



# Summary of Applicant and Grantee Perceptions

# 2013

All organizations that submitted Letters of Intent during the previous grant cycle (2013) were invited to provide feedback to the Foundation about their experience of the Letter of Intent process. Organizations that were invited to submit a Full Proposal to the Foundation were asked additional questions about their experience completing and submitting their proposals. In addition, both applicants and grantees provided valuable feedback about the impact of the Foundation's investments on their organizations, consumers/clients, the community and the field at large. Results are provided in a series of tables in the following pages. Comments by respondents are included following quantitative summaries.

## Highlights

## Key Findings

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The REACH Healthcare Foundation implemented a new applicant and grantee feedback process for the 2012 competitive grant cycle. This report summarizes the results from the most recent grantmaking cycle (2013) and compares results to the 2012 cycle.

The content, timing, and process used to invite applicants to respond was consistent across both years: All organizations that submitted a Letter of Intent (LOI) to the Foundation ( $N_{2012} = 67$ ;  $N_{2013} = 63$ ) were invited to participate by completing a Foundation-developed web-based survey. Applicants were emailed a link to the survey and provided a three week window in which to reply. All respondents were sent a reminder email 1 week and 1 day before the window closed. In both years the Foundation extended the window by one week to allow additional respondents to reply.

The Applicant and Grantee Feedback Survey consists of 43 items measuring applicant experience responding to the REACH Foundation's Letter of Intent - and for those invited to submit a full proposal – their experience developing and submitting their proposal to the Foundation. In addition, respondents were asked to provide information about the:

- utility of Foundation resources available to applicants;
- value of feedback received from Foundation staff;
- way applicants were treated and the helpfulness of staff during the application process;
- clarity and consistency of Foundation communications.

Respondents were asked also to reflect on the value of the Foundation's investments in their organization, community and for consumers as well as to the field at large. Respondents provided feedback on the specific impact of REACH's grant-making and change-making efforts in advancing knowledge development and influencing health care policy in their respective fields.

The results presented here for 2013 applicants were obtained during a 20 day window in July, 2013 and indicate that the Foundation is perceived to be:

1. fair, respectful and supportive of applicants and grantees;
2. providing a thorough and thoughtful review of LOIs and full proposals;
3. helpful and to have a clear and easy to use application process;
4. providing useful resources and information for applicants as they prepare their LOI and full proposal; and
5. providing clear and consistent communications about our mission, goals and funding interest areas.

Respondents indicated that the Foundation is having a positive impact on professionals, their clients and consumers, their organizations, the community, and the fields REACH invests in. REACH staff are perceived to be knowledgeable, deeply engaged, - and by many applicants - are seen as leaders in their field offering innovative thinking and solutions. This is particularly true in mental health, oral health and health care advocacy and public policy. REACH is perceived by a majority of respondents to have had a positive influence on local and state policy, particularly in oral health, integrated care, and supportive health services. Respondents indicated that REACH funding has directly led to improvements in the quality of health care services and programs offered by grantees and has been essential in adding new programs and services, maintaining existing services, and supporting core operating expenses.

REACH staff and leaders are perceived to be responsive, respectful, helpful and fair with applicants and grantees. They are seen as knowledgeable about their respective fields, their organizations, engaged at helpful and appropriate levels with grantees, and interested in the work of grantees.

Several areas for improvement were identified through the *2013 Applicant and Grantee Survey*:

1. Proactively express interest in the work of grantees to ensure that our partners know we value their work.
2. Provide additional information, especially on the key indicators and metrics, about the REACH Theory of Change to continue educating applicants and grantees of the value and utility of this tool;
3. Continue to seek leadership opportunities in mental health and primary care; and
4. Provide additional learning opportunities for community stakeholders, REACH applicants and grantees about evaluation within the context of REACH-funded grants.

The following pages provide a series of tables summarizing the results of the survey and comparisons to internal benchmarks or thresholds of quality the Foundation uses to assess our performance. These thresholds attempt to answer the question, “how good is good enough?” and are meant as a way to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement for the Foundation. Thresholds will continue to be reviewed and adjusted so that Foundation staff strive for higher levels of customer service and quality in our grant making. In fact, several key areas have had their thresholds adjusted upward in order to set the quality standard even higher for our work.

For more information about the survey or the results please contact:



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## Perceptions of Applicants Regarding Letter of Intent Process

The first section of the survey asked applicants to reflect on their experience with the Foundation’s Letter of Intent process as the first stage of applying for a program or core operating grant. Applicants reported that they were treated with respect and a supportive attitude by Foundation staff. Other key findings are in the tables below.

