Learning Together: A Final Evaluation Report for the Community Leadership Project’s Technical Assistance Strategy

Revised Final Report
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Executive Summary

In 2009, the Hewlett, Packard, and Irvine Foundations launched the Community Leadership Project—a three year initiative aimed at building the capacity of small-to mid-sized organizations serving low-income communities and communities of color via three strategies: Granting, Leadership, and Technical Assistance. The Technical Assistance (TA) Strategy, which is the focus of this report, was the most modestly resourced. This $1.4 million investment funded six intermediaries to provide targeted technical assistance to community organizations serving low-income people and communities of color in three target regions in California (the San Francisco Bay Area, the San Joaquin Valley, and the Central Coast). The six intermediaries were selected because of their established track record of effective service, ties to community-based organizations, and use of a framework or approach that embraced cultural competence and equity. Together these organizations served over 300 organizations over the course of the entire three-year initiative.

In 2010, the Hewlett, Packard, and Irvine Foundations contracted with Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) to serve as evaluators of the Community Leadership Project (CLP). SPR’s evaluation examines the impact of the CLP on leaders, organizations, intermediaries, and foundation partners, but also lifts up key lessons about: (1) reaching and providing capacity-building supports to low-income communities and communities of color; (2) characteristics of effective, culturally relevant, and community-responsive capacity building; and (3) qualities of effective capacity-building support for small- and mid-sized organizations serving low-income communities and communities of color. This report serves as SPR’s final evaluation report of the CLP’s Technical Assistance Strategy for Phase One of the initiative.

Capacity-Building Foci and Approaches

This evaluation examines capacity-building efforts along five core capacity areas, with an eye for learning how to tailor support specifically for small- to mid-sized organizations serving low-income communities and communities of color. The five capacity areas covered in the evaluation include: (1) leadership capacity, (2) operational/management capacity, (3) adaptive capacity, (4) programmatic capacity, and (5) community/collaborative capacity. In the TA strategy, the majority of the TA support was focused in the leadership and operational/management capacity areas, with targeted content emphases on financial management, fundraising, and technology capacity.

Approaches to capacity building varied greatly across the intermediaries, ranging from “light touch” support (i.e. lower dosages of support such as one-off workshops or seminars), to two-day intensive clinics, to a more long-term cohort approach to learning. Over the course of the initiative, intermediaries adjusted different aspects of their approach to align with the needs of

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1 The Community Leadership Project initially funded six TA intermediaries to provide TA assistance; however, over the course of the grant, National Community Development Institute (NCDI) closed its doors and therefore was not able to complete its intended capacity-building efforts. Thus, their work is not captured in this final evaluation report.
their participants, while also taking into account the complexity of the topic and participants’ capacity to digest and apply learning.

Outcomes
Our evaluation captured multiple levels of outcomes. While the initiative and this evaluation focused specifically on capturing participant-level outcomes, unexpected outcomes emerged at the intermediary and community levels that are also worth noting.

Participant-level Outcomes
CLP TA participants reported a strong sense of satisfaction with the support they received and survey results indicate that most participants felt that the TA support they received had an impact on their organizations. In the following section, we share participant outcomes across the five core capacity areas measured in this evaluation.

Leadership Capacity
Resources provided through the CLP’s TA strategy gave the leaders of participating organizations much needed time to reflect upon their roles as leaders and tools to help them lead more effectively. Outcomes included:

- **Increased confidence.** Participants reported increased confidence in their leadership roles, which helped them to make strategic, but sometimes difficult decisions and gave them the courage to play more visible roles externally.
- **Reduced sense of isolation.** Networking opportunities embedded in the CLP boosted morale while also providing participants with deeper learning experiences and connections to people who could help them to navigate challenging situations, such as local politics.
- **Improved management skills.** CLP participants shared that TA support helped them to confront difficult situations, facilitate uncomfortable dialogues, and work to shift organizational culture when needed.

Operational Capacity
TA intermediaries and participants shared multiple examples of ways in which TA support helped participants to improve various aspects of their operational capacity:

- **Improved financial management capacity.** Survey respondents reported having a better understanding of finances in general and of what financial health entails, a renewed focus on finances and financial health, a clearer understanding of “how to plan ahead to meet funding needs,” and a greater knowledge base from which to ask “good questions to see a true picture of an organization’s health.”
- **Improved fundraising capacity.** Participants shared that the fundraising support they received enabled them to be more intentional in their fundraising pursuits and it also helped them to broaden their understanding of fundraising responsibilities in general. Respondents also expressed gratitude for concrete tools they could use, exposure to techniques used by fundraisers of color, and for opportunities to practice “the ask” with peers that represent communities of color.
• **Limited improvements in technology capacity.** A majority of participants that received support to increase their organizations’ technology capacity reported positive results. However many lacked the resources to fully implement the technology plans they developed with their intermediary partner.

**Adaptive Capacity**

Having the capacity to adapt to changing political and funding environments is critical to the survival of nonprofit organizations. Outcomes in this area included:

• **Development of strategic planning skills.** Participants shared that having the time and resources to engage in strategic planning were welcome and much-needed sources of support that made “an incredible difference.” Some reported having taken bold steps as a result of their strategic planning work.

• **Increased navigation skills.** CLP participants demonstrated a growing understanding of how to navigate different and sometimes difficult arenas such as local politics or mainstream philanthropy.

**Programmatic Capacity**

Our data yielded few results with respect to increased programmatic capacity, since the TA intermediaries’ foci was primarily centered on helping organizations strengthen their infrastructures, which, in theory, would help them to be strong enough to weather shifting political and economic climates as well as to deliver the programming they envisioned. Though we did not capture large-scale outcomes with respect to improved programmatic capacity, participants and intermediaries shared a few interesting examples of ways in which the TA support they received helped them to increase programmatic capacity. This included successful efforts to strengthen advocacy capacity and using evaluation to identify program strengths and weaknesses.

**Community/Collaborative Capacity**

One of the goals of the Community Leadership Project was to create opportunities for participants to network with one another—to help organizations overcome feelings of isolation and to create a foundation for potential, strategic collaborations in the future. Examples include:

• **Formation of strategic partnerships.** TA intermediaries shared several instances wherein the support and networking opportunities provided through the CLP resulted in advantageous partnerships (e.g. shared grants) or, at the very least, the ability to identify potential partners for future collaborative work.

• **Capitalizing on established networks.** Though San Joaquin Valley participants lamented the challenges posed by geographic isolation, some intermediaries were struck by the “tight-knit” and “interwoven” relationships developed by some members of the nonprofit community in this region, which helped foster a collaborative learning environment that deepened the impact of their work together.

• **Building new networks and leveraging strengths.** Participants were grateful for opportunities provided by the CLP to connect with other organizations that had similar challenges, strengths, and/or areas of focus. These opportunities helped
organizational leaders feel less isolated and served as venues for sharing work and inviting others to their events.

Intermediary Outcomes

While the focus of the CLP was to increase the strength of small- to mid-sized community-based organizations, TA intermediaries also reported having experienced changes in their own organizations and approaches as a result of their participation in CLP. While these are not large-scale outcomes, nor the focus of our evaluation, the outcomes are worth sharing, especially because they have implications for understanding how the process of strengthening communities and community-based organizations leads to change at multiple levels, and to shifts in thinking about the nature of this work. Key outcomes include the motivation to be more reflective about their practices, increased sense of cultural competency and agility developed by working specifically with CLP organizations, and the development of new strategic partnerships and new client bases.

Community-Level Outcomes

Measuring community-level outcomes was not part of the scope of this evaluation. However, interviews with TA intermediaries and focus group conversations with TA strategy participants in the CLP Learning Labs revealed interesting ways in which they see their communities benefiting from this work. While these are not outcomes in the strictest sense, we share them here in order to highlight some of the potential and unintended benefits of TA investments. These include a sense of increased awareness of community issues, increased levels of community engagement, shared learning with organizations that were not part of the CLP, and strengthened community leadership.

Lessons Learned

The Community Leadership Project was designed to be a learning initiative, with learning happening at all levels of the initiative (funder, intermediary, grantee/participant). In this report, we divide these learnings into three specific categories: (1) readiness to engage in capacity building, (2) effective technical assistance strategies for organizations at different levels of readiness, and (3) cultural competence in technical assistance. While some of these lessons have already been covered in previous reports, and have already informed changes to the structure of the initiative, they are included here to provide a comprehensive picture of the learnings that have emerged over the course of CLP.

Readiness for Capacity-Building Support

Below are some lessons about readiness that emerged over the course of the initiative.

- Readiness is a two-way street that requires not only readiness of participants to engage, but also readiness of funders and intermediaries to meet organizations “where they are at.”

- Assessments of readiness or engagement capacity should not be limited to TA recipients, but should also include TA providers.
Desire and willingness to learn are the most critical aspects of readiness—these aspects of readiness are generally measured through consistent attendance.

Readiness should, in large part, be self-determined by the participant, but enabling this requires honest communications from the provider about expectations and required time commitments.

Demonstrations of readiness include a willingness for organizational leaders with decision-making authority to serve as TA participants and to commit to consistent attendance.

In order to participate meaningfully in capacity-building trainings, organizations cannot be in “crisis mode” such that participants are too distracted to engage meaningfully.

Funders and intermediaries should consider cultural bias when determining readiness parameters and consider whether or not these parameters are at odds with the goals of the CLP initiative.

The lessons learned on readiness for capacity building bring up some key questions for reflection or consideration, including:

- **In what ways do readiness parameters support or pose obstacles to the goals of the initiative, particularly with respect to intended target populations?**
- **What role do readiness parameters play in perpetuating marginalization of small-to mid-sized organizations serving low-income communities and communities of color?**
- **How can funders and intermediaries adjust their processes (e.g. eligibility and selection criteria as well as TA approaches), to be more inclusive of organizations at different readiness levels?**
- **How can expectations and notions of success be recalibrated to include incremental levels of change that may seem small from the outside but feel huge to the organizations experiencing those changes and which typically serve as stepping stones to larger changes yet to come?**

**Effective TA Strategies**

Lessons that emerged on effective TA strategies for participants at lower levels of readiness include:

- In order to work effectively with organizations that are new to capacity building and/or are at lower levels of readiness, TA providers need to be nimble enough to adjust their offerings to fit different needs.
- Having a peer-learning component to technical assistance deepens learning, enables providers to provide more effective and efficient TA, and builds a sense of community.
- Engaging in co-design with participants can help ensure that technical support is culturally relevant.
• Appropriate timing of technical assistance offerings has an impact on a participants’ levels of commitment, though the process of deciding optimal timing is not always intuitive.

