

E-book

Sage Intacct

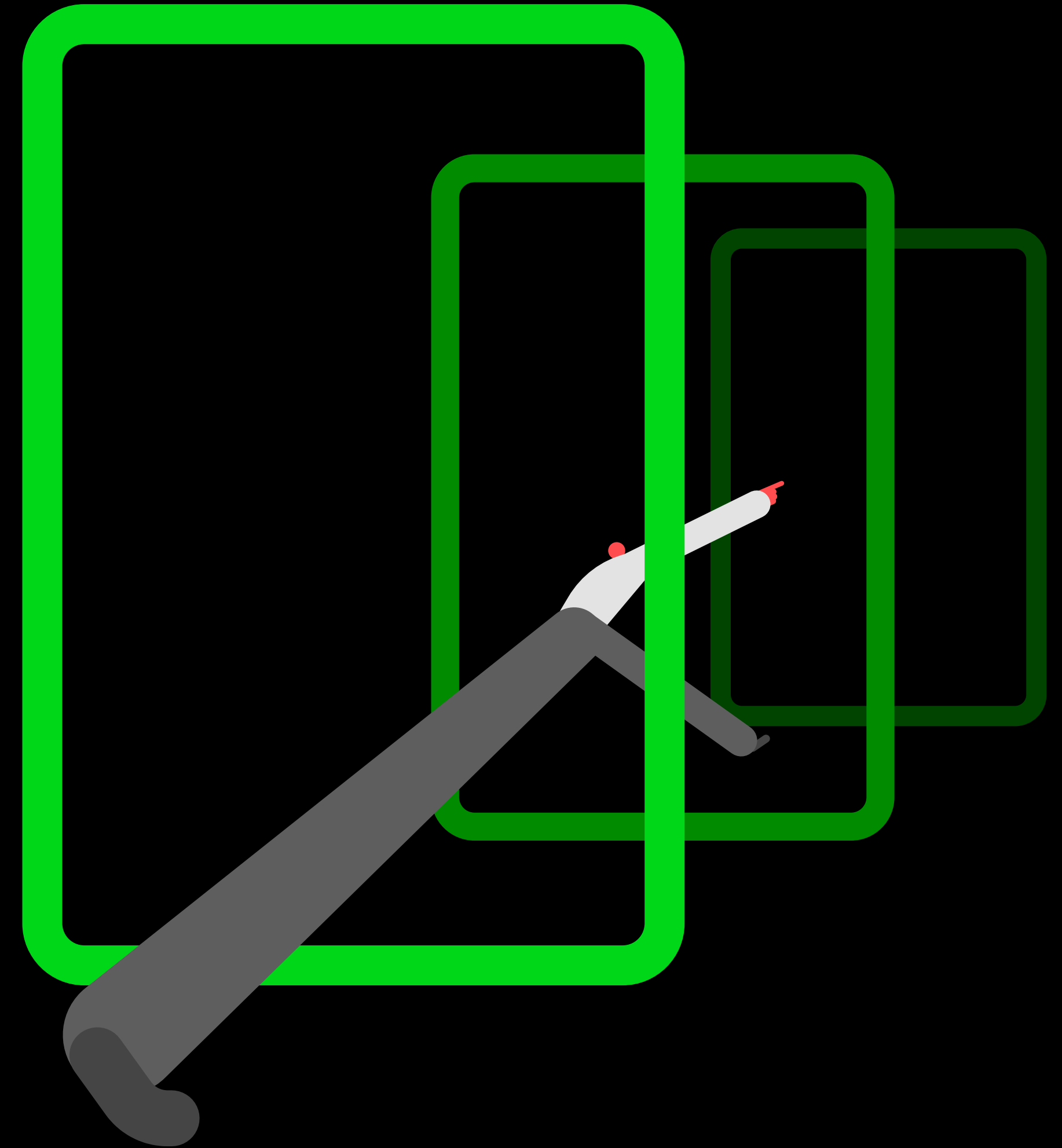
7 Proven Grant Management Best Practices for Growing Nonprofit Funding

