

KEY QUESTIONS FOR CREATING OR ENHANCING PEER NETWORKING ACTIVITIES

Based on what was learned from this study, following are two sets of questions that may be asked either when a new peer networking activity is being created and implemented, or when an existing peer network or peer matching system is being evaluated for possible improvements:

Key questions for creating or enhancing peer networks:

- Who comes to the table as a peer? (e.g., are peers at the right levels in their organizations/communities?)
- Who facilitates the peer network? (e.g., the funder or a third-party?)
- What process and structure are needed for peer network meetings?
- What can be done to facilitate additional networking outside of peer network meetings?
- What resources are needed to operate the peer network?
- What policy needs to be developed for peer communications, both inside and outside?
- What relationships can be established with other peer networking activities?
- What measures of success are possible, and how can these be used to improve the peer network activity?
- What relationship does the peer network have to other organizational or community activities?
- What kind of exit strategy is needed and how will network members know when to implement it?

Key questions for creating or enhancing peer matching systems:

- What are the specific purposes of the peer matching? (what is needed, not just what is wanted)
- Who needs to be present from both sides of the match?
- How will each side benefit from participating?
- Who facilitates the peer matching?
- What resources are needed for peer matching?
- What measures of success are possible, and how can these be used to improve the activity?
- What relationship does the peer match have to other organizational or community activities?
- What kinds of follow-up are needed?

Excerpt taken from *Peer Networking and Community Change: Experiences of the Annie E. Casey Foundation*, by Thomas E. Backer, Ph.D. The full report is available at www.aecf.org.