

## Establishing the NGOsource Equivalency Determination Information Repository (EDIR) on Non-U.S. Based NGOs

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NGOsource Repository

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Updated October 2010





Equivalency Determination (ED) vs.
Expenditure Responsibility (ER)

# Two Regulatory Ways of Qualifying Non-U.S. based NGOs to Receive Grants





#### Benefits of Equivalency Determination (ED)

- 1. A <u>foreign NGO is treated like a U.S.</u> <u>public charity</u>:
  - General operating support is permitted.
  - In appropriate circumstances, grants to support projects that include some lobbying are permitted.



- Re-granting is allowed in more circumstances.
- 2. <u>Imposes none of the ongoing additional</u> multi-year costs of ER (including record-keeping and reporting costs).
- 3. Can update ED annually at low cost.





# Existing Disadvantages of Equivalency Determination (ED)

- 1. High upfront cost (\$5-10k for legal opinion).
- 2. <u>More upfront work from NGO and the grantmaker</u>, often a difficult and frustrating process.
- 3. Time zone, language and regulatory differences <u>make support difficult</u>.
- 4. Not all grantees will qualify for ED, even after up front work is invested.
- 5. <u>EDs are not currently shareable</u> <u>among grantmakers</u>.







#### Benefits of Expenditure Responsibility (ER)

 Allows grantmakers to <u>make</u> grants to foreign NGOs that are not recognized as U.S. public charities by the Internal Revenue Service; without ER, these grants would be forbidden.







#### Disadvantages of Expenditure Responsibility

Restrictions on use of grant funds; CANNOT be used for:

- General operating support
- Projects that include <u>any lobbying</u> (even if there are other funders)



- Grants (including scholarships) to individuals
- Grants to other organizations unless the NGO understands and imposes ER on all regrantees





#### More Disadvantages of Expenditure Responsibility

- Requires additional record-keeping from NGO. NGO must maintain separate bookkeeping or accounting of grant funds and must track the use of any capital assets for the life of the item (with an exception for items worth less than US\$5,000).
- Requires additional annual reporting based on the NGO's fiscal year; grantmaker staff must solicit and review these additional reports.
- Timing and contents of reporting cannot be waived and, if a NGO is out of compliance, no further payments or new grants can be made to that organization.





# The Need for a Centralized Shareable Repository of NGOsource Equivalency Determination Information







#### Our Challenges

- Current IRS regulations <u>prohibit</u> <u>grantmakers from using another</u> <u>organization's "good faith determination"</u>.
- High <u>duplication of effort and costs</u> for both NGOs and grantmakers.

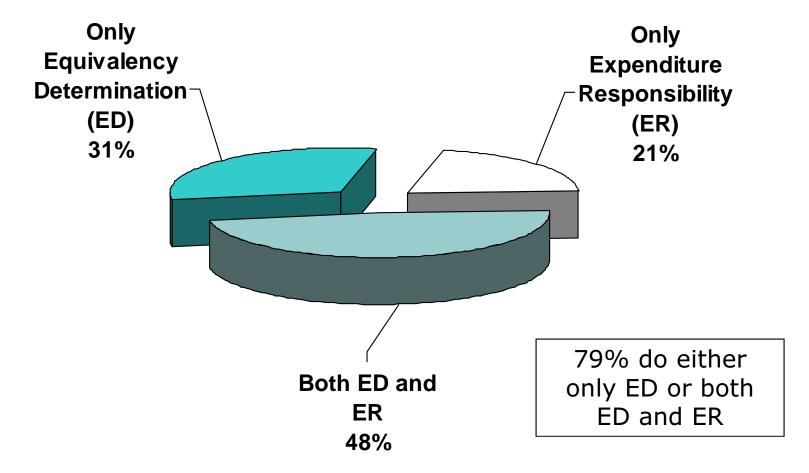


- No centralized database to determine if an NGO has been previously reviewed and has met ED requirements.
- No agreed upon standards for ED data collection and processing procedures. Many grantmakers greatly exceed IRS ED requirements "just in case".
- <u>Difficulty communicating with and supporting NGOs</u> in different languages and time zones.
- High cost of \$5000 \$10,000 for legal opinions





# Equivalency Determination is Broadly Used and Has the Potential for Sharing







### A Centralized Repository is Seen as a Significant Benefit

90% of NGO leaders 86% of grantmakers 75% of service providers agree that . . .

"The availability of a centralized repository containing up-to-date vetted nonprofit information would be a significant benefit."







## **Assemble a Strong Team**







### Four Partner Leadership Organizations













#### Funding Consortium Members









#### Carnegie Corporation of New York









#### THE F.B. HERON FOUNDATION





#### THE KRESGE FOUNDATION

STRONGER NONPROFITS. STRONGER COMMUNITIES.







