

Nonprofit Organizational Practices Survey

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NONPROFIT ACADEMIC CENTERS COUNCIL

Instructions

You are invited to participate in a survey about organizational and governance practices in Arizona nonprofit organizations. We ask that this survey be filled out by the highest level staff member (e.g., Executive Director). If you are not the senior staff member, please forward this survey to the appropriate person.

Your participation is voluntary. Returning the survey indicates your consent to participate. All replies will be kept strictly confidential and will not be seen by anyone other than the researchers; in no case will any organization or survey respondent be identified by name.

We appreciate your leadership in the nonprofit community and hope you will agree to participate. The results of the study will be shared with you and other nonprofit leaders through the website of the ASU Center for Nonprofit Leadership and Management (nonprofit.asu.edu). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Professor Chao Guo, the Principal Investigator, via email aznonprofits@asu.edu or by telephone: 602-496-0164.

The survey should take you about 15-20 minutes to complete. Please return it by fax at (602-496-0953), or by mail (please call if you'd like us to send you a business reply envelope) to the following address:

Professor Chao Guo
Center for Nonprofit Leadership & Management
School of Community Resources & Development
Arizona State University
Mail Code 4020
411 N. Central Ave, Suite 550
Phoenix, AZ 85004-0690

I. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

1. In what year was your organization founded? _____
2. How many full-time equivalent paid staff members does your organization have? *(Enter number)*

3. Does your organization use volunteers (besides board members)? Yes No
If yes, please estimate the average percentage of work in your organization that was done by volunteers during the most recently completed fiscal year: _____(%)

4. If your organization had revenues and/or expenses during the most recently completed fiscal year, please estimate the following:

Total revenues: \$ _____ Total expenses: \$ _____

5. If your organization had revenues during the most recently completed fiscal year, please identify the percentage of your organization's revenues from the following sources: *(Rough estimates are perfectly fine; write -0- if none)*

Type of revenues	% of revenues
Government or public agencies (e.g., grants, fees, sales, appropriations)	
Donations and gifts (e.g., United Way, foundations, individuals, corporations)	
Special events (net of expenses)	
Dues/membership fees	
Private sale of goods and services (non-government)	
Other sources (including endowment, interest)	
TOTAL (should add to 100%)	100

6. If your organization had revenues or expenses, to what extent have your organization's financial indicators changed over the last three years? *(Please circle best response for revenues and expenditures, considering changes of 25 percent or more to be "significant" and changes of 5-25 percent to be "moderate")*

Financial Indicator	Decreased significantly	Decreased moderately	Stayed the same	Increased moderately	Increased significantly
Total revenues	1	2	3	4	5
Total expenses	1	2	3	4	5

7. Please describe briefly your organization’s primary purpose or mission:

8. Please describe briefly your organization’s most important program, service, or activity:

8(b). How has **demand** for your *most important* service, activity, or program changed over the last three years? (*Circle best response*)

- Decreased significantly (by more than 25 percent)
- Decreased moderately (by 10 – 25 percent)
- Stayed more or less the same
- Increased moderately (by 10 – 25 percent)
- Increased significantly (by more than 25 percent)

9. Does your organization have any of the following organizational components?

Organizational components (<i>Check yes or no for each one</i>)	Yes	No
A web site for your organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An email address for your organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computers available for key staff/volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct Internet access for key staff/volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computerized financial records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computerized client/member/program records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written governance policies or by-laws	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written conflict-of-interest policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written personnel policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written job descriptions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formal volunteer recruitment program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formal volunteer training program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reserves dedicated to capital improvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reserves dedicated to maintenance/equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A recent audited financial statement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An annual report produced within the last year	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Evaluation/assessment of program outcomes/impact within past 2 yrs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. How much competition would you say there is in your main program, activity, or service area? (*check one*)

- None Very little A moderate amount A great deal

11. In each of the following areas, please assess how your organization is currently performing compared with other organizations you know of that are close to yours in size and doing the same kind of work. (Circle best response for each area).

