

# Donor Mapping and Tracking How-to Guide

AEM Associates, 5 November 2021

## Step 0 – Blank template

a. Begin with a blank template.

The image shows a screenshot of an Excel spreadsheet template. The columns are labeled A through L. Row 4 is highlighted in orange and contains the text 'Peer Orgs Funded (h' in column L. Row 5 is highlighted in dark blue and contains the text 'Funders' in column A, and 'Column1' through 'Column11' in columns B through L. Row 5 also contains dropdown arrows in each of these columns. Rows 6, 7, 8, and 9 are highlighted in light blue. The spreadsheet is otherwise blank.

b. Note there are two tabs:  
1) the calendar and to-do/next steps list (which we'll fill out in Step 5), and  
2) the detail tab, which we fill out first.

c. Beginning with the Detail tab, looking across Row 5, note the following columns that require definitions. I will describe how to fill them out in Step 4.

**Funders:** In this column, you will list all the donors funding your peer organizations.

**Peer Orgs funded.** In each column, you'll list organizations you consider your peers, however you define that: close allies, doing similar work in other geographies, etc.

**SUM:** This column will count the number peer groups each donor is funding.

**Potential Workstream Matches:** Your program streams.

*Focus Areas:* The donors' headline funding areas. (ie, great apes, womens rights, economic empowerment)

*Program Priorities:* Language relevant to your org about the donor's funding priorities. (ie, anything specific to HIV, criminal legal system reform, networks)

*Solicited/unsolicited proposals:* Solicited means that applications are at the invite of the donor only; unsolicited means they accept all funding proposals and issue open calls.

*Amounts:* Grant size

*Restrictions/geo:* If the donor works only in certain geographies or on certain topics, ie they fund only research, not services or anything else.

*Additional Notes:* Any other intelligence you might want to capture: maybe there's a new incoming ED or some recent relevant media coverage.

*Priority:* Your priority ranking for this funder. I'll say more about how to determine this number in Step 4.

*Justification:* A few notes about why you ranked the funder the way you did.

*Application process:* Details about how to apply, including links to a portal, annual deadlines, formatting, etc.

*Next steps:* Next steps to take to secure funding

*Contact name/title:* Your point of contact at the funder. Could be the relevant PO or someone you know there.

*Email:* Email address for your contact, if you have it or its available on the website.

*Country:* Where the funder is located, or where the relevant PO has an office if different than headquarters.

## Step 1 – Fill in peer organizations

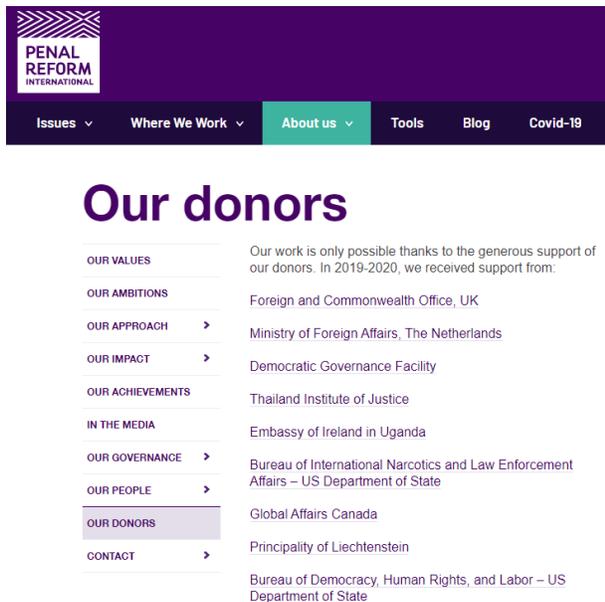
- a. Now that you are familiar with the spreadsheet, begin to fill in your peer organizations (defined in Step 0 above) in Row 5, in Columns B – Y. You can insert more columns if needed.
- b. Your tracker will begin to look like this:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1													
2													
3													
4		<b>Peer Orgs</b>											
	<b>Funders</b>	Robina	Morris Justice Project / Public	Second Chance Coalition (funding is Science	Voices for Racial Justice	Policing Project (NYU School of Law)	Center for Policing Equity	Columbia Justice Lab	Fines and Fees Justice Center (fiscally	Column1	Column2	Column3	Column4
5													
6													
7													
8													

## Step 2 – Track down funders

- a. Now, do some searching to discover who is funding each of these organizations. You can look on their websites (often under the About section) or at the end of their annual reports. You can also run a Google search.

Example 1, organization website:



The screenshot shows the website for Penal Reform International. The header includes the organization's logo and a navigation menu with items: Issues, Where We Work, About us, Tools, Blog, and Covid-19. The main content area is titled 'Our donors' and features a list of donors under various categories. The 'OUR DONORS' category is highlighted.

