

Evaluation Capacity-Building: Meeting the Needs of Community-Based Organizations

Prepared for:



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Executive Summary

ImpactED runs evaluation capacity-building programs that have helped dozens of local Philadelphia nonprofits assess and strengthen their impact in the communities they serve by enhancing measurement and evaluation skills. However, these programs are only available to nonprofits already funded by the William Penn Foundation and Pew Charitable Trusts, further disadvantaging BIPOC-led grassroots organizations and perpetuating inequities in the nonprofit sector.

As part of their commitment to equity in evaluation, ImpactED's team wanted to explore ways to better support local BIPOC-led community-based organizations (CBOs). In the fall of 2020, ImpactED recruited a Fels EMPA student as a fellow to conduct this research. The research included a comprehensive literature review and interviews with leaders from intermediary organizations and CBOs to learn more about their perspectives on the needs and goals of CBOs related to data collection and evaluation.

These interviews provided valuable insight into the unique challenges facing local CBOs, which echoes much of the research noted above. These insights are detailed in the **Key Findings** section below, and include the following main points:

- 1. Lack of capacity present challenges to meaningfully tracking and evaluating impact at CBOs**

Given the broad nature of their work, many CBOs indicated that it can be hard to measure their organization's impact within a broader system affected by many external forces. As a result, CBOs may suffer from "trying to do everything and not know if they're doing anything well."

- 2. CBOs see the value of collecting more and "better" data, particularly data to measure outcomes vs outputs, however, may need assistance in setting up systems and training more staff to use data to inform strategy and operations**

Most CBOs interviewed indicated that any lack of internal application of data was not due to a lack of knowledge, but instead due to a lack of capacity and time. Interviewees emphasized the need for easy-to-use "tools and systems" that allowed them to collect data and analyze data more frequently.

- 3. Fiscal sponsors believed that CBOs would make time to participate in a capacity-building program, but CBOs felt external consulting better fit their short term needs**

Five out of six of the CBOs interviewed said they would prefer utilizing an external consultant to boost their capacity in lieu of program participation in the short term. Longer-term they would prefer to boost knowledge of data collection and evaluation internally but did not think that was possible at the time of their interview.

4. More research is necessary to determine who are the right people to engage on CBO staff

There was no consensus among interviewees about which CBO staff should be involved in an evaluation capacity-building program. In the view of CBO interviewees, decisions around who participates are often made based on who has the capacity and less about their title or role.

In addition to the key findings, the **Recommendations** section includes a list of program design and future research topics for ImpactED to consider as they seek to better serve BIPOC-led grassroots organizations through either a standalone program or dedicated service offerings.

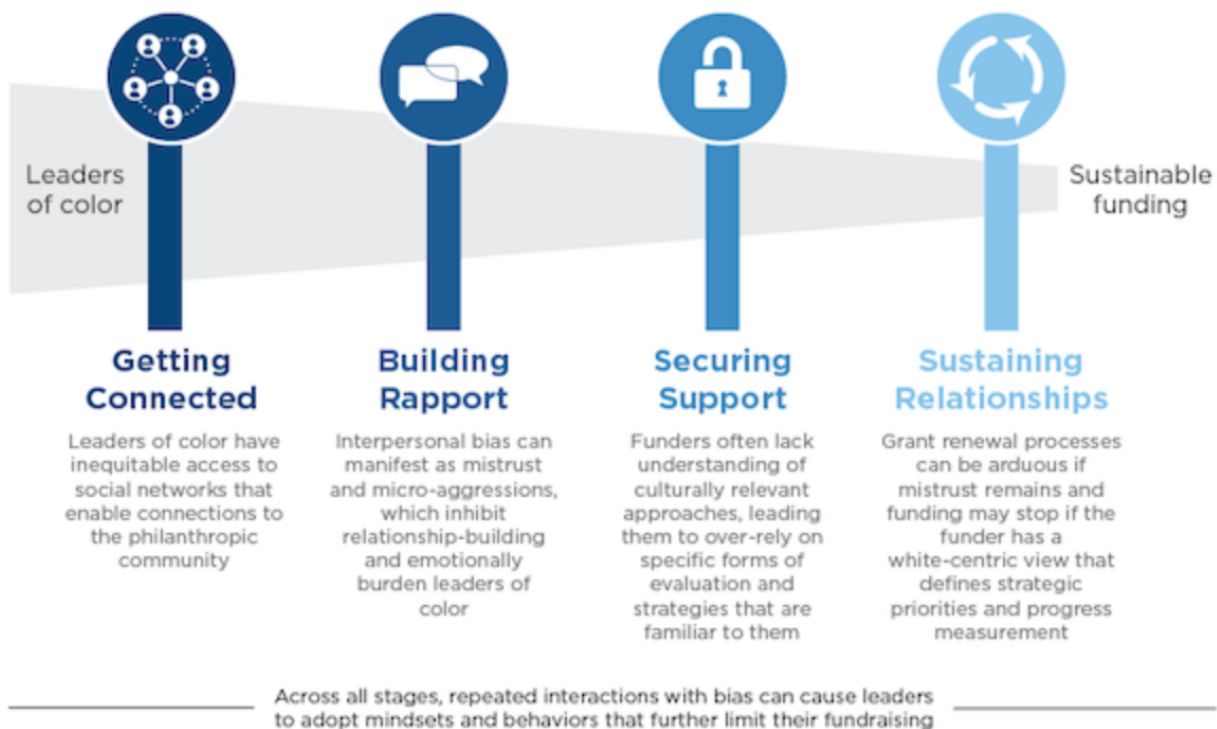
Addressing systemic racism within the philanthropic and nonprofit sector requires building local evaluation capacity within communities of color. By building evaluation capacity, BIPOC-led organizations can draw on their lived experience to develop metrics that are meaningful to their work and use data to design solutions that are responsive to their community's needs and goals. ImpactED can - and should - play a critical role in these efforts.

Literature Review

The project began with a literature review of both academic and sector-created research on issues faced by BIPOC-led organizations in the nonprofit sector. These organizations are often at the forefront of tackling significant challenges, from eradicating poverty to reducing the effects of systemic racism through social services. Many of these organizations are grassroots organizations led by people of color working to effect change in their communities, which are disproportionately impacted by pressing issues like incarceration, racial profiling, and the climate crisis.¹ Tasked with ambitious and critical missions, nonprofits vie for funding from philanthropists to improve the lives of the most vulnerable. However, this relationship with philanthropy is not immune to racial bias; indeed, BIPOC-led organizations receive less money than white-led organizations.² The failure to support BIPOC-led nonprofits is part of the chronic and systemic disparities that undermine the positive social change that people of color create in the United States.³

According to Echoing Green and The Bridgespan Group, nonprofits led by people of color face four race-based barriers to sustainable funding:

Four Key Barriers to Capital



Source: The Bridgespan Group

¹ Le, Vu, et al. "Transformational Capacity Building." *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 2020, pp. 31–37.

² Dorsey, Cheryl, et al. "Overcoming the Racial Bias in Philanthropic Funding (SSIR)." *Stanford Social Innovation Review: Informing and Inspiring Leaders of Social Change* 4 May 2020, ssir.org/articles/entry/overcoming_the_racial_bias_in_philanthropic_funding#

³ Le, Vu, et al. "Transformational Capacity Building." *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 2020, pp. 31–37.

