STRATEGIC PLAN

May 2021
May 31, 2021

Board of Directors
End of Life Choices California

Cycle Advisors was engaged by End of Life Choices California (“EOLCCA” or “Organization”) in January 2021 to collaborate with and assist the Strategic Planning Committee (“SPC”), comprised of Judy Neall Epstein, Robert Brody, June Collins and Eric Rose, in developing a strategic plan for the Organization. The process of developing the plan included meeting individually with four discrete groups of stakeholders – the Board of Directors, members of the Advisory Committee, a representative group of volunteers, and leaders from a variety of organizations in the sector (Appendix A). Additionally, we gathered information on other sector organizations from their websites as to their size, service offerings, and funding resources. A summary of these findings can be found on page 4.

The Strategic Plan began to emerge from the findings of the Organization’s strengths, challenges, and identified opportunities. Stakeholder’s identified EOLCCA’s strengths as its robust group of volunteers, comprehensive database of resources, and vetted list of trusted doctors and hospices. Its challenges are lack of funding, lack of staff, limited awareness of California’s End of Life Option Act, and provision of services across a large state.

We used two concepts, intended impact and theory of change, in developing the strategic plan. They pave the way to a clear, effective, mission-based strategy to help the current board and future staff make decisions. Intended impact are the specific outcomes that EOLCCA will hold itself to achieving. It is the WHO, WHERE, and WHAT of the Organization’s goals. Theory of change is the HOW – the approaches that EOLCCA will undertake to achieve their goals.
The following pages contain the final Strategic Plan, which includes

- Findings from stakeholder meetings
- Mission, vision and values statements
- Intended impact and theory of change
- Geographic focus of the work
- Program priorities for 2021
- Fund development priorities for 2021
- Financial resources – Scale of Giving Plan for 2021
- Financial resources – 2021 Operating Budget
- Metrics and plan implementation

The long-term goals for the Organization are to be financially sustainable, staffed with paid employees and be able to provide all Californians with the resources needed to successfully navigate their end-of-life journey.

The primary goals for the next 12 months are to recruit two to four additional board members, implement the Fund Development Plan, drive additional users to the website, and engage a paid staff member to manage the organization. The specific activities needed to achieve these goals are outlined in the Program and Fund Development Activities section of the plan.

We have enjoyed working with your Organization over the past few months. We learned much from the stakeholders working in the sector and are inspired by your work and the compassion with which you do it. Together, you have created a vision and plan to continue serving the terminally ill until all Californians have access to the services that you provide.

Sincerely,
Sandra Becker
Rita Fuerst Adams
Findings from Stakeholder Meetings

- Resources
- Education
- Support
- Navigators
- Training
- Patient Advocacy

**EOLC**
CA, WA, OR + NY

- Education
- Legal Advocacy
- Political Advocacy
- Community Outreach

**Death with Dignity**

- Resources
- Legal Advocacy
- White papers
- Lobbying
- Referrals

**Compassion & Choices**

- Resources
- Training MDs
- Conferences
- Database of MDs

**ACAMAID**

Overlap with other organizations
We provide Californians the resources needed to successfully navigate their end-of-life choices.
OUR VISION

A day when all Californians have access to their choice of a peaceful death.
OUR VALUES

Compassion  We provide compassionate, insightful and educated support to the terminally-ill and their families.

Empower  We empower patients and their families to seek the care they desire at the end of life.

Collaborative  We collaborate with the healthcare community so patients can die peacefully on their own terms.

Professional  Our staff, and medically trained and lay volunteers act with the highest degree of professionalism.

Integrity  We act with integrity, transparency and authenticity in all interactions with clients, their families, and healthcare professionals.
EOLCCA – Intended Impact and Theory of Change

**EOLCCA** provides trained Client Volunteers to serve as navigators for seriously ill Californians who are navigating end-of-life choices or those simply seeking information for future planning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO WE WORK WITH</th>
<th>OUR WORK</th>
<th>INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES</th>
<th>INTENDED IMPACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terminally ill Californians and their families who seek assistance navigating their end-of-life choices.</td>
<td><strong>Resources</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Maintain library of trusted information on legal end-of-life choices &amp; MAID*&lt;br&gt;- Train + mentor end-of-life choices Navigators&lt;br&gt;- Develop comprehensive database for referrals</td>
<td><strong>Education</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Increase awareness of end-of-life choices in California among seriously ill people and healthcare community</em>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Resources</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Increase number of trained end-of-life choices navigators</em></td>
<td>All Californians have access to the resources and personal support they desire to navigate their chosen legal end-of-life path and in the future, those resources and support systems are provided within the healthcare system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on those who do not have adequate information about end-of-life choices or access to services through their healthcare providers.</td>
<td><strong>Personal Support</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Provide end-of-life choices navigation to seriously ill people and their families&lt;br&gt;- Provide bedside support on day of death, if requested&lt;br&gt;- Provide end-of-life choices + MAID information to the healthcare community</td>
<td><strong>Engagement</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Expand the community of Californians supporting peaceful end-of-life choices</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Medical Aid in Dying*
Where we work

Bay Area
• San Francisco
• Contra Costa
• Alameda
• Napa
• Sonoma
• Marin
• San Mateo
• Santa Clara

Sacramento County

Inland Empire
• Riverside County
• San Bernadino County

Los Angeles County

Orange County

San Diego County

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Program Activities

- Personal Support
- Resources
- Professional Continuing Education
- Community Education + Engagement
## Community Education + Engagement

### WHO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Audience</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospice Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD’s staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disease organizations staff and volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seriously ill people + their families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith based organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attorneys/Legal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### HOW

- Identify audiences
- Develop online webinars
- Provide in-person training
- Provide in-person presentations
- Curriculum development
- Develop printed materials
- Acquire technology
- Identify and train presenters
- Establish process for online scheduling

### HUMAN RESOURCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill set</th>
<th>EOLCCA Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website developer</td>
<td>Contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webinar producer</td>
<td>Contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presenters</td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin.tech support</td>
<td>Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach/marketing</td>
<td>CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writer</td>
<td>CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Designer</td>
<td>Contract/Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educator</td>
<td>CEO/Contract</td>
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# Program Activities

## Professional Continuing Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>HOW</th>
<th>HUMAN RESOURCES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Target Audience</td>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Skill set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>Identify audiences</td>
<td>Website developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Workers</td>
<td>Develop training programs</td>
<td>Webinar producer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Obtain certification of program</td>
<td>Presenters</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop webinar for online delivery</td>
<td>Admin.tech support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop training materials</td>
<td>Outreach/marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify and train trainers</td>
<td>Writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acquire technology</td>
<td>Graphic Designer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop fee structure for</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>training/certification</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establish a process for scheduling,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>billing, payment</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<td></td>
<td>Identify and train trainers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Acquire technology</td>
<td>Graphic Designer</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Develop fee structure for</td>
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<td></td>
<td>training/certification</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Establish a process for scheduling,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>billing, payment</td>
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</table>

**Cycle Advisors**
## Program Activities

### Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>HOW</th>
<th>HUMAN RESOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Audience</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skill set</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Maintain library of trusted information on legal end-of-life choices and MAID</td>
<td>Website developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seriously ill people</td>
<td>Provide easy access to library of information on website</td>
<td>Admin/tech support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families of seriously ill people</td>
<td>Develop and maintain comprehensive database of referrals</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare community</td>
<td>Include links to other sources of information on the website</td>
<td>Writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospice workers</td>
<td>Request other orgs to include links to EOLCCA on their websites</td>
<td>Graphic Designer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Leverage social media to drive people to website</td>
<td>Marketing/social media</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*EOLCCA: End of Life Community Care Association*
# Program Activities

## Personal Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>HOW</th>
<th>HUMAN RESOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Audience</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skill set</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seriously ill Californians</td>
<td>Provide information and navigation via telephone</td>
<td>EOLCCA navigation training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families of seriously ill people</td>
<td>Provide guidance on completing required forms and navigating the legal process</td>
<td>Trained in iCArol software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Provide referrals to MDs who provide MAID</td>
<td>Knowledge of spectrum of end-of-life options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide referrals to hospices that provide MAID</td>
<td>Knowledge of how to navigate legal end-of-life process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide bedside support to client on day of death</td>
<td>Advanced training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recruit additional volunteers</td>
<td>Program manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide volunteer training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fund Development Activities

- Proposal Writing
- Website + Social Media
- Direct Mail
- Personal Solicitation
- Events
- Acknowledgement + Recognition
- Planned Giving
## Proposal Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>HUMAN RESOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Audience</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skill set</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Foundations</td>
<td>Research prospects</td>
<td>Writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Foundations</td>
<td>Develop list of prospects to cultivate and solicit</td>
<td>Admin.tech support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Establish schedule to cultivate and solicit</td>
<td>CEO/Contractor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving Circles</td>
<td>Write and present proposals</td>
<td>Contractor Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other organizations:</td>
<td>Prepare contributor reports</td>
<td>Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic, Faith Based</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Fund Development Activities

## Website + Social Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>HUMAN RESOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Audience</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skill set</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals + families</td>
<td>Establish theme for the year and themes for campaigns</td>
<td>Website developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees of businesses</td>
<td>Integrate fund development message</td>
<td>Website maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate social responsibility programs</td>
<td>Set schedule to coincide with specific occasions, e.g. Health Care Planning Month</td>
<td>Writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundations</td>
<td>Create presence on and regularly update Facebook, Guidestar, LinkedIn,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**WHO**
- Individuals + families
- Employees of businesses
- Corporate social responsibility programs
- Foundations

**WHAT**
- Establish theme for the year and themes for campaigns
- Integrate fund development message
- Set schedule to coincide with specific occasions, e.g. Health Care Planning Month
- Create presence on and regularly update Facebook, Guidestar, LinkedIn,

**HUMAN RESOURCES**
- Website developer
- Website maintenance
- Writer

**EOLCCA Role**
- Contractor
- Staff
- CEO
## Fund Development Activities

### Direct Mail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>HUMAN RESOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Audience</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skill Set</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>Develop list</td>
<td>Admin.tech support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families</td>
<td>Prior donors</td>
<td>Writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businesses</td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>Graphic Designer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporations</td>
<td>Client families</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establish theme and message</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Integrate schedule to coincide with</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>social media themes, events</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# Fund Development Activities

## Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>HUMAN RESOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Audience</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skill Set</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals + families</td>
<td>Plan event timetable</td>
<td>Admin/tech support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsors:</td>
<td>Establish committee for event</td>
<td>Community engagement,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>Create theme for the event</td>
<td>including: Volunteers,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businesses</td>
<td>Implement technology for online events</td>
<td>Board and Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Personal Solicitation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>HUMAN RESOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Audience</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skill Set</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individuals + families</strong></td>
<td>Identify prospects</td>
<td>Admin/tech support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recruit volunteers (BOD, Advisory Board, Volunteers, Staff)</td>
<td>Writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop script for soliciting</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Train volunteers in solicitation techniques</td>
<td>Networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>In person</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phone</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Businesses</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skills</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Networking</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foundations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Admin/tech support</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Writer</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Researcher</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Networking</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EOLCCA Role</strong></td>
<td><strong>Staff</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CEO</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Staff/Contractor</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Board, Advisory Board</strong></td>
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</table>
## Fund Development Activities

### Planned Giving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>HUMAN RESOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Audience</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skill Set</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individuals + families</td>
<td>Develop a planned giving program&lt;br&gt;Identify prospects&lt;br&gt;Update copy on EOLCCA website&lt;br&gt;Create legacy society&lt;br&gt;Establish Planned Giving Committee to promote legacy society</td>
<td>Writer&lt;br&gt;Organizer&lt;br&gt;Attorney&lt;br&gt;Graphic Designer&lt;br&gt;Admin/tech support&lt;br&gt;Researcher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Acknowledgments + Recognition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>HUMAN RESOURCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Audience</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Skill Set</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All contributors: Individuals + Families &lt;br&gt; Businesses &lt;br&gt; Foundations &lt;br&gt; Other Organizations</td>
<td>Send formal acknowledgment within 48 hours of receipt of gift &lt;br&gt; Send additional thank you letter from the Board Chair within 1 month of receipt of gifts of $250 or more &lt;br&gt; Post a list of the names of every contributor on the website &lt;br&gt; Call every contributor of $250 or more annually &lt;br&gt; Host zoom events for contributors to network with other contributors</td>
<td>Writer &lt;br&gt; Organizer &lt;br&gt; Admin/tech support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Send additional thank you letter within 1 month of receipt of gifts of $250 or more.
## Scale of Giving Plan - 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recognition Levels</th>
<th>2021 Goals Contributors</th>
<th>Cumulative Total</th>
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</table>
## 2021 Operating Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Mgmt &amp; General</th>
<th>Fundraising</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td>$142,500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee costs</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting fees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>$800</td>
<td></td>
<td>$800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund development</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting fees</td>
<td>$80,800</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$55,800</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other operating expenses</td>
<td>$14,500</td>
<td>$3,300</td>
<td>$8,200</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>$95,300</td>
<td>$3,300</td>
<td>$64,000</td>
<td>$28,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Operating Income</strong></td>
<td>$47,200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Other Income</strong></td>
<td>$0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Income</strong></td>
<td>$47,200</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund balance - beginning of year</td>
<td>$47,145</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund balance - end of year</td>
<td>$94,345</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In preparation for the launch of the strategic plan, the Strategic Planning Committee ("SPC") will implement the year-one implementation framework with metrics including goal, start and end dates, and impact of the activities. This, along with quarterly budget to actual analysis, will align resources with organizational strategies to achieve the strategic plan.

