

NONPROFIT SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE (NSI): “REAL-TIME” LEARNING & EVALUATION HIGHLIGHTS



INITIATIVE OVERVIEW AS OF 5/1/2016



HOW WE DEFINE LONG TERM SUCCESS

SUC • CESS *noun*
/sək'ses/

LA County nonprofit sector, including funders, nonprofit organizations, technical assistance providers and educational institutions, supports, understands and regularly engages in Strategic Restructuring to enhance its impact and sustainability

Blue Garnet, NSI's learning and evaluation partner, is helping NSI better understand its long-term success and impact.

"No matter how deep your head is buried in the sand, you can still hear the [SR] drumbeat"

"[The NSI] process has kept us on front end of where non-profit world is going. We feel ahead of the curve."

"Realized how important SR is to our longevity and health. Advocate for the process all the time"

KEY FINDINGS (TO DATE)

- Overview -

- Consultant brings structure, timeframe, expertise, and objectivity; critical to process
- Regardless of outcome, SR process considered educational and valuable
- 100% of grantees reaching negotiated SR agreements believe theirs will improve organization impact
- Going through SR process builds experience and knowledge for future SR opportunities

Consultants are the "glue that keeps the process together"; "absolutely essential"

Even without agreement, NSI process "laid the groundwork for future"; "Leverage-able for future merger talks"

"Opportunity to explore is invaluable"; "Process itself is the outcome"

STRENGTHS (TO DATE)

- Overview -

- Key SR negotiation success factors: time to devote to process, internal clarity, honest upfront conversations, trust, positive previous working experience, compatible cultures and mission, and clear understanding SR process and “deliverables”
- NSI’s role has been as a catalyst or “accelerator” of SR discussions
- SR process provides many unanticipated grantee benefits, including relationship development and increased strategic thinking

We are “stronger, smarter, better”

“Made us look inward and toward future... what do we need to do to be sustainable? Took a good hard look at ourselves and ask what kind of organization do we want to be going forward”

“Now, program is “documented well. Inventory, database, pieces of the puzzle are ready”

REAL-TIME LEARNING IN ACTION (TO DATE)

How we’ve adapted our process along the way based on grantee feedback:

GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS	SR DISCUSSION	POST DISCUSSION/ONGOING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous, rolling time frame to accommodate demand and allow grantees to apply when ready • Simplified, on-line application open to any NPO serving LA Co. • Due diligence, readiness assessment by NSI Project Manager • Prompt decision within 3-6 wks • Increased upfront communication re: evaluation, NSI and definition of success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamlined real-time learning evaluation • Pro-bono legal assistance by Public Counsel • Grantee indicator of success development • Clarification re: freedom in consultant selection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration support available; prompt grant decisions maintain momentum • Enhanced grantee learning via convenings • Increased SR education opportunities (e.g. workshops, conferences) • In process: peer learning network; consultant convening; additional communication materials

FUNDERS LIST TO DATE

- The Ahmanson Foundation
- The Annenberg Foundation
- California Community Foundation
- The California Endowment
- Carol & James Collins Foundation
- Durfee Foundation
- First 5 LA
- Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
- James Irvine Foundation
- JPMorgan Chase
- The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation
- UniHealth Foundation
- Weingart Foundation