Sage

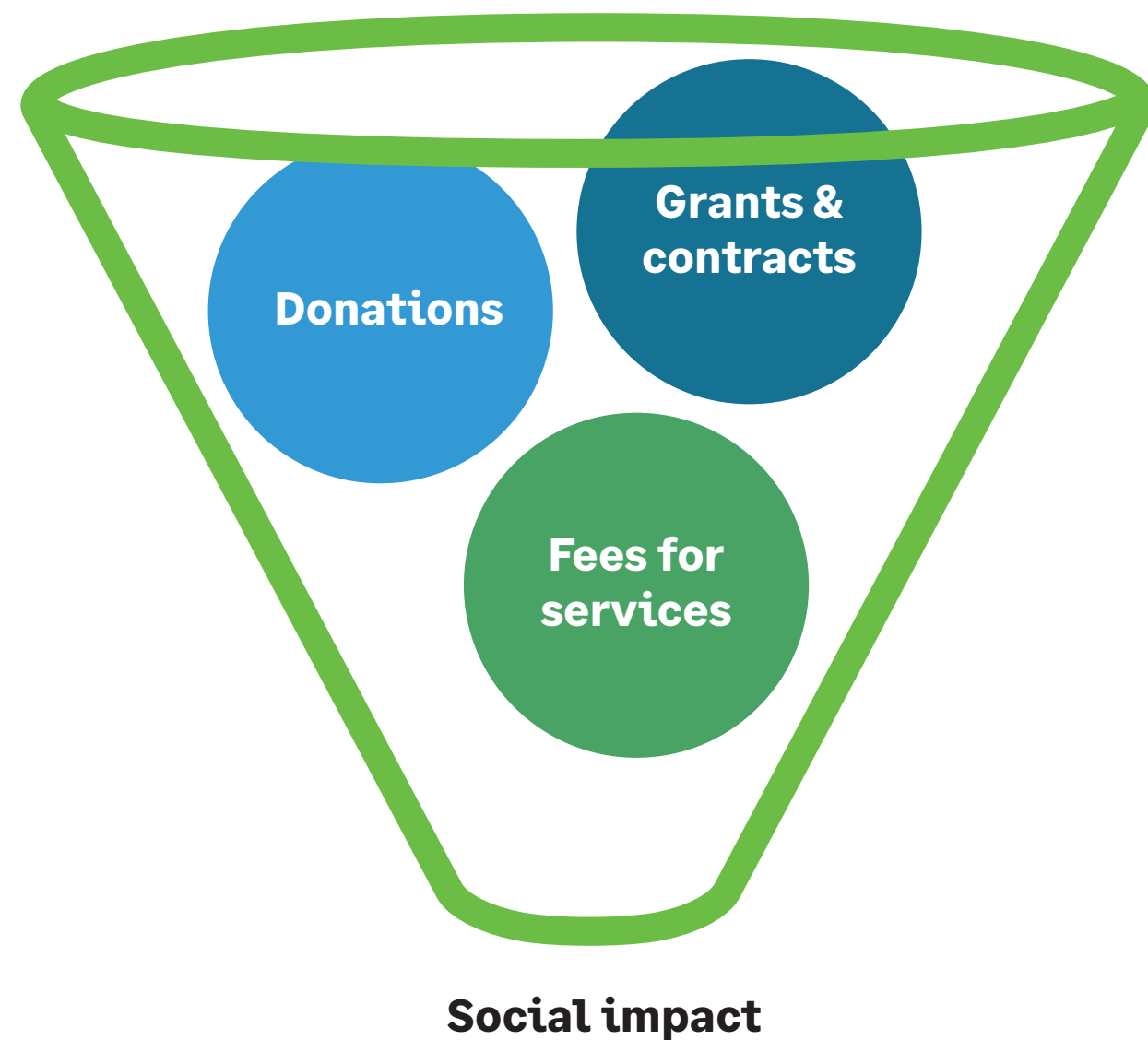


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Funding your nonprofit in a changing world



Build sustainability and financial resilience with effective grant funding.

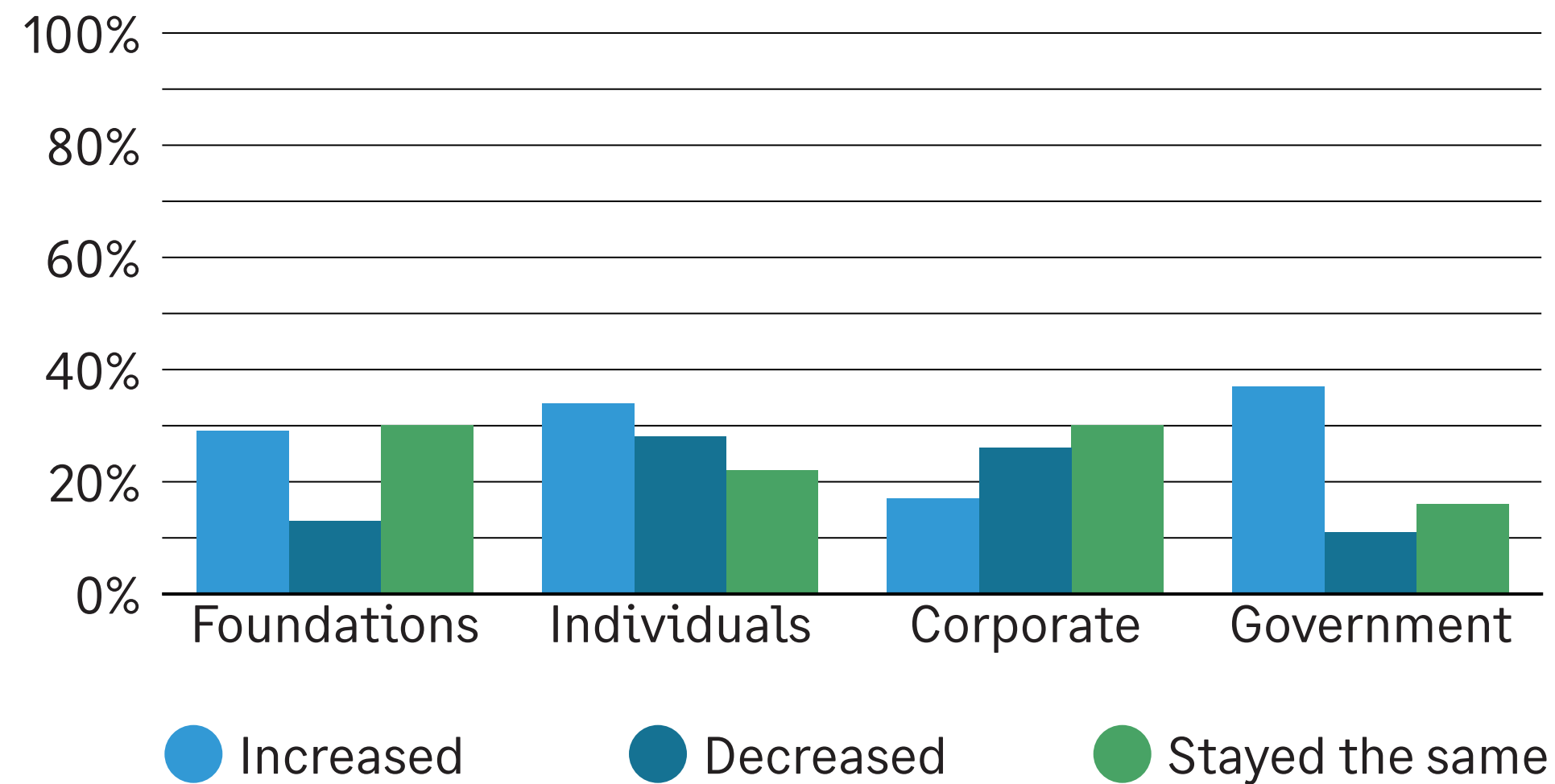
You need only scan the headlines to see nonprofits operate in a rapidly changing world, full of unexpected situations. From a strategic perspective, it is important for organizations to build multiple funding streams to provide stability and flexibility to adapt quickly to change. Your strategic planning should include a top-down approach to creating the best funding mix to support your mission.

