

BUILDING ON SUCCESS

Targeted Strategies for Strengthening Southern Nevada Nonprofits



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Southern Nevada's nonprofit sector is dynamic, resilient, and deeply committed to community impact. Organizations demonstrate strong management practices, engaged leadership, and a clear vision for the change they seek to create. Yet the results from TCC Group's Core Capacity Assessment Tool (CCAT®), combined with survey data and focus groups with nonprofit leaders, indicate that despite strong mission and leadership, many organizations are limited by their staffing capacity and lack time to reflect, adapt, and plan for growth.

Overview of the Study

TCC Group gathered capacity data in collaboration with the Nevada GrantLab and 79 Southern Nevada nonprofit organizations, engaging more than 400 staff and board members using a widely used nonprofit capacity assessment tool. The tool, called the Core Capacity Assessment Tool, or CCAT® for short, measures organizational effectiveness across four capacity dimensions:

- Leadership Capacity – clarity of vision, influence, and ability to guide the organization
- Management Capacity – disciplined planning, staff development, and operational execution
- Adaptive Capacity – learning, reflection, and responsiveness to change
- Technical Capacity – fundraising, communications, evaluation/data use, and technology systems

These data were complemented by three focus groups comprised of 26 nonprofit leaders and a supplemental survey to better understand the lived realities behind the data: what capacity-building supports have been helpful, what have not, and what organizations need now.

These findings reveal a sector that is operationally strong and strategically committed yet limited in areas that affect growth—particularly fundraising, marketing, evaluation, learning, and use of technology.

Key Findings

1. Management capacity is a regional strength - Organizations manage resources responsibly, supervise staff effectively, and maintain clear operational processes. Strong management provides a stabilizing force, even when staffing is limited.

2. Leadership is committed but overstretched - Leaders are mission-driven and often embedded deeply in their communities. However, many organizations lack succession planning, shared leadership models, or leadership bench strength - leaving organizations vulnerable to turnover or burnout.

3. Technical capacity is the greatest constraint on growth - The lowest-scoring capacity area—technical capacity—reveals gaps in fundraising diversification, marketing and outreach, evaluation systems, and technology infrastructure. These deficits are interrelated: limited marketing reduces fundraising potential, limited data systems constrain evaluation, and inadequate technology hinders both. Without strategic investment, these gaps restrict otherwise strong organizations from expanding their reach and impact.

4. Adaptive capacity is inconsistent across organizations - Some organizations are highly adaptable and use data to guide decision-making, while others lack the time, tools, or systems to reflect, learn, and adjust. Without space to step out of day-to-day work, organizations struggle to plan, innovate, or gain the insights necessary to improve their work.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

5. Nonprofits need hands-on support, in addition to training - Across focus groups and the survey, organizations were clear: they do not need additional workshops or professional development that results in more “homework.” They need structured, implementation-focused capacity building where support leads directly to tangible progress—development of fundraising materials, CRM setup, improved digital presence, or completed dashboards.

6. Capacity building must match organizational readiness - Nonprofits in the region are at different places in their organizational lifecycles and are at different levels in current capacity. The organizations need support that is sequenced based on readiness: foundational system building for some, infrastructure upgrades for others, and strategic acceleration for those that are ready to grow.

Opportunities for Strengthening

Southern Nevada’s nonprofit sector is well positioned for growth if support is strategic, coordinated, and sustained. The findings point to several high-impact areas for funders and capacity builders:

- **Invest in technical infrastructure** like evaluation systems, digital tools, and data management to enable organizations to better demonstrate impact and attract new funding.
- **Pair fundraising and marketing capacity-building efforts** to break the cycle that limits visibility, engagement, and revenue diversification.
- **Develop leadership pipelines and succession plans** to ensure continuity and organizational resilience.
- **Reinvigorate board engagement** through training, clearer roles, and stronger executive-board collaboration.
- **Create capacity to participate in capacity building** with backfill funding, stipends, or workload relief (including new staff positions) so leaders have the time and space to engage in capacity-building efforts without sacrificing service delivery.
- **Provide fractional or shared access to technical expertise** through offering part-time, on-demand, or communal shared specialists (fundraising, communications, evaluation/data, digital systems) so nonprofits can advance priority projects without needing to hire full-time staff.
- **Align capacity-building models around implementation** by prioritizing formats where learning is immediately followed by action.

The Path Forward

Southern Nevada nonprofits are ready to grow. Their strong management and leadership provide a reliable foundation for deeper investment in systems, expertise, and infrastructure that enable scale. Capacity-building efforts that give organizations time, hands-on support, and technical resources will accelerate both organizational effectiveness and community impact.

INTRODUCTION



Strengthening nonprofit ecosystems begins with understanding how organizations currently excel, their unique challenges, and their conception of existing limitations and potential solutions. To provide these insights for Southern Nevada nonprofits and the funders and capacity builders that support them, Nevada GrantLab partnered with TCC Group (TCC) to document the capacity and capacity-building needs of a range of nonprofit organizations in the region.

Nonprofits are essential to Southern Nevada's community infrastructure. They deliver programs, hold relationships, and respond to emerging needs. What they often lack is not ideas or direction but resources and support: the time, people, systems, and space to strengthen and sustain their work.

