GUIDE TO THE FOUNDATION DIRECTORY ONLINE
How to Find Information on Grantmakers and What They Fund

About FDO
Foundation Directory Online (FDO) is a database containing information on grantmaking organizations; it is not a funding opportunity database. FDO includes information on private and corporate foundations and government grantmakers that fund national and international projects. The database provides information on each foundation’s application process, the number and dollar amount of grants made each year, recently awarded grants and their recipients, geographic focus, specified areas of interest, contact information, and more.

Where to Begin
• Access FDO here: Harvard FAS RAS Funding Opportunity Databases;
• Click on Foundation Directory Online;
• Enter your Harvard PIN and password, if prompted. Please Note: Harvard University has an institutional subscription to FDO; you cannot create a personal account, save searches, or set up funding alerts.

Free Newsletters
Philanthropy News Digest and the RFP Bulletin both provide weekly updates on new or changing grantmaking organizations and upcoming deadlines.
• Scroll down the FDO home page and click on the Request for Proposals link on the right side;
• Click Get RFP Alerts, and then Need to Register, to create an account. Once you are logged in, you can manage your News and RFP Alert subscriptions.

Starting a Basic Search
FDO searches across nine distinct databases. When performing a funding search, the two most useful are:
• Grantmakers: searches across all grantmaking organizations; and
• Grants: searches for recently awarded grants.

Grantmakers
Click the Search Grantmakers tab on the FDO homepage. We recommend completing the following fields:
• Grantmaker Name: if you are searching for a specific foundation, type the name here; if performing a general search, leave this blank;
• Keyword/Field of Interest Search: enter a keyword or key phrase (note: key phrases must be enclosed in quotation marks) into the Keyword Search field OR click View Index next to Fields of Interest to select FDO-assigned keywords for your search.

Grants
Click the Search Grants tab on the FDO homepage. Use this search feature to:
• Search for grants recently awarded to Harvard;
• Learn what a grantmaker has actually funded in recent years;
• Search for grants awarded in your research area or for similar projects, e.g., search for grants supporting art exhibitions to find grantmakers that fund such projects.

Your search results will provide the year and amount of the grant, the name of the grantee, and, in many cases, a brief description of the awarded project.

Questions and Trainings
If you encounter issues using FDO, please contact the FAS Research Development group:

email: research_development@fas.harvard.edu
phone: 617-384-6989

Research Development regularly offers workshops that demonstrate how to perform a basic search in FDO. Contact Research Development to learn when the next training session will be offered.

Tip: start with broad keywords first, then narrow your results on the results screen or add more specific terms based on the results you receive

Tip: do not check the “Exclude grantmakers not accepting applications” box—some grantmaking organizations that do not accept applications may still welcome letters of inquiry or other preliminary communications

Geographic Focus: Because many grantmaking organizations listed in FDO limit eligibility to applicants in specific geographic areas, it can be useful to complete this field. Click View Index next to Geographic Focus and select options such as Massachusetts; National; and/or National, International.

Support Strategy: Click More Search Options to expand the screen and then View Index next to Support Strategy if you would like to select the type(s) of activity for which you require support (i.e. research).