**Metrics Development**

Metrics inform how progress is measured toward End of Life Choices California’s desired impact. Metrics for each impact and strategy area:

- include a direct linkage to impact
- influence change and inform continuous improvement
- create a culture of accountability
- create common purpose
- can be regularly measured to track progress
## Metrics and Plan Implementation

### Sample Template - Community Education + Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify audiences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop online webinars</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide In-person training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide In-person presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop printed materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and train presenters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish process for online scheduling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---
Financial Analysis

Shifts in financial resources are necessary to accomplish each of the impacts identified. Financial analysis will model the growth necessary to achieve the Scale of Giving Plan for 2021. The analysis will inform the pace at which EOLCCA will make progress and ensure the best stewardship of resources. The implementation framework, metrics and financial analysis will be presented quarterly to the Board of Directors.
Appendix A - Interviews

End of Life Choices California

Board of Directors (* member of Strategic Planning Committee)

Robert Brody, MD *
Lynne Calkins, BA, CRNP
June Collins *
Claudia Comins
Judy Neall Epstein, ND *
Fran Mooreland Johns
Stephen Poses, MD
Eric Rose, MBA *

Advisory Committee to the Board

Taimie Bryant, JD
Victor Epstein, CPA
David Leven, JD
Robb Miller
Sue Dessayer Porter, MBA MSB
Peter Reagan, MD
Jill Schock

Volunteers

Cynthia Tuttelman
Judith Bishop, CNM
Judy Schnack
Laura DeMerchant
Patricia Knight
Stefanie Elkins

Other Organizations

Matt Whitaker - Compassion & Choices
Peg Sanden, ED – Death with Dignity
Faye Girsh – World Federation of Right to Die, Hemlock of San Diego
Lonny Shavelson, MD – ACAMAID
Jeff Levine, MD – Southern California End of Life Options Consultation
Susan Gardner, MD – Southern California End of Live Options Consultation
Appendix B

I. Board Resources
   A. Board member job description
   B. Board of Directors Agreement
   C. Conflict of Interest Policy
   D. Volunteer nondisclosure Agreement

II. Nonprofit resources
   A. BoardSource – https://boardsource.org
   B. Bridgespan – www.bridgespan.org/
   C. CalNonprofits – https://calnonprofits.org
   D. Center for Volunteer & Nonprofit Leadership – https://cvnl.org
   E. Center for Nonprofit Management – https://www.cnmsocal.org
   F. Candid – https://candid.org
   G. Charity Navigator – https://www.charitynavigator.org

III. Fund Development
   A. Fund Development Committee
   B. Gift Solicitation – talking points
   C. Nonprofit Crowdfunding Kit

IV. Articles
   A. Elevating the Role of Faith-Inspired Impact in the Social Sector
Board Member

JOB DESCRIPTION

EXPECTATIONS OF THE BOARD AS A WHOLE

The mission of ABC Organization is [mission].

As the highest leadership body of the organization and to satisfy its fiduciary duties, the board is responsible for

- determining the mission and purposes of the organization
- selecting and evaluating the performance of the CEO/executive director
- strategic and organizational planning
- ensuring strong fiduciary oversight and financial management
- fundraising and resource development
- approving and monitoring ABC Organization’s programs and services
- enhancing ABC Organization’s public image
- assessing its own performance as the governing body of ABC Organization

EXPECTATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

Each individual board member is expected to

- know the organization’s mission, policies, programs, and needs
- faithfully read and understand the organization’s financial statements
- serve as active advocates and ambassadors for the organization and fully engage in identifying and securing the financial resources and partnerships necessary for ABC Organization to advance its mission
- leverage connections, networks, and resources to develop collective action to fully achieve ABC’s mission
- give a meaningful personal financial donation
- help identify personal connections that can benefit the organization’s fundraising and reputational standing, and can influence public policy
- prepare for, attend, and conscientiously participate in board meetings
- participate fully in one or more committees

BOARD MEMBERS ARE ALSO EXPECTED TO

- follow the organization’s bylaws, policies, and board resolutions
- sign an annual conflict-of-interest disclosure and update it during the year if necessary, as well as disclose potential conflicts before meetings and actual conflicts during meetings
- maintain confidentiality about all internal matters of ABC Organization
Board of Directors Agreement

As a Director of the ORGANIZATION, I concur with the following as the aspirations of members of the Board of Directors:

- I recognize my duty of care for the health and wellbeing of the ORGANIZATION. As a member of the Board, I am committed to its mission, vision, and purpose. These are:
  - Mission:
  - Vision:
  - Values:

- I understand my fiduciary duties of care and loyalty to the corporation. Consistent with those duties I understand the need for me to be familiar with and supervise the finances and activities of the ORGANIZATION and to promote its mission, vision, and purpose.

- It is my duty to know what our budget is; and be active in planning that budget and the fundraising to meet that budget.

- I will give what is for me a significant contribution. I may give this as a one-time contribution each year, or I may pledge to give a certain amount several times during the year.

- I will actively engage in fundraising for the ORGANIZATION, in whatever ways are best suited for me. These may include individual solicitation, participating in special events, writing mail appeals and the like. There is no set amount of money that I must raise because I am making a good faith agreement to do my best and bring in as much money as I can.

- I will participate in at least 3 of the 4 Board meetings every year, including the annual meeting that I will attend in-person. In addition, I will be available for phone consultation between meetings. I understand that commitment to this Board will involve a good deal of time and will probably not involve less than XXX hours per month. The ORGANIZATION will make efforts to schedule these meetings to accommodate the most attendees.

- I will actively participate on a Board Committee.

- I understand that no quotas have been set, that no rigid standards of measurement and achievement have been formed. Every Director is making a statement of faith about every other Director. We trust each other to carry out the above agreements to the best of our ability, each in our own way, with knowledge, approval, and support of all.
In its turn, ORGANIZATION is responsible to me in several ways:

- I will be sent, without request, quarterly financial reports that allow me to meet the prudent person section of the law.
- I can call on the CEO to discuss program and policy, goals, and objectives.
- Directors and staff will respond in a straightforward and thorough fashion to any questions I have that I feel are necessary to carry out my fiscal, legal, or moral responsibilities to the ORGANIZATION.
- The ORGANIZATION will provide and pay for Directors insurance.

The foregoing shall not be interpreted or enforced to create any personal liability on my part to the ORGANIZATION. It is a statement of aspirations and not a legally binding agreement that may be enforced against me by the corporation or any third party. My responsibilities and liabilities to the ORGANIZATION shall be governed exclusively by applicable statutes and the provisions of the ORGANIZATION’s articles of organization and bylaws.

_______________________________________  Date: _____________

[Signature]

_______________________________________

[Printed Name]
Conflict of Interest Policy

To be distributed before the appointed term of each Director.

The Board of Directors affirms that its Directors, Officers, Executive Director, and other employees of ORGANIZATION have an obligation to carry out the duties of their respective positions for the benefit of the ORGANIZATION. They should avoid placing themselves in a position in which their personal/professional interests are, or may be, in conflict with the interests of ORGANIZATION.

Where a potential conflict of interest exists, it shall be the responsibility of the person involved, or any other person with knowledge, to notify the Board of Directors of the circumstance resulting in the potential conflict so that the Board of Directors can provide such guidance and take such action as it shall deem appropriate.

_____________________________   _________________
Signature: (Director)      Date:

_____________________________
Printed Name: (Director)
Volunteer Nondisclosure Agreement

In consideration of being engaged as a volunteer by NAME, the undersigned volunteer hereby agrees and acknowledges:

1. That during the course of my volunteer engagement there may be disclosed to me certain confidential information and trade secrets of NAME; said information and trade secrets consisting of, without limitation:

   (a.) Technical information: Methods, processes, systems, computer programs, research projects and related materials.

   (b.) Business information: Membership lists, funding sources, sources of supply, financial data and marketing, or merchandising systems of plans.

   (c.) Membership information: Contact information and biographical data.

2. I agree that I shall not during my volunteer engagement with NAME, or at any time after the termination of my volunteer engagement with NAME, use for myself or others, or disclose or divulge to others, including future employees or consultants, any trade secrets, confidential information, or any other proprietary data of NAME in violation of this agreement.

3. That upon the termination of my volunteer engagement with NAME:

   (a.) I shall return to NAME all documents and property of NAME, including, without limitation, any reports, manuals, correspondence, membership lists, computer programs, computer files, library materials, and all other materials and all copies thereof relating in any way to NAME’s business, or in any way obtained by me during the course of my volunteer engagement. I further agree that I shall not retain copies (in any format, including but not limited to any digital or written format), notes or abstracts of the foregoing.

   (b.) NAME may notify any future or prospective employer or third party of the existence of this agreement, and shall be entitled to full injunctive relief for any breach of this agreement by you.

   (c.) This agreement shall be binding upon me and my personal representatives and successors in interest, and shall insure to the benefit of NAME, its successor and assigns.

Signed this ____ day of ________, in the year ________.

____________________
VOLUNTEER NAME
Volunteer
Fund Development Committee

End of Life Choices California’s Fund Development Committee is responsible for driving the End of Life Choices California’s fund development to meet its annual operating and program budget; creating a culture of philanthropy; and developing multiple forms of funding.

Duties and Responsibilities

Name
Fund Development Committee

Number of Members
4 - Volunteers and Directors; Chair to be appointed by the committee

Purpose
Drive the End of Life Choices California’s fund development plan.

Duties and Responsibilities
Identify, cultivate, and solicit leadership contributions.
Identify, cultivate, and work to develop other forms of funding.
Attend meetings with potential contributors and potential partners for new funding sources.
Make annual contributions.

Skills Required
Knowledge about and/or access to current and prospective contributors.
Knowledge about and/or access to potential partners for new funding sources.
Record of philanthropic giving.
Knowledge of the business and philanthropic community.
Entrepreneurial spirit.

Time Required
6 hours per month.

Reports to
End of Life Choices California Board of Directors

Benefits to End of Life Choices California
Successfully raise End of Life Choices California’s operating budget.
Gift Solicitation Talking Points

Your personal connection

You may know some of the people you are contacting for End of Life Choices California. Start with this or at least your personal connection to End of Life Choices California and why you are involved.

Points to make

End of Life Choices provides trained Client Volunteers to serve as navigators for seriously ill Californians who are navigating end-of-life choices or those simply seeking information for future planning.

End of Life Choices has the vital role of being the statewide clearinghouse on information about California’s End of Life Option Act – Medical Aid in Dying - and all legal end-of-life options for terminally-ill Californians.

