



Board Dialogue Post-Survey Results

Nonprofit Board Leadership Initiative

Board Dialogue Series - Background

Between September and October 2021, CSFF hosted a series of 5 conversations for board members in Routt County to share their own personal experiences and discuss the central question of “**what does it look like to elevate board leadership in the region?**” Thirty-seven individuals participated in these events.

Participants were encouraged to read [The Four Principles of Purpose-Driven Board Leadership](#), an article written by BoardSource from the March 2021 issue of the Stanford Social Innovation Review. Each conversation was limited to no more than 11 participants in order to have an intimate conversation and invite robust dialog.

Prior to this series of conversations for board members, CSFF held a small community conversation around this topic back in April 2021, which was attended by a mixture of board members and Executive Directors. In addition, a conversation for just Executive Directors was held at the beginning of August to delve deeper into their perspectives about their successes and opportunities around strengthening board leadership. Both previous conversations were chances to listen and learn about what might be needed to shift board effectiveness and board culture in order to improve nonprofits’ impact in the region.

For more information on these previous sessions, please reach out to Mike Quinn at mike@whiteriverstrategy.com

Key Takeaways/Shifts in Thinking

Most common themes

There is a need and desire for more board support, training, and resources.

There is a recognition of and appreciation for the similar vision, experiences, and challenges felt by the community.

There is a need and desire to discuss what is currently occurring for boards in the region and what can be done collectively.

Other themes

Board member recruitment is a challenge for nonprofits in the region.

It is important for boards to have a DEI focus.

Purpose-driven board leadership is an important way to think about participation on boards.

It is important for boards to have a succession plan.

Continued Conversations

**Likelihood of sparking a conversation around
advancing board leadership in the next 90 days**

82%

Very Likely

12%

Likely

6%

Neutral

Board Conversations - Goals and What Would Be Most Helpful

What Participants Hope is Possible for their Boards in the Next 12 Months

- Grow as board members to make the board more effective (59%)
- Have more of a focus on strategy and action items that can drive their organization in the right direction (41%)
- To incorporate a DEI mindset on their board (28%)
- To improve recruitment of new board members (22%)
- To improve succession planning in their organization (13%)
- To partner with other organizations (3%)

What Would Be Most Helpful for Board Improvement in the Next 12 Months

- Training or webinars (73%)
- Peer-to-peer mentoring with other board members (67%)
- Access to online resources (33%)
- Other (12%)
 - Meetings or mentoring with potential board members
 - In-person events
 - Space and time for strategic planning

Questions by Topic

Community Need and Collaboration

- How do we define the ecosystem, reduce duplication, and fill in needed gaps in a proactive way?
- What partnerships are possible among the nonprofits in the community?
- With so many nonprofits in the community, can we merge/consolidate?
- Can we create a joint/cross-board task force to focus on issues such as recruitment, assessing needs, etc.?

Engagement

- How do we better engage board members?
- How do we show board members their opinions and views are valued?
- How can I better connect with other board members?
- What does a truly high-level performing board look and act like?

Resources and Training

- What is the best way to provide comprehensive resources to the community (templates, examples, trainings, forums, etc.) so we all don't reinvent the wheel?
- Can we develop shared services, such as access to lawyers, HR, IT, etc?
- Can we create a mentorship program between experienced and new/upcoming board members?

Recruitment & DEI

- How do we make board service more attractive to new people?
- How do we reach/include under-represented portions of our community to include them in board service?
- How do we incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion into our efforts at the board level and in our community?

Thoughts/Questions on the Initiative

Thankful that the Foundation...

- Provided the opportunity to thoughtfully discuss matters with other community members.
- Is committed to the nonprofits in the community.
- Challenged us to focus on these issues.
- Included them and are looking forward to next steps

General Feedback

- Great way to learn from others.
- Conversations were helpful, enlightening, and energizing.
- Appreciated everyone's willingness to open up during the conversations.
- Makes them feel excited for the nonprofits in the region and the people/institutions they serve.
- Inspiring initiative for creative collaboration and improved efficacy.

Would like to see...

- Regular events with other board members (networking, discussions, presentations, etc.)
- Opportunities to connect with other members of the community
- Opportunities to continue to learn and share

Remaining Questions

- How do we best capitalize on our situation and not lose momentum?
- How are these efforts going to proceed? What programs will be implemented?
- How can we ensure that this does not become a lot of work for Executive Directors?
- How can the Foundation help lead this charge?