

Creating and Maintaining Equitable and Inclusive Boards:

A “Pay It Forward” Project

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Background and Purpose

In the landscape of nonprofit organizations, the composition of boards have often been characterized by a lack of diversity and representation. The historical origins of these organizations trace back to the Gilded Age, an era where philanthropy became synonymous with social change efforts, and like the anti-violence movement, was led by upper-class white women. The legacy of this historical backdrop has inadvertently shaped the demographics of boards, perpetuating a lack of diversity and limiting the perspectives brought to the table.

Recognizing the need for transformative change within board spaces, this guidebook emerges from the understanding that equitable and inclusive boards are essential for effective decision-making and positive societal impact. The challenges posed by historical legacies and the nonprofit industrial complex require intentional efforts to reshape the narrative and composition of boards.

The purpose of this guidebook is twofold: to create awareness and provide actionable strategies for organizations to cultivate diverse and equitable boards, and to serve as my "Pay It Forward" initiative as part of the LEAP Fellowship. The LEAP (Leadership Education and Advancement Project) Fellowship is specifically designed to provide intensive and interactive training for leaders of color in the anti-violence field. The fellowship's commitment to providing a holistic leadership development-learning environment aligns seamlessly with the goals of this guidebook. LEAP's emphasis on empowering leaders of color underscores the importance of diverse representation and equitable opportunities within leadership structures.

The guidebook serves as a practical resource for boards committed to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion. It addresses historical challenges, confronts systemic issues within the nonprofit industrial complex, and provides actionable steps for creating environments where every voice is valued. Through this initiative, the intent is not only to inform but to inspire action, catalyzing a shift towards more representative and empowered boards within the anti-violence sector.

Important Note: This guidebook DOES NOT serve as a substitute for the knowledge and skills gained by working with a consultant. It is a starting point, providing foundational insights, but organizations are encouraged to seek additional guidance from consultants for a comprehensive approach to creating and sustaining diverse and equitable boards.

In essence, this guidebook is a collaborative endeavor, combining the transformative lessons of the LEAP Fellowship with a commitment to creating lasting change within the nonprofit sector. It is a "Pay It Forward" initiative, extending the benefits of leadership development to the broader community and fostering a future where diverse and equitable boards are the norm rather than the exception.

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Not Reinventing The Wheel

Embarking on the journey of creating diverse, equitable, and inclusive spaces within boards is not a novel concept; rather, it is a continual evolution rooted in existing frameworks and resources. Both Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) work and Board Management have been areas of focus, yielding valuable insights over time. Numerous resources and toolkits are already available to guide readers on this transformative journey, providing a wealth of knowledge and practical strategies.

This guidebook acknowledges the wealth of existing resources and draws inspiration from well-established materials to avoid reinventing the wheel. Notable sources include "Your Guide to Understanding and Developing the Board of a Rape Crisis Center" and "Board of Directors Toolkit for Nonprofit Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Organizations" which both provide targeted strategies for these contexts. "From Words to Action: A Practical Guide and Toolkit for Operationalizing Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion" offers a comprehensive approach to translating intentions into tangible outcomes.

This guidebook acknowledges the interconnectedness of board dynamics with broader workplace inclusivity. By weaving insights from these established resources into the fabric of this guide, the intention is to enrich the reader's journey with tried-and-true principles, ensuring a robust foundation for cultivating equitable and inclusive board environments.

If You Build It, They Will Come

This adage holds true when constructing the foundation for welcoming new board members, particularly those entering the realm of board service for the first time. A solid foundation is not only welcoming but also essential for cultivating an inclusive and equitable board environment. This foundational process involves several key components, each contributing to the framework that beckons new members into a supportive and informed community.

Firstly, understanding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) principles becomes the cornerstone. An organization must not only embrace these values but also articulate where it stands on the DEI spectrum. This clarity forms the bedrock for creating an environment that values diverse perspectives, promotes equity, and actively fosters inclusion.

Conducting an assessment of the current board makeup is the next crucial step. This assessment delves into the composition of the board, identifying strengths, areas for improvement, and potential gaps in representation. It serves as a guide for intentional recruitment and helps in building a board that authentically reflects the communities it serves.

Equally important is providing an informative orientation on the roles and responsibilities of the board. This orientation ensures that every member, regardless of their prior board experience, is equipped with a clear understanding of their role in governing the organization. It's about setting expectations, clarifying responsibilities, and fostering a collective sense of purpose.

The last thing an individual from an underrepresented community needs is to receive an invitation to serve on a dysfunctional board, only to serve as their token representation. This cautionary note underscores the importance of not merely extending invitations but ensuring that the board environment is functional, supportive, and genuinely values the contributions of each member. By addressing dysfunctionality head-on and committing to fostering an inclusive and equitable board culture, organizations can avoid the harmful impact of tokenism. A dysfunctional board not only hinders its own effectiveness but also risks isolating and undervaluing the unique skills and perspectives that individuals from marginalized communities bring.

By intentionally constructing this foundation, organizations create a welcoming space that not only attracts new board members but also empowers them to actively contribute. The metaphorical "they will come" encapsulates the idea that individuals, especially those previously unfamiliar with board service, will be drawn to an environment where the expectations are clear, the values are explicit, and the foundation is solid. As the foundation is laid, it becomes a magnet for diverse talents and perspectives, forming a dynamic and inclusive board community that is well-prepared to navigate the complexities of governance and make a meaningful impact.

Defining Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In the pursuit of creating equitable and inclusive nonprofit board spaces, it is paramount to establish a shared understanding of key terms that form the foundation of this transformative work. To further enrich the discussion and ensure clarity, please refer to the glossary of terms in the appendix. This glossary (**Appendix A**) serves as a valuable resource, providing nuanced explanations and context for terms central to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) work. As we explore these concepts, the glossary will deepen your understanding and equip you with the language necessary for effective communication and implementation of DEI principles within your board.

Let's embark on a journey of exploration, utilizing the glossary as a companion guide to unravel the complexities of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the nonprofit board space. Together, we'll build a shared vocabulary that empowers us to navigate challenges, foster meaningful conversations, and take purposeful actions towards creating boards that are not only diverse but also equitable and inclusive.

Diversity

Diversity transcends beyond mere representation; it encompasses a rich tapestry of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences. In the context of nonprofit boards, diversity is the intentional inclusion of individuals with varying attributes such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, socioeconomic background, abilities, sexual orientation, and more. A diverse board ensures a broad spectrum of insights and ideas, fostering innovation and adaptability in the face of dynamic challenges. Embracing diversity is not merely a commitment to ticking demographic checkboxes; it is a recognition that the strength of a board lies in its ability to harness the power of differences.

Equity

Equity moves beyond the notion of equality to address systemic disparities and provide fair opportunities to all. In the nonprofit board space, equity means acknowledging and addressing historical and current inequities that may limit certain individuals from accessing leadership roles. An equitable board ensures that each member, irrespective of their background, has the tools, resources, and support necessary to thrive in their role. This involves dismantling barriers, rectifying historical disadvantages, and actively working toward creating an environment where everyone can contribute meaningfully.

Inclusion

Inclusion is the intentional effort to create a culture where every board member feels valued, heard, and actively engaged in decision-making processes. It goes beyond diversity, focusing on creating an environment where diverse voices are not only present but also actively contribute. An inclusive board recognizes that diversity alone is not enough; it requires fostering a culture of respect, openness, and belonging. Inclusion ensures that all members, regardless of their background, are not only welcome but encouraged to share their unique perspectives, thus enriching the board's discussions and decisions.

Interconnected Dynamics

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are not standalone concepts but interconnected dynamics that reinforce each other. A diverse board, when coupled with equity and inclusion, becomes a powerful force for positive change. Equity supports diversity by removing systemic barriers, and inclusion ensures that the benefits of diversity are fully realized. Together, these principles create a board environment that reflects the complexity of the communities served, dismantles discriminatory structures, and fosters an atmosphere where every member can contribute to the fullest extent of their abilities. Embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion is not just a moral imperative; it is a strategic necessity. Boards that prioritize and embody these principles become not only agents of change within their organizations but also catalysts for broader societal transformation.

Recognizing and Mitigating Unconscious Biases

As we strive toward a diverse and reflective board it is important to acknowledge that even the best of people have unconscious biases. These automatic and unintentional preferences wield substantial influence in boardrooms, subtly shaping recruitment, evaluations, and overall dynamics. The first step toward inclusivity is recognizing the existence of these biases. Boards must adopt proactive measures such as blind recruitment processes, bias awareness training, and a culture of openness. Creating an environment where individuals feel empowered to address and challenge biases is not only a moral imperative but an essential stride toward fostering a board that is fair, equitable, and adept at embracing the full spectrum of talents and perspectives.

Beyond Tokenism

In the pursuit of nonprofit board diversity, it's vital to transcend tokenism, recognizing the harm of designating individuals as mere representatives of their demographic. Tokenism, which includes people from underrepresented groups, has detrimental effects on both the individual and the board. Being a "token" subjects an individual to undue pressure, reducing their identity to a singular dimension and fostering feelings of isolation and imposter syndrome. Beyond personal consequences, tokenism fails to leverage the true power of diversity, overlooking the richness various backgrounds bring to the table. It perpetuates superficial diversity without addressing systemic issues or fostering true inclusivity. This approach risks creating a facade of diversity while maintaining existing power structures. It undermines diverse perspectives and neglects the full range of talents and experiences from underrepresented groups.

To combat tokenism, boards must adopt purposeful recruitment strategies beyond checkboxes and quotas. This involves actively seeking individuals from diverse backgrounds based on their unique qualifications, skills, and perspectives. The goal is to create an inclusive environment where every board member can authentically contribute.

Strategies for Purposeful Recruitment:

- **Broaden Networks:** Actively seek candidates from diverse networks and communities beyond traditional channels.
- **Holistic Evaluation:** Assess candidates based on skills, experiences, and potential contributions rather than solely demographic characteristics.
- **Inclusive Outreach:** Craft outreach efforts that communicate a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, making candidates feel valued for their unique perspectives.
- **Cultivate Inclusive Board Culture:** Foster a welcoming and supportive board culture that celebrates individual and collective contributions rather than tokenizing members.

Building a diverse board requires thoughtful intention, manifested in policy and actions. Recruiting individuals from underrepresented communities should be part of the board's plan. ***However it is imperative to avoid tokenization, the expectation to fulfill quotas, or be asked to speak for any one population.*** Each board member, regardless of background, is expected to speak for themselves, ensuring a truly inclusive and empowered board environment.

