

NSP | Update

A bulletin for nonprofit leaders from the
Hartford Foundation for Public Giving



Four Hartford-Area Nonprofits Seek to Raise Start-Up Capital for Earned Income Ventures

The following four organizations (The “Fabulous Four”) are part of the current cohort of the Social Enterprise Accelerator: **Charter Oak Cultural Center**, **Ebony Horsewomen**, **Journey Home** and **Our Piece of the Pie (OPP)**. Teams from each of these organizations have begun raising start-up capital for their earned income ventures with the guidance of **No Margin, No Mission**, a national consulting firm that helps nonprofits become stronger and more vibrant through earned income, social enterprise, and entrepreneurial practices.

The Hartford Foundation has created a matching challenge: for every dollar of start-up capital raised by these nonprofits through September 17, the Foundation will match dollar for dollar, up to \$30,000. Click [here](#) for a list of ventures and contact information.



Join Us for Our Fall Workshops!

Mark your calendars for these upcoming workshops for nonprofits in the Hartford region. **Invitations will be sent to Executive Directors/CEOs 6-7 weeks prior to the session date.**

Managing and Fundraising in these Challenging Times (In-Person) – for Staff and Board Leaders

We encourage you attend as a small team, especially board and staff together - Thursday, September 25, 8:30 a.m. to Noon

In this challenging moment, there are specific steps you can take to prioritize core programs, raise money differently, plan for various scenarios, and partner more effectively with peers. Join us for an interactive, in-person workshop and conversation about:

- Program planning and protecting core programs
- Contingency planning and budgeting for various scenarios
- Diversifying your income
- Collaboration with peers and partners, including shared fundraising

Presenter: Andy Robinson, **Andy Robinson Consulting, LLC** and **Train Your Board**

Mastering Critical Conversations to Solve Complex Problems, Foster Collaboration, and Improve Staff Engagement and Retention – an interactive session on Zoom

For Executive Directors/CEOs and their teams
Tuesday, October 21, 9:00 a.m. to Noon

This highly interactive workshop, rooted in the acclaimed Generative Listening framework featured in a TEDx Talk, will unlock your innate ability to shape transformative conversations that profoundly increase the capacity of your team to strengthen internal and external relationships to better manage change and innovation, break down silos, and make better decisions.

As a result of this program, you will learn to:

- Break down silos and foster genuine collaboration by creating an environment where all perspectives are truly heard and valued.
- Solve complex problems and make more informed decisions by accessing deeper insights and understanding underlying dynamics.
- Accelerate innovation and change by cultivating a listening space where new ideas can emerge and be nurtured.
- Improve employee engagement, productivity, and retention by fostering a culture of feeling heard, understood, and valued.
- Strengthen critical internal and external relationships by building deeper trust and rapport through powerful listening.

Presenter: **Brent Robertson, Be Generative**

Are We There Yet? A Guide to Developing a Theory of Change to Help Plan and Evaluate Your Programs – an interactive workshop on Zoom

A Theory of Change is a simple but powerful tool that helps your team get clear on what you're trying to achieve, and how you'll get there. It helps you plan programs that are actually connected to your goals, and helps you measure how your work is making a difference. Through real-world examples and practical exercises, we will explore how to develop a theory of change for your organization's programming, and equip you to undertake this important strategic exercise with your team.

Part 1 - Building a Theory of Change

Friday, October 24, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. – on Zoom

Part 2 - Translating your Theory of Change into measurable, actionable evaluation components

Tuesday, November 18, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. – on

Zoom

Organizations should only register if they can attend both sessions.

Presenter: **Elena Tamanas Ragusa**, PsyD, President and Founder of Drive Evaluation Studio

Beyond the Gift – From Year-End Donors to Loyal Supporters: The Power of Donor Retention – On Zoom

Wednesday, December 3, Noon to 1:30 p.m.

Year-end giving often brings a wave of generosity, but how do you ensure those donors stick around? Donor retention isn't just good stewardship—it's the key to sustainable fundraising. This workshop will unpack why keeping your current donors is more cost-effective and impactful than constantly finding new ones. Learn how strong retention strategies build lasting relationships and increase donor lifetime value.

This session will provide practical tools to boost your nonprofit's donor retention rate and turn one-time donors into lifelong supporters.

This workshop will cover:

- What donor retention is, and how to maintain relationships with your existing donors to secure their ongoing support
- Proven strategies to retain both repeat and first-time donors
- How to involve both board and staff in improving your organization's donor retention rate

Presenter: **Shari Adams**, Shari Adams Consulting



Resources and Tools for Navigating Uncertain Times

As your community foundation, the Hartford Foundation is closely monitoring developing federal policy changes and their impact on our region. We understand these developments are creating significant uncertainty for our nonprofit partners and the communities they serve. We put together this list of **resources and tools** to help nonprofits during this challenging period. This list will be updated as needs arise, or as we find new resources.