<i>Did we treat all applicants with respect and fairness?</i>	% Yes		Met Threshold
	2012 (N=42)	2013 (N=25)	2013
REACH staff treated you with respect and supportive attitude during LOI process.	100%	100%	✓
Did you seek feedback from Foundation staff following LOI notification?	88%	96%	N/A
After getting feedback do you believe your LOI received a thoughtful and thorough review?	91%	100%	✓

Note: Threshold for perceptions of respect and fairness is 95% affirmative.

<i>Are we, and our processes, helpful?</i>	% Very or Somewhat		Met Threshold
	2012 (N=42)	2013 (N=25)	2013
How helpful were REACH staff during the LOI process?	92%	100%	✓
Online application process was clear	95%	100%	✓
Online application process was easy to use	95%	100%	✓

Note: Threshold for perceptions of helpfulness of staff and our grant application processes is 95% reporting “Very True” or “Somewhat True.” In 2012 the threshold was set at 90%.

## Perceptions of Foundation Communications and Sources of Information

Applicants were asked to indicate which information sources they used during their preparation of their Letter of Intent and the perceived usefulness of those sources. The results are presented below.

<i><b>Do we provide useful information for applicants to prepare their LOI?</b></i>	<b>% Did you use?</b>		<b>% Very/Somewhat Useful</b>		<b>Met Threshold</b>
	2012 (N=41)	2013 (N=25)	2012 (N=42)	2013 (N=25)	2013
Grant Guidelines	100%	100%	98%	100%	✓
Pre-Proposal Conference	98%	100%	98%	100%	✓
Foundation Website	93%	96%	95%	100%	✓
Letter of Intent Proposal Template	91%	88%	97%	95%	✓
REACH Theory of Change	86%	100%	90%	91%	
Phone Calls/Meetings with Staff	81%	72%	91%	100%	✓
Foundation's Annual Report	48%	28%	90%	63%	
Letter of Intent TA Workshop	33%	32%	93%	100%	✓

Note: Threshold for the usefulness of information the Foundation provides our applicants to prepare their LOIs is 95% responding "Very Useful or Somewhat Useful."

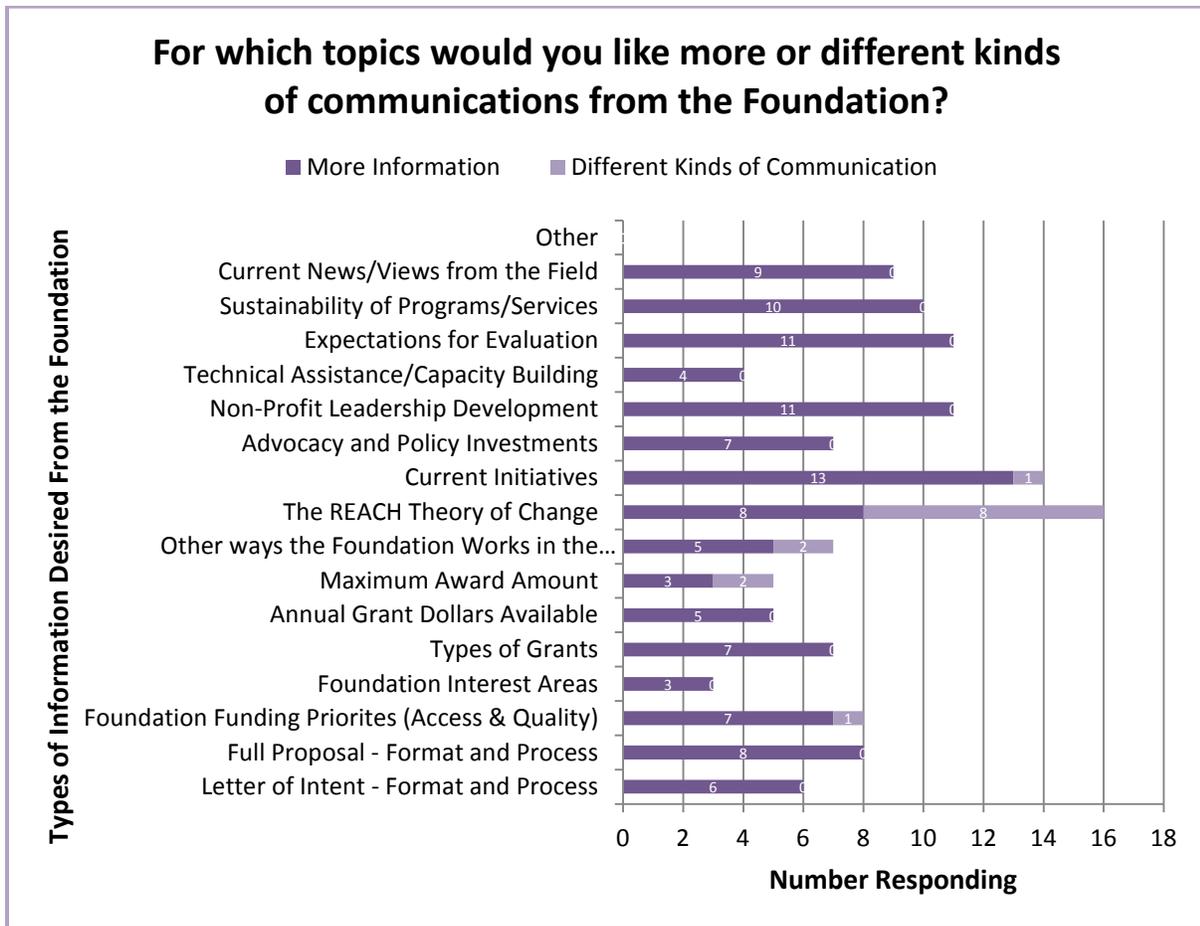
### Comments from respondents:

