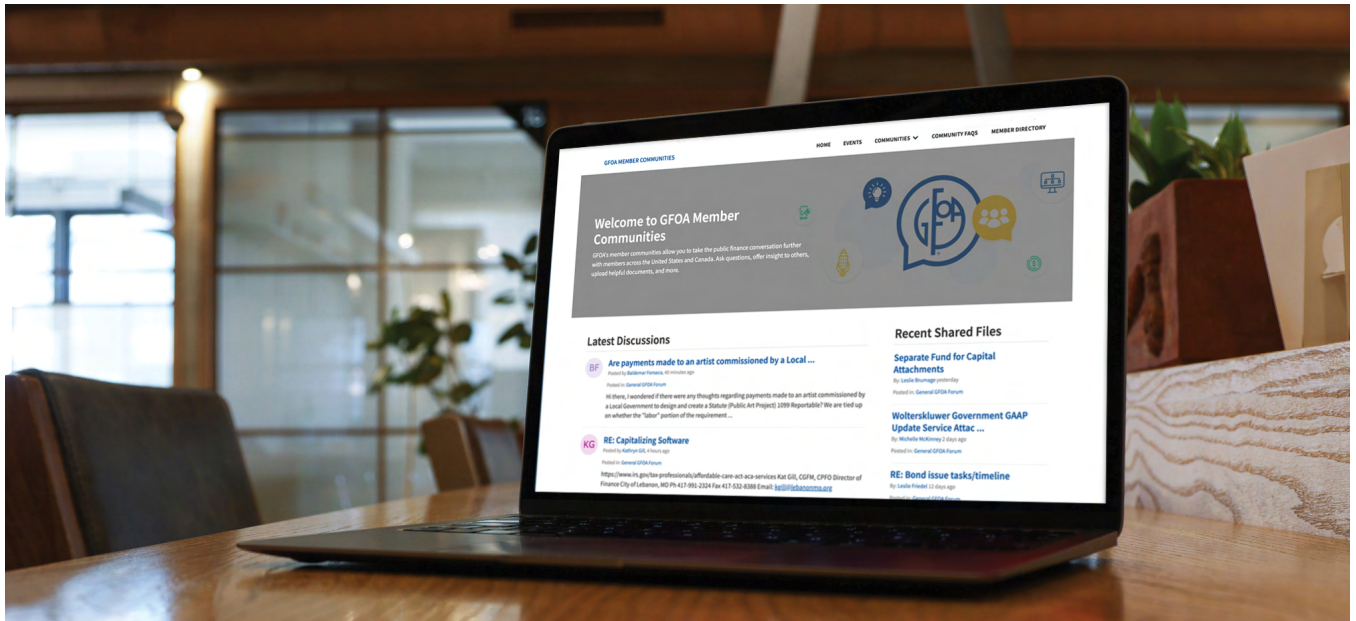


In Brief

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GFOA FORUMS

Expanding the Member Community Experience: A Hub of Collaboration and Support

BY TIMOTHY MARTIN

In 2021, GFOA's vision for creating an online member community was to provide a platform for networking opportunities among our members. Little did we anticipate the depth of collaboration and support that would emerge. While the convenience of popping into a colleague's office for help or advice is familiar, imagine having access to nearly 3,000 public finance professionals spanning the United States and Canada. This is precisely what our member communities offer, and they're growing every single day.

Kelsey Earle was seeking an ideal timeline to facilitate the budget process in the City of Auburn, Maine. She turned to the community's general forum, and within minutes members were actively engaging, sharing relevant documents, and providing the assistance she sought.

Evelyn Mullen faced a unique challenge with outstanding checks that never got cashed. Posting her query to the community resulted in immediate discussions with members across the country, offering insights on how to navigate this situation effectively.

Mark Lacofano, embarking on a five-year capital budget process for the City of Chardon, Ohio, asked about acquiring sample request forms for various departments. In just a few days, he received nearly a dozen responses from community members, showcasing the power of collaborative knowledge-sharing.