• Capacity to digest and apply learning must be factored into the timing, dosage, and depth of technical assistance support.

• For challenging topics, repetition and opening up the training to multiple participants from the same organization are useful strategies for reinforcing learning.

• Providing concrete tools and examples for reference helps participants to apply learnings more readily.

• Having an integrated TA strategy and clear communication about the overall CLP initiative might have resulted in greater benefits for participants and more effective use of resources by TA intermediaries.

**Demonstrating Cultural Competence**

Below are some lessons that emerged over the course of this evaluation regarding culturally competent approaches to technical assistance.

• Culturally competent TA providers demonstrate humility in their TA approach and recognize participant organizations as experts in their work.

• Cultural competence requires that providers look beyond race, ethnicity, and language and also display a sensitivity to and understanding of the multiple layers of identity, including those rooted in religion, gender, sexual orientation, immigrant status, and place.

• Cultural competence includes the ability and willingness to be “up front” about race and how it affects access to resources.

• Confronting and “calling out” racism is an important aspect of cultural competence and is key to building trust when working with communities of color.

• Cultural competence includes a willingness to “step back” and translate concepts in order to make them more relatable.

• Cultural competence requires providers to “check” their assumptions and “break down” concepts that are common to those in the mainstream but may not be readily obvious to people from marginalized communities.

**Recommendations**

Below we share some recommendations based on learnings that emerged over the course of the CLP initiative. Some of these are reaffirmations of learnings that were shared in previous reports and subsequently folded into the design of CLP 2.0, including recommendations around investing more planning time on the front end of the initiative, integrating the three strategies in a more purposeful and transparent way, continuing the flexibility that has come to characterize CLP, and building the capacity of local consultants. Other recommendations include:
• Make intentional investments in growing the pool of consultants of color so that the supply of TA providers matches the diversity of the communities they serve.

• Improve communications about the overall initiative in order to enable strategic leveraging of relationships, opportunities, and organizational social capital.

• Consider differentiated eligibility requirements to account for regional differences in costs of living and costs of doing business.

• Consider creating a targeted leadership focus specifically for leaders of color to support the strengthening of the leadership pipeline.

• Be clear about the larger vision for, and level of commitment to, ongoing community work by the three CLP funders.

• For technology grants in particular, provide adequate resources for implementation so that investments in technology capacity assessments can result in meaningful outcomes.

• Capitalize upon new partnerships formed in the first phase of the CLP to begin building regional capacity and a more robust TA infrastructure.

• Consider alternative vehicles for reporting (e.g. video, visual representations of work, storytelling) that are less burdensome, not culturally incongruous to participants, and that enable participants to capture the “it” of their work.

A great deal of learning has emerged over the course of this first phase of the Community Leadership Project, much of which has been integrated into the design of the CLP’s second phase—CLP 2.0. Though CLP’s Technical Assistance Strategy was a comparatively small component of this much larger initiative, the contributions made by the intermediary partners and the outcomes achieved by participants were significant. The CLP has served as a model of collaborative learning and a testament to the power of collaboration, hard work, and goodwill.
Learning Together: A Final Evaluation Report for the Community Leadership Project’s Technical Assistance Strategy

In 2009, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation launched the Community Leadership Project (CLP). This collaborative effort aimed to strengthen the leadership and organizational capacities of small organizations serving low-income communities and communities of color in California’s San Francisco Bay Area, Central Coast, and San Joaquin Valley regions. The three funders worked in partnership with 27 well-established intermediary organizations as they engaged in three distinct but related strategies to enhance the capacity of community-based organizations to improve the lives of the people they serve. CLP’s primary strategy—the Regranting Strategy—provided core financial support, tailored organizational development assistance, and coaching to small- to mid-sized organizations. The second strategy—the Technical Assistance Strategy—provided focused supports around key capacity areas such as finance, board development, and technology. The third strategy—the Leadership Development Strategy—provided executive directors and other organizational leaders with access to various leadership supports and opportunities. Together, these three strategies were designed to build community organizations’ adaptive capacity, leadership capacity, operational/management capacity, programmatic capacity, and community/collaborative capacity. The hypothesis is that by strengthening these capacities, organizations will be stronger, more sustainable, and better able to adapt to changing political and economic climates.

In 2010, the Hewlett, Packard, and Irvine Foundations contracted with Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) to serve as the evaluator of the Community Leadership Project. SPR designed an evaluation that examines the impact of the CLP on leaders, organizations, intermediaries, and foundation partners and also lifts up key lessons about: (1) reaching and providing capacity-building supports to low-income communities and communities of color; (2) characteristics of effective, culturally relevant, and community-responsive capacity building; and (3) qualities of effective capacity-building support for small and mid-sized organizations serving low-income communities and communities of color. The CLP logic model that undergirds this evaluation is presented in Appendix B.

1 These capacities were identified as key outcomes in the CLP Logic Model, some of which were adapted from the TCC Group’s Core Capacity Building Model. Note: community/collaborative capacity was developed by SPR as a key area to capture for this evaluation. See Appendix A for a more detailed explanation of these capacity-building areas.
This report serves as SPR’s final evaluation report of the CLP’s Technical Assistance Strategy for Phase One of the initiative. Exhibit 1 below provides an overview of the methodology used in the overall evaluation of this strategy and for the development of this report.

Exhibit 1
Methods Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Sources</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Document Review</td>
<td>We reviewed documents that summarized grantees’ objectives and progress, including:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Proposals, interim reports, and final grant reports from each TA intermediary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Training evaluation summaries provided by the intermediaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• CLP progress reports generated by The Learning Partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-depth Interviews</td>
<td>We conducted two-rounds of interviews with key staff in the intermediary organizations that supported this strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11 total)</td>
<td>The first set of interviews took place in summer 2011. A second wave of interviews took place in spring 2013. Appendix C includes a full list of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>respondents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Survey</td>
<td>In order to secure comparable quantitative data to document TA participants’ feedback about the supports they received, we coordinated with each of the intermediaries to include an evaluation form for their participants to fill out at key “endpoints” of their work together (e.g. final cohort convenings, summary workshops, etc.). TA intermediaries used either the Community Leadership Program Technical Assistance Evaluation Form or an approved pre-existing evaluation form from their organization. See Appendix D for copies of these evaluation forms. The data from these evaluations were primarily used to gauge levels of satisfaction, on average, across all intermediaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=91)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Focus</td>
<td>In partnership with the Leadership Learning Community (LLC), SPR conducted regional Learning Labs in each of the three regions in summer 2011 and then again in summer 2012 (six Learning Labs total.) CLP Learning Labs convened grantees and participants in all three strategies, providing them with the opportunity to meet one another, network, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The success, learning, and enthusiasm generated by CLP motivated the Hewlett, Packard, and Irvine Foundations to fund a second phase. CLP 2.0 was launched in 2013. While the goals of the initiative remain the same, the design of CLP 2.0 has been altered based on lessons from CLP 1.0.

All of our interview respondents held leadership positions at their respective intermediary organizations but each had a slightly different title, ranging from Vice President, to Executive Director, to Director of Practice, or simply “Director.” In this report, we will not use proper names or identifiable titles in quote attributions. We will instead use the “Director” title when referring to all intermediary interview respondents.

The number of survey respondents vary by TA intermediary due to the diverse approaches used by each intermediary. Some, for example, worked with small cohorts over a long period of time while others offered workshops or clinics that were open to larger numbers of participants. Since this was designed as an “end point” survey (assessing satisfaction and perceptions of impact at an “endpoint” of the provider’s time with the participants), the number of “endpoints” differed across intermediaries, as did the number of participants. In total, ninety-one participants responded to our survey about the technical assistance support they received through CLP. This number includes 41 participants from Nonprofit Finance Fund, 26 participants from Families in Schools, eight from Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits, and 16 from CompassPoint. Participants that received core support from ZeroDivide (the mini-grants) were not administered this particular survey since they were exclusively recruited from the Regranting Strategy, and therefore have participated in our evaluation in other ways. Because of the small sample size, we are using the results of this survey only to share average participant levels of satisfaction, which will be discussed later in the report.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Sources</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>share their learnings. At the 2012 CLP Learning Labs, SPR conducted focus group discussions with leaders from organizations that participated in the Technical Assistance Strategy. These discussions were focused on whether and how participation in CLP impacted these leaders and their organizations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Overview of TA Intermediaries

The Community Leadership Project invested a total of $1.4 million in its Technical Assistance (TA) Strategy. This investment was spread out across six intermediaries, in sums ranging from $150,000 to $500,000 per intermediary, to provide targeted technical assistance to community organizations serving low-income communities and communities of color in the initiative’s three target regions. These intermediaries were selected because of their established track records of effective service, their ties to community-based organizations, and for having a framework or approach that embraces cultural competence and equity. Exhibit 2 provides an overview of these intermediaries—including their organizational missions, the amounts they were awarded, and the regions they served.

### Exhibit 2
Overview of TA Intermediaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TA Intermediary</th>
<th>Intermediary’s Organizational Mission</th>
<th>Grant Size</th>
<th>Region Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CompassPoint Nonprofit Services (CP)</td>
<td>To increase the impact of nonprofit community-based organizations and the people who work and volunteer in them.</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families in Schools (FIS)</td>
<td>To involve parents and communities in their children’s education to achieve lifelong success.</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Community Development Institute (NCDI)</td>
<td>To build capacity for social change in communities of color and other marginalized communities in a culturally based way.</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF)</td>
<td>To create a strong, well-capitalized and durable nonprofit sector that connects money to mission effectively.</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 The Community Leadership Project initially funded six TA intermediaries to provide TA assistance; however, over the course of the grant, National Community Development Institute (NCDI) closed its doors and therefore was not able to complete its intended capacity-building efforts. While data from NCDI was captured in the interim report, no additional data was captured because of the organization’s shut down and thus the remainder of this report will be focused on the efforts of the five remaining intermediaries.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TA Intermediary</th>
<th>Intermediary’s Organizational Mission</th>
<th>Grant Size</th>
<th>Region Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits (SVCN)</td>
<td>To magnify the influence and contribution of health and human service nonprofit businesses in Santa Clara, in part through support for ethnic leaders.</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZeroDivide</td>
<td>To achieve a “zero digital divide,” as the digital divide is part of the set of social, economic, political, and cultural divides that separate the haves from the have-nots.</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participant Information**

As captured in the CLP Logic Model, the TA Strategy aimed to provide technical assistance to 300 organizations. Together, the TA intermediaries surpassed the target number of organizations served\(^6\) over the course of the three-year grant, as shown in Exhibit 3. In this section, we provide an overview of the number of participants served by each intermediary organization, discuss the foci of the capacity-building supports, and the approaches for delivering these supports. Woven into our discussion of capacity-building approaches and foci are discussions of some of the key capacity challenges faced by CLP participants. We lift these challenges up in order to share how they manifest themselves for CLP organizations, and also to frame how TA intermediaries adapted their approach to more effectively support participants in addressing these challenges.