How would you assess your organization's performance in terms of...	A lot better than average	Better than average	About average	Below average	A lot below average
Program success?	1	2	3	4	5
Positive community impact?	1	2	3	4	5
Financial performance?	1	2	3	4	5
Stakeholder relations?	1	2	3	4	5
Mission fulfillment?	1	2	3	4	5

II. MEMBERS AND CONSTITUENTS

12. Nonprofits generally have one key group of constituents that is affected by their organization, which you may refer to as your “consumers,” “clients,” “members,” or “target population.” Please list the *one* primary constituent and the most important secondary constituent(s) of your organization:

Primary constituent: _____

Secondary constituent(s): _____

12(b). Approximately how many primary constituents does your organization have? (Rough estimates are perfectly fine) _____

13. Does your organization currently have any members (other than board members) that pay dues or fees? (Check best response)

- Yes, you have members and some pay dues or membership fees
- Yes, you have members, but none pay dues or membership fees
- No, your only members are your board members (Please skip to Q16)

14. If your organization has members, then how many general membership meetings do you have each year? (Enter actual number) _____

15. If your organization has members, approximately how many members does your organization currently have of each of the following types? (Write – 0 – if none)

Total number of members who are *individuals* _____ # individuals

Total number of members who are *organizations* _____ # organizations

16. For each of the following statements, please circle the best answer.

	Strongly Disagree		Strongly Agree		
Our programming meets our constituents' demands	1	2	3	4	5
Our mission is relevant to the needs of our constituents.	1	2	3	4	5
Our facilities and services are tailored to our constituents' needs (hours, fees, language, physical accessibility, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
We firmly stand for the interests of our constituents.	1	2	3	4	5
We regularly take actions to earn our constituents' trust and confidence.	1	2	3	4	5

III. GOVERNANCE

17. Does your organization have its own **board of directors**? (*Check best response*)

- Yes, you have your own board of directors
- No, you are governed by another organization (*Please skip to Q28*)
- No, you have some other governance structure (*Please specify:*
_____ *and then skip to Q28*)

18. If your organization has a board of directors, how many board members does your organization have, and how many board positions are currently vacant?

Number of board members (*Enter actual number*) _____

Number of vacant board positions (*Enter actual number*) _____

19. In your opinion, how well does the board reflect the composition of your primary constituents as listed in Q.12? (*circle most appropriate response*)

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Very Closely

20. How many board meetings were held during the most recently completed fiscal year?

21. How long are terms for board members? _____ (years)

- Please mark here if your terms have no specified length

22. How many terms may board members serve continuously before they must rotate off the board?
_____ (terms)

- Please mark here if there is no limit

23. How are elections for board seats conducted? (*Check all that apply.*)

- Mail ballots
- At the annual membership meeting
- Other (specify): _____
- Don't use elections

24. Do your organization's bylaws allow for the recall of board members?

- Yes No

25. Which of the following descriptions is **CLOSEST** to the way your board operates? (*please select ONE*)

- The Chief executive is highly influential and trusted in recommending a course of action on governance issues.
- A small group of the board members plays a very influential role in recommending a course of action on governance issues.
- The Chief executive and board leadership are equally influential in recommending a course of action on governance issues.
- No particular individual or group is highly influential in recommending a course of action on governance issues.

26. Please break down the composition of your board of directors. For example, if you have two employees on your board, please write “2” beside “employees.”

Board members' background	# of board members
Primary constituents of this organization (refer to Q. 12)	
Secondary constituents of this organization (refer to Q. 12)	
Rank-and-file employees of this organization	
Regular volunteers of this organization	
Board member or executive of a corporation, foundation, and/or a financial institution (e.g., a bank)	
Board member or executive of another nonprofit organization	
Government official	
Other (please list) _____	

27. Rate your **board's performance** in the following areas (*circle best response*)

	Very Ineffective			Very Effective	
Providing financial oversight	1	2	3	4	5
Serving interests and needs of members and constituents	1	2	3	4	5
Setting mission, policies, and long-range strategy	1	2	3	4	5
Marketing and promoting the organization	1	2	3	4	5
Evaluating and selecting (if necessary) senior executive	1	2	3	4	5
Ensuring high quality leadership on the board	1	2	3	4	5

28. For each of the following statements, *please circle the best answer.*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The demographic composition of our <i>staff</i> reflects our target population.	1	2	3	4
The demographic composition of our <i>leadership</i> (i.e., board or other governing body) reflects our target population.	1	2	3	4
On important matters, our leaders sometimes act on their own independent judgment of what is best, instead of simply following the expressed wishes of the majority of constituents.	1	2	3	4
On important matters, our leaders normally make decisions that reflect the wishes of the majority of our constituents.	1	2	3	4

29. Does your organization have an advisory group separate from the governing body (i.e., the board of directors)? Bodies of advisors may be variously named panels, committees, boards, teams, councils, and groups.

