COMPETING FOR LOCAL GOOD
THE BUILDING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES COMPETITION: ACTIVATING EMPATHY TO CREATE CHANGE
Thank you for your interest in
*Competing for Local Good.*

We put this brief guide together with the hope that it will help others to evaluate whether a grant award competition would serve their objectives, and to provide a topline step-by-step guide for sponsoring a competition should a reader decide to take the plunge.

When we began to consider a competition, we pondered a number of questions. Did we want to reach new organizations that might not be eligible for our established grantmaking guidelines? Was a competition an appropriate way to seek new ideas to address challenging issues?

For those who have decided to launch a competition, there are additional considerations that will shape your outcomes and help you reach your goals. Will you work with a competition consultant? What will be your prize strategy? How will you harvest new ideas and/or encourage new organizations to network?

We learned a great deal with our work on the Activating Empathy competition. This guide outlines the primary steps we took to create the competition and to reap the benefits. Should this guide spark questions for you on hosting a competition, please contact us using the email address listed at the back of the guide. We would be happy to share more about our experience hosting a competition. Thanks for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,

Irene M. Wong
Local Grantmaking Program Director
WHO WE ARE

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation is a family foundation. We are guided by the enduring business philosophy and personal values of Lucile and David, who helped found one of the world’s leading technology companies. Today, their children and grandchildren continue to help guide the work of the Foundation.

Their approach to business and community participation has guided our philanthropy for nearly 50 years: we invest in effective organizations and leaders, collaborate with them to identify strategic solutions, and support them over time to reach our common goals.

We work on the issues our founders cared about most:
- Improving the lives of children
- Enabling the creative pursuit of science
- Advancing reproductive health
- Conserving and restoring the earth’s natural systems
We want our local communities to continue to be strong and vibrant places where people can reach their full potential. We want to ensure that people have access to the resources and services they need for their well-being, as well as to explore and grow.

Playworks, an Activating Empathy winner, extended its transformation of elementary schools’ conflict-ridden recess into fun organized play that teaches teamwork, conflict resolution and empathy into San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.
The Local Grantmaking Program supports grantees in a five-county region in California.

WHO WE ARE

2014: $14,759,500

- Population & Reproductive Health: $890,000
- Arts: $2,458,000
- Children & Youth: $3,215,000
- Food & Shelter: $2,115,000
- Conservation & Science: $1,265,000
- Community Foundations: $2,330,000
- Initiatives: $2,557,500
- Total: $14,759,500
WHY A SOCIAL COMPETITION?
In 2014, the Packard Foundation was celebrating its 50th Anniversary; the Local Grantmaking Program was seeking a special investment to mark the occasion.

We wanted to reflect the Foundation’s fifty-year legacy of supporting our local communities with an eye to the next fifty years.

Milestones excerpted from the Packard Foundation 50th Anniversary Timeline.
OUR TEAM WAS INTERESTED IN EXPERIMENTING WITH NEW WAYS OF GRANTMAKING WITHIN A PLACE-BASED PROGRAM.

WHY?

- We sought innovative ideas and new organizations
- There was interest in broadening our grantmaking approaches.
- We were interested in leveraging an online platform to build connection among community organizations.
THE ATTRIBUTES OF A SOCIAL COMPETITION FIT THE BILL.

- Partners with experts in the field
- Engages other (judges) in decision-making
- Connects people, builds relationships
- Inspires a sense of urgency to act now

First Tee, an Activating Empathy winner, expanded its unique golf program that serves as a vehicle for mentorship and teaching at-risk youth to recognize their own strengths and leadership.
WE WERE MOTIVATED BY RESEARCH AND ENCOURAGED BY OUR PAST EXPERIENCE.

• Competitions can spur the development of new ideas to address regional challenges. In Minnesota, Kids Lead the Way surfaced a new way of raising awareness about obesity by hosting foot races at elementary schools.

To grow the number of entrepreneurs and impact investors interested in sustainable fisheries, the Packard Foundation’s Conservation and Science Program joined with others to support Fish 2.0, a global business competition that connects sustainable fishing and aquaculture businesses with potential investors.

• Competitions can mobilize and broaden the network of those interested in an issue. These benefits are “arguably more important than the actual award of a successful competition.”*

*http://www.mckinseyonsociety.com/downloads/reports/Social-Innovation/And_the_winner_is.pdf

San Jose State University’s Collaborative for Reaching and Teaching the Whole Child, an Activating Empathy winner, created a school model for training education in social and emotion learning — so critical to improve student outcomes and for educators and students alike to thrive.
SO WE LAUNCHED THE BUILDING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES CHALLENGE: ACTIVATING EMPATHY TO CREATE CHANGE!

The competition awarded $500,000 in grants to organizations that cultivate empathy skills to strengthen communities and to equip young people to become leaders of change.
KEY FIGURES FROM THE COMPETITION...

212 ideas submitted

- 144 five counties
- 37 Bay Area
- 20 other U.S. cities
- 5 international & other
- 3 Southern California

Entrant budget sizes range from $1,000 - $1,000,000+

Nearly 50% had budgets ranging from $50,000 - $500,000

6 awards totalling $500,000
AND OUR BIG TAKEAWAYS.