**Participants Served and TA Intermediaries’ Recruitment Strategies**

In Exhibit 3, we provide an overview of the total number of participants served and intermediaries’ selection criteria for their participants.

\(^6\) The level of support received by each organization reflected in these numbers varies. See the *Capacity-Building Approaches* section for more information.
Exhibit 3
Numbers of Participants Served and Selection Criteria by TA Intermediaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TA Intermediary</th>
<th>Total Organizations Served</th>
<th>Selection Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CompassPoint Nonprofit Services</td>
<td>71 organizations</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families in Schools</td>
<td>27 organizations</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprofit Finance Fund</td>
<td>173 organizations</td>
<td>✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits</td>
<td>16 organizations</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZeroDivide</td>
<td>• 64 organizations completed their technology assessment(^7)</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 58 organizations participated in workshops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 20 organizations received mini-grants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intermediaries engaged in a range of recruitment and selection practices. Below we provide high-level information about recruitment trends, since more detailed discussions of recruitment were provided in previous reports.

- **Only two intermediaries actively recruited participants from the Regranting and Leadership Strategies**, whereas a majority of the intermediaries primarily recruited participants from other existing networks. These two intermediaries noted that receiving recruitment support from intermediaries in the other strategies was helpful, particularly in recruiting participants in the San Joaquin Valley, since both intermediaries had no prior experience working in the region.

- **Overall, TA intermediaries did not engage in a highly competitive process for recruitment and selection.** Rather, their processes focused on identifying organizations—and representatives from those organizations—that would benefit from the provision of a range of supports to organizations. Some intermediaries

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\(^7\) ZeroDivide created a technology assessment specifically for the CLP that was available to all participants in the Regranting Strategy.
added a few more layers into the eligibility requirements and selection processes, for example:

— *Three of the TA intermediaries required that participants have certain traditional indicators of organizational capacity,* including 501(c)3 status, and a minimum number of years of incorporation.

— *Two of the TA intermediaries used organizational budgets as part of their selection criteria.* However, in these cases, the intermediaries eventually widened the budget range, sometimes including organizations with smaller budgets than the designated range for the CLP initiative so as to expand their support to more organizations.

— *By the end of the grant, four out of five intermediaries required that participants held leadership roles at their organizations and had the capacity to commit to consistent attendance.* Intermediaries explained that in order to ensure their training had impact, it was important that those who participated were leaders with actual power to implement what they were learning at their organizations. Over the course of the initiative, in response to some attendance challenges, intermediaries also asked participants for a more explicit commitment to attendance. Intermediaries that utilized a cohort model emphasized the importance of consistent attendance not only for individual learning, but also for maintaining the strength of the learning communities within the cohorts.

**Foci of Capacity-Building Supports to Address Organizational Capacity Challenges**

The organizational capacity challenges faced by the organizations that participated in CLP are not dissimilar from those faced by small nonprofit organizations in general. As with many other small nonprofits, these organizations were challenged by staff turnover, diminishing funding streams, limited technical resources, and challenges in leadership development. At the heart of the TA Strategy’s design was the desire to address these key organizational capacity challenges, with an eye towards tailoring supports to organizations serving low-income communities and communities of color. Exhibit 4 highlights how the focal areas of the five TA intermediary organizations map to the five core CLP capacities, as outlined in the intermediaries’ original grant proposals.
Exhibit 4
Focus of Capacity-Building Efforts by TA Intermediary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TA Intermediary</th>
<th>Focus of Capacity-Building Efforts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership Capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CompassPoint Nonprofit Services</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families in Schools</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprofit Finance Fund</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZeroDivide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the initiative evolved, TA intermediaries adhered to the initial, proposed foci of their capacity-building supports. However, they also adjusted their models to focus on common organizational capacity challenges that emerged during the course of working with TA participants throughout the life of the initiative. Below is an overview of the key findings about the foci of the capacity-building supports, some of which have already been described in greater detail in previous reports.

- **Most of the TA intermediaries (three out of the five) provided capacity-building supports in three or more areas, while the other two intermediaries provided focused support in one capacity building area.**
  - TA intermediaries that provided support in multiple capacity areas typically served a smaller number of organizations over a longer term. These intermediaries also used a cohort approach to learning, which enabled the providers to go “deeper” with their support and enabled the participants to build relationships with and learn from one another.
  - In general, TA intermediaries that provided support in only one specific capacity area served *more organizations* with a “lighter touch” (i.e. lower dosage of support) but with a more intense focus on a specific subject area than those that provided support across multiple capacity-building areas. Providing this targeted content support in a lighter dosage made it easier for participants to digest and apply complex learnings.

- **In an effort to be responsive to the most significant organizational capacity challenges, the TA intermediaries provided much of their support in building**
**leadership capacity.** The following are some ways in which leadership challenges were experienced by CLP participants:

— **Strategic Board Development.**
Recruitment of qualified board members with specific strengths is not easy. Some CLP organizations had the added challenge of having friends or family as current board members, making transitions or efforts to increase accountability somewhat difficult.

— **Overstretched Executive Directors.** As exemplified in the quotes to the right, interviewees shared that one of the biggest challenges faced by CLP organizations was that their leaders were stretched too thinly, wearing “multiple hats” in order to keep their organization moving. Most were also characterized as **having to work consistently in survival mode,** which precluded the ability to engage in strategic management and visioning.

- **All of the TA intermediaries provided support in operational/management capacity.** A core focus of support was aimed at addressing key fundraising and financial management challenges. TA intermediaries noted that challenges in financial management and fundraising were intertwined with staffing challenges, including not having qualified or dedicated staff for these roles. Insufficient technology and poor financial data also contributed greatly to the difficulties that CLP organizations faced in fundraising and financial management. Some intermediaries noted that they needed to adapt their support to appropriately serve the organizations facing these particular challenges. (This is covered in more detail in the Effective TA Strategies section of this report.)

- Although TA intermediaries tended to target specific capacities, **these capacity areas are very interconnected and therefore increased capacity in one area affected capacity in other areas.** While TA intermediaries tended to focus on key areas of challenge such as fundraising, finance, and leadership development, they noted that as organizations strengthened these areas, other capacity arenas such as adaptive and programmatic capacity were also impacted in positive ways.

- **Balancing passion and capacity was often at the root of organizational challenges.** Many of the organizations supported by the CLP TA intermediaries
functioned on “sweat equity,” relying on the passion and commitment of staff and cadres of volunteers to meet the needs of their communities. Moreover, while staffs’ and leaders’ fiercely passionate for and commitment to their communities were key strengths, they also sometimes resulted in decisions that were not always healthy for their organizations. Finding the balance between passion, mission, and capacity was an area of need that almost all intermediaries addressed with their participants.

Capacity-Building Approaches

One of the primary goals of this evaluation was to learn about capacity-building approaches that are effective for organizations serving low-income communities and communities of color across the three regions served. In an effort to be responsive to the particular needs of their TA participants, each intermediary developed a customized approach. As shown in Exhibit 5, the format of the TA supports varied considerably, with each intermediary determining its own combination of formats (i.e. workshops, clinics, individualized TA supports, cohort and mini-grants) to shape its approach. Moreover, the nature of their supports evolved throughout the course of the grant as intermediaries continually refined their approaches (as discussed in the Effective TA Strategies section) in order to be responsive to the needs of participants.

Exhibit 5
Capacity-Building Approaches by TA Intermediary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TA Intermediary</th>
<th>Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Webinar/Workshop/Technology Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CompassPoint Nonprofit Services</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families in Schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprofit Finance Fund</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZeroDivide</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table represents all of the capacity-building support approaches used by TA intermediary throughout the entire duration of the grant. It is thus important to note that not the checked TA formats were not necessarily all utilized within one year or one grant cycle. Instead, it reflects the breadth of formats used by the TA providers, including formats that were not part of their original approach but instead reflect a shift borne out of participant needs.

These supports are grouped together because they represent one-time supports that were offered to participants.

The term “clinic” refers to intensive, multi-day trainings around a specific capacity-building area.
Although this proved to be somewhat challenging to document since some of the TA intermediaries’ approaches changed yearly as they adapted to participants’ needs, capacities, and readiness levels, some key similarities among TA intermediaries’ approaches still emerged. They are listed below:

- Over the course of the grant, **TA intermediaries were flexible about changing their approaches** in order to find a balance between providing useful supports while not being burdensome to TA participants who were already “stretched thin.”

- **All TA intermediaries provided some level of individualized/tailored TA.** Some providers noted, however, that TA participants were not always able to fully capitalize on the individualized support offered to them because they were not at the appropriate point of readiness. Furthermore, some intermediaries noted that there were others without the capacity to fully engage in follow-on support or the resources to implement their capacity-building plans, and thus the potential benefits of such support were not fully realized.

- Although the dosage varied, **three of the five TA intermediaries used a cohort model to create a space for peer sharing, networking, and relationship building.** Using a cohort model allowed participants to apply their learnings in a community setting, receive advice from one another about how to apply their learnings, and share strategies for tackling different challenges. The quote in the textbox above highlights one director’s thoughts about the benefits of peer learning using a cohort approach.

**TA Outcomes**

Capacity building takes time. For the small community-based organizations that participated in the CLP, whose readiness levels and “starting points” with capacity building were generally lower than originally anticipated, it can take even longer. Still, over the course of the evaluation, we gathered outcome evidence that indicates that the CLP’s TA Strategy has had positive impacts on its organizational participants, on the TA intermediary organizations and, to a certain degree, on the communities themselves.