Of these barriers to funding, **Securing Support** often hinges on BIPOC-led nonprofits' ability to fit their programs into the mold of what funders believe works. Unfortunately, funders often value data coming from traditional evaluation frameworks over the knowledge that comes from being a part of the community.⁴ Echoing Green and The Bridgespan Group describe how this creates a vicious cycle: It takes funding to build capacity and to measure effectiveness, yet being strong on these dimensions is a common precondition for securing funding.⁵

The Building Movement Project confirmed this cycle in their Race to Lead report, which revealed that there is much more volatility in funding year over year at BIPOC-led nonprofits⁶. This can affect their relationship to capacity-building work since effective, long-term engagements with capacity-building services are hard to procure without guaranteed funding. In addition, during the COVID-19 pandemic, BIPOC communities are facing multiple crises at once and organizations are stretching themselves to meet the needs of the people they serve⁷. Leaders are dealing with both burnout and worries about long-term financial stability.

The barriers faced by BIPOC-led nonprofits apply to their community-based counterparts as well. In their article "Building the Capacity of Small Community-Based Organizations to Better Serve Youth," the authors argue that the label "CBO" is often loosely applied to any nonprofit organization operating in a local community setting, yet CBOs are unique among nonprofit organizational forms and are citizen-driven organizations that pursue social change in the names of communities that are neglected by the mainstream (Altman, 1994; Marwell, 2004), such as youth of color residing in a specific neighborhood or city⁸. Furthermore, CBOs can be distinguished from other types of nonprofit human service organizations by the fact that they act on the behalf of their local community, increase attention to and address the needs of their community, and develop and empower their community (Altman, 1994; Marwell, 2004)⁹. Using the term CBO instead of nonprofit allows for greater inclusivity of all of the organizations (formal and informal) that serve communities of color.

⁴ Dorsey, Cheryl, et al. "Overcoming the Racial Bias in Philanthropic Funding (SSIR)." *Stanford Social Innovation Review: Informing and Inspiring Leaders of Social Change* 4 May 2020, ssir.org/articles/entry/overcoming_the_racial_bias_in_philanthropic_funding#

⁵ Dorsey, Cheryl, et al. "Overcoming the Racial Bias in Philanthropic Funding (SSIR)." *Stanford Social Innovation Review: Informing and Inspiring Leaders of Social Change* 4 May 2020, ssir.org/articles/entry/overcoming_the_racial_bias_in_philanthropic_funding#

⁶ Wade, Vangela M. "The Funding Gap between Black- and White-Led Organizations Is Clear-and Alarming." *Race to Lead*, Building Movement Project, 1 Oct. 2020, racetolead.org/the-funding-gap-between-black-and-white-led-organizations-is-clear-and-alarming/.

⁷ Douglas, Jen, and Deepa Iyer. Building Movement Project, 2020, *On the Frontlines: Nonprofits Led by People of Color Confront COVID-19 and Structural Racism* buildingmovement.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/On-the-Frontlines-COVID-Leaders-of-Color-Final-10.2.20.pdf.

⁸ Miller, Robin Lin, Shannon K. E. Kobes, and Jason C. Forney. "Building the Capacity of Small Community-Based Organizations to Better Serve Youth." *Toward Positive Youth Development: Transforming Schools and Community Programs*. : Oxford University Press, 01. [Oxford Scholarship Online](https://oxford.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195327892.001.0001/acprof-9780195327892-chapter-10). Date Accessed 16 Jul. 2021 <<https://oxford.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195327892.001.0001/acprof-9780195327892-chapter-10>>.

⁹ Miller, Robin Lin, Shannon K. E. Kobes, and Jason C. Forney. "Building the Capacity of Small Community-Based Organizations to Better Serve Youth." *Toward Positive Youth Development: Transforming Schools and Community Programs*. : Oxford University Press, 01. [Oxford Scholarship Online](https://oxford.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195327892.001.0001/acprof-9780195327892-chapter-10). Date Accessed 16 Jul. 2021 <<https://oxford.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195327892.001.0001/acprof-9780195327892-chapter-10>>.

Methodology

The research documented in the literature review was used to inform the development of two interview protocols (Appendix A) for staff at both intermediary organizations and CBOs. Intermediary organizations, like fiscal sponsors, have roots in the Civil Rights movement and were created to be an engine of equity within the nonprofit sector. They often support CBOs through administrative support, peer networks, and technical assistance. Interviewing CBOs and intermediaries allowed for comparison of perspectives not only across like organizations but also between CBOs and organizations with whom they partner.

The interview protocols were designed to collect information from both groups on the needs and goals of CBOs related to data collection and evaluation, as well as identify any important factors to consider in a potential program design (e.g.: delivery method, length, etc). Potential interviewees were identified from research and the networks of ImpactED staff and were invited to participate via email. 6 intermediary organizations were contacted, and 3 agreed to be interviewed. 9 CBOs were contacted, and 6 agreed to be interviewed. Each interview participant received a \$25 gift card from ImpactED.

Information was collected either verbally or via research on key characteristics of each CBO interviewee, including the organization’s age, budget, staff size, and 501(c)(3) status (Table 1). None of the CBOs interviewed were fiscally sponsored at the time, however, at least two of them had relationships with local or national intermediaries within their particular focus area.

Table 1 - Characteristics of CBO Interviewees

CBO #	Age of Org (Yrs)	Annual Budget	# of FTEs	# of PTEs	# of Volunteers	501c3 status
1	17	\$51,000 - \$100,000	1	0.5	NC	Yes
2	1	\$501,000 +	7	4	NC	Yes, as of 2020
3	30	\$501,000 +	NC	NC	NC	Yes
4	17	\$250,000 - \$500,000	2	1	160	Yes
5	36	\$501,000 +	10	11	NC	Yes
6	7	\$501,000 +	8	4	1	Yes

Interviews ran between 30 to 90 minutes in length and took place virtually via Zoom between December and May 2021. Each interview was recorded and transcribed using transcription software. Responses were then compared and contrasted across all interviewees, and similar answers were grouped together and analyzed to identify key findings.

Limitations

Limitations affect this study in three main ways. First, a significant limitation of this research is that the intermediary and CBO staff interviewed were connected to ImpactED or ImpactED's staff through either personal or professional relationships. This could create issues of social desirability bias, as well as participant concerns about the confidentiality of answers. Second, interviews and other qualitative data collection tools are limited in their accuracy, in that there can be issues of misunderstanding, misspeaking, or other factors that influence how questions or answers are construed by the interviewer and interviewees. Finally, none of the CBOs interviewed were fiscally sponsored, which made it difficult to compare and contrast their responses to those of the fiscal sponsor interviewees.

Key Findings

Interview transcripts were analyzed and key themes were highlighted. Based on the analysis, key findings were organized into four major categories:

- Organization Needs and Goals
- Partnering with CBOs and Fiscal Sponsors
- Program Delivery Model
- Other Considerations

The major findings in each category are described below. Due to the limited number of interviewees, all findings were based on responses from two or more interviewees.