Roles and Responsibilities

In order to cultivate a healthy and functional board capable of fostering a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) environment lies in comprehending the roles and responsibilities of a Board of Directors. For a nonprofit organization to formalize itself as a corporation, the imperative step is to establish a board of directors. This board serves as the legal entity responsible for overseeing various organizational activities, encompassing crucial aspects such as the recruitment of staff (particularly the Executive Director), conducting business transactions, and managing property ownership.

The nonprofit board of directors has the following legal and fiduciary responsibilities in the

stewardship of their organization:

- Duty of Care: taking care of the nonprofit by ensuring prudent use of all assets (e.g., staff, revenue, resources, etc.);
- Duty of Obedience: ensuring the nonprofit complies and obeys all applicable laws, regulations, and policies; that its services advance the agency's mission and purpose;
- Duty of Loyalty: making decisions in best interest of the agency, not for personal self-interest.

Ten Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards

Furthermore, the [Nonprofit Sustainability Technical Assistance \(NSTA\) Project's Board of Directors Toolkit For Nonprofit Sexual Assault And Domestic Violence Organizations](#) explains that each board member has ten key responsibilities in serving the agency. The board members' general responsibilities are essential for the health and success of the agency along with them meeting their three legal duties of care, obedience, and loyalty:

1. **Determine the agency's mission and purpose.** The Board must revisit (every 3-5 years) to evaluate its relevance to the field and in light of any trends or issues the agency is facing.
2. **Select the Executive Director.** The board of directors is responsible for hiring the Executive Director of the agency. While the hiring process may be delegated to a committee (i.e. search committee) the entire board should be kept informed about the hiring process and should be able to give input into the criteria by which potential executives are assessed. When it comes to hiring the Executive Director of any agency, it is wise for the board to seek input from multiple stakeholders in order to make the best decision for the organization.
3. **Support the Executive Director and assess their performance.** The board must support and evaluate the Executive Director. Supporting (not micromanaging) the director includes:
 - providing regular performance reviews;
 - complimenting and recognizing them for jobs well done;
 - giving them constructive feedback;
 - assisting them when tough issues come up with other board members;
 - keeping them informed of issues about which the board is aware;
 - clarifying expectations the board has for them (including maintaining and up-to-date job description for them);
 - encouraging the director to take care of themselves (including taking leave when necessary);
 - and introducing them to community leaders.
4. **Plan for the organization's development.** It should also be engaged in a planning process to determine what specific goals the agency should seek to accomplish in order to pursue its mission. Planning can happen many different ways for organizations with or without an outside facilitator), but it is important that every agency engages in a planning process.
5. **Ensure adequate resources, including fundraising.** The board should be the main fundraising body of the organization. While it may require staff support to complete its fundraising, ***the board must not rely on staff to fundraise***. Fundraising may be delegated to a committee of the board, but it is important to note that all board members should be involved at some level with fundraising. Fundraising is more than hosting

special events; fundraising includes soliciting individual donors as well. All board members should solicit donations from community members, and should make their own financial contributions to the agency. Beyond fundraising, the board should evaluate other potential sources of revenue for the organization. The board should continuously aim to find sustainable income for the organization.

6. **Manage resources effectively.** It is the responsibility of the board to make sure these resources are used wisely. In order to determine how to allocate the organization's resources, the board should develop (in conjunction with the agency's Executive Director) and approve the annual budget for the agency. After a budget is approved, the board should monitor the agency's expenses to ensure that the agency remains within the parameters of the budget. In order to monitor the use of resources effectively, the board should receive and read financial reports on a monthly basis. It is the board's job to ask clarifying questions if the financial reports are unclear. In order to best manage these resources, the board should determine the financial policies for the agency. (More information about these policies is contained in the Financial Management section of NSTA's toolkit.) The board should also ensure that the agency receives an audit each year.
7. **Determine and monitor the organization's programs and services.** In order to change to meet the evolving needs of clients and communities, the board must assess any trends that would alter the needs or fundamentally change the client base. Boards should then use this information in the organization's planning processes to adapt programs to meet the new and emerging needs. For example, a community has a new agribusiness company being established in their community that will add new jobs along with a new immigrant population joining their community. The Board and staff will want to consider this new information in their upcoming strategic planning discussions. The board is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the organization's programs and services as well. The board, in conjunction with staff, should determine when programs and services should be changed.
8. **Enhance the organization's public standing.** The board members are the organization's main representatives in the community. In order to promote the organization, board members should be able to speak about the mission, goals, and programs of the agency. Board members should take opportunities to promote the organization to civic, religious, community, and government groups as appropriate. The board and Executive Director should determine who serves as the official spokesperson for the agency, but all board members should be able to speak intelligently about the organization on a more casual basis.
9. **Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability.** As part of their duty of obedience, the board of directors is responsible for ensuring that the organization is in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations along with its contracts. Similarly, the board should ensure that the agency adheres to its contracts as well as occupational, safety, health, labor, and related regulations. Because the board is ultimately responsible for ensuring the agency's compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, boards may choose to bring in outside professionals with specific areas of expertise to guide them in setting policy. The agency also must follow the requirements of its own by-laws and articles of incorporation. The board should understand the contents of these documents and should follow the guidelines they outline. If the board does not follow its own policies, the agency becomes vulnerable and may face a lawsuit.

10. **Commit to Board development.** Boards grow and change throughout the life of an organization. In order to best meet the changing demands facing them, the board should:

- develop a new member orientation that prepares newcomers for their roles;
- educate themselves continuously;
- assess board performance;
- identify and recruit new members; and
- develop committees as appropriate.

Job Descriptions

The Board of Directors should have a structure that clearly defines the roles of board members. It should clearly distinguish the different roles for the board officers from the general member's role. Refer to **Appendix B** for samples of Board Member job descriptions.

Committees

Boards often utilize committees to streamline their work, finding them more efficient than handling tasks as a whole. Committees offer the flexibility to include individuals beyond the board, tapping into diverse expertise. Each committee requires at least one board member, and ideally, each board member serves on one or two committees to ensure balanced workloads. Committees craft recommendations for the full board, possessing defined roles through job descriptions and annual work plans (**Appendix C**). Each committee should be relevant and helpful to the work of the agency.

At minimum, the Board of Directors should have the following committees:

- Personnel
- Executive
- Fundraising
- Finance
- Board Development/Nominating

Having these committees in place may make it easier for the Board to regularly focus on its main areas of responsibility. Once the above committees are formed and deemed healthy and functioning, additional committees (e.g. special events) may be created.

There are two main types of committees: standing committees, integral to the board structure, and temporary committees, formed for short-term goals and disbanded upon completion.

To foster and sustain a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) environment within a board, the Board Development/Nominating Committee plays a pivotal role. This committee is entrusted with crucial responsibilities aimed at enhancing the effectiveness and inclusivity of the board. Its primary duties include assessing the current composition of the board, actively identifying and recruiting new board members, proposing a slate of officers for each board election, pinpointing potential committee members, crafting an orientation process for incoming board members, and addressing the ongoing training and education needs of the board.

Despite the role of the Board Development/Nominating Committee, it is important that all board members be involved in the identification and recruitment of new Board Members. This

collaborative approach ensures that the board remains dynamic, diverse, and well-prepared to fulfill its mission in an ever-evolving landscape.

Board Development

It is crucial to understand how the healthy development of the Board is integral to the health of the organization. Boards, similar to organizations, undergo life cycles with varying levels of support requirements. Recognizing the evolving nature of boards and understanding their changing needs is crucial for effective governance.

Boards should mirror the community served by the organization, reflecting a diverse range of life skills and experiences. This diversity enhances the organization's functionality, represents diverse perspectives, and advances its mission. Creating a diverse board demands intentional efforts, expressed through policies and a sustained commitment.

Board Development extends beyond the recruitment of new members. It encompasses ongoing activities such as board education, assessment, evaluation, and committee development. Each of these components requires dedicated time and attention consistently, avoiding postponement until board terms expire or crisis situations arise.

Recruitment

In order to make intentional strides towards a DEI environment, it's important to assess not only the makeup of your board but where your board and organization stands in their commitment to diversity. It is important to assess your board/organization's commitment to and practice of DEI prior to recruitment because if your board/organization is not a safe space for individuals then not only are you inviting individuals into an unsafe space but risking those individuals going back to the community and sharing their experiences.

Nonprofit boards should annually assess their performance to ensure accountability to the community they serve. This evaluation (**Appendix D**), led by a committee like board development or governance, involves self-assessments from each board member, aiding in identifying necessary training for improved effectiveness.

The comprehensive board assessment covers key responsibilities, including mission and purpose, Executive Director evaluation, organizational development planning, resource management, program and service monitoring, public standing enhancement, and board development. The board's accountability extends to the community, survivors, funders, and government entities, emphasizing the importance of reviewing its performance internally to benefit the agency and the community it serves.

If possible, since board recruitment is ongoing, utilize tools such as the DEI Organizational Assessment (**Appendix E**) from United Partners for Human Services to identify any areas of growth for your board/organization. Afterwards, have a discussion, make a commitment to improving the identified areas of growth, and begin an action plan (**Appendix F**)

Additionally, many organizations utilize a Board Matrix (**Appendix G**) to assess what skills/characteristics the current Board Members have and what skills the Board needs.

The Board's role extends beyond recruitment to the continuous identification and nurturing of potential members, particularly during community representation. As organization ambassadors, Board Members actively engage by inviting community members to visit the agency, inquiring about adding their names to the mailing list, assessing their interest in volunteering, and extending invitations to upcoming special events. These activities gradually integrate interested community members, enriching the organization's resource pool.

Cultivation and recruitment strategies may involve more direct approaches. For instance, if the Board identifies a potential candidate, a designated Board Member, such as the President or Nominating Committee Chair, can arrange a lunch meeting to discuss joining the Board. Effective recruitment requires meticulous organization, and the recruiting Board Member should provide a current Board Member job description, articulate the agency's mission and goals, clearly define expectations for the potential Board Member, and outline the timeframe for new member elections.

The application process should be transparent, involving steps such as completing an application, conducting interviews, or a voting process. Before extending invitations to apply, the Nominating Committee should finalize process details, including determining the authority responsible for deciding on new Board Members.

When recruiting potential board members, it is imperative to provide transparent and comprehensive information about the time commitments associated with board service. This includes attendance at regular board meetings, participation in committee meetings, involvement in projects during off-months, and active engagement in fundraising activities. Clearly communicating these expectations helps potential members assess their availability and commitment levels.