Repository funders since project inception and grants currently being considered and processed





## **Off and Running**

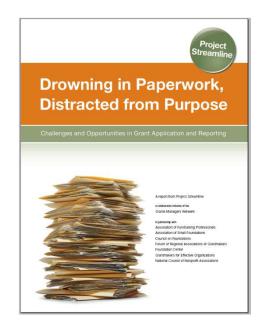






#### Streamline the ED Process

- Establish a centralized Repository of NGO information that would enable international grantmakers to <u>share</u> and rely on EDs that are conducted by the Repository.
- Select and support a well qualified organization to establish and manage the Repository on a long term basis.



NGO Repository
Project cited as a
"Creative Approach"
to streamlining
international
grantmaking







# Proposed Equivalency Determination Information Repository (EDIR) Operation





#### NGOsource Proposed Repository Services for NGOs and Grantmakers

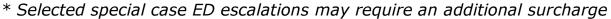
- 1. <u>Provide step-by-step instructions, references and online tools in multiple languages</u> to assist NGOs to successfully collect, prepare and submit all of the information required to be considered for ED status
- 2. Comprehensive list of <u>FAQs</u> plus examples to assist NGOs in collecting their required documents
- Online branching ED questions to streamline the process by filtering questions by type of public charity/private foundation
- 4. <u>Provide NGOs with a high level of global support</u> in nearby time zones via e-mail, phone, computer, fax and other means





#### NGOsource Proposed Repository Services for NGOs and Grantmakers

- Online tools to help NGOs <u>convert</u> <u>budgets from local currencies into \$USD</u>
- 6. Optional fee-based <u>document</u> translation referral services
- 7. Review of all submitted information and documents as being complete and up-to-date
- 8. <u>Escalation to external legal counsel</u> with expertise in international nonprofit law on an <u>as-needed basis</u>\*
- Grantmaker web-based portal and e-mail updates showing the current status of ED processing







#### NGOsource Proposed Repository Services for NGOs and Grantmakers

- 10. The EDIR will make a "good faith determination" that can be shared and relied on that an NGO is the equivalent of a U.S. public charity as specified in Rev. Proc. 92-94.
- 11. Issuance of an <u>approved time-limited Repository</u> certificate for a successful ED
- 12. Reminder services to help NGOs to maintain up-to-date information
- 13. <u>Integration with the major commercial</u> <u>grants management software and</u> <u>services</u>
- 14. <u>Annual independent audit</u> of the EDIR operation







### Getting an Initial "Green Light" from the IRS

- The IRS representatives <u>raised no objections and</u> <u>indicated a willingness to review a more detailed</u> <u>plan</u> for the Repository at the appropriate time.
- The IRS envisioned creating just such a Repository when Revenue Procedure 92-94 was issued 15 years ago.
- IRS officials indicated that, <u>should</u> the agency approve the Repository, grantmakers could rely on the equivalency determination information stored there.



Source: This feedback was the result of an important "go/no go" meeting with IRS officials of the Exempt Organization Division in September 2007





# TechSoup Global + Partners Selected to Host and Manage the Repository







For more info see: <a href="http://techsoupglobal.org/ngorepository/faqs">http://techsoupglobal.org/ngorepository/faqs</a>







- Guided NGOs through <u>eligibility and</u> <u>verified the legal charitable status</u> of 107,000+ organizations of which 30,000 are non-U.S. NGOs.

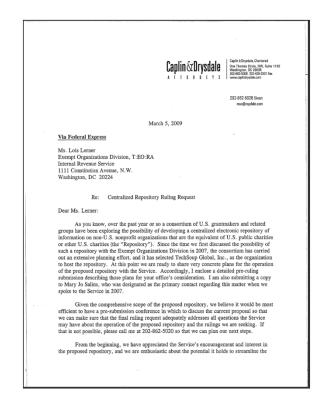
- Network of 25 global partners serving 31 countries
- Demonstrated expertise processing US\$1 billion of in-kind donations by 40 major U.S. corporate grantmakers.
- <u>Existing workflow, processes, and integrated multi-lingual</u> <u>systems</u> that are similar to the Repository's key requirements.
- Developed and implemented a <u>proven financially</u> <u>sustainable revenue generating business model</u>





### Seeking Regulatory Approval

- Initial PLR filing with IRS in March 2009
- Met with IRS Exempt
   Organization officials
   in April and November 2009
- Revised PLR request submitted in June 2009
- Submitted Revenue Procedure to Treasury Department December 2009
- Met with Treasury in February 2010
- Regulatory review now in process





# ACT Recommends Facilitating Equivalency Determination Information Repositories

Advisory Committee on Tax Exempt and Government Entities (ACT)

Report of Recommendations



Cegarin act of the Treasury Internal Revenue Bervice w w w . 1 r s . g o v Treasure 1344 (free 5-3006) Catalog Number 385760 Public Meeting Washington, DC June 10, 2009 ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON

TAX EXEMPT AND GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

(ACT)

EXEMPT ORGANIZATIONS: RECOMMENDATIONS

TO IMPROVE THE TAX RULES GOVERNING

INTERNATIONAL GRANTMAKING

Mary Rauschenberg, Project Leader
Fred Goldberg, Project Leader
Bonnie Brier
Karin Goldman
Jack Siegel

Ana Thompson

June 10, 2009

Source: http://www.irs.gov/pub/irstege/tege\_act\_rpt8.pdf





# ACT Encourages IRS to Give High Priority to COF and TechSoup Global Proposal

"We encourage the IRS to facilitate formation of Equivalency Determination Information Repositories EDIRs which would make equivalency determinations in accordance with the requirements of Rev. Proc. 92-94 (as updated from time to time) and procedures approved by the IRS that could be relied on by other charities.

