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Editorial

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DEAR READERS

This issue includes four articles that provide in-depth thinking on some emerging innovations in foundations. We also review four new resources.

As foundations and communities continue to look for ways to assess progress, there has been increasing attention to community level indicators. **Borders, Edwards, and Miller** share the lessons from their experiences with helping grantmakers increase the effectiveness of data-intensive, large-scale community-indicator work. Rather than tracking many individual indicators, the authors argue that statistically derived composite indicators can be viewed at smaller geographic levels, leading to increased accuracy and understanding. While many in the field have argued for choosing a few simple indicators to focus on, this approach provides a much more comprehensive look at community data, preserving both complexity and simplicity.



Tran and Shah explore the California HealthCare Foundation's internal efforts to institutionalize organizational learning. Over the past ten years, many foundations have begun talking about being learning organizations, the innovation at CHF is to use design thinking to develop their approach to learning.

Stahl offers a Talent Philanthropy Framework as a means to address the human resource challenges of nonprofits. While there has been much discussion in the philanthropic sector about the human resources issues facing nonprofits as the boomer generation retires, there has been little in the way of practical advice on how to address it. The author proposes 10 guiding principles that foundations can use to encourage and empower nonprofits to strengthen their talent.

Picking up on the learning theme, **Patrizi, Thompson, Coffman, and Beer** offer an insightful and original analysis of the importance of foundations incorporating learning as part of their overall strategy. While learning is important for strategic success in most circumstances, it becomes essential when foundations engage in many large and extraordinarily difficult and complex concerns. This article identifies three common "traps" that hinder foundation capacity to learn and adapt. One of these traps is "indicator blindness" — excessive reliance on poorly chosen indicators and targets. Perhaps more robust indicators, as described by Borders et al, are one way of overcoming this blindness by re-introducing complexity.

Terry Horton reviews *The Generosity Network: New Transformational Tools for Successful Fund-Raising* by Jennifer McCrea and Jeffrey C. Walker, with Karl Weber. She recommends this fun and easy read for nonprofits new to relationship-based fund development.

Practical Project Management for Agile Nonprofits: Approaches and Templates to Help you Manage with Limited Resources by Karen R. J. White is reviewed by Megan Murphy.

Murphy likes the practical planning advice and project-planning templates that nonprofits can adapt to their own needs. Project management is a key capacity, often overlooked, that nonprofits need to develop.

Ashley Rosener reviews *Leveraging the Power of Foundations: An Analysis of Program-Related Investing* by the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, Indiana University. This report includes both quantitative and qualitative data on the use of these new tools for change.

Focus on Sustainability: A Nonprofit's Journey by Dennis G. McMillian is reviewed by Matthew Downey. He notes that this book's contribution is a focus on sustainability and tying it to an organization's ability to demonstrate competence in four areas: strategy, human resources, revenue generation, and collaboration.

I hope you'll agree that the articles in this issue address some cutting-edge issues in philanthropy. We encourage our subscribers to use the commenting feature on our new platform to start a conversation. You can activate your online subscription at <http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/tfr>.



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