

## **The Changing Roles of Community Foundations in Time of Crisis**

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### **Abstract**

In this paper, Monika Pisankaneva analyzes the impact of the financial crisis of 2008-09 on community foundations. Unlike private foundations, community foundations receive their income from a range of local donors, which can ensure flexibility in situations of decreased income from one specific source. Pisankaneva seeks to identify the impact of the current economic crisis on community foundations' grantmaking and non-grantmaking roles.

The global financial and economic crisis of 2008-09 triggered an increased engagement of some community foundations with non-grantmaking roles, which enabled them to fulfill more effectively their primary role as supporters of the third sector in their communities. This paper draws on research from the Council on Foundations (USA), the Foundation Center (USA), the TCC Group (USA), and Alliance Magazine (UK), and on survey responses to a structured questionnaire from ten community foundation practitioners representing ten different countries. Survey results indicate most responding organizations succeeded in attracting more funding in 2009 than the previous year. Moreover, many respondents felt that the crisis internally strengthened their community foundations by inspiring new levels of creative thinking in order to remain effective during the crisis. Pisankaneva concludes that many organizations were able to mitigate the effects of the financial crisis on their service delivery, through deep community level involvement and working to attract new donors.

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