



The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI)

Retrospective Analysis and Evaluation of the Hewlett Foundation's Grantmaking in Mexico Request for Expressions of Interest (EOI)

TIMELINE

EOI

Issuance of the EOI: February 20, 2020

Submission Date: March 18, 2020

Email EOI to: tpa@hewlett.org with subject “EOI Response: Mexico Retrospective”

Evaluation of Responses and Shortlisting: March 31, 2020

RFP (estimated and subject to change):

Issuance of RFP: April 1, 2020

Full Proposal Submission Date: April 17, 2020

Evaluations of Responses/Selection Process: April 2020

Tentative Start Date of Contract: April 2020

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation's Global Development and Population program seeks five-page expressions of interest (EOI) for a retrospective analysis and evaluation of our grantmaking in Mexico from 1997 through 2019. The purpose of the analysis is to increase our knowledge of the aggregate impact of our grantmaking to Mexican civil society

organizations, and to draw out relevant insights to effectively support civil society to engender social change within a national context.

Background

The Hewlett Foundation has supported 84 Mexican civil society organizations through 352 grants totaling just over 110 million dollars. The foundation began strategically supporting Mexican civil society in 1997 with the creation of the U.S.-Latin America Relations (USLAR) program, which aimed to “create new communities of interest in the Americas by encouraging meaningful collaboration among U.S. and Latin American institutions engaged in basic policy

research and related outreach activities.”¹ The U.S.-Latin America Relations (USLAR) program made grants in four thematic areas² with a geographic concentration in Mexico and Brazil. One of the program’s first grants in 1997 was awarded to the Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas in Mexico City, which remains an active grantee today.

In 2000, an opposition candidate won the Mexican presidential election for the first time in over 70 years on a campaign platform that prioritized transparency and accountability. One of the new administration’s first actions was to pass a federal access to information law, which established a semi-autonomous institute to oversee governmental transparency and freedom of information requests.

In 2002, the Hewlett Foundation opened an office in Mexico City with two program officers and a program associate.³ With staff presence in Mexico, and working in collaboration with Hewlett’s Environment Program, a larger portion of USLAR’s grantmaking shifted to support Mexican organizations working to:

- Promote rule of law and justice reform.
- Support strengthening of environmental organizations in the U.S.-Mexico border region, mostly via border community foundations
- Support policy research and exchange, primarily on electoral democracy, public security and migration.
- Support long-term relationship-building between U.S. and Mexican leaders in diverse sectors, on key issues for the region

In 2004, the Hewlett Foundation ended the U.S.-Latin America Relations program. The Mexico-based staff and grantmaking transitioned to the newly created Global Development program.

The Global Development work in Mexico launched with three strategic objectives:

- Increase transparency and effectiveness of public resources
- Improve the enabling environment for philanthropy in Mexico

¹ 1997 Annual Report, https://hewlett.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/HewlettAR_1997.pdf

² 1) Free trade and comparative economy, 2) poverty and social policy, 3) democratization and rule of law, 4) hemispheric and transboundary environmental issues.

³ A 2010 interview with C.R. Hibbs offers her reflections about the foundation’s grantmaking in Mexico <https://hewlett.org/newsroom/foundations-a-qa-with-c-r-hibbs-global-development-program-officer/>

- Strengthen Policy Research for Development

In 2010, the Hewlett Foundation's Global Development program and Population program merged and grantmaking in Mexico became more tightly integrated with the global transparency and accountability strategy; no longer was there a specific budget allocation or sub-strategy for grantmaking in Mexico. Four years later (2014) the foundation closed its Mexico City office and the two program officers relocated to the Hewlett Foundation's office in Menlo Park, California.⁴

The Hewlett Foundation's Global Development & Population program continues to support Mexican civil society through its [Transparency, Participation & Accountability strategy](#).⁵

Purpose and Use of Retrospective Analysis

The purpose of this evaluation is to:

- Document and assess the assumptions of the Hewlett Foundation's evolving strategies that guided its grantmaking in Mexico, especially focused on advancing transparency, citizen participation, and accountability in government.
- Assess progress towards the objectives described in strategy documents, including identification of enabling and inhibiting factors.
- Document and assess the types of support (financial and non-financial) that the Hewlett Foundation provided to organizations in Mexico and any differences over time as the foundation's presence, staffing and budget changed.
- Document challenges and/or success stories from the foundation's support of civil society organizations; synthesize actionable insights for private foundations and civil society organizations that work in Mexico.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen current monitoring and learning practices at the Hewlett Foundation and among select grantee partners working in Mexico.
- Document and assess the Hewlett Foundation's recent efforts to support the diversity, equity, and inclusion goals of grantee partners.⁶

