

Evaluative Learning and the Community of Learners Approach
» [page 3](#)

An Emphasis on Learning
» [page 4](#)

Case Study: Nature Museum
» [page 5](#)

Community of Learners Approach -- A How-to Guide
» [page 6](#)

Community of Learners Results
» [page 10](#)



Creating a Community of Learners

Successful Evaluative Learning for Nonprofits and Funders

Chantell Johnson

The past several years have seen an increased emphasis on evaluation of nonprofit programs and grantmaking initiatives. While not yet a fixture in today's nonprofit and philanthropic environment, accountability and measurement of results and impact are increasingly important values. However, although evaluation may be more common, there is no uniform method or approach used by the entire field. There are many philosophies and approaches to evaluation, and nonprofit organizations and funders are well advised to think carefully about the one that will offer a process that is meaningful and findings that are valuable to key stakeholders. This is a particularly important question for nonprofits, which frequently find themselves in a reactive position, charged with collecting data and developing reports that are based on the interests of funders or other external audiences.

As the saying goes, "If you have met one funder... you have met one funder." This is especially true in terms of evaluation. Striving to fulfill the myriad of reporting requirements for different funders, nonprofits may find themselves collecting different data to address the interests of diverse stakeholders. In some cases, this can lead to disorganized and useless data, but in the worst case scenario, it can contribute to burn-out as employees become frustrated with what they perceive to be pointless data collection.

TCC consultants have found that more and more nonprofits are expressing interest in a more proactive approach to evaluation--exploring ways to build their internal evaluation capacity, take ownership of evaluation efforts, and leverage their evaluation activities for their own formative learning and improvement.

The general term TCC Group uses to describe this philosophy is evaluative learning. However, we believe that the Community of Learners approach, which is a deliberate evaluation consulting strategy, and one of the most effective methods of evaluative learning, has great potential for both nonprofits and funders.

For example, when the IT Resource Center, a Chicago-based nonprofit providing technology support, needed an evaluation, they chose the Community of Learners approach. The approach was a perfect fit for their need for an evaluation framework that would allow the staff to be guided in immediate data collection while serving as a blueprint for subsequent data collection and analysis.

To accomplish the work, TCC and the IT Resource Center formed an Evaluation Team composed of the IT Resource Center's Executive Director, Co-director, one staff person and three board members. Guided by TCC consultants, this team jointly designed the evaluation through a lengthy and involved planning process, that included determining roles and responsibilities for each of the Evaluation Team members around the design of specific data collection tools and tasks.

The benefits of this collaborative working relationship included increased knowledge about the evaluation process and provided the Center with an evaluation process and trustworthy results that the Board and staff could speak about with first-hand experience. Notes Deborah Strauss,



Executive Director of the Center, "We learned a great deal about the evaluation process that we can use again in the future."

Due to success like this, a growing number of funders have become engaged in supporting their grantees' participation in such efforts. The result is a trend toward a consumer-driven evaluation system, where key stakeholders play important roles in developing and conducting evaluations and data is used for learning and improvement.

For more than 26 years, TCC Group has been providing evaluation services and assistance to nonprofits in a number of fields and in a range of sizes. This paper explores the Community of Learners approach as an evaluation method that actively involves the staff and leaders of a foundation or nonprofit in the evaluation process. In addition to outlining the necessary steps, this paper provides examples of organizations that utilized the Community of Learners approach to strengthen their staffs' skills and understanding of evaluation.

More and more nonprofits are expressing interest in a more proactive approach to evaluation.



Evaluative Learning & the Community of Learners Approach

Evaluative learning is an ongoing, collaboratively designed, and stakeholder led evaluation process that primarily serves organizational learning. It is an evaluation philosophy and process that emphasizes a formative approach: collecting useful data and applying it immediately to improve the quality and effectiveness of the program, initiative, or organization. Evaluative learning acknowledges the importance of accountability and measures of outcomes and allows for a more comprehensive approach to evaluation by making the organization the primary audience for the evaluation, rather than external stakeholders.