End of Life Choices California -
- Is the resource for factual, unbiased end-of-life information
- Offers non-judgmental support to help navigate this difficult time and help locate physicians willing to prescribe Medical Aid in Dying and/or supportive hospices.
- Aids in developing clear advance directives to guide their end of life care wishes to ensure a dignified death experience both for themselves and for the family and loved ones they will leave behind.
- Helps them discuss end-of-life options with their physicians.
- Guides them in having frank, honest conversations with their families and loved ones about their end-of-life wishes.

Summary to use

It is our wish that everyone has easy access to the information and support they need to make the choice for the death that feels right to them. It is our goal to provide information and personal support to people from all walks of life, free-of-charge.

Ask for their gift

If you believe they are ready to become more involved by giving, ask them to consider a gift.

As you and your family plan your giving, please consider including End of Life Choices California as one of your primary charitable organizations for a heartfelt gift.

Your gift makes it possible for us to attract the most compassionate and knowledgeable volunteers and to provide them the training and consistent mentoring they need to spend time with each person who calls, free of charge.
Your Nonprofit Crowdfunding Kit
Templates, Tips, Tools, and More
Hi There.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, donors have flocked to social media to provide snapshots of their daily lives and engage with the friends, family, and nonprofit organizations they love while adhering to social distancing guidelines.

As giving (along with everything else) goes increasingly digital, more and more organizations are tapping into the community-based appeal of nonprofit crowdfunding. In addition to its social aspects, nonprofit crowdfunding bears a wonderfully inclusive quality. At a time when many donors are financially unable to give but still want to help out, crowdfunding enables them to support you without spending a cent. And just because someone with a tight budget isn’t donating, their fundraiser for your organization could raise quite a bit!

From reaching out to donors and board members to inviting local schools to join in, crowdfunding can bring your community together to champion your cause even when its members are physically apart. We hope this guide can equip and encourage your team to take on this buzzy fundraising strategy, as raising awareness for all the good you and your team do is more important than ever.

Wishing you and your organization our very best,

The DonorPerfect Team
What is Nonprofit Crowdfunding?

Nonprofit crowdfunding is an online fundraising strategy that invites donors to become D.I.Y. fundraisers. To launch a crowdfunding campaign, organizations create a main fundraiser page and ask donors to create their own individual fundraiser pages branching off from that campaign. Donors then share their fundraising pages via email and on social media with their friends, family, colleagues, and connections to raise money for the organization.

It’s no surprise that crowdfunding is quickly catching on, as data shows an incredible return on investment for an effort that’s largely light-handed from the perspective of nonprofit staff. That’s because, with crowdfunding, you empower supporters to raise money for you. And that they do!

According to DonorPerfect’s crowdfunding data:

- **$800** Average amount raised by a single supporter’s page
- **$132** Average donation to a crowdfunding campaign
- **50%** of people asked to donate to a campaign via email give

The Benefits of Nonprofit Crowdfunding

Get more of the good stuff - effortlessly.
Time and staffing resources are the most precious commodities in the nonprofit world, and crowdfunding can help your team gain more of both.

By choosing to crowdfund, you’re essentially adding person power to fuel your fundraising campaign’s success without having to spend a dime. Not to mention, having those hands on deck for your fundraising campaign means that your team can stay focused on the other crucial tasks that never seem to stop piling up.

Raise more money through maximum exposure.
A nonprofit organization can never have too many supporters, which is why crowdfunding is growing increasingly popular as a fundraising strategy.

Crowdfunding not only engages your current donor base, but it also enables your organization to be introduced to new audiences as donors create their own fundraisers for your cause and share it on their social media networks. Suddenly, the participation of a single donor can connect your organization with hundreds of their friends, family members, colleagues, and followers.

Enable donors to feel (even more) connected to your cause.
When you empower donors to create their own fundraisers through your organization’s crowdfunding page, they take their fundraiser personally because it’s just that – theirs. By sharing and promoting their fundraiser page, your donor takes pride in their ability to rally people they know around a cause that means a lot to them.

Inspire the next generation of fundraisers.
From Baby Boomers who love sharing grandbaby photos on Facebook to Gen Z youths who broadcast the highlights of their day via Instagram stories, your donors live on social media. And as the amount of money raised by nonprofits using Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter steadily rises year over year, it’s in your organization’s best interest to ensure they’re able to give to you on social media.
How Does Nonprofit Crowdfunding Work?

Here’s how easy it is to equip your supporters to raise money for your organization with DonorPerfect Crowdfunding for nonprofits.

1. First, create your organization’s crowdfunding page.
2. Add a story, photos, and your fundraising goal.
3. Next, send a link to your organization’s crowdfunding page to your supporters and invite them to create their own fundraisers right from that page.
4. Your supporters will share their fundraising pages with their network. (Note: With DonorPerfect Crowdfunding, your organization can maintain control over all individual fundraising pages associated with your organization. That way, you can ensure all messaging authored by donors is in line with your unique standards.
5. All donations and donor information collected by your organization’s page and individual fundraising pages automatically flow right into your DonorPerfect CRM for heartfelt thank you emails and resolicitation down the line. No data entry needed!

6 Events That Call for Crowdfunding Pages

Not sure if you “need” to try crowdfunding? Here are just some of many use cases in which the power to transform donors into D.I.Y. fundraisers can really come in handy.

Short-Term Fundraisers
Ever launch a fundraising campaign that suddenly starts to putter when the goal line is almost in sight? Promoting your organization’s crowdfunding page as part of a multichannel campaign can provide your organization with the much-needed boost that will bring you closer to your fundraising goal.

Social and Political Campaigns
In recent years, the polarized political climate in the United States has given way to social-media fueled fundraising campaigns sparked by stories in the news. If your organization’s mission addresses some of today’s hot-button issues, crowdfunding should be an essential component of your fundraising strategy. By providing donors with the tools they need to help you fund the progress they want to see, you enable them to find a meaningful purpose in moments when they feel powerless.
Lofty Capital Campaigns
When it comes to funding a big venture, the ability to rally donors beyond your immediate network is crucial to your campaign success. You can set up your organization’s crowdfunding page in a way that’s dedicated to your capital campaign and suggest goal amounts for your donors’ individual fundraiser pages. If each individual fundraiser brings in $1,000 and 100 people participate, there’s $100,000 raised with minimal effort on your part!

Birthday Fundraisers
Many of your donors would love nothing more than to celebrate their birthday on social media by asking friends and family to donate to your organization. Create an organizational crowdfunding page on your website called “Donate Your Birthday” and invite your donors to set up their own fundraising pages to start their new year off by giving back.

Giving Tuesday
The social media bent that sets Giving Tuesday apart makes it the perfect day to leverage this community-driven fundraising strategy. Many organizations have seen great success by attaching their Giving Tuesday goal to a campaign that anyone can champion.

Walks, Runs, and Races
Crowdfunding makes it easy for your supporters to get to the starting line by raising money solo or in teams. Set up an organizational crowdfunding page dedicated to your event so participants can easily raise the amount they need to join in by soliciting donations from people in their network.

Best Practices for a Hit Crowdfunding Campaign

Show and tell a story that resonates.
When you set up your organization’s crowdfunding page, differentiate your ask by telling a compelling story that will pull at your donors’ heartstrings so they’ll want to create a fundraiser for you. Beyond that, you’ll want to ensure that they have enough details along with an image or two to effectively share your story (or their take on) with their networks.

Set clear goals and deadlines.
When your supporters know what you’re shooting for, they’ll be more engaged in the campaign. By adding a progress bar to your organization’s fundraiser page, individual fundraisers will not only be able to keep tabs on their own progress, but they’ll also know how the campaign is faring overall.

In the same way displaying your goal sets expectations, adding a deadline to your overall campaign is a good idea because it creates a sense of urgency. For example, if you invite your supporters to participate in your crowdfunding campaign by saying, “Our goal is to raise $5,000 in 10 days and the countdown starts tomorrow!”, you’ll likely garner more engagement.

Actively invite your community to participate.
It doesn’t matter how inspiring your story is or how beautifully you build out your organization’s crowdfunding page. If no one knows you’re launching a crowdfunding campaign, these valuable assets may as well not exist. The success of your campaign almost solely relies on your ability to effectively invite your supporters to join in and create their own crowdfunding pages.

To help you carve out segments and communications, we’re offering you a crowdfunding communications template pack that you can personalize with your organizational and campaign details on page 6.
Give supporters a hand in creating their campaigns. The more you help your supporters in promoting their fundraisers, the more successful they’ll be. After all, your team knows the best ways to tug at the heartstrings of your community, so you should be the ones giving them a hand.

In addition to providing them with a link to your organization’s crowdfunding page, you’ll want to include:

- Templates for social media posts promoting their fundraising page
- Templates for an email that invites friends and family members to give
- Images they can use to accompany their email and social media posts

Good news! We’ve handled these templates for you at the end of this guide.

Send them a reminder when the fundraiser begins. Your supporters have busy lives, so it’s quite possible they could forget to share their fundraising page at the time when you need their help most. Be sure to nudge them via email two days before your fundraiser and the day it starts, so they’ll remember to fill in their quick-and-easy communication templates and share in minutes.

Thank your fundraisers in a special way. When acknowledging those who took time out of their week to ensure the success of your fundraiser, who shared about your organization with their hundreds of followers, and who believes in what you do so much that they want to personally help you grow your reach, a generic “thank you” just won’t do. Don’t just thank them for their gift or their “support”. Acknowledge the impact of their active participation in serving as a member of your team. To help you hit the right note, we’ve included a thank-you letter with the templates.

Welcome new donors to your community. With each individual crowdfunding campaign your donors launch, you’re gaining brand new donors who are giving to your organization for the first time. To ensure they give again, thank them for their gift, invite them to be a part of your community, and keep them posted on how their donation is making a difference with a new donor welcome email series.

Your Complete Crowdfunding Campaign Template Pack

Save time and hassle setting up your crowdfunding campaign with these communication templates that include:

- Crowdfunding invitations
- For donors
- For board members
- For local schools
- Crowdfunding templates for donors to use
- Email to family and friends
- Social media posts
- Thank you email to donors who made pages

ACCESS YOUR TEMPLATES
New to DonorPerfect?

Most DonorPerfect subscriptions include everything you need to launch a successful crowdfunding campaign and engage your donors:

- Comprehensive Donor CRM
- DonorPerfect Crowdfunding
- Constant Contact Email Marketing
- Personalized Donation Receipts
- Intuitive Reporting and Program Metrics

Rated #1 for ease of use and overall value, DonorPerfect equips nonprofit organizations to create and manage campaigns that raise money and boost retention. Get a closer look in a quick group demo or give us a call to learn more at 800.220.8111.

GET A DEMO

Part of the DonorPerfect Community?

Why wait? You can start building a dazzling crowdfunding campaign right now! Best of all, you’re not alone. We’re with you every step of the way.

Visit the Knowledgebase to:

- Learn how to create a crowdfunding form
- Style your crowdfunding form with your logo, images, stories, and more
- Setting up email receipts for your crowdfunding campaign
- Sharing your crowdfunding campaign with your supporters

Gain the tools, templates, and strategies you need to launch, manage, and grow through crowdfunding, the digital fundraising strategy that rallies your passionate supporters to raise money and awareness for you.

GET STARTED
Elevating the Role of Faith-Inspired Impact in the Social Sector

By Jeri Eckhart Queenan, Peter Grunert, and Devin Murphy
When one of Washington, DC’s largest human services providers—Catholic Charities DC (CCDC)—fell on hard times, its board recruited an experienced leadership team to help keep its doors open to the community’s most vulnerable.

Monsignor John Enzler joined CCDC in 2011 as CEO amid a perfect storm of shrinking government funding and a philanthropic community that was still reeling from the impact of the Great Recession. “It was a tough time. Needs were rising. Resources were falling. There was a lot of dysfunction. The budget relied on public funds. [My] friends thought I was crazy and told me not to take the job,” he admits. But Enzler felt called to the work. “For Catholic Charities, the question is never ‘what’s your background?’ It’s only ‘how can we help?’ I want to be a change agent for people whose lives are a daily struggle for food, shelter, and clothing.”

