

Collective Wisdom: RAGs in the 21st Century

Prepared for the Forum of RAGs CEO meeting
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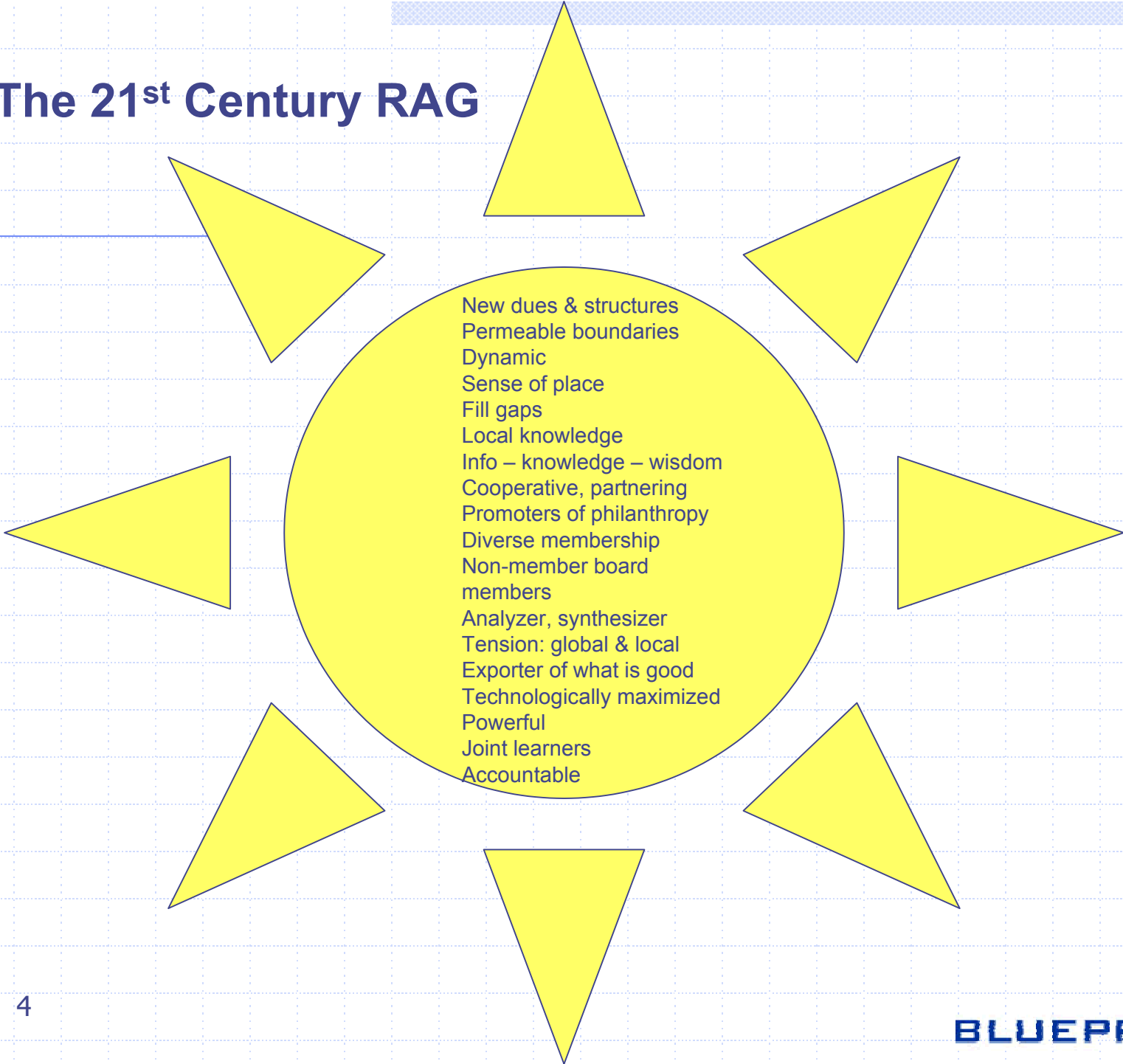
Outline for the morning