Organization Needs and Goals

The following text summarizes the key findings from interviews about the needs and goals of CBOs related to data collection and evaluation.

Key Finding 1:

The work of CBOs is often emergent & expansive (e.g.: criminal justice reform, poverty reduction, combat structural violence)

- The majority of CBOs interviewed had missions to tackle complicated issues in a multitude of ways (programs, direct service, special projects), and these missions are often broad enough to develop programming that is responsive to community needs. With smaller staff sizes, the broad missions mean individual staff wear many hats, and can easily be pulled in different directions.
- Some CBOs may be doing work that is emerging and would benefit from/are interested in participatory or democratic data collection and evaluation practices if they had more staff.

“A lot of what CBOs do is emerging, so a lot of what we're doing is action research--building a framework to help us build the field. It's very democratic and takes the views of those on the ground and uses them in a very meaningful way (instead of being extractive with surveys, etc).”

Key Finding 2:

Lack of capacity presents challenges to meaningfully tracking and evaluating impact at CBOs

- Interviewees identified lack of capacity as a major challenge faced by all CBOs, especially in regards to capacity for meaningful data collection and evaluation work. Many CBOs lack the ability to move beyond basic tabulation (e.g.: how many attendees are at an event) due to time and staffing constraints. Organizations of all sizes and budgets declared “there are only so many hours in a day.”
- Given the broad nature of their work, many CBOs indicated that it can be hard to measure their organization’s impact within a broader system affected by many external forces. As a result, CBOs may suffer from “trying to do everything and not know if they’re doing anything well.”

Key Finding 3:

The focus of data collection and evaluation efforts conducted by CBOs could be influenced by their size and age

- One interviewee explained that data can be used for both front-of-house operations (e.g.: impact metrics for funders) and back-of-house operations (e.g.: measuring the sustainability and efficiency of program delivery). Given this distinction, all fiscal sponsor interviewees agreed that most CBOs they work with are collecting data for front-of-house operations, more specifically, for funders.
- No CBOs made this distinction. However, of the CBO interviewees, CBOs with smaller budgets (<\$300K) or newer to the landscape (<5 years old) reported that their data collection and evaluation efforts were mainly focused on either fulfilling grant requirements or informing funding requests.
- Older CBOs with larger budgets (>\$500K) were more likely to describe efforts to use data to inform program operations. They indicated that collecting information for funders is also important, but can be a strain, given the need to enter data in multiple systems and having reports that don’t translate well across each other/across programs.
- Many CBOs indicated data collection and reporting requirements were a reason they chose not to pursue specific funding sources, either due to staff constraints or because the required metrics were not aligned with their values (e.g.: youth development work does not solve systemic poverty).

“I’m like, we’re not gonna solve poverty through after-school programs and pre-employment programs or workforce development programs. Media and creative arts, that’s not how you solve poverty. I’m stretching young people’s imaginations and their imaginative faculties.”

Key Finding 4:

CBOs see the value of collecting more and “better” data, particularly data to measure outcomes vs outputs, however may need assistance in setting up systems and training more staff to use data to inform strategy and operations

- Fiscal sponsor interviewees indicated that most CBOs see value in collecting and analyzing data, however, they also believed that most CBOs may only have the capacity to collect data. They believed additional help would be necessary for analysis and knowing how to use data to inform operations.
- Alternatively, most CBOs interviewed indicated that the lack of internal application of data (if occurring) was not due to a lack of knowledge, but instead due to a lack of capacity and time. Interviewees emphasized the need for easy-to-use “tools and systems” that allowed them to collect data and analyze data more frequently.
- Some CBO interviewees also indicated that digital literacy within their organizations, particularly among staff who work directly with the community, was often a constraint that slowed down the data collection process.

Key Finding 5:

CBOs believe there is a difference between the impact they value/are interested in measuring versus what they need to report to funders

- Every CBO interviewed discussed in some way the tension created by trying to change and measure impact on a macro-level system while primarily working at an individual level. For example, trying to affect change on the overall criminal justice system through individual casework that is different from the norm.
- Some CBOs indicated they struggle to measure their impact within the “bigger picture.” More specifically--how do they report on the impact of a program knowing that it is affected by larger forces such as gun violence and opioid epidemics?
- Every CBO interviewed cited an example of a misalignment between the organization’s values and beliefs and what funders often ask for in both the proposal and reporting stages. Multiple CBOs stressed the importance of qualitative or experiential data (e.g.: how does someone feel in their space), though they currently report largely on outputs like the number of program attendees, the number of referrals, etc. Some information they find most meaningful is hard to capture as an output.
- Similarly, all interviewees agreed that poor data collection and evaluation at CBOs is often the result of grant requirements that are developed by funders who have a limited understanding of the work.
- Larger CBOs (budgets of >\$500K) were more likely to discuss walking away from a funder or grant opportunity because of unrealistic or misaligned data and reporting obligations.

“I always say it's really hard to describe [our impact]. Like, yesterday, when our kids were in the office, there was a down moment where they were just giggling and playing and how do you put that into words? [The work] the program is doing to create a safe space for them to just be vulnerable and be kids? That's a lot harder to describe, but to me feels the most meaningful.”

Key Finding 6:

Fiscal sponsors believe knowledge of data collection and evaluation best practices at CBOs can be dependent on funding & funding sources, however, most CBOs interviewed had at least one person on staff with evaluation knowledge/experience.

- While some fiscal sponsor interviewees stated that it is safe to assume data literacy across CBOs is low, they conceded that some CBOs run programs that are evidence-based or have a sophisticated program model evaluated by a national agency.
- The CBOs interviewed all had at least one person on staff with extensive knowledge or experience with evaluation but acknowledged that this skill set is concentrated in one or two individuals in the organization was a constraint.
- Some larger/more established CBOs (>\$500K) felt more confident about program grant reporting processes but indicated they struggle with communicating impact at an organizational level/across programs.

Key Finding 7:

CBOs are concerned about collecting data because the populations they serve are over surveyed, stereotyped, and often hard to reach.

- Almost every CBO interviewed mentioned that their communities are “over surveyed,” meaning that nonprofits, government agencies, and/or universities had or are studying them in some way, often without reporting findings back to the community.
- Some CBOs were concerned with data being used to sort individuals into tracks, and not allowing room for individual context. They indicated that they don’t collect or report on certain data as a political statement--e.g. this information isn’t necessary to support an individual effectively.
- Some CBOs indicated that the population they serve can be transient, and they don’t want to collect data that doesn’t tell the full picture in fear that it will do a disservice to their community (e.g.: it was hard to conduct surveys during the pandemic because people were afraid).

Key Finding 8:

CBOs want their program and evaluation work to be trauma-informed and have a racial equity lens

- Half of the CBOs interviewed described their efforts to ensure their work is trauma-informed and includes a racial equity lens.
- Some indicated that evaluating the impact of internal racial equity efforts is an area they would like assistance.
- Some indicated that data collection and evaluation efforts need to be trauma-informed given the likelihood their community members have had negative experiences previously.

“We are very much committed to the trauma-informed work and to racial equity, diversity inclusion work. We have not figured out yet how to measure that and the success of [those efforts].”