Unlike many human services organizations, CCDC had philanthropic benefactors who were willing to place a significant bet on the organization. Enzler says the turnaround began with two gifts totaling $6 million, which gave CCDC the flexibility to hire a seasoned chief operating officer and a chief financial officer who brought a lot of efficiencies to CCDC’s services in education, employment, and housing. With the help of COO Patrick Dunne, a retired rear admiral of the US Navy, and CFO Mary Jane Morrow, a former partner at accounting firm Grant Thornton, Enzler and the team mapped out a plan to evaluate and cut programs that were not sustained through funding, and reinvest precious unrestricted dollars in programs that were core to CCDC’s mission and impact.

The timely intervention of philanthropy buttressed a critical bedrock of care for individuals in our nation’s capital. The result: CCDC is financially strong—nearing completion of a $100 million capital campaign—and provided food, shelter, and educational services to over 140,000 individuals in the metropolitan DC area, in the year ending June 30, 2019.¹ When need grew highest during the COVID-19 pandemic, CCDC was able to mobilize its community of donors to raise $2.4 million in donations for personal protective equipment and provide 1.1 million meals.²

In our research, we found that faith-inspired organizations account for 40 percent of social safety³ net spending across a sample of six cities, which vary in size and demographics.

There are numerous faith actors doing critical things that—but for them—would not be accomplished. We need to demystify faith-based organizations and close the funding gap, because they can be innovative, high performing, and have a tremendous impact.”

AMY GOLDMAN, CEO, GHR FOUNDATION

³ The “social safety net” is the public and private support that helps people confront the numerous challenges of experiencing poverty. For many, it is often synonymous with human services, and in the social sector, it represents multiple billions of dollars in services aimed at helping people achieve and maintain well-being—across their lifespan, from cradle to grave. See Susan Nall Bales et al., “Talking Human Services: A FrameWorks MessageMemo,” FrameWorks Institute, January 8, 2015.
Yet, while some individual philanthropists and community foundations have recognized faith-inspired organizations as platforms for impact, that perspective has not translated into funding from the largest institutional philanthropies—particularly those seeking to address the effects of poverty and injustice.

“It seems the social sector has an ‘allergy’ to faith-based organizations,” says Amy Goldman, CEO of the GHR Foundation. “There are numerous faith actors doing critical things that—but for them—would not be accomplished. We need to demystify faith-based organizations and close the funding gap, because they can be innovative, high performing, and have a tremendous impact.”

As mission-driven leaders and researchers, we seek to contribute to a robust dialogue about the role of faith-inspired organizations in driving social change. This article reflects independent analysis of data, interviews with field experts, and perceptions of the social sector honed over the 20 years of The Bridgespan Group’s work in the sector. We are grateful for the work of others. For example, Philanthropy Roundtable, Lake Institute on Faith & Giving at Indiana University’s Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, and the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University have pioneered perspectives and thinking on how to speak to the magnitude of faith-inspired impact in the social sector. Additionally, the religious focus of initiatives by the Aspen Institute, Auburn Seminary, Fetzer Institute, Interfaith Youth Core, Repairers of the Breach, and Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship underscores that there remain many open questions about the boundaries and assumptions that have been brought to the topic. Not least of those questions is: what opportunities are missed by neglecting such a sizeable share of the ecosystem of support for individuals, families, and communities?

### Diverse Traditions United by a Common Focus

As varied as faith traditions are, many share a common concern with fighting poverty. In Islam there is a moral imperative to support those in need. Zakat, one of the five pillars of Islam, requires Muslims to give alms or charity to the poor.4 In Judaism, numerous mitzvot or commandments relate to tzedakah, the Hebrew word for charity5 that also connotes a sentiment of justice or righteousness.6 The concern for caring for those in need is a core tenet of Christian faith, with churches from the earliest centuries providing social services and helping to serve the needs of those experiencing poverty.7 Likewise, Hindus believe that dharma, one’s religious duty, necessitates dāna—generosity or giving.8 Dāna is a virtue embraced with Buddhism and other faith traditions, as well.9 And a hallmark of the Sikh faith is langar, the provision and sharing of a free meal to promote selfless service.10

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5 Ibid.
Across each of these traditions, faith has inspired the founding of both houses of worship where people can gather as well as aligned nonprofit organizations that seek to translate many of the religious doctrines of charity and caring for those most in need into professionalized services offered to communities across the country. Like other parts of the social sector, this subsector of nonprofits has evolved to represent varying degrees of faith intensity and differing levels of ties to the faith institutions that originally gave rise to their founding.

Given this broad spectrum of religiosity, we chose to describe these nonprofits with the umbrella term “faith-inspired,” rather than the more commonly used “faith-based,” because we think it more accurately respects the diversity of organizations where faith has played and continues to play a role.

Unpacking the Separation of Faith and Funders

Before we get ahead of ourselves, we need to acknowledge that we hold two truths in tension about the role of faith in society.

Discomfort with faith-inspired nonprofits is often grounded in both searing personal experiences and a complicated historical relationship between faith traditions and many areas of social justice. Throughout history and into the present moment, major faith traditions have been the source of harm, trauma, and hardship. The involvement of faith leaders and institutional protectors in sexual abuse scandals along with systematic discrimination and targeted violence against Indigenous, Jewish, and Muslim peoples come to mind. The stances taken by various faith traditions on gender roles and marriage equality run counter to the values of some funders and their advisors. Others are informed by their religious beliefs in how they deliver services, for example, by excluding LGBTQ couples from adoption and foster care services, an issue being adjudicated right now in the nation’s highest court. And some faith traditions and the work of some faith-inspired organizations have taken positions on reproductive health and rights protections that are not supported by the majority of Americans. These issues leave many funders wary.

At the same time, faith-inspired impact has been at the core of social movements that have transformed the United States—ranging from Quakerism among white abolitionists to...
to the Christian temperance movement in women’s suffrage to the interfaith organizing (principally led by Black preachers, Catholic priests, Jewish rabbis) that formed the core of civil rights era organizing. In many ways, organizers from Faith in Action (formerly PICO National Network) and the Poor People’s Campaign are continuing the long legacy of faith-based organizing for civil rights that extends back to the Congress of Racial Equality, NAACP, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

This complex history—with its various tensions of conservativism, charitable humanitarianism, and progressive social justice liberation—can make it hard for funders to discern which faith communities are aligned with their values, let alone with their impact objectives.

Additionally, over the past two decades, the largest institutional funders have increasingly adopted the frame of “strategic philanthropy” as their guide for investing. That has led to a dichotomy among funders, perhaps an unfair one, between strategic investments that are designed to “solve” society’s most pressing challenges and more place-focused and people-centered forms of charity that are designed to “serve” the ongoing needs of communities. Many faith-inspired organizations fall in the latter camp.

To be sure, some faith-inspired organizations retain language, context, and values that speak to their ability to serve those continued needs while also adopting the very types of strategic approaches that have come in vogue for strategic philanthropy. Yet even for them, the presence of those tensions and the inability to translate effectively between faith-inspired leaders and institutional philanthropy leaders creates conditions for misperception.

“Faith-based movements play a singular role in the founding history and evolving context of the United States,” says Dan Cardinali, president and CEO of the nonprofit membership organization, Independent Sector. “To unlock their immense potential, philanthropy has to bring the right competencies and a nuanced understanding of their values and perspectives.”

Our review of the role of faith in communities—especially low-income communities of color—pushes us to reconsider faith-inspired nonprofits in light of the continued role faith plays in the lives of so many people. Despite recent declines in religious affiliation, nearly three out of every four Americans remain religiously affiliated.

Given this nuanced reality, we believe that the pendulum may have swung too far in the direction of strategic and institutional philanthropy’s avoidance—at the cost of evaluating the merits—of faith-inspired organizations that are working toward shared aims. To be clear, we are not suggesting that funders should reallocate their grant dollars away from current recipients toward faith-inspired organizations. Rather, in this article, we seek to address some common myths and misperceptions that unduly reinforce the skepticism, and provide some guidance for philanthropists seeking to understand how to assess and align on common values and commitments to social justice, particularly as they focus on sorely needed new investments in safety net services.

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Dispelling Myths That Leave Impact on the Table

“I have persistently observed [among my peers] the discomfort when it comes to faith-inspired organizations. It’s a disservice to the impact we all seek.”

NOORAIN KHAN, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, FORD FOUNDATION AND MEMBER, MUSLIM PHILANTHROPIC COUNCIL, INDIANA UNIVERSITY LILLY FAMILY SCHOOL OF PHILANTHROPY

In 2019, Philanthropy magazine, a publication of Philanthropy Roundtable, devoted an entire issue to “Faith and Giving”—documenting the ways faith, including faith-inspired organizations and religious givers, contributes to social healing. Its research found that faith-inspired organizations are at the forefront of both care and recovery for those experiencing homelessness. Fifty-eight percent of the emergency shelter beds in 11 surveyed cities are maintained by religious providers, who also deliver many of the addiction, health care, education, and job services needed to help those experiencing homelessness regain their independence. In the US, local congregations provide 120,000 programs that assist the unemployed and 26,000 programs to help people living with HIV/AIDS—the equivalent of one faith-affiliated program for every 46 people infected with the virus.14

The data highlighted by Philanthropy magazine illustrate that the connection between faith-inspired activities and impact is both deep and profound. We set out to compile data and speak to more leaders in the field in order to further this exploration. And what we found were three myths about faith-inspired organizations—and several opportunities for philanthropy to more fully engage with faith-inspired impact in the social sector. What follows is our attempt to elevate stories of exemplary faith-inspired organizations that are pushing the boundaries of innovation, community engagement, and impact.

Myth # 1—Secularism is the dominant frame for America

A lot of media attention is given to the increasing disaffiliation with faith traditions in the United States. Indeed, the number of Americans who do not identify with any organized religion rose from 17 percent in 2009 to 26 percent in just 10 years.15 However, nearly half of this disaffiliation is driven by individuals who no longer identify with a particular religious tradition, rather than actively identify with agnosticism or atheism. The overwhelming majority of Americans still affiliate with a religious tradition.16 And the role of faith is often more important in communities that have been marginalized by, and left without access to, public institutions such as hospitals and health centers.

Pew research finds 75 percent of Black adults rank religion as “very important” in one’s life compared to 49 percent of white adults. Moreover, 83 percent of Black adults attend religious services weekly, monthly, or at least a few times a year, compared to 66 percent of white adults.17 Additionally, 82 percent of adults making less than $30,000 said that religion

was “very important” or “somewhat important” in one’s life compared to 69 percent of adults making over $100,000; comparing adults with a high school education or less and adults with advanced degrees reveals a nearly identical gap.18 Thus, secularism as a trend seems to have taken more of a hold in whiter, wealthier, and more educated segments of American society. But the focus on disaffiliation overlooks the broad swath of communities for whom faith remains a central and animating force of community connection. Faith institutions can be critical vectors of support in these communities.

“Secularism is the dominant narrative in the US, but often less so in vulnerable communities, in my experience. It’s a disservice to not even acknowledge it,” says Kashif Shaikh, co-founder and executive director of the Pillars Fund, a grantmaking organization that invests in American Muslim organizations.

### Faith Is Differentially Important in the Lives of Americans

Percentage of adults who say religion is...

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Not too important</th>
<th>Not at all important</th>
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<tr>
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<td>5%</td>
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Houses of worship can play an outsized role in providing basic services in Black neighborhoods because philanthropy works in nontraditional ways in Black communities, ranging from tithing to giving circles. “The majority of [Black people’s] philanthropic dollars goes to the church,” says Christal Jackson, founder of Head and Heart Philanthropy, a Black venture philanthropy organization. The many fixtures of the “Black church”—which includes Black protestant denominations such as the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, AME Zion, the National Baptist Convention, Church of God in Christ, and the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church—provide critical social services in Black neighborhoods, ranging from meal programs, child care, housing for the elderly, AIDS ministries, job training for those formerly incarcerated, and other anti-poverty efforts. These services are woven tightly into the social fabric of many communities.

