Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- For Nonprofits -

Updated May 14, 2018

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION BY NONPROFITS (Prospective Grantees)

1. What are the criteria and requirements for nonprofits to receive a grant from Listen for Good?

The threshold and additional criteria are as follows:

Threshold Criteria

- Applicants must be nominated by a current or new funder who supports their participation, and who agrees to contribute $15,000 to Fund for Shared Insight's Listen for Good initiative in support of the grant.
- Applicants must be a U.S.-based, 501(c)(3) public charity whose work is focused domestically. Its beneficiaries for this initiative must reside in the 50 United States.
- Applicants must have a minimum annual budget of $500,000 in the current and previous fiscal years.
- Applicants must serve a minimum of 100 unique beneficiaries annually, and have intentions to survey a minimum of 50 respondents at minimum two times per year.
- Applicants must serve, and plan to implement feedback loops with, clients whose voices are least heard. For example, these might be families visiting food pantries, youth attending afterschool academic and enrichment programs, residents living in public housing, recent immigrants using legal-aid services, or individuals participating in job-training programs.

Additional Selection Criteria and Expectations

- Organization demonstrates commitment to design and implementation of high quality beneficiary feedback loops, defined as:
  - Data are collected regularly (at least 2x/year, ideally more often);
  - Response rate over the course of the year is substantial (targeting 60-80%);
  - Data are used to inform organizational practice (and ideally lead to programmatic changes); and
  - Staff close the loop with those who provided feedback (how this is done will vary by organization).
- Organization embraces use of the standardized question set and data collection via the SurveyMonkey platform; participation in technical-assistance offerings provided through L4G; contribution of anonymized data to benchmarks; and sharing data and lessons with Fund for Shared Insight and its nominating funder.
- Organization's leadership team demonstrates commitment to engaging in the downstream activities associated with implementing high-quality feedback loops, including:
  - Using the data for ongoing improvement
  - Communicating and advocating the value of beneficiary feedback to staff and other stakeholders
  - Dealing with hard situations that could arise from receiving or responding to feedback
  - Closing the loop with beneficiaries
- Organization has sufficient capacity to execute on the proposal and to participate in Listen for Good technical-assistance sessions (group and individual) and Shared Insight's evaluation of the project.
- Organization can collect data in English, Spanish, Chinese (traditional characters), or Vietnamese. If organizations wish to collect data in other languages, they must manually enter data into a pre-programmed survey in one of the above four languages on SurveyMonkey.

2. Why do you require the organization serve a minimum of 100 beneficiaries annually?

We have tried to keep the requirements as broad and flexible as possible in terms of nonprofit size, location(s), issue areas, and so forth. We recognize that some nonprofits have broader service models, and some deeper. That said, we felt we needed to establish a minimum number of beneficiaries served as a proxy for organizational size and readiness to participate in Listen for Good, and we determined that 100 unique beneficiaries served annually is a reasonable minimum.

CONTEXT AND DEFINITIONS

3. What is your definition of a "high-quality feedback loop"? Does it have to be tied to individual beneficiaries or can it be anonymous?

We define a high-quality feedback loop as one in which data is collected regularly; the loop is closed with those who provided feedback; data are used to inform practice; and benchmarks are created to put the data in context.

The feedback/feedback loop can be anonymous or not; it's up to the individual organization to determine what will be most effective given the context. The decision about anonymity may influence how the organization messages the feedback collection and closes the loop, but high-quality feedback loops can be anonymous or not. Also, there may be organizations that shift over time – for example, starting out with anonymous feedback loops and shifting to non-anonymous ones over time or vice versa.

4. What is the Net Promoter System℠ or NPS®?

In order to expand the practice of high quality feedback loops, we researched what options might be ***simple*** enough for the majority of nonprofits to implement and ***standardized*** enough to begin to create some meaningful benchmarks. A promising idea came from the business sector, where there is considerable experience in soliciting customer feedback in the form of the Net Promoter System℠ (NPS®) – a concept originally created by Bain & Company. NPS is framed around the idea of asking customers if, based on their experience, they would recommend a service to someone in a similar position. The standard NPS question specifically asks: **"How likely are you to recommend [x company, program, product or service] to a friend or family member?" on a 0 to 10-point scale,** and is followed up by a qualitative question: "What is the reason for your score?" Many companies also add, "How can we improve?" or "What are our biggest strengths and weaknesses?"

An organization's NPS score is calculated by taking the percentage of promoters (those who answer a 9 or 10 on the question) less the percentage of detractors (those who answer 0 to 6). Active users of NPS typically examine feedback in each category, conduct root-cause analysis to understand the reasons behind the detractor experiences in particular, and "close the loop" with customers so they know the organization heard them. NPS scores can be transactional (about a specific interaction or product) or relational (about the overall experience of an organization or product). Both kinds of scores help organizations better understand the perceptions and feedback of the people we seek to help.

5. Has NPS been used with the people we seek to help and/or other stakeholders in the nonprofit sector? It sounds like NPS is about customer loyalty and "promotion" of a brand or product, and that isn't really our goal in our nonprofit work, so how is NPS relevant to our context?

NPS is increasingly being used by nonprofit organizations to gather feedback from stakeholders, such as donors, volunteers, and members, and some nonprofits are experimenting with using NPS with beneficiaries – the exact practice Listen for Good is promoting. Given the relative success of NPS across other sectors – especially with its ability to simply capture feedback data (quantitative and qualitative) and build benchmarks to put the data in context – Fund for Shared Insight is interested in developing a broad, coordinated effort to apply and test NPS as an entry point for nonprofits to gather feedback from those they are seeking to help. During the first year of Listen for Good, we had 46 grantees experiment with asking the NPS question of their clients/ beneficiaries —representing the largest coordinated data-collection effort to test NPS with beneficiaries to date.

With the Listen for Good initiative, we seek to build on the spirit of NPS to expand and strengthen beneficiary feedback loops in the social sector. We recognize that this may not be the perfect question or the exact right approach, but think it is a powerful way to advance the conversation. Of course, while businesses inherently want customer referrals or customers promoting their brand/service/product, nonprofits are not typically looking for the same thing. But even if the goal isn't to turn beneficiaries into promoters or to achieve high customer loyalty, we believe that NPS – the rigor of asking questions, the practice of using data, and the feedback-process experience it provides – is a valuable tool for nonprofits seeking to hear from those who are least heard.