Partnering with Intermediaries

The following text summarizes all relevant findings related to partnering with intermediaries to develop and implement an evaluation capacity-building program for CBOs in their networks.

Key Finding 9:

Many intermediaries act as thought partners and connect partner organizations to capacity-building services

- Many intermediary organizations that support CBOs offer fiscal sponsorship along with capacity-building services that are "right-sized" for the organization. Those that target CBOs often do not have "readiness" requirements. Some fiscal sponsors indicate they work with partners to determine when their services are no longer needed.
- All interviewees confirmed that they believe it is part of their role as intermediaries to connect partners to capacity-building services, either in-house or externally.
- Interviewees often leverage their reputation and relationships on behalf of their program partners to help find or negotiate for resources.

“We think of ourselves as partners with CBOs, so we provide technical assistance, guidance, program support, and often pool knowledge and resources. For example, CBOs may say ‘We need a coordinator--who’s going to call that meeting?’ and that’s where we come in.”

Key Finding 10:

Intermediaries see value in offering data collection and evaluation capacity building programs to their partners

- Two interviewees had started internal conversations about identifying ways to offer data collection and evaluation services to partners through the purchase or creation of technology platforms.
- All intermediary interviewees expressed interest in having additional conversations with ImpactED about exploring a capacity-building program for their partners.

Partnering with CBOs

The following text summarizes all relevant findings related to partnering with CBOs to support them through an evaluation capacity-building program or service offering.

Key Finding 11:

The size of a CBO may influence their vetting process and approach to partnerships

- CBOs with larger budgets (>\$500K) more frequently said phrases like “it has to be the right partner” or “someone who understands our community” whereas CBOs with smaller budgets were more likely to have engaged quasi-professionals/volunteers (e.g.: university students) for program support or assistance in some area.
- Some CBOs indicated that addressing power dynamics within partnerships is also important, particularly with funders. For example, a funder who wants to fund organizations led by people of color should actively build relationships with those organizations. A funder who wants their grantees to engage in capacity-building should let grantees determine when to meet and how to engage.

“What usually happens is whoever has the most power controls the situation, be it what time you meet or what resources you get. In my experience, smaller organizations are often given the least amount of resources within a partnership and are expected to be grateful.”

Delivery Model

The following text summarizes all relevant findings related to the delivery model of an evaluation capacity-building program that exclusively caters to CBOs.

Key Finding 12:

Fiscal sponsors believed that CBOs would make time to participate in a capacity-building program, but CBOs felt external consulting better fit their short term needs

- Fiscal sponsor interviewees believed that CBOs will likely make time for an evaluation capacity building program despite lack of capacity, however, when asked about their previous experience with capacity building programs the majority of CBO interviewees indicated that they struggled to participate in some way, including:
 - Keeping up with the pace of the program (if an online course)
 - Finding a staff person with enough available time to participate
 - Bringing lessons from capacity building/training back to the organization for consideration/application
- Five out of six of the CBOs interviewed said they would prefer utilizing an external consultant to boost their capacity in lieu of program participation in the short term. Longer-term they would prefer to boost knowledge of data collection and evaluation internally but did not think that was possible at the time of their interview.
- Two CBOs mentioned the AmeriCorps Vista program as a way to address organizational priorities without adding them to the existing workloads of full-time staff members.
- One CBO suggested that getting paid to participate makes it easier to justify making time for training/program participation.

Key Finding 13:

Coaching and peer learning opportunities could be valued parts of the delivery model

- Interviewees agreed that some type of regular coaching would be best to reinforce training content and help participants use data to inform decisions. Many CBO interviewees said that left to their own devices, they may not keep up with a program.
- Fiscal sponsor interviewees also indicated that the organizations they work with like peer learning opportunities. This is supported by research, which indicates that under-resourced organizations benefit from peer networks and cohort models because they help to build connections that strengthen movements. If a CBO is led by a person of color, they can often feel (and in some cases, are) isolated in their work and a support system is critical to combating burnout.
- Half of the CBOs interviewed highlighted opportunities for unstructured time with peers to discuss challenges and solutions have been a valuable part of other training and capacity-building programs/events.

“When [peers] are surfacing challenges or new ideas they're considering, it's a way to contemplate things that maybe haven't occurred to us or to help someone workshop something. It might actually help us learn something as well, or realize something that we're doing that we didn't originally identify as a pain point. It's the generative back and forth that can be really powerful.”

Key Finding 14:

Some CBOs have space constraints that affect their participation in programs

- Particularly in a hybrid (in-person/virtual) environment, some CBOs indicated that having their space open to the community affects their ability to engage in online programming.
- Some CBOs have maxed out the amount of programming and staff they can hold in their space, which may affect their ability to engage an external partner onsite.

Key Finding 15:

More research is necessary to determine who are the right people to engage on CBO staff

- There was no consensus among interviewees about which CBO staff should be involved in an evaluation capacity-building program. In the view of CBO interviewees, decisions around who participates are often made based on who has the capacity and less about their title or role.
- 1 CBO mentioned that they had board members and volunteers participate in a capacity-building program, which may apply to other CBOs as well.

Other Considerations

The following text summarizes any findings that were not easily categorized, but have relevance to the program design of an evaluation capacity-building program that caters to CBOs.

Key Finding 16:

Intermediaries believe there are opportunities to develop common theories of change/metrics to improve the ability of CBOs to collect data and evaluate programs

- Interviewees believed the data and evaluation challenges faced by CBOs were also an opportunity to engage funders and intermediaries in identifying ways to streamline metrics and reporting. Suggestions included developing a theory of change for fiscal sponsors, as well as developing common reporting metrics or structures for certain types of systems change work.
- Another opportunity could be empowering CBOs to work together to develop a coherent theory of change that they then can communicate to funders. This could be a translation tool that allows them to take an affirmative stance and takes away some of the power of foundations to select metrics that may be burdensome or irrelevant.
- Two interviewees also cited positive examples of instances where the development of a common evaluation tool (either a technology system or evaluation framework) successfully reduced reporting burdens for multiple organizations.

- Several CBOs mentioned that because they either refer people to partners or work with partners to implement different aspects of a program (e.g.: CBO has a housing counseling program, a partner assists with home loans) they do not always have access to all of the data to understand their full impact. The development of a shared system may help them shift from measuring outputs (e.g.: number of housing referrals) to outcomes (e.g.: % change in homeownership in a community based on successful housing referrals)

“The Department of Commerce brought in a consultant to build out a tool for commercial corridor managers to help them capture the progress of their program. The data points and metrics are customized to measure the goals of their program. It’s been very successful and now Commerce is having other programs use that model--develop a uniform set of metrics for all programs across the city, build a system so that data only needs to be entered at one time and it goes directly to Commerce.”

Key Finding 17:

Intermediaries believe that CBOs will benefit from mobile and real-time data collection tools

- Interviewees believed leveraging new technologies would address capacity issues related to data collection and evaluation.
- Real-time data collection tools may also help CBOs doing emerging work, which may have frequent shifts in metrics. Many CBOs discussed surveys or outreach networks they used during the COVID-19 pandemic to understand and be responsive to the needs of their communities.
- Over half of the CBOs interviewed highlighted “ease of use” as the most important factor of any data collection tool, and some indicated that the tools should also be designed for a less digitally-savvy audience due to low levels of digital literacy among the individuals most likely to be tasked with data collection.