- The 21c RAG – what is it and what will it take?
- Scanning the philanthropic community in America – preliminary results of survey data for Forum research

RAGs in the 21st Century

- Known force on the field
 - Growth and diversification
- Known unknowns
 - Millennial generation
 - Networks, niches and filters
- Evolving to meet the challenges

The 21st Century RAG



New dues & structures
Permeable boundaries
Dynamic
Sense of place
Fill gaps
Local knowledge
Info – knowledge – wisdom
Cooperative, partnering
Promoters of philanthropy
Diverse membership
Non-member board members
Analyzer, synthesizer
Tension: global & local
Exporter of what is good
Technologically maximized
Powerful
Joint learners
Accountable

Characteristics of the 21c RAG

- Virtual and physical
- Knowledge and access
- Dynamic and diverse
- Niche value, networked value
- Plug and play partnerships
- Peer-to-peer learning

Virtual and physical

- Active and passive impact of technology
 - ◆ (Blau, *More than Bit Players*, www.surdna.org)
 - New geographies
 - New expectations
 - Greater comparison shopping
- Onsite and online opportunities
 - Membership, partnerships, operations, learning, policy,
- *Your examples here* _____

Knowledge and access

- A key resource
- Very competitive market
- Knowledge creation is a collaborative act - associations have advantages
- Filters matter
- *Your examples here* _____

Dynamic and diverse

- Current identities: geography, issue, race/ethnicity, structural type
- Diverse structures = diverse needs
- Variegated membership and dues options
 - Lifecycle stages: startup, established
 - Initiative partners
 - Web only
 - Advocacy or media members (dues)
 - Fee for service or consultancy
- *Your examples here* _____

Niche value, networked value

- Leveraging the power of many, determining the power of the network
- Deliberate Evolution, www.blueprintrd.com/publications
- Collective alliances:
 - Industry representation, media, initiatives, R & D
- Niche alliances (nodes on the network)
 - Emergent issues, shared identities
- *Your examples here* _____

Plug & play partnerships

- Major service now
- From opportunistic to strategic
- Network host or incubator
- New revenue streams
- New service for non-members
- *Your examples here* _____

Peer-to-peer learning

- Demographic mapping
- Face to face time
- Cross border learning (Forum)
- Nurtured networks – alumni groups
- *Your examples here* _____

Scanning the horizon

- From fringe to core
- Incremental to transformative moments
 - Change happens as a series of small steps and then there is a major breakthrough
 - In some cases, change is a leapfrog process

Research purpose

- Why do we need a 21c RAG?
- Scan the field to identify funder networks
 - ◆ Some will develop into RAGs
 - ◆ Some will compete with RAGs
 - ◆ All present new opportunities or challenges
 - ◆ All influence the infrastructure
 - ◆ All reflect change in philanthropy

