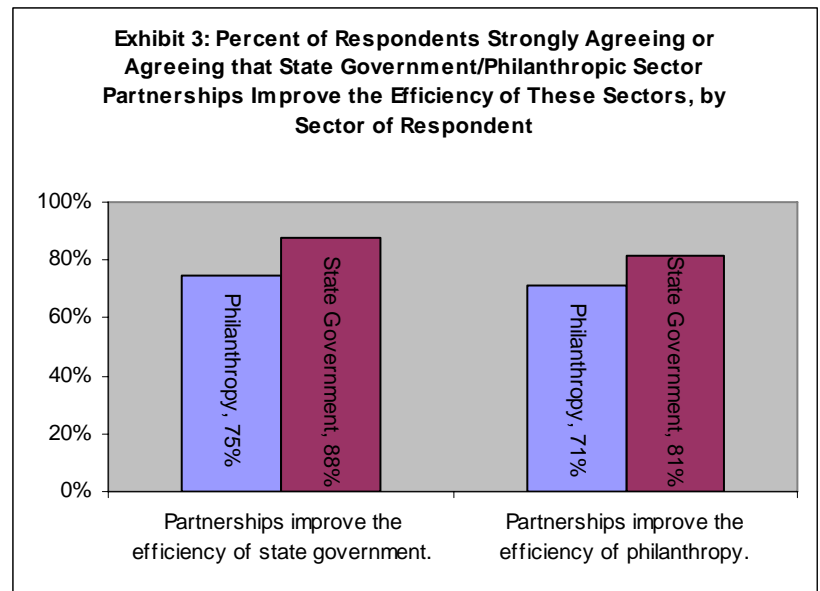
	<i>Number of Projects</i>	<i>Amount of Funding</i>
Health	0	\$0
Early Childhood	1	\$6,500,000
Education	3	\$886,000
Land Use	0	\$0
Workforce Development	6	\$3,552,460

GOAL 2. SUPPORT MODELS THAT IMPROVE STATE GOVERNMENT

OFL supports models that are likely to improve both the efficiency and the effectiveness of state government. In 2006 and 2007, examples of such programs include: Prisoner Reentry, Early Childhood Investment Corporation, Study on Accessibility to Higher Education in Michigan, Michigan Food Policy Council, and Achieve the Dream.

Eighty-one percent of survey respondents felt that government/philanthropic partnerships improve the efficiency of government—a decrease from 92% in 2005. Seventy-six percent of respondents indicated that such partnerships improve philanthropy’s efficiency.

This opinion varied based upon the sector in which the respondent worked. Proportionally fewer members of the philanthropic sector indicated that partnerships improve efficiency than their state government counterparts (Exhibit 3).

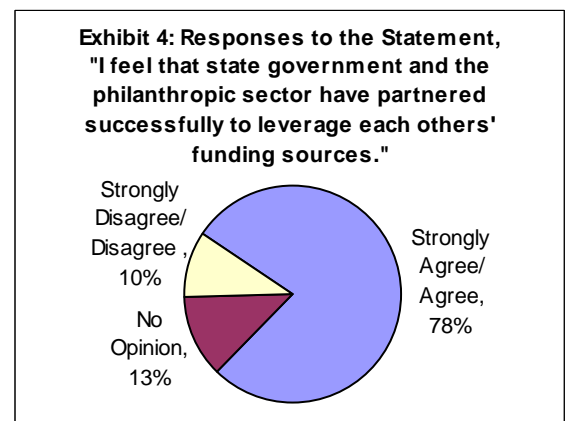


GOAL 3. RESPOND TO OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW PARTNERSHIPS

In 2007, the Liaison Office participated in a number of activities that responded to or enabled new partnerships. OFL provided resources, helped clients identify possible partners, and sponsored meetings and exchanges. Survey results show that the majority of respondents took advantage of the services and events sponsored by OFL (Table 2). All three of these percentages are lower than they were in 2005.

Seventy-eight percent of respondents felt that state government and the philanthropic sector have partnered successfully to leverage each others’ funding sources (Exhibit 4).