⁴ Ruth Levine, Program Director of Global Development & Population when the office was closed, published a blog post commemorating the work of grantees supported by grantmaking from the Mexico City office: <https://hewlett.org/friday-note-its-not-adios-mexico-its-hasta-la-proxima/>

⁵ https://www.hewlett.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/GDP_TransparencyParticipationandAccountabilityweb.pdf

⁶ <https://hewlett.org/building-capacity-for-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-lessons-from-two-years-of-organizational-effectiveness-grants/>

The Hewlett Foundation anticipates that the evaluation results will be used to:

- Inform aspects of the Transparency, Participation & Accountability strategy refresh in 2021.⁷
- Identify opportunities to improve our support of Mexican civil society organizations, including coordination with grantmaking that is international in scope and with other funders.
- Identify opportunities to support program staff to stay abreast of contextual factors that influence the effectiveness of grantmaking strategies and the work of grant recipients.

Preliminary Evaluation Questions

The evaluator will be asked to rationalize and prioritize evaluation questions to be addressed based on: 1) the evaluator's initial review of relevant strategy documents; 2) grant-related documentation and data; 3) input from Hewlett Foundation staff and partners. The following questions illustrate possible areas of inquiry to be considered and narrowed down:

- 1. To what extent and how has the Hewlett Foundation and its grantee partners contributed to social change in Mexico?**
 - a. What have been the most notable consequences of the Hewlett Foundation's grantmaking in Mexico? Who has benefitted? Where have we fallen short? What can we learn from the characteristics of impactful grantmaking?
 - b. What were the main factors that informed shifts in the foundation's grantmaking strategies in Mexico?
 - c. To what extent have Hewlett Foundation grantmaking strategies been aligned with the strategic priorities of grantee partners?
 - d. How did program staff select grantee organizations? How were prospective grantees assessed for the likelihood for future impact and what can we learn from those assessments?
 - e. To what extent and how did program staff coordinate with other relevant funders to inform strategy development and optimize support to grantee partners?
 - f. To what extent, and how did Mexican grantee partners influence global and regional norms of public transparency, participation, and accountability as a result of the support received from the Hewlett Foundation? To what extent, and how did Hewlett Foundation's grantmaking in Mexico influence the practices of other funders and policy advocates?

⁷ For example, what is a reasonable number of priority countries for a relatively small grantmaking team based in the U.S.? How can program staff most effectively stay informed about relevant contextual issues in countries where they do not live? What is the role of Hewlett Foundation in facilitating partnerships between local, national, and international programming? The guiding questions for Hewlett Foundation program staff to assess progress to date are listed on page 69 of the Outcome Focused Philanthropy guidebook: <https://www.hewlett.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/OFP-Guidebook.pdf>

- g. What were the opportunity costs of the Hewlett Foundation's strategic priorities and grantee selections? In retrospect, what were promising areas of civil society engagement where Hewlett Foundation and its partners did not engage?

2. To what extent and how has the Hewlett Foundation contributed to strengthening the effectiveness and diversity of grantee partners?

- a. What have been the most notable consequences of the Hewlett Foundation's support of grantee partners' organizational effectiveness in Mexico? How have foundation staff and grantee partners identified priority opportunities to strengthen grantee organizational effectiveness through the use of supplementary grants focused specifically on organizational effectiveness? What factors may have contributed or inhibited progress?
- b. To what extent do grantee partners' systems for monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) effectively document the impact of their work? What opportunities exist to improve their and Hewlett Foundation's MEL systems and processes?
- c. To what extent do the staff of the foundation and grantee partners reflect the communities they work with? To what extent and how have the Hewlett Foundation and grantee partners advanced diversity, equity, and inclusion in their organizations and programmatic work? How has this changed over time?

3. To what extent and how have Hewlett Foundation staff understood the political, social, and economic factors that enable and inhibit progress toward strategy outcomes?

- a. What primary contextual factors enabled and inhibited progress toward the foundation's strategic objectives in Mexico?
- b. What have been the practices of foundation program staff to stay abreast of the contextual factors that influence the assumptions of grantmaking strategies and the outcomes of grantees work? What are common gaps in knowledge relevant to strategy development and grantmaking decisions?
- c. How has contextual knowledge informed strategy development processes?
- d. How is contextual knowledge shared across relevant program staff, including during staff transitions? What are opportunities to optimize knowledge gathering and sharing?
- e. To what extent and how do foundation staff facilitate knowledge sharing between civil society organizations based in Mexico and other countries? What are opportunities to optimize knowledge gathering and sharing?
- f. What were the effects of opening and closing the office in Mexico City on program staff's relationships with grantees, awareness of relevant contextual factors and decision-making?