Background and methods

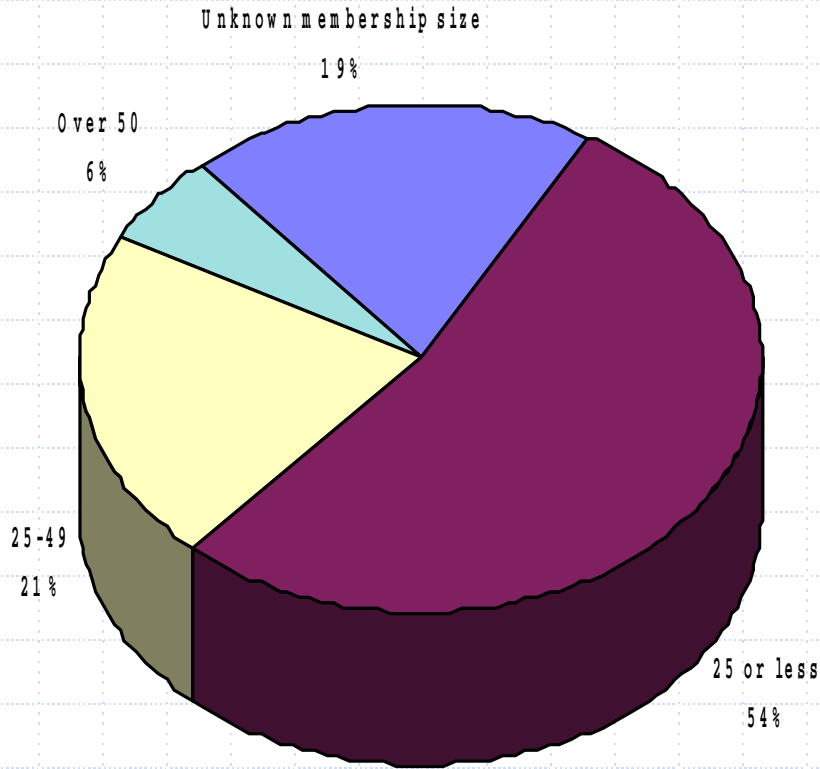
- Phase I
 - Survey of secondary sources
 - ◆ RAGs, community foundations, and known networks
 - Product: Map of the networks
- Caveats
 - Secondary sources, not primary
 - Very limited qualitative information

Preliminary results

- 204 networks found (7-31-01)
- Descriptions on about 52%
- Size
- Geographic reach
- Frequency of meetings
- Staffed or unstaffed
- Date of formation

