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### Barriers and Facilitators of Nonprofit Community Involvement

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**Barriers and Facilitators of Nonprofit Community Involvement**

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Master's Capstone

Submitted to:

Nonprofit Studies Program

University of Richmond

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### **Abstract**

Community-facing organizations have recently been critiqued for catering to donors instead of prioritizing community involvement. This lack of community engagement can lead to organizations not being as effective at the work they aim to do within these communities. Studies also show that organizations that have a more equal distribution of power engage more with their communities. This research project investigated how power distribution in Richmond-area nonprofits impacted the way that their communities were involved within their organizations. Findings from this study suggest that nonprofit fundraisers are more invested in creating community representation within their organization rather than cultivating a more diverse donor-base. Participants in this study also believe that if more employees in their organization are involved in fundraising, the more money they could raise to serve their communities.

## Introduction

### Introduction

The nonprofit sector has its roots in the early days of America, back when colonists first settled. While the organizations in colonial times were much different from the nonprofits of today, they both have their roots in assisting fellow members of one's community. Over time, nonprofit responsibility has expanded to fill the gaps left by the government—if there is a community need that cannot be satisfied by government action alone, nonprofits step in. Since the 1970s, the nonprofit sector has boomed and has come to make up a sizeable piece of the nation's economy, contributing over \$1 trillion in 2016 (NCCS Team, 2020). Over 1.5 million nonprofits are currently registered with the Internal Revenue Service, and nearly \$440 billion in private donations are directed towards nonprofits each year (NCCS Team, 2020).

These nonprofits are funded primarily by income from fees for goods and services provided by the organization and by money from the government; however, money from private individuals, foundations, and corporations is what truly drives nonprofit operations. Individual donors make up 80% of private philanthropic giving, meaning nonprofits are very invested in recruiting and maintaining individual donors (Worth, 2016). Organizations have historically solicited gifts from wealthy individuals and foundations, which can cause these nonprofits to alter their mission and programming to please the wealthiest of their donors. This tendency for organizations to bend to the will of the wealthy has led to the creation of what some people refer to as the nonprofit industrial complex, which has resulted in organizations being more preoccupied with catering to donors than to the communities they are supposed to serve (INCITE!, 2017).

The problem at hand is that nonprofit organizations often do not fundraise in a manner that honors the communities they serve. When the desires of the donors are prioritized over the needs of the community, the nonprofit is not operating in a beneficial way. Donors should be appreciated and thanked, but not at the expense of the true mission of the organization.

Instead, all levels of the organization should be involved in fundraising, thereby increasing the number of people who can do outreach in the community. Many nonprofits currently have a segmented, hierarchical leadership structure where leadership is centralized at the top of the organization and fundraising responsibilities lie with one person or a specific team (Magloff, 2019). Instead, when more employees are involved in fundraising, the organization can have a wider reach through each employee's own networks. This method of fundraising is especially beneficial at attracting community members to one's organization, as employees can bring in their local friends and families to support the cause.

This study explores how power distribution within nonprofit organizations impacts the way the organization fundraises. By understanding how nonprofit power dynamics impact fundraising and community involvement, organizations will be able to structure their organization in a way that aligns with their mission and better serves their community.

## **Context**

### ***History of Organizations and Associations***

The nonprofit sector as it exists today is a relatively new construction. The philanthropic sector has its roots in the early colonial days of this country when colonists relied on one another for help due to their distrust of the government. These colonists formed associations and organizations to help the needy, oftentimes seeing charity as their religious duty. This concept of community organizations became entrenched in American society, as people formed associations

to help one another out where the government failed to do so. In democratic societies, the government focuses its resources on the needs of the ‘average’ citizen, meaning the needs of those at the fringes or outskirts of the average get left behind. Thus, associations and organizations are formed to fill in the gaps where the government has not focused its resources (Holland & Ritvo, 2016).

In the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, associations grew into larger organizations. Instead of the traditional structure of smaller groups where everyone knew the people within the organization, associations grew into larger, more structured groups. At the same time, donations to these nonprofit organizations became funded primarily from large donations from wealthy individuals. When the Great Depression hit, the government stepped in to help the needy. However, when Reagan came into office, government help for the poor was rapidly decreased, leaving the nonprofits as the only source of programming to assist low-income populations (Holland and Ritvo, 2016). Today, there is still a focus on individualism and nonprofits fundraising for themselves as opposed to getting much government support. Over the past 30 years, the nonprofit sector has expanded, resulting in over 1.5 million nonprofits being registered with the Internal Revenue Service as of 2019 (NCCS Team, 2020).

### ***Philanthropic Giving***

Similar to how nonprofit organizations have shifted over time, so too has fundraising and philanthropic giving. In the early days of America, money was primarily given to religious institutions, the poor, and the local community. As time passed and the wealthy’s affluence grew, the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries brought about larger-scale philanthropic giving. Traditionally, most giving had been smaller-scale, individual giving; however, this era brought about the creation of foundations. Private foundations such as these were established so that

wealthy families and individuals could set aside money to fund charitable causes. Prominent philanthropists such as Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller created foundations of their own with the viewpoint that people with their wealth and stature were morally obligated to give back to the less fortunate (Worth, 2016).

Nonprofits were able to solicit gifts from foundations like those of Carnegie and Rockefeller. However, shortly after traditional foundations were created, a phenomenon of community foundations emerged. As opposed to being funded by a wealthy family or individual, community foundations were formed by money pooled from members of a given community who prioritized funding important local causes. Today, many donors and foundations are more cause-driven as opposed to organization-driven. This means these donors prioritize a certain issue over any one specific organization. This shift towards cause-driven giving can make fundraising forecasting more difficult, since there is less 'loyalty' to specific organizations (Worth, 2016).

### ***How Nonprofits Get Their Money***

There are many revenue streams for nonprofits aside from individuals and foundations. In fact, in 2013, 48% of all income reported by public charities came from fees for goods and services provided by the organization. The second-largest source of income reported by these public charities was funding from the government, either at the federal, state, or local level. According to the National Center for Charitable Statistics, only 13% of the income reported by public charities came through philanthropic donations, from individuals, corporations, or foundations. While it might seem as though charities are mostly funded by private giving, the sector is mostly funded by fees and governmental support (Abramson, 2018).