All of this said, we want to be very candid that what we seek in this initiative are learning partners who will join us in this project to see how NPS, in concert with a simple set of additional questions, can generate meaningful feedback for improvement and help us figure out what we can all learn along the way.

6. Why did you decide to focus on a semi-standard survey instrument instead of allowing organizations to pick the questions they feel are most appropriate?

A focus of Listen for Good is to build critical infrastructure that currently does not exist in the feedback field – the ability to create benchmarks. Using a standardized or semi-standardized survey tool means that nonprofits can better understand and analyze results by comparing them against results from multiple surveys within their organization, as well as against those at similar organizations or groups working in the same issue area. Together, we can build valuable benchmarks, making survey data more transparent and useful across the sector.

Fund for Shared Insight does believe, however, that it can be valuable for organizations to ask a limited number of customized questions of beneficiaries. In addition to the standard Listen for Good questions that all organizations are required to ask, groups have the option to add up to five of their own questions to the survey.

7. What are benchmarks and why do they matter? How will you create them in this initiative?

Benchmarks provide the opportunity to put data in context – a benchmark is a comparative data point or data points that provide interpretive value. For example, let's say you survey your beneficiaries and get a Net Promoter Score of 50. Then you might ask, "Is that a good score, an average score or a low score?" Well, it really all depends on the context or comparative data – that is the benchmark. If you know that the high among peer organizations is a 90, the low is 0, and the median is 55, you learn you are scoring right in the middle of organizations and can consider if or how you might improve.

A benchmark can come from a few sources including: (1) your own organization's history – you can benchmark current against past performance; (2) your own organization's work across multiple sites – you can benchmark across multiple sites at a single moment in time and over time as well; and (3) a data set of other similar organizations. By requiring participants to use a semi-standardized survey tool, Listen for Good is creating the opportunity for organizations to build and use all three types of benchmarks. A dataset that allows organizations to compare themselves to other groups has been the most elusive to date, but Listen for Good is making it happen. Based on our work with 46 organizations in 2016, we have already begun to build benchmarks in issue areas, including food insecurity, youth development, and workforce development.

8. How is this feedback different from typical client-satisfaction surveys? And what is perceptual feedback?

In many ways, it is analogous. However, we would argue that the NPS framework and our related question set are more actionable than traditional customer-satisfaction surveys. For example, you can segment respondents based on respondents that identify as "promoters" versus "detractors", and use the qualitative feedback from both groups to determine what's going well within your organization and what needs improvement.

Simply put, perceptual feedback refers to the perspectives, feelings, and opinions individuals have about their experiences with an organization, product, or service that are used to inform and improve the practice and decision-making of that organization. Perceptual feedback captures sentiments of both the head and the heart, gathering information about what individuals did; whether an interaction met their personal standards; and how that interaction made them feel (e.g. supported, respected, or delighted). To read more about perceptual feedback, please reference "Perceptual Feedback: What's it all about?"

9. How is implementing feedback loops different from other community-engagement efforts?

Community-engagement efforts can be important and valuable ways to hear from the people we seek to help in designing the programs or services offered in their communities. Our observation is that these efforts, though they can take many forms, are often structured as one-time events, such as a community meeting or forum.

When we talk about feedback loops, we define them as part of a process of ongoing, systematic collection of perceptual data from the people we seek to help.

DEFINITION OF AN "END BENEFICIARY"

10. What do you mean by 'beneficiary' or 'the people we seek to help'?

People use a variety of terminology to describe the people we seek to help, including "beneficiaries," "clients," "ultimate constituents", and "ultimate intended constituents". For the purpose of mutual understanding in the work of Fund for Shared Insight, we primarily use the phrase "the people we seek to help" – recognizing that we don't always reach the people we *want* to help.

Beneficiaries from whom feedback will be collected must be the ultimate intended beneficiary receiving services and represent individuals whose voices are least heard. For example, these might be families visiting food pantries, youth attending afterschool academic and enrichment programs, residents living in public housing, recent immigrants using legal-aid services, or individuals participating in job-training programs. Ultimate beneficiaries as defined here are not teachers, nurses, social entrepreneurs, or others whom we would consider "intermediaries" to the people we ultimately seek to help.

11. We have two primary customer groups, early learning programs/child care providers and parents of the children. Is it correct to assume you would want to involve both customer groups?

In this project, we are committed to listening to the ultimate intended beneficiaries of this work. Thus, you cannot apply for a grant to survey anyone who isn't an ultimate beneficiary. One key distinction is that in almost every case (except maybe a workforce-development program), people who are at their jobs, such as childcare providers, nurses, and teachers, are not ultimate beneficiaries. In those cases, students and maybe their parents would be considered the ultimate beneficiaries.

12. One of our goals is to survey our volunteers. Could we apply to Listen for Good to do that?

Neither volunteers nor donors are ultimate intended beneficiaries, and thus surveying those populations would not meet the criteria of Listen for Good. That said, many organizations have good reasons to survey these stakeholders and we encourage you to survey them if it makes sense for your work – but not under this grant opportunity.

LISTEN FOR GOOD STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS

13. What questions are we required to ask as part of Listen for Good and what questions can we customize?

The core feedback tool is simple, consisting of five standard questions that all participating organizations are required to ask:

- 1. How likely is it that you would recommend […] to a friend or family member?
- 2. What is […] good at?
- 3. What could […] do better?
- 4. How much of a positive difference has […] made in your life?
- 5. How often do staff at […] treat you with respect?
  ©2015 SurveyMonkey.

In addition, organizations can ask four optional demographic questions and add up to five custom questions to their survey.

14. What if the people we seek to help can't answer questions on a 0-10 scale (e.g. people with low literacy levels, people with disabilities)?

Several current Listen for Good grantees serve end beneficiaries who may need assistance to answer questions on a 0-10 scale. These grantees will be available to share the practices that have worked for them, including using scales that incorporate descriptive words or pictures, and using proctors to aid in administration. However, our threshold requirements are that beneficiaries must have some basic anticipated ability to comprehend the Listen for Good survey questions. If you would like to survey an especially hard-to-reach population that may struggle with comprehension of the 0-10 scale or other aspects of the questions or methods for data collection, please contact us individually to discuss.