*"I feel the Theory of Change is overly-burdensome for organizations, particularly smaller non-profits. The difficulty of working within the Theory of Change contributes to an overall hesitancy within non-profits to approach the Foundation for support".*

*"At the time it was introduced (or I became aware of it), REACH's Theory of Change was unique among our funders. It has led the way, in many ways, in helping advocacy organization evaluate our success and think about our long-term impact. REACH has also led the way in advocacy evaluation, which has had a strongly positive impact on our work."*

“REACH has been thorough and consistent in its dedication to its mission and priority areas. REACH also clearly demonstrates its commitment to supporting its grantees as partners in improving the health of the target audience.”

This next section of the survey was designed to measure the information interests of applicants and overall demand for information from the Foundation. The chart below can be interpreted by locating the longest bar – each bar represents the magnitude of the overall demand for information and the sections of the bar represent the desire for 1) more information and 2) the demand for different types, venues, and medium for communicating the information. The results of this analysis indicate that the Foundation needs to continue focusing on communicating the utility and value of the REACH Theory of Change and its application to the work of our applicants and grantees. Equally important is the desire of applicants to learn more about the Foundation’s current initiatives such as Medical Home, the Rural Health Initiative, the Cultural Competency Initiative, and the Wyandotte County Health Opportunity Mapping initiative. Applicants are seeking more information about the Foundation’s expectations for evaluation.



## Perceptions of Applicants Invited to Submit a Full Proposal

Applicants who were invited to submit a full proposal were asked a series of additional questions about their experience of preparing and submitting the full proposal. The following tables provide a rich dataset of perceptions and expressed opinions about the Foundation, our operations, impact, and leadership in the communities we serve.

The results indicate that REACH staff members are perceived by all respondents to be helpful, respectful and supportive during the full proposal process. Furthermore, the on-line application process was reported to be clear and easy to use.

	% Yes		Met Threshold
	2012 (N=32)	2013 (N=19)	2013
<b><i>Do we treat others with respect and fairness?</i></b>			
REACH staff treated you with respect and supportive attitude during the FULL PROPOSAL process.	97%	100%	✓
Did you seek feedback from Foundation staff following AWARD OR DECLINE notification	74%	100%	N/A
After getting feedback believe your FULL PROPOSAL received thoughtful and thorough review	94%	100%	✓

Note: Threshold for perceptions of respect and fairness is 95% affirmative.

	% Very or Somewhat		Met Threshold
	2012 (N=32)	2013 (N=19)	2013
<b><i>Are we, and our processes, helpful?</i></b>			
How helpful were REACH staff	94%	100%	✓
Online application process was clear	88%	100%	✓
Online application process was easy to use	81%	95%	✓

Note: Threshold for perceptions of helpfulness of staff and our grant application processes is 95% responding “Very” or “Somewhat.”

