

Colorado Nonprofit Development Center (CNDC)
Organizational Consulting – Fees, Staffing Structure, and Service Offerings
Work Plan Outline – 2023

CONSULTANT: We have engaged Joel Bashevkin, former Director of Social Ventures for Tides, one of the largest fiscal sponsors in the US. Before Tides, Joel had extensive experience in nonprofits and for-profits. Joel comes to the work already understanding the intricacies of fiscal sponsor purpose, services, fees, and day-to-day operations.

SUMMARY: The work plan is focused on our project fees, service offerings, and staffing structure. Our three goals are:

- 1) Ensure that CNDC’s fee schedule and service model provides equitable fee structures, sustains CNDC, and supports a project growth/impact priority.
- 2) Ensure that CNDC’s service team and cross-team structure, roles, training, and partner support are effective, collaborative, and efficient.
- 3) Streamline accounts payable (“AP”) workflows to improve accuracy and efficiency by leveraging technology and increasing project involvement in the process (e.g., project partners entering information directly). *NOTE – This will be used as a test case for other systems at CNDC.*

Below is an outline of the work plan direction and activities under each topic. Most of the detail is operational and staff-focused, as will be most of the decisions; however, some issues (e.g., fee structure) will require board approval to make significant changes. We will keep you posted and involve the appropriate committee and/or board member as needed.

SERVICES AND FEES

Current state at CNDC (based on JB review):

- Clear set of services that are provided.
- Successful fee-collection mechanism.
- Survey results indicating consensus that services meet project needs.

Where we want things to be:

- Reasonable, sustainable fee model that incorporates equity and focuses on project fees based the service cost.
 - Ability to charge per transaction fees vital for equity and/or behavior modification.
 - Assessment of whether to shift to an expense-based fee collection model.
- Schedule of services that breaks out:
 - The core services covered by the core fee for all partners.
 - Elective/a la carte services for partners who need those functions.
 - Identify services to be outsourced.

Proposed workplan outline:

- Assess the last three years of revenue-to-expense comparisons for overall CNDC health.
- Audit the complete fee schedule (% age rates listed against collected) and assess for equity. Test for project level.
- Review workload and fees for expedited or off-cycle requests.
- Review onboarding materials to understand how each service is explained/offered (refreshers) to projects and what expectations are set for project partner responsibility.
- Map the core services and elective/a la carte services.

STAFFING STRUCTURE

Current state at CNDC (based on JB review):

- Clear job descriptions for each role. Some JDs indicate project interaction levels (directly partner-facing, indirectly supporting CNDC partner-facing staff or executive level for overarching).
- Clear roles with vetting/onboarding projects.
- It appears that both program and finance staff have direct partner-facing roles, but positions report to different execs. Are there clear lanes and responsibilities?
- Unclear how often partner meetings occur. For partner meetings, unclear if there are set agendas covering the full range of transactional, relational, and planning topics.

Where we want things to be:

- Team structure with clear roles/responsibilities at CNDC for each project's transactional, relational, and growth needs.
- Ability to recruit and retain talent in team functions.
- Improved onboarding, training, and retraining for CNDC staff.
- Standard project meeting agendas and pacing that address a wide range of reactive and proactive needs.

Proposed workplan outline:

- Review all team structure materials.
- Identify the priority concerns, potential models, and success indicators.
- Train and build a roles/responsibility matrix on the RACI model (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed).
- Create clear areas of primary and supporting partner-facing responsibilities.

AP PROCESS

Current state at CNDC (based on JB review):

- Clear workflow process for CNDC staff, but not for projects
- Mostly, AP works well for instances where there are no hiccups. Lack of project management/tracking platform means transactions may get lost if atypical. There are a high number of atypical transactions.

- Sage offers project access to real-time financials but has not been fully implemented/trained.
- A general belief that asking projects to submit AP requests differently would be perceived as asking them to do more of the work.

Where we want things to be:

- Efficient workflow that guides a ticketing transaction system to process all typical items and how to handle atypical ones.
- Project staff trained and actively using platforms, thereby reducing CNDC staff time and increasing projects' financial literacy/ownership of their fiscal health.
- Implement platforms with CNDC and project staff that ultimately reduces duplicative entry work, increase the quality of submissions, and shift more of CNDC staff time to higher-value contributions (e.g., project support).

Proposed workplan outline:

- Detail list of challenges in AP payment transactions to establish priority areas of attention.
- Develop potential solutions (tools, training, workflow changes, platform interfaces, etc.).
- Evaluate the readiness of CNDC and project staff to make incremental or substantial changes to current practice.
- Assess best ways to design and test potential solutions, including engaging with select CNDC and project staff.