15. What training and support does Fund for Shared Insight provide?

In addition to grant funds, Fund for Shared Insight has a technical assistance (TA) team that will provide comprehensive orientation and support at threshold moments in the process. The team includes several consultants with specific expertise in survey design and analysis of beneficiary feedback.

Grantees must participate in at least four coaching/TA sessions at a minimum: a) a web-based orientation, b) a 1:1 survey design conversation with the TA team, c) a 1:1 conversation with the TA team focused on interpreting results, and d) a 1:1 conversation with the TA team that includes members of grantee senior staff to debrief on the Listen for Good process, discuss "closing the loop," and share outcomes of the L4G process. Grantees will also have the option to join relevant communities of practice to share lessons and ideas.

The TA team also provides ad-hoc assistance as requested.

16. Is Listen for Good looking for a certain sample size and/or response rate?

In terms of sample size, there are no set numbers beyond the 100 beneficiaries served threshold – the initiative can be for large organizations or smaller ones. Regarding response rates, we expect that organizations will have multiple feedback rounds/cycles during the year, and we want organizations to aim for a response rate of 60-80% over the course of the year. Each organization will have different ideas for how to structure the timing and methods of feedback collection to reach or exceed this target. Listen for Good is structured around a survey composed of only six simple, straightforward questions, which should help organizations to see high response rates.

If Listen for Good grantees are struggling with response rates, our TA team will help troubleshoot/ problem-solve. We don't expect that every organization will meet or exceed the target response rate right away, but we do expect that organizations will strive to reach this target and commit the time, resources, and attention to the project needs to meet its goals.

17. I see that organizations must serve at least 100 beneficiaries. Are there a minimum number of clients that must be surveyed? Could we do a pilot with a subset of students before rolling out more fully?

The minimum requirement of 100 clients is meant primarily to serve as a proxy for the capacity of organizations applying. However, we encourage organizations to get minimum survey populations of at least 50 people and approaching closer to 100 where possible, as a larger sample size will help enable research and analysis. Your initial rounds can be a smaller subset of your clients, and we agree that there is a lot of value in piloting a survey process before rolling out the project to all clients.

18. Are we expected to use particular methods for soliciting feedback from the people we seek to help? What are our options for data collection?

We are pleased to partner with SurveyMonkey on the Listen for Good initiative. SurveyMonkey is a well-known company that provides a user-friendly online survey interface, easy access to analyze survey results, and the ability to create benchmarks over time for standardized questions.

Grantees will use a customized version of SurveyMonkey's platform to aggregate, track, and analyze feedback. We strongly encourage organizations to collect data directly through SurveyMonkey's survey platform online, either on a computer, tablet, or mobile device – where possible. However, we recognize that technology limitations and computer literacy may make this hard for some beneficiaries and some organizations may prefer to administer paper surveys. We support multiple approaches to data collection, so long as the final data collected ends up in SurveyMonkey (through direct collection or manual input).

Here are more details on the most common/straightforward ways that organizations might collect data:

- **Computer or tablet at point of service.** Ask people who are in your office/attending your programs to answer a few questions on a computer or tablet (e.g. iPad). The computer or tablet would need to be connected to the internet.

- **Remote access via email or text message URL link.** Send beneficiaries an email or text message with a link to the survey (they would need to be on a smart phone to answer the survey from the text message). This email or text could happen anytime – it could be while they are in your office/attending your programs or it could be at a later time.

- **Paper at point of service.** Grantees who believe their beneficiaries would do better responding to paper-based surveys can use this method, but note that the organization will be responsible for entering the data into SurveyMonkey. The organization could use grant funds to pay a staff member or volunteer for this task.

- **Phone calls.** You could use what would be considered a more traditional method of gathering feedback by calling people. The data would need to be collected in or transferred to SurveyMonkey.

- **Help from a trusted person at point of service.** If your clients can't read or write, you could consider having someone who is a neutral/trusted person help facilitate the feedback. When a client comes in the office or finishes receiving programming or services, the trusted persons could explain however is appropriate that the customer's feedback is important and they'd like to ask him/her a few questions. They could then ask the clients verbally or use whatever other method might be most appropriate.

- **Other methods of feedback collection.** We are open to other ideas and methods that nonprofits suggest and think will work well for their program/service model and the people they seek to help.

SurveyMonkey does not support texted responses directly into its platform.

19. What if we use another platform other than SurveyMonkey to collect data now, do we have to switch platforms to participate in Listen for Good?

Yes, all data collection for Listen for Good needs to happen through the SurveyMonkey platform. We cannot support data collection in other platforms as part of this initiative at this time. If you are using another platform and are willing to switch to SurveyMonkey, the company can do a one-time import of your survey data so that you'll have it all in one place going forward.

If you are using another platform and are happy with that, then we hope to learn alongside you, so please keep in touch.

20. **Will we be able to access our data after the two-year Listen for Good grant is over? Do we have to continue using SurveyMonkey to do so?**

We absolutely want organizations to be investing in such a way that they continue to implement high-quality feedback loops with the people they seek to help over the long term. The SurveyMonkey accounts provided by Listen for Good will be free to participating nonprofits and the nonprofits will have full access to their data for two years. After Listen for Good, the data can be migrated into a nonprofit's own SurveyMonkey account if they want to keep using it for a fee and retain access to Listen for Good benchmarks, or they could use any number of other survey platforms (free or paid) out there. As part of this grant project and process, we will work with grantees to help determine what the best option(s) would be at the end of Listen for Good.

21. **What do you expect us to bring/provide as a grantee? How much specialized knowledge/skill do we need to have on staff to participate in Listen for Good?**

Each grantee organization should bring/provide: (1) A leadership and organizational commitment to systematically collecting feedback, closing the loop with constituents, and reflecting on/using the feedback where they can to improve their organization's work. This doesn't mean acting on *every* piece of feedback, but it does mean considering it and closing the loop meaningfully with the people who gave feedback. (2) Someone on staff who will be the point person/project manager (could be more than one person) in getting the feedback system implemented. This person doesn't need to have special expertise, the SurveyMonkey interface is straightforward and the questions are relatively simple. We will support him/her to learn the system, understand how to analyze the data collected, and decide what to do with the information.