However, even though most money in the sector is contributed by fees and governmental support, there is still a very large donor base in the country. Private charitable giving rose to nearly \$430 billion in 2018, according to the National Center for Charitable Statistics (2020). Of this number, gifts from individuals comprised 80% of the given total—72% from living individuals and 8% from bequests after the donor has passed away. The remaining private charitable gifts were given by foundations (15%) and corporations (5%). The impact of giving from individuals is likely even understated in these figures, as many foundations are established from gifts from a single individual (Worth, 2016).

Nonprofit organizations raise this money in a variety of different ways. Many organizations can charge fees for their goods and services, such as hospitals, universities, or museums. Most money that is raised in the nonprofit sector comes from these fees. Money can also be given to nonprofit organizations from the government, either through government grants or some sort of assistance program. Grant money is also donated through private foundations and corporations. The rest of the money raised by nonprofits is typically through soliciting gifts from individuals, corporations, and foundations. Most money brought in through gift solicitation comprises of large gifts from a small number of donors, however, smaller monetary gifts can still make a big impact in an organization (Foster, 2009). As such, individuals are key stakeholders in the nonprofit fundraising process.

### ***Nonprofit Industrial Complex***

As the nonprofit sector has grown in recent decades, nonprofit organizations have evolved to be much more structured and professional than ever before. A critique of this more structured nonprofit sector is that it has shifted into what some refer to as a nonprofit industrial complex (NIC), more concerned with raising money than doing good for the community. A



major contributor to the NIC is the amount of money solicited through foundations (INCITE!, 2017). Many foundations are established with money from very wealthy individuals. This money is then filtered into foundations where the rich are not taxed on their wealth.

Additionally, much of the money given by foundations does not go to the poor or go to organizations that are affecting social change. Even when money from foundations *do* go to these causes, a unique issue is at play: money that stemmed from social and economic inequality is used to help ‘solve’ these same inequalities (Kohl-Arenas, 2015). This means that the current fundraising model utilized by most nonprofits just ensures that the country remains in the status quo. Radical social change cannot occur within the nonprofit industrial complex as it exists today (INCITE!, 2017).

### ***How Demographics Have Shifted***

Another matter that is affecting nonprofit fundraising practices is that the country’s demographics are shifting from a majority-white country to a majority-minority country. Traditionally, the strategy utilized by nonprofit fundraisers targets wealthy, white donors as opposed to the growing minority population. Because of the rapidly shifting demographics in the United States, the fundraising strategy aimed towards wealthy, white Americans will be far less reliable. Jung (2015) found that this ever-growing minority population has not been a focus of fundraisers—not because they don’t have the means to donate, but because they have been largely ignored by the fundraising field. Additionally, wealthy white donors find comfort in interacting with white female fundraisers, which is why the fundraising field is heavily composed of white women (Dorsey et al., 2020). With more minority donors, white women might not be the preferred fundraising connection.

To address the trend of minority communities being ignored in the fundraising field, Smith et al. (2012) conducted a study to investigate philanthropy in communities of color. They conducted an ethnographic study of 260 people of Mexican, Guatemalan, Salvadoran, Filipino, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and African descent. The researchers noted that minorities are often seen as less generous and ‘takers’ of more charitable services than their white counterparts. Their study led them to conclude that communities of color *do* give to charitable causes, they just often give in a way that differs from white donors. The respondents in their study favored donating their time and money directly to people who needed help in their communities or directly to places of worship as opposed to giving to mainstream charities. Despite the variety of respondents’ backgrounds, these trends were found across the sample of respondents (Smith et al., 2012).

### **Problem**

The major issue at hand in the nonprofit sector is that the development of the sector over the last century has led to a disconnect between the organizations and the communities they are supposed to be serving. When nonprofits are funded mainly by wealthy individuals and foundations, organizations can prioritize the needs of the donors over the wellbeing of the communities being served. Traditionally, most fundraisers work within the philosophy of donor-centered fundraising, where fundraising tactics are geared toward the donor’s needs to make them feel good about their giving. Vu Le, on the other hand, argues that we should shift towards a model of community-centric fundraising. Donor-centered fundraising perpetuates inequity, fosters a white-savior narrative amongst donors, and pits nonprofits against each other in a competition to raise the most money. A donor-centered fundraising model ‘others’ those who are being served, while telling major donors that they have the solutions to beneficiaries’

problems. Instead, the good of the community should come before all else (Le, 2017).

Organizations should ground their work in social justice and work toward the goal of community wellness. By doing this, organizations can better serve their constituents and truly create positive change in their communities.

This problem of prioritizing donors over communities affects people throughout the nonprofit sector, especially organizations that aim to create social change within their communities. If nonprofits are not effectively engaging with and assisting their community, the community members could become wary of working with the organization, making future collaboration less likely. Community buy-in is an important part of an organization's success, so community collaboration and trust should be a priority.

This problem is potentially a result of the nonprofit industrial complex. Nonprofit organizations have been receiving less money from the government, meaning they must make up the difference through private donations from individuals and foundations (Jung, 2015). Individual giving can be harder to predict and track, resulting in nonprofits aiming to cater to the donor's desires to retain their ongoing donations. However, when nonprofit organizations cater to the desires of wealthy individuals, they are simply upholding the status quo in which the wealthy hold all the power and are the decision-makers (INCITE!, 2017). True social change at the hands of nonprofits cannot happen until organizations embrace a community-focused method of fundraising and operating.

To see how this could be done, this study investigates how the nonprofit structure and power dynamic impact the way the organization fundraises. It is hypothesized that organizations that have a more equal power distribution will use more inclusive methods of fundraising that engage more of the local community.

**Significance**

When nonprofits center their focus and fundraising on donors' needs, community members can get left behind. This impacts the performance and efficacy of the entire nonprofit sector. If nonprofits can better serve the communities around them, they will be trusted by those they aim to serve. Additionally, by making it a priority to involve the community in an organization, the nonprofit has the opportunity to reach a whole new audience of potential donors, ones who care deeply about the impact of the nonprofit's work in the community. Moving toward a more inclusive way of fundraising is also a moral issue—fundraising should be rooted in justice and equality. Fundraisers and other nonprofit employees have an obligation to serve their constituents in an honoring way, meaning fundraisers should be able to identify their privilege and ensure that they don't 'other' their constituents. By bringing the community into the nonprofit's work, there is less of an 'us' and 'them' feeling.