- Yes No Not applicable

30. If yes, which of the following groups serve on those committees or advisory boards? (*Check all that apply*)

- Primary constituents
 Secondary constituents
 Volunteers
 Employees
 Board of directors
 Executive director
 Community members
 Other (*please list*) _____

IV. CONSTITUENT RELATIONS AND INVOLVEMENT

31. If we did a survey of your organization’s *primary constituents* (see Q.12), how do you think they would answer the following questions about your organization? To what extent would they agree or disagree with the following statements? (*Circle best response for each item*)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The organization is trusted by constituents as its legitimate representative	1	2	3	4	5
The organization’s policy concerns fit with those of constituents	1	2	3	4	5
The organization is recognized by the media as a legitimate spokesperson for primary constituents	1	2	3	4	5
The organization has not taken adequate actions to earn the trust and confidence of constituents	1	2	3	4	5
The organization provides programs and services in response to the needs of constituents	1	2	3	4	5
At times the organization has appeared to lag behind the changing needs and expectations of constituents	1	2	3	4	5

32. In making *major strategic decisions* (starting or ending programs, changing locations, organizational re-structuring, and developing new products or services) each constituent group will normally be involved to a different extent. For each of the following groups, **how extensively** is it involved in your organization’s strategic decision-making? (*Circle best response for each group; skip those that are not applicable*)

	Not at all involved	Somewhat involved	Completely involved		
Board of directors	1	2	3	4	5
Executive director	1	2	3	4	5
Rank-and-file employees	1	2	3	4	5
Volunteers of this organization	1	2	3	4	5
Primary constituents of this organization (refer to Q. 12)	1	2	3	4	5
Secondary constituents of this organization (refer to Q. 12)	1	2	3	4	5
Other (<i>please list</i>)	1	2	3	4	5

33. Still talking about *major strategic decisions*, what **level of involvement** does each of the following groups have in *making the ultimate decision*? (Circle most appropriate response for each stakeholder group)

	Group is <i>not consulted</i>	Group is <i>informed</i> during the process	Group is <i>consulted</i> for its opinions, needs, & wishes	Group can <i>vote</i> on alternatives created by others	Group has active <i>input</i> and <i>collaboration</i> in developing alternatives and setting priorities	Group is <i>empowered</i> to directly <i>select, implement, vote on, and change</i> alternatives
Board of Directors	1	2	3	4	5	6
Executive Director	1	2	3	4	5	6
Rank-and-file employees	1	2	3	4	5	6
Volunteers	1	2	3	4	5	6
Primary Constituents	1	2	3	4	5	6
Secondary Constituents	1	2	3	4	5	6
Other (please list)	1	2	3	4	5	6

34. Rate your organization’s **communications** in the following areas:

(Circle best response for each item)	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
We communicate adequately with our constituents.	1	2	3	4	5
We report to our constituents on our progress.	1	2	3	4	5
Through research and feedback, including suggestions from community groups, service agencies, advocacy groups and users, we know the needs of our constituents.	1	2	3	4	5
We use constituent feedback in designing and modifying our program and services.	1	2	3	4	5
We communicate our decisions to all those affected by them	1	2	3	4	5
Before reaching decisions on important issues, we request input from those likely to be affected by the decision.	1	2	3	4	5
If the organization thinks a constituent group is likely to disagree with an action we are considering, we make sure we learn how they feel before we make the decision.	1	2	3	4	5

35. There has recently been interest in “participatory” *group planning and decision-making techniques*, where participants not only make their wishes known but also actively help set priorities and develop and/or vote on key alternatives. Has your organization used any of the following **participatory techniques** over the **past two years**? (*Check all that apply; please check “other” and briefly describe if you use a relevant technique that has not been listed*)