Moreover, it is crucial to inform potential board members about their financial responsibilities, particularly their contribution to the annual fund. This includes details about the organization's expectations regarding financial support.

Vague quotas can create uncertainty and may not resonate well with potential board members. People generally prefer to know the specific number they are expected to contribute, allowing them to assess their financial capacity and make commitments that align with their capabilities. Providing clear, detailed information about financial expectations fosters a sense of trust and transparency, enhancing the recruitment process and encouraging individuals to join the board with a well-defined understanding of their responsibilities.

Some organizations may operate under a "give or get" policy, allowing board members to either make a personal financial contribution or actively participate in fundraising efforts to meet their annual fund commitment. This policy offers flexibility and acknowledges different ways members can contribute to the organization's financial health.

By providing prospective board members with a clear understanding of the time and financial commitments involved, organizations ensure that individuals join the board with realistic expectations and a genuine commitment to actively contribute to the success and sustainability of the organization. This transparency is essential for building a board that is aligned with the organization's mission and values.

Recruitment through a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) lens is a strategic and intentional process aimed at attracting a diverse pool of candidates and fostering an inclusive environment. The following steps outline how organizations can perform recruitment through a DEI lens:

Assessment and Planning:

Start by assessing the current demographics of your board or team. Identify gaps in representation and areas for improvement. Develop a DEI recruitment plan with specific goals and timelines to guide your efforts.

Diverse Outreach:

Utilize a variety of platforms and networks to reach a broad audience. Engage with diverse communities, organizations, and networks aligned with your mission. Attend events, conferences, and meetings that attract participants from diverse backgrounds.

Inclusive Job Descriptions:

Craft job descriptions using inclusive language and emphasize your commitment to diversity. Clearly communicate the organization's dedication to equity and inclusion. Highlight the importance of diverse perspectives in contributing to the organization's mission.

Blind Recruitment Processes:

Implement blind recruitment practices, such as removing names and other identifying information from initial application reviews. Focus on evaluating skills, qualifications, and experience rather than personal characteristics.

Diverse Selection Panels:

Create diverse selection panels responsible for reviewing applications and conducting interviews. Ensure that decision-makers represent a variety of backgrounds and perspectives to avoid unconscious biases.

Training and Education:

Provide training for recruiters and hiring teams on unconscious bias and DEI principles. Foster a culture of continuous learning and awareness to ensure everyone involved in the recruitment process is well-informed.

Affinity Groups:

Establish or connect with affinity groups within your organization or community. These groups can provide valuable insights into the experiences of different communities and assist in tailoring recruitment efforts.

Community Engagement:

Engage with diverse communities through partnerships, outreach, and active involvement. Demonstrate a genuine commitment to understanding and addressing community needs, fostering trust and collaboration.

Transparent Communication:

Clearly communicate your organization's commitment to diversity and inclusion in recruitment materials. Address any concerns or barriers that potential candidates may have, providing a transparent view of your organization's values.

Feedback Mechanisms:

Establish feedback mechanisms for candidates to share their experiences during the recruitment process. Use this feedback to continually improve and refine your DEI recruitment strategies, ensuring an ongoing commitment to inclusivity.

Orientation

It's imperative to acknowledge that community members aren't inherently prepared for board service; rather, they need guidance and development to assume their new roles. When new board members commence their terms, providing a comprehensive orientation is essential for ensuring their understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the organization. Given that many board members may lack prior experience in this capacity, training and orientation become vital, covering key topics like:

- The roles and responsibilities inherent to board membership
- Clarification of board and staff roles and defined boundaries
- Expectations for new board members in their interactions with staff and fellow board members
- Pre-established expectations set by the agency for incoming board members, discussed prior to assuming the role
- Insight into board processes and procedures
- How to read and understand profit and loss statements and other financial statements

Board orientation can be conducted through various approaches, including but not limited to:

- A brief meeting between the Board Chair and the new Board Member
- A luncheon involving the new Board Member, Board Chair, and Executive Director
- A formal meeting for all new Board Members

Orientation sessions can be conducted individually or collectively for multiple new Members. Typically, the Board Chair, being well-versed in Board operations, hosts the orientation. The Executive Director may elaborate on the agency's work and introduce the staff.

Furthermore, new board members should undergo training and receive information about the agency, including the current budget (how to read financial statements), and strategic/long-range plans. Furnishing board members with a comprehensive handbook containing this information and other pertinent details for future reference is crucial.

Given that fundraising is a crucial responsibility of the board, a fun way to induct board members is to have Board members participate in the CoreCentric®: Discover Your Right Fit Role activity. This activity is a great way to engage board members in their roles. Board members often express apprehension about fundraising efforts, but this activity offers a tailored approach to engage each board member effectively. This tool assists board members in identifying donor engagement activities aligned with their natural strengths, constraints, interests, and preferences. By matching individuals with activities within their comfort zones (**Appendix H**), CoreCentric® empowers leaders to focus on high-impact fundraising, alleviating fears and fostering active involvement in causes they care about.

Additionally, incorporating a seasoned Board Member as a mentor for a newcomer in their initial year of service is a valuable approach for fostering integration and support. During the onboarding process, providing a chance for the new member to express their preferences in a mentor allows for a more personalized and effective matching process.

Ongoing Education

Following the initial orientation, board members should undergo ongoing training throughout their terms, addressing various topics such as fundraising, organizational trauma, and legal responsibilities. Regular board assessments become instrumental in identifying specific areas for continued training. The board should assess its performance, actively seek necessary training, and solicit additional advice as deemed appropriate.

Board leaders should prioritize innovative training methods, utilizing platforms like retreats, breakfast meetings, and brown bag lunch events, as well as resources such as videos, books, teleconferences, and internet conferences. Recognizing the challenges of scheduling extra meetings, integrating training into regular retreats and meetings can be a practical approach.

Additional Ways to Practice DEI

Sponsorship and Financial Support:

Example: A board establishes a sponsorship program to financially support members who may face economic barriers to contributing to the board's annual fund. This ensures that financial constraints do not hinder diverse participation.

Cultural Competency Training:

Example: A board invests in cultural competency training for its members, bringing in external experts to provide insights into diverse cultures and backgrounds. This training enhances understanding and fosters a more inclusive board culture.

Community Engagement and Feedback:

Example: A board conducts regular town hall meetings or surveys within the communities they serve. This feedback loop ensures that the board is aware of diverse community needs and perspectives, guiding decision-making processes.

Mentorship Programs:

Example: A board implements a mentorship program where seasoned board members mentor newcomers. This mentorship provides guidance, support, and opportunities for professional growth.

Diverse Outreach and Recruitment:

Example: When seeking new board members, a board actively partners with local organizations and networks that represent diverse communities. This intentional outreach broadens the pool of candidates and ensures diverse representation.

Inclusive Board Events:

Example: A board hosts events that consider diverse cultural practices, dietary needs, and accessibility requirements. This inclusivity ensures that all board members feel comfortable and welcome during organizational activities.

Partnership with Diversity Organizations:

Example: A board collaborates with local diversity and inclusion organizations, jointly organizing events or programs that promote DEI values. This partnership extends the impact of DEI initiatives beyond the boardroom.

Flexible Meeting Schedules:

Example: A board recognizes that members may have different scheduling constraints. To accommodate diverse work hours and family responsibilities, the board implements flexible meeting schedules, alternating meeting times to ensure broader participation.

Language Accessibility Initiatives:

Example: Acknowledging linguistic diversity, a board invests in language accessibility initiatives. This may include providing translation services for meetings, documents, and communications to ensure that all members can fully engage regardless of their primary language.

Implicit Bias Training:

Example: In an effort to address unconscious biases, a board incorporates implicit bias training into its regular professional development programs. This training helps board members become more aware of potential biases and promotes fair decision-making processes.

Conclusion

This guidebook is a comprehensive resource for individuals involved in nonprofit organizations, with a specific focus on those addressing domestic violence and sexual violence. It covers crucial aspects such as organizational governance, board development, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and effective fundraising strategies.

At its core, the guide emphasizes the pivotal role of the board of directors in steering a nonprofit organization. It stresses the importance of establishing a diverse, equitable, and inclusive board, underscoring the significance of understanding roles and responsibilities. From mission-setting to executive director hiring, supporting their performance, and planning for organizational development, each step is crucial for sustained success.

The guidebook addresses DEI with intentional efforts, highlighting the crucial role of the board of directors in identifying, recruiting, and supporting board members from diverse backgrounds. Emphasizing that diversity should go beyond tokenism, the guide fosters a culture where each board member can authentically represent themselves.

Fundamental to organizational success is effective fundraising, which involves not just financial contributions but also active involvement in resource mobilization. The guide provides insights into cultivating potential board members and integrating them into the organization strategically.

To enhance board performance, the guide recommends continuous training and assessment, ensuring that board members are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate

challenges effectively. The emphasis on DEI extends to recruitment, with a dedicated section outlining strategies for attracting diverse candidates.

Board members are encouraged to engage in the annual performance assessment process, promoting accountability to the community they serve. This process, led by a committee, involves self-assessment and overall board evaluation, guiding the identification of training needs.

Recognizing that community members need coaching and development for board service, the guide emphasizes the importance of orientation for new board members. Additionally, mentorship programs, where veteran board members guide newcomers, are highlighted as effective integration strategies.

The guidebook introduces innovative approaches to fundraising engagement, such as CoreCentric®, aligning board members with activities matching their strengths. Furthermore, it underlines the board's responsibility in contributing to the annual fund, emphasizing the need for clear, specific financial expectations.

In practicing DEI, the guide suggests additional strategies like creating sponsorships to assist board members financially. It emphasizes the importance of transparent communication regarding time commitments and financial obligations, steering clear of vague quotas.

Finally, the guide encourages boards to continually evolve and adapt to the changing needs of their organizations. By embracing a culture of learning, openness to feedback, and a commitment to DEI principles, boards can foster a positive impact on their communities. This guidebook stands as a dynamic tool, providing insights, strategies, and frameworks to support the ongoing success of nonprofit organizations.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Bias – Prejudice toward one group and its members relative to another group. (GARE)

- **Implicit Bias** - biases people are usually unaware of and that operate at the sub-conscious level.
- Implicit bias is usually expressed indirectly. (GARE)
- **Explicit Bias** - biases that people are aware of and that operate consciously. They are expressed directly. (GARE). The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, and other categories. (Racial Equity Tools)

BIPOC – Black, Indigenous and People of Color (UPHS DEI Taskforce Guiding Principles)

Community Indicator - The means by which we can measure socioeconomic conditions in the community. All community indicators should be aggregated by race, if possible. (GARE)

Cultural Blindness – The belief in treating everyone “equally” by treating everyone the same. It is based on the presumption that differences are by definition bad or problematic, and therefore best ignored. Cultural blindness can be applied to identity characteristics such as sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, etc. (NCCJ)

Discrimination – The unequal treatment of a person differently, or less favorable, for some reason. (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission).