**Participant-Level Outcomes**

Results from surveys taken by CLP TA participants indicate a strong sense of satisfaction with the support they received through this strategy. Overall, TA participants from each of the five surveyed organizations reported feeling that the technical support they received through the CLP had a positive impact on their organizations. Exhibit 6 shows levels of satisfaction in multiple
areas, based on surveys taken by participants across four intermediaries, with results averaged across participants.\textsuperscript{11}

**Exhibit 6**  
**Average Levels of Satisfaction with Capacity-Building Efforts by TA Intermediary (N=91)\textsuperscript{12}**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributed to your organization’s skills, knowledge, and/or systems?</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped your organization reach its capacity-building goals?</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflected an understanding of and sensitivity towards the cultures and needs of the communities you serve?</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enabled you to better connect with the communities you serve and your ability to advocate on their behalf?</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to findings from survey data, interviews with TA intermediaries and focus group discussions with TA participants at the CLP Learning Labs offer additional insights into the ways in which the technical assistance support they received was helpful in building the five core capacities described earlier in this report: (1) leadership, (2) operational, (3) adaptive, (4) programmatic, and (5) community/collaborative. In the following sections, we highlight some of the outcomes shared with us by intermediaries and participants across these core capacity areas. It is important to remember, however, that the TA Strategy was the most modestly-resourced of

\textsuperscript{11} These intermediaries include CompassPoint, Families in Schools, Nonprofit Finance Fund, and Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits. NCDI did not implement the surveys prior to its closure. In an effort to reduce burden, recipients of TA support from ZeroDivide were exempt from taking the survey, since they were also grantees in the Regranting Strategy and participated in other evaluation activities associated with that strategy.

\textsuperscript{12} Note that while 91 participants took the survey overall, some did not answer all questions and thus there is a variance in responses per question. The N for the last question is significantly lower in part because the evaluation survey used by CompassPoint (which we mapped to our survey) did not include a comparable question.
Ending Isolation through Networking Opportunities

One Learning Lab participant described the challenge of leadership isolation, noting:

“I don’t always have like-minded people around me that can understand and see what I see. I need to be around someone who gets it.”

CLP provided her with opportunities to be around people who “get it” and she admiringly referred to these newfound peers as “visionaries” who provide “inspiration” and “confidence” — and who could help her navigate politics in unfamiliar contexts.

Another participant described the benefits of networking this way:

“I learned that other small to mid-sized organizations are more similar than different. I was surprised that so many of these organizations share the same challenges. I have learned to reach out to other local nonprofits when I have questions. I found that many other EDs have experienced the same situations and can often share their experiences, which can be helpful.”

Leadership Capacity

Resources provided through the CLP’s TA Strategy gave some of the leaders of participating organizations dedicated time to reflect upon their roles as leaders and tools to help them lead more effectively. Below is a list of some of the leadership outcomes shared with us by providers and participants.

- **Increased confidence.** Participants reported an increased feeling of self-confidence in their leadership, which gave them the courage to take bold steps. Examples of these “bold steps” that were shared by participants include testifying before the Centers for Disease Control, serving as a key speaker at a major national conference, and letting go of longstanding relationships with certain partner organizations in order to move the organization forward in a different direction.

- **Reduced sense of isolation.** Feelings of isolation are not uncommon among leaders of color, particularly those working in social justice and service arenas. However comments shared by participants in the CLP Learning Labs, particularly those held in the San Joaquin Valley and the Central Coast, indicate a sense of gratitude for the opportunities CLP has afforded them to meet leaders of other, similar organizations and to feel part of a larger network. In the textbox on page 12, we offer some of the comments made by participants about the ways in which they benefitted from feeling part of a larger network.

- **Improved management skills.** A director of one
intermediary organization shared that one of the key outcomes she witnessed as a result of this work was that participants gained an “increased understanding of the executive director’s leadership role and increased skills in order to deliver on that role.” Accordingly, some Learning Lab participants shared that some of the management skills they learned gave them the confidence and tools to confront difficult situations, facilitate uncomfortable dialogues, and work to make necessary shifts in organizational culture.

**Operational Capacity**

TA intermediaries and participants shared multiple examples of ways in which TA support helped participants to improve various aspects of their operational capacity. Some of these examples are listed below.

- **Improved financial management capacity.** Survey responses that indicate improved financial management capacity as an outcome came primarily from those that worked with the intermediary that focused specifically on this area. Toward this end, survey respondents reported having a “better understanding” of finances in general and of what financial health entails, a renewed focus on finances and financial health, a clearer understanding of “how to plan ahead to meet funding needs,” and a greater knowledge base from which to ask “good questions to see a true picture of our organization’s health.”

- **Improved fundraising capacity.** Participants that received technical assistance support in fundraising noted that simply having the time and resources to focus on fundraising was helpful. Survey respondents noted that the fundraising support they received enabled them to be “more intentional” in their fundraising pursuits and it also helped them to “broaden[their] understanding of fundraising in general” and responsibilities with respect to fundraising. Respondents also expressed gratitude for “concrete tools” they could use, for exposure to techniques used by fundraisers of color, and for opportunities to practice “the ask” with peers that represent communities of color.

- **Limited improvements in technology capacity.** A major challenge faced by small community-based organizations is insufficient technology to meet needs or to enable staff members to effectively conduct their work. A majority of participants (18 of 20) that received mini-grant support from one intermediary to increase their organizations’ technology capacity reported positive results. Technical capacity-building support included the development of a technology plan and limited resources (up to $5,000) to implement that plan. Interestingly, while grantee reports and comments from Learning Lab participants indicate strong satisfaction with the support received in the technology capacity arena, it is not clear how much actual progress was made in terms of improving technology infrastructure for these organizations. With such a limited pool of resources for implementation, only modest

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13 As reported in their grantee reports to the intermediary.
improvements were possible, though these organizations now have clear plans to guide resource allocation efforts for future technology improvements.

**Adaptive Capacity**

Having the capacity to adapt to changing political and funding environments is critical to the survival of nonprofit organizations. Survey respondents indicated growth in adaptive capacity in a number of ways, as listed below:

- **Development of strategic planning skills.** Strategic planning was the primary vehicle through which one intermediary carried out its support and some participants offered positive comments about the process. One survey respondent noted that going through the process of developing a strategic plan “made an incredible difference.” A couple of respondents reported being more “focused,” while others noted that having a strategic plan motivated and enabled them to “move forward to implement action steps.” One organization reported bold changes resulting from this work, including an organizational restructuring to better position the organization financially and structurally.

- **Increased navigation skills.** A big part of adaptive capacity includes being able to adjust and thrive within shifting political and economic environments. Histories of marginalization and, for some, geographic isolation, resulted in low levels of “political savvy” and thus the ability to navigate funding arenas was not an area of strength for many of the organizations participating in the CLP. While these are skills that are built over time, participants demonstrated greater understanding of how to navigate different arenas. For example, CLP Learning Lab participants noted that being connected to other, more experienced organizations has been helpful in terms of navigating certain political arenas. Coaching also helped participants understand and practice navigating funding arenas.

**Programmatic Capacity**

Our data yielded few results with respect to increased programmatic capacity, but this was because the TA intermediaries’ focus was primarily on helping organizations strengthen their infrastructure, which, in theory, would help them to be strong enough to weather shifting political and economic climates as well as to deliver the programming they envisioned. Though we did not capture large-scale outcomes with respect to improved programmatic capacity,
participants and intermediaries shared a few interesting examples of ways in which the TA support they received helped them to increase capacity in this area. This included successful efforts to build advocacy capacity (measured through increased coalition membership and base-building efforts) which helped to increase program support, as well as the use of evaluation to identify areas of program strength and areas for improvement.

**Community/collaborative capacity**

One of the goals of the Community Leadership Project was to create opportunities for participants to network with one another—to help organizations overcome feelings of isolation and to create a foundation for potential, strategic collaborations in the future. Examples of ways in which participants increased community/collaborative capacity are listed below.

- **Formation of strategic and/or supportive partnerships.** TA intermediaries shared several instances wherein the support and networking opportunities provided through CLP resulted in advantageous partnerships (e.g. shared grants) or at the very least, the ability to identify potential partners for future collaborative work.

- **Capitalizing on established networks.** Though participants in the San Joaquin Valley Learning Labs lamented the challenges they faced due to geographic isolation, some intermediaries were struck by the “tight-knit” and “interwoven” relationships developed by some members of the nonprofit community in this region, which they said helped foster a strong, collaborative learning environment that deepened the impact of their work together.

- **Building new networks and leveraging strengths.** As noted previously, the CLP provided organizations with opportunities to connect with other organizations that had similar challenges, strengths, and/or areas of focus. Repeatedly, participants in the CLP Learning Labs expressed deep gratitude for these opportunities. Not only did these opportunities help organizational leaders feel less isolated, but they served as venues for organizations to share their work, to invite other participants to their events, and to offer concrete support (e.g. grantwriting support) to one another.

**Intermediary Outcomes**

The Community Leadership Project is characterized by learnings and change at multiple levels. While the focus of this work was to increase the strength of small to mid-sized community-based organizations, TA intermediaries reported having experienced changes in their own organizations or in their approaches as a result of CLP participation. While change at the intermediary level was neither anticipated nor the focus of our evaluation, the outcomes are positive and worth sharing, especially because they have implications for understanding how the process of strengthening communities and community-based organizations influences change at multiple levels—and how it can shift thinking about the nature of this work. Below we highlight some of these unanticipated but critical outcomes:
- **New service areas and partnerships.** For three intermediary organizations, the CLP represented their first opportunity to work with organizations in California’s San Joaquin Valley region. To ensure that they were engaging appropriately and effectively with the organizations in this region, two partnered strategically with key local organizations that had a keen understanding of the geography, the organizations that serve the community, and the strengths of and challenges faced by organizations and communities this region. These partnerships have been described as “incredibly rewarding” by the TA intermediaries, who feel gratified that their work is growing and reaching new audiences.

- **Opportunities to be more self-reflective about their own practices.** One intermediary director noted that one of her organization’s strengths is that it is a “learning organization” and thus staff benefit from the learning happening via their grantees. She describes:

  > The strength of that comes from the fact that we are really a peer to all of the organizations that we serve and support. That means that as they learn, we learn. As they look at their board capacity, it’s causing us to look at our board capacity and ask the critical questions. As they’re developing their strategic plan, we’re implementing pieces of our own, and it’s allowing us to ask critical questions of ourselves. It really challenges our own thinking and our own approach. And that’s why our ability to develop relationships and really cultivate and connect those relationships to agencies doesn’t just benefit them, but it benefits us as well.