The competition surfaced new ideas and organizations.

It did not spur additional funder investment, despite invitations to co-host.

It enabled broad community participation.

It energized and empowered community organizations to benefit local communities.

It elevated community focus and interest in empathy.
HOW DID WE DO IT?
SOCIAL COMPETITION: OUR SIX STEPS (THAT COULD BE YOURS, TOO.)

STEP 1: SELECT THE COMPETITION ADMINISTRATOR

STEP 2: PLAN THE COMPETITION

STEP 3: LAUNCH THE COMPETITION

STEP 4: OUTREACH TO ENTRANTS

STEP 5: CELEBRATE THE WINNERS

STEP 6: SUSTAIN THE BENEFITS
WHY DID WE PARTNER WITH ASHOKA CHANGEMAKERS?

WE CHOSE TO WORK WITH AN EXPERT PARTNER

• Experience in social sector competition space.
• Track record in designing and hosting online competitions.
• Leader of changemaker networks.
SELECT THE TOPIC.

We thought of a number of ideas. Through our ideation process we landed on the concept of empathy.

WHY EMPATHY?

Empathy is a unifying strength of leaders and organizations that work to make our communities strong and resilient. Empathy skills are essential for problem-solving and innovation.

Recent research points to the importance of social and emotional learning in school and for later success. Teaching empathy is an integral part of social and emotional learning and a growing movement throughout schools and in youth development worldwide.

It is a topic of our time. During his 2014 commencement speech at Stanford University, Bill Gates focused not only on social good, but empathy. “Take your genius and your optimism and your empathy and go change the world.”
ASHOKA DEVELOPED THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA BASED ON THEIR PROVEN MODEL OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP.

Given the competition sought to strengthen local communities, programs had to have the potential to create impact within one or more of the five counties.
CONSIDER HOW PRIZE STRATEGY CAN ACCOMPLISH YOUR GOALS.

- We offered $100,000 awards to motivate entries from both small and large organizations as well as to attract established entities seeking to scale up or launch new programs.
- We presented two $50,000 Idea Prize awards to seek out innovative programs still in the early stages of demonstrating impact.
- We offered six awards to improve the likelihood that winners would be geographically diverse.
- We provided unrestricted cash awards so that winners could determine how to use the funds for the greatest impact.

Soul Shoppe, an Activating Empathy winner, developed an online toolkit to equip parents and teachers to create an empathy-based learning environment, where all kids can safely learn to regulate emotions.
DETERMINE AWARD DECISION-MAKING PROCESS.

We sought judges external to the foundation who were thought leaders, had local contextual knowledge and understanding of youth’s challenges in our region.

The Respect Institute, an Activating Empathy winner, expanded its program to equip vulnerable youth and those who influence them with the tools to develop social and emotional resilience to Santa Clara County juvenile justice facilities and to reach youth no longer in school.
DEVELOP THE OUTREACH STRATEGY.

Our goal was to encourage diverse organizations throughout the five county region to participate. We leveraged our partnership knowledge and expertise to broadly reach out. We offered research and information to help organizations successfully apply.
GENERATE INTEREST AND ENTRANTS.

We offered a small *early entry award* to stimulate submissions. In addition, we utilized social media, community and professional networks, and friends and colleagues to spread the word and encourage programs to apply.

Rising International, an Activating Empathy winner, expanded its training of women and teens in launching social businesses, “home parties,” where communities are invited to learn about humanitarian issues and to support women artisans. In the process, teens earn a wage and create pathways for more opportunities.
SELECT SEMI-FINALISTS, FINALISTS, AND WINNERS.

213 entries

A team screened all entries and selected 86 semi-finalists.

86 semi-finalists

From those semi-finalists, the team looked for high quality, innovative entries as well as diversity in entries — different geographies, types of organizations and topic areas.

23 finalists

Using the assessment criteria, the judges narrowed the field to 23 finalists.

6 winners

Out of the finalist pool, the judges selected the six winners.

Competition Finalists: Using the competition’s web platform, the judges reviewed the 23 finalists — and conferred as a group to make the final decision.
WE ANNOUNCED AND SHOWCASED THE WINNERS AT THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OPEN HOUSE.
The Summit brought together semi-finalists and finalists at a day-long convening and capacity building event. Participants heard from a prominent empathy practitioner and participated in sharing sessions to facilitate cross-learning. As a result, participants initiated connections and conversations.
We profiled winners on our communications channels, documented our learnings, and wrote about the competition on our blogs. Ongoing conversations between competition entrants continue today.
CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WINNERS.
THANKS TO OUR FIVE JUDGES AND TO THE KEY INDIVIDUALS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE BUILDING EMPATHY COMPETITION.

Katherine Murtha – University of California, Haas School of Businesss
Cynthia McKinney Drayton, Kristie Wang, Smita Satiani – Ashoka Changemakers
Melissa Daar Carvajal – MDC Consulting Network

For more information email us at LocalGrantmaking@packard.org