At TCC Group, evaluative learning has been the foundation for nearly all evaluation engagements, regardless of the size, complexity, age, or implementation stage of the program or initiative in question. We have discovered that the most effective evaluative learning assignments--those that yield the most valuable information, have the most impact on the organization, and are conducted most efficiently--are grounded in what we call the Community of Learners approach.¹ We believe that this approach is successful because it focuses on the client or primary audience as responsible for the design and/or implementation of the program or initiative.² Simply put, the creators of the program must also create the evaluation. Peter Senge, author of *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*, writes:

The primary leverage for any organizational learning effort lies not in policies, budgets or organizational charts, but in ourselves. Even creating desired results is not a sign of learning. In the end, the premise that organizations are

the product of our thinking and interacting is powerful and liberating. It suggests that individuals and teams can affect even the most daunting organizational barriers (p. 48).³

First and foremost, the Community of Learners approach to evaluative learning is designed to build staff capacity around evaluation. It is intended to enhance the organization's learning culture by promoting an open dialogue about evaluation findings and making informed decisions based on collected data.

How does this happen? In our use of the Community of Learners approach, we incorporate the knowledge, skills, and talents of our clients as integral to the consulting engagement. We start with our client's current capacity and build on it. Such assignments require key stakeholders--typically Executive Directors, staff, and funders--to fully engage in the evaluation process alongside a team of trained evaluators. Our clients receive hands-on training in evaluation, thereby increasing their evaluation knowledge, skills, and confidence in addition to benefiting from the data.

For instance, when The Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum wanted to take more control of their evaluations, they first developed a set of tools and protocols for the evaluation process itself. This "all hands on deck" approach, discussed on page five, increased the staff's capacity to carry out the evaluation and become more deliberate in their learning.

Other clients have the opposite issue: they have extensive databases or data collection protocols for evaluation, but little to no understanding of the data and an inability to use the information to change and strengthen their programs. Even with limited technical assistance these existing data sources can be harnessed and used in powerful ways. In another example, when Shedd Aquarium approached TCC Group about evaluation, program leaders already had data on their members and participants thanks to an existing database and annual survey. However, they needed help framing the data in a consistent and powerful way. Their Community of Learners experience allowed the staff to support new, more sophisticated data collection efforts. With their increased understanding of evaluation, they were then able to understand the limitations of their data and address their remaining evaluation questions.



An Emphasis on Learning

In many respects, the Community of Learners approach employs a fairly straightforward evaluation process. The steps include:

1. Identify and organize the decision makers and stakeholders;
2. Determine the evaluation framework;
3. Design tools and processes for data collection; and
4. Gather, analyze and interpret data.

Where we see an important difference, however, is in the emphasis on learning. The Community of Learners approach deliberately emphasizes the development of a pervasive culture of learning at each step in the evaluation process and at multiple levels in the organization.

Each evaluation is planned around the ability of individual stakeholders to engage in certain key activities, such as tool development, data collection, and data use. Stakeholders from different parts of the organization are involved in all steps of the evaluation and provide input on the program's history, underlying assumptions and intended outcomes.

After many years of working with the Community of Learners approach, we have found that the most challenging aspect for our nonprofits clients

is the development of the design and data analysis components.

Working with a skilled evaluation consultant who understands nonprofits is crucial to meeting this need. The Community of Learners approach allows for a collaborative, teaching focused, client-consultant partnership. Usually after working collaboratively with consultants, a client's abilities have increased dramatically and they are able to carry out the day-to-day data collection necessary for monitoring their work, measuring progress and assessing some of their outcomes.

If consulting assistance is necessary again in the future--for advanced data collection or specific evaluation programs--the client has the capacity to be strategic and selective about when they bring in an outside consultant.

Over time, Community of Learners "alums" strengthen their basic evaluation skills and tend to evolve their evaluations over time to include more sophisticated questions, using consultants to address these as necessary.

Usually after working collaboratively with consultants, a client's abilities have increased dramatically and they are able to carry out the day-to-day data collection necessary for monitoring their work, measuring progress and assessing some of their outcomes.