In furtherance of this recommendation, we encourage the IRS to give high priority attention to the proposal of the Council on Foundations and TechSoup Global and any other organization seeking to establish an EDIR. We have not reviewed this proposal and express no views regarding its merits. However, we believe that it presents an opportunity for the IRS to develop standards for EDIRs. Ultimately the IRS should publish guidance regarding standards and procedures for EDIRs to obtain IRS approval."

Source: http://www.irs.gov/pub/irstege/tege\_act\_rpt8.pdf

COUNCIL on FOUNDATIONS



# Repository Membership and ED Processing Fees Currently Under Consideration

As of November 2009 and Subject to Change





## Comparing the Approaches

	ED Cost	Time *	Cross Border NGO Support	Liability Risk
NGOsource Repository	Annual membership plus ED processing fee	Immediate ED to 4 weeks or longer	Repository staff in multiple time zones & languages	Full anticipated risk transfer
In-house ED	Varies widely	3-6 weeks average	Foundation staff if available & skilled	Risk on grantmaker
Outsource ED to law firm	\$5,000 to \$10,000	4-8 weeks average	Law firm	Risk on law firm / GM
Expenditure Resp. (ER)	Varies widely	Longer life cycle	Foundation staff if available & skilled	Risk on grantmaker



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# ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FEE Under Consideration\*

<u>Tier</u>	<u>Fee</u>	Number of ED Requests Submitted
1	\$1,000	Up to 9 ED requests annually
2	\$1,900	10-29 ED requests annually
3	\$4,600	30-59 ED requests annually
4	\$10,000	60-99 ED requests annually
5	\$14,500	100+ ED requests annually

#### PLUS the following ED Processing Fees ->

\* As of November 30, 2009 and subject to change





## ED PROCESSING FEES FOR GRANTMAKERS Under Consideration\*

For each request:

**New NGO - \$1,445 to \$1,760 fee** (varies by volume) The NGO is new-to-the-Repository. This requires a significant level of NGO support, data collection, complete review of all submitted information, and possible escalation to external legal counsel.

#### **ED Update Needed - \$800 fee**

Some out-of-date NGO data is in the Repository. The NGO is contacted and provided the necessary support, they update their data, and the Repository team conducts the review.

#### **Current Existing ED - \$250 fee**

The NGO's certified status is up-to-date and still valid. The Repository can proceed to issue a new ED certificate to any member grantmaker.

\* As of November 30, 2009 and subject to change





## STARTER PACKAGE Under Consideration\*

- New Repository members (one time only)
- 1-4 ED requests in the year
- 50% discount
  - Tier 1 Annual Subscription Fee = \$500
  - New ED Processing Fee = \$880

\* As of November 30, 2009 and subject to change





#### Intended Benefits Over In-house ED

- **1. Risk elimination**. With the anticipated regulatory approval, the grantmaker will no longer be making a risk-laden determination on its own.
- **2. Higher quality process.** The repository provides a dedicated full-time staff and a <u>consistent</u>, <u>reliable</u> resource for ED processing.
- 3. Elimination of a requirement for a highly specialized in-house skill. ED is an extremely specialized skill often concentrated in one or a few staff that at any given time may be unavailable due to vacation, illness, or other turnover.
- 4. Allowing internal grants management staff to focus on core tasks. Elimination of a frustrating and difficult to scale process.





#### More Intended Benefits Over In-house ED

- **5. More consistent ED turnaround time**. NGOs are sometimes unresponsive to the data and time requirements of the ED process. The Repository will provide better NGO support (in time zone, in language, in culture) in order to obtain more complete and timelier ED submissions.
- **6. Significant benefit to the NGO**. Provides a <u>less expensive process</u>, for which they potentially will have further time and cost savings when they have multiple funders and only need to complete a single ED. Also, an NGO with a certified ED will <u>potentially gain access to the TechSoup in-kind donation program</u>, which provides access to software, hardware, and other technology resources that increase its capacity, without having to register or qualify separately.