Recommendations for Program Design

Based on the findings outlined above, recommendations were developed to inform the design of an evaluation capacity-building program tailored to the needs of CBOs. These recommendations are specific to effective outreach and engagement with CBOs, targeted service offerings, and a delivery model optimized for impact and sustainability.

Outreach and Engagement

Recommendation 1:

In the short term, cultivate relationships with partner organizations like intermediaries and other nonprofit “infrastructure” organizations to offer a program or service to CBOs

- Many CBOs and grassroots organizations are program/service focused and have limited administrative capacity. As a result, many are not registered 501(c)(3) nonprofits and often work with intermediaries like fiscal sponsors to perform administrative and fundraising functions like accounting, human resources, and liability insurance.
- Intermediaries like fiscal sponsors have extensive networks of CBO partners (in Philadelphia and beyond) and have established relationships that can be leveraged to offer evaluation capacity-building services.
- Other organizations to consider as partners are organizations or individuals working to support CBOs, either through consulting or technical assistance.
- The long-term goal should be to build direct relationships with CBOs to develop a positive reputation as a trusted partner.

Recommendation 2:

Establish a pilot partnership with an intermediary to further refine service offerings/delivery model

- Intermediaries are interested in providing evaluation capacity-building services to their partners and are enthusiastic about the potential to work with ImpactED.
- Developing a program in partnership with an intermediary will allow ImpactED to refine the services offered as well as the delivery model. This can be done either with the intermediary or through stakeholder interviews with CBO partners.
- Consider engaging AmeriCorps Vista networks, like PHENND, as a potential partner intermediary (see Appendix B).

Service Offerings and Delivery Model

Recommendation 4:

Develop a learning pathway that targets the most immediate data collection and analysis needs of CBOs through consulting/external support (e.g.: a coach and VISTAs) and then over time broadens the scope of work to include internal training in data collection and evaluation for CBO staff.

- Due to their limited staff capacity, CBOs' biggest need is more people power. Therefore, an initial engagement targeted around solving their most immediate data collection and evaluation needs may be most effective at establishing the value of ImpactED services to CBO staff. Over time this relationship could change to a training program for internal staff to increase their knowledge of data collection and evaluation.
- This learning pathway can draw from pre-existing content from other evaluation capacity-building programs, however needs to be applied over a longer timespan (e.g.: 2-3 years), with more hands-on support from ImpactED, coaches, and other staff in the first year of the program.
- The program would need to be flexible to the varying availability of CBO staff, and would best be facilitated by a central contact (like a coach). Format should be determined in partnership with CBOs (not a one size fits all approach).
- An attractive hook for earlier stage CBOs could be showcasing how previous evaluation capacity building work helped organizations attract funding while staying true to their mission and values. For older CBOs, the hook can focus on helping them connect the dots between their siloed programs and overall organizational impact.

Recommendation 3:

Develop a program budget and/or pricing model to offer consulting services to CBOs to address their data collection and evaluation needs

- More data is needed to know whether fiscally-sponsored organizations' perspectives on capacity-building programs differ from the CBOs interviewed, however, if ImpactED wants to serve CBOs like those interviewed thus far, they are most interested in a program or service that does not require much existing staff time. The overwhelming preference was to use staff augmentation to address current data collection and evaluation gaps.
- To be most effective, the consulting services should have a central contact who staff from all parts of the organization can go to with data and evaluation questions or requests. This will reduce the strain on any current staff where evaluation knowledge may be concentrated.
- Much like CBOs, the services offered need to be responsive to the changing needs of the CBOs and the communities they serve. ImpactED should develop a budget for group technical assistance programs to give to foundations to support CBOs with these needs.

Recommendation 5:

ImpactED services should be trauma-informed, racial equity-focused, and able to help CBOs analyze their impact at the micro and macro levels

- The populations served by the CBOs interviewed for this research are often marginalized and underserved. As a result, CBO staff are very sensitive to working with potential partners who are not attuned to the needs of their communities.
- At the start of any engagement with CBOs, ImpactED should work with staff to identify any concerns they have regarding data collection and evaluation and work to address/reduce these concerns where possible.
- ImpactED should identify opportunities to engage with evaluation peers who are working to implement trauma-informed data collection and evaluation practices.
- As a result of existing funding requirements, most CBOs have some infrastructure in place to collect data, though there is room for improvement in a few areas:
 - Ensuring CBOs are collecting data that matters to them (what data is needed and why)
 - Building their capacity to meaningfully analyze data and apply learnings, moving beyond outputs to their more ambitious outcomes
 - Adding nuance to their data to reflect the multiple identities and experiences of the community they serve

Recommendation 6:

In the short term, ensure services help CBOs build easy-to-use systems and tools to collect and analyze data. In the long term, consider offering services that help CBOs doing similar work to develop theories of change and shared data instruments

- The CBOs interviewed for this research emphasized that a frequent pain point is developing data collection tools and systems that are easy for people with varying levels of digital literacy to use. ImpactED should develop content or best practices for staff who work with CBOs to follow when creating new tools.
- Many CBOs may share a lack of data and evaluation capacity, however many CBOs also share funders and are mission-aligned. As documented in the Department of Commerce example highlighted under Key Finding 16, the development of shared metrics and data collection and reporting instruments can have a significant effect on showcasing the impact of CBO work while reducing an administrative burden.
- ImpactED should explore opportunities to work with groups of CBOs, perhaps in partnership with an intermediary or within a collective impact framework, to empower CBOs to define their impact and streamline data collection and reporting.

Recommendation 7:

Include peer learning opportunities in the delivery model of any program or service offering tailored towards CBOs

- Intermediaries and CBOs alike emphasized the importance of including peer learning opportunities into the delivery model. This can be used not only as a recruitment strategy but also as a strategy to build data and evaluation capacity across/within communities.

Recommendations for Future Research

There were many important findings from this initial set of interviews, however, there is much more for ImpactED to learn about effectively serving CBOs and grassroots organizations. Below is a list of recommendations for future research that will continue to build on this work.

Recommendation 1:

Conduct interviews of fiscally-sponsored CBOs to compare and contrast their answers with CBOs who have a 501(c)3 designation.

- A major limitation of this research is that of the CBOs interviewed, none of them were fiscally sponsored. As a result, there may have been more variance between the answers of intermediary and CBO interviewees than there would have been if fiscally sponsored organizations were interviewed.

Recommendation 2:

Further refine service offerings and delivery model through interviews (or surveys) with CBOs, other evaluators, and intermediaries.

- Interview more CBOs, particularly those with budgets less than \$500K and who have been in operation for less than 3 years.
- Identify organizations with experience in data collection and evaluation for collective impact initiatives.
- Participate in ongoing conversations with Social Impact Commons about developing a theory of change for fiscal sponsorship.

Recommendation 3:

Continue to refine research to inform selection criteria that could be incorporated into a program application (e.g.: budget size, staff size, mission).

- The CBO interviews provided some insight into differences that may exist within organizations based on budget size and age, however, the sample size of organizations interviewed is too small to draw meaningful conclusions.
- Continue to compare answers from future interviews across staff size, budget, and age of the organization.