Helping a Nature Museum Embrace Evaluative Learning

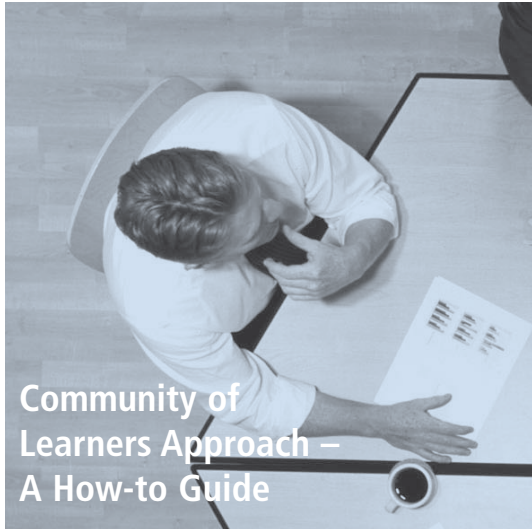
TCC Group has engaged in evaluation activities with The Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum (PNNM) in a variety of ways over the past several years. The relationship between TCC and PNNM began as a “less engaged relationship” where PNNM was mostly providing feedback on data tools. However, the relationship has grown to the point where PNNM is now leading aspects of the evaluation and integrating evaluation in a more significant way into all of the work that it does.

Hannah Vandercook, Director of Scout Programs at PNNM, had the following reflections about the Community of Learners approach: “When working with evaluators in the past with other programs or hearing about other program relationships with their evaluators, I often felt that the evaluation was imposed on the program from on high. The evaluator often came into the program with evaluation tools that did not always fit the program or suit the participants, or didn’t seem to capture what we were after. The process of evaluation with TCC Group has been very different from this, mainly because we, as the program implementers, have been very involved in the entire evaluation process. Our comments have not only been welcomed, but encouraged, especially when it came to the evaluation tools we were using to capture our data.

“For example, in the first year of our program we noticed that one of the tools we were using was simply too difficult for the participants to understand, so we changed that tool completely. It is nice knowing that the evaluation process is not static but far more fluid, and can ‘roll with the punches.’ We have evaluators who are open to our comments and suggestions, yet still have the expertise to help us gather the data that we need to find.

“The process of helping to create and implement the evaluation tools ourselves has really been enlightening. After conducting focus groups, interviews, and creating questionnaires, I definitely feel I’ve gained new evaluation skills and feel more comfortable taking part in future evaluations.

“I think this type of relationship can really be a model for other nonprofit programs and their evaluators. Nonprofits especially can benefit, not only financially, but also with gains in their staff’s skills and knowledge about evaluations. This process also shows just how time-consuming evaluating a program’s effectiveness can really be, which has given me a newfound respect for evaluators.”



The Community of Learners approach to evaluation entails a working group of diverse stakeholders who bring different perspectives to the experience, but who share the common goal of an inclusive and enriching evaluation process. The following steps outline what an evaluation process using the Community of Learners approach might look like:

1. Assess Organizational Readiness to Participate in This Type of Approach

Concepts like evaluative learning and Community of Learners may not be familiar or appealing to all organizations. Some may be better suited to these approaches than others. The first step is understanding whether a particular organization or initiative is ready to embark on this journey. Table 1 on page 7, offers a checklist that nonprofits and funders can use to gauge their readiness to use evaluative learning strategies. In addition, organizations need to determine whether the Community of Learners is right for them. Assessing readiness for Community of Learners is very similar to assessing readiness for evaluative learning; however, it places a greater emphasis on the following issues:

- Staff and leadership receptivity;
- Engagement in collaborative work;
- The organization's interest and ability to use information for learning purposes and to inform decisions; and
- Participatory models of decision making

While readiness is critical, it is not an absolute measure of the value of the Community of

Learners approach to a particular organization. One organization may demonstrate fewer signs of "readiness" than another; however, it can still utilize the Community of Learners approach.