Similar to the influence of the Black church, the Catholic Church plays an important role supporting Latinx communities, especially newcomers to the United States. More than 30 million Latinx individuals in the United States identify as Catholic, including 13.5 million immigrants. Collectively, Catholic identity accounts for 48 percent of the US Latinx population.

Because new immigrants often have low trust in public systems of support, they tend to avoid accessing resources even when needed. Against this backdrop, Catholic parishes have served as a safe haven for recent immigrants, and particularly Latinx immigrants. Along the US-Mexico border, for example, they help with refugee services and resettlement, and have taken the lead in reuniting undocumented immigrant children separated from their families. In addition to finding community and fellowship, parishes have also acted as the connector to critical safety net supports and services provided by trusted nonprofits in the region. Other faith traditions have provided similar supports to new immigrants.

Moreover, consider the role of faith communities in rural America. Rural counties have 80 percent more congregations per capita than other counties in the United States. A field report conducted by Bridgespan and the National 4-H Council documented that congregations and religious institutions in rural communities often directly deliver critical support to those experiencing poverty in the absence of direct service secular nonprofits. As one philanthropic leader noted during that research: “A lot of what we think of as the social sector in small towns happens through churches.”

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20 “God in America Article: The Black Church,” PBS American Experience.
26 Mark McKeag et al., “Social Mobility in Rural America: Insights from Communities Whose Young People Are Climbing the Income Ladder,” The Bridgespan Group, November 14, 2018.
27 Ibid.
While the religious disaffiliation trend is rightfully giving pause to faith leaders seeing specific pockets of decline, many faith-inspired organizations are not standing on the sidelines. Rather, they are taking action to address the trend and re-engage different demographics in social-change efforts. Philanthropists would do well to take note, as David P. King, director of the Lake Institute points out: “Many major foundations moved away from directly funding religion but now have rediscovered that if you want to work on equity, with grassroots organizations in the urban core of major cities, you need to work with congregations and faith organizations.”

Myth #2—Faith-inspired organizations are a small portion of the social sector

In the absence of a comprehensive analysis, we found several sources that suggest faith-inspired organizations comprise a third or more of all nonprofits. For example, giving to religiously affiliated organizations (which includes donations to congregations) represents nearly one-third of all giving in the United States. Roughly a third of the 50 largest nonprofits in the country have a faith orientation. And 40 percent of international nongovernmental organizations are faith-inspired.

We sought to add to that mosaic of data with a rigorous analysis of the social safety net, one of the social sector’s largest segments. We analyzed Candid’s GuideStar data on nonprofits and conducted expert interviews to identify the secular and faith-inspired nonprofits that provide critical basic-needs services in six US cities. We found that faith-inspired nonprofits account for 36 percent of “safety net spending” in Washington, DC, and 46 percent in Detroit. In Amarillo, Texas, it is 71 percent. Across our six-city sample, the weighted average was 40 percent—representing two out of every five dollars spent on safety net services.

And those numbers are just from the nonprofits we were able to observe. Many congregations—whose information is not available through comparable datasets—also provide direct support via mutual aid, volunteering, and contributions that are not captured in IRS reporting. For example, the infrastructure of gurdwaras, places of worship in the Sikh tradition, has proven helpful to fill food insecurity needs that resulted from the COVID-19 crisis in communities across the United States. As a result, the proportion of vital safety net services that could be described as faith-inspired impact is likely larger.

Taken together, the data demonstrate that faith-inspired organizations are a significant-enough proportion to merit attention from funders.

32 Krishna, “How to Feed Crowds.”
While many safety net organizations receive government reimbursements and benefit from individual giving, philanthropic giving still matters. And the largest philanthropies have, in aggregate, paid less attention to the faith-inspired safety net. Our research found that faith-inspired nonprofits represent only 12 percent of safety net funding for the 15 largest private foundations in the United States, despite the fact that these organizations provide 40 percent of human services spending in our six-city sample.

Indeed, faith-inspired organizations represent only 2 percent of all grant dollars provided by those top-15 institutional philanthropies. And in our database of “big bet” philanthropic gifts over $25 million directed at social change, only 2 percent of the dollar value of gifts went to faith-inspired organizations. The stark divides raise questions about the lack of attention from institutional philanthropy, advisors, and intermediaries in the social sector.

This data confirms what some leaders have long observed: faith-inspired nonprofits serve alongside, but separately from, secular human service organizations. “There are two rivers running in parallel,” agrees Rosanne Haggerty, president and CEO of the secular

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33 The Bridgespan Group identified all US donors’ publicly announced 2015–2018 gifts for social change of $25 million and higher that it could find, using a range of sources and outreach. It included gifts pledged in these years, rather than fulfillments of prior commitments. In ascertaining which commitments go to “social change,” Bridgespan aimed for inclusivity and opted for a broad definition of social change, including all gifts to human services, the environment, and international development, save for a small minority that, upon individual review, clearly fell outside the social-change realm. Although institutional gifts can incorporate social-change concerns, Bridgespan does not include gifts to arts institutions, higher education institutions, medical institutions, or private K-12 schools, unless donors stipulate the gift for antipoverty initiatives or underfunded diseases that disproportionately affect low-income people. Bridgespan includes gifts to religious organizations only when the goal is human services or international development.
nonprofit Community Solutions, which works to end homelessness. “And the separation is not to the benefit of progress.”

Haggerty points out that many faith-inspired organizations have just as much impact as secular ones, and that funders may have a blind spot if they don’t see those nonprofits as part of the same social sector ecosystem. “The philanthropic community needs their eyes opened. Faith-based organizations have to be seen to be incorporated.”

To be sure, not all faith-inspired organizations meet the highest standards of impact, scale, and sustainability. But some do—and funders would benefit from understanding and evaluating the various models of social change that faith-inspired organizations represent.

**Myth #3—Faith-inspired organizations are stodgy and lack innovation**

“There’s a perception that faith-inspired organizations do only direct service work, which is seen as charity—not strategic, innovative, or forward looking,” says Neill Coleman, chief philanthropy officer of Trinity Church Wall Street, which awards more than $25 million a year in grants to strategic initiatives on homelessness and criminal justice with a racial equity lens, as well as to leadership development and capacity-building for churches. “The point needs to be made that there are innovative and high performing faith-inspired organizations.”

**Jewish Vocational Service** (JVS) Boston, for example, is one of the largest and oldest providers of adult education and workforce development services in the Greater Boston area. In 2016, JVS embarked on a $15 million social impact bond project called Massachusetts Pathways to Economic Advancement (MA Pathways). MA Pathways raised investments from impact investors and philanthropies to tackle workforce development for limited English speakers, with the state repaying investors only if JVS successfully achieved agreed-upon outcomes for participants. In partnership with Social Finance and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, MA Pathways was just the third “pay for success” project in the state. The project enabled JVS to scale its proven workforce development model to help 2,000 immigrants throughout Greater Boston improve their English and find higher wage jobs.34

In addition to its role in nonprofit capital market innovation, JVS has not been afraid to reinvent its services. Given social distancing requirements brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, many of JVS’s traditional approaches to workforce development have been hampered or halted—at a time when its clients need those services more than ever. To address this unforeseen challenge, JVS partnered with MassHire Downtown Boston to develop a national online portal connecting job seekers and employers, offering coaching and virtual job fairs, and helping unemployed individuals access unemployment insurance. Beyond ensuring that JVS can continue to serve its existing clients during the pandemic, this tech-enabled innovation has helped JVS dramatically increase its reach.

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34 “Fact Sheet,” Massachusetts Pathways to Economic Advancement Pay for Success Project.
There are many other examples of faith-inspired organizations doing pioneering innovation. Take FaithAction International House, for example, an innovative interfaith organization based in Greensboro, North Carolina. Because few states provide driver’s licenses or state IDs to immigrants with limited or no status, millions are without access to crucial services for their well-being and safety. In response, FaithAction developed a community-based ID card program that has also become a tool to foster trust among diverse newcomer communities and local law enforcement. What makes the approach unusual is that, in the process of acquiring an ID, participants must engage in an open dialogue with local law enforcement with whom these immigrants might not otherwise willingly interact. The mood of the sessions is friendly and has proven to build trusting relationships with local police officers. The IDs have to be renewed each year, requiring ongoing dialogues.

Bringing people together from different worlds speaks to FaithAction’s interfaith heritage and drives its theory of change. “We talk about FaithAction in a way to reach as many different audiences as possible,” says Rev. David Fraccaro, FaithAction’s executive director. “I worked hard to learn how to speak the different languages of faith, denominations, and no-faith-at-all so as not to exclude anyone.”

In six years, FaithAction’s ID program has grown to over 20 communities throughout North Carolina and to six other states from Florida to Oregon. Law enforcement in every community credit the program with increasing the willingness of new immigrants to report when they are the victim of crimes as well as cooperate in police investigations. Local health centers and schools have also found the FaithAction IDs helpful to increase their services’ reach into these communities.35

As the A. James & Alice B. Clark Foundation’s president and CEO, Joe Del Guercio, explains: “We fund in the Greater Washington, DC, area. From a diligence perspective, the faith-inspired organizations in our portfolio are sharp, disciplined, and analytical. They are also the place where there is trust among a number of underrepresented groups, and there is a faith component to that. Several have attracted people of strong faith with successful careers. ... Overall, there is a significant return on investment.”

**Tactical Steps To Close the Gap**

As we collectively look out on the crises of a global pandemic, our country’s racial reckoning, and increasing threats to democratic norms, it is all the more imperative that we look for ways to deeply engage with the systems and institutions that motivate, convene, and establish a sense of community across the lives of millions in this country and billions of people abroad. One way is to build bridges across secular-anchored funding and faith-inspired impact. Here are a few thoughts on potential opportunities for impact.

View faith-inspired organizations as brokers of trust

“People respond to those to whom they pay their tithes and offerings in ways they would not respond to those to whom they pay their taxes,” says Mike Leavitt, a former governor of Utah, who turned to congregations when he needed to mobilize services. “I remember moments as governor, trying to deal with child welfare issues and foster families. I could stand up and tell compelling stories, but it was difficult to get people to come forward to help. I went to the Catholic bishops and Episcopal bishops and those from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and when they stood at their pulpits and said ‘we have a need,’ the people just came pouring in.”

Similarly, faith institutions hold high levels of trust in Black and Latinx communities. “As a means for intersecting with communities that are rooted in race and ethnicity,” says David Dodson—who is active in the interfaith community in North Carolina and recently retired as president of MDC, a catalyst for social change in the South—“faith-inspired organizations that are governed, run, and accountable to the people they serve can be excellent partners for funders who wish to build authentic connections and partnerships with underrepresented communities.”

It’s an opportunity that exists across the country. For example, New York State partnered with local congregations in communities of color to turn their churches into COVID-19 testing sites to rapidly increase access to testing. Northwell Health, a nonprofit health care network, worked with the state to open 24 testing sites located in communities of color in and around New York City. The partnership between Northwell, local churches, and the state government came about in direct response to the disproportionate COVID-19 infection and death rates among Black and Latinx New Yorkers. At the time the partnership was announced, 20 of the 21 zip codes with the most COVID-19 hospitalizations in the state had greater-than-average Black and/or Latinx populations. New York government officials said that houses of worship were ideal new testing sites because they “have the credibility, authenticity, and the capacity to reach those in the community,” as Congressman Hakeem Jeffries explained at a launch event. With trust built in Black communities, the partnership is now turning to the task of raising awareness of vaccination options and when people will have access to them.

36 David Dodson is also a member of the Bridgespan Knowledge Advisory Board.
Funders might similarly look for nonprofits that are capable of working with congregations because of the reach they hold in communities. Family Promise, a secular nonprofit, works with 6,000 congregations and organizations across all denominations to provide shelter, food, and support services to families experiencing homelessness. At the heart of Family Promise’s approach is the use of existing community resources, including local religious communities and their 200,000 volunteers, to help families reach sustainable independence. The approach has gotten results: 88 percent of people served in the Family Promise shelter program secure permanent housing within nine weeks.

