The Importance of Confidentiality

Although transparency is one of Impact100's guiding principles, confidentiality within the grant review process is equally important to maintain fairness and integrity. Every Focus Area Committee member has a responsibility to safeguard applicant information and internal deliberations. Sharing certain details, such as the number of applications received by a particular Focus Area, can unintentionally lead to unfair assumptions or fractured trust. To protect applicants, committee members, and the overall experience, it's essential to keep certain information private. This guide outlines what to keep confidential and provides guidance on how to communicate with care during and after the review process.

Why Confidentiality Matters

Confidentiality protects applicants' sensitive information, preserves trust among members, and upholds fairness in the review process. Our goal is for every nonprofit to feel respected and every member to feel confident that the process is impartial.

Sharing too much detail can distort perceptions. For example:

- Revealing how many applications were submitted per Focus Area may lead people to assume that certain Finalists are more or less "deserving" based on the size of the pool.
- Discussing committee size can make it seem as though one Focus Area carried more influence or voting power.

These assumptions shift focus away from what matters most: evaluating the most transformational and sustainable proposals.

General Confidentiality Expectations

All Focus Area Committee members must:

- Keep all application materials, financial documents, and discussions strictly confidential.
- Refrain from sharing or forwarding any nonprofit materials outside the committee.
- Avoid discussing specific applicants, scoring, or deliberations with anyone not serving on **that grant review committee.**
- Maintain confidentiality even after the review process concludes.
  Respect each applicant's privacy and handle all information with care and professionalism.

Confidentiality builds trust not only within your chapter but also with the nonprofit community you serve.

What Can and Cannot Be Shared

Can Be Shared Publicly:

- The total number of grant applications received, if your chapter wishes to include it in newsletters or events.
- The general timeline and process for review.
- The total number of members who served on grant review committees
- The names and missions of Finalists and Grantees, once officially made public.
- The names and missions of all applicants, but only after the Annual Meeting **(and only if consistent with chapter policy and communications with/expectations of applicants)**.
- Cumulative or historical impact data (e.g., total grants awarded or nonprofits funded over time).

Should Not Be Shared:

- The number of applicants per Focus Area
- The number of committee members serving in each Focus Area
- The names of applicants who did not move forward
- Any details of committee discussions or votes

Why even keep committee size private? Because if nonprofits believe one Focus Area Committee (FAC) had more members than another, they may assume that committee carried more influence or voting power. Keeping that data internal helps avoid confusion and false assumptions. Keeping this information internal helps maintain fairness and avoid perceptions of bias or imbalance.

Member Conversations – Proceed with Care

It's normal and encouraged for members to talk about their positive experiences serving on a committee, but specifics should stay within the group. Members should avoid saying things like:

  - "We had 25 applications in our category"
  - "Our decision was really difficult"
  - "We had 18 women on our committee"

Even casual comments like these can unintentionally create a sense of imbalance or frustration across the chapter

Confidentiality isn't about secrecy; it's about fairness. It helps protect the applicants, the integrity of the process, and the shared trust that fuels every Impact100 chapter.