TCC Group has seen the approach work with diverse organizations that fall on different points of the "readiness continuum," as outlined below. Recognizing this does not place a value judgment on the organization's culture; rather, it offers information that will be critical to developing the evaluation workplan. For the purposes of this discussion, we have identified three points along the "readiness continuum" but recognize that each organization will fall in a slightly different place.

Less Engaged: At this point, key stakeholders engage in a fairly passive manner by performing tasks such as reviewing the evaluation design, evaluation tools, etc. and providing input. The relationship between consultant and client is defined largely by the sharing of information and mutual support in the implementation of the evaluation.

Fairly Engaged: At this higher level of engagement, the client is often part of the data collection process. Depending on staff capacity, participation may be more administrative or may be more advanced and include technical tasks. Because the client is more actively involved in the implementation of the evaluation, it is important for the consultant(s) to clearly outline tasks, roles and responsibilities and to manage those involved in data collection in the completion of their assignments.

Most Engaged: At this point of the continuum, the client brings a considerable level of nonprofit knowledge and experience, and these skills are used throughout the evaluation design and data collection. Again, it is important to clearly distinguish the roles of the client from those of the consultant(s), based on the expertise different stakeholders offer.

2. Assemble an Evaluation Team

Central to the Community of Learners approach is the development of an evaluation team composed of consultants, nonprofit staff members, and/or funders. This team should represent the various

While readiness is critical, it is not an absolute measure of the value of the Community of Learners approach to a particular organization.

Table 1: Calculating Readiness for the Community of Learners Approach

Nonprofit Organizations:	Funders:
<p>EXTREMELY IMPORTANT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong organizational leadership Receptive staff Periodic organizational assessments Periodic needs assessments Board buy-in/familiarity 	<p>EXTREMELY IMPORTANT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program/initiative leadership A clearly defined Program Theory/Logic Model Clear, and measurable goals and objectives A willingness to support more than just programs Set-aside resources for evaluation
<p>VERY IMPORTANT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Periodic environmental scans Some form of MIS/data management Strong administrative support A history of engaging clients in planning efforts Strong external relationships 	<p>VERY IMPORTANT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative relationships with grantees Board buy-in to evaluation Flexibility: a willingness to make mid-course corrections Frequent communication with grantees Program expertise (substantive knowledge)
<p>LESS IMPORTANT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source(s) of sustainable unrestricted funding Knowledge of how to use research Some evaluation history and/or knowledge Staff job security and low staff turnover 	<p>LESS IMPORTANT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strategic, stable and clear program focus Collaborative relationships with other funders Experience with and/or expertise in evaluation A strong referral network

roles or perspectives of the staff involved in the specific program or initiative in question. As members of the evaluation team, these stakeholders are chosen for their knowledge, skills and ability to become change agents within the larger organization when evaluation findings are eventually implemented. One of the most comprehensive teams we have seen to date was assembled by the Shedd Aquarium which included the marketing, development, education, membership, public relations, community outreach, and evaluation departments. This multidisciplinary team ensured multiple department buy-in from the start and strengthened the overall evaluation.

3. Define Roles: Consultant and Client

Regardless of where the organization falls along the "readiness continuum," the responsibilities of client and consultant are clearly defined and structured so that scope of work and an individual's specific role are explicit. As a client's evaluation capacity grows, the structure of the

Community of Learners relationship can evolve. As Tina Nolan, Director of Education at the Nature Museum, said: "We took a leap of faith in engaging in this approach to evaluation. In the past, external evaluators did the bulk of the work in evaluating our programs, providing us with formative feedback during the run of the program, and a tidy summative report at the end. This approach, however, did not help us as a staff to envision evaluation as integrated throughout the project and integral to everyone's job. Since we adopted this Community of Learners approach, I have noticed a shift for the better in terms of staff willingness to think about assessment in deeper ways. Staff have an increased understanding about approaches and tools used in evaluating educational programs, and see it as a major component in program development as opposed to an afterthought."

An organization with less evaluation experience or knowledge will likely benefit from considerable

direction, guidance, technical support and assistance from the consultant. In such a relationship, the consultants will incorporate the client's ideas and priorities into the evaluation design but will not look to the nonprofit staff to play an active role in the evaluation design or implementation beyond basic administrative support.