**Response**

This study investigates how power distributions within an organization affect the way the organization fundraises. Data was collected through interviews of fundraising professionals in Richmond-area nonprofits. Interviewees were selected from established organizations that have a fundraising position or team. Interviewees must also work at an organization that is community-facing, working in the community as opposed to organizations such as universities or museums. The results of this study suggest that there is a disconnect between prioritizing community engagement and fund development within an organization.

**Conclusion**

This section has outlined the context, problem, and significance at hand—that nonprofits tend to prioritize donors over community interests. The following section will discuss the

relevant literature about this problem. Section three will then discuss the methods and findings from the interviews with fundraising professionals. Finally, the last section will discuss conclusions and implications for the future.

## **Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

This section of the research paper will summarize and synthesize the existing literature that is currently available regarding community engagement and power structures in nonprofits. This chapter will begin by discussing the theoretical framework that this study is grounded in. Next, the paper will transition to discussing several key concepts that are related to the variables of this study: power and leadership, fundraising, donor demographics, and strategic interests. Finally, this chapter will end with a summary and a look at what is to come in the remaining chapters.

### **Community Engagement**

This study operates under the framework of community engagement. Community engagement is a framework that suggests that working collaboratively with those around you is the best, most effective way to bring about change (Department of Health and Human Services, 2011). A real-world example of the importance of community engagement was described in an article by Barnes and Schmitz—in 2010, Chris Christie, Cory Booker, and Mark Zuckerberg teamed up to launch a reform of Newark Public Schools. Over \$100 million was given to the project, which also involved the collaboration of other philanthropists from across the country. The creators of this plan used a top-down approach, meaning those in leadership positions came up with the initiative and planned it completely before debuting it to constituents. What was meant to be an innovative, well-accepted plan to revitalize the public school system led to

massive outcry and protest from the public, who vehemently disapproved of the initiative. The entire plan ended up being scrapped and the money that went into the project went completely to waste. Booker then helped launch a different initiative with a similar goal; however, this new plan involved leaders and organizations from across the community using a bottom-up approach. This initiative was far more successful and sustainable, as stakeholders of all kinds were involved from the beginning of the project (Barnes & Schmitz, 2016).

Though this is just one example, the Barnes and Schmitz stories epitomize the importance of bringing communities into the initiative from the get-go by using a bottom-up approach to planning. Experts argue that it is not enough to just have community members at the table, they need to hold leadership positions as well. By including members of the community that organizations are aiming to help, there is a much higher likelihood that the initiative will gain support and be sustainable in the long run (Barnes & Schmitz, 2016).

Another important piece of the community engagement theory centers on collaborative partnerships—it is important not only to get the community involved in an initiative but to also involve other organizations as well. Nonprofit experts note that many issues plaguing communities cannot be solved by one organization alone. Instead, all types of organizations can come together to create change, so long as they all agree to pursue the same goal. When working in a collaboration, power dynamics can shift—whereas power is normally distributed from a top-down approach within an organization, collaboratives lead to a more lateral distribution of power. Each organization can take charge of a certain aspect, like funding, planning, scheduling, etc. By creating a network of two or more organizations, the collaboration can have access to more resources for their cause than ever possible individually (McDonald, 2011).

This study is grounded in the framework of community engagement, working under the notion that communities should be involved in the decisions that affect them, and that collaborative partnerships are the key to successful, community-wide change.

### **Power and Leadership**

Within the framework of community engagement, power and leadership are often more disbursed throughout an organization and collaborative, rather than concentrating power right at the top of the organization. Power must inherently be shared with community members as well as with other employees within the organization to ensure that resources are used wisely towards the greater good of the community. One important decentralization of power has to do with fundraising. Traditionally, there would be a fundraising team consisting of one or more employees whose sole focus is raising money for the organization. However, it is much more beneficial for an organization to develop a culture of philanthropy, where employees of all kinds are involved in the fundraising process. Building a successful culture of philanthropy begins with recognizing the fact that fundraising is a necessary and vital way to gain philanthropic support. One way to do this is to ensure that an organization's fundraising practices align with its mission. Once the importance of fundraising is understood by all staff and the board, a culture of philanthropy can develop, and fundraising responsibility can be shared across the organization. That way, each employee is involved in taking charge of the organization's financial success (Nathan & Tempel, 2016). It is also vital that the organization's financials are not held secret by the board or executive director. Transparency is key when it comes to disbursing leadership and power through the organization—if employees are in the dark about the financial status of the organization, decisions about employment or program termination will

come as a shock, potentially confusing and disappointing employees. Instead, fundraising and financial information should be shared responsibilities of all staff (Bell & Ellis, 2016).

Aside from fundraising, another important decentralization of power within nonprofit organizations lies with the board. In traditional nonprofit structures, many governing decisions are left up to the board, who “sit behind high walls and drawn shades, holding the outside world at bay to keep secrets in and invaders out” (Freiworth, 2017, p. 9). This quote exemplifies how leadership is condensed at the top of the organizational hierarchy. Instead, adopting a governance framework that distributes power and leadership decisions more equitably has been shown to increase self-determination and personal democracy, as well as benefit community participation. Freiworth (2019) suggests that all stakeholders should be involved in the governance process, including all levels of staff and even some community members. By having these groups involved in leadership in some way, each person is personally invested in the success of the organization. Having community involvement also helps keep the organization in tune with community issues and needs. Centralized governance, on the other hand, does not provide the community the same benefits (Freiworth, 2017).

### **Fundraising**

To create change and do the greatest good for the community, an organization must be in proper financial standing. As previously mentioned, it is important that fundraising tasks be decentralized so that all staff are invested in the financial capacity of the organization (Nathan & Tempel, 2016). For a nonprofit to survive in the short term, it must be resilient—it must have enough money in unrestricted funds to be able to pay the bills in the event of an economic shock or downturn. Equally important is the main goal in the long run: maintaining or expanding



services. Nonprofit organizations must find the best methods of fundraising so that they make enough money to stay in operation and improve upon the work that they do (Bowman, 2011).

Finding this fundraising ‘sweet spot’ is easier said than done—donor giving can be hard to predict. There have been theories of an “altruism budget,” where there is a theoretical cap on the amount of money given by the country’s donor base. However, an increase in present-day giving by donors does not necessarily deplete future giving like previously thought (Gee & Meer, 2020).

