

Guidance for Management Response to Evaluations

Introduction

The purpose of this guidance on management response is to strengthen the use of evaluations by Laudes Foundation and its partners, fostering enhanced ownership towards accountable learning from results. It is a formal mechanism that helps ensure that evaluations are used, contributing to organizational effectiveness, learning for adaptation(s) and improvement.

A management response facilitates strategic involvement, as appropriate of senior management and programme staff within the organisation on the evaluation findings and recommendations through a formal process that includes:

- Comprehensive consideration of the evaluation report and / or assessment;
- An understanding whether the management agrees, partially agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the evaluation report and the reasons, thereof; and
- A written formulation of time-bound action-plans, and those responsible for ensuring their implementation.

Responses often require inputs related to financial, human resource, planning, implementation, partnership, advocacy, M&E, and communications actions, and should involve the appropriate managers/staff.

The publication of the Management Response along with the evaluation report on the organisation's website is important to demonstrate commitment to using evaluations to inform strategic and programmatic decision-making.

Management response to the Partner Perception Report 2025

In January 2025, Laudes Foundation commissioned the Centre for Effective Philanthropy (CEP) to survey its partners on how Laudes Foundation is performing as a partner and funder.

This is the second time Laudes Foundation commissioned a Partner Perception Report (PPR), with the first PPR conducted in 2022. The results of the 2022 survey act as a Laudes specific baseline for comparison (note: previous PPRs under C&A Foundation are included for illustrative purposes only)

Sixty-one percent (145 out of 238) of the foundation's partners responded to the survey. The results affirm Laudes continued field leadership, particularly in support of policy and regulatory development; understanding of context in which partners work; and provision of multiyear and unrestricted grants (General Operating Support) and also non-monetary support. Still, there are changes that can be made when compared to the benchmarks – including on communication, grant processes / review through to reporting and evaluation echoing similar results in 2022, and finally in more targeted non-monetary support, particularly with regard to fundraising. However, we are clear in the responses below on where we cannot make changes, given our vision, mission and strategic focus and importantly how we execute.

This document outlines the specific actions to be taken by the foundation as a result of CEP's recommendations over the course of 2025 and into our next strategic period from 2026 to 2031.

Recommendations and Action Plan

Recommendation	Response: (Accepted, Partially Accepted, Not accepted;) ¹	Action Planned	Expected Completion Date
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¹ The options for response are: • Accepted, meaning Fully Accepted: the organisation thinks that this recommendation should be completely implemented, and the response should show how and by when that is to be done. • Partially Accepted: the organisation thinks part of the recommendation is in error or not applicable and will not be responding to it, but accepts and will take action for the other part. Note that the reason for a partial acceptance must be given. • Not Accepted: the organisation thinks the recommendation is based on inaccurate findings or does not address the findings in the appropriate way. The reason for non-acceptance must be stated.

Recommendation 1.			
To deepen impact on partners [their organisations] Laudes should provide an even greater proportion of partners, where appropriate, with more flexible grants.	Partially Accepted	<p>On annual basis we provide over 20% of funding to partners in the form of unrestricted grants (General Operating Support). As we outlined in our 2024 Annual Report, it is our intention to increase the use of unrestricted grants to support partners.</p> <p>Unrestricted grants are determined in discussion with partners and in accordance with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission alignment with Laudes • Clear leadership, systems and structures in place to manage flexible funding in an accountable manner; • Lifecycle of our grant relationship with the partner; • External contextual factors. <p>We view unrestricted grants as a critical modality for supporting partners and delivering sustained impact, but not the only relevant modality. Laudes will continue to use programmatic grants for the majority of our support to partners in-line with executing on our strategy.</p> <p>The foundation will, through its programmatic teams:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Take a tailored approach to increasing unrestricted grants. This will include encouraging programme managers to offer unrestricted grants to partners where there is strong mission alignment and where there is evidenced capacity to absorb and manage flexible funding. 	2025 – ongoing

		2) Improve and use grant portfolio data to understand and question differences in the use of unrestricted grants between industry programmes, with the intent to have more consistency in application.	
Recommendation 2.			
Laudes should consider opportunities to provide more tailored beyond-the-grant support to partners, including additional fundraising support and the high value connective and collaborative service that partners find so impactful.	Accepted	<p>We understand partner requests for more non-grant support - specifically fundraising, networking and collaboration opportunities across their areas of work. This is essential given the challenging external context and the need to collaborate effectively to create and sustain impact.</p> <p>The foundation will through its programmatic teams and particularly the Organisational Development and Inclusion team:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Launch a new Resilience Framework to guide our efforts in addressing challenges to individual, organisational and partner ecosystem resilience. This framework will include structured organisational development support for partners, including fundraising and resource diversification. The support may be provided through: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Integration into new and existing grants, as appropriate; b. Engagement with third-party and/or platforms of service providers that can address multiple partner needs 	2025 – onwards

		<p>2) Increase collaboration and networking opportunities between partners working on complementary areas of work and offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Additional funding, where appropriate, to be identified at grant design phase or during implementation; b. Use of Partner Learning Fund to enable sharing of what is working and not across partners. 	
Recommendation 3.			
<p>Laudes should reflect on the changes in perceptions of the Foundation's relationships and communication with partners. In doing so, utilize the frequent touchpoints staff have with partners to drive deeper relationships and clearer alignment and expectations with the Foundation.</p>	Accepted	<p>We will act on the feedback received from partners to further improve relationships with empathy and understanding and address promptly persistent weaknesses in communications.</p> <p>The foundation will, through its programmatic and enabling teams improve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The quality of relationships, paying close attention to maximising positive behavioural factors during grant development and implementation and mitigating the negatives. We have already started to act on the feedback through several internal processes including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Embedding the Presencing Institute's "Systems Lab Awareness" training to deepen our listening, learning and empathy in our work with partners and each other; b. Conducting programme team-level feedback sessions with CEP to address specific results and needs within programmes vis-à-vis partners. 	2025 – onwards

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The partner experience during grant development, implementation, learning, and reporting as part of the forthcoming internal "Grant Process and Review" project. We commit to updating our partners on the subsequent improvements made by mid-2026. 3. The communications with partners, particularly acknowledging that we have not yet sufficiently addressed areas for improvement flagged in the 2022 PPR. This is a clear priority for 2026 and we will take the following actions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Communicate our new strategy (2026-31) to all partners in a clear and timely manner. b. Update our website and partner portal to reflect our strategy and improvements in grant-making processes including relationship expectations and standards. 	
Recommendation 4.			
Laudes should continue to streamline and clarify application and reporting processes, with an eye towards continuing to right-size the burden of process with the size of the grant awarded.	Accepted	<p>We acknowledge that the changes we have made between 2022 and 2025 have halved the number of hours partners spend on the grant processes for Laudes – down from 139 to 77 hours. At the same time, we also see continued room to improve our end-to-end grant processes and the partner experience.</p> <p>The foundation's Programmatic and Enabling teams will therefore undertake the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertake a comprehensive "Grant Processes and Review" Project, as referenced above, to improve the partner experience from grant design and implementation 	Q3 2025 to end of Q2 2026

		<p>through to reporting and learning (including systems appropriate rubric ratings).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The project will draw on the PPR evidence from partners and other internal assessments to deliver relevant and useful changes. b. If prototyping of changes is required, we will test with select partners to ensure changes are fit-for-purpose. <p>2. Communicating to all partners of the improvements made by mid-2026, as referenced above.</p>	
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