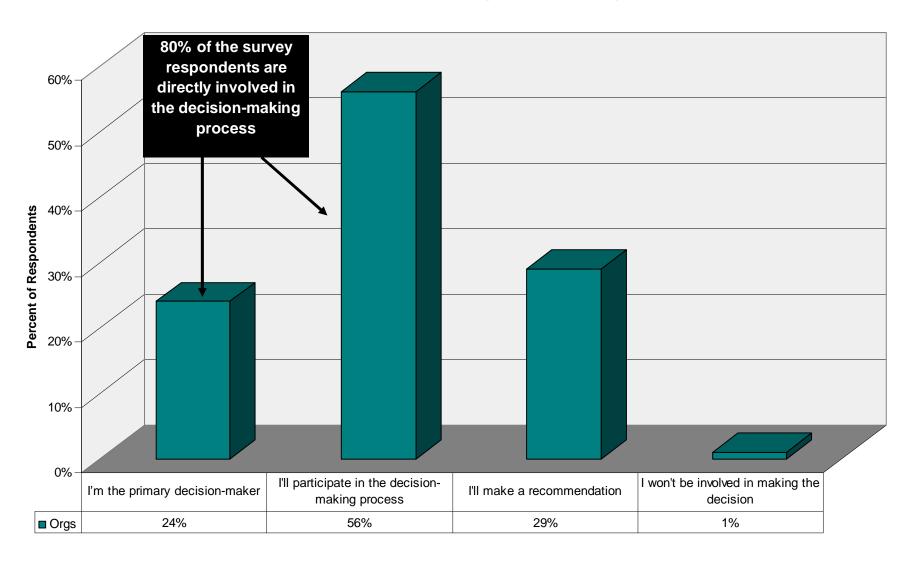
## Spring 2009 Survey of International Grantmakers Highlights of Preliminary Results







#### Role in the NGO Repository Outsourcing Decision-Making Process - Q6

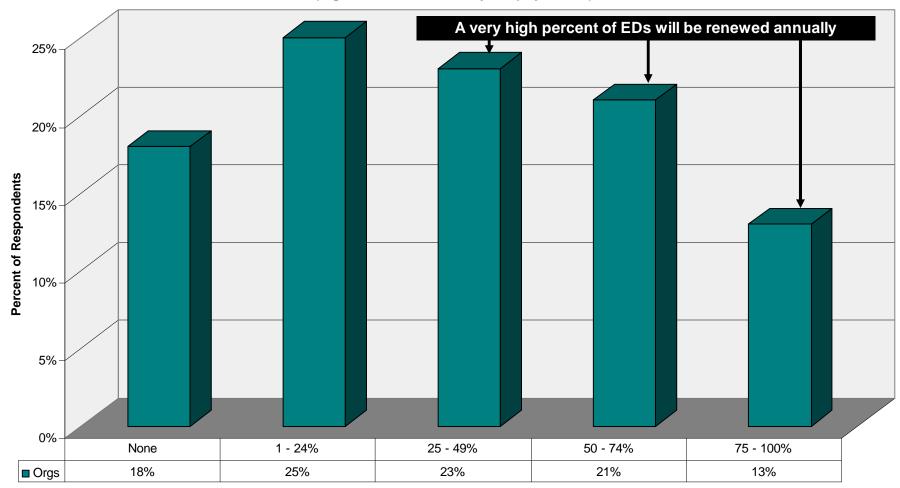






## Direct Grants to Non-U.S. Based NGOs that are Continuing Support from Prior Years - Q10

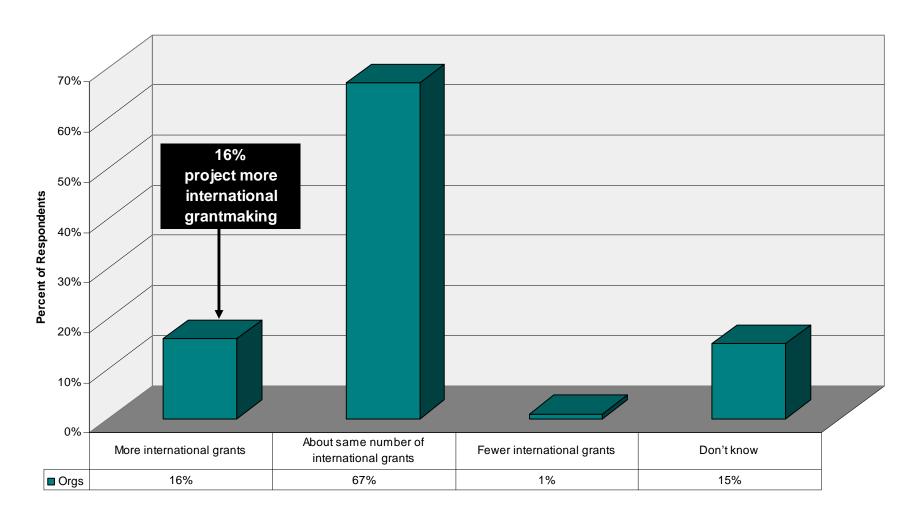
(e.g. renewals or multi-year payments)