On the other hand, an organization with a higher level of evaluation capacity will participate alongside the consultants in the evaluation design and implementation. Nonprofit staff who have expertise in some facet of the evaluation process will be charged with leading that component of the evaluation in collaboration with the consultants. No matter what role staff play, they are always assumed to be experts in their field and in their work. In a relationship where the client is playing a more active role, staff members are also considered experts in some facet of the evaluation.

For instance, the IT Resource Center leveraged its staff expertise by designing the site visit component of a larger evaluation design. Using their firsthand expertise, and with limited technical assistance, they developed an observation rating protocol to be used on site visits to assess their clients' technology use, integration and assimilation—all aspects that were directly aligned with the IT Resource Center's intended program outcomes.

4. Assign Consultant Responsibilities

In most cases, the consultants take the lead in managing the evaluation design and guiding its implementation. Typical responsibilities for the consultant include:

1. Educate staff about evaluation and equip staff with data collection tools;
2. Facilitate interactive discussions among team members to establish evaluation priorities and identify methodology;
3. Ensure that the evaluation design supports the client's information and learning priorities and the reporting requirements of other stakeholders, such as board members, funders, etc.;

The Evaluative Learning Continuum

Key Questions	Zero to Minimal Learning	Modest Learning
1) What's the purpose of the evaluation?	Accountability to funders	Accountability to funders and organizational leaders
2) Who is the audience for the findings?	Funders	Funders and organizational leaders
3) Who will conduct the evaluation?	External evaluator	External evaluator (hired by funders) with assistance from organizational staff
4) Who will determine the evaluation questions and evaluation design process?	Funders and external evaluator	Funders, external evaluator and organizational leaders
5) What data are available to address evaluation questions?	Objective data gathered only using scientific methods	Objective data gathered only using scientific or quasi-scientific methods
6) What types of evaluation reports or presentations of data are provided?	Very detailed findings, but no examination of recommendations beyond the data	Somewhat detailed, with some examination of recommendations beyond the data
7) Who will provide interpretive feedback on the findings?	Funders	Funders and organizational leaders
8) How frequently will evaluations occur?	At the conclusion of program funding	At the conclusion of each program cycle

		▶
	Significant Learning	Intensive Learning
	Program planning	Organizational and program planning
	Funders, organizational leaders and staff	Funders, organizational leaders, staff and the broader field
	External evaluator (hired by organization) in conjunction with organizational staff	Internal evaluator, perhaps with coaching from an external evaluator, if not trained in evaluation
	Funders, external evaluator, organizational leaders, and staff	Funders, external evaluator, organizational leaders, staff, clients, and community stakeholders
	Objective and subjective data	Objective, subjective, and alternative types of data (e.g., pictures, stories, etc.)
	User friendly (i.e., audience-defined) with examination of recommendations beyond the data	User friendly (i.e., audience defined), examines findings beyond the data, and incorporates a reflective process (e.g., planning "scenarios")
	Funders, organizational leaders, and staff	Funders, organizational leaders, staff, clients, community stakeholders, and the broader field
	Periodically throughout the life of the program	Ongoing for all programs within an organization

4. Analyze and report on data collected;

5. Play an active role in creating a collaborative learning environment that empowers staff not only to do evaluation for a particular project, but to also sustain their knowledge and abilities after the consulting engagement has ended; and,

6. Facilitate staff use of the evaluation results through a collaborative review of the findings and dialogue about the integration of these findings.

5. Assign Client Responsibilities

No matter how proactive or responsive their role in the process, nonprofits and funders are critical to the Community of Learners. They provide rich context about their organization, the nature of the project to be evaluated, and the short- and long-term goals of the organization or initiative. Typical responsibilities include:

1. If needed, learn the basics about evaluation in general and their evaluation specifically;
2. Provide critical input into the evaluation design and implementation;
3. Facilitate the evaluation design and implementation;
4. Engage in evaluation implementation (e.g., conduct interviews, administer surveys, and develop ratings and measures of quality and outcomes); and,
5. Share and practice their knowledge and abilities with their colleagues to increase the overall capacity of their organization to do evaluation beyond the consulting engagement.