Recommendation 4:

Explore a partnership with PHENND/AmeriCorps VISTA to increase ImpactED's capacity to serve CBOs with hands-on support with data collection and analysis (see Appendix B).

- In addition to evaluation capacity-building support, CBOs need more staff solely dedicated to data collection and analysis. It is unrealistic for ImpactED to designate current staff as part-time support for CBOs, however, a redesign or addition to the ImpactED Fellows program of an AmeriCorps VISTA partnership could increase ImpactED's ability to support the staffing needs of CBOs.
- PHENND is a trusted, local AmeriCorps VISTA partner that can work with ImpactED to design the VISTA program and could handle the administrative burden of running a VISTA program once launched.
- The development of an ImpactED VISTA program could also serve as a way to recruit a more diverse cohort of fellows outside of the traditional Penn network and train them to enter the field of evaluation.

Appendix A - Interview Protocols

CBO Perspectives on Data & Evaluation Needs Interview Protocol

Introduction

Hello [Name] my name is [Interviewer 1] and this is my colleague [Interviewer 2]. We are from ImpactED, a research and evaluation center housed within the University of Pennsylvania. We provide social and public sector organizations with training and support for evaluation and help them determine what data to collect and how to use that data to better meet their constituents' needs. Thank you for taking the time to speak with us today.

Background/Logistics

As part of our commitment to equity in evaluation, ImpactED is exploring ways to better support community-based and grassroots organizations. In order to do so, we want to learn more about the needs and goals these organizations may have for using data and evaluation to grow or improve their work.

Today we are interested in learning from you about your current practices collecting and using data in your organization. We want to know how collecting and using data supports your organizational goals, and how information currently flows into and out of your organization. We'd also like to learn what kinds of support you would be interested in (if any) to grow or reinforce a data-driven culture at your organization. Through this interview, we hope to gain valuable insight into the unique challenges facing community-based organizations and explore the viability of partnering with them more in the future.

The information we learn in this interview will be used to inform the team at ImpactED of key findings to consider when developing products and services for organizations like yours. We would like to record this session so that we can refer back if necessary. Are you ok with us recording? [Yes/No].

We are exploring the viability of partnering with community-based and grassroots organizations, but this interview is not a sales pitch. If you might be interested in exploring partnering moving forward, we'd love to set up a follow-up call but for this conversation, we're just really interested in hearing more about your work today.

If you have any questions at the end of this interview, please feel free to email Maggie Deptola at mdeptola@sas.upenn.edu.

Questions

Section 1: Opening/Introductory Questions

Indicator/Construct	#	Question
Individual Background		What is your role at the organization and how long have you been in your role?
Organizational Background		What is your organization's mission and how is that mission achieved (e.g.: projects, programs, events, etc)?

Section 2: Key Questions

Over the next few questions, we'd like to get an idea about how data flows through your organization currently.

Indicator/Construct	#	Question
Current Thinking about Impact		How do you think about your impact?
		Are you measuring your impact in any way? If so, how?
		What do you hope to be different as a result of your work?
		What are some things you'd like to learn about the work you're doing and its impact?
Organizational Goals		What information or resources could help to achieve your organization's goals?
Operations		What information or resources could improve your organization's operations?
Current Thinking on Data		How do you think about data? What do you define as data?
		What types of data do you collect? How do you use it?
Concerns about Data & Evaluation		What concerns do you have about collecting data and evaluation?

Capacity-Building Programs		<p>Has your organization previously participated in a capacity-building program?</p> <p>If yes: What was the experience like? What did you find most valuable about the experience?</p>
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Section 3: Closing Questions

Indicator/Construct	#	Question
Interest in ImpactED Services		Are you interested in building your organization's capacity to collect and use data?
Delivery Model		Would you prefer training to build your internal capacity or would you rather work with an external consultant on an ongoing basis?
		If training:
		How much time could someone from your organization devote to a program that trains them on best practices in data and evaluation?
		In your opinion, what would be the best way to provide this support to your team (e.g.: cohort-based program, online training, one-on-one)?
		Who do you think would participate from your organization?

Closing

Thank you for participating in this interview today. As we shared when we started, we provide these types of services to social and public sector organizations. If you think you'd be interested in learning more about the support we could provide, we're happy to schedule a follow-up call. Either way, we really appreciate your time today--it's been incredibly helpful. Keep an eye out for an email with instructions on how to access your \$25 Visa gift card and thanks again!

Fiscal Sponsor Perspectives on CBO Needs Interview Protocol

Introduction

Hello [Name] my name is [Interviewer 1] and this is my colleague [Interviewer 2]. We are from ImpactED, a research and evaluation center housed within the University of Pennsylvania. We provide social and public sector organizations with training and support for evaluation and help them determine what data to collect and how to use that data to better meet their constituents' needs. Thank you for taking the time to speak with us today.

Background/Logistics

As part of our commitment to equity in evaluation, ImpactED is exploring ways to better support community-based and grassroots organizations. This means moving beyond our existing methods of identifying organizations to work with (often through foundations) and exploring other ways to engage community-based organizations that may be interested in our services. We conducted research that revealed that many of the organizations and programs we want to reach may have an affiliation with a fiscal sponsor. As a result, we are connecting with fiscal sponsors to learn your perspectives on the needs of your sponsees as they relate to data collection and evaluation. Through this interview, we hope to gain valuable insight into the unique challenges facing community-based organizations and explore the viability of partnering with fiscal sponsors.

The information we learn in this interview will be used to inform the team at ImpactED of key findings to consider when developing products and services for community-based organizations. We would like to record this session so that we can refer back if necessary. Are you ok with us recording? **[Yes/No]**.

We are also exploring the viability of partnering with fiscal sponsors, but this interview is not a sales pitch. If you might be interested in exploring partnering moving forward, we'd love to set up a follow-up call but for this conversation, we're just really interested in hearing more about your - and your sponsee's experiences with data and evaluation.

If you have any questions at the end of this interview, please feel free to email Maggie Deptola at mdeptola@sas.upenn.edu.

Questions

Section 1: Opening/Introductory Questions

Indicator/Construct	#	Question
Individual Background		What is your role at the organization?
Organizational Background		What is your organization's goal in providing fiscal sponsorship?
		How long has your organization offered fiscal sponsorship?
		What language do you use to describe the projects, programs, and organizations for which you provide fiscal sponsorship?
		In what ways do you interact with the <insert term> as part of your role?
Experience Using Data		What experience have you had using data and evaluation to improve a project, program, or organization?

Section 2: Transition Questions

Indicator/Construct	#	Question
Types of Fiscal Sponsor Capacity Building Supports		As a fiscal sponsor, do you provide any type of capacity-building support to your <insert term> beyond financial and operations assistance? If so, what types?
Capacity Building Needs		From your perspective, what challenges do your <insert term> face when either trying to grow or improve their programs or services?
Existing support for data collection and evaluation		What support are you able to provide (if any) to assist with these needs?
		To your knowledge, where do sponsees typically get this support (if at all)?
Capacity Building Assessment Process		As a fiscal sponsor, do you assess a <insert term>'s data collection and evaluation capacity as part of your application or vetting process? (Yes/No)
		If yes, what are you looking for in order to accept a program or project?
		If not, what factors are you looking for in order to accept a program or project?