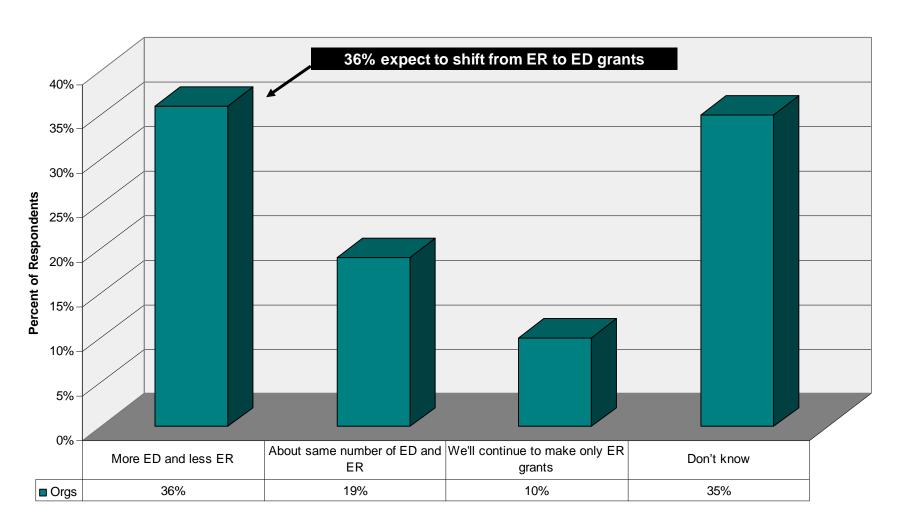
#### **Changes in International Grantmaking - Q17**







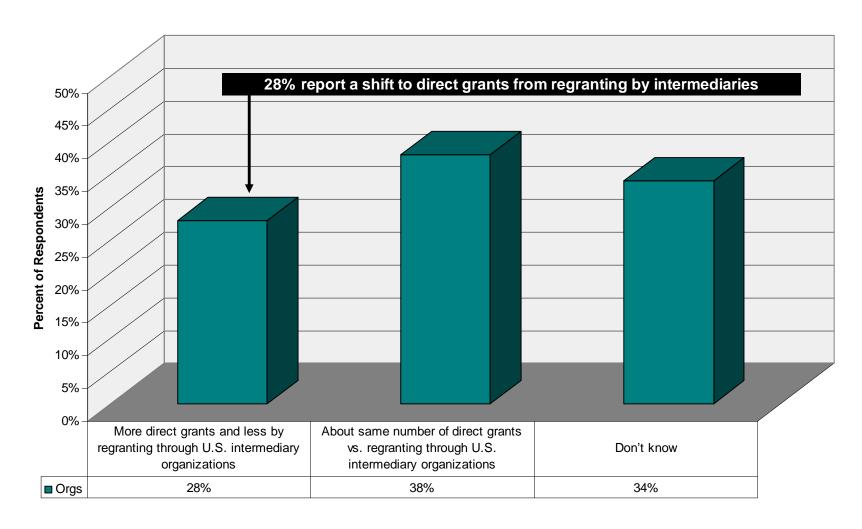
## Impact on the Ratio of Equivalency Determination (ED) vs. Expenditure Responsibility (ER) Grants - Q18







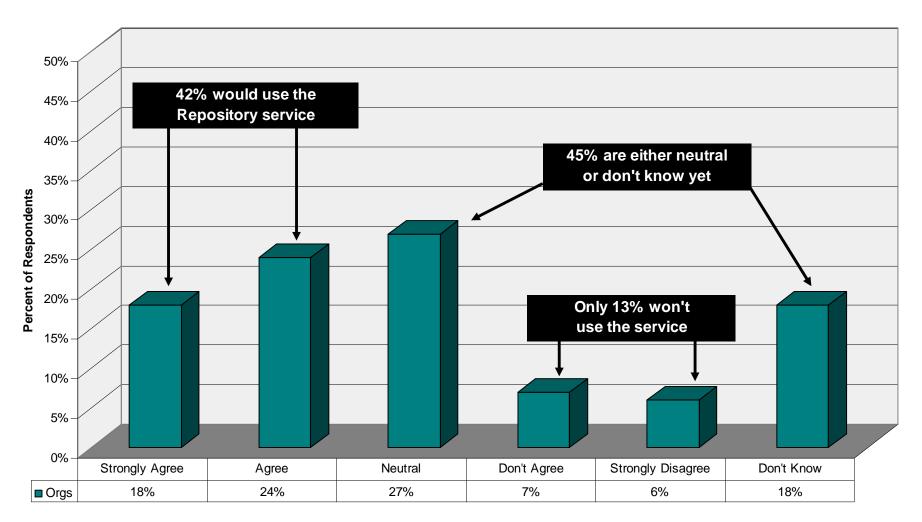
## Impact of the Number of International Grants via Regranting Through U.S. Intermediary Organizations - Q19