- **Increased cultural competence.** Several directors shared that participation in CLP resulted in organizational self-reflection and at least one director commented that it prompted her to consider her own organization’s cultural competence. She added that this has changed how her staff members approach their work:

  > We’ve learned just as much as the participants. About better coaching, better mentoring… It has changed our organization. We are more sensitive to the issues. We try to incorporate what we’ve learned in our work. White privilege has not died. It is alive and well. We’ve learned more about the impact of white privilege, more about how to integrate that in our organization and to be a change agent.

- **Increased ability to adapt to different readiness levels.** All organizations found themselves having to adapt their approaches and tools in order to best accommodate the different readiness levels of the organizations they served. All felt they learned a great deal in the process.

- **Affirmation of principles.** At least one intermediary expressed that working in CLP was exciting because it provided an opportunity to test the application of her organization’s guiding principles, which was ultimately affirming.

**Community-Level Benefits**

Measuring community-level outcomes was not part of the scope of this evaluation. However, interviews with TA intermediaries and focus group conversations with TA participants in the
CLP Learning Labs revealed interesting ways in which the community may be benefitting from this work. While these are not quite outcomes, we share them here in order to highlight some of the potential and unintended benefits of TA investments.

- **Increased awareness of community issues.** CLP participants report that through their external leadership activities, increased fundraising events, and strengthened programming, they are reaching larger audiences when sharing their work. In doing so, they are increasing awareness of the issues faced by their communities.

- **Shared learning beyond CLP.** Some participants from the 2012 San Joaquin Valley Learning Lab reported that the learnings and tools they gained as a result of their participation in CLP were so useful that they shared their newfound knowledge with other non-CLP related organizations.

- **Strengthened leadership capacity beyond CLP.** In the San Joaquin Valley region, leaders tended to serve on multiple boards. Thus, TA intermediaries postulated that building the leadership capacity of board members may be having an impact on multiple organizations and not just CLP participants. A director at one intermediary organization explained:

  > The hope is that, again, to the extent that those individuals are working within multitude of organizations, they’re able to pollinate that new information and comprehension and apply it for other organizations as well. Some of that is also just a hope that to the extent we see transition and fluidity in non-profits, as much as you do in any other sector, that we’re reaching individuals who might right now be staff, might be executive directors, might be board members, but could in the future move into applying that information as an independent consultant or from a small consulting practice.

The director of one intermediary organization shared that though we may not be able to measure community-level outcomes associated with the TA Strategy, she believes that communities ultimately benefit from the strengthening of the organizations that serve them. She explained:

> When they do well, we do well because the extent to which they are a better positioned, a more sustainable organization, our communities benefit, and it means that our ultimate goal of a more educated population is better able to be met and to be achieved.

**Lessons Learned/Recommendations**

The Community Leadership Project was designed to be a “learning initiative,” with learning happening at all levels of the initiative (funder, intermediary, grantee). In this section, we lift up the lessons learned from the TA Strategy over the course of the entire initiative. We divide the learnings into three specific categories: (1) readiness to engage in capacity building, (2) effective technical assistance strategies for organizations at different levels of readiness, and (3) cultural competence in technical assistance. While some of these lessons have already been covered in
previous reports, and have already informed changes to the structure of the initiative, we are including them here in this final report in order to provide a comprehensive picture of the learnings that have emerged over the course of this initiative.

**Readiness for Capacity-Building Support**

The subject of participant “readiness” for engaging in capacity building effort was a somewhat uncomfortable topic for several TA intermediaries who recognized that setting a threshold for readiness had the potential of excluding the very organizations the initiative was designed to support: small organizations that have not had much access to philanthropic resources for capacity building. All TA intermediaries reported having to adapt their support to adjust to readiness levels that were lower than expected. This was true even for intermediaries that had predetermined readiness factors included in their eligibility criteria. At the same time, all intermediaries reported having learned a great deal as a result of needing to adapt to meet the readiness levels of CLP participants. Below are some lessons about readiness that emerged over the course of the initiative.

- **Readiness is a two-way street that requires not only readiness of participants to engage but also readiness (and willingness) of funders and intermediaries to meet organizations “where they are at.”** Assessing participant readiness for engagement in capacity-building efforts is a common and practical strategy that helps to ensure optimal and effective use of resources and support. However, most CLP TA intermediaries agreed that when engaging in a capacity-building initiative for organizations that fit the CLP profile, the onus for readiness should not rest on the participant organization alone. Funders and intermediaries need to also assess their own readiness to engage with these organizations and to adapt expectations and service accordingly. A director of one intermediary organization commented that it was important for funders to think about their own flexibility when considering parameters for readiness. She added that for the kinds of organizations served through the CLP, there must be some flexibility in setting benchmarks that are appropriate for the organization and that take into account incremental growth and different gauges of growth, depending on where organizations have started out. She explained:

  *I guess that would be my recommendation- to make sure that there is flexibility so that as you’re looking at supporting their organizational needs based on whatever their baseline readiness is that you’re taking into consideration and leaving room for the ways in which they need to evolve internally and externally.*

- **Assessments of readiness or engagement capacity should not be limited to TA recipients but should also include TA providers.** As noted earlier, TA intermediaries were chosen for their strong track records of effective service, ties to community-based organizations, and frameworks or approaches that embrace cultural competence and equity. For the most part, these parameters resulted in the selection of strong intermediary organizations that were able to work effectively with the
community-based organizations served by the CLP. However over the course of the initiative, one intermediary provider experienced its own set of insurmountable organizational capacity challenges and folded before it could complete its work. Having selection parameters for intermediary providers that incorporate indicators of organizational stability and capacity to meet commitments may be useful in ensuring TA providers’ capacity to meet their commitments.

- **Intermediaries identified desire and willingness to learn as the most critical aspects of readiness.** At least three TA intermediaries named willingness and desire to learn as fundamental criteria for assessing readiness. One intermediary director described “readiness” as more of an “attitude,” a “willingness to be ready.” She explained:

  *For the most part, what we found is that organizations were not only willing to learn, but excited to learn and to be able to make change. Even if incremental, they were still able to make some changes that would benefit their organization and benefit their work and really move their work along.*

- **Readiness should in large part be self-determined by the participant, but enabling this requires honest communications from the provider about expectations and required time commitment.** One intermediary director stated that readiness should be self-determined, but emphasized that organizations need the right information and clear expectations in order to make that decision. As such, she believed it was the intermediary’s duty to be clear about expectations and process so that participants could make an honest and accurate assessment about their capacity to engage in trainings.

- **In order to demonstrate readiness, organizational leaders with decision-making authority must be willing to serve as TA participants and to commit to consistent attendance.** Having organizational leaders (including board members) serve as training participants is crucial because those who participate in the trainings must have the requisite decision-making power in their organizations to implement their learnings and effect change. Commitment to attendance was especially critical for trainings that utilized a cohort approach because these trainings had dual goals of skill-building as well as relationship-building. This commitment was also critical for trainings that employed a sequential skill-building approach that was implemented via multiple trainings over a predetermined period of time (as opposed to one-off workshops).

- **In order to participate meaningfully in capacity-building trainings, organizations cannot be in “crisis mode.”** Though they recognized that almost all organizations participating in CLP could be characterized as struggling, particularly in this challenging economic climate, intermediaries felt there was a difference between struggling organizations and those that were in crisis. Organizations that were in crisis were characterized as having absolutely no capacity to engage in learning because they were “distracted” by challenges such as leadership loss or financial struggles so severe that the potential for shut-down appeared imminent. Participants from struggling organizations, though stretched thinly, could still meet
attendance commitments and could still benefit in some way from trainings that were adapted to meet their needs and readiness levels.

- **Funders and intermediaries should consider cultural bias when determining readiness parameters and consider whether or not these parameters are at odds with the goals of the initiative.** One intermediary director emphasized the importance of unpacking traditional notions of readiness in order to see cultural bias in how these parameters are determined and who gets excluded as a result:

  > Readiness is often code for certain standards of what’s “needed” and what should be “in place.” I think there are limitations to this [resulting in] ways to not have access for folks that really want to do this work. And there’s this cultural bias about what an organization should look like in order to be strong and functioning.

  To emphasize her point, this director shared that she had worked with several organizations that “fit the bill” in terms of traditional notions of readiness, including a healthy budget and staff size, but whose efforts to engage meaningfully in capacity building failed because they were simply not ready for a certain level of change.

The lessons learned regarding readiness for capacity building bring up some key points for reflection or consideration, including:

- **In what ways do readiness parameters support or pose obstacles to the goals of the initiative, particularly with respect to intended target populations?**
- **What role do readiness parameters play in perpetuating marginalization of small-to mid-sized organizations serving low-income communities and communities of color?**
- **How can funders and intermediaries adjust their processes (e.g. eligibility and selection criteria as well as TA approaches), to be more inclusive of organizations at different readiness levels?**
- **How can expectations and notions of success be recalibrated to include incremental levels of change that may seem small from the outside but feel huge to the organizations experiencing those changes and which typically serve as stepping stones to larger changes yet to come?**

**Effective TA Strategies**

In working with organizations that were at different levels of readiness, TA intermediaries were able to demonstrate and flex their own adaptive capacities and all intermediaries noted that they learned a great deal in the process. In this section, we lift up lessons about capacity-building strategies that the intermediaries felt were particularly effective in supporting organizations that participated in the CLP.

- **In order to work with organizations that are new to capacity building and/or are at lower levels of readiness, TA providers need to be nimble enough to adjust their offerings.** TA intermediaries noted that in order to provide effective TA to organizations at low or different levels of readiness, they need to be flexible enough
to meet the grantees “where they are at” and nimble enough to adapt their services accordingly. All providers had examples of ways in which they had to be flexible and adjust some aspect of the services they offered, as described in the textbox on page 22. Interestingly, all intermediaries reflected upon their need to adjust in positive terms, recognizing the value of their own learning that came as a result. One intermediary director explained:

As we were sort of teaching adaptive capacity to our cohort, we had to embrace adaptive capacity as a TA provider and really change to what they needed.