“[Many in the nonprofit sector] are very productivity- and outcomes-focused. Faith helps people be resilient, to hang onto hope, and to make meaning of suffering,” says Casper ter Kuile, author and founder of Sacred Design Lab, a spiritual research and design consultancy. “It is impossible to measure those things but that doesn’t make them less important. There is beauty in belonging; it inspires people to do the hard things.”

Extend trust with meaningful dialogue on values

Because they are viewed in light of a higher calling, faith-inspired organizations are highly trusted among their congregants—and that trust can also spill over into local communities. One example is the Inner-City Muslim Action Network (IMAN), founded more than 20 years ago by Rami Nashashibi on Chicago’s South Side. IMAN bridges cultural divides by bringing health and wellness to underserved neighborhoods. For example, IMAN launched the Corner Store Campaign as an effort to improve relationships between Arab storeowners and Black and Latinx neighborhood residents. To build trust, the campaign had to show that the storeowners were invested in the community. On the South Side, many corner stores are the primary sources of food in communities where supermarkets are unwilling to set up shop, leaving residents in “food deserts” that lack access to fresh fruit, vegetables, and meat.

To address this gap, IMAN’s Corner Store Campaign provided avenues to connect store owners to local farmers’ markets and offered microloans and grants to encourage stores to stock fresh foods. Today, tensions among residents and storeowners have significantly decreased, and IMAN now holds month-long community events during Ramadan to foster connection and share in the celebration of breaking the fast. The program has been so successful that Nashashibi was awarded the MacArthur Genius Grant in 2017 for “building

39 “What We Do,” Family Promise.
40 “Our Impact,” Family Promise.
41 “Rami Nashashibi, Community Leader, Class of 2017,” MacArthur Fellows Program.
bridges across racial, religious, and socioeconomic divides to confront the challenges of poverty and disinvestment.”

Talking about IMAN’s purpose, Nashashibi has said, “[This is] what you do as a Muslim: you commit your life to being a force for good, particularly in neighborhoods and communities that have struggled because of historical injustices, because of profound disparities.”

Successfully engaging with these organizations hinges on trusting the roles they play in their communities and embarking on a frank, mutual dialogue with faith-based actors about the funder’s motivations. The need to align on values goes both ways, with both funder and organization open about what drives them and where they won’t go. Some leaders we spoke with cautioned anyone hoping to partner with congregational communities to center the communities, not themselves.

**Complement the role faith-inspired organizations play by collaborating on solutions for the communities they serve**

“Churches are really key anchors in underserved communities,” says Kathryn Pitkin Derose, senior researcher at RAND Corporation, a policy think tank. “They excel at responding to critical needs, and they know those needs in their communities very intimately. When you start to combine efforts with churches, you can really have an important impact on the community as a whole.”

It’s that intimate knowledge of local needs that gives faith-inspired organizations a unique vantage point from which to see distinct challenges. In South Los Angeles, for example, RAND partnered with churches to address HIV. RAND didn’t bring a cookie-cutter solution drawn from academia. Rather, it worked with faith leaders from Black and Latinx churches on strategies that they together thought would make a difference. In this case, the social stigma associated with HIV was holding community members back from getting tested. So the team came up with a strategy that included sample sermons, peer leader trainings, and other approaches to lessen the stigma in those communities. The result: testing rates rose to significantly higher levels in South LA compared to similar communities.

With the help of a federal grant, RAND then engaged church leaders on the next health challenge the community resoundingly pointed to: the obesity epidemic. RAND got back to work with faith leaders.

The collaboration makes a lot of sense. “It’s really about social justice,” says Derose, who is also an ordained deacon. “That’s what propelled me into research addressing health disparities and into a religious service founded on justice. That’s where they overlap.”

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42 “Rami Nashashibi, Community Leader, Class of 2017,” MacArthur Fellows Program.
45 Ibid.
Conclusion

We are standing on the shoulders of many who have long been investing in these questions and have helped us with this work—Philanthropy Roundtable, Lake Institute, and Berkley Center. This initial research on faith-inspired nonprofits and the safety net is our attempt to bring insight and rigorous data to a field where such data is not easily accessible.

We see many avenues for future exploration, as we see the profound intersection between faith-inspired impact and Bridgespan’s work in racial justice, scaling impact, vulnerable populations, peer-driven change, and community-based philanthropy. In addition, there are many other sectors not covered here—global development, peace and conflict resolution, climate change, disaster relief—in which faith-inspired organizations have an outsized or growing impact.

New initiatives by the Aspen Institute, Fetzer Institute, and Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship underscore there is much more that might warrant future study. Here, we are not ending our discussion on faith-inspired impact, but humbly beginning to contribute to the collective work of others.

Jeri Eckhart Queenan and Devin Murphy are partners in The Bridgespan Group’s New York office, where Peter Grunert is manager. The authors also thank Bridgespan former Consultant Liz Calder, Editorial Director Cora Daniels, Associate Consultant Erica Lezama, Case Team Leader Asimina Pantazelos, Manager David Washer, and Senior Editorial Director Larry Yu for their essential collaboration on this article.
Research Methodology

Our team considered a variety of data, including geographical location, population, racial demographics, and religious affiliation (as measured by Gallup polling on religious identity and participation) in order to select a set of dissimilar cities. The analysis focused on Amarillo, Dallas, Detroit, Montgomery, San Francisco, and Washington, DC.

In our review of organizations across the faith-inspired spectrum within those cities, we observed nonprofits as varied in size, mission, programs and services, sources of funding, and geographic scope as their secular counterparts. They span all issue areas, from human trafficking to climate change, and all program models, including direct service, social enterprise, and advocacy. They are single organizations and massive networks that collectively represent billions of dollars in charitable giving, government contracting, and fee-for-service activities in support of community health and well-being.

We decided to focus on those that provide safety net services. To define the social safety net, the team interviewed experts in social welfare and mapped Candid’s GuideStar NTEE tax codes to the following categories: child welfare, legal services, health care (including mental and behavioral health), housing, food and income security, and employment services.

Two independent reviewers then pulled data from GuideStar using the following steps for each city:
- Identify all 501(c)(3) charities and remove defunct organizations or those recently acquired.
- Filter out organizations with expenses less than $5 million in urban areas and $1 million in rural areas.
- Filter out NTEE codes for issue areas that did not fit the six social safety net categories outlined above. This process filtered out congregations.
- Review the remaining organizations and exclude those that did not appear to focus the majority of their services on direct social safety net provision for the local community (e.g., foundations, hospital systems, senior care housing facilities, and nationally-/internationally-focused organizations).
- Identify organizations that were faith-inspired as defined by 1) expressing faith in their mission, 2) were founded by a faith leader, or 3) were founded by a religious community.

The independent reviewers then reconciled their lists and spot-checked select cities and organizations with experts across Bridgespan.
In order to be conservative and avoid overcounting, our analysis did not count as faith-inspired Goodwill or the YMCA, two of the largest nonprofits in the United States, because these networks now include many local chapters that do not operate as faith-inspired entities, even if some in the network still do. The Salvation Army, because of its legal status as a church, was also excluded.

Because our data analysis intentionally focused on 501(c)(3) nonprofits and did not include congregations, it does not count social services that faith communities themselves deliver. Additionally, while this particular research focused on the United States, we know that faith-inspired organizations also have a significant presence globally, accounting for a third to half of all global development revenues. Sizing the magnitude of services provided by congregations as well as exploring the implications of faith-inspired impact on global development are areas for future inquiry.

46 Rachel McCleary and Robert Barro, “Private Voluntary Organizations Engaged in International Assistance, 1939-2004.”
Executive Directors Guide

The Guide for Successful Nonprofit Management

Written by:
Deborah Linnell
Zora Radosevich
Jonathan Spack
TSNE MissionWorks

Published by:
United Way of Massachusetts Bay
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Deborah Linnell
Zora Radosevich
Jonathan Spack

Published by

TSNE MissionWorks
Partners in social change

89 South Street, Suite 700, Boston, MA 02111
617.523.6565 phone
info@tsne.org email
www.tsne.org

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89 South Street Suite 700,
Boston MA 02111
or email eguide@tsne.org

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CHAPTER 6

Why Do Boards of Directors Exist?
What Is Good Governance Anyway?
How Does Governance Work?
Governance Basics
Board as Boss or Board as Partner?
Trends in Governing through Flexible Partnerships
Creating Flexible Partnerships
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The New Work of the Board: Revisiting Board Meetings
Guidelines for Nonprofit Boards
Why Do Boards of Directors Exist?
Boards exist to help ensure that organizations uphold the “public trust” in their charitable purpose and remain worthy of the significant tax benefits that the government grants to charitable organizations under the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax code, section 501(c)(3). Nonprofit organizations are given these tax benefits because the IRS (for the government) has determined that their mission and activities benefit the common good. State and federal laws make boards of directors legally responsible for providing the oversight necessary to ensure that the charitable purpose is being served and that ethical standards are being upheld. Every 501(c)(3) eligible organization is required by law to be governed by a board of directors which acts on behalf of the general public, does not stand to gain financially from the charitable activities of the organization, and exists to provide prudent oversight of the overall operations and direction of the organization.

What Is Good Governance Anyway?
According to the authors of the Harvard Business Review article “The New Work of the Nonprofit Board”:¹ “Effective governance by the board of a nonprofit organization is a rare and unnatural act. Only the most uncommon of nonprofit boards functions as it should by harnessing the collective efforts of accomplished individuals to advance the institution’s mission and long-term welfare.”

We believe effective governance need not be so rare. Executive directors and board members can work to focus the collective minds of the board on the mission, program effectiveness, and the long-term health of the organization. When it comes to governance, less is generally better. By “keeping it simple” and continually reinforcing the mission and vision of the organization, boards can stay focused on policy, oversight, and the setting of parameters within which management can move the organization forward. “Keeping it simple,” however, does not mean relinquishing oversight responsibilities, failing to show up for meetings, or rubber-stamping a powerful executive director or board president.

Keeping it simple for good governance relies upon:

- the collective action of prudent people making well-informed decisions;
- a partnership among the board and the community, clients, management, and frontline staff to fulfill the mission;
- people at all levels of the organization who can clearly define and uphold the mission; and
- people who can set aside their individual egos and personal agendas for the collective good and benefit of the public the organization exists to serve.

How Does Governance Work?

The board of directors is the entity that is legally responsible for the conduct and performance of the nonprofit organization. Traditionally, this legal responsibility has been viewed as having three fundamental legal duties which have been stated as:

- **Duty of Care**, which means acting in good faith consistent with what the board or individual board member truly believes is in the best interest of the organization;
- **Duty of Loyalty**, which means doing what is in the best interest of the organization; and
- **Duty of Obedience**, which means honoring and acting consistently with the requirements of applicable laws and the organization’s mission, bylaws, policies, and other standards of appropriate behavior.

Fundamentally, board members must honor these standards of behavior in all decisions and actions related to the organization. Their governance responsibilities include:

- **defining and upholding** the mission and purpose of the organization;
- **designating** broad parameters and policies within which staff can manage, function, and experiment (defining ends, not means);¹
- **ensuring** financial viability, which falls into two broad categories: (1) providing financial oversight through a treasurer or finance committee, and (2) planning for future viability through resource development;
- **maintaining** accountability to the client, staff, funders, community, and public, including a duty to evaluate effectiveness and incorporate feedback circles with various stakeholders;
- **ensuring** a healthy management function, which means providing for a qualified, skilled, and accountable executive director or, in alternatively structured organizations that operate without an executive director, ensuring that a strong and accountable management function exists; and
- **protecting** the strength and continuity of the board through succession planning and board development activities.

Boards typically meet their responsibilities by self-organizing into structures and systems that allow them to function and communicate. Traditionally, boards have allowed function to follow structure. We believe boards should feel free to allow structure to follow function and suggest: (1) limiting the number of standing committees that hold regular meetings, whether they have issues to discuss or not, and (2) encouraging the use of task forces and ad hoc committees that convene to meet strategic needs and disband when their issues have been dealt with. That said, keep in mind that the overall purpose of breaking the full board into committees is to allow board meetings to focus on larger discussions while the more detailed work is done in committees.