Diversity – Includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender—the groups that most often come to mind when the term “diversity” is used—but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values. (Racial Equity Tools)

- **Race and Ethnicity** – Race refers to a person’s physical appearance and ethnicity refers to one’s nationality, ancestry, culture, and language. In 1997, the U.S. Office of management and Budget designated Hispanic/Latino as an ethnicity category, separate from race, which included American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White.
- **Sexual Orientation** – Refers to an individual’s physical and/or emotional attraction to the same and/or opposite gender. Different sexual orientations can include, lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, questioning, or straight. (HRC)
- **Gender Identity** – Refers to a person’s internal sense of being male, female, or non-binary, which may or may not correspond to the person’s body or designated sex at birth (meaning what sex was originally listed on a person’s birth certificate). Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity, expression or behavior is different from those typically associated with their assigned sex at birth, including but not limited to transsexuals, cross-dressers, androgynous people, and gender non-conforming people. Intersex refers to a sex assigned at birth for individuals exhibiting characteristics (such as reproductive or sexual anatomy and/or chromosomes) of both birth-assigned males and females. (HRC)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Dis/ability** – Refers to a variety of individuals who may or may not use this specific term to describe themselves or their experiences, encompassing a broad range of dis/abilities that may be perceptual, illness-related, physical, developmental, psychiatric, mobility-related or environmental.
- **Age** – Refers to the length of time that one has existed on the planet, their duration of life.
- **Class** – Refers to a group of persons sharing a similar social position and certain economic, political, and cultural characteristics. Social class is a status hierarchy in which individuals and groups are classified on the basis of esteem and prestige acquired mainly through economic success and accumulation of wealth.
- **Religion/Spirituality** – Refers to human beings' relation to that which they regard as holy, sacred, absolute, spiritual, divine, or worthy of especial reverence. It is also commonly regarded as consisting of the way people deal with ultimate concerns about their lives and their fate after death. In many traditions, this relation and these concerns are expressed in terms of one's relationship with or attitude toward God(s) or spirits; in more humanistic or naturalistic forms of religion, they are expressed in terms of one's relationship with or attitudes toward the broader human community or the natural world. (Cain) Spirituality is an individual's understanding of, experience with, and connection to that which transcends the self.
- **National Origin** – Refers to a nation where a person is from. National origin discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favorably because he or she comes from a particular place, because of his or her ethnicity or accent, or because it is believed that he or she has a particular ethnic background.

Equity – Equity is just and fair inclusion. An equitable society is one in which all can participate and prosper. The goals of equity must be to create conditions that allow all to reach their full potential. In short, equity creates an oath from hope to change. (NRDC)

- **Equity vs Equality** – Equity refers to fairness and justice and is distinguished from equality. Whereas equality means providing the same to all, equity means recognizing that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and adjust imbalances. The process is ongoing, requiring us to identify, and overcome intentional and unintentional barriers from bias or systemic structures. (National Association of Colleges and Employers)
- **Environmental Equity** – Equal protection from environmental hazards for individuals, groups, or communities regardless of race, ethnicity, or economic status. This applies to the development, implantation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies, and implies that no population of people should be forced to shoulder a disproportional share of negative environmental impacts of pollution or environmental hazard due to a lack of political or economic strength levels. (NRDC)
- **Racial Equity** – Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. This includes the elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or race to eliminate them. (NRDC) Race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes and outcomes for all groups are improved. (GARE)

Fairness – Impartial and just treatment or behavior without favoritism or discrimination. (Oxford); free from bias, dishonesty, or injustice (Learning for Justice)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Gentrification – Gentrification is often defined as the transformation of neighborhoods from low value to high value. This change has the potential to cause displacement of long-time residents and businesses. Displacement happens when long-time or original neighborhood residents move from a gentrified area because of higher rents, mortgages, and property taxes. Gentrification is a housing, economic, and health issue that affects a community's history and culture and reduces social capital. It often shifts a neighborhood's characteristics (e.g., racial/ethnic composition and household income) by adding new stores and resources in previously run-down neighborhoods. (CDC)

Identity – Race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or mental or physical ability. (UPHS DEI Taskforce Guiding Principles)

Impact – A marked effect or influence (Oxford)

Inclusion (voice, decision-making, feedback, meaningful impact) – Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individual and/or groups into processes, activities and decision/policy making in a way that shares power. (NRDC)

“ISMs” – A way of describing any attitude, action or institutional structure that oppresses a person or group because of their target group. Examples may include race/ethnicity/color (racism), gender (sexism), economic status (classism), age (ageism), religion (e.g. anti-Semitism), sexual orientation (heterosexism), ability (ableism), language/immigration status (xenophobia), gender identity/expression (transphobia). (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 2001)

Justice - Fairness, impartiality, equity (Oxford)

- **Environmental Justice** – Environmental justice embraces the principle that all people and communities have a right to equal protection and equal enforcement of environmental laws and regulations. (NRDC)
- **Climate Justice** – Climate justice is the framing of climate change as an ethical and political issue, rather than purely environmental. It relates the effects of climate change to environmental justice and social justice and examines issues such as equality, human rights, collective rights and the historical responsibilities for climate change. A fundamental proposition of climate justice is that those who are least responsible for climate change suffer its gravest consequences. (NRDC)
- **Racial Justice** – The systematic fair treatment of people of all races that results in equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone. All people can achieve their full potential in life, regardless of race, ethnicity or the community in which they live.(The Annie E. Casey Foundation)
- **Social Justice** – Social justice includes a vision of a society in which the distribution of resources is equitable, and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. Social justice involves social actors who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others and society. (NRDC)

Marginalized – Excluded, ignored, or placed in a powerless position within a group, society or community. (NCCJ)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Meaningful Involvement/Impact – (1) People have an opportunity to participate in decisions about activities that may affect their environment and/or health; (2) The public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision; (3) Their concerns will be considered in the decision-making process; and (4) The decision makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected. (NRDC)

Microaggression – Brief and common daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, offensive, or negative slights and insults towards people of other races, ages, gender identities, sexual orientation, physical or mental abilities, etc. (D. Wing Sue)

Oppression – An unjust system that disadvantages one social identity group over another, maintaining inequity. Oppression fuses institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry and social prejudices in a complex web of relationships and structures that saturate most aspects of life. Oppression denotes structural and material constraints that significantly shape a person's life chances and sense of possibility. Oppression also signifies a hierarchical relationship in which dominant or privileged groups benefit, often in unconscious ways from the disempowerment of marginalized or targeted groups, who experience consequences of discrimination, exclusion, deprivation, exploitation, control of culture and sometimes violence. Oppression resides not only in external social institutions and norms but also within the human psyche. Eradicating oppression ultimately requires struggle against all its forms, and at all levels and building coalitions among diverse people offers promising strategies for challenging oppression systemically. (W.K. Kellogg Foundation)

Prejudice – The act of forming an opinion toward another group and its members prior to considering all available information. Such attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations or stereotypes that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with distinct characteristics. (W.K. Kellogg Foundation)

Privilege – Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to all members of a dominant group (e.g. white privilege, male privilege, etc.). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because they are taught not to see it, but nevertheless it puts at an advantage over those who do not have it. (Racial Equity Tools)

Racism – Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices. (Racial Equity Tools)

- **Individual Racism** – Pre-judgement, bias, or discrimination based on race by an individual. (GARE)
- **Institutional Racism** – Policies, practices and procedures of institutions that have a disproportionately negative effect on racial minorities' access to quality of goods, services, and opportunities. (NRDC) Policies, practices, and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color, often unintentionally. (GARE)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Structural Racism** – A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, coming to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color. (GARE)
- **Systemic Racism** – The basis of individual and institutional racism; it is the value system that is embedded in a society that supports and allows discrimination (NRDC)

Equality – Ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents and believing that no one should have poorer life chances because of where, what or whom they were born, what they believe, or whether they have a disability. Equality recognizes that historically, certain groups of people with characteristics (race, disability, sex, and sexuality) have experienced discrimination. (NRDC)

Racial Inequity – Race can be used to predict life outcomes, e.g., disproportionality in education (high school graduation rates), jobs (unemployment rate), criminal justice (arrest and incarceration rates), etc. (GARE)

Social Identity – The ways in which one characterizes oneself, the similarities one has with others, the ways one has learned to behave in stereotyped social settings, the things one values in oneself and in the world, and the norms that one recognizes and accepts governing everyday behavior. (NCCJ)

Social Power – The degree of influence and access to resources that an individual or organization has among peers and within society. (W.K. Kellogg Foundation)

Stereotype – A set of inaccurate and simplistic beliefs about a group of people in which all individuals in the group are labeled and often treated based on perceived group characteristics. (Oxford)

Tokenism – The practice of making an obligatory effort or symbolic gesture of the inclusion of members of an underrepresented group to deflect criticism or comply with affirmative action rules. Also, a dominant/majority group may tokenize an individual by expecting that they represent and/or speak on behalf of an entire cultural group. (Cain)

Workforce Equity – The workforce of a jurisdiction reflects the diversity of its residents, including across the breadth (functions and departments) and depth (hierarchy) of government. (GARE)

Job Descriptions for Board Members

Every nonprofit board of directors should have a structure that clearly defines the roles of board members. It should clearly distinguish the different roles for the board officers from the general member's role.

The following are samples of the job duties for the following board member positions and can be adapted for your agency:

Board Officers:

President/Board Chair: This position is the chief volunteer role within the organization. The President is responsible for:

- leading the board meetings and the Executive Committee;
- assisting the Executive Director in developing the agenda for each Board meeting;
- serving as the main liaison between the board and staff;
- representing the organization to the community;
- leading board planning;
- ensuring the board acts in accordance with its policies;
- serving as the chief representative of the board; and
- creating leadership opportunities for other board members.

Vice President/Vice Chair: The Vice-President is the "second-in-command" on the board and serves as the President if they are unavailable. Because of the Vice-President's key role in working with the board, the VP should be informed of all major agency issues as the President is. The VP's duties include:

- attending all board meetings;
- serving on the Executive Committee;
- carrying out special assignments as requested by the board president;
- understanding the President's responsibilities and be able to perform the duties in the President's absence; and
- participating as a vital part of the board leadership.