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**Adjusting Support to Fit Needs and Readiness Levels**

**Scaling back offerings.** Though staff at one intermediary organization expected that they would build technological capacity of participating organizations by conducting trainings on things like constituent management platforms, E-Advocacy, and social media, when they did site visits and conducted technology assessments of participating organizations, they realized that the technology needs of many of the grantees were more rudimentary than they assumed. This intermediary then “seriously scaled back” its offerings to focus more on more foundational technology support.

**Adjusting depth of content.** After the first year of CLP, staff at one intermediary organization realized that it was going too deep with some of its follow-on work with organizations in the first year of the grant. The follow-on work proved extremely resource intensive and the participant organizations did not always have the capacity to commit to the level of work required with the follow-on support, nor to digest and optimize their learning in general. The intermediary then adjusted its approach, making the content easier to digest and opening up the trainings to more people. Another intermediary went in the opposite direction, responding to participants’ explicit requests to reduce the number of learning topics so that they could go deeper into their learning in specific arenas. Staff at yet another intermediary organization also made depth adjustments, but they did so in an iterative way, making slight tweaks to their program each year. The intermediary’s director described this process of adaptation as a “reverse pyramid,” explaining:

I almost see it as a reverse pyramid. We started very broad, and year by year, we had to refine that down so that we could meet them at the point of where they were and really provide them technical assistance that they needed.

**Adjusting delivery method.** In an effort to support San Joaquin Valley participants in overcoming obstacles related to geography, one intermediary tried adjusting its peer learning circles so that some of them could be conducted via telephone rather than in person. Though this shift was an effort to be responsive to certain challenges, it also unexpectedly changed the dynamics of the peer learning circles as well as the level of commitment to attendance and thus the intermediary shifted back to in-person meetings.

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- **Having a peer-learning component to technical assistance builds community while deepening learning.** One director shared the belief that learning in a cohort of peers builds strength because the participants are able to form a community and learn from one another. She said that when participants were asked what the most important aspect of the program was for them, “what came up was the network—the building, the learning together, the learning from each other, the monthly meetings.” She added that another important value of this kind of learning was the comfort that
they were learning from people who were “working right here—in this county, right across the street from you.” Another director echoed this sentiment, noting that not only did participants appreciate the group learning approach, but it provided participants with the opportunity to “dig deep into their organizational issues and then find a kind of common ground with their peers.” Another director added that group learning afforded participants with opportunities to share strategies that were readily applicable because the participants were in similar situations.

- **Group learning can result in more effective and efficient TA delivery.** Directors at two intermediary organizations stated that having a group or cohort learning environment enabled them to be more effective and responsive to the needs of the participants. One noted, for example, that the cohort format enabled her to maximize the benefits of one-on-one coaching and cohort learning by hiring one coach to serve all grantees in its second participant cohort. This was not only an effective use of resources from a financial perspective, but it also enabled the coach to be more effective in facilitating small, peer-learning opportunities because she was familiar with the challenges and successes faced by all participants. The other director shared that the group learning dynamic gave her opportunities to witness important but subtle nuances that impacted learning for her participants. She explained:

  
  We started to see what some of those dynamics look like [that impact learning.] For example, is there a certain understanding on the board president’s part, but not the executive director or vice versa? And is there sort of a shared sense of what the issues of the organization are, or do those vary by one individual to another? It allows us to be more appropriately adaptive and responsive to the individual circumstances and individuals as well that we’re dealing with in terms of planning the follow-on assistance.

- **Co-design can help ensure that technical support is culturally relevant.** Staff at an intermediary organization that had no experience working in the San Joaquin Valley partnered with more established organizations in the region in order to better ensure that their program offerings were appropriate and relevant to the organizations in the region. These partner organizations, which were also intermediaries in the Regranting Strategy, helped this TA intermediary in forming an advisory group filled with community partners that could “test” the relevance and appropriateness of intermediary’s fundraising training content. The TA intermediary’s director described this approach as “one of the most impactful ways we approached this project.”

- **Timing of technical assistance offerings has an impact on participants’ ability to commit.** Figuring out optimal timeframes that would enable overstretched leaders to meet their attendance commitments was challenging. Several intermediaries adjusted training timeframes to help with engagement issues, noting that what ultimately

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14 A majority of participants in this intermediary organization’s first cohort elected to use their mini-grants to engage individual consultants to provide coaching services. For Cohort II, the intermediary centralized the coaching aspect of the work, reducing the amount of mini-grants provided to the participants and using the excess to pay for one coach to serve all participants.
ended up being optimal for their participants was not always intuitive. Important considerations included but were not limited to: (1) days of the week that trainings were offered, (2) overall duration of training period, and (3) intensity of sessions.

- **Capacity to digest learning must be factored into the timing, dosage, and depth of technical assistance support.** Staff at one intermediary organization shared that they tried to be intentional in the timing of their offerings in ways that enabled participants to come away from workshops with enough time to digest the content and to attempt to implement some aspects of their plans in-between meetings, with the help of a coach. However, another intermediary organization experienced challenges with its participants when it tried to engage in in-depth, follow-on support because the participants did not have the capacity to learn the concepts, implement the assignments that were part of their follow-on support, and run their organizations. In response, this intermediary opted to eliminate its follow-on support option in favor of a broader approach that could be offered to larger numbers of participants and whose content was more easily digestible.

- **For learning challenging topics, repetition and encouraging attendance from multiple staff members at an organization can be a useful strategy.** Some concepts—like nonprofit finance—are not easily digestible, and accurately applying learnings can be a slow process. Repetition and allowing more staff members of an organization to attend trainings on financial management was helpful to and appreciated by participants. A director at the intermediary organization that focused specifically on financial management explained:

  *This might sound a little strange, but in the workshops we did in years two and three, we presented essentially the same content....It was actually deemed to be helpful, and we kept hearing that it was helpful for folks to have the opportunity to hear things more than once. Finance isn’t necessarily an area that folks [grasp], and not necessarily an area that once you’ve heard concepts, you “get” them and can go apply them. We not only had the same individuals return to the workshops more than once, but we also had them sending their colleagues or additional board members. I think enabling that learning to be appreciated by one individual, and then also made available for their colleagues, meant you had a group of individuals who are responsible for making decisions for an organization who all had the same information. They were able to kind of change their approach and start to use new language, start to use new concepts than what they might have previously been using to make decisions.*

- **Providing concrete tools and tangible examples helps participants apply learnings more readily.** Staff at two intermediary organizations noted that providing participants with concrete tools, such as sample board development plans, board job descriptions, financial worksheets, and sample strategic plans was helpful to participants. Certainly, as noted previously, Learning Lab participants noted that they utilized the tools they received not only in their own organizations but also across the multiple organizations with which they were connected.
An integrated TA strategy and clear communication about the overall CLP initiative might have resulted in greater benefits for participants and more effective use of TA resources. TA participants that attended the Learning Labs expressed surprise in learning that they were part of a larger initiative, noting that they would have liked to have had the opportunity to participate more deeply and take advantage of the opportunities afforded via the other two strategies. One participant likened the experience to being extremely hungry and then being offered a piece of bread while others are getting a full meal. She added that while she was of course grateful for the bread, she was “still hungry” and “wanted more.” TA intermediaries also longed for greater coordination across all intermediaries in order to create community at the intermediary level and to ensure that they were not duplicating each other’s strengths and efforts.

Demonstrating Cultural Competence

“Cultural competence” is a loaded term—one that, in a multicultural society, means different things to different people. Trying to articulate what constitutes culturally competent TA proved to be challenging because, as one intermediary director noted, on one hand, cultural competence is a “sensitive topic” while on the other, “everyone thinks they are culturally competent.” In this section, we lift up aspects of technical assistance approaches that multiple respondents felt reflected a culturally competent and/or culturally sensitive approach to technical assistance.

- Culturally competent TA providers demonstrate humility in their TA approaches and recognize participant organizations as experts in their work. The importance of humility was a recurrent theme in discussions around cultural competence in capacity building. Respondents described a number of different ways in which TA providers demonstrated humility that resonated with participants, including engaging as “learners,” recognizing/honoring the expertise of community-based organizations, being careful and engaged listeners, being “non-judgmental” and “open-minded,” and reflecting a “generosity of spirit.”

- Cultural competence requires a sensitivity to

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**Feedback from Participants**

*We are grateful for [our intermediary’s] help in finding us a consultant who possesses both the knowledge/skills and cultural understanding to help us unify and expand the Board.*

***

*We are very grateful for the vision and leadership of CLP funders in funding this important initiative. In this diverse community where immigrants make up more than two-thirds of the country’s population, there is so much need for linguistically appropriate and culturally-effective services to serve ethnic communities.*

***

*This grant allowed our agency the time to think about the work we do and how to capture effectiveness. Because we had the right consultant, I believe, we made quick progress and buy-in. [The consultant’s] understanding of our agency and our clients, the culture of the clients we serve and the culture of our staff was extremely valuable. This grant was a great jumpstart to our bigger plans for measuring, collecting, and analyzing this meaningful data.*

layered identities, particularly when matching trainers to participants. At least two intermediaries discussed the importance of making the effort to match participants with trainers that have similar backgrounds—racially, ethnically, and linguistically. But intermediaries and participants also cautioned that the process of cultural matching needed to incorporate an understanding and acknowledgment of the layered aspects of identity and how that influences trust and learning. Thus considerations of culture also should include religion, gender, sexual orientation, immigrant status, and place. That is not to say that trainers must be matched perfectly across all layers of identity, but that there needs to be an understanding of and sensitivity to layered aspects of identity when matching trainers to participants.

- Cultural competence includes the ability and willingness to be “up front” about race. At least two intermediaries talked about being “up front” about issues of race when working with communities of color. One director said that talking about race and class is part of the framework they use in their Fundraising Academy, adding that it is important not to assume that arenas such as finance or fundraising are race-neutral. She explained that race and class shape “how we experience money personally” and thus this is the starting point the organization uses in talking about how to raise money in and with communities of color. For organizations run by leaders of color, having this point of entry into fundraising is extremely important because mainstream fundraising tactics are often culturally incongruous with the ways in which communities of color operate.

- Confronting and “calling out” racism is an important aspect of cultural competence and is key to building trust when working with communities of color. One intermediary director noted that when working with her cohorts, it was important to just “call out racism” when it occurred. She said that when leaders of color were frustrated with behavior they felt was racist, that it was important to air it out and to “call it”—to acknowledge the behavior and not ignore the racist undertones. By acknowledging it, this director not only built trust with her participants, but she also could then work with them on strategies to change the dynamics.