Remember that these NSP programs and services are available to help your nonprofit:

- **Organizational Assessments** – can help your board and staff leaders to identify priorities and build consensus around next steps.
- **Technical Assistance Grants (TAGs)** – skilled consultants can assist you with planning in areas such as organizational strategy, fundraising,

marketing, boards, human resources and strategic alliances. Executive Directors/CEOs may also receive executive coaching.

- **The Nonprofit Loan Fund** – can provide low interest loans and lines of credit to Hartford-area nonprofits.
- **Catchafire** – matches skilled professionals who wish to donate their time, with nonprofits who need their expert talent. Learn more about how Catchafire works by watching this [2 minute video](#). Contact **Traci Resler** if your Hartford-area nonprofit is interested in a Foundation-sponsored membership.

Click [here](#) for a full list of NSP's programs and services – we're here to help!



Find Grants for Your Nonprofit Using Hartford Public Library's Candid Foundation Directory

If you're searching for grants, [Candid's Foundation Directory Online](#) is available at Hartford Public Library locations either on a library computer or using the library's wi-fi. This resource includes in-depth profiles of funders that provide grants to nonprofits. For a brief introduction, [watch this video](#).



Newly Released Compensation and Benefits Report Now Available to Nonprofits

Nonprofit staff compensation data is crucial to help nonprofit leaders make reasonable, fair and equitable compensation decisions, and align compensation with organizational values. This newly completed report from [The Alliance](#) and community partners including the Hartford Foundation covers: A range of staff positions that are common to the CT nonprofit workforce, and salary and benefits information from small to large nonprofits across the state in a wide range of service areas. The report is available at no cost to 501(c)3 nonprofits, and may be downloaded [here](#).

Many thanks to the large number of Hartford-area nonprofits that participated in the survey!



Newly Released Guide to Fiscal Sponsorship Now Available

NSP engaged [Fio Partners](#) to research fiscal sponsorship, which has gained attention as an alternative to nonprofit status and a way to support community-led initiatives. We hope that this guide will be helpful to potential fiscal sponsors, sponsored projects, funders and others. "[Fiscal Sponsorship 101](#)" answers some basic questions such as:

- What is fiscal sponsorship?
- What kinds of supports do fiscal sponsors provide and how much does it cost?
- What fiscal sponsorship can sound like — but is not

- Common models of and ranging approaches to fiscal sponsorship
- Issues potential sponsors and sponsored projects should consider

We invite you to share this guide with others, and we hope this resource helps potential fiscal sponsors and projects explore whether the arrangement might be a good fit for them.



CTData's Data for Democracy Conference – Save the Date!

With new and growing challenges to data collection and public trust, it's more important than ever for nonprofit and public sector leaders to come together, share solutions, and advocate for the data that drives our missions and supports strong communities. At the December 3rd Data for Democracy conference, you will learn practical hands-on data skills, hear about participatory strategies to engage people with lived experience, learn how to conduct "before action reviews" and "in action reviews" and more.

Click [here](#) to learn more and to register.



Nonprofit Finance Fund Releases State of the Sector Report

The 2,000+ nonprofits that participated in Nonprofit Finance Fund's 2025 State of the Sector survey shared what 2024 looked like, and what they're bracing for in the future. The survey results revealed long-standing challenges, like rising demand for services and the toll of doing underfunded work year after year. There were also urgent concerns about costs rising faster than funding, and the continued decline in government support.

The report, which may be downloaded [here](#) is designed to guide funding and advocacy decisions at this crucial time, and includes overall findings and recommendations for nonprofits, government, and philanthropic funders.



Consultants Provide Insights on State of Nonprofits at NSP Convening

NSP's recent convening of consultants that work with nonprofits involved a number of robust discussions related to understanding our collective work in the context of the current environment. These discussions included:

- What we are seeing as immediate implications for nonprofits, leaders and communities
- What we anticipate as impacts on the social sector
- How organizations are planning for and reacting to shifts in the environment
- Potential responses to these shifts

We hope that a summary of these discussions, which are

available [here](#) will be helpful to you in better understanding the current climate, its impact on nonprofits, and how funders and capacity builders can provide support.



SEAT Program Seeks Community Residents of Color to Serve on Nonprofit Boards

NSP is collaborating with the **SEAT Program** to help train and place community residents of color on nonprofit boards. Community residents interested in serving on boards receive in-depth training on nonprofit board service and have the opportunity to serve on the board of a Hartford-area nonprofit.

For more information about the SEAT program or to apply, please visit <https://www.seatct.org>

The NSP Team

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Visit the Nonprofit Support Program website

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