Grant funding is a large and growing part of the strategic funding plan for nonprofit organizations. According to Wikipedia, “A grant is a fund given by an end entity—often a public body, charitable foundation, or a specialized grant-making institution—to an individual or another entity...for a specific purpose linked to public benefit. Unlike loans, grants are not to be paid back.”

A significant, and potentially renewable, source of funds that do not have to be repaid? Yes, please!

Grant funding is growing

In what funding areas have you seen a change in the last 12 months?



Sage Intacct 2022 Nonprofit Technology Trends Report²

Nonprofits are seeing an increase in the size, volume, and types of grants available.

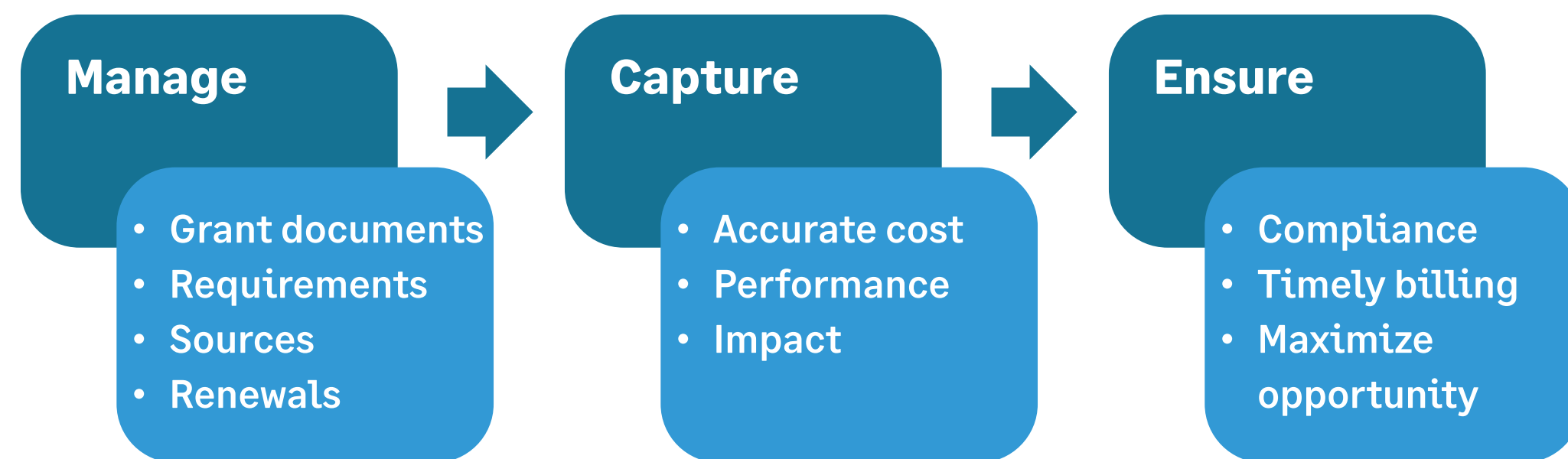
Total charitable giving in the United States climbed to \$471.44 billion in 2020, according to the most recent report by Giving USA.¹ The nonprofit industry has seen shifts in where funding originates. While individuals continue to provide the largest share of donations, grant funding is increasing. There are more types of grants available now and more funder entities, including federal, state, and local governments around the world, as well as private, public, and community foundations and corporations.