Section 3: Key Questions

Indicator/Construct	#	Question
Experience Using Data (Sponsees)		In your opinion, what level of knowledge do sponsees have about how evaluation tools and practices can help to grow or advance their projects?
		Is there a type of sponsee that struggles more than others with data collection and evaluation? If so, what makes them unique?
		Is there a type of sponsee that excels with using data and evaluation? If so, what makes them unique?
Data Collection and Evaluation Needs		In your opinion, what needs do your sponsees have around data collection and evaluation?
		Are there specific scenarios where these needs become evident to you (e.g.: grant writing or reporting, auditing, etc)?
Sponsee Perception of the Value of Using Data		What goals do you think your sponsees have for data collection and evaluation?
		What concerns do you think sponsees have about collecting data and evaluation?
Delivery Model		How much time do you think sponsees could devote to data and evaluation efforts?
		Do you think sponsees would prefer training to build their internal capacity or working with an external consultant on an ongoing basis?
		If training:
		In your opinion, what would be the best way to provide this support to your sponsees (e.g.: cohort-based program, online training, one-on-one)?
		Who do you think would participate from the sponsee team?

Section 4: Closing Questions

Indicator/Construct	#	Question
Interest in ImpactED Services		Are you interested in providing data collection and evaluation support to your sponsees?
		Are there any organizations you can refer us to for interviews?
		Do you have any questions for us?

Closing

Thank you for participating in this interview today. As we shared when we started, we provide these types of services to social and public sector organizations. If you think you'd be interested in learning more about the support we could provide your sponsees, we're happy to schedule a follow-up call. Either way, we really appreciate your time today--it's been incredibly helpful. Keep an eye out for an email with instructions on how to access your \$25 Visa gift card and thanks again!

Appendix B - AmeriCorps Vista Summary

The following is adapted from an email exchange with PHENND’s VISTA Program Coordinator, Dana Kayser (dkayser@sas.upenn.edu).

There are two types of AmeriCorps programs that could be used to set up a fellowship that places people at CBOs to support with data and evaluation work. The AmeriCorps VISTA program or the AmeriCorps State and National program. Due to different histories, they have different program models as summarized in the table below:

Program Element	VISTA	State & National
Administrative Authority	Federal AmeriCorps Office	State Volunteerism Commission
Timeline of service for Fellow	“full time” 365 Days, start date in line with a number of federal options throughout the year	Measured hourly, program’s choice of different formats- 1700 hours (full time), 1200 hours (three quarter time), 900 Hours (half time), 675 hours (reduced half time), 450 hours (quarter time), 300 hours (minimal time)
Programmatic focus	Anti-poverty, capacity building, sustainable communities	Direct service (though some capacity building allowed)***: Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, and Veterans and Military Families.
Site timeline	Program sponsors partner with individual sites in 3-year cycles, usually sites have a different vista every year	Variable, decided by the program. Some sites partner for only 1 year, some partner indefinitely
Member benefits	105% of poverty living stipend paid directly through the federal office, health care, child care, education award (equal to pell grant), 10 vacation & 10 sick days, loan forbearance + interest paid while in service or PSLF eligibility, Federal jobs non-competitive eligibility, eligible for most federal entitlements (depending)	Living stipend dependent on the program (range 14k-28k) paid through program payroll, education award pro-rated to hourly enrollment, loan forbearance + interest paid while in service or PSLF eligibility, eligible for federal entitlements
Member duties	Are outlined in a VISTA Assignment Description (VAD) which are drafted and submitted to the federal office before members are	Are outlined in the AmeriCorps grant and in a contract with sites that sponsors make before placing members

	placed. (usually written in partnership with placement sites)	
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***AmeriCorps State and National is known and administered as a direct service program, but there are State and National projects that are centered on capacity building, notably Public Allies and Volunteer Maryland. A more detailed summary of the programs can be found [here](#).

Due to its focus on capacity building, AmeriCorps VISTA likely makes the most sense for ImpactED to pursue, however, the administrative burden of the program is worth consideration. Partnering with an organization like PHENND would enable ImpactED to place their program members on PHENND's AmeriCorps VISTA grant, and administer an ImpactED specific program while PHENND handles the data collection and reporting requirements.

Given the technical nature of ImpactED's work, their VISTA program design would need to include either a significant training component and ongoing support for VISTAs placed with CBOs. City Year and Public Allies have models where fellows serve onsite 4 days per week and train with their program administration 1 day per week. ImpactED could also do an intensive onboarding of VISTAs before they get placed at CBOs, and assign ongoing virtual training modules.

Many AmeriCorps VISTA participants are early in their careers, and may not be able to navigate the important relationship-building aspects of working with CBOs without support. Knowing this, the most ideal program design that utilizes VISTAs may be assigning CBOs a coach who acts as a point person for all evaluation capacity-building activities, and VISTAs act as another set of hands on site to support with data collection and reporting. This would allow the more complex aspects of evaluation capacity building (e.g.: goal setting, data interpretation, change management) to be addressed by the coach, while the elements of evaluation that require a lower level of knowledge and training to be handled by a VISTA.

Appendix C - Proposal Boilerplate for

The following template language was developed in partnership with ImpactED staff and can be used for future funding proposals to support evaluation capacity building at CBOs. The proposal language is specific to BIPOC-led organizations, as many community-based and grassroots organizations in Philadelphia are led by people of color.

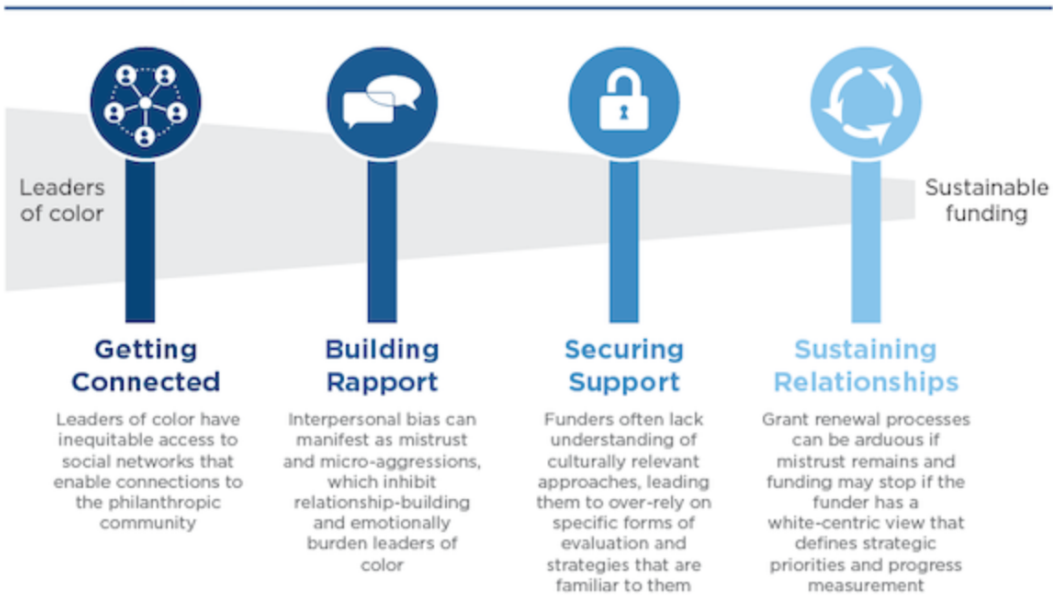
Evaluation Capacity-Building Program for BIPOC-Led Organizations: *Project Proposal Template Language*

What is the challenge?