Period of Assignment and Approach

The retrospective analysis and evaluation is anticipated to start in April 2020 and conclude within eight months with a final presentation in December 2020. As part of the Hewlett Foundation's commitment to openness and transparency, we plan to share the results of this evaluation in some form publicly. A timeline for subsequent phases of the evaluation and exact deliverables will be mutually agreed but should be completed within 9 months. Consultants will have access to relevant, internal strategy, grant, and evaluation documents.

Desired Profile

The following are essential criteria for the evaluators:

- Demonstrated evaluation experience, with an excellent understanding of evaluation principles and methods, including strong capacity in quantitative and qualitative methods. The ability to identify and communicate any limitations or challenges, to propose solutions along the way as needed, and to complete the assignment within the scope and budget.
- Demonstrated emphasis on values, including:
 - Openness, transparency, and humility
 - Shared ownership and vision: engage many internal and external voices
 - Grapple with dimensions of equity
 - Input, ideas, and influence from those closest to issues, problems, and solutions
 - Engage beneficiary feedback
- Demonstrated ability to deliver high-quality, concise, and timely results.
- Demonstrated ability to design and deliver informative, engaging, and efficient presentations, consultations, workshops or webinars in order to validate and gather feedback on preliminary findings from key audiences, clarify and/or add precision to questions for further exploration during the evaluation process, or inform future project design and decision-making.
- Experience with conducting evaluations of civil society organizations and funders on the relevant subject-matter in a developing country setting.
- Strong leadership and management track record; the ability to manage all evaluation logistics including travel arrangements, visas, scheduling, etc.
- The ability to travel to Mexico as necessary
- Spanish-language fluency
- The ability to work closely, sensitively, and efficiently with Mexican civil society organizations, civic groups, and government representatives to gather the necessary information without creating a significant additional burden.

- The ability to effectively describe and communicate key global development, social change, and evaluation concepts in straight-forward and jargon-free English to non-technical audiences.

Submission of EOIs

Interested evaluators and firms should answer all of the questions below and complete and submit the form to tpa@hewlett.org no later than 5:00pm (Pacific Time) on Wednesday, March 18, 2020. Incomplete EOIs will not be considered. Keeping the five-page limit in mind, please do not restate the evaluation's scope of work, and only provide responses to the questions below. Please put "**EOI Response: Mexico Grantmaking Retrospective**" as the subject line in your correspondence.

1. **In no more than five pages, please describe the organizational and financial profile of your institutional entity, and your capabilities related to this assignment including:**
 - a. The full legal name and type of entity if applicable (e.g. University, private consulting firm).
 - b. Organizational structure, including any associates, partner firms, etc. and the number of years it has been in the consultancy business.
 - c. Your organization's geographic experience, especially in Mexico
 - d. The organization's most relevant past experience in relation to evaluation of transparency, participation, and accountability programs. Please pay particular attention to the Purpose and Use of Evaluation, Preliminary Evaluation Questions, and Desired Profile sections above in your response.
 - e. Any recent research findings and evaluation methods that you think will be particularly relevant to this assignment, and that you anticipate your team will draw upon in designing your approach to this assignment.

2. **Include the curriculum vitae of all team members**

Summary profiles of the proposed evaluation team, including contact information and personal websites if available. There should be a clear team leader who will serve as the primary evaluator and point of contact for the foundation. The team leader will be expected to attend all in-person team meetings and relevant events or activities. Except for the team leader, the summary profiles of all other team members should not exceed one page. Please enclose the curriculum vitae of all evaluation team members. (this section should be submitted as an Annex to the EOI and will not be included in the five-page limit).

Please note that this EOI does not constitute a solicitation. We do not require bids or proposals at this time. We are only seeking your expression of interest in participating

in the tender. A response to this EOI is not a guarantee that you will be selected to participate in the tender. A Request for Proposal with detailed Terms of Reference will be provided to those invited to submit a full proposal. Following the RFP, shortlisted institutions will be invited to participate in an interview. Please note that the foundation reserves the right to make adjustments to the requirements in this call and also to require compliance with additional conditions as and when issuing the final tender document.

If you have any additional questions about this EOI, please email tpa@hewlett.org. Please emails only; no calls.