### **Donor Demographics**

One way to increase the amount of money raised by an organization to financial sustainability would be to diversify the organization’s donor base. Yuha Jung (2015) studied the current state of fundraising practices used by nonprofit art museums and found that the strategy used by most fundraisers in the nonprofit arts sector focuses primarily on wealthy, white patrons. In the United States, nonprofits and museums alike have received less support from the government, thereby increasing their reliance on fundraising from donors. However, demographics in the United States are rapidly shifting towards a majority-minority population, meaning the fundraising strategy aimed towards wealthy, white Americans will be far less reliable. Jung found that this ever-growing minority population has not been a focus of fundraisers—not because they don’t have the means to donate, but because they have been largely ignored by the fundraising field. Ignoring this minority population can also make the arts seem like an exclusive and discriminatory space when this is often not the case. Instead, Jung suggests that shifting towards a relationship-building approach to fundraising will create deeper ties with donors and will welcome donors of all races and backgrounds into the arts. She also notes the necessity of having diverse fundraisers and board members in the organization while

also realizing the fact that different communities give in different ways (Jung, 2015). While this work focuses on nonprofit art museums, Jung's findings are still very relevant for the rest of the nonprofit sector.

To address the trend of minority communities being ignored in the fundraising field, Smith et al. (2012) conducted a study to investigate philanthropy in communities of color. They conducted an ethnographic study of 260 people who lived near San Francisco. Participants were of Mexican, Guatemalan, Salvadoran, Filipino, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and African descent. The researchers noted that minorities are often viewed as takers rather than givers and are often seen as being less generous than their white counterparts. Their study led them to conclude that in reality, it is not that communities of color don't give, they just often give in a way that differs from white donors. The respondents in their study noted that they often donated their time and money directly to people who needed help in their communities as opposed to giving to mainstream charitable agencies. Many respondents also prioritized giving to their places of worship over mainstream charities. Despite the variety of respondents' backgrounds, these trends were found across the sample of respondents (Smith et al., 2012). To address the tendency of fundraisers to focus on white donors, fundraisers should learn about the ways that communities around them give money. By looking at the giving patterns of nearby communities, fundraisers will be able to connect with a whole new set of prospective donors.

### **Strategic Interests**

Thanks to shifting demographics in the United States, it makes moral and financial sense for nonprofit organizations to shift their organizations to be representative of the communities they serve. Despite minority populations' growing population, wealth, and influence, they are often considered to be recipients of nonprofit services as opposed to potential contributors to the

cause. The shift that needs to occur is adapting the organization's tactics to reach new potential donors since fundraising is not a 'one size fits all' operation. To attract a diverse range of donors and volunteers, the organization must first begin to understand and create relationships within the community. The organization should aim to reflect the demographics of the local population, starting with the board and extending out across all levels of the organization. Having a diverse staff who all take part in leadership decisions and fundraising will make the organization better equipped to make new connections within the community. Offering space to the public is another way to integrate the organization into the greater community and give more name recognition to that potential untapped donor base. To eventually reach all different people within the local community, fundraisers must familiarize themselves with the unfamiliar and step out of their fundraising comfort zone (Newman, 2002).

Another way that organizations need to strategically plan is by figuring out which programs are the best use of their resources. Nonprofits have finite access to resources, and try as they might, they cannot fund every program that they would want to. Experts have since advocated for a shift from focusing on specific programs and services to prioritizing impact. This will allow the nonprofit to focus on what is truly most important about their work—making meaningful change within their community. This paradigm shift also involves considering other types of capital beyond financial, such as human and social capital. Knowledge, skills, relationships, and trust can all go a long way towards an organization making a meaningful impact. In terms of impact, Bell and Ellis (2016) recommend evaluating programming for their sustainability and mission impact. Nonprofits should aim to invest plenty of resources into their programs that have high sustainability and high mission impact, as these make the most financial sense and do the most from their community. They should begin to reevaluate programs that

have low mission impact and/or low sustainability, as their resources could make a bigger impact if they were invested elsewhere (Bell & Ellis, 2016).

## **Conclusion**

The community engagement framework recommends that communities should be involved in nonprofit programming and implementation and that leadership should be distributed within nonprofit organizations. For leadership and power to be successfully shared among staff members, fundraising and other decision-making responsibilities should be contributed to by staff of all levels. By having more buy-in from staff members, employees are more invested in the success of the organization. To create positive impact within the community, nonprofits should also get community members involved, by involving members in creating and implementing programming. Diversifying the organization's donor base and board will ensure that the organization is integrated with the community and can understand its unique needs. Nonprofits must also evaluate their programming based on community impact as opposed to simply looking at financial success because bettering the community is what the nonprofit sector is all about.

In this study, the researcher will analyze local Richmond nonprofits to see how their leadership and power are distributed among employees. It is hypothesized that organizations that utilize a more equal power distribution will utilize more diverse methods of fundraising and will also have more community involvement in their programming.

## **Methods and Findings**

### **Method**

#### ***Research Overview***

The purpose of this research study was to see how Richmond-area nonprofits involved community members in their organizations. The researcher wanted to study how power distribution in an organization affects methods of fundraising. She wanted to see if an organization with more disbursed power/leadership was able to have more organizational involvement from the community. To study these questions, she conducted four semi-structured interviews with nonprofit fundraising professionals in the Richmond area.

### ***Recruitment***

When recruiting subjects for this research project, the biggest qualification needed of participants was working for an organization with an established fundraising position and/or team. The ideal sample was people who worked for medium- to large-sized organizations as opposed to smaller, grassroots organizations. More structured organizations likely had a larger donor base and more experience with fundraising and soliciting gifts. Another qualification for participants was that they worked for an organization whose constituency was in the city of Richmond. This was mainly done for convenience purposes—this provided a more manageable number of organizations to reach out to as opposed to finding organizations across the state or country.

The sampling method used for this research study was a mix of convenience sampling and snowball sampling. The researcher found two organizations from her own networks and found the remaining two organizations through suggestions from earlier participants. In total, 16 organizations were contacted to participate in this study; four responded and scheduled interviews.

The participants who participated in this study were each from organizations that serve residents of Richmond, Virginia. The first participant, Mary<sup>1</sup>, works for Organization 1, a nonprofit that provides quality, low- or no-cost education to students in the East End. Mary's organization has about 40 employees and works with anywhere from 40-60 volunteers a year. The second participant was Rachel\*, who works for Organization 2. This organization provides safe, affordable housing for Richmond residents and has a staff of four people. Organization 3 is the workplace of Jess\* and 41 other individuals. Like Organization 1, Jess's organization focuses on educating East End students. The last participant, Emily\*, worked for Organization 4. This final organization employs about 20 people and increases access to affordable, healthy food in the Richmond area. *Table 1* summarizes this information below.