## Utility of Information Available to Applicants Invited to Submit a Proposal

The focus of this analysis is to determine whether the resources we prepare and provide applicants for preparation of their full proposal submission to the Foundation are used and found to be useful. Each of the documents we have distributed to applicants was used by a large majority of applicants and virtually all applicants found the information useful. The REACH Theory of Change was perceived as useful by a larger percentage of applicants in 2013 than in 2012.

<i><b>Do we provide useful information for applicants to prepare their <u>full proposal</u>?</b></i>	<b>% Did you use?</b>		<b>% Very/Somewhat Useful</b>		<b>Met Threshold</b>
	2012 (N=33)	2013 (N=19)	2012 (N=33)	2013 (N=18)	2013
Grant Guidelines	100%	100%	97%	100%	✓
Pre-Proposal Conference	100%	100%	100%	100%	✓
Feedback from staff on LOI	97%	100%	94%	100%	✓
Proposal Template	97%	95%	85%	100%	✓
Phone Calls/Meetings with Staff	97%	90%	91%	100%	✓
REACH Theory of Change	91%	95%	77%	89%	
Foundation Website	79%	90%	92%	100%	✓
Proposal TA Workshop	46%	63%	100%	100%	✓
Foundation's Annual Report	39%	37%	90%	86%	

Note: Threshold for usefulness of information provided is 90% reporting "very" or "somewhat" useful.

### Comments from Respondents:

*"The complexity of the Theory of Change model was not clearly communicated or considered prior to implementing."*

<b><i>Are we communicating with clarity and consistency about our work?</i></b>	<b>Clarity</b>		<b>Consistency</b>		<b>Met Threshold</b>
	2012 (N=32)	2013 (N=21)	2012 (N=32)	2013 (N=21)	2013
Clear and consistent about our mission	100%	95%	98%	100%	✓
Clear and consistent about our goals	100%	95%	95%	100%	✓
Clear and consistent about our interest areas	100%	100%	98%	100%	✓

Note: Threshold is 95% reporting “very” or “somewhat” clear and consistent.

## **Foundation Understanding of and Leadership in Health Care**

During the 2013 grant term Foundation leadership and program staff made a concerted effort to participate in, sponsor, and present at local, regional and national events specifically focused on our interest areas. The results from this survey appear to suggest that this more extensive professional and community engagement in the interest areas as well as leading a number of key convenings focused on mental health, oral health, and health care policy have translated into the perception that the Foundation better understands applicant fields. Furthermore, as demonstrated in the following two tables, Foundation applicants perceive a marked change since 2012 in our ability to innovate and bring new ideas and solutions to pressing challenges in applicant fields.

<b><i>To what extent has the Foundation demonstrated an understanding of your field?</i></b>	<b>% Very or Somewhat</b>		<b>Met Threshold</b>
	2012 (N=32)	2013 (N=21)	2013
<b>All REACH Interest Areas</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>100%</b>	✓
Primary Care	87%	100%	✓
Mental Health	88%	100%	✓
Oral Health	72%	100%	✓
Integrated Care	88%	100%	✓
Supportive Services	89%	100%	✓
Advocacy/Policy	90%	100%	✓

Note: The threshold for perceived knowledge of applicant disciplines and fields of work is 90%. The 2012 threshold was 85%.

## Foundation's Role in Advancing Knowledge

For each of the Foundation's interest areas applicants report perceiving Foundation leaders and staff as leaders offering innovative ideas and solutions to pressing challenges in meeting the needs of the uninsured and medically underserved.

<i>To what extent has the Foundation advanced knowledge in your field?</i>	Year	Leader Offering Innovations	Deeply Engaged but not Innovator	Active Participant but not Leader	Limited or No Involvement	Unable to Assess
<b>All REACH Interest Areas</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>17%</b>
	<b>2013</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>13%</b>	---	<b>7%</b>
Primary Care	2012	33%	27%	27%	7%	7%
	2013	60%	---	20%	---	20%
Mental Health	2012	44%	13%	19%	6%	19%
	2013	71%	---	29%	---	---
Oral Health	2012	29%	29%	14%	14%	14%
	2013	75%	---	25%	---	---
Integrated Care	2012	13%	50%	25%	13%	---
	2013	50%	50%	---	---	---
Supportive Services	2012	32%	21%	21%	5%	21%
	2013	60%	20%	20%	---	---
Advocacy/Policy	2012	70%	10%	---	---	20%
	2013	86%	14%	---	---	---

Note: Thresholds have not yet been set for the role of the Foundation in advancing the knowledge within a given field.