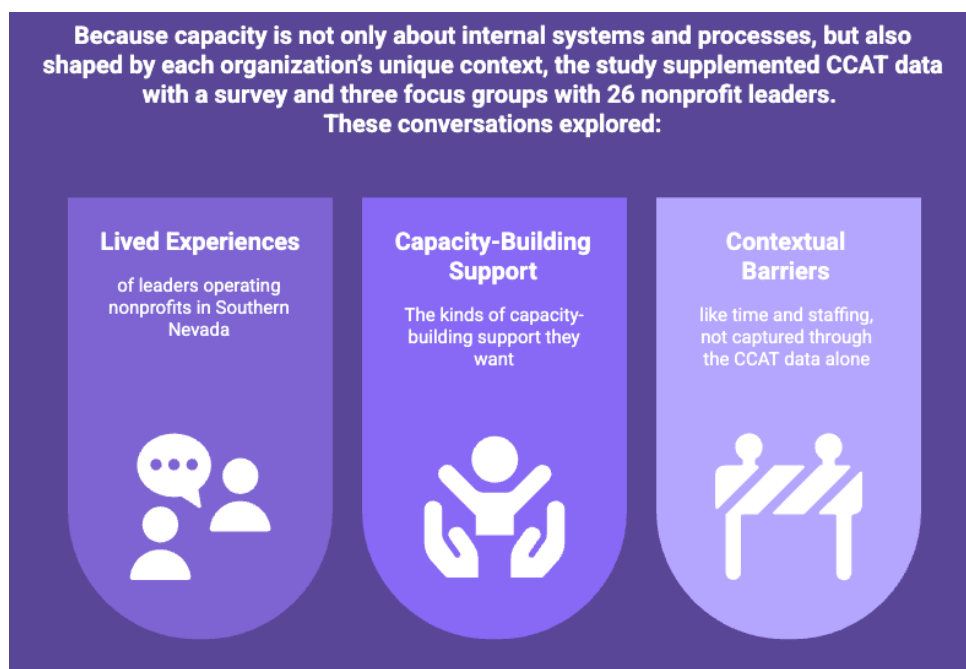
To understand the current state of capacity in the region, TCC partnered with nonprofits to gather information on their leadership, management, adaptive, and technical capacities using the Core Capacity Assessment Tool (CCAT®), a validated assessment used with more than 7,000 organizations nationally.

In Southern Nevada, 400 staff and board members from 79 organizations completed the CCAT, representing a broad range of sizes, missions, and organizational maturity.

How the CCAT® Works



INTRODUCTION



The qualitative findings confirmed the quantitative data and revealed the conditions under which capacity-building efforts succeed or fail.

This report provides:

- An overview of current organizational capacity strengths and limitations.
- Insights into the challenges and contextual factors shaping capacity.
- Detailed perspective on the primary capacity challenges experienced by Southern Nevada nonprofits and potential solutions for alleviating those challenges.
- Targeted strategies for supporting nonprofits based on what they say they need and are ready for.

Together, these learnings offer a roadmap for funders, capacity builders, and community partners to invest in what nonprofits need to thrive—capacity that accelerates impact, not capacity building that adds more work.



SOUTHERN NEVADA NONPROFITS CORE CAPACITIES

TCC Group's Core Capacity Assessment Tool (CCAT®) measures nonprofit organizational effectiveness across four interrelated areas—leadership, management, adaptive, and technical capacities—that together reflect an organization's overall ability to achieve its mission.

Leadership capacity reflects the ability of an organization's leaders to inspire, guide, and align people toward a clear and shared vision.

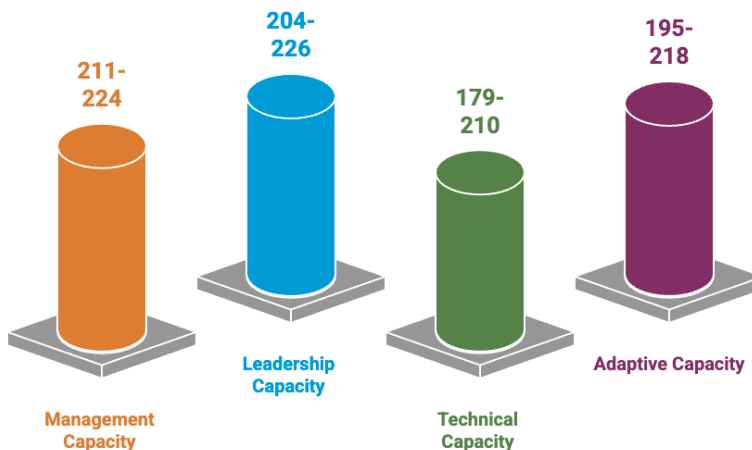
Management capacity captures how effectively an organization plans, implements, and oversees its operations and resources to ensure stability and accountability.

Adaptive capacity measures how well an organization monitors its environment, learns from experience, and adjusts strategies and programs in response to changing conditions.

Technical capacity assesses the skills, systems, and resources that enable an organization to carry out its work—from fundraising and communications to technology and program delivery.

The CCAT generates a standardized numeric score for each capacity domain on a 300-point scale, where higher scores indicate stronger organizational capacity. Scores are normed against a national database of nonprofits, allowing each organization's results to be interpreted in relation to what is typical or strong within the sector.

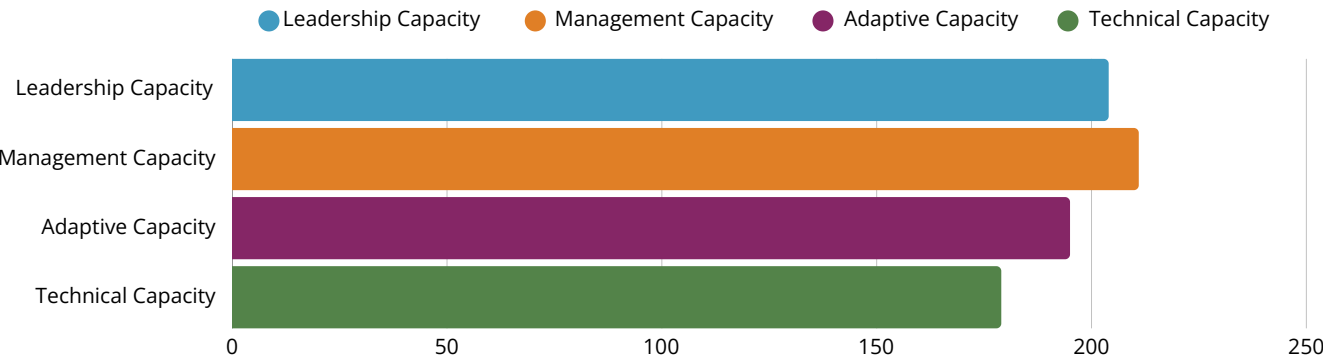
Southern Nevada's nonprofits demonstrate strong operational capacity and a deep commitment to their missions. Using CCAT® results from 79 organizations (over 400 respondents), we observed a consistent pattern across the four core capacity domains. As shown in Figure 1, Management capacity scored the highest of all domains with an average score of 234, while Technical capacity scored the lowest at 205. Leadership capacity was 220, and Adaptive, 212. Most nonprofits similar to those in southern Nevada tend to score within the following ranges:



These results indicate that Southern Nevada's nonprofit sector demonstrates overall organizational strength, with particularly high capacity in management and solid performance in leadership and adaptive capacity. Technical capacity scored somewhat lower, suggesting that while nonprofits are effectively managed and mission-driven, continued strengthening of systems and resources will be essential to sustain and expand their impact.

