The Nonprofit Sustainability Initiative (NSI) fosters long-term partnerships for nonprofits interested in exploring strategic restructuring to create sustainable impact. The NSI is a funding collaborative of over a dozen foundations that helps nonprofits achieve their mission by providing stability in a funding environment constantly influenced by changing policy and priorities.

The goal of the NSI is to normalize strategic restructuring by establishing an environment where service providers, funders and consultants understand and regularly engage in the activity as a strategy for enhancing impact and sustainability.

Strategic restructuring (SR) is a range of formal, long-term partnerships, that lead to greater organizational effectiveness and efficiency. These partnerships can range from jointly managed programs, shared administrative services and joint programming, to mergers and acquisitions.

These strategic restructuring grants ensure that nonprofit leaders have the right tools in place to adapt to external changes and create sustainable impact. These partnerships create opportunities that help build the capacity to sustain the nonprofit mission and scale the vision.
The NSI application and related information, including award criteria, can be found at: calfund.org/nsi

Here’s a summary of the major steps:
1. NSI grants typically range from $20,000 to $40,000 and are used to hire consulting services associated with the exploration and negotiation of an SR partnership
2. Identify a potential partner(s) and agree upon general, high-level strategic partnership goals and objectives
3. Each grantee needs to get a signed Board resolution to enter into good-faith negotiations
4. Interview consultant candidates and select consultant. Agree upon the consultant’s scope of work, timeline and budget
5. Complete and submit NSI application
6. NSI Project Manager will contact applicants with follow-up questions and due diligence

INTERESTED IN APPLYING?

NEED ADDITIONAL INFO?

For more information on the NSI or the application process, please contact Carrie Harlow, Interim Project Manager, at NSIProjectManager@gmail.com or Ann Sewill, Vice President, Health & Housing at asewill@calfund.org.

Additional resources can also be found at: calfund.org/nsi

PARTICIPATING FUNDERS

- The Ahmanson Foundation
- Annenberg Foundation
- Ballmer Group
- California Community Foundation
- The California Endowment
- The Carol & James Collins Foundation
- The Carl and Roberta Deutsch Foundation
- Cedars-Sinai
- The Durfee Foundation
- Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
- First 5 LA
- The James Irvine Foundation
- JPMorgan Chase
- LA84 Foundation
- The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation
- The Rose Hills Foundation
- UniHealth Foundation
- Weingart Foundation

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

- Consultant brings structure, time-frame, expertise, and objectivity; critical to the process
- Regardless of outcome, SR process considered educational and valuable
- 100% of grantees believe their SR agreement will result in improved organizational impact
- Going through SR process builds experience and knowledge for future partnership opportunities
- Key success factors include: time to devote to process, internal clarity, honest upfront conversations, trust, positive previous working experience, compatible cultures and mission, and clear understanding of 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