When boards design committee structures to ensure proper function, they generally create committees that parallel administrative functions within the agency – such as planning, program, fundraising, public relations, personnel, executive, and board development committees.³

Governance Basics

**Bylaws**

Bylaws spell out how a corporation and its board will function. State law requires nonprofit organizations to have bylaws to become incorporated. Bylaws should generally be kept as simple and open-ended as possible to avoid endless amendments in the future. Basic bylaws should contain the following specifics about the board:

- the range in the number of members who will sit on the board;
- the length and number of terms of board members;
- the titles and roles of board officers;
- what constitutes a quorum for doing business, the frequency of board meetings, and other voting procedures; and

¹ John Carver has written extensively on “policy governance” by which the board sets the parameters within which management can achieve the “ends” set by the board.

² For more information on committee structure, we suggest contacting the National Council on Nonprofit Boards at 1-800-883-6262 or www.ncnb.org.
• other board procedures and responsibilities, such as resignations, removal from office, filling of vacancies, etc.

Terms of Office
Consider limiting the number of terms of office a board member can serve. Many organizations have found that allowing board members to serve for a maximum of six years gives them the year or two it takes to develop a deep understanding of the agency’s mission and programs as well as a significant amount of time to contribute to meaningful and appropriate leadership. After six years, however, board members tend to become entrenched. Keep in mind that good board members can always find other ways to stay involved and can be invited back on the board after their break from the governance role. When term limits are in place, it is especially important to balance senior, knowledgeable board members with newer members.

Board Size: What Is the Right Size?
There is no right or wrong size, but recent trends show that large boards (over 30 members) appear to be falling out of favor. Such large boards tend to be run by executive committees that become cliques, with power concentrated in the hands of a few. The boards of small and mid-size nonprofits tend to range from 11 to 25 people. Boards should be large enough to provide the oversight that the IRS and the attorney general’s office is seeking, but not so small that they become cozy clubs nor so large that they become social clubs where the true charge of governance is lost.

Incorporation
Each state has its own laws and regulations concerning how a nonprofit organization can become incorporated. In general, the secretary of state’s office can provide specific information and any necessary forms.4

Tax-Exempt Status
Federal tax-exempt status is determined by the Internal Revenue Service. The IRS application process requires you to submit copies of the agency’s bylaws, mission statement, and Articles of Incorporation.5

Full Board Responsibilities
The board as a whole is accountable for governance of the nonprofit organization. The full board should meet often enough to fulfill its legal obligation to provide oversight of the organization. While there are no absolute right or wrong numbers of meetings, meeting fewer than four times a year may be problematic. Many boards meet monthly or bimonthly.

Board meetings should be conducted with a written agenda (with length of time proposed for each item included on the agenda) that has been sent to board members ahead of time. It is common for the executive director and board president to prepare the agenda, with one of the two taking responsibility for sending it out. Unless there are compelling reasons, the board meeting should not be scheduled to last longer than two hours.

The board should have simple, straightforward bylaws that define its size, terms of its members, and voting procedures. Every board member should sign a conflict of interest statement. If the work of officers is complex, the board may want to consider creating written job descriptions for board officers; many organizations are developing written job descriptions for all board members. (See the Appendix for a sample conflict-of-interest statement and generic board job description.)

The full board should focus its attention on “bigger” issues, such as positioning the organization to flourish in changing times; long-range visioning; and developing broad policies. While many boards traditionally have devoted their meetings around hearing committee reports, a better system might be to organize meetings around the agency’s top priorities for the year.

4 In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, application forms are available at and inquiries should be made to: Secretary of State, Corporate Division, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108. This office can be reached by telephone at 617-727-9640 or on the Internet at www.state.ma.us/sec.

5 Start the process by requesting IRS Form 1023 and Publication 557 entitled “Tax Exempt Status for Your Organization.” Copies are available on the IRS website www.irs.gov under Forms and Publications or by calling 800-829-1040.
Traditionally, the full board charges its committees to do the “legwork” for the board. One method for being clear about the “charge” of the committees is to create job descriptions not only for the committees, but also for the committee chairs – to help define the tasks needed to manage effectively, reach goals, and evaluate committee performance.

Committees can include non-board members as long as the non-board members are aware of the responsibilities and commitment that is required. Including others on committees is a good way to recruit and get to know volunteers who later may become board members. (See Creating Boards of the Future later in this chapter.)

**Board as Boss or Board as Partner?**

Many organizations are struggling with the old “command and control” model of governance (and management) and finding that it does not work well for nonprofit organizations. It is not flexible enough to help organizations meet their mission effectively, nor is it a good model for organizations working to

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**Governance Models**

### A Traditional Hierarchical Model

- **Board of Directors**
- **Executive Director**
- **Staff**
- **Services and Community**

### A Partnership Model of a Mission-Focused Nonprofit

- The board governs with accountability to clients, community, and staff
- The executive director facilitates cross-function communication, partnership, and accountability
- The staff implements programs, is empowered to make decisions as those closest to the work, and partners with clients
- Clients inform new programs through feedback, formal evaluation, and participation in planning
- The board and the executive director ensure that the organization is accountable to the broader community through open communication and feedback loops
empower people within and outside the organization. The hierarchical formula that seemed to work in the quickly fading industrial age does not help organizations navigate in the new information age. Today’s environment requires staff and management who can respond quickly to changes in technology, consumer needs, and the economy, as well as to the increased demand for accountability by funders, constituents, consumers, and the general public.

Our preferred model of governance emphasizes partnership between the board and the agency’s various stakeholders. In the partnership model, board members view themselves as partners with a set of stakeholders who also have ownership in, and accountability to, the organization. Management systems tend to be flatter or more circular under a partnership model, where it is clear that all stakeholders share in the responsibility of communicating with each other in managing the organization effectively.

**Trends in Governing through Flexible Partnerships**

Organizations often start as small, entrepreneurial endeavors that grow, adding staff, systems, facilities, and new programs. Naturally, the leadership style and level of governance will need to change as well, to fit the organization at any given stage of its life cycle. Unfortunately, most governance models are static, proposing similar governance structures and systems for all nonprofit organizations, regardless of their size, age, needs, or philosophy.

The executive director, in partnership with the board of directors, needs to understand where an organization is in its life cycle and to be honest about the leadership skills and attributes that are required to provide shared and appropriate levels of leadership at each juncture of the life cycle.

A core competency that should be required of those in governance and management is the ability to step back and honestly communicate the types of leadership roles, responsibilities, and partnerships that are important for a given period of time in an organization’s life cycle. Sometimes a board will “follow” a strong staff. Sometimes it will lead the organization. Ideally, it will demonstrate flexibility in continually redefining its partnership with management and constituents in order to best serve the changing needs of the organization.

Our fast-changing environment will demand quick-cycle workplaces that can learn and adapt as needed. These “learning organizations” will be led best by those who understand the situational leadership and flexible partnering that is needed to meet the agency’s mission in the twenty-first century’s context of constant change.

**Creating Flexible Partnerships**

The relationship between the executive director and the board of directors will fit one of three basic styles: leading, following, or partnering. Much of the relationship will be defined by where the nonprofit is in its life cycle and the organization’s recent history.

Executive directors and boards of directors are often too close to the organization to see clearly the impact organizational growth and life cycles have on relationships within the organization. Few people truly understand that different phases in the life of an organization call for different types of leadership – in both governance and management. This lack of understanding leads to repeatedly hiring executive directors who are the “wrong person at the wrong time,” as well as to filling the board with people with appropriate skills, but not the right amount of “team-ness.” (See Chapter 13, Managing Change, for an explanation of organizational life cycles and the leadership styles required most during those cycles.)

Most people do not join a nonprofit organization – either as board member or as executive director – with the intention of creating dysfunction. And yet, far too much dysfunction is allowed to exist within our organizations, particularly at the governance and management level, because the people involved do not have the perspective and tools to root it out.

When people problems divert attention from the mission, hard times result. Each difficult experience creates its own little pool of disappointment, distrust, and dysfunction. Others within the organization get caught up in the pieces of the story that directly affect them. They don’t see the effect of each piece on the organization as a whole – they touch the
elephant’s leg and think they feel a tree trunk. We need to equip our boards, management, and frontline staff with the tools they need to see the whole picture and tell the whole story within our organizations. When we do focus on the whole picture, we call it “systems thinking.”

Smart executive directors take on the role of helping the whole system see the whole elephant. *They do not think they can see or hold the whole all by themselves.* They facilitate leadership in others and rely on the “whole system” to move the organization forward.

Successful organizations of the future will rely on executive directors, board members, and other leaders who:

- are highly self-aware;
- have strong communication skills;
- can coach others toward personal success;
- understand the leadership requirements of each life cycle of the organization;
- understand that different situations and phases of the life cycle will require different types of leadership;
- understand that if they have a predominant leadership style, the situation, times, or phase of their organization’s life cycle may call for other types of leadership; and
- bring a full-systems approach to analyzing problems – reversing the culture of blame that prevails in many organizations (leaders too often blaming the staff, the board, or funders rather than looking at the whole system) and coaching the organization’s partners toward a culture of shared accountability instead of individual finger-pointing.

**Creating Boards of the Future**

**Selecting New Board Members for Partnership, not Power**

Current thinking in nonprofit board development suggests selecting board members for their personal attributes, communication skills, and deep concern for the mission of the agency instead of for their connections, specific skills, or areas of expertise – resources that might be better found through consultants or other experts. Consider approaching former clients or users of the organization’s programs, people with expertise in the organization’s key programs, and people who represent the organization’s key constituents to serve on your board.

As with executive directors, the leadership requirements at the governance level are not static. Different types of board members are required at different phases of the organization’s life cycle. It is advisable to keep in mind where the organization is headed over the next three year cycle and to seek out leaders with skills that will match the organization’s strategic priorities. There are some attributes, however, that are universally appealing in a board member, including:

- humility;
- a sense of humor;
- an ability to see the big picture;
- emotional maturity;
- a balanced approach;
- good communication skills; and
- the ability to think strategically.

Another trend in the board selection process is to turn nomination committees into board development committees. Instead of creating grids that list skills and attributes being sought, board development committees are charged with creating a balanced and diverse board, seeking people with the qualities listed above.

Board development committees are charged with taking stock of and understanding the phases of the organization’s life cycle, noting whether it is new and entrepreneurial, in need of management and systems, in an expansion mode, or collaborating strategically with all its stakeholders and potential partners. Board development committees also need to assess the current strengths and weaknesses of the board, define gaps, and ensure succession on the board.
Recruiting New Board Members

When recruiting new board members, the board development committee should strike a balance between begging for potential members and giving board candidates the third degree. In general, board development committees should do the following:

• Develop (and revisit annually) a policy statement for how the board will partner with the executive director, staff, and community. This statement should set the tone and parameters of the board’s role and responsibilities. All new board members should understand the policy – which reflects the board’s culture and style – to ensure that their personal values and styles are aligned with those of the organization.

• Develop a generic board member job description that allows prospective board members to clearly understand the expectations of the organization and what they can expect in return.

• Develop an overall profile of the current priorities and core work of the board over the next several years, including the types of people and attributes that will help the organization make progress on its priorities.
- Develop a matrix that will help the board identify candidates who reflect the organization’s mission, vision, values, and current priorities.

- Develop a process – as formal or informal as needed to match the culture of the organization – for reviewing individual candidates and ensuring they are a good match for the organization.

**Special Considerations when Recruiting Board Members**

- Friends of the executive director or board members do not necessarily make good board members. Keep in mind that their presence can create subtle partnerships and boundary issues, as well as hamper the ability to confront openly and honestly.

- Stacking the board with relatives of board members can open the organization to accusations of nepotism and conflict of interest.

- While it can be great to have board members with professional skills (attorneys, accountants, etc.) who can help the organization, keep in mind that some may simply want to do board work to get away from their jobs. When board members do provide pro bono services to the organization, it should be clear that they are acting as any other volunteer; they do not speak or act for the board unless the full board expressly empowers them to do so.

