



For Immediate Release

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Taproot Foundation Announces Strategy Management Practice and Capacity Builder Partnerships With Wells Fargo as Presenting Sponsor, Foundation Will Deliver \$50M in Pro Bono Strategic Management Consulting in the Next Five Years

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, September 10, 2008 – The Taproot Foundation today announced a new suite of services designed to bolster nonprofit capacity in strategic planning and decision-making. The Foundation’s Strategy Management practice, presented by Wells Fargo, will give nonprofit organizations the opportunity to receive 500 hours of expert research and analysis—more than \$70,000 worth of services in each project—at no cost to them. In addition to Wells Fargo, funding for the new initiative was provided by Deloitte LLP, Capitol One, the Surdna Foundation, and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

Said James Shepard, Jr., COO and VP of Programs at the Taproot Foundation, “Strategy Management helps nonprofits address some critical management issues that are often skipped over in the day-to-day pressures of operating in the social sector.”

As presenting sponsor of the Strategy Management practice, Wells Fargo is helping to address the nonprofit sector’s strategic management challenges by serving as an early leader of the rapidly-growing pro bono community service movement among American corporations. A key driver for the company’s support was the growing demand for strategy management skills in the sector.

“We see these needs growing and are always searching for ways to address them,” said Tim Hanlon, President of the Wells Fargo Foundation. “We know how much the sector can benefit from data-driven analysis. Executive Directors want more information. They want to make confident decisions—and follow through.”

Strategic partnerships support nonprofits

The Foundation is also announcing a series of co-marketing partnerships with local capacity builders, designed to bring a greater continuum of services to nonprofit clients. By aligning with select consultants in Boston, New York, Washington, DC, Chicago, San Francisco, and Seattle, the Foundation can connect nonprofits to additional services and help to disseminate best practices throughout the sector.

The partnerships, with providers such as San Francisco’s CompassPoint and Chicago’s Millenia Consulting, support the new practice and point to new possibilities for collaboration. “We can’t do everything with a client,” said Paul Connolly of TCC Group, a 30-year old management consulting firm with offices in New York City, Chicago, Philadelphia, and San Francisco. “The Taproot Foundation’s work can help our clients when they can’t afford our whole range of services, or when they need additional perspectives on a problem.”

“Clients that have more information are better prepared for the planning process,” said Hanlon. “An organization that has worked with a Taproot Foundation team knows more about their particular challenges, and their opportunities, so any following or additional work is that much stronger.”

Project development targeted data-driven decision-making

The Strategy Management practice is the result of over 18 months of research and development and \$400,000 in investment from key funders. The practice includes four projects, or Service Grants, that support nonprofits in strategic planning and decision-making: a robust, detailed environmental scan; a financial analysis that uncovers the true costs of operations; a competitor and collaborator analysis that uses a comprehensive peer analysis to highlight growing threats or opportunities; and a scorecard that isolates and monitors the select measures that are key to an organization’s success.

As part of the practice development, the Taproot Foundation tested projects with more than 20 organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area. Pro bono consultants draw from varied experience in the corporate and nonprofit sectors, including investment banking, management consulting, corporate consulting, venture capital, market research, and product and company management. “How else is a nonprofit going to get 500 hours with a team of management consultants, or investment bankers, or CEOs?” asked Aaron Hurst, Taproot Foundation president. “Board service is critical, but these projects get at a very different aspect of nonprofit management.”

The Taproot Foundation’s capacity builder partners include:

Boston

Brickman Associates
Mendelsohn, Gittleman & Associates, LLC
Nonprofit Solutions Associates
Strategy Matters, Inc.
Third Sector New England

San Francisco Bay Area

CompassPoint
CBO Center
TCC Group
La Piana Associates

Chicago

Executive Service Corps of Chicago
Millenia Consulting
TCC Group

Seattle

Executive Service Corps Washington
Laura Pierce Consulting
Nonprofit Assistance Center Seattle

New York

Support Center for Nonprofit Management
TCC Group
Community Resource Exchange

Washington, DC

Greater DC Cares

For case studies about Strategy Management projects, including photos and quotes, see http://www.taprootfoundation.org/cs/hearing_speech.php and http://www.taprootfoundation.org/cs/child_advocates.php.

For more information about capacity builder partnerships, see http://www.taprootfoundation.org/npo/catalog/strategy_partners.php.

For more information about applying for a Strategy Management Service Grant, see <http://www.taprootfoundation.org/npo/catalog/strategy.php>.

About the Taproot Foundation

Every year, hundreds of nonprofit organizations rely on the Taproot Foundation's award-winning Service Grant program to provide millions of dollars worth of pro bono Marketing, Leadership Development & Strategic HR, IT, and Strategy Management consulting services that better equip them to tackle our society's toughest challenges. Learn more about the Taproot Foundation at: www.taprootfoundation.org.

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