*Table 1*

	<b>Organization 1</b>	<b>Organization 2</b>	<b>Organization 3</b>	<b>Organization 4</b>
	Mary*	Rachel*	Jess*	Emily*
<b># Employees</b>	40	4	42	20
<b>Philanthropic focus</b>	Education	Affordable housing	Education	Access to healthy food
<b>Size of fundraising team</b>	4	2	4	3
<b>Demographics of interviewee</b>	White woman	White woman	White woman	White woman

### *Procedures*

Participants of this study were identified from a combination of convenience and snowball sampling. With the parameters of wanting to interview employees at medium-to-large,

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<sup>1</sup> All names are changed for the sake of anonymity

established, Richmond-based nonprofits in mind, the researcher consulted her networks and ultimately found the first two participants in the study. After conducting the interviews with these two participants, they advised the researcher to reach out to a few other Richmond-based nonprofits, two of whom responded and eventually participated in the study. The researcher found each participant's email address on their organization's website. Each person was contacted using a standard email template that outlined the nature of the interview, the subject matter, and the time commitment associated with the interview.

Each participant was given the option of an in-person, telephone, or virtual video interview. Mary opted to participate in an in-person interview, which took place in a coffee shop of her choice. The other three interviews took place over the phone. The interviews lasted anywhere from 45 minutes to just over an hour. Each interview was recorded by the researcher for transcription purposes; however, the audio recordings were not shared with anyone aside from the researcher. After the interviews were completed, the researcher transcribed the audio recordings. One transcription was done by hand, while the others were completed using a free online transcription service. Once the interview transcription concluded, the coding process began.

The coding process occurred in two different steps. The first step was going through each interview transcription and identifying preliminary themes from each interview. These first themes were typically a word or two from a quote that stuck out as important during the first read-through. The second step of the coding process was to find commonalities of these preliminary themes across interviews and come up with a word or phrase to characterize this commonality.

### ***Instruments***

Before the interviews began, the researcher created an interview protocol. This set of interview questions, included in full in the appendix, contained five different sections to gather information about the interviewees' background along with details about the organization's structure, fundraising process, diversity, and community impact. While a standard set of interview questions was created, the interview was semi-structured, allowing the opportunity for follow-up questions when appropriate. An example of a question that elicited rich data was "Do the racial demographics of you and your fundraisers impact the way that you solicit gifts?" Another well-received question was "If you could change how your organization is structured, what changes would you make?"

### ***Limitations***

This study had a few limitations, one of which was its small sample size—there was about a 25% response rate to requests for interviews, resulting in a small number of interviews. Another limitation was that all the participants in the study were white women, creating a lack of diversity in the sample size. Additionally, the initial focus of this study was to measure some form of community impact, however, the interview questions didn't end up doing an adequate job of measuring impact. Instead, data was collected about the extent to which organizations fundraised and involved the community in their work.

### **Findings**

#### ***Themes***

Four key themes arose from the four interviews: need for organizational change, cultivating trust through relationships, expanding definition of community involvement, and discomfort in the fundraising role. The need for organizational change theme spoke to participants' desire for change within their organization; they wanted a more collaborative



organizational structure, a revamped mission statement, and a philanthropy-focused organizational culture. Participants also prioritized the need to build connections, by fostering one-on-one relationships with community members and by building trust with the community. Participants also spoke of expanding their organizations' definitions of community involvement by creating channels for community feedback and by creating volunteer opportunities for the community. However, these participants also noted that there is a conflict between wanting community representation on their board and wanting a board who can fundraise. The final theme was about the difficulty of being a fundraiser with the wanting to care for donors' education while also providing privacy and respect for program participants. More in-depth definitions of these themes and subthemes can be found in *Table 3*.

**Need for Organizational Changes.** All four participating organizations were described by their fundraisers as having a more traditional structure and layout. Mary spoke about how the executive director of Organization 1 “carries the weight of leadership” within the nonprofit, while Rachel spoke about how Organization 2 has a “relatively traditional structure in terms of a board that oversees a single executive director, and that ED then oversees staff.” While all participants noted that their executive directors were receptive to input from other levels of staff within the organization, most participants expressed their desire for a more networked and collaborative organizational structure. Emily noted that in smaller organizations, there is less room for career growth—many people in her organization leave once they have outgrown their current role. By creating a more collaborative organizational structure where positions are less restricted to one or two specific responsibilities, staff could transition to positions that better suited them, as opposed to leaving the organization for that opportunity. Creating more staff

longevity within the organization allows for employees to create and sustain better relationships with program participants and the community.

In addition to a desire for an improved organizational structure, many participants mentioned the need to revisit and redefine their mission statements. This does not involve changing the work that the organizations are a part of, however, this change would ensure that public statements released by the organization are reflective of the work that they do. Many participants felt that the recent shift towards racial justice in the country requires updated language that more accurately reflects the organization's beliefs. Rachel noted that Organization 2 has been "actively taking our implicit values and making them more explicit" to hone in on the work that the organization does. By having a more accurate and representative mission and values statement, organizations will have a clearer purpose to share with donors and constituents alike.

Another change that these nonprofits have undertaken is creating a culture of philanthropy within their organizations. Each participating organization had a specific position and/or team of positions that were solely responsible for fundraising. Despite not requiring formal fundraising participation from other employees, other staff informally participate in fundraising just by sharing their experiences with the people around them. Jess mentioned that "It's having you understand that you represent this organization externally as well, and any interaction you have where you're talking about [Organization 3] is a potential fundraising opportunity." Meanwhile, Rachel noted that at Organization 2, "not everybody asks people for money. Like to me, everyone does development by, are you creating positive experiences and associations with us, people want to be a part of things that are successful. They want to be a part of things that you're a part of. So, inviting in our spheres of influence to contribute to the work

that we do is something that I highly value.” While these organizations don’t require that each staff member be explicitly involved in fundraising, each employee does impact the organization’s fundraising success.