Category	Donors
OUR VALUES	
OUR AMBITIONS	Our work is only possible thanks to the generous support of our donors. In 2019-2020, we received support from:
OUR APPROACH	Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UK
OUR IMPACT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands
OUR ACHIEVEMENTS	Democratic Governance Facility
IN THE MEDIA	Thailand Institute of Justice
OUR GOVERNANCE	Embassy of Ireland in Uganda
OUR PEOPLE	Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs – US Department of State
OUR DONORS	Global Affairs Canada Principality of Liechtenstein Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor – US Department of State
CONTACT	

Example 2, organization annual report:

## THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

### 2019 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

Aetna / CVS	MAC AIDS Fund
AIDS United	NYC Dept. of Mental Health and Hygiene
Arnold Ventures, LLC	NY Dept. of Health, AIDS Institute
Broadway Cares / Equity Fights AIDS	Open Society Foundation
California Public Health Institute	San Francisco Battery
Comer Foundation	SF Dept. of Public Health
Elton John AIDS Foundation	Syringe Access Fund
Fishman Family Foundation	Twitter
Gilead Sciences	Van Ameringen Foundation
Judson Memorial Church	ViiV Healthcare
	Wyoming Dept. of Health

www.harmreduction.org

b. Begin to list the funders you encounter in Column A. Mark an “x” in the box for each funder of your peer org. It’s important to use an X rather than another mark, as the formula is reading for Xs. Your tracker will start to look like this:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1												
2												
3												
4												
5	Funders	Robina	Morris Justice Project / Public	Second Chance Coalition (funding)	Voices for Racial Justice	Policing Project (NYU School of Law)	Center for Policing Equity	Columbia Justice Lab	Fines and Fees Justice Center	Column2	Column3	Column4
6	Open Society Foundations		X			X			X			
7	Minneapolis Foundation			X	X							
8	Arnold Ventures	X				X		X	X			
9	McKnight				X							
10	Ford Foundation		X					X				

### Step 3 – Who are these funders funding?

- a. Look at your emerging list of funders. To build an even more robust list of funders, look on the funders' websites to see what other groups they are funding in the space. Many large donors have grantee databases you can search. You can also check their annual reports.



b. For less transparent donors based in the US, you can look at the IRS 990 tax forms on the [Guidestar](#) website.

- Create a free account to search all US-based foundations and non-profits.
- Navigate to the funder you are interested in, and pull up their from 990.
- Scroll way down to find lists of the groups they are funding.
- Here is one example from the secretive group Wellspring:

Grantee's Name	Grantee's Address	Grant Date	Grant Amount	Grant Purpose	Amount Expended By Grantee	Any Diversion By Grantee?	Dates of Reports By Grantee	Date of Verification	Results of Verification
INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF CIVIL LIBERTIES ORGANIZATIONS	AVENUE BLANC 49 GENEVA 1202 SZ	2019-07-24	150,000	COORDINATING TRANS LEGAL STRATEGIES	0	NO	N/A		N/A
KENTALS INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION	PETRUS DONDRSPLEIN 1 SINT MICHELSGESTEL NOORD BRABANT 5271 AA NL	2017-04-24	260,000	TEACHING DEAF LEARNERS	129,644	NO	3/27/2019, 9/1/2019	2019-09-01	N/A
KENYA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION	NGONG ROAD MORNINGSIDE OFFICE PARK 4TH FLOOR NAIROBI 00100 KE	2018-10-12	250,000	PAMQJA TWaweZA	88,125	NO	4/2/2019	2019-04-02	N/A
KENYA LAND ALLIANCE	BARNABAS-MITI MENCUMBARUK BLOCK 8/652 KIANJOYA D PO BOX 2177 2 NAKURU 20100 KE	2018-06-18	150,000	IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL LAND PROVISION FOR WOMEN	150,000	NO	4/1/2019, 8/31/2019	2019-08-31	N/A
KENYA LEGAL & ETHICAL ISSUES NETWORK ON HIV AND AIDS	MOMBASA ROAD SOMAK HSE 4TH FLOOR PO BOX 112 NAIROBI 00202 KE	2017-06-22	240,000	WOMEN'S INHERITANCE RIGHTS PROJECT	240,000	NO	8/1/2019	2019-08-01	N/A
KENYA LEGAL & ETHICAL ISSUES NETWORK ON HIV AND AIDS	MOMBASA ROAD SOMAK HSE 4TH FLOOR PO BOX 112 NAIROBI 00202 KE	2017-07-19	200,000	ADVANCING SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS IN KENYA	200,000	NO	8/1/2019	2019-08-01	N/A

- c. Fill the new aligned groups you've discovered across the top in row 5, as new peer organizations
- d. Repeat the process above, of identifying these new groups' donors
- e. Repeat as necessary until you have 50 – 100 donors (or fewer, depending on your time and capacity)

#### Step 4 – Fill in the details

- a. Now is time to fill in the rest of the columns. But first—
- b. Rank the donors.
- c. You'll do this by sorting the "Sum" column, Column AO, from largest to smallest. This will sort the list of donors so that the one on top is funding the largest number of your peer orgs.