The Giving USA report revealed foundations awarded \$88.5 billion in grants and corporations gave another \$16.88 billion. The biggest source of grant funding comes from the discretionary spending budget of the U.S. government which is estimated at \$174 billion annually. In fact, the *NonProfit Times* estimated nearly one-third of nonprofit revenue currently comes from government grants and contracts. These are significant funds available to support and sustain your mission.

¹ Giving USA 2021

² Sage Intacct Nonprofit Technology Trends Report

How the grant management process works



When you build the right team and grant management process, you will have the pieces in place to build sustainable funding.

Is your organization ready to succeed with grant funding? It takes strategy and focus to discover the best grant opportunities for your organization, then win them and perform to grantor expectations and requirements.

Without a solid grant management process, supported by modern technology, many nonprofits struggle to track grants and monitor budgets, meet grantor reporting requirements, and capture accounting costs for proper reimbursement.

What's involved in grant management?

First, create a team and designate roles. Second, gather and review all grant documentation, details, and requirements. Third, establish procedures and ensure you can capture grantor-required data about expenses, performance, and impact. Finally, be sure your team will be ready to provide progress reporting, and billing if appropriate, to grantors in a timely manner.

Grantor requirements

Making sure you meet (and exceed) grantor expectations can lead to a stable, renewable source of future funds.

The acceleration of grant funding has been accompanied by rising expectations from grantors. Many grants come with significant grantor restrictions—the rules and regulations governing how, when and for what purpose you can use the grant funds. Additionally, most grants have requirements for transparency, reporting, and audits.

Make sure your grant team understands and prepares for grant requirements and reporting compliance:

- Federal awards all use the government's **Uniform Guidance** for grant requirements, including cost principles and audit requirements.
- Foundations and corporations might be less stringent about requirements, but you can still expect to have rules about the types of budgetary expenditures allowed and reporting requirements.



What's needed for effective grant management?

Start with a solid strategic plan and good software automation.

An effective grant management process should be supported by modern technology with a centralized database—not across a myriad of spreadsheets. Nonprofits will need a fund accounting solution and time and attendance capabilities for capturing labor. Many also benefit from integrated project management and/or CRM solutions.

A grant management system is a program or application that assists fund-seeking organizations in administering and automating the grant process. For example, Sage Intacct Grant Tracking and Billing centralizes all grant documents and program delivery details for secure, comprehensive views of grant management. It provides the grants team, staff, and auditors with a single, shared source of truth.

Inadequate grant management can lead to:

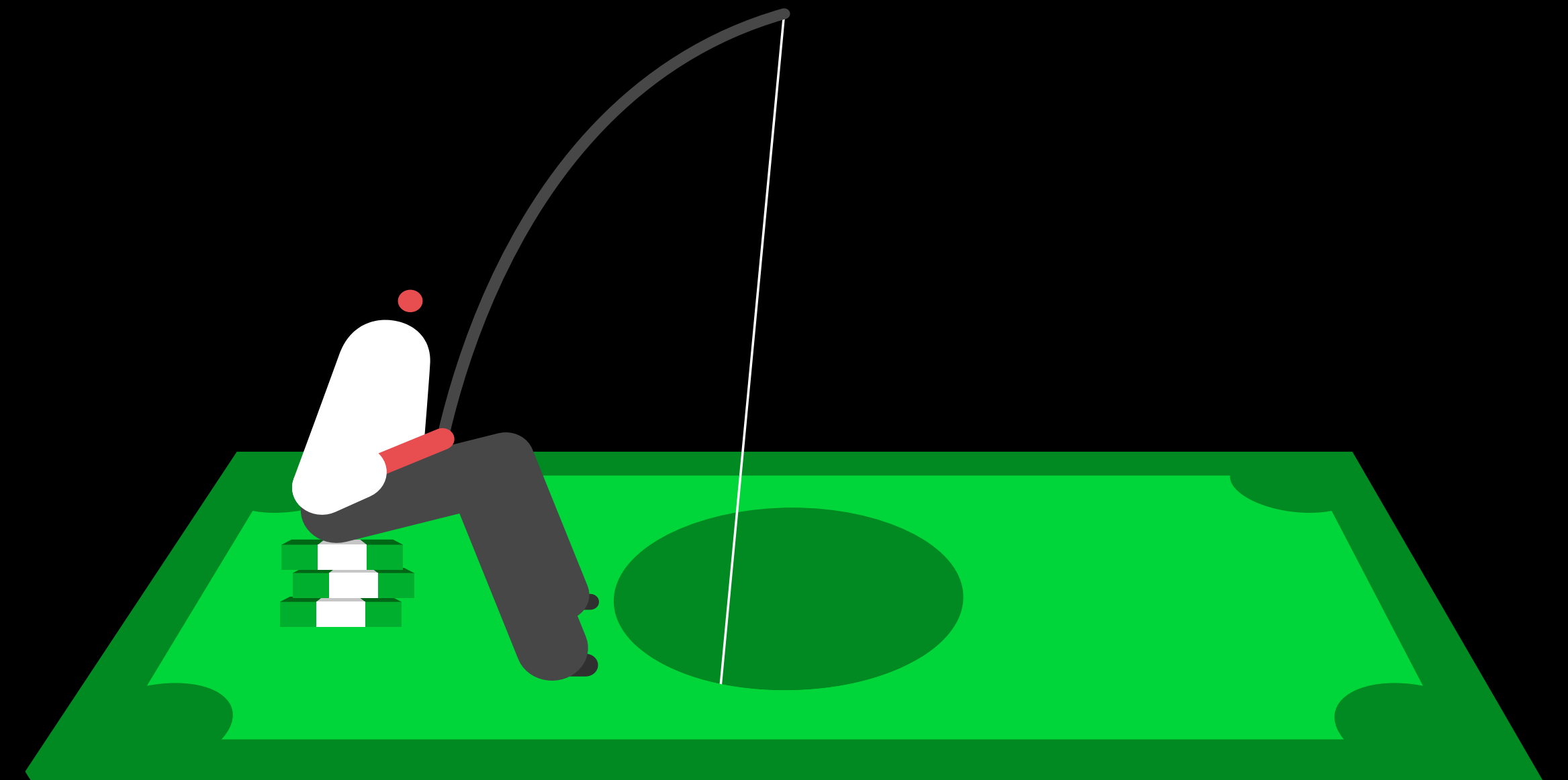
- X Lost awards**
- X Poor audit results**
- X Reputational damage**
- X Having to return funds**
- X Difficulty securing future grants**