**Cultivating Trust Through Relationships.** A major theme that appeared in each interview was the necessity of cultivating strong relationships. Participants believe that the way to create meaningful community change is to work with individual community members in a one-on-one capacity. Jess from Organization 3 notes that they take an “individualized approach to service” when engaging with their community. Whether that means sitting down with a student and coming up with a personalized education plan or working with a parent who wants to move out of public housing, each community member that they interact with is assisted in a meaningful way. Mary, from another educational organization, spoke about how the community impact made by Organization 1 is done on an individual level with the students they serve. By focusing on the individual, these organizations can ensure that they make a meaningful, long-lasting impact on their participants.

Aside from fostering one-on-one relationships with participants, some fundraisers emphasized the importance of building trust with the communities they serve. Emily stated that the trust she and her coworkers build with clients is imperative to long-term success. Meanwhile, Jess notes that the community’s trust in her organization is one of the biggest assets they have. Organization 3 has been working in the East End for decades, stating:

We have been a long-time partner in this community, and we understand and incorporate [community] voices. We're asking for you to partner with us and entrust us to ensure that our neighbors get what they want, what they need. Um, so that's really, our message is, is asking for trust, asking for support, asking for long-term investment. This is a community where there's a lot of in and out, and people will come in, do a study, and leave and never actually share the study results, or they'll come in and try a nonprofit or try some approach to philanthropy. And it might not get the results that they want. So, they just

leave. And we are committed as being long-term partners in the east end... we've got really solid relationships and have built really strong trust with community members.

Over the past few decades, Organization 3 has established themselves as partners of the East End, and because of their perseverance and commitment to listening to community members, they have been immensely successful.

**Expanding Definition of Community Involvement.** Each participant from the four organizations emphasized the importance of community involvement in their respective organizations. One way these organizations involve Richmond constituents is by creating organized channels for feedback from program participants. Emily mentioned that Organization 4 is currently creating a participant advisory board for one of their programs so that they can investigate how to better serve their clients. She also emphasizes the importance of asking critical questions—“we can survey people to death, but if everyone just says, ‘we're happy with the program’ and ‘we loved it,’ we're not really gaining any great insight that can help us change or adapt those programs to meet the needs of the community.” At Organization 3, Jess mentioned that they utilize community needs assessments and they co-create programs with members of the Richmond community. Based on these responses, organizations do their best work when they are listening to those they serve. Participants and organizations alike will have better experiences when opinions are shared and valued.

A few interview participants mentioned wanting to diversify their donor base and bring in more community members. One way that organizations have done this is by bringing community members onto their governing board. However, Mary explained that there exists a conflict between prioritizing community member representation and prioritizing board members who can raise a lot of dollars. She explained, “As a fundraiser, I struggle with how we've focused a lot on having a representative level of students, of parents, of people in the

neighborhood. And those people are not people who can write large checks or who are network people who can write large checks. However, with staying true to our mission and what we are working for, I feel like there's a balancing act of valuing both of those things.” Similarly, Jess explained that their organization wants to recruit board members from the community, but that they are facing an obstacle of putting aside the view that board members should have “deep pockets.” As such, there seems to be a disconnect between prioritizing representation and funding.

One way to circumvent this disconnect is to think differently about philanthropy. Jess shared that despite philanthropy typically being equated to money, there are many ways the community can get involved without any financial burden. Organization 3 sees many community members coming in and volunteering their time. Jess says this is a way for community members to get involved and give back without any sort of financial contribution. Emily also noted that community members occasionally come to the farm to see the inner workings of the programs that they participate in. Bringing community members into the organization at any level is beneficial to the organization and rewarding for the community members themselves.

**Discomfort in the Fundraising Role.** Each participant in this study was a white woman working with a primarily Black clientele and a primarily white donor base. Because of this racial dynamic, these fundraisers recognize that they have the opportunity and duty to educate their donor base about the community that they are contributing to. Mary spoke about her experience with this, saying:

I do feel like I've been in conversations with white conservative majors before, and they have said things that have made my skin crawl, and I am a white privileged affluent woman. And I have thought to myself after I reflected on those moments that having the confidence to speak into that with grace and education feels really important. But I

wonder if it's a disservice—I don't think I have settled from a personal...like, I wonder, am I comfortable with this? And I have settled on, like, I think that's my job, to educate them. And I think I'm good at it.

Mary's experience as a white woman working with a primarily white donor base gives her a sense of common ground with these donors. This commonality allows her to educate the donor about their biases and opinions in a way that is respectful but true to the organization's mission. Jess, however, notes that her organization can take things a step further— they will refuse money if the gift does not align with their mission and values:

Sometimes we have to have hard conversations with donors who want things that we know don't align with who the East End is or who our community members are. We will have those hard conversations if we need to, we will say no to money if we need to, if it doesn't align or is trying to paint a narrative that we don't believe to be true. We've said no before, and I'm sure we will again, even though that's hard to do as a fundraiser. You don't want to reject the money, but sometimes that's important.

In cases where educating the donor doesn't work, some organizations will prioritize staying true to the mission, even if that means losing out on money.

In addition to their roles in educating their donors, many interviewees value providing the utmost respect for their program participants. Rachel spoke about how at Organization 2, they aim to “deconstruct how we even think about charity and saviorism and donations in general.” She notes that when it comes to appealing to donors, she is “not going to rely on telling you a story that makes you feel good about yourself or pity people or whatever. We have really high standards at [Organization 2] of privacy and respect and integrity to our tenants and clients.” By centering the community's wants and needs, organizations can build ever-important trust within the community. However, sometimes it is still helpful to share uplifting stories about an organization's participants. In that case, Emily argues, the organization should provide compensation for the participant's time so that they can “steward those stories in a really

authentic and ethical way that helps to highlight the disparities without shoving the community member under the bus.”

**Table 2: Coding Schema**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sub-theme</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Need for organizational changes	Collaborative organizational structure	Desire to move from a traditional structure to one with a more collaborative distribution of power
	Redefining mission	Mission and values statement don't reflect current goals and beliefs
	Creating a culture of philanthropy	Creating a workplace where employees understand the value of fundraising and fundraise through sharing stories and experiences
Cultivating trust through relationships	One-on-one connections	Importance and value of creating one-on-one relationships with program participants and donors
	Trust-building	Establishing relationships with community members, being reliable, and creating trust
Expanding definition of community involvement	Creating feedback channels	Importance of creating clear opportunities for community feedback
	Conflict	There is a conflict between wanting a board that brings in money and wanting a board that is representative of the community
	Breadth of philanthropy	Philanthropy is much more than just donating money, it includes volunteering, providing feedback, and more
Discomfort in the fundraising role	Education	Importance of educating the wealthy, white donor
	Privacy and respect for clients	Importance of treating clients with respect and privacy

## **Conclusion**

Participants in this study suggest that nonprofit fundraisers are more invested in creating community representation within their organization rather than cultivating a more diverse donor-base. Participants in this study also believe that if more employees in their organization are involved in fundraising, the more money they could raise to serve their communities. However, more research needs to be conducted to find the right balance between community representation in the organization and board fundraising requirements. More research needs to be done on methods of increasing community engagement within organizations.