- Tokenism is not real diversity. Avoid bringing on people simply because they fit a demographic profile; it is an insult to true diversity work. We do not mean that boards should remain homogeneous, but we believe it is better for boards to struggle through real discussions about who has power and control in their organizations and why, so that they can appreciate the fact that diversity enhances their organization. Board members need to outline how other important constituencies can gain access to and share power. Taking the time to design thoughtful, long-term strategies to recruit and orient new members is better than superficially changing the makeup of the board without addressing the underlying lack of understanding of true diversity.

**Further Considerations for Effective Recruitment**

- Create a board structure that asks potential board members to serve as committee members first. The benefits are twofold: you get to see prospects in action, and they get to see how the organization works before making a deeper commitment.

- Fully orient new board members into the culture of the organization, and explain the board’s partnership with the executive director.

- Assign new board members a “buddy” from the existing board to help with orientation through the first few meetings.

- Have candidates come to the organization’s office or workplace to meet the frontline staff. Keep in mind that if potential members do not have time to get to know the real work of the organization before committing to their governance role, they will not have time once they are board members.

**Orienting New Board Members**

New board members should visit the agency one more time for a full orientation to the board’s bylaws and the organization’s personnel policies, fundraising activities, fiscal procedures, and programs. A tour of the facilities and meeting with staff and constituents is most beneficial in helping new board members see the “whole elephant.” The executive director should compile a board handbook that contains at least most of the following items:

- mission statement;
- conflict of interest policy (and any other policies to be signed by the board member);
- fact sheet (one to two pages – an overview of the agency);
- bylaws (a synopsis of key points is nice for new board members);
- list of dates and locations of board meetings;
- list of dates and locations of committee meetings;
- annual calendar or program schedule;
- board member responsibilities (job description);
- committee job descriptions;
• up-to-date board roster (name, address, telephone/fax, e-mail);
• certificate or review of board members liability insurance;
• copies of current policies, such as personnel policies, that the board approves;
• prospective board member referral form
• list of all major funding contracts (name of funder, amount, program funded);
• sample or draft of grant proposal;
• ample of solicitation letter with contribution response envelopes;
• section for board/committee meeting minutes;
• information packet (a separate packet that includes: brochure, annual report, contribution benefits brochure, press releases and articles, bumper stickers, business cards, etc.);
• communication guidelines (meeting guidelines and protocols for communication with the executive director, staff, press, public and board officers); and
• other appropriate materials.

The board president and the members of the board development committee should make an extra effort to ensure that a new board member feels very welcome at his or her first meeting. Make it clear that new members should feel comfortable asking for clarification of items they will likely not understand at first. Keep in mind that the “alphabet soup” that many nonprofits employ, common use of terms used in the field, budget definitions, voting procedures that may not be clear, and name-dropping by board members may make people feel excluded and out of their league when they first come on a board.

**Board Orientation Checklist**

The new board member has met with the development committee to go over:

- mission and values;
- how the mission is used as a screen for making decisions;
- future strategies;
- board development activities;
- expectations of board members;
- written board member job description;
- type of partnership expected of board members with other stakeholders, including executive director, staff, clients, and community;
- conflict of interest policy (including signature);
- fund development policies (expectation that all board members give within their means);
- any other board policies; and
- board decision-making policies.

The new board member has met with the executive director to:

- tour the facilities,
- meet the staff, and
- hear about day-to-day operations, including an overview of programs, finances, and fundraising, and for a brief overview of the personnel policies.

**The New Work of the Board: Revisiting Board Meetings**

One of the more important differences between the “old work” and the “new work” of the board is how board meetings themselves are conducted. In the old style, board meetings were process-driven, the agenda didn’t vary much, committees routinely reported old business, and the emphasis was on information sharing.

Consider this: A board member who spends time going over changes in the minutes from the last meeting or asking for detail on a $1,000 line item within a million-dollar budget does not understand the true “oversight” nature of governance. Some people love to focus on detail, which can be a marvelous attribute in its proper place. But *attention to detail is not the job of a board member*. Meetings should be structured to allow board members to focus on what really matters, not on operational questions concerning facilities, people management, and budget minutiae. If you, as the executive director, are encouraging small-stakes “operational discussions,” honestly assess whether you are doing it to encourage less involvement, less partnering, and less input on what really matters to your organization.
What really matters in the board room is using the volunteer time of the board member as if it were sacred. Use it to define and tackle strategic priorities, bringing to bear the collective wisdom of the board community to complement (and at times contradict) the staff’s insider view.

Consider organizing board meetings so that substantive conversations and decisions can be made about finances, fundraising, governance, and the agency’s strategic priorities. Consider setting up an annual calendar that enables the board to spend the majority of a meeting on one or two topics. Pro-forma reports from the executive director or the treasurer can be sent via e-mail or surface mail ahead of time, giving members an opportunity to ask questions if they have them without sitting through a verbal report.

For example, board meeting time spent considering fund development should focus strategically on relationship-building and the organization’s viability, not on what the invitation to the next event should look like. Fundraising does not have to be revisited during every single board meeting if the board has had a substantive discussion of how it will meet its fiduciary responsibility in the current year and for the next few years. Ask a few board members (and development staff, where they exist) to bring an annual fund development plan to the board for discussion.

Guidelines for Nonprofit Boards

- Create a code of ethics for board members (see the Appendix for a sample) in order to address conflicts systematically and to serve as a strong reminder to people on the board that they are there to serve the mission of the organization. The existence of an ethics code sends a clear message to board and staff that they are accountable to high standards of conduct.
• **Focus on the mission.** Practice mission-focused management so that the mission permeates all of the major decisions and actions of the organization. A clear understanding of the organization’s purpose will help create a team spirit and a common ground from which to build communication.

• **Talk!** Communicate openly about roles in the organization. Understand that roles change as the organization grows and as leaders transition out of the organization. Become aware of your own learning curve and how it affects your role. Make sure newer people are listening and learning and that experienced leaders are training new leaders. Lack of role definition between the board and the executive director is a chronic problem for many nonprofits; strike the right balance for your organization so that it can fulfill its mission and work efficiently toward its goals. Changes in key leadership should trigger a revisiting of roles – if a strong director departs, will the board step forward for awhile? Will it relax its oversight as the new director becomes acclimated?

• **Create sound policies that set parameters for actions by each segment of the organization – the board, board committee, staff, executive director, volunteers, etc.** A common weaknesses among boards is the creation of policies that are so tight, they result in micromanagement, or so loose, there isn’t enough accountability. Policies should always be rooted in the mission and have a solid rationale. They should set *broad* parameters within which the director can manage and the staff can implement. Staff can be involved in setting policy through recommendations or by their presence on committees, but it is important for them to have the power to communicate with the board. Staff will more likely have more ownership over organizational policies if they have been involved in their development.

• **Handle leadership transitions carefully** by revisiting mission, values, and principal goals before proceeding with a major hiring or change in how the organization is structured. Keep in mind that when a founder or charismatic leader leaves the staff or board, *there will be a vacuum.* When a leader of any type leaves the organization, there is a period of transition. Good leaders plan for succession, but they cannot manage all the dynamics that change will bring. By reaffirming the mission and goals and ensuring ongoing, clear communication, a leader can lay a foundation that creates a clear set of expectations for the new director, staff, or board member.

• **Create an outcomes orientation.** The substantive work of the board is in working with staff, constituents, and the community to define real outcomes for the consumers of the organization’s services, the community, and the field.

• **Create a future orientation.** The board should focus on larger trends in the environment, in the field, and in the community instead of concentrating on smaller day-to-day issues. The board should act as a window into the larger world for the staff and the organization, looking outward more and inward less.

• **Maintain absolute fidelity to constituents.** Some board members fail to see that governance is about others, not about themselves. Board members must act on behalf of those for whom the nonprofit is organized – the constituents – not the funders, not the staff, not the executive director, and not the board itself. Creating opportunities for dialogue with primary constituents is an important aspect of the board’s responsibility.

• **Keep board members informed with relevant information** that reflects the context of the organization. Board members need information about the constituency, the field of endeavor, and the funding environment. Material and articles on relevant subjects should be circulated constantly. Consider establishing study groups and mini-seminars on matters of particular strategic relevance.

• **Reserve board meetings for work that has meaning.** Laundry lists of reports and information-sharing take valuable meeting time and energy away from board dialogue on core concerns and the board’s own work plan.
Help the board find its own path of continuous improvement to enhance its capacity for self-awareness, reflection, and honesty. Move away from a pure nominations committee toward a board development committee that doesn’t exist simply to fill vacancies, but also sees to the health of the board and keeps it on track by evaluating, challenging, and developing long-range recruitment plans. Yes, board members should have connections and skills, but they should also be present on the board for the right reasons, including:

- a personal mission that fits within and complements the mission of the organization;
- the potential to be a good team member;
- a willingness to engage in productive conversation;
- a willingness to be accountable and see the whole system for what it is;
- the ability to partner effectively with other stakeholders; and
- a belief that the collective good is more important than personal power and control.

Create and adhere to fiscal procedures. Recruit a strong treasurer who can fulfill the board’s job description. Keep in mind that oversight does not mean micromanagement of the budget or its line items; rather, oversight means setting sensible policies within which the director and staff can act. Board liability is particularly high in this area because the public trusts board members to use tax dollars and donations wisely and for the purposes defined in an organization’s documents. It is hard to recover the trust of the public if fiscal mismanagement is apparent.

Create a system for feedback about programs from consumers, community, staff, and volunteers. This can be done through direct observation by board members, tracking program results by staff, and surveying consumers. Whatever the method, listening to feedback, especially from consumers and communities, gives yet another important perspective on your activities, lessens fear of “otherness,” and makes the organization more “open” to the public.

Evaluate the executive director and ensure that the director is evaluating staff and holding them accountable for their roles as stakeholders in meeting the mission. Evaluation is the accountability tool and the best way for you to know how accountable the director is to the mission and other stakeholders. Because performance evaluation can be difficult, it helps to have clear expectations and policies. Performance evaluation can be achieved by a small, representative group from the board, but it should occur regularly, not as a response to a crisis. Performance evaluations should be put in writing. Consider making your process for evaluating the executive director consistent with how other staff evaluations are handled in the organization. We encourage the development of a mutually respectful and systematic process for soliciting staff input as an important part of building communication skills and a culture of honest feedback.

Create a culture of openness to information, communication, and inclusiveness. At the heart of many accountability problems – and many nonprofit problems in general – are poor communication skills or personal styles that run contrary to inclusiveness. Information should flow in all directions: up-down, down-up, and across. All stakeholders should be encouraged to address problems directly as they arise. Open communication will go a long way toward creating a functional and emotionally healthy organization.

Create a culture of diversity. Organizations short-change themselves when they neglect to recruit board members who are different from the majority. Diversity of background brings diversity of perspective. Diversity is another form of accountability. If you fear certain groups, such as constituents or wealthy people, examine your fears. Find out why you fear them, whether the
fear is real, and whether it is keeping the organization from knowing these people. Keep in mind that your organization will be richer, intellectually and spiritually, by casting a wider net.

- **Educate the board and staff to the key responsibility of holding the public trust.** While we may be dedicated to our mission, we often forget that by its tax-exempt nature the nonprofit board has stewardship over a particular public trust. Help staff and individual board members understand why the board exists.

- **Define ways in which the board, executive director, and staff formally communicate.** Consider such concerns as:
  - who informs when issues reach critical junctures;
  - who provides the board with timely information; and
  - how staff is involved in setting policy and making decisions.

Communication is a learned skill; organizations can encourage growth of this skill with systems that facilitate communication among their stakeholders.

- **Define who is accountable when communication breaks down.** Poor communication is a major reason for lack of organizational accountability; the board and staff must discuss how it will hold itself and others responsible for not adhering to the standards of communication, such as timely reports, attending meetings, providing supervision, etc.

- **Enhance opportunities for constituency feedback and empowerment.** Conduct needs assessments and encourage community people or consumers to join the board. Staying in touch with the people and the community served helps create a culture of openness and a focus on the mission and goals for the broader community.

- **Provide accessibility to the organization, to the media, government, and donors.** Organizational transparency and a culture of openness demonstrate to the public that you are accountable and have nothing to hide.