Community of Learners Results

Over time, the organizational culture adapts to increasingly emphasize learning and continuous evaluation.

TCC Group's clients have reaped numerous benefits from the Community of Learners approach. They include:

1. A shared definition of assumptions about strategies, programs, and intended outcomes.

The ultimate result of the Community of Learners approach is that the organization has clearly stated the underlying assumptions related to the quality of its strategies/programs and its intended outcomes. While most evaluations do this, the Community of Learners approach is unique in that it involves a diverse group of staff, board, and/or funders; thereby creating a learning environment that facilitates stakeholders' investment in understanding the program and making improvements that will increase quality and impact. As stakeholders exchange and debate their assumptions about the program, their level of ownership grows, both collectively and individually.

2. Stronger organizational culture.

We believe that the Community of Learners approach helps to build organizational culture in two ways: 1) promoting continuous learning as an organizational value; and 2) increasing the capacity of individual staff members to use evaluation findings for the purpose of learning.

The approach requires stakeholders to ask questions that they did not previously think to ask and to use evaluation data in a way that they had not previously thought to use. Staff, board, and funders come together to discuss what they are learning and how to use these data to make programmatic decisions and to determine strategic direction. Over time, the organizational culture adapts to increasingly emphasize learning and continuous evaluation.

3. Increased evaluation capacity.

Staff participate in many, if not all, steps of the evaluation, and thus they learn new concepts, models, approaches, and techniques related to evaluation design and data collection. Of course, a staff member's involvement and responsibility depends on his or her readiness and skills, as well as other factors. However, as skills and confidence grow, so too can responsibility for evaluation tasks. Oftentimes, clients realize that they do not always need a consultant to collect and analyze valuable information. As they build their own capacity, they can take on more responsibility related to evaluation design and data collection.

4. Immediate use of evaluation findings.

A Community of Learners approach brings evaluation findings back to the evaluation team for dialogue and discussion. Reports are not simply delivered, they are discussed to determine the implication of the findings and an action plan to address them.

Because the team represents a broad-base of organizational stakeholders (e.g. staff across multiple departments, partners, etc.), the dialogue about data use is rich and the interplay with the different stakeholders serves as a catalyst for immediate data use as each stakeholder reacts to, questions, and discusses the implications and use of the data. This dialogue is critical for evaluation findings to be used throughout the program/organization and lends credibility and confirmation to the data, thereby leading to action.

5. Demystification of evaluation.

Evaluation activities do not necessarily need to be grounded in complicated or academic research models to be valuable to an organization's decision-making. Depending on the goals,

a simple evaluation can produce information that is equally valuable. Quite often, the simple evaluation is more valuable, because it might be more accessible and thus more likely to be understood and utilized by a broader range of stakeholders. Evaluation does not necessarily require special skills; sometimes, staff are already collecting data and are simply unaware of it. A strong evaluation may just be a question of understanding the potential of your activities and leveraging them to maximize their potential for learning.

6. Increased belief that evaluation is affordable.

Not only can evaluation be simple, it can also be a relatively inexpensive endeavor. Through the Community of Learners approach, many clients are able to have a high quality, useful evaluation within a reasonable budget because of the emphasis on internal knowledge and skill development.

The Community of Learners approach is most successful when used by organizations that want to build their capacity to collect and use evaluation data in order to learn about their programs and improve them. However, it can also be quite successful in cases where a funder has required an organization to conduct an evaluation for accountability purposes. These two goals need not be mutually exclusive.

We have found that everyone's interests are best served when the various parties are clear about their specific needs, expectations, and limitations related to evaluation and when all stakeholders engage in the process ready to learn.

Endnotes:

1. York, Peter (2005). *A Funder's Guide to Evaluation: Leveraging Evaluation to Improve Nonprofit Effectiveness*. Saint Paul, Minn.: Fieldstone Alliance.