## **Discussion**

### **Overview**

The real-world issue that inspired this project was from the researcher's own observations of community-focused nonprofit organizations. From her observations, it seemed as though community-focused nonprofit organizations were not adequately engaging the community they serve. There seemed to be a lack of representation in leadership positions and few avenues for community feedback for organizations' programming. When organizations are not including members of the community they serve, they risk 'othering' and infantilizing these communities. Some people hold the perception that those receiving services from nonprofit organizations do not know how to help themselves, so not including these voices can perpetuate this misconception (Le, 2017).

This project looked at how power was distributed within nonprofit organizations and how communities were involved in the fundraising process and beyond. By investigating Richmond-area nonprofits' experiences with involving community members in their organizational processes, we can learn what has or has not been successful in the pursuit to bring in community



involvement. This study aimed to investigate how power is distributed throughout nonprofit organizations and how that power distribution affected an organization's impact in the community. However, with the set of interview questions chosen, the discussions with participants ended up revolving around how each organization aimed to involve the community as opposed to the level of impact the organization saw itself making in the community. Many interesting findings came from these interviews; however, they did drift slightly from the original intention behind the project.

This research project used qualitative methods of investigation. Four individuals from four different nonprofits were interviewed by the researcher. The interview was semi-structured, meaning the researcher asked a set of predetermined questions while also asking follow-up questions that were not created in advance. The four participants were selected using a mix of convenience and snowball sampling. Once each interview concluded, the researcher transcribed each interview and conducted a two-part coding process, resulting in a set of themes and sub-themes. Below is a list of themes and sub-themes that emerged from the coding process.

**Table 3**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sub-Theme</b>
Need for organizational change	Collaborative organizational structure
	Redefining mission
	Creating a culture of philanthropy
Cultivating trust through relationships	One-on-one connections
	Trust-building
Expanding definition of community involvement	Creating feedback channels
	Conflict

	Breadth of philanthropy
Discomfort in the fundraising role	Education
	Privacy and respect for clients

One of the most interesting findings from this study was that there is a conflict between wanting a governing board that brings in money and wanting a board that is representative of the community being served. Many participants have struggled to find the right balance between wanting representation and the expertise and perspective that comes from community members being on the board. At the same time, these participants desire a board that will donate and connect the organizations with their wealthy peers. In an attempt to bring community members into other areas of the organization, some participants mentioned expanding their view of philanthropy to also focus on volunteering and time spent with the organization. This expansion of philanthropy allows community members to get involved in their organization without needing to donate financial resources. Instead, a donation of time is considered to be just as valuable as a monetary donation.

Many participants also desired a change in the organizational structure of their nonprofit to cater to more community involvement. One participant noted that her organization does not provide much opportunity for internal growth, thus resulting in a relatively high turnover rate. When employees are not staying at their organizations, it is difficult to cultivate the community relationships that are necessary for the nonprofit to be a trusted, long-lasting presence in the community. Another organizational change mentioned by participants was wanting to foster a culture of philanthropy within their nonprofit. When each staff member and volunteer is invested in the organization and shares their experience with their networks, a wide variety of people can become donors.

## **Implications**

### ***Need for Organizational Change***

The findings from this study suggest that nonprofit fundraisers desire a more collaborative, less traditional organizational structure. These participants mentioned that the traditional, hierarchical structure typical of nonprofits is not conducive to a more representative, community-oriented organization. This finding is important for practitioners because their performance and community impact could potentially be improved by restructuring their organization. While not a simple change, an organizational restructuring could maximize the organization's impact and increase the number of people they serve.

In addition to a desire for structural change, participants also expressed the need to update language surrounding organizational mission and values. There seems to be a shift from organizations highlighting the work that they do *for* communities to the work they do *with* communities. These nonprofit organizations want to convey that they work alongside their participants as opposed to sending the message that their participants would not succeed without the help of them and their donors. This desire to avoid a 'white savior' narrative is important for practitioners and students alike. Anyone who currently works for or desires to work for a nonprofit should be cognizant of the desire to shift missional language from doing to assisting. This could also be an educational opportunity for donors—organizations could share the reasoning behind the language change and begin a conversation about the relationship between donors, organizations, and program participants.

In addition to structural and language changes, participants also noted the benefits of cultivating a culture of philanthropy within their organizations. This culture of philanthropy results in people at all levels of the organization being involved in the fundraising process.

Promoting a culture of philanthropy means that all members of the organization should be able to discuss the mission and values of the nonprofit with people around them. This could impact the way that nonprofit organizations recruit new employees since each staff member would need to be familiar with the ins and outs of the mission and feel comfortable participating in the fundraising process.

### ***Cultivating Trust Through Relationships***

Participants in this study spoke at length about the importance of trust and relationships with the community they serve. Many participants believe that the way to gain that trust is to develop one-on-one relationships with community members. This impacts practitioners because it takes time and effort to cultivate these meaningful relationships. Organizations would also need to decide who is responsible for creating these relationships: fundraisers, senior leadership, program managers, or perhaps even everyone in the organization. Cultivating these one-on-one relationships can be a good way to build trust within the community. With so many nonprofits being created, one way to encourage long-term success is to gain the trust of those the organization serves. According to these research participants, trust and relationship-building go together, so these could be the keys to success for creating a lasting impact in the community. This would also positively impact the experience of community members, as they would feel more comfortable being participants of an organization that they trust and who respects them.

### ***Expanding Definition of Community Involvement***

One implication of this research is that there seems to be a conflict between organizations wanting their governing board to reflect the community they serve versus wanting the board to be able to fundraise for them. More research needs to be done to figure out the correct balance board representation. While it is beneficial to have well-connected, wealthy donors as board

members, it could be argued that it is just as beneficial to have community members on the board. These community members would be able to bring a different perspective to board meetings and would likely be able to make connections between the organization and other well-respected members of the community. These resources could be just as fruitful as money for the nonprofit organization looking to create a bigger impact within the community.