Secretary: The Secretary is responsible for documenting board decisions and maintaining records of all agency governance information. The Secretary's responsibilities include:

- attending all board meetings;
- serving on the Executive Committee;
- recording the minutes of all board meetings;

- ensuring the safety and maintaining important documents, including: articles of incorporation, tax-exempt documentation, by-laws, audits, budget, and policies, meeting minutes; and
- writing correspondence for the board.

Treasurer: The Treasurer manages the agency's financial information. The Treasurer may work closely with the organization's finance staff to determine the agency's financial procedures. The Treasurer oversees the agency's financial reports and audit, and makes sure that the board receives copies of these pieces of information. The Treasurer reports on finances to the board at the regular board meetings and responds to the questions board members pose. The Treasurer serves on the Finance Committee and develops recommendations of financial policies for the board to review. The Treasurer's duties include:

- attending all board meetings;
- understanding financial accounting and reports for the agency;
- serving as the Chair of the Finance Committee;
- managing, with the Finance Committee, the board's review of an action-related to the board's financial responsibilities;
- working with the Executive Director and finance staff to ensure that appropriate financial reports are made available to the board on a regular basis in a timely manner; and
- assisting with the presentation of the proposed annual budget to the board for review and approval.

Adapted from:

- Resource Sharing Project - Your Board of Directors: The Basics:
<http://www.resourcesharingproject.org/your-board-directors-basics>
- Bridgespan Group: Board Job Descriptions:
<https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/library/hiring/nonprofit-job-description-toolkit/board-job-descriptions>

Sample Board Member Job Description

Position Summary:

The board of directors is responsible for ensuring that the organization is well-managed and financially responsible. The board is the governing body of the organization and is responsible for establishing the mission and goals for the organization. In addition, the board sets the organization's policies which provide the parameters for the agency's work.

General Responsibilities (for entire board):

1. To ensure the organization is responsibly managed (in accordance with the organization's bylaws and policies) and is compliant with legal and contract requirements.
2. To ensure that the organization has the resources it needs to pursue its goals. In order to fulfill this responsibility, board members must determine how the organization will raise funds, participate in fund-raising events, donate money, recruit and solicit donors, and identify potential funding sources.
3. To ensure that the resources of the organization are raised and spent in a responsible manner. Board members must help create or approve the agency budget, set financial policy, acquire adequate insurance, and arrange for an annual financial audit.
4. To hire and supervise the Executive Director.
5. To serve as the organization's representatives in the community.
6. To determine the program priorities for the organization. To fulfill this responsibility, board members must establish the organization's strategic plan and long term goals. In addition, the board must evaluate the organization's progress towards its goals.
7. To evaluate and assess board composition, identify and recruit potential board members.

Individual Responsibilities:

1. To make a personal commitment to the mission of the organization.
2. To regularly attend board and committee meetings.
3. To disclose any conflicts of interest as they arise.
4. To stay informed about the goings-on of the organization, including reading financial and program reports.
5. To donate financial resources to the organization and to identify potential donors/funding sources.
6. To participate in special events of the organization.
7. To attend board training events in order to obtain continuing education.
8. To work with the board and staff to strive towards the goals of the organization.

Reprinted from:

- Resource Sharing Project - Your Board of Directors: The Basics:
<http://www.resourcesharingproject.org/your-board-directors-basics>

SAMPLE Board Officer Descriptions:

PRESIDENT / CHAIR / CHIEF VOLUNTARY OFFICER (CVO)

- *General:* Ensures the effective action of the board in governing and supporting the organization, and oversees board affairs. Acts as the representative of the board as a whole, rather than as an individual supervisor to staff.
- *Community:* Speaks to the media and the community on behalf of the organization (as does the executive director); represents the agency in the community.
- *Meetings:* Develops agendas for meetings in concert with the executive director. Presides at board meetings.
- *Committees:* Recommends to the board which committees are to be established. Seeks volunteers for committees and coordinates individual board member assignments. Makes sure each committee has a chairperson, and stays in touch with chairpersons to be sure that their work is carried out; identifies committee recommendations that should be presented to the full board. Determines whether executive committee meetings are necessary and convenes the committee accordingly.
- *Executive Director:* Establishes search and selection committee (usually acts as chair) for hiring an executive director. Convenes board discussions on evaluating the executive director and negotiating compensation and benefits package; conveys information to the executive director.
- *Board Affairs:* Ensures that board matters are handled properly, including preparation of pre-meeting materials, committee functioning, and recruitment and orientation of new board members.

VICE PRESIDENT / VICE CHAIR

- *General:* Acts as the president/chair in his or her absence; assists the president/chair on the above or other specified duties.

- *Special Responsibilities*: Frequently assigned to a special area of responsibility, such as membership, media, annual dinner, facility, or personnel.
- Some organizations choose to make the vice president, explicitly or implicitly, the president-elect.

TREASURER

- *General*: Manages the board's review of, and action related to, the board's financial responsibilities. May work directly with the bookkeeper or other staff in developing and implementing financial procedures and systems.
- *Reports*: Ensures that appropriate financial reports are made available to the board. Regularly reports to board on key financial events, trends, concerns, and assessment of fiscal health.
- *Finance Committee*: Chairs the Finance Committee and prepares agendas for meetings, including a year-long calendar of issues. In larger organizations, a separate Audit Committee may be chaired by a different person.
- *Auditor*: Recommends to the board whether the organization should have an audit. If so, selects and meets annually with the auditor in conjunction with the Finance and/or Audit Committees.
- *Cash Management and Investments*: Ensures, through the Finance Committee, sound management and maximization of cash and investments.

SECRETARY

A major benefit of a corporate secretary position for a board is having someone who supports the full range of board work from communications to the logistics of board and committee meetings. The chair and chief executive benefit from having a gate-keeper who acts as a knowledgeable liaison between the senior staff and the board. Specific benefits on both sides include:

- Constant attention to sensitive deadlines and other dates important to the board.
- A structured approach for tracking important documents, compliance issues, or trends influencing the organization's work.

- The ability for the board to remain on top of its own agenda.
- A coordinated approach to managing any concerns regarding the respective roles of the board and chief executive, impact of the external environment on the organization, and effect of logistics on board processes.
- Freedom for the chief executive to focus on work while remaining assured that the board's needs are being met.

SAMPLE Board Committee Descriptions

Fund Development Committee

Purpose of the Committee:

As a committee of the Board of Directors, helps the Board carry out its due diligence function related to assuring fiscal health through philanthropy and fund development. Partners with staff to institutionalize the philanthropic process within the Board and its individual members, assuring a donor-centered organization.

- **Reports to:** Board of Directors and takes direction from the institution's strategic plan.
- **Staff to the Committee:** Development Director (or executive director if there is no development officer).
- **Committee membership and operations:** Members include both Board and non-Board members. All committee work is done in partnership with and through the leadership and enabling of assigned staff. The CEO makes all staff assignments. The committee does not usurp the authority of the Board, and neither directs nor oversees staff.
- **Frequency of meetings:** As necessary, estimated at six times per year.

Scope of Work for the Fund Development Committee

- Partner with the Governance Committee to assure appropriate articulation of roles and performance expectations in fund development (e.g., for Fund Development Committee, Board, individual board members).
- Devise and recommend philanthropy and fund development policies and recommend to the Board for action, including any limitation policies.
- Help nurture a culture of philanthropy throughout the organization, and assure that all donors of time and money are respected and honored.
- Assure that the Board and individual Board members are adequately educated about the basic principles and best practices in fund development, including the design of a donor-centered organization.
- Through the fund development planning process: help establish the charitable contributions goals for the annual budget; devise the annual fund development plan for action by the Board; and recommend results and benchmarks for action by the Board.
- Review results and evaluate return on investment (ROI) compared to the plan. Identify trends and implications and engage the Board in strategic dialogue and decision-making regarding philanthropy and fund development.
- Help the Board articulate the case for philanthropic support directed at specific audiences.
- Establish task forces to carry out specific fund development activities. Monitor task force performance.
- Provide personal follow-up to individual Board members to monitor their participation.

Finance Committee

Purpose:

The finance committee is responsible for assisting the board in ensuring the organization is financially viable and meeting its fiduciary and compliance responsibilities. The work of the committee revolves around six major areas.

1. Ensure that accurate and complete financial records are maintained:

- Monitor income and expenditures against projections.
- Review and recommend financial policies to the board, including ensuring adequate internal controls and maintaining financial records in accordance with standard accounting practices.

2. Ensure that accurate, timely, and meaningful financial statements are prepared and presented to the board:

- Present quarterly or monthly financial statements to the board.

3. Oversee budget preparation and financial planning:

- Propose for board approval a budget that reflects the organization's goals and board policies.
- Ensure that the budget accurately reflects the needs, expenses, and revenue of the organization.

4. Safeguard the organization's assets:

- Review proposed new funding for ongoing financial implications, recommending approval or disapproval to the board.
- Ensure that the organization has the proper risk-management provisions in place.

5. Help the full board understand the organization's financial affairs:

- Ensure that the board as a whole is well informed about the organization's finances.
- Educate the board about financial matters.

6. Ensure compliance with federal, state, and other requirements related to the organization's finances:

- Ensure that organization maintains adequate insurance coverage.
- Ensure that the IRS Form 990, other forms, and employment and other taxes required by government are filed completely, correctly, and on time.

Audit Committee

Purpose:

In compliance with the *California Nonprofit Integrity Act of 2004* (see attached memo regarding compliance with SB 1262), we are required to perform an annual financial audit and to make it available to the public. Per the legislation, the purpose of the audit

committee is to ensure that the organization performs an annual audit and that it is disclosed to the public, specifically, the committee's duties include:

- Recommend to the board of directors the retention and termination of the independent auditor
- Negotiate the compensation of the auditor on behalf of the board
- Confer with the auditor to satisfy the committee members that the financial affairs of the charitable organization are in order
- Review and determine whether to accept the audit, and
- Approve performance of any non-audit services to be provided by the auditing firm.