SOUTHERN NEVADA NONPROFITS CORE CAPACITIES

Figure 1: Core Capacity Scores for Southern Nevada Nonprofits

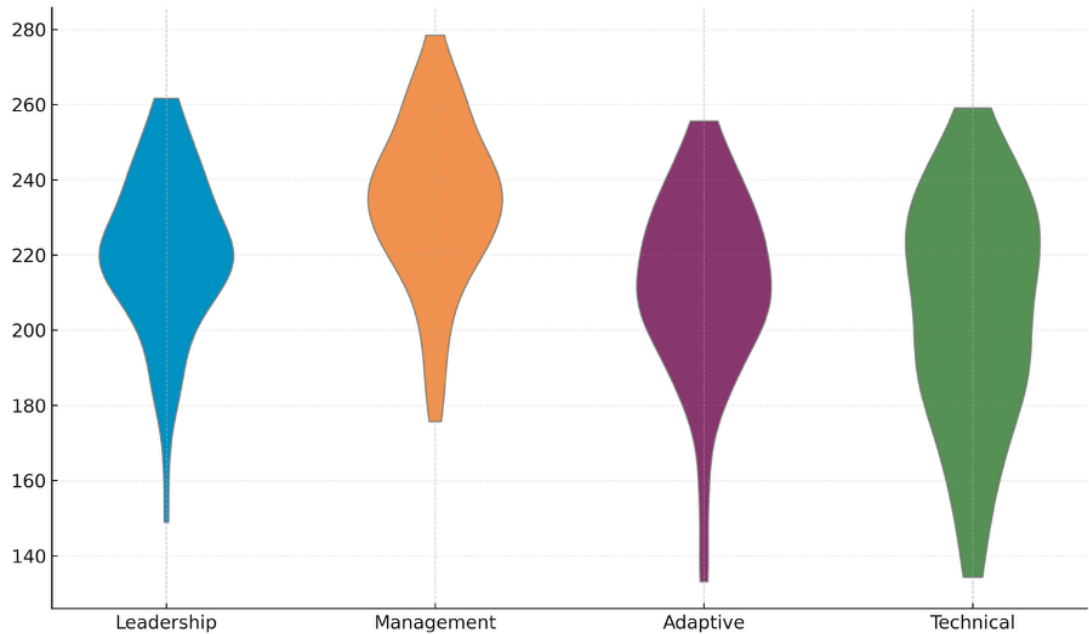


Taken together, these results show that Southern Nevada nonprofits are well-led and responsibly managed; strong in the day-to-day execution of their work. What is less developed are the supports that enable organizations to grow or scale that work. Many have the leadership and management discipline to deliver programs, yet lack the systems, staffing, and time needed to expand infrastructure.

As one participant in the focus groups explained, “We’re overperforming with under-capacity.”

While Leadership and Management scores cluster tightly (Figure 2), indicating consistent strength across organizations, Adaptive and Technical capacities show a much wider spread. This variation reflects uneven access to tools like fundraising infrastructure, data platforms, technology systems, and evaluation supports.

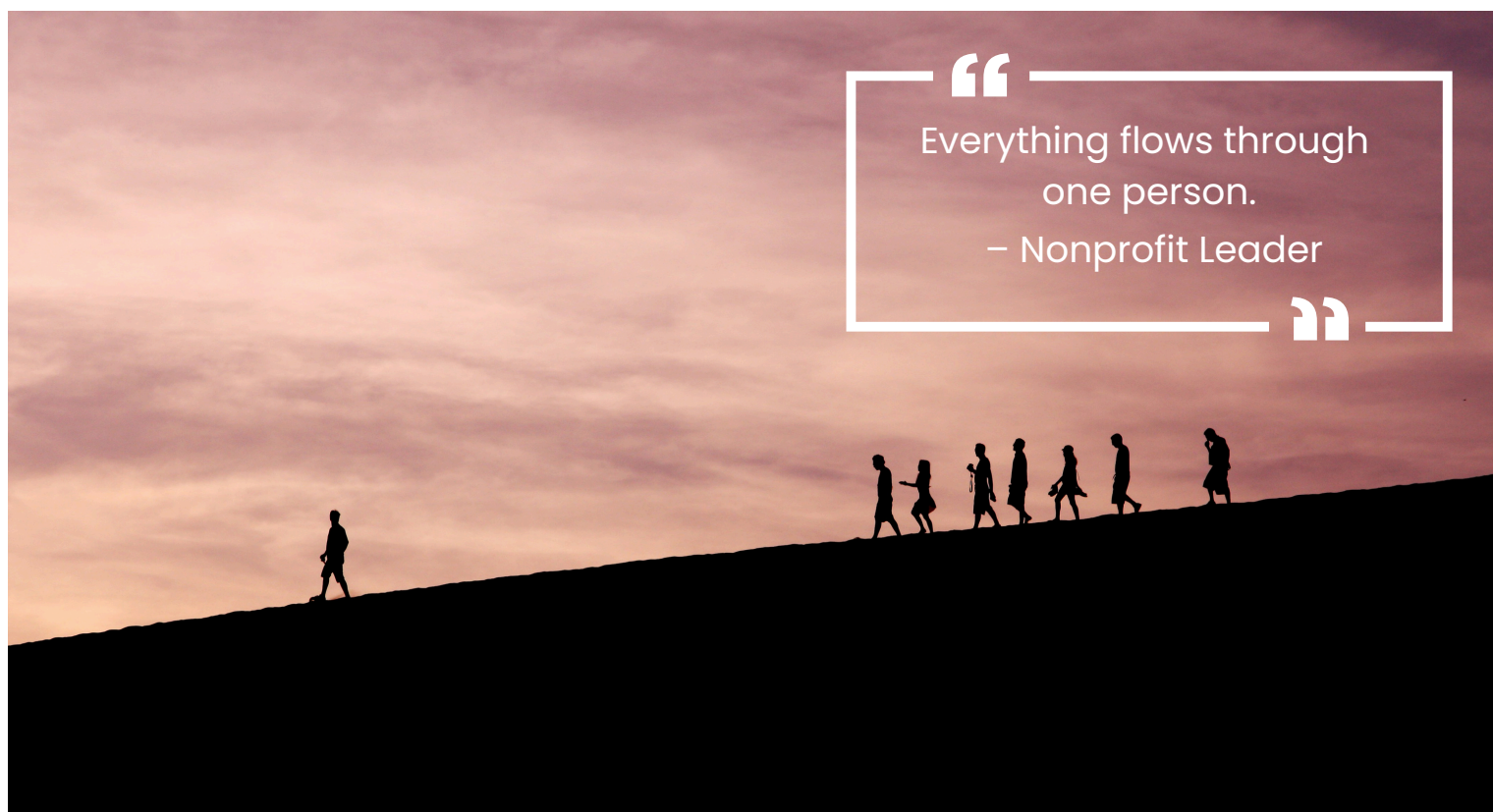
Figure 2: Distribution of Scores Across Core Capacities