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appreciative Inquiry | <input type="checkbox"/> Design Charettes | <input type="checkbox"/> Citizen Juries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Appraisals | <input type="checkbox"/> Citizen panels | <input type="checkbox"/> Consensus Conferences |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deliberative Polling | <input type="checkbox"/> Future Search | <input type="checkbox"/> National Issues Forum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Open Space | <input type="checkbox"/> Participatory GIS | <input type="checkbox"/> Participatory Appraisal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning For Real | <input type="checkbox"/> Samoan Circles | <input type="checkbox"/> Participatory Evaluation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Study circles | <input type="checkbox"/> Team Syntegrity | <input type="checkbox"/> 21 st Century Town Hall |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vision Search | <input type="checkbox"/> Wisdom Council | <input type="checkbox"/> World Café gathering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please list) _____ | | |

36. Does anybody besides the board ever have a final, *formal* vote on making key strategic decisions for your organization?

- No, only members of the board have a formal vote on key decisions.
- Yes, other people (e.g., members, staff, primary constituents, etc.) have a formal vote on key decisions.
 - If yes, approximately how many people (*besides board members*) have a formal vote in making key decisions? (*Enter actual number*) _____
 - If yes, please describe these people _____
 - If yes, please describe how these votes are conducted _____
- Not applicable (we do not have a board, or another group makes key decisions).
 - If not applicable, please describe who makes these decisions for your organization: _____
 - If not applicable, approximately how many people have a formal vote in making these decisions for your organization? (*Enter actual number*) _____

V. ADVOCACY AND POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

37. Nonprofits often engage in efforts to influence or change governmental policies at the local, state, or federal levels. If your organization has been involved in any **advocacy** work, then what proportion of your organization’s resources (time, money, etc.) are spent on it? (*Enter rough percentage from 0-100; leave blank if not applicable*) _____ %

38. There are a number of different strategies nonprofits can employ in their efforts to work for policy change. For each of the following **advocacy strategies**, how frequently does your organization use this technique? (Circle best response for each strategy; “often” means at least monthly use).

Advocacy Strategy	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often
Research: original analysis or research on specific legislation or broad social or political problems.	0	1	2	3
Media advocacy: working for policy change via press releases, media events, letters to editor, op/ed pieces, and relationship-building with editors and journalists.	0	1	2	3
Direct lobbying: efforts to influence legislation by persuading politicians to support a particular position, normally through direct communication with elected officials or their staff.	0	1	2	3
Grassroots lobbying: mobilizing the public to support or oppose specific legislation (aka “indirect lobbying”).	0	1	2	3
Public Events and Direct Action: strikes, protests, demonstrations, “sit-ins,” and other public actions.	0	1	2	3
Judicial Advocacy: working for change through the legal system (e.g., class-action and <i>amicus curiae</i> litigation).	0	1	2	3
Public Education: efforts to inform and educate the public about public policy issues.	0	1	2	3
Coalition Building: working for policy change through coalitions with other advocacy and lobbying groups.	0	1	2	3
Administrative lobbying: influencing the administration through meetings with government officials, commenting on administrative rulemaking, etc. (aka “regulatory advocacy”).	0	1	2	3
Voter registration and education: efforts to register voters or encourage citizens to vote.	0	1	2	3
Expert Testimony: providing testimony or advice at committee hearings, etc. upon request from a legislative body.	0	1	2	3
Electioneering: efforts to influence the outcome of an election by endorsing or supporting a candidate or political party, or mobilizing your supporters to vote a certain way.	0	1	2	3
Other (please list): _____	0	1	2	3

39. If your organization has been involved in any advocacy work, then how effective would you say it has been in those efforts? (Circle best response; leave blank if not applicable)

Not at all effective 1 2 3 4 5 Completely effective

VI. INFORMATION ABOUT RESPONDENT

40. What is your position with this association?

- Highest level staff member (e.g., CEO or Executive Director)
 Other – please specify _____

41. How long have you been in this position (*in years*)? _____

42. How long have you been affiliated with this organization (*in years*)? _____

43. What is your gender? Male Female

44. If we have questions, may we contact you? Yes No

Your Name _____

Email or Phone (*with area code*) _____

45. If you are returning this survey by fax, or by mail without the ASU business reply envelope, please tell us your organization's name _____

Thank you again for taking your time to complete the survey!