Program Committee

Purpose:

The program committee is responsible for ensuring our programs have a viable and sustainable strategy and are achieving their intended educational impact and outcomes. The work of the committee includes:

- Oversight of new program development; monitor and assess existing programs.
- Initiate and guide program evaluations.
- Facilitate discussions about program priorities for the full board of directors.
- Interface with the CEO, Chief Operating Officer (COO), and Program Director (PD) to monitor organizational process against goals in program operations: youth employment, job training, youth services, and post-program transition/placement outcomes.
- Co-host (with PD) monthly 1-hour "check-in" call/meeting with Program Committee during months when no board meeting is scheduled.
- Conduct monthly calls with PD to plan the agendas for monthly committee calls.
- Lead (with PD) the presentation of program reports to the full board at each board meeting.
- Work with staff to determine how to incorporate input of Youth Advisory Board into board meetings.

Executive Committee

The role of an executive committee, as with all committees, is to help the board accomplish its work in the most efficient way. Some boards form an executive committee just because everyone else has one — it seems to exist by default. When creating any committee, it is wise to first analyze the entire structure of the board and determine whether that particular committee would add value. This paper is designed to help boards determine whether an executive committee is a necessary tool for their organization.

What is an executive committee?

As the name implies, an executive committee has special responsibilities and authorities above all other committees. Usually an executive committee acts on behalf of the full board. Its main purpose is to facilitate decision making in between board meetings or in the case of a crisis or other urgent circumstances. It can also act as the communication link to the chief executive and, in some cases, performs the chief executive's performance evaluation.

Limits of authority

Often the role of an executive committee is defined by what it cannot do. To avoid delegating essential powers away from the full board, an executive committee should not:

- amend bylaws;
- elect or remove board members;
- hire or fire the chief executive;
- approve or change the budget; or
- make major structural decisions (add or eliminate programs, approve mergers or dissolve the corporation).

Members of the executive committee

It is a common practice for the board's officers to serve on the executive committee. Usually the board's chair leads the executive committee. Large boards often elect to add other representatives to this committee to ensure necessary diversity in decision making and to avoid concentrating too much power in the hands of a few. The size of the committee should stay relatively small in order to keep it a flexible and efficient tool for the board. The chief executive usually serves as an ex-officio member of this committee.

When an executive committee is beneficial

The following are situations that might warrant using an executive committee.

- **The board is large.** Having a smaller group authorized to act on its behalf in certain circumstances can speed up decision making.
- **Board members are scattered all over the country.** It is easier for a core group to gather during an emergency.
- **The board regularly needs to take action or make frequent decisions.** Certain repetitive and standard financial and legal matters do not require full board meetings and could easily be attended to by an executive committee.
- **The board needs a place to test controversial ideas.** An executive committee can be used to study important issues and to present the findings to the full board.

When an executive committee is less beneficial

- **The board is small.** Decision making is already efficient when the full board meets.
- **The board is active and motivated.** It is easy to get everybody in the meeting room to produce results. All board members are optimally involved.
- **The board has no standing committees.** All committee activities are carried out by temporary task forces.

Special concerns

An organization is well served by an executive committee when the committee facilitates the board's time management. However, to keep every board member active and responsible for his or her own participation, pay attention to the following concerns.

- The role of the committee should be defined in the bylaws, not by the committee itself.
- The executive committee cannot replace the full board. It reports to and is accountable to the full board.
- Even though the executive committee may be granted special powers in the bylaws, the full board should always confirm decisions in its next meeting.
- The executive committee should not marginalize other board members. If the committee is perceived as an inner clique, outside members easily feel left out, resulting in poor morale.

Excerpted from [The Nonprofit Policy Sampler, Second Edition](#) by Barbara Lawrence and Outi Flynn, a publication of BoardSource, formerly the National Center for Nonprofit Boards. For more information about BoardSource, call 877-892-6273 or visit www.boardsource.org. BoardSource © 2009. Text may not be reproduced without written permission from BoardSource.

Temporary “ad hoc” Committees or Task Forces

Some committees are convened on a temporary basis to address a specific, single event or issue. Often called ad hoc committees or task forces, they meet for a few months and then disband once their task is completed. Commonly used temporary committees and their designated tasks include:

- **Site Committee**: To work with staff to evaluate the existing location and consider a move to a different location, to review a new lease, or to weigh the feasibility of purchasing a building.
- **Special Event Committee**: To coordinate the board's assignments on a particular event, such as an annual dinner.

- CEO Transition or Search Committee: To seek a new executive director, including recommending guidelines and a search process to the board, to take steps to help the new executive succeed. Some search committees hire the new executive director, while other search committees present a group of candidates to be evaluated by a different committee or the whole board.
- Merger Committee: To pursue a possible merger with another organization and to bring information and recommendations back to the full board.
- Planning Committee: To lead a strategic planning endeavor (the planning committee may consist of both board and staff members).
- Special Issue Committee: To investigate an unusual problem or opportunity, such as negative publicity in the newspaper, deep staff resentment against the executive director, an unusual grant opportunity or a possible joint project with another organization. Setting up a Special Issue Committee to research the situation and report back to the board ensures that decisions are based on adequate information.

End-of-Meeting Questions

Each committee should adjourn with a series of questions such as:

1. What do we report to the full Board, how and why?
2. What requires strategic dialogue with the Board? What kind of background information will we provide in advance and how will we set the context for the conversation?
3. How can we complement the work of our Board colleagues?
4. What kind of personal follow-up with Board members and other committee members or volunteers is necessary? Why? Who will do what by when?

Board Assessment and Evaluation

Nonprofit board of directors should conduct an annual performance assessment of the board to ensure accountability to the community that the agency serves. The discussion about the board's performance in meeting its expectations and goals can help determine if board members understand their roles.

The board assessment process can be assigned to a committee, such as the board development or governance committee, to lead the annual assessment process. A self-assessment for each board member (see sample form that can be adapted for your board's use) may be completed and returned to the committee for review and compilation. These self-assessments can further assist the committee in determining the training topics needed to further develop the board members' skills for overall board effectiveness.

An overall board assessment can be conducted to help the board discuss and review its overall performance in terms of key responsibilities:

- mission and purpose;
- selecting/evaluation of the Executive Director;
- planning the organization's development and planning process;
- ensuring adequate resources (i.e., fundraising);
- managing resources effectively;
- determining and monitoring the agency's programs and services;
- enhancing the agency's public standing; and
- ensuring the board's development (See sample tool following this section).

The board can also engage in seeking feedback from funders, community members, survivors, and staff through surveys or stakeholder meetings to help provide input on ways it can improve its performance.

It is important to remember that the board of directors is accountable to its community, survivors/clients that the agency serves, funders, the federal, state/territorial, and/or tribal governments for the good management of the agency. Overall, the board assessment process is a key internal step for the board to review its performance in order to ensure they are benefitting the agency and the community it serves.

Adapted from:

- Resource Sharing Project - Your Board of Directors: The Basics:
<http://www.resourcesharingproject.org/your-board-directors-basics>

Resources:

- BoardSource – Successful Board Self-Assessments:
<http://leadingwithintent.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/SuccessfulBoardSelf-Assessments.pdf>
- Center for Nonprofit Leadership – Board of Directors Assessment:
<http://www.adelphi.edu/wp-content/blogs.dir/91/files/2012/09/Board-of-Directors-Assessment.pdf?t=1379703205-148802>
- Maine Association of Nonprofits – Is Your Board Ready for Self-Assessments?:
<http://www.nonprofitmaine.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Is-Your-Board-Ready-for-Self-Assessment-Acrobat-Pro-version.pdf>
- National Council of Nonprofits – Self-Assessment for Nonprofit Boards:
<https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/self-assessments-nonprofit-boards>

Sample Board Member Self-Evaluation

Use the following questions for individual board member evaluation. Board members answering “yes” to these questions are likely to be fulfilling their governance responsibilities.

Questions	Yes	No	Not Sure
1. Do I understand and support the mission, purpose and philosophy of my agency? Do I understand my agency’s philosophy and commitment to anti-racism/anti-oppression as it relates to board, staffing, and services to the community?			
2. Am I knowledgeable about my agency’s programs and services?			
3. Do I follow trends, important developments, priorities, and needs related to my agency?			
4. Do I assist with fund-raising and/or give a yearly monetary gift/donation to my agency? Do I ask people in my circle of influence (e.g., friends, business colleagues, etc.) to contribute/donate to my agency?			
5. Do I review and understand the organization’s regular financial statements?			
6. Do I have a good working relationship with my Executive Director/CEO?			
7. Do I recommend and nominate individuals to join my board and/or committees (as it relates to board diversity and inclusion)?			
8. Do I prepare for and actively participate in board meetings and committee meetings?			
9. Do I act as a good-will ambassador (i.e., help promote) for my agency?			
10. Do I find serving on the board to be a satisfying and rewarding experience?			

Reprinted from:

- National Council of Nonprofits – Sample Individual Board Member Self-Evaluation: https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/sites/default/files/documents/Individual%20Board%20Member%20Self-Evaluation_0.pdf

Sample Board Assessment Tool

Responsibility	Yes/no/ maybe/ unsure	What needs improvement?	Who is responsible?	Deadline
1) Determine agency mission and purpose				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the mission statement accurate? Has it been updated in the last three years? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the organization have a clearly stated philosophy and/or values statement? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board regularly refer to the mission statement and the organization's values/philosophy? 				
Plans for development:				
2) Select the Executive Director				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the ED's job description been updated in the past three years? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the goals of the ED position clear to the board and to the ED? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a succession plan in place in order to sustain the agency during an ED transition? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the board's personnel actions in line with the agency's personnel policies and current employment law? 				
Plans for development:				

Responsibility	Yes/no/ maybe/ unsure	What needs improvement?	Who is responsible?	Deadline
3) Support and supervise the ED				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board president or other designee regularly supervise the ED? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board provide continuous support to the ED in order to help them achieve the goals in their job? Has that support been tailored to meet the unique challenges and areas of growth for the agency's current ED? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board strongly encourage self-care for the ED? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board provide timely feedback (positive and constructive) to the ED? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board clearly state and review the expectations of the ED with the ED? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the ED's evaluation criteria clearly stated and in line with the expectations of the job? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board ensure that all employees are compensated fairly and receive a reasonable benefit package? 				
Plans for development:				

Responsibility	Yes/no/ maybe/ unsure	What needs improvement?	Who is responsible?	Deadline
4) Plan for the organization's development.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the board developed a strategic plan or strategic goals for the agency? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the board providing adequate support in the pursuit of those goals? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the board monitoring the agency's progress towards those goals and amending the plan/goals as necessary? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the plan or set of goals shared throughout all levels of the organization? 				
Plans for development:				
5) Ensure adequate resources				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board raise funds for the agency? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the full board support the agency with personal contributions (in kind or otherwise)? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board ensure that there are enough funds to meet the agency's commitments? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board have a fundraising plan? 				
Plans for development:				