In other words, nonprofits are not struggling with vision or commitment; they are constrained by the scaffolding required to sustain and scale impact.

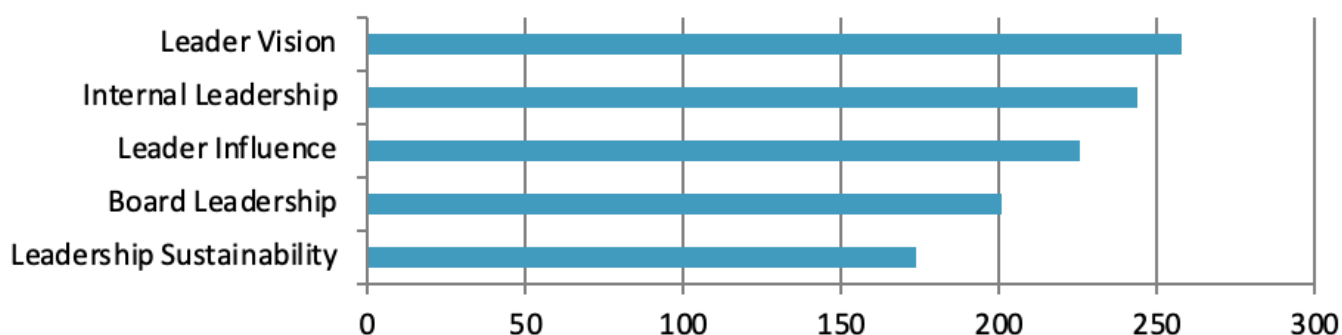
LEADERSHIP CAPACITY

Strong leaders, but challenged by succession planning



Leadership capacity is a visible strength in Southern Nevada's nonprofit ecosystem. Executive leaders are skilled, dedicated, and deeply connected to community issues. As shown in Figure 3, the highest scoring sub-capacity within Leadership is Leader Vision, followed closely by Leader Influence — demonstrating strong ability to inspire, motivate, and represent the organization publicly.

Figure 3. Leadership Sub-Capacity Scores



Where vulnerability emerges is in the sub-capacities of Leadership Sustainability and Board Leadership, which receive significantly lower scores relative to Vision and Influence. Leaders frequently carry primary responsibility for strategy, relationships, and fundraising.

LEADERSHIP CAPACITY

When boards lack strategic engagement or shared ownership, leadership becomes concentrated rather than distributed. This also reinforces the strain described above: the organization can sustain day-to-day operations, but struggles to create space for systems-building, succession planning, or leadership development. During focus groups, when asked what would make leadership more sustainable, one leader replied immediately: “A bench.”

Nonprofits describe a desire for more shared leadership, not just stronger executive leadership. While Leadership scores are solid relative to other domains, they are not high enough to compensate for weaknesses in Adaptive and Technical capacities. Strong leaders alone cannot overcome inadequate infrastructure. In essence:

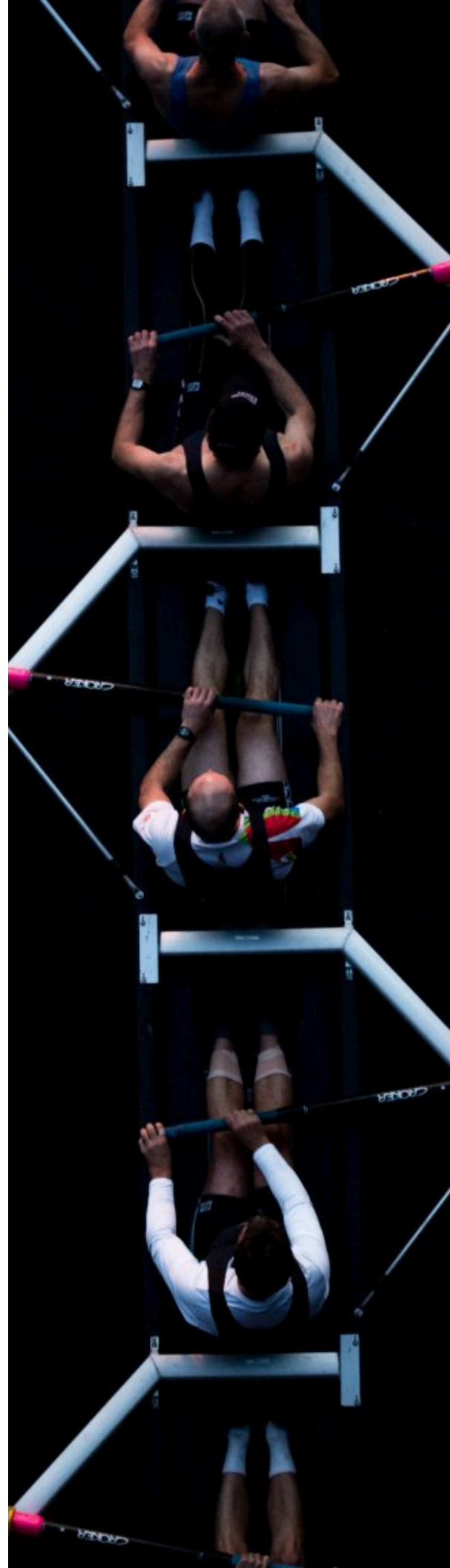


Leadership is strong because of strong people



Leadership resilience is limited because systems are thin

Leadership in Southern Nevada is driven by commitment and passion, but growth requires structured support, shared leadership, and governance that fuels strategy rather than only overseeing compliance.



MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

A strong operational foundation, held together by human effort



Management capacity is the backbone of the sector's performance, and the reason Southern Nevada's nonprofits have been able to remain reliable and effective even with shifting community need. In the CCAT results, Management scores are the highest across all four capacity domains (see Figure 1). The nonprofit leaders describe their organizations as “steady,” “disciplined,” and “able to deliver.”

This strength reflects years of building sound internal processes: budgeting, resource allocation, compliance, and program supervision. Because Management is the most consistent capacity across organizations, the violin/box plot in Figure 2 shows a tight distribution: nearly all nonprofits score within the same band. Unlike Leadership, Adaptive, or Technical capacities, which vary widely based on resources and maturity, Management is reliably strong, regardless of budget size, mission, or history. But that stability has come at a cost.

When we look inside the Management domain, the CCAT sub-capacities reveal a nuanced story. The highest scoring elements are Financial Oversight and Operational Planning, which demonstrates that organizations are strong stewards of their resources. However, across organizations, the lowest scoring sub-capacity is Program Staffing (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Management Capacity Scores



MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

Issues discussed in the focus groups included: overextended staff with limited budgets, forcing many staff to juggle multiple responsibilities, resulting in staff turnover and burnout and reduced organizational efficiency; recruitment barriers, with organizations struggling to find candidates with cross-cutting skills (e.g., a combination of fundraising, marketing, and outreach experience) leading them to either divide responsibilities inefficiently or rely on under-qualified staff; and barriers to retention, including lower pay and a lack of clear leadership pipelines for younger and mid-level staff.

It appears that the organizations aren't being held up by sufficient staffing or infrastructure, but by overextensions of existing people. Organizations are not "operationally lean", they are over capacity and compensating. Many leaders shared that they personally buffer gaps across fundraising, HR, technology troubleshooting, program oversight, and partnership management. One leader expressed their frustration, saying: "We have the systems. We don't have the hands." Another shared that the time they spent "keeping things running" limits the ability to reflect, improve, or grow and as such, "we execute. We don't get to optimize."

The Management capacity story, when considered with the other core capacities, appears strong.



Southern Nevada nonprofits know how to manage effectively



Management strength masks deeper structural fragility

Without staffing relief and technical infrastructure, Management capacity will continue to function like a ceiling, not a foundation. In other words, the sector can and does operate but is not poised as a community to scale up.

TECHNICAL CAPACITY

The critical bottleneck preventing growth



Technical capacity, which includes fundraising, marketing and outreach, evaluation and learning, and technology infrastructure, is the sector's most significant constraint. Independent of organization size, budget, sector, or years of operation, the Southern Nevada nonprofits consistently score technical capacity as the lowest on the CCAT (see Figure 1). Many nonprofits described having strong programs and strong management systems but lack the skills and tools to maximize their impact (Figure 5).

While Management capacity is high and tightly clustered, Technical capacity shows the widest variation of all domains (Figure 2). Some organizations have developed CRM platforms, consistent messaging, and data systems; others are still using spreadsheets or paper records. This variation means some nonprofits can fundraise and scale, while others remain invisible.

Further, most Southern Nevada organizations rely heavily on a small number of funding sources and struggle to diversify their revenue streams, which limits their potential for expanding services.

“

We can't raise more money
because people don't know
we exist.

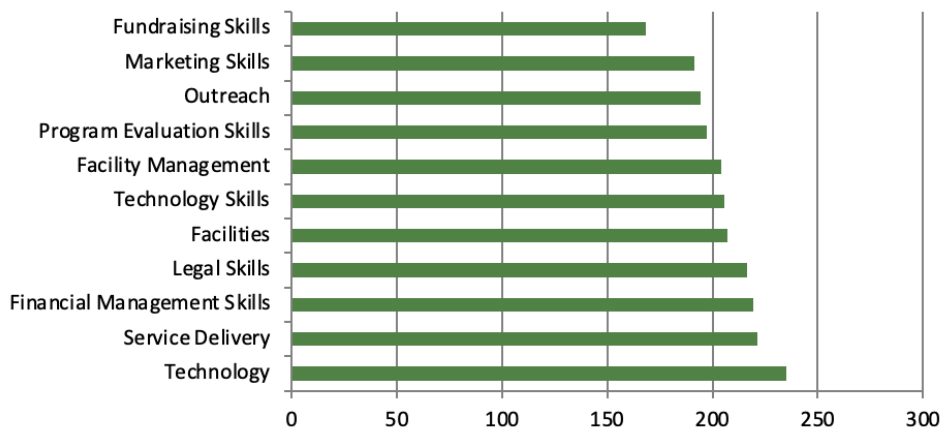
– Nonprofit Leader

”

This situation is further exacerbated by the fact that their marketing and outreach capacity is also limited, with many organizations suffering from outdated websites, minimal social media presence, and limited ability to tell their stories compellingly. This restricts their ability to reach new audiences, engage supporters, and build the visibility that effective fundraising requires. Meanwhile, underdeveloped capacities to conduct and exercise evaluations limit nonprofits' ability to demonstrate impact to funders and capacity builders and reduces their capacity for organizational learning.

TECHNICAL CAPACITY

Figure 5: Technical Capacity Scores



While the nonprofits have strong discipline around how work gets done, they lack the tools to amplify that work or grow revenue. In one of the focus groups, the leaders described this dynamic as a “trap” or a “loop” – that they “can’t market without money. [They] can’t get money without marketing.”

Evaluation capacity is also a particularly deep gap. Organizations collect data for compliance, not for learning or storytelling, because they lack the time or systems to analyze it. Several leaders expressed that they are “data rich and insight poor,” gathering large volumes of information they cannot use. “We have data. We don’t have bandwidth.” And while there is a view that they might have the technology they need to support their work:



There is not only an issue with understanding how best to use it



There is a time, staffing, and investment gap

Without dedicated capacity to upgrade systems, strengthen marketing and fundraising functions, and develop evaluation capabilities, organizations remain constrained by the limits of their existing infrastructure.