## Perceptions of Foundation Influence and Impact in Interest Areas

Applicants in 2013 reported an increased perception of Foundation influence on local and state health policy, particularly in oral health, integrated care, supportive health services and more broadly in health care advocacy and policy. Applicants also perceived the Foundation to have had a substantial impact on their consumers/clients and on their organization.

<i>To what extent has the Foundation had a positive influence on local and state health policy in your field?</i>	% Significant or Somewhat		Met Threshold
	2012	2013	2013
<b>All REACH Interest Areas</b>	57%	75%	✓
Primary Care	47%	60%	
Mental Health	57%	57%	
Oral Health	57%	75%	✓
Integrated Care	75%	100%	✓
Supportive Services	53%	80%	✓
Health Advocacy	80%	100%	✓

Note: Threshold for Policy Influence is 75% or more reporting that the Foundation has had a “significant” or “somewhat significant” influence in health policy in their field

<i>To what extent has the Foundation’s work had an impact on your field, organization and professionals</i>	% Strong Positive/ Positive		Met Threshold
	2012	2013	2013
Impact on the field	95%	94%	✓
Impact on my organization	88%	94%	✓
Impact on me as a professional	85%	72%	
Impact on community	93%	94%	✓
Impact on consumers/clients	88%	94%	✓

Note: Threshold for Foundation generalized impact is 90%. The 2012 threshold was set at 85%.

**Comments from Respondents:**

*“REACH has made improving the oral health care delivery system a consistent priority. They certainly have left their mark on the oral health community in a myriad important ways.*

*“At the time it was introduced (or I became aware of it), REACH's Theory of Change was unique among our funders. It has led the way, in many ways, in helping advocacy organization evaluate our success and think about our long-term impact. REACH has also led the way in advocacy evaluation, which has had a strongly positive impact on our work.”*

*“Every time we have a Care Coordination case the impact of REACH work is felt in the community. Without REACH we would not be able to provide the linkage of services to consumers that greatly strengthen their lives and mental health recovery.”*

*“REACH has had a major impact on the field of mental health as it enables agencies to provide services that would not be available to consumers without that funding.”*

*“Our clients have case management in the field but have not been able to participate fully in treatment planning without the help of REACH- REACH funded us to provide laptops in the community and we look forward to using them to partner with clients to provide quality services.”*

*“REACH has been thorough and consistent in its dedication to its mission and priority areas. REACH also clearly demonstrates its commitment to supporting its grantees as partners in improving the health of the target audience.”*

*“Devoting resources to improving access and quality of health services for the underserved is essential. Equally important is the related policy work.”*

**Perceptions of Grantees: Impact of Past REACH Grants**

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Organizations that have received several grants from the Foundation or been the recipient of technical assistance, capacity building grants, or participated in initiatives reported that the Foundation’s investments in their organization has had a strong positive impact in their ability to continue pursuing their organizational mission, goals and ensure continuity in the provision of services. Grantees reported that our investments have had a substantial impact on their ability to improve the quality of services and programs, expand programs and services, and enhance their leadership capacity.

<i>To what extent has the Foundation’s investment(s) in your organization impacted . . .</i>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Strong Positive/ Positive</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Strong Negative/ Negative</b>	<b>Met Threshold</b>
your ability to continue pursuing your mission, goals and provide your services?	2012	97%	0%	3%	✓
	2013	100%	0%	0%	✓

Note: Threshold for Impact is 90% or more reporting “Strong Positive” or “Positive” impact.

<i>What specific effects have REACH investments had on your organization? REACH funding allowed us to . . .</i>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Met Threshold</b>
Improve the quality of our services and programs	76%	75%	✓
Cover operating expenses so that we could pursue other funding opportunities	55%	31%	
Expand an existing program or set of services to more or different clients	53%	50%	✓
Maintain an existing program or service	50%	38%	✓
Add a new program or service to meet a new or existing community need	50%	38%	✓
Enhance our leadership capacity	37%	56%	✓
Survive as an organization during difficult economic times	32%	31%	
Leverage additional funding from other funders	29%	38%	✓

Note: Thresholds for specific impacts are difficult to set due to the unique and changing circumstances of organizations from year to year. In 2012 no thresholds were set. For 2013 staff proposes setting the threshold for impact on specific circumstances at 33%; operating on the belief that our investments should meet grantee needs in some of the most common areas of need. To the extent that at least one-third of our grantees are able to have a need met in a specific area through our grants appears to be a minimum level of responsiveness to the broader set of diverse and changing needs and circumstance in our grantee community.