7 proven grant management best practices

As you create a strategic plan, budget, and initiatives, make sure you adopt the following grant management best practices.

1. Designate the right team
2. Build positive relationships with donors
3. Handle restricted funds with care
4. Monitor revenue, spending, and budget
5. Capture accurate costs for reimbursement
6. Track KPIs and automate grantor reporting
7. Earn a clean audit opinion

Let's examine each of these best practices in more detail, and address how cloud nonprofit accounting software with strong grant management capabilities can enhance visibility and success.



Best practice #1

Choose and empower the right team

Grant management requires a commitment of time and energy.

It's important that you task the right people with the job. Designate passionate and experienced staff from key functional areas including fundraising, project management, leadership, and finance. Give them the right tools to manage the entire grant lifecycle, and train them to identify the grant opportunities most closely aligned with your organization's goals, structure, and staffing.

The grant lifecycle is broken into two stages, the "pre-award" and the "post-award." In many organizations, these two stages are managed by different teams. From an automation perspective, you will want to have discussions with your internal teams and come to an agreement as to where data will be housed. Will it be housed in your CRM system, your financial system, or both?



Best practice #2

Build positive relationships

Relationships with grantors are built on trust, accountability, and a shared passion for your mission.

Grants are a wonderful source of nonprofit revenue because many of them can be extended or repeated. But it takes a positive relationship with your grantor to earn a renewal.

Once you start winning grants, your organization is likely to get additional grants. Ensuring you meet the objectives and requirements of each grant will go a long way toward building each grantor relationship.

Today's modern financial solutions can help you earn trust and build relationships. With good expense tracking, grant management, and reporting capabilities, you can provide accountability and meet grantor requirements and expectations.



Best practice #3

Handle restricted funds with care

Restricted funds carry obligations or instructions pertaining to how your organization can use the funds.

If your organization is awarded a grant with restricted funds, you must be very careful about your compliance with those restrictions and your accounting of the funds. Most large grants carry restrictions, and organizations that don't or won't comply with restrictions will not be considered trustworthy—making it difficult or likely impossible to earn a grant renewal.

Many nonprofits try to track funds from each restricted grant in its own spreadsheet, but that's an invitation for errors. It's much cleaner, accurate, and transparent for your accounting system to track restrictions and automatically record when funds become available.



“One of my favorite things about Sage Intacct is how we can track and report on grants and restricted contributions very easily and instantaneously with up-to-the-minute information.”

~ Robert Ehret, VP of Finance, Boys & Girls Club of Greater Tarrant County

Stay on top of grant details and restrictions

The screenshot shows the Sage Intacct Grants management interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a star icon, a home icon, and the text 'Grants'. To the right of the navigation bar is a search bar with a magnifying glass icon and the text 'Search'. Below the navigation bar, there is a header section with the text 'Grants' and a set of buttons: 'Add', 'Delete', 'Done', 'Import', and 'Export'. Below the header section, there is a filter section with the text 'Grant Status with Restriction' and a dropdown menu. To the right of the filter section, there are several options: 'Manage views', 'Group filters Nothing selected', a checkbox for 'Include private', 'Advanced filters', and 'Clear all filters'. Below the filter section is a table with the following columns: 'Grant ID', 'Grant name', 'Grant type', 'Grant status', 'Begin date', 'End date', 'Revenue Restriction', 'Restriction Expiration Years', 'First Restriction Expiration Date', and 'Time Satisfaction Schedule'. The table contains 15 rows of grant data. Each row has an 'Edit' and 'View' link, a colored square icon, and a checkmark icon. The first row is highlighted in blue.