2. There are numerous theories, models and approaches in the field of evaluation from which TCC Group's Community of Learners approach to consulting has emerged. Among a few worth referencing herein are the following: Co-evaluation as written about in *Evaluation with Power: A New Approach to Organizational Effectiveness, Empowerment and Excellence* by Sandra Trice Gray and Associates in a publication by the Independent Sector (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998) and Empowerment Evaluation as written about by D.M. Fetterman, S.J. Kaftarian and A. Eandersman in *Empowerment Evaluation: Knowledge and Tools for Self-Assessment and Accountability* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996.)

3. Senge, Peter (1994). *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*. New York: Doubleday.

TCC Group

About TCC Group

For more than 26 years, TCC has provided strategic planning, program development, evaluation and management consulting services to nonprofit organizations, foundations, corporate community involvement programs and government agencies. In this time, the firm has developed substantive knowledge and expertise in fields as diverse as community and economic development, human services, children and family issues, education, health care, the environment, and the arts.

From offices in Philadelphia and New York, and full-time staff in Chicago, the firm works with clients nationally and, increasingly, globally. Our services include strategic planning, organizational assessment and development, feasibility studies, program evaluation and development, board development, restructuring and repositioning, as well as grant program design, evaluation, and facilitation.

Approach

Our approach is governed by the need to establish a clear and engaging consulting process that offers structure and predictability as well as flexibility to meet unforeseen needs. Working in multidisciplinary teams, we tailor each new assignment to meet the individual needs and circumstances of the client. We develop a scope of work that responds to the particular challenges, timetable and budget for the assignment.

Sometimes clients engage us for short-term research, problem solving, or facilitation projects. Other times we provide comprehensive planning and evaluation assistance over a longer period or conduct other activities, over one or more years. Increasingly, TCC helps clients manage and implement their work and provide advice on an ongoing basis. We bring to each new assignment the perspective of our expertise, broad experience and the enthusiastic commitment to get the job done right.

Evaluation Services

Our evaluation services are geared to improve and enhance ongoing program development (formative evaluation) and provide information that informs decision-making on the continuation or evolution of programs (summative evaluation). We offer evaluation services to the nonprofit as well as funders.

We believe that evaluation is an integral part of the planning process and as such can be used to assess and develop current capacity so that an organization can enhance its overall effectiveness. Our evaluation team will assist in designing the processes and tools necessary to create an organization's internal evaluation system, as well as provide professional development and technical assistance related to evaluation theory, design, implementation and data collection to executives, program officers and staff.

Our Clients

We have provided consulting services to a broad range of nonprofit groups, governmental agencies, corporate citizenship programs, and philanthropic organizations in many fields, from the arts and community development to education and medical research.

Among our evaluation clients are such leading foundations as the Annenberg Foundation, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, The Freeman Foundation, William Penn Foundation, and Sierra Health Foundation.

Corporate and nonprofit evaluation clients include Microsoft, Goldman Sachs, Prudential Foundation, Lucent Technologies Foundation, National Urban League, the Posse Foundation, Eureka Communities, Lorraine Monroe Leadership Institute, Newark Public Schools, National Foundation for the Teaching of Entrepreneurship, Association of Performing Arts Presenters (APAP), Poet's House and the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education (PEJE).

Chantell Johnson is a Senior Consultant and Associate Director of Evaluation at TCC Group. Senior Consultant Anne Sherman and Jennifer Avers, Consultant, made substantial contributions to this paper. Many thanks also to Richard Mittenthal, Peter York and Paul Connolly for their helpful input.

Contact TCC Group

New York

50 East 42nd Street
19th Floor
New York, NY 10017
phone: 212.949.0990
fax: 212.949.1672

Philadelphia

One Penn Center
Suite 1550
Philadelphia, PA 19103
phone: 215.568.0399
fax: 215.568.2619

Chicago

875 North Michigan Ave.
31st Floor
Chicago, IL 60611
phone: 312.794.7780
fax: 312.794.7781

Website

<http://www.tccgrp.com>

Email

info@tccgrp.com