The nonprofit sector is often at the forefront of tackling significant challenges, from eradicating poverty to reducing the effects of systemic racism through social services. Many of these nonprofits are grassroots organizations led by people of color working to effect change in their communities, which are disproportionately impacted by pressing issues like incarceration, racial profiling, and the climate crisis.¹ Tasked with ambitious and critical missions, nonprofits vie for funding from philanthropists to improve the lives of the most vulnerable. However, this relationship with philanthropy is not immune to racial bias; indeed, BIPOC-led organizations receive less money than white-led organizations.² The failure to support BIPOC-led nonprofits is part of the chronic and systemic disparities that undermine the positive social change that people of color create in the United States.³

According to Echoing Green and The Bridgespan Group, nonprofits led by people of color face four race-based barriers to sustainable funding:⁴

Four Key Barriers to Capital



Across all stages, repeated interactions with bias can cause leaders to adopt mindsets and behaviors that further limit their fundraising

Of these barriers to funding, **Securing Support** often hinges on BIPOC-led organizations' ability to fit their programs into the mold of what funders believe works. Unfortunately, funders often value data coming from traditional evaluation frameworks over the knowledge that comes from being a part of the community.⁵ Echoing Green and The Bridgespan Group describe how this creates a vicious cycle: It takes funding to build capacity and to measure effectiveness, yet being strong on these dimensions is a common precondition for securing funding.⁶

At ImpactED, we run evaluation capacity-building programs that have helped dozens of local nonprofits assess and strengthen their impact in the communities they serve by enhancing measurement and evaluation skills. However, these programs are only available to nonprofits already funded by the William Penn Foundation and Pew Charitable Trusts, further disadvantaging BIPOC-led grassroots organizations and perpetuating inequities in the nonprofit sector.

As part of our commitment to equity in evaluation, our team conducted research into how we can better support local BIPOC-led community-based organizations (CBOs). The research included a comprehensive literature review and interviews with leaders from intermediary organizations and CBOs to learn more about their perspectives on the needs and goals of CBOs related to data collection and evaluation.

These interviews provided valuable insight into the unique challenges facing local CBOs, which echoes much of the research noted above. Most notably, interviewees shared that CBOs have limited resources to meaningfully track and evaluate their impact.⁷ Many CBOs lack capabilities beyond basic tabulation (e.g., capturing attendance), and do work that can be hard to quantify. As one interviewee noted, CBOs often suffer from “trying to do everything and not knowing if they’re doing anything well.”⁸ Additionally, most of CBOs' current evaluation efforts are for funders to fulfill grant requirements, with metrics being defined by funders and not the CBOs themselves.⁹

Addressing systemic racism within the philanthropic and nonprofit sector requires building local evaluation capacity within communities of color. By building evaluation capacity, BIPOC-led organizations can draw on their lived experience to develop metrics that are meaningful to their work and use data to design solutions that are responsive to their community's needs and goals. Philanthropy can - and should - play a critical role in these efforts.

What is our unique solution?

To respond to this challenge, we will co-design and implement a multi-year evaluation capacity-building program in collaboration with leaders of local BIPOC-led community-based organizations.

Who would participate?

This program will support six local BIPOC-led community-based organizations. To identify program participants, we will leverage our existing partnerships with **[insert text]**.

What are the program's key elements?

The program would have several key elements:



Capacity Assessment. During each year of the program, we will conduct a capacity assessment in partnership with each participating CBO to assess the organization's goals and needs. Drawing from the research, we plan to assess evaluation capacity along three dimensions:

- ▶ Existing evaluation strategy, data collection/analysis, and data use skills
- ▶ Available resources (e.g., technology, time, staffing)
- ▶ Current organizational culture



1:1 Technical Assistance. To help organizations build internal capacity, we will provide targeted technical assistance to address immediate needs and support long-term implementation:

- ▶ Each organization will be assigned a coach and one or more graduate students from ImpactED's Fellowship Program, which is a partnership with the Fels Institute of Government. Coaches will help guide overall strategy and implementation, whereas Fellows will provide organizations with additional support for data collection, analysis, and reporting.
- ▶ The first year of the evaluation capacity building will pair each organization with a coach and ImpactED fellow to address the most immediate data collection and analysis needs identified in the capacity assessment through virtual and/or onsite support. During future years of the program, coaches will assess the progress of capacity-building efforts and determine what support is necessary.
- ▶ Each organization will receive a \$5,000 stipend to sustain the capacity built during the program.



Peer Learning Cohort. In the first year of the program, we create intentional virtual and in-person opportunities for participating CBOs to have unstructured time with peers to discuss challenges and solutions they have related to data collection and evaluation. In future years, we will continue to have unstructured time and design a series of trainings to respond directly to the emerging needs of CBOs identified during the annual capacity assessments. These trainings will be tailored to CBOs' needs and where possible, will be co-designed using their input. Learning in a cohort will help participants build knowledge, as well as cultivate valuable networks, and access social capital. We anticipate four sessions focused on the following types of evaluation issues we heard from our research:

- ▶ Defining meaningful metrics for evaluation
- ▶ Developing tools and systems for data collection
- ▶ Incorporating racial equity into data collection and evaluation work

How will we measure our impact?

The evaluation team at ImpactED will conduct a robust evaluation of the program. This evaluation will be conducted in collaboration with the program participants using a participatory evaluation framework.

During the program, we will determine the extent to which the program is creating a high-quality learning environment and building a peer learning community. Following each session, we will use post-session surveys to assess the extent to which the program increased participants' knowledge of evaluation practices and provided them with the skills to implement these practices. In addition, we will conduct stepback meetings with each organization. We will work collaboratively with organizations during these meetings to reflect on their experience and identify strengths, challenges, and future priorities.

At the end of the program and the year following, we will administer a survey to track participants' implementation of evaluation practices and their experience securing additional funding.

How will the program impact the community?

Over the short term, organizations will address any capacity issues they have that inhibit their ability to collect data and measure their impact. Over the long term, organizations will increase their knowledge and skill in evaluation practices. More specifically, they will be able to:

- ▶ Identify metrics that are meaningful to their work
- ▶ Collect data in a way that is feasible for staff
- ▶ Use data to inform external operations (e.g., grant applications) and internal operations (e.g., service delivery)

Additionally, the program will facilitate peer connections and increase participants' access to social capital. Together, this increased skillset and enhanced network will provide participating CBOs with access to

sources of funding they have not previously been eligible for due to limited evaluation data. It will break the cycle we noted above and shift the power dynamics in the philanthropic sector.

Ultimately, organizations connected to their local communities are best equipped to advance racial equity and social justice. By building the capacity of BIPOC-led CBOs and providing them with financial resources to sustain that capacity, we are investing in those who will address the critical issues facing their communities over the long term.