Grant ID	Grant name	Grant type	Grant status	Begin date	End date	Revenue Restriction	Restriction Expiration Years	First Restriction Expiration Date	Time Satisfaction Schedule
120	Grant #3	Grant	Active	07/01/2021	06/30/2022	Time	1	11/30/2021	
130	County Contract	Grant	Completed						
141	Funding Source #1	Grant	Active	07/01/2013	06/30/2016				
142	Funding Source #2	Grant	Active						
154	RLF Grant	Grant	In Progress	01/01/2020	12/31/2021				
154a	Project #1	Grant	Active	01/01/2020	12/31/2020				
154b	Project #2	Grant	Application Review	01/01/2021	12/31/2021				
250	Travis County Employment Counselling Contract	Grant	Active						
311	HUD Award	Grant	Active			Purpose			
312	Rio Grande Matching Grant	Grant	Active			Purpose			
401	2013-2015 Federal Grant	Grant	Active	01/01/2013	12/31/2015	Purpose			
401B	2015-2017 Federal Grant	Grant	Active	07/01/2015	06/30/2017	Purpose			
403	Dupont Foundation Award	Grant	Active	07/01/2016	06/30/2019	Time	2	07/01/2017	✓
404	Rural World Network	Grant	Active	10/01/2014	09/30/2016	Purpose			
405	Sutherland Award	Grant	Applied For						

Sage Intacct Grant Tracking and Billing displays all grants, along with their status and restrictions. It also automates the release of restrictions, according to the grant rules.

Best practice #4

Monitor revenue, spending, and budget

Many grants repay expenditures rather than pay up front, so it is important to keep a watchful eye on expenses, budget, and cash flow at all times.

You do not want to submit an expense for reimbursement only to find out your expense doesn't qualify per the grant terms. Similarly, not tracking your spending could result in overspending with no grant award to cover the entirety of your costs.

A modern, cloud accounting system will give you instant visibility into revenues and expenses, including those associated with grants, from any location in the world. As an example, Sage Intacct helps you know where you stand as you monitor spending and see how you're tracking with the budget. It also helps you report and compare budget to actuals on grants that have reporting periods that differ from or run across your fiscal year.



Gain visibility into funding and expenses

Sample Nonprofit Organization | Top level | Karla Grace | Help & Support

Role Based Dashboards | Project Manager View

Employee Time By Project

Grace, Karla, Federal Grant #2	Begin Date	Entry Date	Project ID	Customer Name	Task Name	Item Name	Duration	Billable	Billed
	02/15/2021	02/19/2021	401	Zev Daniels Family Foundation/HealthyTomorrow	Analysis & Assessment	Billable Time	4.00	true	true
	02/15/2021	02/20/2021	401	Zev Daniels Family Foundation/HealthyTomorrow	Analysis & Assessment	Billable Time	2.00	true	true
	02/15/2021	02/16/2021	401	Zev Daniels Family Foundation/HealthyTomorrow	Analysis & Assessment	Billable Time	(8.00)	true	false
	02/15/2021	02/16/2021	401	Zev Daniels Family Foundation/HealthyTomorrow	Analysis & Assessment	Billable Time	8.00	true	true
	02/15/2021	02/18/2021	401	Zev Daniels Family Foundation/HealthyTomorrow	Analysis & Assessment	Billable Time	8.00	true	true
	02/15/2021	02/17/2021	401	Zev Daniels Family Foundation/HealthyTomorrow	Analysis & Assessment	Billable Time	6.00	true	true
	03/01/2021	03/02/2021	401	Zev Daniels Family Foundation/HealthyTomorrow	Analysis & Assessment	Billable Time	(8.00)	true	false
	03/01/2021	03/03/2021	401	Zev Daniels Family Foundation/HealthyTomorrow	Analysis & Assessment	Billable Time	6.00	true	false

Project Time By Task

Grace, Karla, Analysis & Assessment	Begin Date	Entry Date	Employee Name	Task Name
	02/15/2021	02/19/2021	Grace, Karla	Analysis & Assessment
	02/15/2021	02/20/2021	Grace, Karla	Analysis & Assessment
	02/15/2021	02/16/2021	Grace, Karla	Analysis & Assessment
	02/15/2021	02/16/2021	Grace, Karla	Analysis & Assessment
	02/15/2021	02/18/2021	Grace, Karla	Analysis & Assessment
	02/15/2021	02/17/2021	Grace, Karla	Analysis & Assessment
	03/01/2021	03/02/2021	Grace, Karla	Analysis & Assessment

Project By Financial Summary

Project ID	Project Name	Total Deferred Revenue	Total Payments	Total Revenue	Total Cost of Goods
402	Travis County Contract	0.00	0.00	215,000.00	0.00
Sum for Travis County		0.00	0.00	215,000.00	0.00

Resource Schedule Analysis By Project

Project ID	Project Name	Task Name	Employ ID
404	Mission Trip #1 - Bible Ministry	Biometric Study	EMP-00
404	Mission Trip #1 - Bible Ministry	Nutrition Curriculum Covered	EMP-00
404	Mission Trip #1 - Bible Ministry	Nutrition Focused Menu Offered	EMP-00
Sum for 404			
Sum Total			