	A	W	X	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AO	
1										
2										
3										
4										
5	Funders	African American Leadership Forum	Justice Policy Institute	Community Resource Hub for	Black Organizing for Leaders	African American Policy Forum	Alliance for Safety and Justice	Column31	SUM	
6	Open Society Foundations	X	X	X	X				10	
7	Minneapolis Foundation	X				X			8	
8	Arnold Ventures						X		7	
9	McKnight	X				X			6	
10	Art for Justice						X		5	

d. Starting with the first donors in the list and working your way down, begin to fill in the details. A lot of information can be copied/pasted directly from the funders' websites.

*Potential workstream matches:* Compare your portfolios of work against the funders'. Are they a match? Consider geography, population, modality (advocacy, capacity building, services), and content (environment, education, HIV)

*Website:* Copy/paste

*Focus areas:* Copy/paste

*Program priorities:* Copy/paste

*Solicited or unsolicited:* Should be available on website – look for phrases like “invite only,” which indicates solicited, or grant deadlines, which indicates that unsolicited applications are also accepted.

*Upcoming deadlines:* Copy/paste

*Amounts:* May be specific ranges listed on the website. If not, take a stab at an average grant amount by looking at recent grants.

*Restrictions/geo:* Should be able to copy/paste from the website's grant applications details page, OR dig deeper into specific portfolio sites.

*Additional notes/comments:* Note other useful intelligence – do they prioritize organizations led by women or young people? Add that here.

*Priority:* Along with justification, this is the field where you demonstrate your intuition. Take all the information you've just sourced—the size of the grants, how competitive they are, whether you know someone there, the closeness of your work streams—and put a number on it. 1 is a perfect match; 4 is no match at all (ie, the donor works only in Eastern Europe and you are located in SE Asia).

- *Note: I don't have a magic formula for this – it's more a gut feeling anything else. But I tend to give a lot of weight to donors where I know someone, or where I can easily get a warm introduction from a common contact.*
- *Note: If it's clear at the outset that a donor is a 1, note that in the priority column and also describe in the justification, but don't spend too much time filling out the other fields.*

*Justification:* Fill in a few sentences about why you prioritized the donor the way you did. Something like, for a 4: We are a perfect match, and they should already be funding us. Close relationship with Program Officer Smith. Or for a 2: This would be a stretch. Some overlapping work on legal empowerment, but the prioritize work in different countries.

*Application process:* Copy/paste the details of when and where to apply from the website, if there are open calls. If applications are invite only, note that.

*Next steps:* What do you have to do next? Some common responses: Reach out to potential partners; set up a meeting with the PO; write the LOI by 10 December; wait til next year's deadline.

*Contact:* If you know someone at the donor, or you know someone in your network who can make an introduction, list that here. Check your Linked In or Facebook profiles for common friends.

*Email:* Either from your inbox or sometimes available to copy/paste on donors' Contact or Staff pages.

*Country:* Copy/paste from About page.

Your tracker will look like this:

	A	AQ	AR	AS	AT	AU	AV	AW	AX	AY	AZ
1											
2											
3		Potential Workstream Matches								1 = high, 4 = low	
4	Funders	Education + Organizing	Policy devel	Advocacy	Column1	Current or Past Funder	Website	Focus Areas	Program Priorities	Solicited or unsolicited proposals?	Upcoming proposal deadlines
5	Open Society Foundations	X	X	X	X	X	<a href="https://www.opensocietifoundations.org/">https://www.opensocietifoundations.org/</a>	Active across human rights spheres, from justice to health to sexual and repro rights.	Within OS-US' justice focused work, portfolios are on immigration and mass incarceration, including drug policy, policing, and bail reform.	Solicited only	NA
6	Minneapolis Foundation	X				X	<a href="https://www.minneapolisfoundation.org/">https://www.minneapolisfoundation.org/</a>	A range of place-based funding initiatives, including racial and economic justice, wellness, and climate change	At the core of our community-driven initiatives is our commitment to dismantle the racial inequities that pervade the criminal justice system. Each of the steps	Solicited + unsolicited	None as of 9/2
7	Arnold Ventures		X				<a href="https://www.arnoldventures.org/">https://www.arnoldventures.org/</a>	Among many other topics: policing, pre-trial justice, reintegration, opioids	Policing: Law enforcement must act in service to communities by promoting public safety with reverence for life and dignity, and by	Solicited + unsolicited (occasionally)	No relevant opportunities currently but check back and sign up for newsletter - <a href="https://www.arnoldventures.org/">https://www.arnoldventures.org/</a>
8	Mcknight	X	X	X		X	<a href="https://www.mcknight.org/">https://www.mcknight.org/</a>	International, Arts and Culture, Midwest Climate, Neuroscience, Vibrant and Equitable Communities	Vibrant & Equitable Communities Program Goal: Build a vibrant future for all Minnesotans with shared power, prosperity, and participation.	Unsolicited	Initial inquiry deadlines: January 15 April 15 July 15
9											