22. **How much time do you expect that participating in Listen for Good will take from our staff?**

There are really two types of time that we expect organizations will spend on this work:

1. Transactional time – this includes the proposal process, feedback loop design, TA sessions, implementation of surveys, review of data, and closing of the loop with those who gave feedback. On average, we think this will probably add up to two or three days per month for a primary point person or project manager from your staff (maybe slightly more up front and less down the road once the systems are developed).

2. Reflective and learning time – this includes digesting the data received, making sense of the feedback, sharing it with key staff and other stakeholders internally, determining what, if any, changes to make, and planning for those changes. It is harder to predict the time that these things will take with precision, as it will probably vary by organizations. It could be an average of one day per month, or the equivalent of several days of time. It could involve many people in the organization or a few. And it will likely ebb and flow over time.

We know that Listen for Good will take time – that is why it's structured as an 18-month grant program with organizations receiving $20,000 in the first year and $10,000 in the final six months. This should cover not only technology and training, but also the time staff members spend on all aspects of Listen for Good.

23. **If our organization is an active grantee (or past grantee) of one of the core funders of Fund for Shared Insight, can that organization participate in Listen for Good?**

Absolutely! If core funders have grantees that want to participate in this initiative, the core funders will contribute the full $30,000 to support those grantees (no match from Fund for Shared Insight).

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

24. What are the reporting requirements for grantees of Listen for Good? In particular, when and how do we share the data we collect from beneficiaries? Who will have access to my data?

Grantees will receive a single grant from Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (project sponsor of Fund for Shared Insight). This means they will submit grant reports to Shared Insight for this grant, and will not have any separate reporting obligations to the funder who nominated them.

In addition to implementing your feedback plan and reporting to us on the grant, you agree to share the results of your feedback collection (including your analysis and interpretation, not the raw data necessarily) with your nominating co-funder and discuss the interpretation of the data and application to your work. We hope that this open dialogue between grantees and their nominating funder about what they are learning from regularly collecting feedback will help funders better understand the organization's work and may also help funders with context and data to inform their own work.

We do expect grantees to report on their grant funding and project work at the end of the 18-month grant period. The reporting requirements are posted along with the proposal form and these FAQs on the Listen for Good website. The goal of the reporting is to understand what grantees have done, what it takes to implement Listen for Good well, what grantees are learning, and what they may be changing in how they both collect and use the data.

Shared Insight and the TA team will have access to all respondent data throughout the project, but will not share this data with anyone outside of Shared Insight staff.

PROPOSAL/APPLICATION PROCESS QUESTIONS

25. In our grant proposal, how receptive will you be to alternative ways of presenting our methodology (i.e. drawings, maps)?

We are very receptive to *additional* ways of depicting or describing your methodology, so long as it is useful to you and understandable to us as an external audience. That said, we still do need applicants to provide the key information about project design (feel free to use bullet points).

26. Do you have any preferences as far as geographic location or size (i.e. annual budget) of applicants? Would the selected program need to serve a minimum number of participants?

No preferences as long as the organization meets the threshold criteria outlined in FAQ No. 1 (above) and the RFP.

27. In looking at the Fund for Shared Insight map at http://map.fundforsharedinsight.org/, it looks like you have some geographic spread, but are you interested in more applicants from specific geographic areas?

We have organizations in a variety of regions of the country and a broad set of issue areas. We'd like it to continue to be diverse and do not have specific geographies that we are targeting.

28. Do you anticipate that a similar RFP open to NGOs working internationally will be available in the future?

We do hope ultimately that Listen for Good is able to directly provide such opportunities or that it will inform international work in the future. In an attempt to limit moving parts in this initiative's early years, however, we are not able to offer that now.

That said, GlobalGiving, a grantee of Fund for Shared Insight, is exploring feedback collection in other countries around the world and blogging openly about it, so do keep an eye on GlobalGiving's work at www.globalgiving.org. For more information about GlobalGiving and its Feedback Fund, you can email projecthelp@globalgiving.org.

29. Would a project in Puerto Rico meet the criteria for beneficiaries being based in the United States?

No. At this time, Listen for Good is available only to organizations that serve beneficiaries based in the 50 United States.

30. In terms of the financials requested – for our previous fiscal year, will a summary suffice, or do you need a detailed document with each line item?

Our goal in asking for financial information is two-fold: (1) To get a sense of overall organizational financial health; and (2) To understand how you operate, how you work, your revenue model, and your cost structure. We will need financials at an appropriate level of detail to help us understand these issues.

31. Will you consider awarding grants to a collaborative of nonprofits? Will you consider funding a work group composed of more than one organization (assuming there is one lead agency)?

We have not yet received a proposal from a group of nonprofits, though we've spoken with collective-impact initiatives and can see there might be value in groups working together. Such an initiative might get some efficiencies and produce better sets of comparative data about a population. But before jumping into a collaborative, think about what would be reasonable. Would you collect feedback with one Listen for Good grant or would you need multiple grants? If you needed multiple grants, would your nominating funder contribute to more than one Listen for Good grant or would you look for multiple funders? All these scenarios could work, and, in fact, we have been very clear with funders that, just as nonprofits can work together to apply, funders can work together to nominate. For example, two (or more) funders together could contribute the $15,000 matching funds for one grantee.

32. One of the proposal criteria is that the "organization must have sufficient capacity to participate in the Fund for Shared Insight evaluation of the project". Can you give us more information on what this evaluation might entail? Could you define "sufficient capacity"?

We are working with ORS Impact out of Seattle, which is evaluating the entire Listen for Good initiative. ORS has been providing annual evaluation reports and if ORS asks you to do a survey or interview phone call, we expect you to make time to do that. We anticipate there will be two surveys in the first year and one the second year to take a pulse on how things are going. This is a chance to give feedback on how the Listen for Good initiative is going. ORS may interview a sample of grantees, so it won't be a burdensome expectation, maybe a few hours on the margin.

In terms of capacity to participate in the evaluation, the question is whether an organization has too many competing priorities, whereby a few hours might seem like too much. If you have capacity to participate in Listen for Good, you should have the capacity to participate in the evaluation.