Another implication of these findings is that the concept of philanthropy seems to be evolving. Instead of just focusing on monetary donations, nonprofit organizations are also focused on finding donors who are willing to donate their time. One way that organizations could get community members involved in philanthropic efforts would be to encourage volunteering or showing up to community events. Donating time can be just as meaningful to an organization as a monetary donation and is a way to connect with individuals who might care about the nonprofit's mission without having the means to donate money. More research can be done to discover other ways that community members can get involved without monetary donations.

### ***Discomfort in the Fundraising Role***

Another important implication of this study is that white fundraisers could potentially leave their jobs, since many of these fundraisers experienced discomfort in their role. These participants each noted that they have felt uncomfortable due to inappropriate, racially insensitive remarks from their donors. More research is needed to figure out the best steps in these scenarios. Is it better to take the time to educate the donor so that they begin to change their way of thinking? Or is it unethical to take money from people who hold racist ideas and spend it on a Black constituency? Additional research on the effects of white donors on nonprofits that have a majority-minority constituency would be beneficial to answer these

questions. Research also needs to be done by human resources professionals to see how this discomfort affects job satisfaction and performance. Constant feelings of discomfort could lead to burnout or even vacating jobs.

### **Recommendations**

Because participants favored a change to the typical nonprofit organizational structure, moving forward, researchers should investigate how different power distributions impact the work done by nonprofits. Perhaps there is a certain specific structure that nonprofits would benefit from. Alternatively, different structures could be beneficial for different types of organizations—what works best for an environmental justice organization might not be most effective for an education-based nonprofit. Research would also need to be done to discover the best way to transition a nonprofit organization from one structure to another without disrupting programming and other work done within the community.

The nonprofit sector would also benefit from additional research done on the most effective forms of community involvement in organizations. Based on the answers given by this study's participants, this is a prominent issue facing nonprofits today. Participants noted that they were eager to increase representation of community members in the organization and the donor base, but that there did not seem to be many actionable ways to do so. One participant mentioned liking the idea of community-centric fundraising, but that it seemed more of a nice idea as opposed to a reasonable method of fundraising. Conducting more research on centering communities within nonprofit organizations is essential to ensuring that community members' voices are heard and prioritized in the nonprofit sector.

Based on participants' answers in this study, nonprofit organizations should prioritize learning about education and sensitivity when hiring new fundraisers. If a nonprofit wants to

prioritize racial justice within its organization, fundraisers need to be equipped to educate their donors if they express views that are in opposition to the mission. Coming up with a clear set of actions when encountering these scenarios is key. Additionally, for similar reasons, fundraisers should prioritize being sensitive to program participants' privacy during the fundraising process. It can be exploitative if the only interaction a fundraiser has with a participant is to get their story to raise money. Instead, fundraisers should ensure that they fairly compensate program participants for their time and ensure that the stories they tell are honoring of those who experienced them.

### **Relating to the Literature**

Jung (2015) and Smith et al. (2012) wrote about the need to diversify the donor base to be more representative and diverse. Participants in this study, on the other hand, mentioned that they were less focused on increasing the diversity of their donors and more focused on making their organizations more representative of the community they serve. One participant mentioned that she didn't see it as the job of her organization to try to solve the American wealth gap. Instead, she focused on diversifying the leadership within her organization and educating the wealthy, white donors that support the organization. Other participants mentioned similar viewpoints, that they were not as interested in creating a diverse donor base as they were in ensuring that their donor base is educated and respectful of the work that the organization does. This shift from the literature is another opportunity for future research.

Alternatively, a finding that aligned with the existing literature was the importance of creating a culture of philanthropy within an organization. While power is currently typically centered at the top of the organizational hierarchy, creating a culture of philanthropy allows fundraising responsibility to be shared across an organization (Nathan & Tempel, 2016).

Participants in this study noted that one of the best ways they have found to introduce themselves to new people is to have their employees share positive experiences they have had with their networks. This is a simple, yet effective way to get everyone involved in fundraising without having to train all employees on how to solicit gifts and make specific asks of donors.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this research study was to see how Richmond-area nonprofits involved community members in their organizations. Participants shared their struggles with wanting to prioritize both community engagement and fund development, and while these two areas have some similarities, they do not perfectly align. This issue is important to pay attention to because there could be a way to better serve the community while also bringing in more money for programming. To find this balance, it is important that researchers and practitioners alike find the right balance between fundraising and community engagement. It is not enough to say a change must be made; instead, it is necessary to disclose best practices and next steps so organizations everywhere can be better stewards of their communities.



## Appendix

### Interview protocol

#### Background

1. Have you always lived in Richmond?
  - a. If not, when did you move here?
  - b. What made you decide to move here? OR What do you like/dislike about living here?
2. How long have you worked at \_\_\_\_\_?
3. What inspired you to work for \_\_\_\_\_?
4. What is your job title?
5. Have you always held this position, or did you start at the company in another role?
6. How would you describe your current responsibilities at \_\_\_\_\_?
7. What is a typical day like for you on the job?

#### Organization and Leadership

1. How many employees work in your organization? How many volunteers?
2. Can you describe the leadership structure of your organization?
3. Can you describe the Board's involvement within the organization?
  - a. Are there certain requirements that board members must follow? Do they have any specific responsibilities?
4. If you could change how your organization is structured, what changes would you make? Why?
5. Can you describe your organization's mission?
6. How does the board work toward your mission? Your fellow employees?

#### Fundraising

1. How does fundraising in your organization work?
  - a. What methods do you use to fundraise?
  - b. What makes a successful fundraising year for your organization?
2. About how many people at your organization are involved in fundraising?
3. How is the community involved in fundraising?
4. How does your organization's mission align with your fundraising practices?

#### Diversity

1. What role does representation play in your organization?
2. Would you consider your organization diverse? Why or why not?
3. Do the racial demographics of you and your fundraisers impact the way that you solicit gifts? Why or why not?

#### Community

1. Do you involve members of your local community into your organization? This could include the Board, employment, programming, etc.
2. What kind of impact do you see your organization making in your community?
3. Does your organization participate in any sort of community outreach programs?
4. Can you describe the extent to which you partner with other organizations in your community?
  - a. How do these partnerships impact the work that you do in your community?
5. Do your employees live in the community you serve?

Is there anything we haven't talked about that you feel is important?

Is there anything you want to ask me?

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