Grants Issued

Posted Dt.	Doc Dt.	Doc	Memo / Description	Department	Locator
2100 - Accounts Payable (Balance Forward As of 01/01/2021)					
05/04/2021	05/04/2021	GRANT ISSUED	Bill - Amanda Workman	120	201
Totals for 2100 - Accounts Payable					
5700 - Grant Issued - Professional Development-Tuition (Balance Forward As of 01/01/2016)					
05/04/2021	05/04/2021		Grant Issued: 2021/05/04 Batch Purchase	120	201
05/04/2021	05/04/2021	GRANT ISSUED	Bill - Amanda Workman	120	201
Totals for 5700 - Grant Issued - Professional Development-Tuition					
Grand Total					

Project/Grant Expense Summary

Project ID	Project Name	Total Billable Expenses	Total Non-Billable Expenses	Tot Bill Ex
401	Federal Grant #2	0.00	336.00	
401	Federal Grant #2	0.00	300.00	
401B	2015-17 Health Initiative Grant	7,089.39	193,765.16	5,
401C	#2 Health Initiative Grant	0.00	0.00	
800	Youth Center Grant-606 Requirements RR	0.00	0.00	
800	Youth Center Grant-606 Requirements RR	0.00	0.00	
Sum Total		7,089.39	194,401.16	5,

Resource Schedule Analysis By Employee

Employee ID	Employee Name	Project ID	Project Name	Task Name
EMP-0009				
EMP-0009	Grace, Karla	404	Mission Trip #1 - Bible Ministry	Biometric St
EMP-0009	Grace, Karla	404	Mission Trip #1 - Bible Ministry	Nutrition Cu
EMP-0009	Grace, Karla	404	Mission Trip #1 - Bible Ministry	Nutrition Fo
Sum for EMP-0009				
Sum Total				

Employee Time By Funder

Employee Time By Project with Cost Rate

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Sage Intacct dashboards put project funding information at your fingertips, displaying key information about individual grants funding, budgets, and real-time budget-to-actuals.

Best practice #5

Capture accurate costs for reimbursement

Nonprofits with grants need an accounting system capable of capturing both direct and indirect costs accurately and billing grantors for reimbursement. A multi-dimensional general ledger, like the one in Sage Intacct, enables you to capture and tag expenses, flag them as reimbursable, and associate accounting entries with specific grants.

When it is time, gather eligible charges for reporting and bill them back to your grantor with the click of a button. Tagging your transactions when you enter them reduces errors, so you won't miss a charge or overstate amounts. In this way, nonprofits using Sage Intacct have been able to reduce the billing cycle for grant reimbursement significantly.

Labor expenses are often billed back to the grant. Use integrated timekeeping data and easily tie employee efforts per grant to timesheets. Sage Intacct enables nonprofits to bill indirect costs based on a negotiated rate, specific rate, or markup based on type of expense.



Best practice #6

Automate grant reporting and track KPIs in real-time

Clear, timely reporting and KPIs will demonstrate your organization's mission impact and financial accountability.

With modern accounting and grant tracking software, it's easy to produce required reports as well as supplemental information for your grantors. Without good automation, this reporting can take a lot of time and result in less robust, less accurate reports.

With so much real-time data at your fingertips, it's also possible to measure and track Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These may involve both financial performance and outcomes. KPIs are a great way to keep a pulse on your organization and your mission. Use this information to elevate your story and maximize engagement with grantors, constituents, and future donors and grantors.



“Sage Intacct has really driven our ability to scale with 80% growth. There’s no way we could have done that without Sage Intacct – it would have been insurmountable to track, manage, and report on all that data and in essence, 100+ grant ‘revenue centers.’”

~ Ben Luety, CFO, Seattle Indian Health Board

Best practice #7

Ensure a clean audit opinion

Earn and keep your grantors' trust with transparent and clean audits.

Demonstrating responsible stewardship and good financial ethics supports your organization's excellent reputation. A clean audit opinion puts everyone's mind at ease—board members, foundations, government grantors, and individual donors. An audit is a requirement for many grantors.

A modern nonprofit financial management solution helps your auditor save time and access information more easily. With Sage Intacct, organizations can grant secure, read-only access to auditors, allowing auditors to further analyze transactions or find reports. The Sage Intacct Collaborate feature lets auditors ask questions easily within the system. Sage Intacct's role-based dashboard capabilities allow for the setup of specialized auditor or compliance dashboards.



“Sage Intacct is very helpful in meeting the compliance requirements of public funding grants. Our donors want to see that we receive a clean audit opinion. The internal controls in Sage Intacct are critical. The entire AP and AR cycles are now paperless with an audit trail and an automated approval process built right in.”

~ Faith Noble, CFO, Towards Employment

Conclusion

Demonstrate your return on mission

Ensuring mission impact requires securing reliable, sustainable funding—and grants can be a powerful part of that equation. They are often renewable and do not require repayment. But they do come with strings attached, in the form of grantor requirements including potential restrictions, reporting, and audits. To ensure continued success with grant funding, nonprofits need a thoughtful approach to grant management.