33. **On additional documentation to be submitted with the proposal, do we need to do a two-year financial projection or does one year suffice? Also, if we are in the process of modifying our strategic plan, can we send once the update is complete?**

There are two components of the financials we'll ask you to submit, one is a project budget. We would like your best projection for two years. We understand reality might not match predictions, but this helps us understand how you might best deploy those resources. If your organization is in flux on your financials, just give us the best information and an asterisk or footer. If you're in the midst of updating, give us a preview. It all helps us get a full picture of you, your organization, and your work. We're real people reading on the other end of the paper or email.

34. **Can a grant recipient be both a service provider *and* a funder? As a United Way organization, could we be the recipient of a Fund for Shared Insight grant (with our project being to gather input from seniors/elders served by multiple senior programs in our community)? We have a current funder (who funds our efforts to engage seniors in identifying how we can improve the system of care) who would nominate us to be the grant recipient. The results of the project would inform that funder, as well as us as a funder and our funding partners.**

We have one United Way that was a grant recipient and one United Way that was a co-funder. What you can't do is be both in the same grant.

35. **Will Fund for Shared Insight do another grant round for more flexible approaches to beneficiary feedback (e.g. repeat what you funded for practice in year one)? Is there an open or upcoming application process for your other grant funds?**

There are no other funding opportunities available outside of Listen for Good for feedback practice at this time.

36. **Going through the grantees, it looked like they were in issue-area clumps, like housing and food banks. I'm wondering if there are specific segments you are trying to fund?**

We kept the Listen for Good RFP broad, not targeting particular issue areas, except targeting people whose voices are least heard. From our 2016 L4G portfolio, we have grouping around specific issue areas, such as food banks, health clinics, youth development, and workforce development. This will help organizations talk with each other about implementation of the work and also enable us to create benchmarks in specific areas.

37. **Why have some of the organizations that have applied in the past not been accepted?**

Some simply did not meet the stated criteria; others may have been rejected based on two broader dimensions we think about: 1) an organization's commitment to doing this and 2) an organization's capacity to do this. If commitment or capacity seems really low, that could make the grant less viable. There were also a couple of situations where an organization had asked their nominating funder to repurpose an existing grant and that was not the spirit of this work in terms of bringing in new funds to the nonprofit focused on feedback.

We are happy to talk with funders, and if it would be helpful to connect a potential nominating funder with us, we'd be happy to do that. Our goal is to attract new foundations to join in this work to support nonprofits to collect feedback from the people they seek to help, and our hope is that our matching grants make it attractive for co-funders to do so.

38. **My organization works in the U.S. and internationally. Although our international programming is much more extensive than our domestic program, can we apply just for the U.S .program only? And then can we can adopt the domestic approach to our international constituents on our own?**

As long as your domestic work addresses at least 100 beneficiaries and qualifies for Listen for Good, then that would be fine.

If you are learning in the U.S. and applying your feedback work internationally, we'd like to learn along with you! Fund for Shared Insight has other types of grants that support feedback, and two of these grantees are Feedback Labs and GlobalGiving, both which have instituted significant feedback work internationally. We've tried to share lessons learned from our early grantees, including GlobalGiving, and we hope such learning will continue to be shared among all our grantees.

NOMINATING/CO-FUNDER QUESTIONS

39. **How does the co-funding of Listen for Good work?**

One key goal of Listen for Good, and of Fund for Shared Insight more broadly, is to engage the philanthropic funding community in supporting, using, and valuing beneficiary feedback. To participate in Listen for Good, a funder must nominate a nonprofit – and if the nonprofit is selected, then that funder agrees to contribute $15,000 of the $30,000 grant total to Shared Insight.

A central (and we think exciting!) aspect of this co-funding opportunity is that it enables funders (and nonprofits) who work in all different geographies and issue areas to participate in building or improving feedback loops with the people they seek to help.

40. **Can the nominating co-funder be a former funder of our organization (not a current one), knowing that they have to fund their portion of this grant? Or can it be a new funder that hasn't funded us before?**

We have a strong preference and priority for nonprofits nominated by current funders. That said, we don't want to stifle interest and so it's not out of the question for a past funder or a new funder to nominate.

We want these data from beneficiaries to be used by funders to inform their work as well, and we think that is most likely to happen for a current funder of an organization. So, if past funders nominate a nonprofit, we would contact the funders to ask why they are not a current funder and about their interest in and commitment to using the feedback from beneficiaries to inform their work. If it were a new funder nominating, we would also want to understand their interest and commitment to this work and to the data that will be collected from beneficiaries.

41. Can an individual donor fund the match or does it need to come from a foundation funder?

The nominating co-funder can be a private foundation, community foundation, corporate funder, or individual donor. As long as the funder/donor has an interest in using feedback from the people you (and they) seek to help, then we would welcome their participation as a nominator and co-funder.

42. Can you explain how funders officially nominate an organization? What documentation is required as evidence of the $15,000 funder support?

All funders need to do is tell the organization they are nominating that they agree to support the nomination and co-funding portion of the grant. The organization will then apply and state the name of nominating funder (organization and contact person/info) on the proposal cover sheet. We will contact the listed funders to confirm that they did in fact nominate the organization and learn more about why they are interested in feedback collection and how it might inform their work. In some cases, we will already have talked to the funder and/or have known to expect the nominated proposal. In other cases, we may not know of the funders or their interest until we receive a proposal from an organization they nominated.

43. Can the charitable foundation of a nonprofit hospital that funds the charitable foundation participate by having the non-profit hospital provide the $15,000 in funding?

Any funder can nominate (so in this case a hospital that funds your work is fine). Nominating co-funders can be foundations, individual donors, corporate donors, a hospital, or others. Our hope is the data about the people that you and they seek to help will be of interest to the funders as well.

44. Can the funding be used to assist the nominating funder in receiving feedback?

If the question is whether the grant will pay for staff time for your organization to think about the findings and how you will present them to others, including funders, then Yes.

If the question is, can you use the Listen for Good grant for your funder to get feedback directly from either ultimate beneficiaries or grant recipients, the answer is probably No, as that is not the goal of Fund for Shared Insight. If there is a rare case where the funder actually works with the people they and you seek to help directly (like an operating foundation), we could review that case in more detail and consider it.