Amy Dexter, like many members, sought to enhance her understanding of subscription-based information technology arrangements. Even before GFOA staff could respond to her request, community members were sharing GFOA articles on the subject.

These anecdotes represent a fraction of the daily interactions within our member community. Over the past year alone, there have been more than 2,600 posts or comments added to the General GFOA Forum. This thriving ecosystem demonstrates the essence of our community—members helping members with the shared goal of building thriving communities. It's a testament to the strength and vitality of our online network. As we look ahead, we're excited to see this collaboration continue to grow, fostering even more connections and knowledge-sharing among our dedicated public finance professionals.

But there's even more to the community than meets the eye. Not only can you engage with the wider membership, but you can also connect in a more specific way.



Imagine having access to nearly 3,000 public finance professionals spanning the United States and Canada. This is precisely what our member communities offer, and they're growing every single day.

Explore discussions in GFOA's affinity group forums

At GFOA, our commitment to fostering professional connections and knowledge-sharing extends to our diverse affinity groups, each with its own dedicated private forum. Engage with your peers, share insights, and build a supportive community tailored to your unique interests and challenges.

Small Government Forum. Are you part of a small government? Join the Small Government Forum to connect with professionals who understand the intricacies of working in smaller municipal setups. You can discuss strategies, share success stories, and collaboratively navigate the nuances of finance in smaller jurisdictions.

Women's Public Finance Network. The Women's Public Finance Network (WPFN) boasts a vibrant community of nearly 1,500 members. In the WPFN forum, discussions span from career development to mentorship opportunities, book clubs, and more. Join a supportive space where women in public finance lift each other up and collectively contribute to professional growth.

There are also private forums for our **Black Caucus, LGBTQIA+ Caucus, Urban Forum, and Utility Finance Forum.** Once you become a member of

any GFOA affinity group, you'll be added to that group's dedicated forum. Take advantage of this dynamic platform to initiate discussions, seek advice, and contribute to the collective wisdom of your professional community.

Embark on your CPFO journey with support and guidance

Are you in the midst of your Certified Public Finance Officer (CPFO) journey and seeking a community to share experiences, ask questions, and celebrate successes? Look no further—the CPFO Candidates Forum is your dedicated space within our community, designed to provide support, encouragement, and valuable insights throughout your certification process.


Engage in dynamic conversations about exam preparation, study strategies, and program updates. Our forum is not just a platform for asking questions—it's a space where you can interact with the CPFO program administrator, Eric Roach. Get firsthand insights, guidance, and updates.

Share your successes, inspire others

We believe in celebrating achievements! Share your milestones, whether it's completing an exam or achieving CPFO certification. Your success stories inspire and motivate others on the

same journey. As Sumitra Potharazu, finance manager for the Fox River Valley Public Library District in East Dundee, Illinois, shared: "Took the last exam and passed! Thank you all for your support and help." Potharazu became CPFO certified in October, and her success story is a testament to the collaborative spirit of our forum.

GAAFR Plus community

In November 2023, GFOA launched the new GAAFR Plus subscription. A large benefit of the subscription is gaining access to the GAAFR Plus online forum. Once you subscribe, you'll be able to get peer support, recommendations, and guidance on financial reporting issues. In the forum library, you'll gain access to Blue Book supplements and other templates and guides. Staff from our Technical Services Center routinely monitors the community to answering a wide range of questions. With so much change in the world of governmental accounting, these are valuable resources for members. 

Timothy Martin is GFOA's senior manager for digital experiences.

Joining is easy. As a GFOA active government member, you already have access to many communities; simply use your GFOA username and password to log in.

 Visit community.gfoa.org

TOP 10 2023 Forum Contributors

Andrew Lent | 12,069 points*
Glenys Salas | 11,849 points
Kristina Kerper | 10,826 points
Leslie Brumage | 9,841 points
Maria Zagar | 9,675 points
Sumitra Potharazu | 9,191 points
Ashley McGowen | 9,185 points
Jill Kane | 8,951 points
Charles Shin | 8,443 points
James Harrison | 8,320 points

**Members earn points for posting discussions or questions, replying to others, uploading documents, and more.*