Nonprofit Capacity Building Report

Sharon Lezberg, Community Development Educator; UW Extension Dane County

Report to the Extension Committee, 7/13/2021

The nonprofit sector

- There are 2,815 nonprofit organizations operating in Dane County registered with the IRS as of 2017.
- There are 4,685 organizations in all 501c categories in Dane County, registered with the IRS as of 2017.
- Categories: Human Services (29%), Education (14%), Public, Societal benefit (13%), Religion related (11%), Arts, Culture, and Humanities (11%), Health (8%), Environment (6%), Unclassified, International, Mutual aid (9%)
- Employer of choice for many
- Economic development due to revenue generation and circulation

Society as a four legged stool

- Nonprofit sector plays critical role in addressing societal challenges.
- Questions driving the project:
  - How are nonprofits themselves sustained?
  - How can we increase the capacity of the sector?
  - For Extension, how can we best support the essential work done by nonprofit organizations?

Towards a Stronger Nonprofit Sector

ANDY DAVEY, MADISON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

SHARON LEZBERG, UW EXTENSION DANE COUNTY

NONPROFIT CAPACITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

"It is both arrogant and ignorant to believe that you can give money to an organization for your project, and not be concerned about the infrastructure that makes your project possible."

- Darren Walker, President of the Ford Foundation, April 2021

PEER LEARNING

*Recommendation: **Develop and sustain robust peer cohort learning and longer time-frame professional development opportunities based here in Dane County.***

"There's a bounty of knowledge locked up in other executive director heads."

INFORMATION SHARING

Recommendation: **Establish and sustain a local nonprofit center or hub of practical information about what's going on in the nonprofit sector that is up-to-date and easy to use.**

"I assumed when I moved here that there was a nonprofit resource center. Having somewhere that could at least coordinate some of these resources would help. There are always things that I don't know about that are going on in Madison and resources we may not know about. "

RACIAL EQUITY

Recommendation: **Fund and support organizations led by people of color working on equity and assist white-led organizations in deeper transformations towards racial equity.**

"Many women and men of color are being used and abused in nonprofit industries."

"Traditional environmental organizations have got to do the deep work of racial justice. … Is this environment safe for folks to feel like they belong?"

COLLABORATION

Recommendation: **Fund and support equitable collaboration and coalition-building around shared goals with a focus on nurturing existing relationships**

51% of respondents to a post session evaluation said the most important take-away from their conversation related to how satisfying and meaningful it was to connect with other nonprofit leaders.

EVALUATION AND DATA MANAGEMENT

Recommendation: **Fund and support meaningful and equitable evaluation and impact assessment that is most useful and relevant to those closest to the work.**

"…appreciated discussion of potential funding stream to help nonprofit assess strengths/opportunities."

** There is a strong desire among nonprofits to understand the impact of their work and find ways to improve or innovate.

KEY RECOMMENDATION

- Fund capacity building to improve the strength and reach of the nonprofit sector
  - Funders:
    - Prioritize capacity building > the infrastructure
    - Develop collaborations and mechanisms to assure equity in capacity building funding allocations
  - Nonprofit support organizations:
    - Collaborate to build innovative training programs
    - Provide opportunities for networking
    - Serve as a convener for collaborations and provide backbone support functions

NEXT STEPS

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Slide 1

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Nonprofit Peer Learning Program: Dane County

- Reflect on and clarify your personal leadership style and the relationship between organizational culture and leadership.

- Explore pathways to build trust, communication, collaboration, and innovation in your organization.

- Identify impacts of disruption and ways that organizations are adapting to these disruptions.

- Learn and practice planning tools to help set a direction for your organization and adapt to change.

Slide 2

**Wednesdays, 2:00-4:00 pm,
September 29 through December 15, 2021**

Schedule:

Sept. 22	Pre-session primer: Access to Online Course Components
Sept. 29 & Oct. 6	Orientation, Leadership, Organizational Culture
Oct. 13 & 20	Planning Tools
Oct. 27 & Nov. 3	Telling Your Story, Marketing Your Organization
Nov. 10 & 17	Nonprofit Sustainability
Nov. 24	NO CLASS THIS WEEK
Dec. 1 & 8	Fundraising and Donor Relations
Dec. 15	Wrap-up, Evaluation and On-Going Engagement

Slide 3

Course Outcomes. During this course you will:

- Reflect on and clarify your personal leadership style and the relationship between organizational culture and leadership.
- Explore pathways to build trust, communication, collaboration, and innovation in your organization.
- Identify impacts of disruption and ways that organizations are adapting to these disruptions.
- Learn and practice planning tools to help set a direction for your organization and adapt to change.
- Develop skills to align mission with strategic plan and to address sustainability in times of uncertainty.
- Evaluate your organization's fund-development/resource development plan.
- Create or revise a marketing/communication plan.
- Identify opportunities for ongoing learning through connection with a peer network.
- Identify strategies to build more equitable and just organizations and communities.