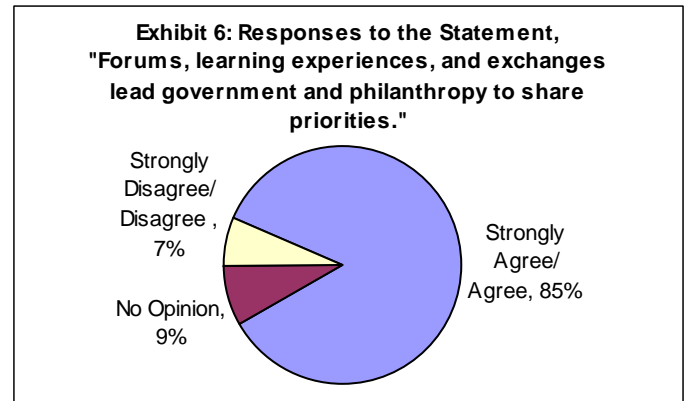
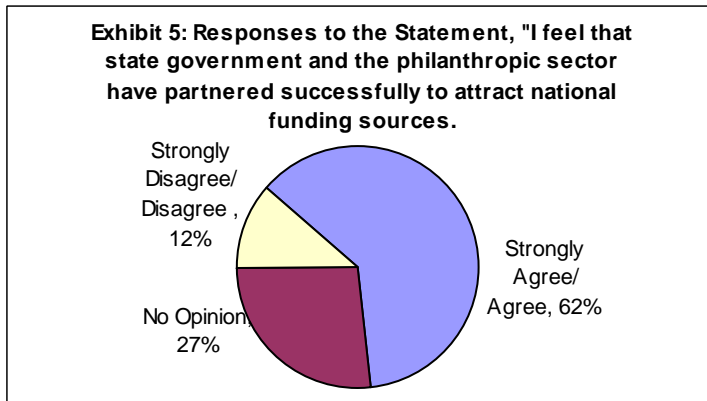
I use OFL to get information about current priorities and emerging partnerships within the philanthropic sector or in state government.	66%
I use OFL to identify potential partners for my organizational/agency priorities.	56%
I attend forums and exchanges sponsored by the OFL.	60%



Please note: percents do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

GOAL 4. ATTRACT FUNDS TO MICHIGAN

An important goal of the Liaison Office is to attract new grants and federal funds to Michigan. Sixty-two percent of respondents felt that the state government and the philanthropic sector have partnered successfully to attract national funding sources (Exhibit 5)—slightly higher than 60% in 2005. In order for fund development to be successful, government and philanthropy must embrace the same priorities. OFL encourages shared priorities by providing learning events. Eighty-five respondents felt these opportunities were successful in facilitating shared priorities (Exhibit 6)—a decrease from 94% in 2005.



Please note: percents do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

GOAL 5. ESTABLISH AND QUANTIFY THE OFFICE FUNCTION

This final goal relates to the overall operational and administrative capacities of the Liaison Office. To meet this goal, OFL staff identified and matched funders, advocated for improved coordination, and worked with Community Research Institute (CRI) to complete an assessment of the office.

A key piece of CRI's evaluation was determining how staff time was spent according to task and priority. In terms of tasks, staff spent the most time on networking and the least on research (Exhibit 7). Networking dominated staff time in 2005, as well, but to a lesser degree. An increase in maintaining networks is to be expected in a more mature institution with a larger network. When staff time was divided according to priority, data show that the majority of time was spent on projects that fell outside of the identified priorities (Table 3).

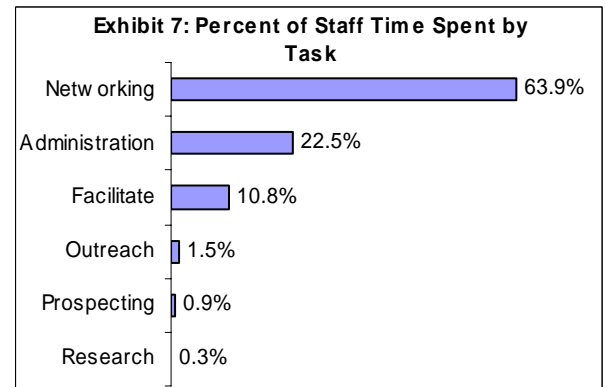


Table 3: Number of Staff Hours Spent by Priority

	Number of Hours
Early childhood	15.0
Land use	27.3
Health	30.0
Workforce Development	50.0
Education	56.6
Other	240.3