- Cultural competence includes a willingness to “step back” and translate complex concepts in order to make them more relatable. A director at one intermediary organization described the thrust of her organization’s work as “taking the language of finance and translating it into the language of the every day so people can make sense of it and use it as a tool.” In their CLP work, staff at this intermediary organization took that one step farther, making sure that the stories were not only relatable but also “culturally appropriate.” They described their process of helping participants relate to the topic of nonprofit finance:

  What that has meant in practice is also just really leaving more time for questions and communication that goes two ways. [This means it] isn’t just us talking at people, but really enabling conversation and creating a comfortable space to ask questions and share personal experiences—to test understandings of how concepts relate to organizations specifically. That’s just broadly good practice, but certainly something that we’ve really practiced a lot in [the CLP.]
Cultural competence requires providers to “check” their assumptions and “break down” concepts that may not be readily obvious to people from marginalized communities. One intermediary director shared that in working with a cohort of ethnic leaders, she learned how important it was to “check your assumptions,” particularly when coaching these leaders about how to navigate certain circles. She learned, over the course of her work with these leaders, that terms and practices used often in the mainstream or by the “dominant culture” are foreign to those on the margins. She said, for example, that she could not simply say to the ethnic leaders in her cohort that they should “have coffee” or “do lunch” with someone because several did not understand what that meant in practice. She found that suggestions to have lunch with someone would result in questions such as: “Where would we go?” “Who would pay?” “What would I say when I got there?” She realized that she really needed to step back and “break it down,” to deconstruct what it means to “do lunch,” including how to prepare for that lunch date by doing research beforehand, what kinds of topics to address, and how to make a “pitch” to that person.

Recommendations

In this section we offer some recommendations based on learnings that have occurred over the course of the initiative. Some of our key recommendations have already been shared in previous reports and were incorporated into the design of CLP 2.0, including recommendations around investing more planning time on the front end of the initiative, integrating the three strategies in a more purposeful and transparent way, continuing the flexibility that has come to characterize the CLP, and building the capacity of local consultants. Other recommendations include:

- **Invest in growing the pool of consultants of color.** The diversity of the available pool of capacity-building providers does not match the diversity of the communities they serve. Growing this pool is not an easy task because it includes the challenge of finding potential consultants to grow. Toward this end, intermediaries note that we need to start thinking “out of the box” and to bring staff of community-based organizations into the dialogue.

- **Improve communications about the overall initiative in order to leverage relationships, opportunities, and organizational social capital.** As mentioned previously, several participants shared that they did not realize that the TA support they received was part of a larger initiative. Increasing communications and transparency about the overall initiative would help participants take part in a wider array of support activities and enable them to capitalize on the organizational social capital that comes with being part of an initiative funded by high-profile philanthropic funders.

- **Consider differentiated eligibility requirements to account for regional differences.** A director of one intermediary organization shared that initiatives aimed at supporting small- to medium-sized organizations must consider variations in regional costs and how that influences definitions of “small” or “medium” (as defined by size of organizational budget). She suggested that, when determining budget size
for eligibility criteria, considering differentiated eligibility requirements might be more helpful than applying one budget range for an entire state.

- **Consider having a targeted leadership focus for leaders of color.** The leadership pipeline for communities of color continues to be an issue of concern for people engaged in capacity-building work with communities of color. While the CLP focused on building the capacity of organizations that served communities of color, it did not require that the organizations be led by people of color. Some felt that this was a missed opportunity and suggested that having an explicit and targeted focus for leaders of color would be helpful in growing the number of leaders of color and strengthening the leadership pipeline.

- **Be clear about the larger vision for and level of commitment to community work.** Some participants indicated uncertainty about their sense of the funders’ commitment to their communities in the long-term and the implications associated therein. Capacity building for what was an important question that emerged for these participants. San Joaquin Valley Learning Lab participants, for example, expressed concerns about what it means to have worked so hard to build capacity if the larger philanthropic world continues to be unwilling to invest in them, wondering in particular what happens when and if the CLP funders “move on.”

- **For technology grants, provide adequate resources for implementation.** The CLP provided resources for one intermediary to conduct technology assessments for participating organizations and some mini-grants for implementation of technology plans. However, the assessments revealed that a majority of organizations needed significantly more resources in order to fully implement their technology plans—well beyond the $5,000 mini-grants that were provided to some participants. Without adequate resources to actually implement the technology plan, the assessments themselves were not as useful as they could have been.

- **Capitalize upon new partnerships to begin building regional capacity and a more robust TA infrastructure.** In the course of this work, TA intermediaries forged strategic partnerships with major institutions in the San Joaquin Valley such as California State University-Fresno, and Fresno Regional Foundation. Intermediaries encouraged continued investments in these partnerships and targeted investments in growing a larger pool of partners to strengthen the TA infrastructure in the San Joaquin Valley and to develop a visible and accessible “hub” of support.

- **Consider alternative vehicles for reporting.** While reporting and evaluation are extremely important for learning and for monitoring effective and strategic use of resources to achieve certain goals, they are also extremely burdensome, particularly for organizations that already have limited capacity. At the CLP Learning Labs, participants shared that current vehicles for reporting are also somewhat incongruous with the ways in which their communities and organizations function. They add that typical reporting requirements do not always capture their organizational strengths and the value of their work in their communities as lived by these communities. They encouraged funders to consider different mechanisms for assessing and reporting impact—for example, storytelling, video, and visual imagery—to better convey the “it” of what they do and their impact on the lives of the people they serve.
Conclusion
This first phase of the Community Learning Project was designed to be somewhat exploratory in nature, as funders, intermediaries, grantees, and participants learned together what it would take to provide effective capacity-building support to small- and medium-sized organizations serving low-income communities and communities of color. Much of the learning that emerged over the course of this first phase of the Community Leadership Project has been integrated into the design of the CLP’s second phase—CLP 2.0. Thus, perhaps the biggest outcome of this initiative was the development of a more solid foundation for support in the next iteration of this initiative—a foundation built on the learnings and infrastructure developed over the course of CLP 1.0. Though the Technical Assistance Strategy was a comparatively small component of the larger CLP initiative, the outcomes and contributions that emerged from this effort were significant.

The Community Leadership Project has served as a model of collaborative learning and a testament to the power of collaboration, hard work, and goodwill. It has been an honor and a pleasure to witness, document, and share the progress and growth that occurred at all levels, and we look forward to being part of what comes next.
# Appendix A
## Description of CLP Measures of Organizational Capacity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Specific Sub-Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Capacity</td>
<td>The ability of organizational leaders to vision, inspire, model, prioritize, make decisions, provide direction and innovate to achieve the organizational mission. Leadership capacity includes roles and skills of leaders to keep staff connected and accountable to organizational vision and progress, and to promote a mission-centered and inclusive approach to decision making. Board has ongoing commitment and strategy for its own capacity building and successor. Leaders have been identified and cultivated.</td>
<td>Board development&lt;br&gt;Board leadership&lt;br&gt;Organizational&lt;br&gt;Organizational leadership and decision-making&lt;br&gt;Sustainability of leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational/Management Capacity</td>
<td>The ability of an organization to effectively use its resources to ensure efficient operations, including: proper facilities and related management skills; strong fund development strategy and financial operation systems; the attraction, development, and retention of qualified, diverse staff and volunteers; teamwork and clear communication throughout the organizational structure; and adequate technology infrastructure and related skills.</td>
<td>Facilities&lt;br&gt;Fundraising and fiscal management&lt;br&gt;Staff assessment and development&lt;br&gt;Staff recruitment and retention&lt;br&gt;Staff relations&lt;br&gt;Team based management and staff structure&lt;br&gt;Technology and information system capacities&lt;br&gt;Volunteer management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adaptive Capacity</td>
<td>The ability of an organization to monitor, assess and respond to internal and external pressures and changes. This includes proactive use of strategic decision-making tools such as organizational self-assessments, client needs assessments, programmatic learning, field trend analyses, etc. Also measured by the ability to maintain financial and staffing stability within changing internal and external contexts.</td>
<td>Access to and use of decision-making tools and supports&lt;br&gt;Organizational and environmental learning&lt;br&gt;Programmatic learning&lt;br&gt;Resource sustainability and adaptability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Specific Sub-Indicators</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programmatic Capacity</td>
<td>The ability of an organization to plan, implement and evaluate programs that resonate with community needs and align with organizational missions. This includes the necessary organizational resources and infrastructure, as well as staff knowledge, skills, and cultural sensitivity to effectively and efficiently deliver services that meets community need and builds upon community assets.</td>
<td>• Program delivery</td>
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<td>• Program evaluation</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Program staff management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community/ Collaborative Capacity</td>
<td>The ability of the organization to effectively outreach to, partner with, and directly engage low-income communities/communities of color that they represent and serve. Includes ability to establish credibility and trust with low-income communities and communities of color, and engage in meaningful partnerships among diverse stakeholders. Also includes ensuring that the beliefs, values, and practices of served communities inform—and are reflected in—organizational policies, programs, and staffing.</td>
<td>• Community alignment</td>
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<td>• Community engagement</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Community outreach</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix B. Community Leadership Project Logic Model