Sage Intacct streamlines grant, fund, project, and donor accounting while delivering real-time visibility into the metrics that matter. It automates expense tracking, grant restrictions, and compliance reporting to ensure every grantor requirement is met. It also makes it easy to track and share KPIs with grantors so they can see meaningful measurements of the mission impact of their funds. This helps nonprofits build better grantor relationships, earn renewals, and win new grants based on prior success.



About Sage Intacct

Sage Intacct is the AICPA's preferred provider of cloud financial applications.

Specializing in helping nonprofits of all types—including health and human services, NGOs, charities, trade and membership associations, cultural institutions, and faith-based organizations—Sage Intacct streamlines grant, fund, project, and donor accounting, while delivering real-time visibility into the metrics that matter.

Our modern, true cloud solution, with open APIs, gives nonprofits the connectivity, visibility, and efficiency they need to do more with less. At Sage Intacct, we help nonprofits strengthen stewardship, build influence, grow funding, and achieve mission success.

In addition to intuitive software solutions, Sage Membership provides members with access to actionable human advice from experts and peers through exclusive content and tools to help you make even better mission-critical decisions.



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Quick links to educational resources

Looking to move your nonprofit finance operations to a new cloud accounting system? Here are some additional resources to help you make the right decision.

Product overview video

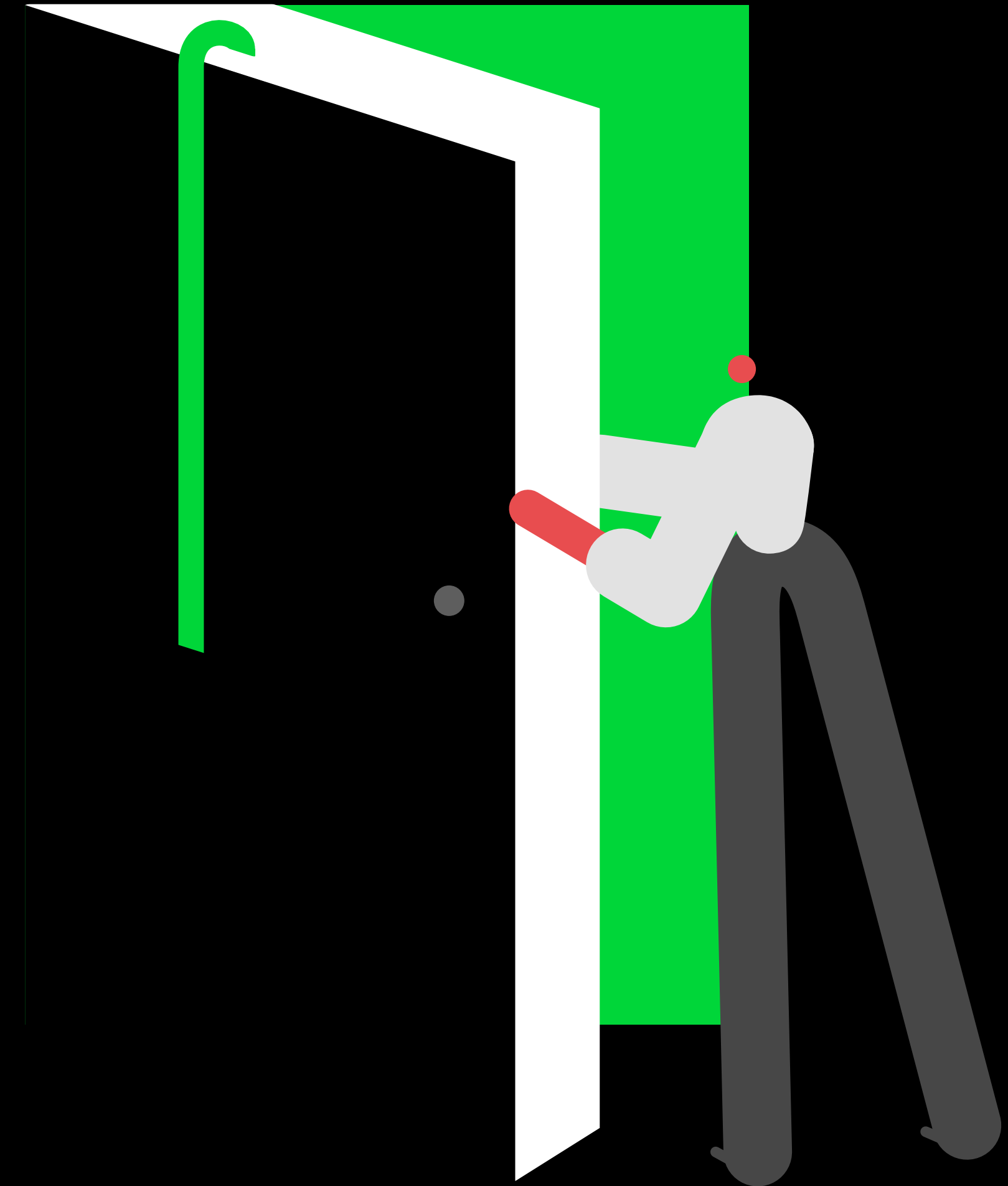
[Sage Intacct for Nonprofits](#)

Customer story video

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