45. Do in-kind donations to our organization count as a current funder? The foundation may be willing to contribute $15,000 to provide the match, but we want to ensure they are eligible before we make the direct ask.

Yes. If they have provided in-kind support and would be adding financial support via this match, then they would qualify as an existing funder and be able to nominate you for a Listen for Good grant.

46. **We're having conversations with a couple different funders to see if they'd be interested in partnering. How have other organizations gone about finding funders who are interested in participating?**

Our sense so far is that nonprofits have gone to funders with whom they have a good relationship, talk about the unique opportunity, and ask them if they would be willing to make a one-time grant to do this. We're also open to multiple co-funders for one organization's nomination. In a way, that's a win-win: We want people to be informed through this work and, in this case, we'd be engaging more than one funder in the learning process. We have a preference that a current funder nominate you, but if you're able to use this opportunity to engage a new funder, that is fine too.

47. **Does the grant from the co-funder go to Fund for Shared Insight?**

Yes, the co-funder makes a grant for $15,000 to Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (RPA), as Fund for Shared Insight is a sponsored project of RPA. This amount is matched by $15,000 from Shared Insight's core funders. RPA will then make a single grant of $20,000 to the funded organization in the first year and $10,000 in the final six months of the 18-month grant period.

48. **How would you suggest we go about finding a nominating co-funder for the $15,000? Is there a formal process for this?**

Initially, we publicized Listen for Good primarily to funders on the idea that they would think about their portfolio and organizations and invite certain of their grantees to apply. We understand, though, that some nonprofits may hear about this opportunity before their funders do. In those cases, we encourage organizations to ask their existing funders if they would be willing to nominate them and provide the $15,000 grant for them to participate in Listen for Good. Please don't apply before you have secured the co-funding. We're happy to talk to a potential nominating co-funder to explain Listen for Good, but we can't help you find a nominating co-funder.

49. **Can you explain the role of the funder we bring in? Do they just provide the $15,000, or do they have additional responsibilities?**

We like to say the funders will have only additional opportunities. At this stage of the process, they just need to agree that they will contribute the $15,000 to Fund for Shared Insight. But we hope you and they are committed to talking about your data over the course of the initiative. We won't share your specific data with them, but we ask that you talk with them about your data. We will work with you about how to share that data with your funder. Our hope is that you will have something to share with your funder, that you could educate them about the people that you and they seek to help.

BUDGET/ USES OF GRANT FUNDS

50. **Could we purchase tablets, iPads, or computers with the grant money so we don't have to use paper surveys with our clients at sites?**

Yes! All of the above – and you'd want to be sure you pay for Wi-Fi so that you can access SurveyMonkey from those devices. There is no mechanism to upload SurveyMonkey data that's collected offline.

We also expect grant funds will be spent on staff time and technology.

51. Can we charge indirect costs to the grant?

Yes! In our effort to be a responsible project funder, we completely understand you will have overhead, and you can charge it to the grant. The amount should be reasonable and reflect the actual indirect cost. There is no set rule on the percentage.

52. Is it okay to use Listen for Good funding to pay for incentives to either beneficiaries to participate in answering the survey or for staff incentives to change behavior/activities based on beneficiary feedback?

We had a few organizations in Listen for Good seek to provide limited incentives to constituents to respond to the survey. In certain cases, it is a good idea, but we caution you to properly set up expectations. If this is a continuous feedback loop, for example, when do you make a decision to no longer provide incentives?

We have found in our experience that closing the loop is the mechanism through which people feel their voices have been heard, and that process in itself can build loyalty and interest in participating in future surveys. However, if you feel it is necessary for your population, you could put incentives in your budget and explain your rationale in your narrative. For example, some organizations have entered the name of every person who fills out a survey into a monthly raffle for a prize of a gift card.

Regarding offering staff incentives to administer Listen for Good, we don't have an issue with it by policy, but we'd question the necessity and address that on a case-by-case basis.

53. What amount should we budget for use of SurveyMonkey?

All Listen for Good grantees will have free access to the SurveyMonkey Listen for Good tools throughout the duration of the grant period. Fund for Shared Insight pays for these expenses. We don't anticipate that organizations will need much additional software, but if you wanted to purchase additional analytic or data visualization software, those might be reasonable expenses for the grant funds, if they are related to using the Listen for Good data.

54. Why are the grants all $30,000 oer 18 months ($20,000 in year one and $10,000 in the final six months)? What exactly can nonprofits do with the grant funds? Can we pay for staff time to administer surveys and review the data with teams internally? Can we pay for software? Training on survey development and how to gather useful data? What else?

We have tried to keep this initiative simultaneously as simple and as flexible as we can. An example of flexible is supporting organizations that work in all geographies and issue areas across the U.S. (and working with the funders who nominate those organizations). To keep things relatively simple, we've set a standard grant amount with $20,000 in year one and $10,000 in the last six months. We think that

$20,000 in the first year should be sufficient to help with initial costs of planning and staff training associated with implementing high-quality feedback loops. We expect that by the final six months, the time and cost will not be as high as the first year. Grant funds may be used for all aspects of the project, including staff time required to plan, implement, and analyze feedback data; any tools or technologies required to support data collection; staff time required for closing the loop with participants; and participation in Listen for Good follow-up activities.

55. Can we use grant funds to translate the survey into a different language?

Yes. We have people who are doing their own language translations and we can work with you on how to best input the data into SurveyMonkey. Listen for Good organizations can currently collect data in English, Spanish, Chinese (traditional characters), or Vietnamese. If organizations wish to collect data in other languages, they must manually enter data into a pre-programmed survey in one of the above four languages on SurveyMonkey.

DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF LISTEN FOR GOOD

56. Would it be possible to see the list of basic demographic questions? Would it be possible to expand the list if we needed to or is it a set list of demographic questions?

Right now, there are only three questions in the instrument: age of beneficiary, gender, and race/ethnicity. Some organizations are choosing to modify the answer options associated with these questions, but we wanted to provide a draft in an effort to create some standardization in the demographic information people are seeking from constituents.