#### **Comments from Respondents:**

*“Through the REACH Foundation’s PCMH initiative, our clinic changed its practice model, increasing access and quality of care for our patient families. Through the quality metrics we have established and are managing, we are beginning to see improved health outcomes.”*

## **Perceptions of Grantees: Foundation Characteristics**

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Grantees were unanimous in their perception that the Foundation is responsive, respectful, helpful and fair. More than 90% feel comfortable discussing the progress or problems they are experiencing in the implementation of their grant’s scope of work. Conversely, almost three-quarters report that they believe the Foundation is being overly prescriptive through the use of a theory of change, the guiding questions in the request for proposals and grant guidelines. Twenty-five percent believe Foundation staff are overly involved during proposal development.

<i>Consider the following characteristics. Rate each in terms of your personal experience with the Foundation</i>	% Very or Somewhat True		Met Threshold
	2012	2013	2013
Foundation staff are responsive	97%	100%	✓
Foundation staff are respectful	98%	100%	✓
Foundation staff are helpful during the application process	97%	100%	✓
Foundation staff are helpful during the grant term	97%	100%	✓
Foundation staff treat me fairly during the application process	90%	100%	✓
Foundation staff are <b>overly involved</b> during the development of our full proposal	22%	25%	
Foundation's approach is <b>overly prescriptive</b> through TOC, RFP, Guidelines	59%	75%	
Foundation staff are interested in our work during site visits	79%	75%	
Foundation staff understand my organization's mission/goals	90%	100%	✓
I'm comfortable discussing grant progress /problems with my program officer	90%	95%	✓

Note: Threshold is 95% or more of respondents reporting "very true" and/or "somewhat true." Threshold for reverse scaled items that include "overly involved" and "overly prescriptive" is 10% or less reporting "very true" and "somewhat true." The threshold in 2012 was set at 90%.

#### Comments from Respondents:

*"We feel like the staff is outstanding in helping us to understand new concepts; i.e. Theory of Change. They are always helpful and respectful."*

*"The Foundation has been a true partner in the development of some cutting-edge initiatives for our non-profit (e.g., EMR, diversity issues, collaborative documentation, etc.)"*

Grantees gave the Foundation high marks for the level and frequency of communication they have with their program officer and the Foundation. All grantee respondents reported that they are satisfied with the relationship between their organization and the Foundation. Almost 90% report that the frequency of site visits during the grant term is appropriate.

<b>Consider the following characteristics. Rate each in terms of your personal experience with the Foundation</b>	<b>% Very or Somewhat True</b>		<b>Met Threshold</b>
	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2013</b>
There is an appropriate level of communication from my program officer during the grant term	87%	100%	✓
The frequency of communications between the Foundation and my organization during the grant term is appropriate	92%	100%	✓
The frequency of site visits during the grant term is appropriate	84%	88%	
I am satisfied with my organization's relationship with the Foundation	87%	100%	✓

Note: Threshold for Foundation characteristics is 95% reporting "Very True" or "Somewhat True." The 2012 threshold was set at 90%.

Comments from Respondents:

*"I strongly believe our relationship with the REACH foundation has grown over the past five years. \_\_\_\_\_ is our project officer and has spent a great deal of time learning about our organization, leadership and initiatives."*

## Perceptions of Grantees: Reporting and Evaluation Requirements

Almost 90% of grantees believe the Foundation's reporting, data collection and evaluation requirements are reasonable given the amount of funding they receive from the Foundation. Fully half of respondents – a 5% increase since 2012 – find the REACH Theory of Change helpful for considering potential outcomes and their indicators that could be tracked to demonstrate the progress of their work. The relatively low percentage finding value in the Theory of Change is consistent with other literature that found TOC uptake a process that occurs over several years and through several key decision points within organizations.

<b>Are the reporting and evaluation requirements reasonable given the amount of funding you receive?</b>	<b>% Very True/Somewhat True/Yes</b>		<b>Met Threshold</b>
	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2013</b>
Reporting requirements are reasonable	90%	88%	
Data collection and evaluation requirements are reasonable	81%	88%	
Theory of change is helpful for considering outcomes and indicators you can track	45%	50%	

Note: Threshold is 90% or more of respondents reporting "very true" and/or "somewhat true", or in the case of the theory of change "yes."