

Nonprofit Leadership and Management: Strategies for Organizational Success

August 28 – October 22, 2024

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Class Description and Learning Objectives

This 8-week course is focused on the fundamental issues in nonprofit management and leadership and is geared for experienced nonprofit practitioners. We begin by exploring the sector, examining what makes nonprofits unique, the history of the nonprofit sector in the U.S. and around the world, the theoretical underpinnings for its existence, and its scope and impact on society. From there, we examine governance and accountability of nonprofit boards, funding challenges, program evaluation, strategic management theory and practice, the role of nonprofits in policymaking, and the unique aspects of nonprofit finance. Throughout, we will examine real world examples and review the theories and practices that apply to them. Participants will leave the course with greater intellectual depth about nonprofits' role in society, as well as practical new skills to take back to their organizations.

Course Materials and Requirements, Customized for the Online Environment

The content and instruction have been customized for this environment, with an eye to finding advantages (such as the flexibility to participants in how/when/where they consume the materials) where they exist.

1. **Asynchronous lectures and interviews:** For each module, there will be 2-5 pre-recorded short lectures or interviews with nonprofit leaders to watch at the participant's convenience.
 - a. Please complete the module readings before watching the lectures/interviews.
 - b. Please watch the lectures/interviews before the discussion sessions.
2. **Synchronous discussions:** There will be one live 90-minute summary, small-group, and full-class discussion session per week. Attendance in live lectures is mandatory to complete the course.
3. **Reflection memos, due each week:** In 300 words or less, describe something of particular significance that you learned the preceding week from the readings, lecture, and discussion. More details provided during the course.
4. **Final assignment:** There will be a short assignment due near the end of the course in order to receive your certificate. Assignment details will be provided during the course.

Office Hours

Optional Office Hours with Prof. Brooks will be arranged; instructions for sign up will be posted on Canvas.

Technical Policies and Online Support

For assistance with any technical issues, please contact the program team.

Attendance and Virtual Classroom Conduct

Participation in the live virtual sessions are mandatory. We are able to excuse up to one absence during the program without affecting your certificate. Please log in on time, having done the readings and carefully watched the lectures, and be prepared to participate actively in discussions.

For in-class discussions, participants should rely on the *Chat* and *Raise Hand* features in Zoom. We will monitor the chat and feedback features in Zoom and help facilitate the virtual classroom discussion.

Accessibility & Accommodations for Participant Learning

Harvard Kennedy School is committed to the full inclusion of participants with disabilities (learning, mental-health related, physical, chronic illness, temporary injury, etc.). The Harvard Kennedy School provides accommodations and support to participants with documented disabilities on an individual, case-by-case basis. If participants have a disability or think they may have a disability and would like to receive accommodations for their learning, please contact the program director. Because accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, we recommend that you contact us as soon as possible.

Study Groups

We will host optional study groups before the live sessions. Group discussions will be based around program topics including fundraising, government/nonprofit relations, communications, HR & volunteer management, social entrepreneurship and nonprofit governance and board relations. Participants can join to choose a different group each week.

Orientation Session

We will host a program orientation and onboarding session in August to review the Zoom and Canvas platforms, meet one another, set expectations, and answer any questions you may have before the start of the program. Though the session will be recorded, you are very strongly encouraged to attend live, as it is the first opportunity to meet your classmates, the staff, and start forming a community with your cohort. Please come prepared by downloading the latest version of Zoom to your computer or iPad.

Week 1

Fundamentals of the Nonprofit Sector

Knowledge goals

1. Understand the dimensions and history of nonprofit activity in the U.S. and around the world
2. Know the biggest issues in policy surrounding nonprofits

Action goals

1. Critically put current developments into historical context
2. Confront policy issues with expertise

Week 2

Strategic Finance

Knowledge goals

1. Understand the best systems of nonprofit finance

Action goals

1. Rebuild a finance system at a nonprofit

Week 3

Nonprofits and the Public Sector

Knowledge goals

1. Understand the key points of nonprofit-government interaction
2. Working knowledge of many models of public goods provision

Action goals

1. Readiness to participate on either side of the government-nonprofit divide
2. Share insights with policymakers to improve collaboration and oversight

Week 4

Fundraising and Philanthropy

Knowledge goals

1. Understand the dimensions of philanthropy and giving patterns
2. Working knowledge of new fundraising models

Action goals

1. Effective donor management
2. Improved fundraising toolkit at all expertise levels

Week 5

Nonprofit Marketing and Human Resources

Knowledge goals

1. Understanding of the most effective messages for various nonprofit causes and audiences
2. Knowledge of best practices in employee and volunteer recruitment, retention, and management

Action goals

1. Bring new ideas to nonprofits on how to share key messages
2. Improve hiring practices and volunteer recruitment

Week 6

Performance Measurement

Knowledge goals

2. Understand the best methods of effectiveness measurement

Action goals

1. Construct a performance measurement system

Week 7

Social Enterprise

Knowledge goals

1. Familiarity with all forms of nonprofit entrepreneurship
2. Understanding of modern venture philanthropy

Action goals

1. Participate in a nonprofit startup
2. Assist a philanthropist in funding a startup

Week 8

Building a Nonprofit

Knowledge goals

1. Recognize the most effective mission statements
2. Understand core principles of effective leadership in nonprofits

Action goals

1. Write a great mission statement
2. Self-transformation as a leader