57. **Are there any plans to make the surveys available in other languages besides English and Spanish?**

We currently offer the survey tool in English, Spanish, Chinese (traditional characters), and Vietnamese. Grantees are free to translate the survey instrument into other languages, but data must be loaded into SurveyMonkey using one of the four existing language templates in order to be included in the benchmarks. If an organization wanted to survey a population in a language we don't support, the work-around would be to collect the data some other way (e.g. on paper) and then input the results into SurveyMonkey in English or Spanish.

58. We have multiple programs from which we would like to get feedback. Should we focus only on one program for the application or could we address multiple programs?

We encourage you to apply for funding for Listen for Good for as many programs as you'd like. Two things to keep in mind though: 1) it will still be only one grant; we're not in a position to make multiple grants to a single organization, and 2) a key criterion for the grant is to build capacity to execute, so if you apply for many programs we'll want to understand and be confident that you can execute well across those multiple programs.

59. The 60-80% target response rate seems really high compared to other survey responses that we've achieved in the past. How do organizations get such high response rates? For example, were clients surveyed on site versus sent an email?

We recognize a 60-80% response rate is high and will likely be easier to achieve in-person than via email. We believe in targeting this response rate, however, because it means that the data will be more representative, taken more seriously, and not easily dismissed. We recognize that not every organization will hit the 60-80% target from the start. For those that don't, we'll work with you on ways to increase the response rate over time, aiming towards the 60-80% target.

60. **Some of the survey questions will generate open-ended narrative data. Is there any recommended software that could be used to analyze the qualitative data?**

There are two questions in the core Listen for Good survey that are qualitative questions. The issue of how to analyze qualitative feedback is one that the field is working actively on. The most basic approach is to use a word cloud; another option is to have a staff member code responses; and a third option is to use software that automates the coding based on word recognition. However, these software solutions are still very much in development. The ability to present qualitative data back to people (including beneficiaries), identify themes, and categorize qualitative data is important. Part of Listen for Good technical assistance will include tips and ideas for how to think about making sense of qualitative data.

61. **We serve clients at multiple sites. Would it be possible to group client responses by sites to compare sites?**

We definitely encourage organizations to benchmark and collect data from multiple sites – some of the best benchmarks organizations have are from experiences across sites, across teams, and over time. This would be a great use of the tool and a way to get really valuable trend or pattern data. SurveyMonkey has easy tools for disaggregating client responses by site or population groups.

62. **Should we or could we engage the beneficiaries of our work in contributing to the analysis of the data collected from them?**

Key to our definition of a high-quality feedback loop is that organizations close that loop with the beneficiaries who provided feedback. Often, one of biggest challenges with feedback tools, from the beneficiary perspective, is that clients or beneficiaries provide feedback and get no response or acknowledgment of what an organization did with the data. This is a deterrent to individuals' continued participation, and makes them not want to take surveys or give feedback as seriously.

We encourage organizations to share the survey data with beneficiaries, and leave it to them to decide how macro or micro to go in sharing the themes. We also encourage groups to involve beneficiaries in interpreting the data, if that makes sense for their work.

63. **Would we need to restrict feedback to those whom our organization serves, or could we solicit feedback from youth served by our system/sector? We are a national network for young people in foster care. While we are interested in soliciting feedback for our organization, we are also very interested in using NPS to solicit youth feedback about *all* the services they receive in foster care.**

The answer here is a qualified Yes. This scenario would be OK *so long as* you are specifically collecting feedback from your own beneficiaries as part of the process (versus "skipping over" them), and you could implement a high-quality feedback loop with the broader stakeholder group (where data collection is regular/systematic, the data is used to inform your organization, and the loop is closed with those who gave feedback). A central goal of Listen for Good is to support organizations in using feedback to improve their work, so we wouldn't want to collect feedback from people where organizations would not be able to apply that data meaningfully and/or close the loop with those individuals.

The answer to this question might be No if you're not able to do this as a high-quality feedback loop. For example, if what you really want to do is a one-time needs assessment or market research, or the situation is such that the data won't really be able to influence how one or more organizations do their work for these beneficiaries, then this would not qualify.

64. Can we gather data using SMS?

We have seen the field derive a lot of value from using text messaging. However, because we seek to create a common platform as part of this exercise and develop benchmarks, we do need all the data to end up in SurveyMonkey. If your beneficiaries are (generally) using smart phones that can connect to the internet, then you can text out the survey link and ask them to click on it to get to the website where they will answer the questions. If organizations still would rather collect data via SMS, they would then have to input the data into the SurveyMonkey platform manually.

65. Can we have access to the raw data for our own organization?

Absolutely! There's both data visualization output and an excel output, and we are working with SurveyMonkey to make these as user-friendly as possible. You'll also have access to the benchmarks that will be created through this work.

66. I see the Net Promoter System is registered to Bain & Company. Is there a cost to using the framework, either during the grant period or after?

There's no charge to use NPS. Anyone can use it anytime. Fund for Shared Insight has set up a contract with SurveyMonkey to pay for all the individual Listen for Good organization accounts and each organization's subscriptions to access benchmarks, and will pay all these fees for the duration of the 18-month grant period. Each organization is free to make its own assessment of how to continue after Listen for Good. If your organization already has a SurveyMonkey account, at the end of Listen for Good, you will be able to merge your data into that account. The SurveyMonkey accounts plus the benchmarks run between $700-$1000 per year. Each organization is also free to transfer data to another platform at the end of the Listen for Good initiative.

67. Could NPS be incorporated into a larger project? For example, we are developing an online support community, and would consider using NPS to collect feedback there.

In general, we would say, Yes – although it is hard to know without understanding what the larger project is. However, if you plan to implement Listen for Good using the SurveyMonkey interface and then incorporate the data into a larger project or platform, that would be fine.

68. Is there technical support around developing beneficiaries' sense of empowerment and openness in giving detailed, candid, and concrete feedback?

We have seen that there can often be positive "courtesy bias" due to the inherent power dynamics in the relationship between provider and client. This is why we're so committed to benchmarks. Benchmarks will start to norm the data and adjust for the bias. A substantial portion of our TA is also focused on providing guidance for how to gather the most candid feedback possible. Addressing the inherent power imbalance is a real issue for making sure that feedback loops are maximally valuable over the long term.