ADAPTIVE CAPACITY

Learning happens, but adaptation is accidental

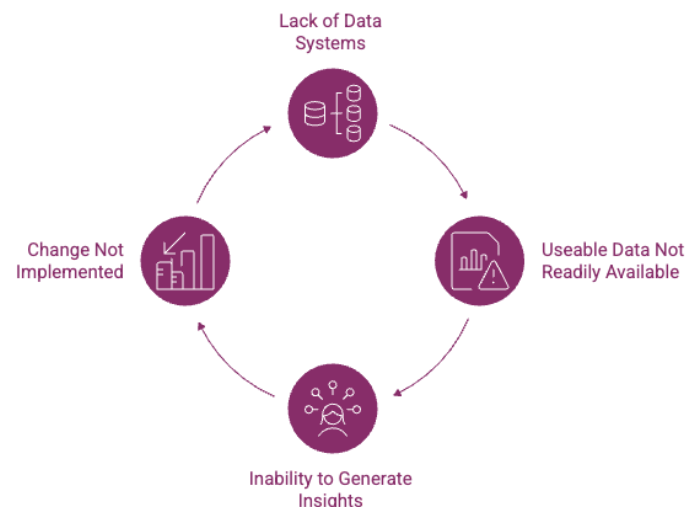


Adaptive capacity reflects an organization's ability to learn from experience, reflect on data, and make intentional decisions based on what they learn. In the CCAT results, Adaptive capacity sits below both Management and Leadership (see Figure 1) and shows wide variation between organizations (see Figure 2). This variation tells us that while some organizations have feedback systems and reflection processes, many do not.

Leaders consistently described being reactive rather than proactive. When adaptation occurs, it is triggered by crisis, funding constraints, or staff burnout, not by formal data-use structures. Staff and leaders in focus groups shared that they are constantly listening, sensing, and responding, but rarely able to pause, analyze, and plan. This has a huge impact on their ability to adapt their programs (Figure 6).

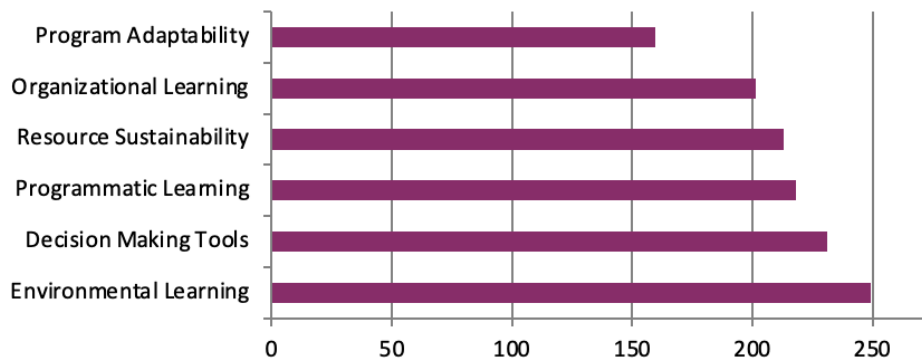
Adaptive capacity doesn't break down at the level of mindset; it breaks down at the level of time and structure. As one leader said in a focus group, “We don't have strategic planning retreats. We have strategic planning moments... in hallways.”

Another contributor to weak adaptive capacity is the lack of data systems and evaluation infrastructure described above. When data is not readily available in usable form, organizations cannot easily generate insights that lead to change. This is why Technical capacity and Adaptive capacity move together in the charts - where one is weak, the other follows.



ADAPTIVE CAPACITY

Figure 6: Adaptive Capacity Scores



Adaptive capacity also connects back to Leadership. When leadership authority and knowledge are concentrated in one person:



Adaptation becomes dependent on an individual's bandwidth



Over-relied-on executive leaders rarely have time to step back, reflect on data, or test new approaches

Many of the nonprofits in the region are at risk of this. Further, without the systems that create insight, organizations are challenged to build their adaptive muscles.

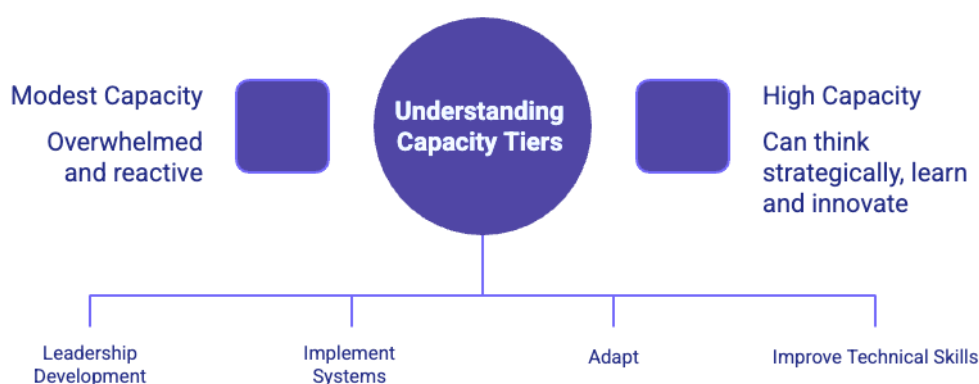


ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND LIFECYCLE

Dual Views of Strength and Need

Southern Nevada's nonprofit ecosystem is not made up of one type of organization, it is a spectrum. Organizations differ in two meaningful and complementary ways: their overall capacity and their lifecycle stage.

Capacity tiers describe an organization's internal readiness - its ability to sustain operations, adapt to change, and scale what works. Capacity is reflected in the strength of leadership, management systems, adaptability, and technical skills. When capacity is modest, organizations are often overwhelmed and reactive. When capacity is high, organizations can think strategically, invest in learning, and innovate.



At the same time, each organization occupies a place in a broader lifecycle stage:



Capacity and lifecycle are not the same thing, but they are deeply connected. Capacity determines how easily an organization can move through its lifecycle. Organizations with modest capacity tend to be early stage, focused on stabilizing what they have built, and on their core program identity, than scaling up. Organizations with moderate capacity tend to be building internal systems and unlocking scale. Organizations with high capacity are positioned for growth, influence, and innovation. So, there is some overlap. Capacity is what enables movement through the lifecycle. It is not overhead, it is the engine that makes the mission possible.