- e. Fill in enough rows so that you have roughly 50 viable funders – those ranked 1 – 3—with hopefully 15 or 20 in the 1 or 2 range.

### Step 5 – Transfer information to calendar and to do/next steps list

- a. You'll now paste this information into the other tab, Calendar and To-do List.
- b. Note that the columns are in a slightly different order, with some missing, because we want this tab to be action oriented.
- c. There are also a few new columns here, and I'll define them briefly:
  - Staff:* the person in charge of this application or relationship
  - Next Step Due:* Exactly that. Put an internal deadline on your next step. For example, if the application is due on Jan 1, you may want a rough draft, the next step, on Dec 15. Or your next step might be due check in with the Program Officer by December 1.
  - Next Step History (Column I):* Once you've completed a "next step" in Column E, copy it over to Column I so you can remember what you've already done. Type a new next step into Column E!
- d. You'll also notice a few categories in Column A.
  - a. *Active:* List donors under Active if you are \*actively\* pursuing a funding opportunity with them.
  - b. *Prospective:* Future prospects that you aren't actively pursuing but also want to keep tracking. They might be a stronger prospect in a year, or when a new Program Officer is onboarded, or a country releases its new funding priorities.
  - c. *Funded:* Opportunities you've won! Yay.
  - d. *Application under Review*
  - e. *Declined*

- e. List each donor and its details in order of its priority rank – 1s, then 2s and 3s. Don't include 4s. It is possible to have “1s” in the Active and Prospective lists.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Client ABC					
2	2022 - 2023 Prospects					
3						
4	Priority	Organization/Foundation	Staff	Deadline	Next Step Due	Next Step
5	Active					
6	1	Bush Foundation		Rolling		Maintain relationship with Ramla, keep pushing JJ + data project
7	1	Joyce Foundation		Dec 1, 2021		Continue pursuing funding on MDHR investigation
8	1	Just Trust		Check back		Keep in touch with Aly Tamboura. Subscribe to newsletter
9	1	Minneapolis Foundation		Check back - None as of		Maintain relationship with Chanda as you go through strategic review, subscribe to
10	1/2	McKnight		Initial inquiry deadlines:		Sounds like you already have relationships there. Maintain them and think about
11	1/2	St. Paul and Minnesota Foundation		Early Jan for Building		Watch for 2022 deadlines and meet with Pahoua Yang Hoffman
12	2	Minnesota Vikings Social Justice Fund		NA		Not clear who staffs this work, either from the Vikings or the Wilf Family
13	2/3	GHR Foundation		NA		Seek intro to Amy Goldman or Cassie Bean for networking purposes, perhaps via
14	3	Headwaters Foundation		Giving Project - Early 2022		Meet with Maria or Melissa Rudnick for networking purposes
15	3	Northwest Area Foundation		NA		Seek intro from MABC or AALF, either to Nikki Foster or someone else.
16	3	Otto Bremer		Dec 2, Feb 10, April 14,		Reach out to Dominic Papatola for a chat
17						
18	Prospective					
19	2	Arnold Ventures		NA		Connecting with William Johnston or another PO could be a good first step - ask
20	2	Ford Foundation		NA		After completing strategic plan, reach out for an intro from BPI or Columbia Justice
21	2	Open Philanthropy Project		NA		After completing strategic plan, reach out for an intro from BPI or Columbia Justice
22	2	Open Society Foundations		NA		Identify and connect with relevant PO, perhaps via Robina or Policing Project.
23	3	Art for Justice		NA		Put on back burner behind other prospects. Consider for 2023.
24	3	MacArthur Foundation		NA		Put on back burner behind other prospects. Consider for 2023.

## Best Practices

- The tracker should be a living document. Store it in a shared drive where it can be updated by the whole team.
- Keep it up to date by reviewing and amending as part of your regular team meetings.
- Keep the “next steps” short and punchy and action-oriented.
- Hold yourself to your deadlines!
- Don't stress about the mapping process. It can be as robust or lean as you like—the main thing I want you to take away is a one way to uncover new donors and track your relationships for sustainability and effectiveness.
- Consider watching the [webinar](#) for more tips and tricks.