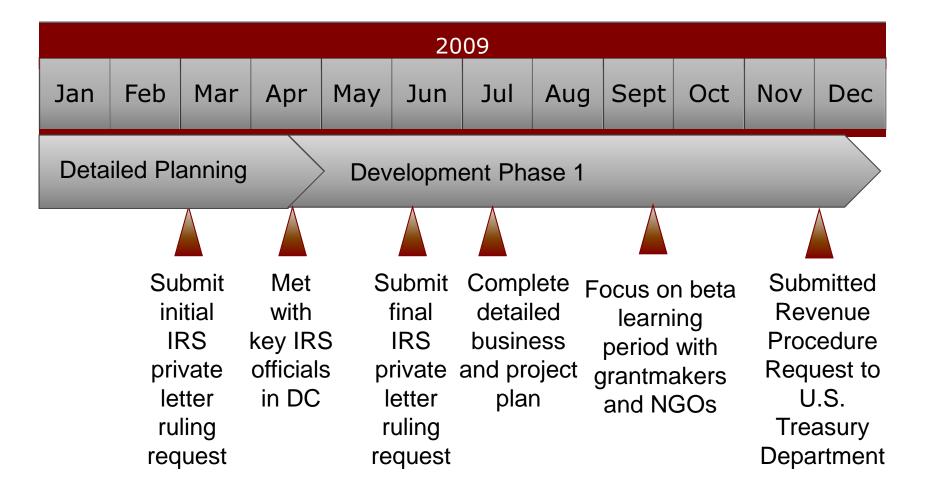
## **Would Become a Member of the Repository and Use the Service to Process our Equivalency Determinations - Q24a**







#### NGO Repository: 2009 Timeline and Targets







### NGO Repository: 2010 – 2012 Timeline and Targets

2010												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Meet with Treasury Dept Repository Development and Testing												
2011												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Dev. Phase 2												
Repository Operations												

2012											
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Repository Operations											





## Fully Working Prototypes of the NGO Repository's Grantmaker Portal





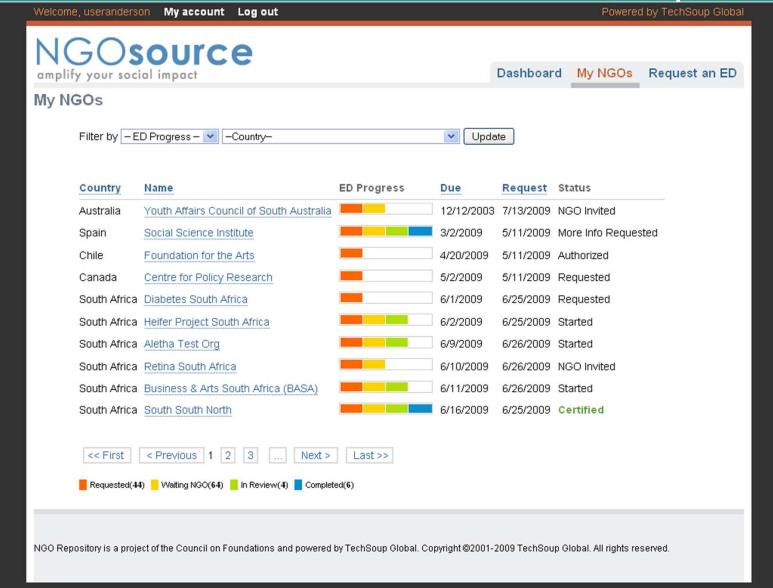
## SAMPLE: Grantmaker Dashboard







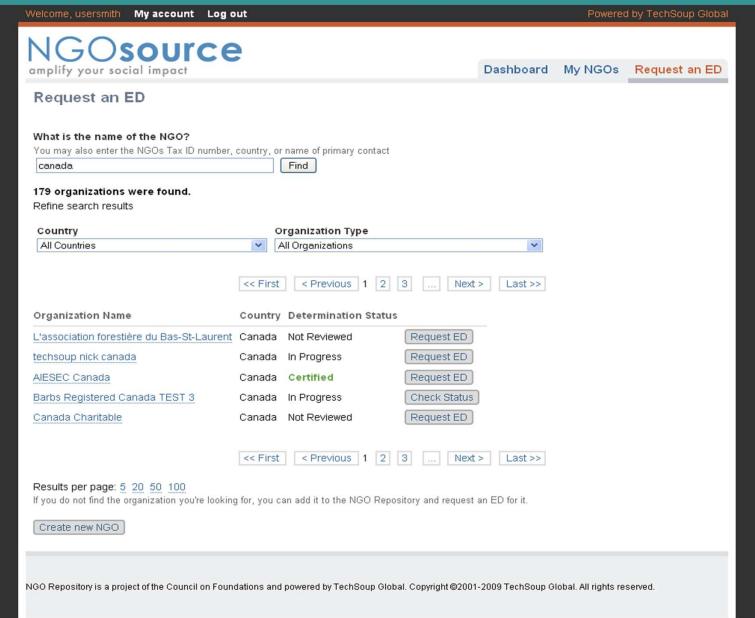
## SAMPLE: Grantmaker Notification Options