Responsibility	Yes/no/ maybe/ unsure	What needs improvement?	Who is responsible?	Deadline
6) Manage resources effectively				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board approve the agency's annual budget? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board review the agency's budget during the course of the year? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board (or finance committee) review regular financial statements from staff? Does the board understand the agency's financial statements? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board ensure that there are financial policies for the agency and that the agency operates within them? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board ensure that the agency receives and reviews an annual financial 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board ensure that the agency has appropriate levels of liability, director & offer, and other appropriate insurance? 				
Plans for development:				

Responsibility	Yes/no/ maybe/ unsure	What needs improvement?	Who is responsible?	Deadline
7) Determine and monitor the agency's programs and services				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board assess trends in the service area and uses this info to plan? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board have a system in place to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and services? Does the board use this data to inform the development of future programs? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do programs and projects fit within the agency's mission statement? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board have a complete understanding of the organization's programs? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board examine trends in the field to help develop future services? 				
Plans for development:				
8) Enhance the organization's public standing				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can all board members articulate the purpose of the agency? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do board members provide connections between the agency and the community? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are board members clearly proud to represent the agency? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do all board members participate in the rape crisis center's key events? 				
Plans for development:				

Responsibility	Yes/no/ maybe/ unsure	What needs improvement?	Who is responsible?	Deadline
9) Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the board members adhere to bylaws, policies, and state laws regarding agency governance? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are board members are aware of and disclose potential conflicts of interest? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do board members ensure that agency policies meet all legal requirements? 				
Plans for development:				
Responsibility	Yes/no/ maybe/ unsure	What needs improvement?	Who is responsible?	Deadline
10) Ensure board development				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do all board members have job descriptions and have they agreed to responsibilities of being board members? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have all board members received updated copies of all board policies and information (e.g., manual)? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have all board members receive an orientation to the agency board when they begin? Does this orientation include information specific to SA/DV work, such as what the role of a rape crisis center is and what sexual assault survivors might need? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board have a plan to receive annual training? Do they receive annual training? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board (or a committee of the board) work to identify and recruit new members? 				

Responsibility	Yes/no/ maybe/ unsure	What needs improvement?	Who is responsible?	Deadline
10) Ensure board development (cont.)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board utilize a committee structure effectively? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board as a whole fully represent the richness and diversity of the community the agency serves? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board have a shared commitment to anti-oppression/anti-racism work? Is there an agreement across the board about what this means for the organization? 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board's structure provide meaningful opportunities for input from communities the agency serves? Are historically marginalized groups provided with meaningful opportunities to influence the board? 				
Plans for development:				

Reprinted from:

- Resource Sharing Project - Your Board of Directors: The Basics:
<http://www.resourcesharingproject.org/your-board-directors-basics>

DEI ASSESSMENT TOOL INSTRUCTIONS

Guidelines for Assessors

Please write the date you are conducting the assessment at the top of the tool. For each item, you are being asked to score the extent to which your organization demonstrates that practice: not at all, small, moderate, or large extent. Please circle the number (1 to 4) that corresponds to your best judgement. This is your assessment; there is no “right” answer. If you score an item to not apply to your organization, circle N/A in the last column.

Scoring the Assessment

1. Add the total number of circles in each column and record them in row “a” at the bottom of the Assessment.
2. Following the instructions in row “b,” multiply the column totals by the numbers indicated and write the result in row “c.”
 - The total number of circle in the “not at all” column will be multiplied by 1.
 - The total number of circles in the “to a small extent” column will be multiplied by 2.
 - The total number of circles in the “to a moderate extent” column will be multiplied by 3.
 - The total number of circles in the “to a great extent” column will be multiplied by 4.
 - N/A responses receive no score.
3. Add up the total number of points in each column and write the sum in row “c.” This is the final score for the assessment.
4. Use the final score to identify your organization’s point on the continuum of Pathfinder, Driver, Leader and Mentor.

Date of Assessment: _____ Name of Assessor(s): _____ Role: _____

DEI Organizational Assessment							
Category	Best Practices	Not at All	To a Small Extent	To a Moderate Extent	To a Great Extent	Not Applicable	Unknown
<i>Culture</i>							
1	Agrees on the meanings of diversity, equity, and inclusion.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
2	Ensures a welcoming environment with spaces, signs and materials with diverse images, such as: people of all ages and racial backgrounds, same-sex couples, transgender individuals, people of all abilities, etc.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
3	Creates a safe environment to discuss difficult issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
4	Openly talks about organizational power dynamics, including one's privilege and status, as they relate to diversity, equity, and inclusion.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
<i>Values & Guiding Principles</i>							
5	Publicly shares clear messages supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion, such as: policy statement of diversity, equity, and inclusion on website, office spaces, and other publicly distributed materials.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
6	Guides the implementation of policies supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion centered around client voice.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
<i>Administrative Policies and Operational Practices</i>							
7	Develops formal policies promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion for board recruitment and operations.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
8	Maintains policies to effectively address any/all discrimination complaints.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
9	Implements a whistleblower policy.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
10	Implements a conflict-of-interest policy.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
11	Ensures organizational compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, including building accessibility requirements.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
12	Authorizes a unisex bathroom that is safe for transgender and gender nonconforming individuals.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
13	Acknowledges days of religious, spiritual, and cultural observance when setting board and organizational meetings, schedules, and events.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
14	Develops a conflict resolution process for the board and staff.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A

<i>Board and Staff Composition</i>							
15	Seeks ways to meaningfully increase the diversity of its board and staff composition across all lines of difference.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
16	Regularly assesses board member and staff composition to ensure successful recruitment and retention of diverse talent.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
<i>Recruitment</i>							
17	Creates recruitment plans to actively target populations that are not represented on the board and staff.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
18	Builds meaningful relationships with groups representing diverse populations to support recruitment and retention of diverse talent.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
<i>Capacity Building and Training</i>							
19	Develops processes to retain board members, staff and volunteers from diverse groups.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
20	Provides professional development opportunities for board, staff, and volunteers in diversity, equity, and inclusion issues (cultural competency, implicit and explicit bias, privilege, etc.)	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
21	Regularly incorporates diversity, equity, and inclusion issues in board and staff meeting agendas.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
22	Incorporates diversity, equity, and inclusion training in new board and staff member orientation processes.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
<i>Policies</i>							
23	Includes “sexual orientation” and “gender identity and expression” in equal employment opportunity, nondiscrimination, and anti-harassment policies.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
24	Provides equal access for all employees and their families to employment benefits (if offered). Benefits could include health insurance for domestic partners and their children; bereavement policies that include same-sex partners and extended family; maternity leaves for mothers and their partners, including those who adopt; and health coverage that includes benefits for transgender employees, including hormone replacement therapy, gender confirmation surgery, and medical leave.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
25	Has a zero-tolerance anti-bullying policy.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A

<i>Procedures</i>							
26	Is explicit about organization's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion when hiring at all levels.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
27	Contracts with executive search firms, when needed, with proven success in building diverse candidate pools.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
28	Ensures organizational written forms offer at least three gender/sex categories, such as male, female, transgender or self-identify.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
29	Reviews the recruitment, retention, and career development measures for employees, especially regarding diversity.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
<i>Vendors</i>							
30	Ensures organization contracts with vendors and providers who are committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion, especially those owned/operated by women, people of color, youth, or people who are differently-abled or LGBTQ+	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
<i>Strategic Planning, Programming and Service Delivery</i>							
31	Uses the organization's statements about diversity, equity, and inclusion to inform the strategic planning process.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
32	Includes and regularly updates a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Action Plan with the strategic planning process.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
33	Includes diversity, equity, and inclusion commitments in the organization's mission, vision, and values.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
34	Develops short and long-term goals toward diversity, equity and inclusion and regularly assesses progress.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
35	Ensures active participation in strategic planning of staff, volunteers, clients, customers, participants, donors.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
36	Ensures the organization serves diverse constituents in ways that support diversity, equity and inclusion.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
<i>Collaborations and Community Outreach</i>							
37	Supports public policy that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
38	Supports visible participation in events celebrating diverse communities, such as LGBTQ+ community events, celebrations of ethnic and cultural heritage and events that honor civil rights leaders, etc.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
<i>Communications</i>							
39	Supports use of pictures and stories relevant to people with diverse backgrounds in all communications.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A

40	Ensures materials and websites are translated to all languages used by populations served by the organization.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
41	Ensures all media releases and news briefs are sent to media outlets that reach target diverse populations.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
Fundraising							
42	Cultivates donors from diverse communities.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
Performance Measurement, Evaluation and Research							
43	Adopts appropriate diversity, equity, and inclusion related indicators in performance goals.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
44	Regularly assesses organization's commitment to the values of diversity, equity and inclusion.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
45	Allows and encourages anonymous feedback to measure effectiveness of diversity, equity and inclusion in policies and programs.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
46	Includes the perspective of the organization's staff, program participants and donors when evaluating programs and policy.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
47	Develops diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies informed by the best available data regarding diversity.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
48	Regularly reviews research-based best practices regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion to inform board decisions and actions.	1	2	3	4	N/A	N/A
Additional Activities							
	Please utilize this space to describe additional activities your organization does to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion. This information will not affect your overall score, but is valuable to highlight, track, and celebrate.						
Scoring the Assessment		Not at All	To a Small Extent	To a Moderate Extent	To a Great Extent	Not Applicable	Unknown
a. Total for each column							
b. Multiply by number of points		x1	x2	x3	x4	x0	x0
c. Column total							

Scoring Guide			
Pathfinder	Driver	Leader	Mentor
1 to 48	49 to 96	97 to 144	145 to 192

Pathfinder: As a pathfinder of diversity, equity, and inclusion, your organization is seeking organizational change. Completing this assessment is an important first step. Use this tool as a discussion starter to raise awareness and understanding. Consider developing a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan using the best practices illustrated in this assessment and address your critical areas for growth. When you have made progress, celebrate your successes.

Driver: As a driver of diversity, equity, and inclusion, your organization is driving organizational change. It has established its path toward diversity, equity, and inclusion. You may use this tool as a discussion starter to raise awareness on the great work you are doing. Implement a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan to address gaps and opportunities for growth. Continue to develop and implement strategies to build and sustain diversity, equity, and inclusion while fostering an inclusive culture.