This distinction matters because different organizations require different types of support that needs to be "rightsized" for their current capacities. A one-size-fits-all capacity-building program will unintentionally advantage organizations that already have the most capacity, while leaving earlier-stage organizations behind. By understanding where nonprofits sit on both dimensions, capacity and lifecycle, we can target support that meets organizations where they are and accelerate, creating progress for the entire Southern Nevada nonprofit ecosystem.

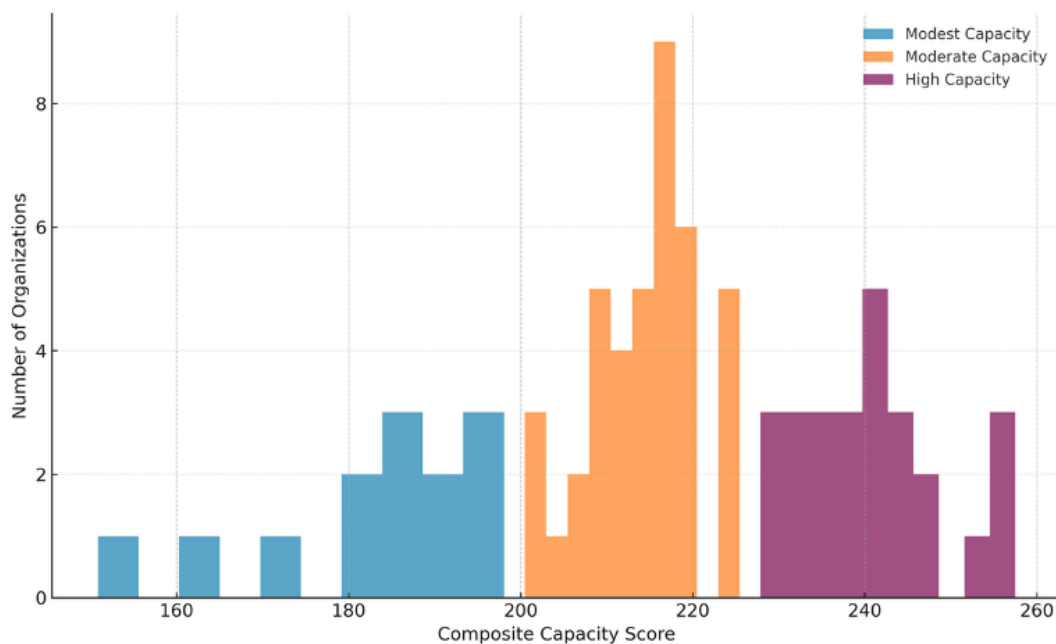
MODEST, MODERATE, AND HIGH-CAPACITY ORGANIZATIONS

Same mission. Different capacity. Predictable constraints



Organizations were grouped into three capacity tiers based on their CCAT composite score: the combined average of the four core domains (Leadership, Management, Adaptive, Technical). These tiers reflect measured organizational capacity, not age, budget size, or lifecycle stage. Figure 7 shows the number of nonprofits that fall within each capacity level organized by score, with the smallest percentage of organizations falling in the modest capacity range and highest number in the moderate range.

Figure 7: Counts of Organizations by Average Capacity Score



MODEST, MODERATE, AND HIGH-CAPACITY ORGANIZATIONS

Modest Capacity Tier

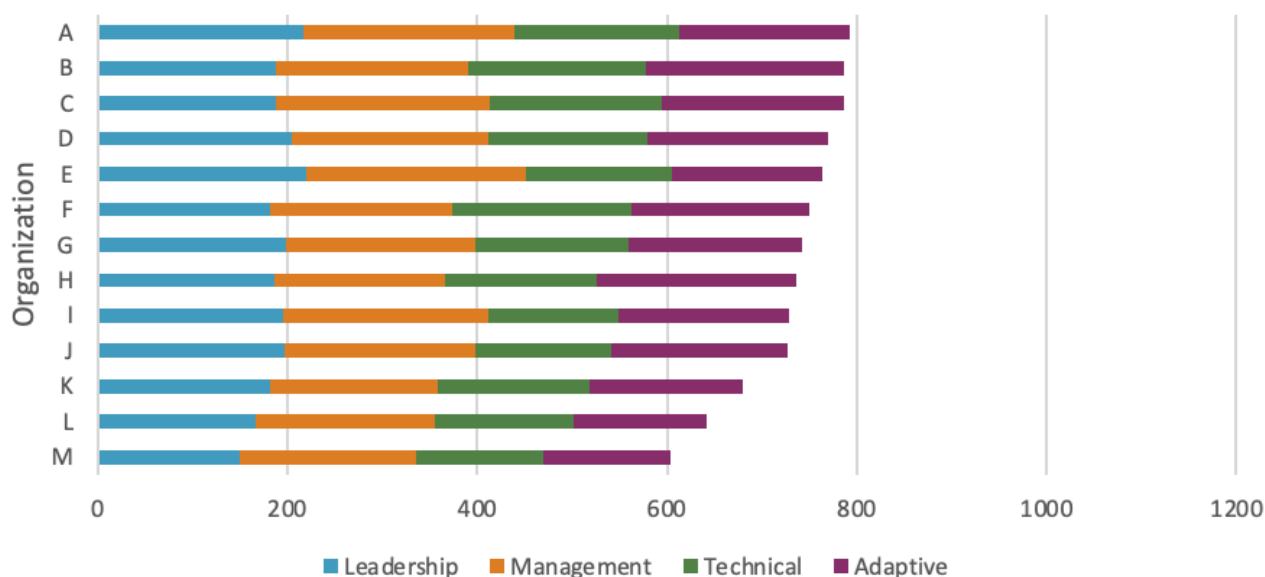
Thirteen organizations fall into the modest capacity tier, representing about 17 percent of all participating nonprofits. Many are newer organizations, but several have been operating for years without access to infrastructure-building support. In this tier, programming has grown faster than the internal capacity needed to support it.

We are building structure and programs at the same time.