69. **Could you tell us about the (required and/or optional) technical support intended for design of the survey and process and for interpretation of the results?**

Our free technical-assistance services include:

- A combination of one-on-one consulting services, webinars, and downloadable resources, such as a toolkit.
- More specifically, you will have a one-on-one conversation with someone from the Listen for Good team prior to launching your survey to focus on your survey design.
- Once you get your data back, you will engage in at least two one-on-one conversations with our team to help you review the patterns and make sense of the data.
- As each organization gets going with multiple rounds of feedback, we will continue to calibrate the technical assistance we provide to support your ongoing work and learning.

We also have a website that we've built to support the implementation of Listen for Good. This website provides a host of resources for implementing organizations at each stage of the feedback loop.

70. **Can you offer an example of a method that has been used to re-engage survey participants in order to close the loop with them on their feedback? Was it a celebration? A report?**

The goal is to provide a forum or vehicle to let survey participants know their voices were heard, address some of the concerns raised by the feedback, and celebrate successes. This can be done many ways. Some organizations have invited participants to a celebration or a meeting where results are discussed. Others have written reports or shared summary notes in a newsletter or in flyers posted at their offices or program sites. If you have a small enough beneficiary pool, there may even be an opportunity to do one-on-one, in-person feedback.

71. **What is the expected level of data that we will share with funders and with peers? Will we be expected to share participant-level data or just aggregated data?**

Fund for Shared Insight will have access to all the data. In terms of what you share with your nominating co-funder, we encourage you to share aggregated data and provide them with context and interpretation of the results. Our expectation is that you will share data that is positive, as well as data that may not be as flattering and provide a balanced perspective about your results. We aren't prescriptive about how these data are shared, as we know every relationship is different. One of our webinars is about strategies for sharing data with funders.

72. **We are very excited at the prospect of national benchmarks. Will the results of this project be available to the general public in the case that we are not a participant?**

We will be opening up the Listen for Good survey template (and its related benchmarks) to the general public sometime in 2020.

73. Can the beneficiaries surveyed be minors?

Per SurveyMonkey rules, youth under age 13 cannot enter data directly into SurveyMonkey, unless there is a parent present. We would also expect you to use whatever permissions/approvals are needed for your field of work and to follow your own governance structures.

74. I see that feedback cycles should be implemented six months after grant notification. We are a school; could we implement feedback cycles in line with the school calendar?

Yes, we can be flexible. Six months is a guideline, we just want to make sure people start using grant dollars and begin collecting feedback in 2017. If your rollout date is later in the year, we suggest perhaps doing a pilot in the meantime before you launch. Our goal is to ensure multiple rounds of data collection, at least two, maybe more, according to what makes sense for your program model.

75. How will data be anonymous? Will it be connected with client information? Will NPS scores be shared in conjunction with the nonprofit? How will L4G use the data?

Individual client data will not be linked to other program outcomes unless your organization used some identifier as a way of tracking survey respondents.

Fund for Shared Insight will have access to all organizations' data as the primary funder, but will not share any organization-specific data with any other partners or co-funders. In addition, while Shared Insight may publish an article of aggregate-level data for the benefit of the field, we will never share an individual organization's feedback results with attribution unless you consent to it being shared (for example, to be included in a newspaper article). All grantees' data will also be included anonymously in any benchmarks developed as part of this project.

Finally, we require you to share your results in some aggregated form with your nominating co- funder. We do recognize the tensions and challenges that might be associated with sharing results, but require you to have a conversation with your funder in the spirit of mutual learning and improvement.

76. Will there be standard informed consent documents that clients will have to sign before giving feedback?

You should not need extra consent requirements for doing this specific feedback data collection work. However, if you would typically enact a consent process to collect data from your clients, you may want to do so for this as well. In addition, it's worth noting that SurveyMonkey will not allow the survey to be completed by anyone under age 13, unless a parent is present.

77. Who designs the five custom questions and how long does this part of the project take?

Each organization designs its own custom questions in consultation with the Listen for Good TA team. We anticipate organizations using these custom questions to delve into specific aspects of their service, quality of the experience, or day-to-day experience. This part of the project can take several weeks, so we recommend beginning the survey design process four-to-six weeks prior to survey implementation.

Please note, your custom questions will not contribute to the benchmarks in SurveyMonkey. Only the standardized Listen for Good questions will contribute to the benchmarks.

78. Can you please give examples of the custom questions grantees have added to the standard questions?

The additional five custom questions can ask about a variety of different things depending on your context.

Some grantees use these questions to learn about additional services they could provide that would be of interest to their clients (i.e., “Which of the following life-skills classes would you be interested in taking, if offered?”).

Other grantees use these questions to gauge the effectiveness of new policies or programs being implemented at their organization. For example, if staff members have recently undergone customer-service trainings, you could ask clients about related aspects of their experience (i.e., “Did someone greet you with a warm smile when you entered the clinic?”). Similarly, if you recently implemented a new system to streamline communications, you could ask clients how easy it is to get in touch with you.

Some grantees have also used these questions to understand barriers that prevent clients from participating in their programming. For instance, an afterschool program could ask about the availability of transportation to and from program sites.

Other grantees may use these questions to inquire about other aspects of client expectations or behavior that have relevance for how they deliver services. For instance, a food pantry could ask about whether or not providing fresh fruits and vegetables is important to clients.

This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of examples. The Listen for Good TA team will work with you to develop custom questions that are a good fit for your context and your goals.

79. Can we modify the custom questions over the course of the grant?

Yes, definitely. We would encourage that; it’s a place where you’ll want to be getting different feedback over time. Basically, the way the program works is you’ll have your own SurveyMonkey account under an overall Listen for Good account, and you will be responsible for iterating and programming and designing and administering those questions yourself beyond the first round of data collection.

80. Can you share examples of how you've worked with organizations to collect feedback from ultimate beneficiaries who are children, and how the NPS questions have been tailored to be relevant/make sense to those children?

The standard NPS question cannot be modified. Since our goal is to create benchmarks, all Listen for Good organizations must ask the very same core survey question (even as organizations may add their own, additional customized questions). The youngest clients currently participating in the standard NPS surveys are at the 8^{th}-grade level. We do have an organization working with a variety of youth. With the older youth, they’re using the Listen for Good survey. With the younger youth, they’re using a different survey outside of our SurveyMonkey accounts, and those data won’t be included in the benchmark.