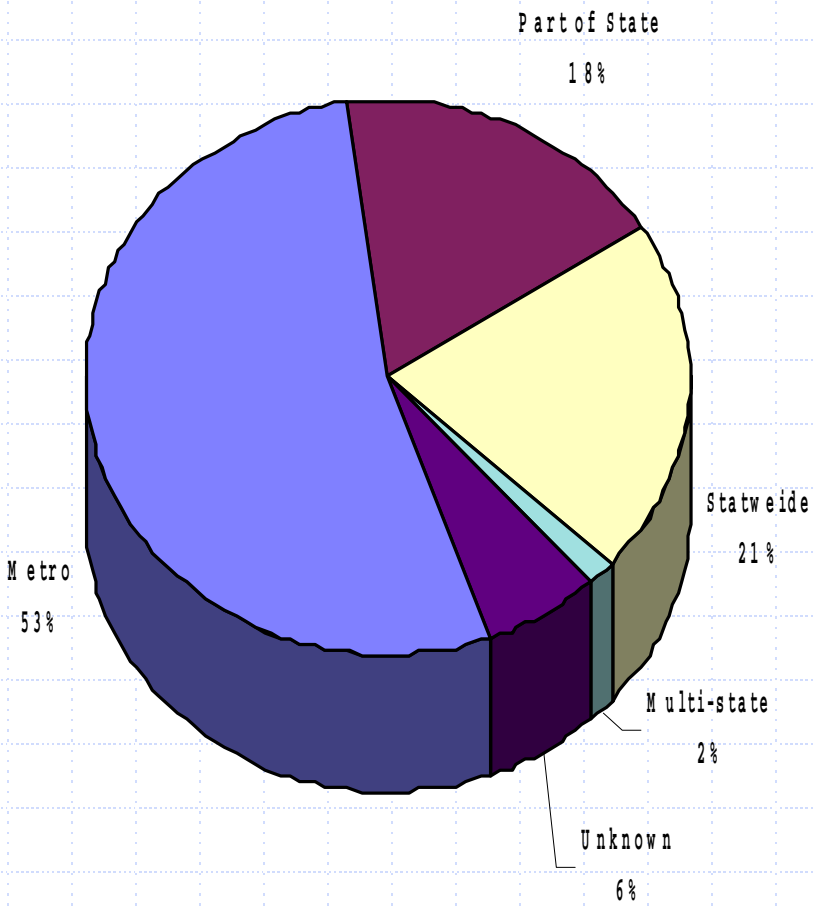
Most networks have small memberships

Size of networks



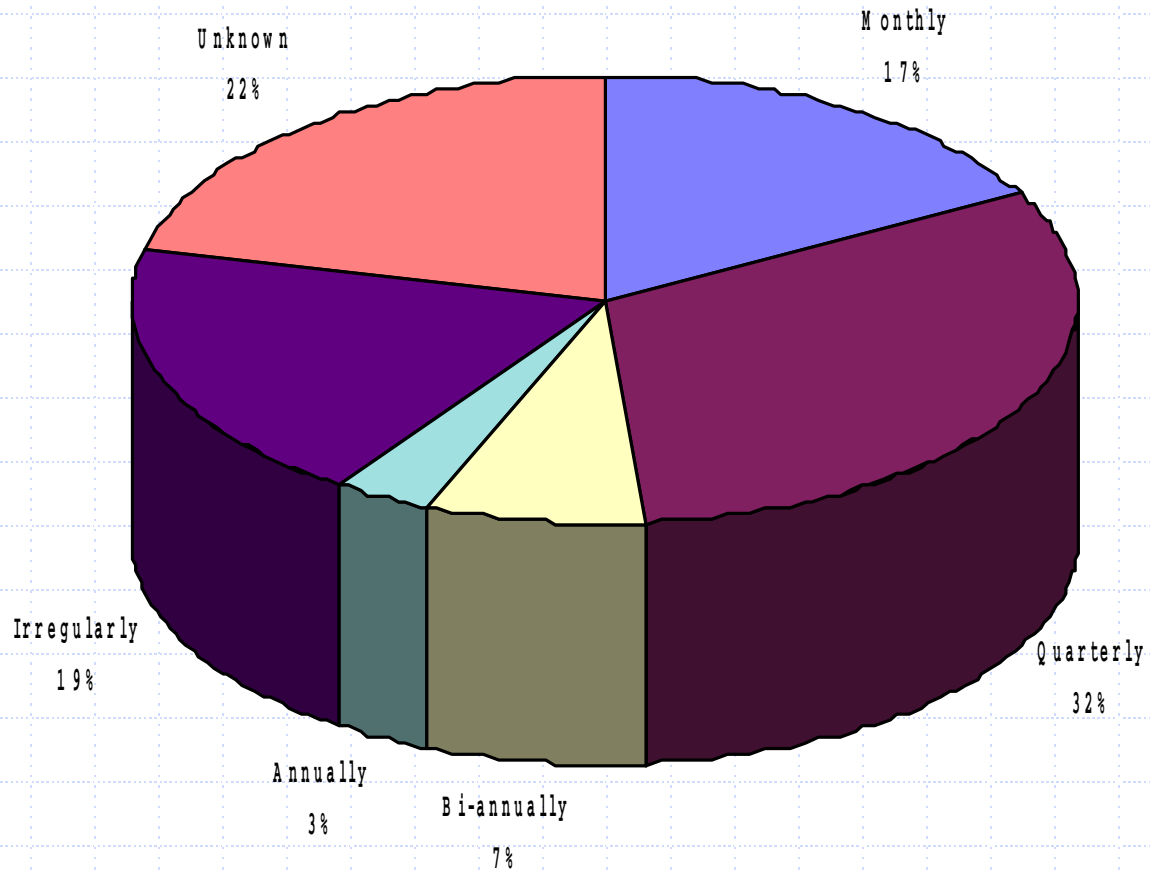
Most funder networks are very local

Geographic reach



Almost half of the networks meet on at least a quarterly basis

Meeting frequency

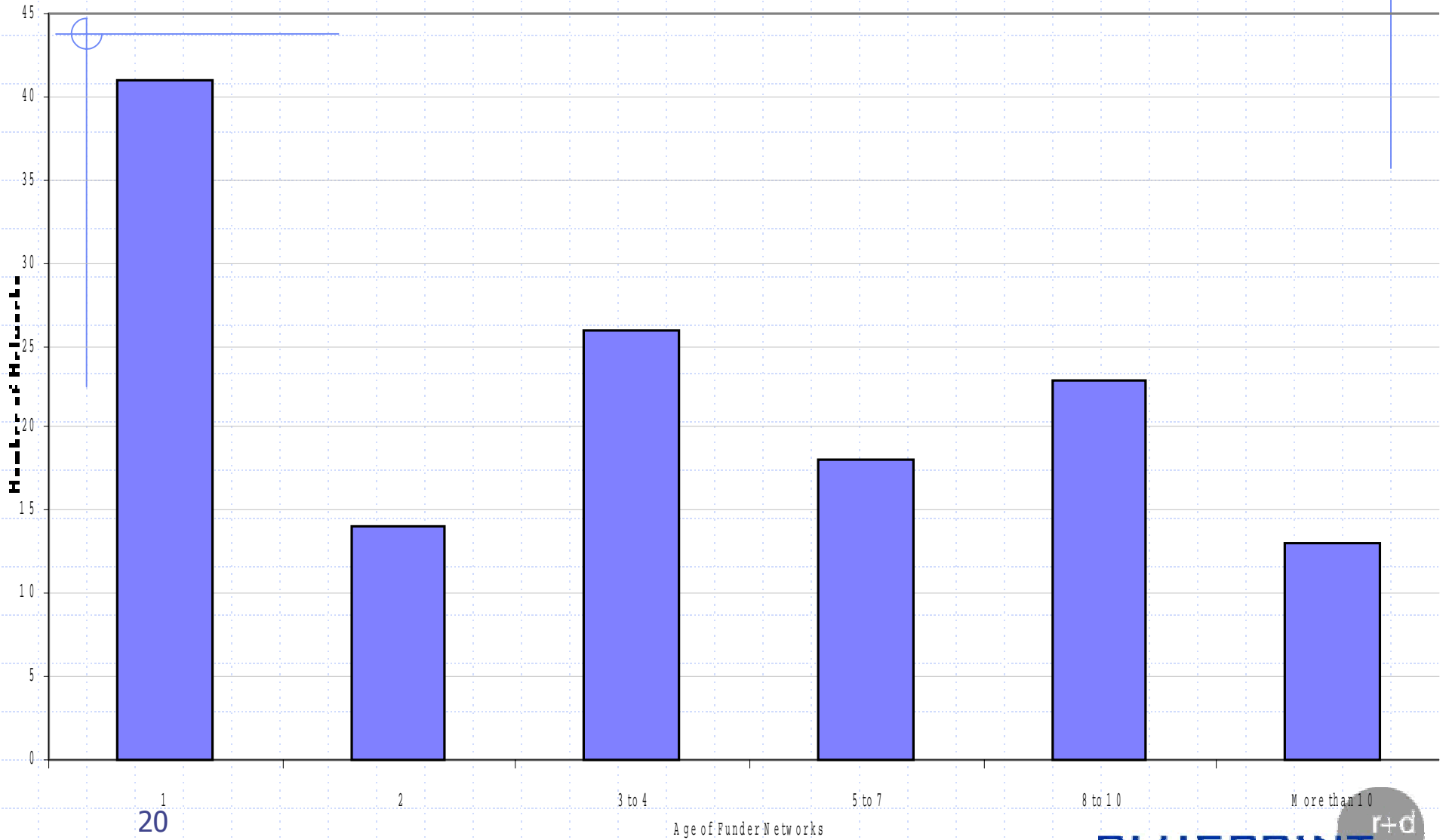


Paid staff

- 35% reported to have paid staff or consultant support

The growth in new funder networks has increased significantly over the last two years

Rate of network creation



What's next...

- What else do we need to know?
 - Who joins these new networks and not RAGs?
 - What roles do RAGs play in creating, absorbing, nurturing? What is impact on RAGs of doing so?
 - Lifecycle, attrition, staffing rates
 - What do these networks do?
 - Which of the 21c RAG characteristics apply?
- Filling in the gaps...Double checking

For the Forum...

- Forum membership
- RAG activities
- Philanthropic infrastructure
- Fringe to center

For more information

For more information, a copy of this presentation, or other Blueprint publications, please contact us:



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