**Vision:** Ensure that organizations serving low income communities and communities of color have access to funding resources, technical assistance, capacity-building and leadership development approaches in order to better serve and benefit these communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Target Population</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Short-Term Outcomes</th>
<th>Long-Term Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Build the capacity of small and midsize organizations working in low-income communities and communities of color to achieve their missions</td>
<td><strong>Nonprofits</strong>&lt;br&gt;Focus: Serving low-income communities and/or communities of color in urban and rural areas</td>
<td>Partner with intermediaries&lt;br&gt;Tailored regranting and capacity-building initiatives for 100 organizations&lt;br&gt;Multi-year core support&lt;br&gt;Organizational development assistance and coaching, tailored to each grantee</td>
<td>Nonprofits&lt;br&gt;Demonstrated progress &amp; enhanced competence in key areas of nonprofit management to serve low-income communities and communities of color, including:&lt;br&gt;1) Leadership Capacities&lt;br&gt;2) Operational Capacities&lt;br&gt;3) Adaptive Capacities&lt;br&gt;4) Programmatic Capacities&lt;br&gt;5) Community/Collaborative Capacities</td>
<td>Nonprofits&lt;br&gt;Improved ability to adapt to change for improved organizational performance, relevance, and impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve private foundations’ understanding of and support for the needs, challenges and strengths of low-income communities and communities of color organizations</td>
<td>Group technical assistance for 300+ organizations&lt;br&gt;Fund development training&lt;br&gt;Management skills&lt;br&gt;Executive director skills&lt;br&gt;Peer learning</td>
<td>Individual Leaders&lt;br&gt;Leadership development for 500+ leaders&lt;br&gt;Using a variety of models and approaches (especially) for leaders of color</td>
<td>Individual Leaders&lt;br&gt;Strengthened leadership and management skills to lead low-income communities and communities of color organizations&lt;br&gt;Greater knowledge and analytical skills of social inequalities, community history &amp; context and the advocacy skills to influence philanthropy and policy&lt;br&gt;Demonstrated humility, cultural relevance and capacity to negotiate multiple identities&lt;br&gt;Renewed commitment and inspiration for leaders’ work leading to greater sustainability&lt;br&gt;Increased capacity to collaborate in teams and exercise external influence through networks to benefit low-income communities and communities of color</td>
<td>Individual Leaders&lt;br&gt;Strengthened capacity in the ED and other executive staff’s ability to realize their collective vision and sustain themselves in their work&lt;br&gt;Increased collaboration, learning and resource sharing across boundaries&lt;br&gt;Strengthened pipeline of diverse organizational &amp; community leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn which capacity-building approaches are most effective in building org capacity</td>
<td>Promote learning among nonprofits, intermediaries and foundations&lt;br&gt;Convenings&lt;br&gt;Sharing knowledge, networks and resources within and across regions&lt;br&gt;Identifying opportunities for coordination or collaboration&lt;br&gt;Collaborative management of the project by Packard, Irvine and Hewlett</td>
<td>Foundations &amp; Initiative&lt;br&gt;Greater understanding of issues facing smaller organizations &amp; low-income communities and communities&lt;br&gt;Greater knowledge of the role of cultural relevance and responsiveness in effective grantmaking &amp; methods of capacity-building</td>
<td>Foundations &amp; Field (Philanthropy &amp; Nonprofit Sector)&lt;br&gt;Greater capacity to support innovative organizational strategies that produce transformative results for communities of color</td>
<td>Foundations &amp; Field (Philanthropy &amp; Nonprofit Sector)&lt;br&gt;Greater capacity to reach, engage and serve low-income communities and communities based on greater awareness of dynamics of power and culture</td>
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<tr>
<th>Assumptions for Effectiveness</th>
<th>Multi-year general operating support</th>
<th>Partnership with regional intermediaries with strong networks &amp; understanding of diverse communities</th>
<th>Support of small nonprofits as the vehicles by which we reach, benefit low-income communities and communities of color.</th>
<th>Support of small nonprofits as the vehicles by which we reach, benefit low-income communities and communities of color.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nonprofits</strong>&lt;br&gt;Focus: Serving low-income communities and/or communities of color in urban and rural areas</td>
<td>Size: Annual budgets between $25,000 and $2 million</td>
<td>Field: Any program field or domain aligned with CLP funders’ priorities</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Leaders</strong>&lt;br&gt;Leaders, especially PoC, working in nonprofits serving low-income communities and communities of color organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multi-year general operating support</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Focus on &amp; Promotion of:&lt;br&gt;1) Leadership with capacity to engage low-income communities and communities of color&lt;br&gt;2) A learning culture that is asset-oriented &amp; transparent&lt;br&gt;3) A context to explore the intersection of race, class in capacity building&lt;br&gt;4) A variety of models, approaches, supports for capacity building to meet different needs &amp; types of organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Geography</strong>&lt;br&gt;San Francisco Bay Area (5-6 counties)&lt;br&gt;Central Coast (3 counties)&lt;br&gt;San Joaquin Valley (6 counties)</td>
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**Underlying Values:** Our future in CA depends on the success of the communities of color that comprise a majority of our population. Two necessary components of a vibrant and diverse democracy are effective community-based organizations and diverse leadership throughout California’s nonprofit sector.
Appendix C
List of CLP Interview Respondents

Round 1 Interviewees
1. Adriana Rocha - CompassPoint Nonprofit Services
2. Kaci Patterson - Families in Schools
3. Angela Gallegos-Castillo - National Community Development Institute
4. Jessica LaBarbera - Nonprofit Finance Fund
5. Patricia Gardner - Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits

Round 2 Interviewees
1. Adriana Rocha - CompassPoint Nonprofit Services
2. Kaci Patterson and Felicia Jones - Families in Schools
3. Jessica LaBarbera and Angela Francis - Nonprofit Finance Fund
4. Patricia Gardner - Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits
5. Brian Gallagher – ZeroDivide
Appendix D. Evaluation Survey

Community Leadership Program Technical Assistance Evaluation Form

Please complete the following report describing the Technical Assistance support you received through the Community Leadership Project.

1. AMOUNT AND TYPE OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
In what capacity arena(s) did you receive technical assistance? (Check all that apply)

☐ a. Leadership ☐ e. Adaptive Capacity
☐ b. Fundraising/Finance Management ☐ f. Overall organizational capacity building
☐ c. Management ☐ g. Board Development
☐ d. Executive Director Training ☐ h. Networking/Collaborations
☐ i. Other (please list): ____________________________________________________________

2. SATISFACTION WITH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
In the following section, please indicate your level of satisfaction with specific aspects of the technical assistance you received, using a 5 point scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Helped your organization reach its capacity-building goals?</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>NA/No Opinion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<th>B. Contributed to your organizations skills, knowledge, and/or systems?</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>NA/No Opinion</th>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<th>C. Reflected an understanding of and sensitivity towards the cultures and needs of the communities you serve?</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>NA/No Opinion</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<th>D. Enabled you to better connect with the communities you serve and your ability to advocate on their behalf?</th>
<th>Very Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>NA/No Opinion</th>
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<td>NA</td>
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Please list any additional comments or suggestions:
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

3. ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What level of impact has the technical assistance you received had on your organization and the people in it? For example, have there been shifts in work processes, organizational structure, or strategy?</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
<th>Very Little Impact</th>
<th>Some Impact</th>
<th>Enormous Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. How has the technical assistance you received made a difference in your work?
5. Are there tools, practices, processes that your organization learned from this experience and will continue to implement on your own?

6. Please describe any problems or challenges with your CLP-funded technical assistance experience and how you responded to them.

7. Do you have any examples of productive collaborations or networking that developed as a result of your participation in the CLP Initiative?

8. Is there anything else you would like to share with the funders and grantees of the CLP Initiative that you think would be helpful or instructive in terms of understanding how best to support small and mid-sized organizations serving communities of color?
### CompassPoint Survey Mapping

Below is the mapping of CompassPoint’s pre-existing evaluation survey, to the evaluation form created by SPR for the purposes of this evaluation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>CLP Evaluation Form</strong></th>
<th><strong>CompassPoint Survey</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. In what capacity arena(s) did you receive technical assistance?</td>
<td>Fundraising Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2A. Helped your organization reach its capacity-building goals?</td>
<td>#10 Were the learning goals you identified achieved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2B. Contributed to your organization skills, knowledge, and/or systems?</td>
<td>#20 Have your own fundraising practices changed as a result of FACC: (1) I communicate with donors more often, (2) I use donor and gift history to personalize fundraising requests more often, and (3) I have allocated more time to cultivating and asking individual donors. Have your organization's fundraising practices changed as a result of FACC? (For example, creating or cleaning up the donor database; updating the fundraising plan; increasing the board or staff's participation in fundraising?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2C. Reflected an understanding of and sensitivity towards the cultures and needs of the communities you serve?</td>
<td>#6 Were you able to explore and address fundraising roles and experiences as a person of color in working in communities of color? #19 Did you find it useful to be able to explore fundraising roles with a focus on people of color in communities of color?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2D. Enabled you to better connect with the communities you serve and your ability to advocate on their behalf?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any additional comments or suggestions</td>
<td>#12 Suggestions for coaches #24 Considering all your experiences in FACC, what areas do you feel you and your organization need further information/support on? #26 Additional comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CLP Evaluation Form</strong></td>
<td><strong>CompassPoint Survey</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What level of impact has the technical assistance you received had on your organization and the people in it? For example, have there been shifts in work processes, organizational structure, or strategy?</td>
<td>#13 - #18 To what extent did your participation in FACC: (1) improve or enhance your understanding of your fundraising role? (2) Decrease fear/anxiety related to asking for money? (3) Improve or enhance your understanding of your donor base? (4) Improve or enhance your understanding of grant issues? (5) Improve or enhance your awareness of tax policy issues? (5) Improve or enhance your understanding of the following fundraising strategies/activities/opportunities: personal solicitation, telephone solicitation, mail appeal, house parties, special events, working with your Board of Directors, overall fundraising, planning and evaluation, developing/using systems and infrastructure to support fundraising, foundation funding, corporate funding, and government funding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>How</strong> has the technical assistance you received made a difference in your work?</td>
<td>#23 What were the most useful elements of this Academy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Are there tools, practices that your organization learned from this experience and will continue to implement on your own?</td>
<td>#21 Please describe any changes in: your own fundraising practices? Your organization's fundraising practices? #22 What fundraising next steps do you plan to implement in the next 3 months?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Please describe any problems or challenges with your CLP-funded technical assistance experience and how you responded to them.</td>
<td>#25 What suggestions do you have for improving the trainings for future participants?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Do you have any examples of productive collaborations or networking that developed as a result of your participation in the CLP Initiative?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Is there anything else you would like to share with the funders and grantees of the CLP Initiative that you think would be helpful or instructive in terms of understanding how best to support small and mid-sized organizations serving communities of color?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Unused questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>How many sessions did you attend?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>Was the time allotted adequate for the amount of information presented?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>Was there adequate balance between small group activities, large group activities, and presentation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>Have you had an opportunity to voice any concerns or questions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>Were you able to connect with/share experiences with peers with similar fundraising roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>Were you and your coach able to reach shared understanding regarding your learning goals?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>Did coaching provide role-play/practice opportunities beneficial to your learning/understanding?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#9</td>
<td>Did your coaching sessions help you implement what you were learning in the large group session?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#11</td>
<td>I would recommend my coach for future FACC participants.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>