Leader: Your organization is in the position of leading organizational change. Your organization is paving a solid path toward diversity, equity, and inclusion. Use this tool as a discussion starter to make critical decisions to address gaps and opportunities for growth. Reflect on all that your organization has accomplished to be more diverse, equitable, and inclusive. Identify modifications or opportunities to rethink key management concepts and principles to enhance this work and deepen its impact.

Mentor: Your organization has effectively implemented and adapted methods and processes to build and sustain diversity, equity, and inclusion. It has made the creation of an inclusive environment a priority, and as a mentor, your organization is in the position of helping others implement change in their organizations. Your organization can assist others in this important work. Pathfinder and Driver organizations may benefit from following your organization's path and support. Your organization can benefit from mentoring others by building relationships and ensuring sustainability of this work within our human services sector.

Now What?

Congratulations on completing and scoring the DEI assessment. Where does your organization go from here? Here are some suggestions:

1. Facilitate a conversation with stakeholders in your organization about the results and follow the accompanying discussion guide.
2. Incorporate the best practices listed in the assessment into the daily activities of your organization. This may include incorporating best practices into a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan. Please see Appendix B for the Action Plan Template.
3. Retake this assessment in one year and identify any changes made, or areas in need of further improvement.
4. Review the list of recommended readings in Appendix D.

DEI ASSESSMENT SCORING GUIDE

Scoring Guide

Pathfinder

1 to 48

Driver

49 to 96

Leader

97 to 144

Mentor

145 to 192

Pathfinder: As a pathfinder of diversity, equity, and inclusion, your organization is seeking organizational change. Completing this assessment is an important first step. Use this tool as a discussion starter to raise awareness and understanding. Consider developing a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan using the best practices illustrated in this assessment and address your critical areas for growth. When you have made progress, celebrate your successes.

Driver: As a driver of diversity, equity, and inclusion, your organization is driving organizational change. It has established its path toward diversity, equity, and inclusion. You may use this tool as a discussion starter to raise awareness on the great work you are doing. Implement a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan to address gaps and opportunities for growth. Continue to develop and implement strategies to build and sustain diversity, equity, and inclusion while fostering an inclusive culture.

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APPENDIX A - DISCUSSION GUIDE

Introduction

If you will be facilitating internal discussions with stakeholders in your organization, use these questions to help guide the conversation. Questions are broken into categories to host multiple conversations or divide this work into sub-groups within your organization. For instance, you might hold a session with the board, the senior staff, all staff, just volunteers, or members of your committees.

Capture and summarize the comments that come out of these discussions and use the summaries to help guide the team within your organization that will be drafting the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan. Feel free to share the results of the assessment with your stakeholders, allowing them to provide quality feedback about culture, interpretations, and actions within your organization.

I. Organizational Development

Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion should be known and understood by all board members, management, staff, volunteers, members, and partners.

- Why do we think diversity, inclusion, and equity are important to our organization?
- What is our current understanding of diversity, inclusion, and equity, and their meanings? (Use the glossary if needed to spark discussion)
- How do we create a welcoming environment? (Get participants to give examples)
- What actions can we take to make our environment more inclusive? (Examples to share if your discussion stalls could be to suggest the use of pictures, signs, materials, brochures, and stories that include people with diverse backgrounds).

II. Internal Systems

Commitment to creating an environment free of barriers to diversity, inclusion and equity should be included in all policies, practices, and guidelines of the organization.

- How do the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion guide the work of our organization?
- How can we include diversity, equity, and inclusion into a values statement?
- How do we measure if our current policies relating to diversity and inclusion are effective and relevant?
- Do we consider issues relating to race, ethnicity, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, age, class or persons with disabilities when we set policies and make decisions for the organization?

III. Leadership & Governance

The way nonprofits approach recruiting new board and staff members may help build diversity and promote inclusive and equitable practices.

- How do we currently recruit board and staff members?
- Is the current composition of our board or our advisory boards reflective of the demographic served by the organization or represented in the community? How are these voices and perspectives important to our donors, volunteers, and staff?
- Do we know the demographic composition of our organization (board, staff, clients, volunteers, etc.) and the community that we serve? If so, in what ways are they different and why?

APPENDIX A - DISCUSSION GUIDE

- What are we doing as an organization to ensure that our board and organization is reflective of the demographics and diversity of the community?
- How are we being intentional about reaching out to underrepresented populations?
- What is currently holding us back from achieving the level of diversity we desire?
- When considering the way, the board and committees function, do we find and remove barriers to participation from underrepresented populations (e.g. time and location of meetings, accessibility of building, availability of child/elder care, meeting style)?
- Have we considered changing our governance structures to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion? For instance, have we formed a youth advisory committee or consumer advisory committee?

IV. Human Resources

Nonprofit organizations should strive to exercise fair and equitable human resources management and practices that attract and retain qualified individuals.

- How do we currently recruit and hire for diversity within our organization? Do we send job postings to a variety of contacts and through different vehicles to ensure that diverse audiences see them?
- How do we identify any barriers in the recruitment, selection and retention processes for staff, volunteers and management/leadership (i.e. advertising outlets, criteria for selection, interview process, time or financial requirements for participation)?
- How do we make sure that all employees have the same opportunities for advancement and professional development?
- How do we ensure all employees are valued and included in the workplace culture?
- If money/budgets were not a barrier to decisions made about benefits, would our organization adopt policies that were more inclusive of all employees and their families?

V. Strategy

Organizational planning is a process that defines a nonprofit's overall direction, activities, and strategies to fulfill its mission. Nonprofits have a duty to engage in sound planning to provide a clear vision for the future, including overall direction, activities, programming, and strategies to fulfill the mission. Partnerships with other organizations may reflect diversity.

- How does diversity, equity, and inclusion relate to our organization's mission, vision, and core values?
- How do we engage the participation of diverse constituents in developing the strategic direction of our organization?
- Do we have a communications strategy to inform diverse populations of our activities and invite them to participate?
- How do we partner with organizations representing diverse populations?

VI. Performance Management

Nonprofits should regularly monitor and evaluate programs and services to measure and celebrate progress against their goals.

- How do we currently evaluate and monitor the accessibility, appropriateness and effectiveness of our programs and services for diverse populations?
- How do we celebrate progress made in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion?

APPENDIX B - DEI ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

Objectives

- Why should we take action to advance this work?
- What does our organization need to accomplish in order to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion?
- What organizational change do we hope to achieve?

Required Actions and Strategies

- What action do we take to ensure accomplishment of success?
- What do we need to do to achieve this success?

Champion of Actions

- Who will lead the action(s)?
- Who accepts responsibility and accountability for completing actions?

Measurable Indicators of Success

- How will we know that we have successfully achieved our objectives?
- What will success look like?
- How will we quantify success?

Timeline for Completion

- How long do we need to achieve our objectives?
- Over what period of time will the actions take place and by when will we accomplish this success?

Objective(s):

Required Actions and Strategies What will be done?	Champion of Action(s) Who will lead the action(s)?	Measurable Indicator(s) of Success What will be the evidence of success?	Timeline for Completion By when? (Day/Month)	Tracking Progress: Achievement Y (Yes) N (No) O (Ongoing)

	Latino														
	Native American / Alaska Native														
	Other														
Resources	Capacity and inclination to give														
	Access to funders and/or donors														
	Available for active participation (cultivation, stewardship, etc.)														
Community Connections	Business														
	Media														
	Politics														
	Social Services														
	Education														
	Philanthropy														
	Other:														
	Other:														

	Government									
	Law									
	Mission-related:									
	Other:									
	Other:									
	Other:									



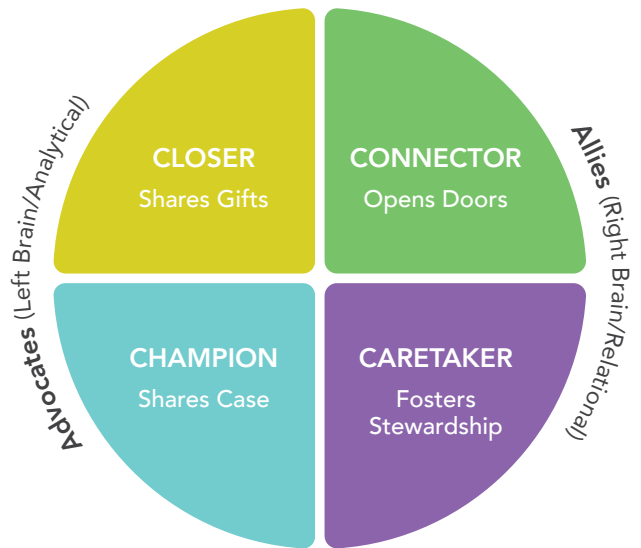
Name: _____

My Right-Fit Role:

- Connector (Green)
- Closer (Yellow)
- Champion (Blue)
- Caretaker (Purple)

High-impact activities within my preference zone I am willing to do:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



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CONNECTOR	CHAMPION	CLOSER	CARETAKER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Identify prospects with affinity & ability · Set appointments · Make introductions · Invite to tours/events · Host events · Put notes on invites · Sign letters · Tell patient stories · Add to mailing lists · Push social media · Review donor list to identify/connect · Identify board members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Provide expert information, details, context, impact on case or clinical work · Lead facility tours · Answer donor questions · Refine case for support · Review current & prospective donor lists to identify/connect · Assist with research · Orient board members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Make the ask! · Negotiate gift details · Encourage involvement · Make presentations · Share the case · Invite to tours/events · Tell mission stories · Recruit board members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Thank donors · Handwrite notes · Make follow-up calls · Give stewardship reports · Seek feedback & input · Seek donor needs/preferences · Send birthday cards · Round on patients · Send paper clippings · Help new board members

PERSONAL IMPACT PLAN *Worksheet*



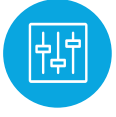
Name: _____	Email: _____
Organization: _____	Phone: _____



How is the mission aligned with your personal values and purpose?



What do you most want to accomplish through your service here?



How could the organization best leverage your strengths, preferences and interests?



What is your CoreCentric™ color profile?

- Connector (Green)
- Champion (Blue)
- Closer (Yellow)
- Caretaker (Purple)



Are there specific engagement opportunities that really energize and excite you?



What specific commitments and activities are you willing to undertake now to advance philanthropy?

1.

2.

3.



What support, tools and resources do you need to be successful?



How would you prefer the organization stay in touch with you about your plans?

- Face-to-Face
- Text Message
- Phone Call
- Other:
- Email



What else do you want us to know or understand?