



**EMBARGOED UNTIL OCTOBER 6, 2014**

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**Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers and  
Foundation Center Form Strategic Alliance**

**Nationwide Partnership Will Expand Access to Data on Philanthropy,  
Improve Foundation Effectiveness**

*New York, NY — October 6, 2014.* Washington, DC-based Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers and New York-based Foundation Center have announced a new partnership to improve the quality and effectiveness of grantmaking through the strategic collection and sharing of data on philanthropy. The Forum is a national network of 34 geographically organized philanthropic associations that together have a membership of more than 4,300 grantmaking organizations, making it the largest network in American philanthropy. Foundation Center is an independent nonprofit that is known as the leading source of information about philanthropy worldwide.

“The philanthropic sector talks increasingly about such things as field alignment, strategic collaboration, and leveraging core competencies,” said Lawrence T. McGill, vice president for research at Foundation Center. “This partnership is a golden opportunity to put those principles into action.”

The Forum’s mission is to leverage the collective knowledge of its association members so that each can be the highest quality provider of philanthropic support services in their regions, while a Foundation Center priority is to empower donors with the knowledge tools they need to be strategic. The partnership will tap the unique strengths of each organization in order to achieve shared goals.

“The Forum Network has both deep regional roots and a broad national reach, and our regional associations’ members are key to strengthening connections and knowledge sharing across the giving sector. However, at present, only a handful of our associations has access to up-to-date grantmaking data on their membership, and none have sophisticated online tools that allow the data to be queried and explored in real time,” said Michael Litz, president and CEO of the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers. “Opening these new resources to the Forum

Network will be a game-changer for those striving to be more strategic and impactful in their philanthropy.”

The partnership will entail establishing platforms and systems for collecting data contributed by Forum members and translating it into knowledge services that will benefit not only the Forum membership, but the broader philanthropic sector. Specific plans include the following:

- **Philanthropy Data:** To support a vibrant and effective philanthropic sector, the partnership will launch a “donor data campaign” to encourage members of regional associations to centralize and standardize giving data at Foundation Center. This current data will be accessible to all members through an interactive mapping platform helping to inform funding decisions and track trends in each region.
- **Philanthropy Research:** Templates for research reports will be created so that information about regional giving can be more easily and efficiently published and shared, providing regionally focused funders with critical information about funding patterns in their communities.
- **Philanthropy Tools:** Data visualization, benchmarking, and knowledge management tools will provide regional associations with continuous access to comprehensive data on the work of their member foundations and empower users to draw actionable conclusions from the information.

In recent years, Foundation Center and individual Forum member associations have partnered on a wide variety of projects, including more than 40 research reports and fact sheets, and Forum members have participated in Foundation Center’s Funding Information Network. This partnership is a natural evolution of those preceding collaborations, all of which have in common the goal of spreading knowledge to strengthen philanthropy and the good it can achieve. The national scope of the partnership, however, will introduce efficiencies and broaden its impact.

“Recent advances in information technology have put us in a position to collect and share knowledge far more efficiently than ever before,” said Lisa Philp, vice president for strategic philanthropy at Foundation Center. “When this system for data gathering, sharing, and visualization is applied across an entire network of grantmakers, the opportunities for donors to collaborate and achieve their visions of a better world will multiply exponentially.”

*Share on Twitter:* .@givingforum and @fdncenter announce strategic alliance to improve quality and effectiveness of grantmaking. <http://bit.ly/FCforum14>

#### **About Foundation Center**

Established in 1956, Foundation Center is the leading source of information about philanthropy worldwide. Through data, analysis, and training, it connects people who want to change the world to the resources they need to succeed. Foundation Center maintains the most comprehensive database on U.S. and, increasingly, global grantmakers and their grants — a robust, accessible knowledge bank for the sector. It also operates research, education, and training programs designed to advance knowledge of philanthropy at every level. Thousands of people visit Foundation Center’s website each day and are served in its five regional library/learning centers and its network of more than 470 funding information centers located in public libraries, community foundations, and educational institutions nationwide and around the world. For more information, please visit [foundationcenter.org](http://foundationcenter.org) or call (212) 620-4230.

#### **About the Forum of Regional Association of Grantmakers**

Established in 1998, the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers is a national philanthropic leader and network of 34 regional associations of grantmakers with a combined membership of more than 4,300 grantmaking organizations. The Forum facilitates effective philanthropy by fueling connections and knowledge sharing across the giving sector, delivering efficiencies and cost savings for our 34 member associations, and providing tools and resources to advance policy change. For more information, please visit [givingforum.org](http://givingforum.org) or call (888) 391-3235.