## SAMPLE: Search Results



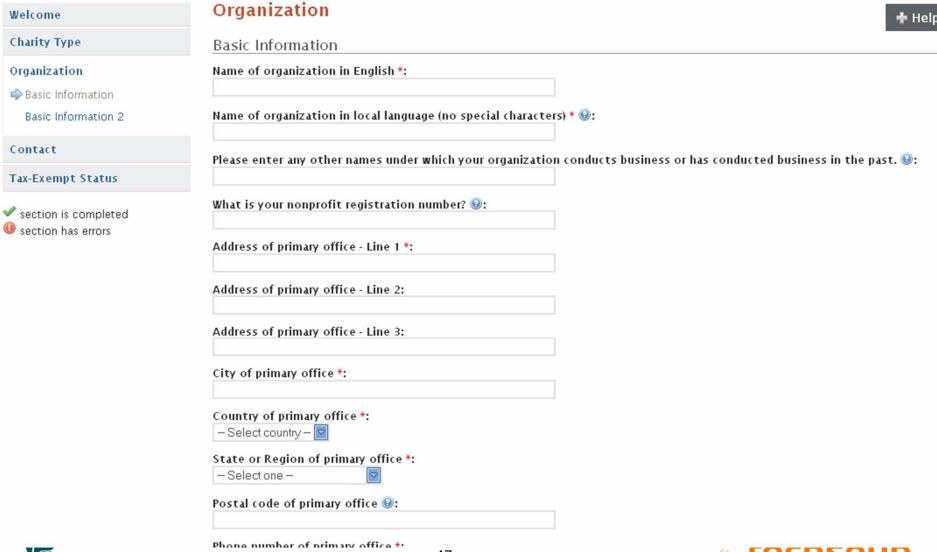




## SAMPLE: Questionnaire Basic Information

Home

Equivalency Determination Wizard







## SAMPLE: Questionnaire Organization Test

#### Home Equivalency Determination Wizard Tax-Exempt Status Welcome ♣ Help Charity Type Organizational Test Organization Is your organization registered solely for charitable purposes? \* @: Yes Contact O No Tax-Exempt Status Do the governing documents of your organization allow it to conduct activities that are not charitable? \* (9): Document Upload Yes Operational Test O No Activities Organizational Test Do the laws in your country allow the organization to conduct non-charitable activities as a substantial part of its total activitites? \*: Political Activity Yes Influencing Legislation O No Dissolution Personal Benefit Continue Save & Quit Back ✓ section is completed section has errors





## SAMPLE: Spanish Welcome Screen



Inicio » Cuenta de usuario » Determinación de equivalencia

#### Cuestionario de determinación de equivalencia

Bienvenido

Tipo de organización benéfica

Organización

Contacto

Estado de exención impositiva

- Olick to see help text.
- Section is complete.
- Section has errors.

Bienvenido



**Descripción general.** ¡Bienvenido al cuestionario de determinación de equivalencia de NGOsource! Como debe saber, un donador con sede en los EE. UU. se encuentra en proceso de evaluar una solicitud de donación para su organización. Como parte de su solicitud de donación, se le ha solicitado a NGOsource (una compañía independiente sin fines de lucro de los EE. UU.) que complete una determinación de equivalencia.

Conforme a las leyes impositivas de los EE. UU., los donadores deben cumplir requisitos legales específicos antes de otorgar una donación a una entidad como la suya, que se encuentra organizada según las leyes de otros países que no son los EE. UU. Estos requisitos legales pueden cumplirse realizando una determinación de equivalencia (ED). El fin de la ED es demostrar que su organización es el equivalente de una organización benéfica de los EE. UU. Si usted reúne los requisitos como equivalente de una organización benéfica de los EE. UU., los donadores podrán reducir las restricciones en el uso de fondos de donación.

Comprendemos que puede parecer que este complejo proceso demanda mucho tiempo o es confuso, y nos hemos esforzado por hacerlo lo más simple posible. Tenga en cuenta que completar este proceso una vez permitirá que otros donadores con sede en los EE. UU. encuentren su organización más fácilmente.

**Documentos requeridos que debe recopilar.** Antes de comenzar el cuestionario de determinación de equivalencia en línea, puede resultarle útil recopilar lo siguiente:



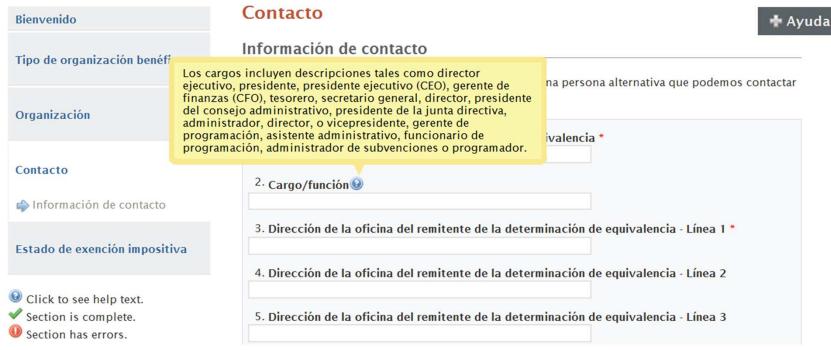


## SAMPLE: Contact Info with Online Help



Inicio » Cuenta de usuario » Determinación de equivalencia

#### Cuestionario de determinación de equivalencia





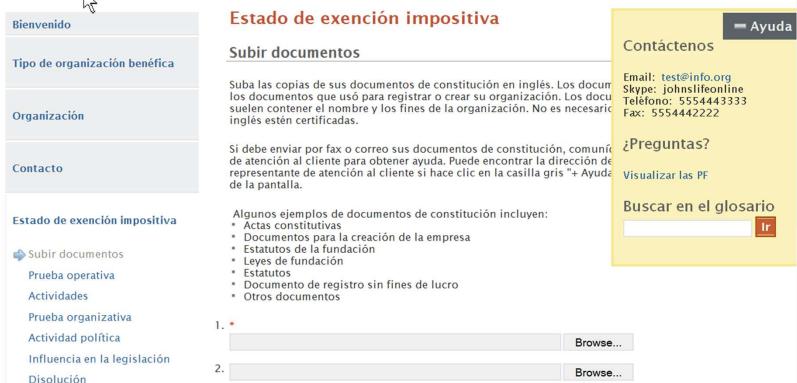


## SAMPLE: Spanish Attach Documents



Inicio » Cuenta de usuario » Determinación de equivalencia

Cuestionario de determinación de equivalencia





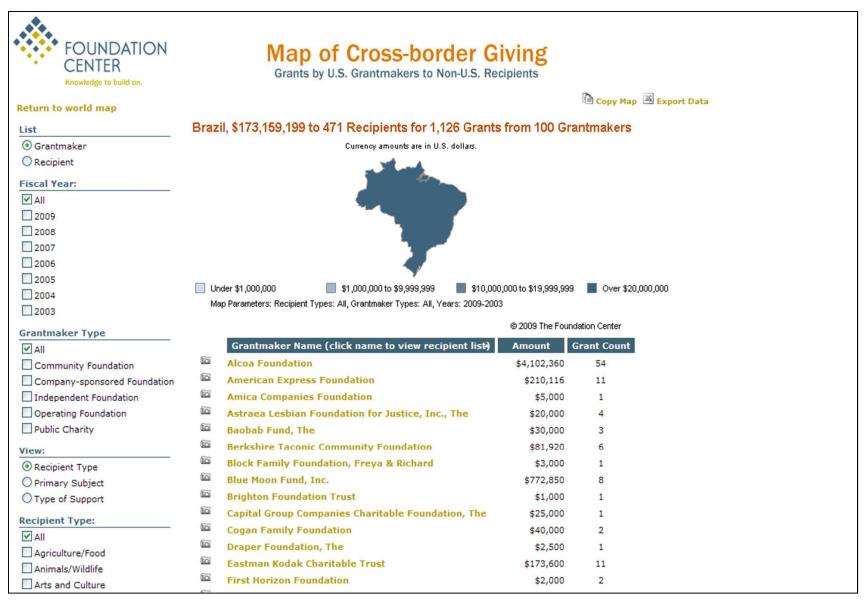


# Link to the Foundation Center's Foundation Directory Online (FDO) and Interactive Map of Cross-border Giving





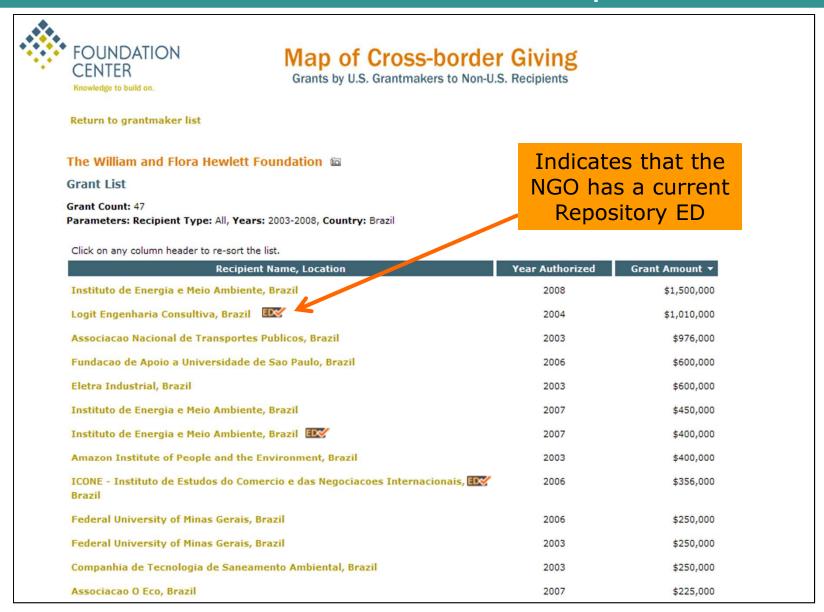
#### SAMPLE: Link to the Foundation Center's Interactive Map of Cross-border Giving







#### SAMPLE: Link to the Foundation Center's Interactive Map of Cross-border Giving







## Time for spirited questions!





## Contact Us

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