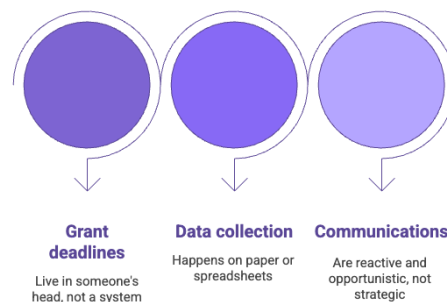
– Nonprofit Leader

Despite the lowest total capacity in Figure 7, the Management capacities' contribution is strong (Figure 8), showing that leaders have figured out how to keep programs running and maintain financial discipline even without systems.

Figure 8: Modest Tier Organizational Core Capacity Scores



Administrative functions in these organizations are largely personal and manual. Leaders often serve as the entire organizational infrastructure, acting as executive director, program manager, grant writer, data analyst, and IT support. As one leader stated, “Every dollar goes to services, which means I do everything else myself.”



Boards in these organizations tend to be passionate but informal. They want to help, but don't yet know how to support growth through governance or fundraising. These organizations know what they need, but capacity constraints trap them in a perpetual startup loop. In one focus group there was consensus around the statement, “we know where we need to go. We just don't have the runway.” These modest-tier organizations are not lacking in leadership, strategy, or vision. They are lacking time, staffing, systems, and technical capacity to support growth.

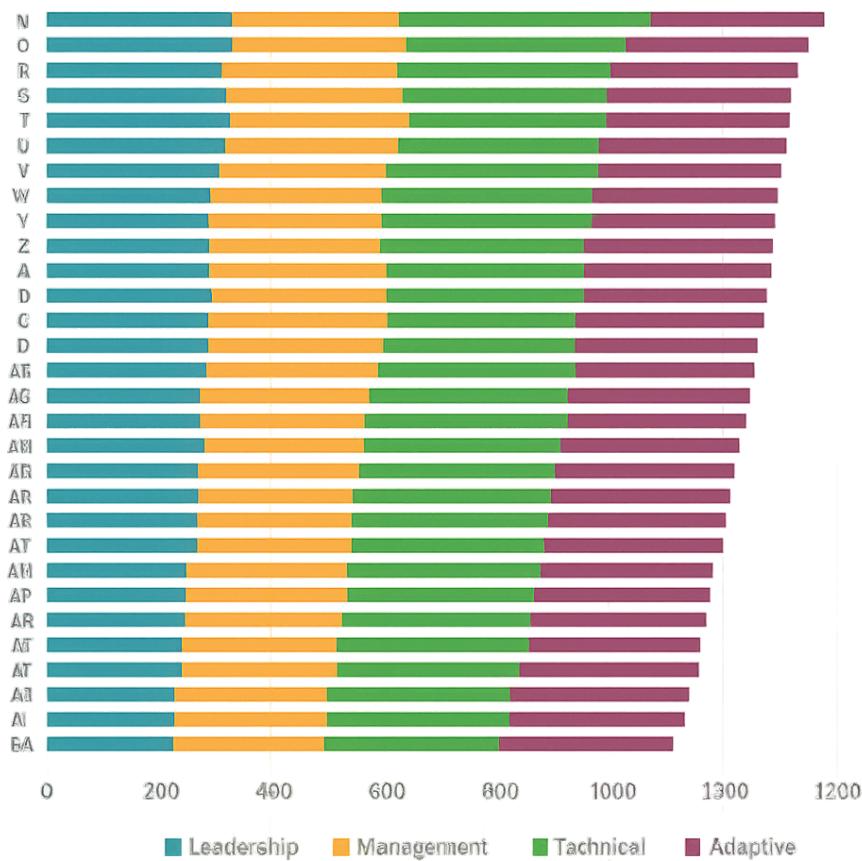
Moderate Capacity Tier

Forty organizations fall into the moderate capacity tier (51%). These are the nonprofits that have demonstrated success, built recurring programming, acquired stable funding, and developed reliable internal processes. They have evidence of demand and credibility with stakeholders.

Management and Leadership capacity segments increase for these organizations, but Technical and Adaptive capacity remain disproportionately low (Figure 9). The organization is no longer fragile, but it has outgrown the systems that helped it get here.

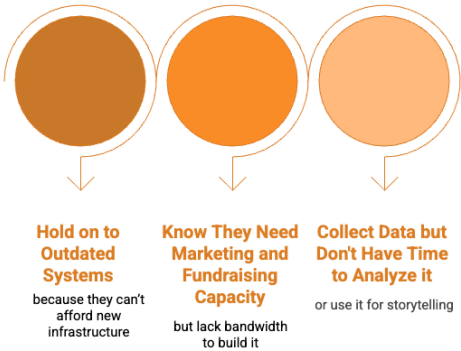
“We’ve proven our model. Now we’re stuck.”
– Nonprofit Leader

Figure 9: Moderate Tier Organizational Core Capacity Scores



Challenges in this tier do not come from not knowing what to do—leaders can articulate exactly which system upgrades or investments are needed to scale. However, they cannot execute those changes because they lack the flexible capacity to focus on them.

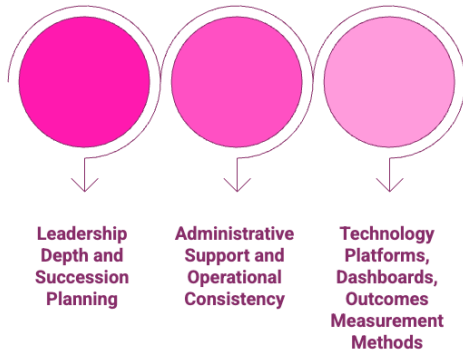
These organizations have reached the capacity ceiling, and scaling is impossible without investment in Technical and Adaptive capacity.



MODEST, MODERATE, AND HIGH-CAPACITY ORGANIZATIONS

High Capacity Tier

Twenty-six organizations fall into the high-capacity tier (33%), and while their total capacity score is higher, Technical and Adaptive capacity still contribute less than Leadership and Management (Figure 10). These organizations have:



We have the systems. What we don't have is space.

– Nonprofit Leader

They do not lack skills or systems. What they lack is slack, space to think, plan, and innovate. Because they are reliable, more requests flow to them: “Can you serve more clients?”, “Can you take on another collaboration?”, “Can you apply for this grant?”

These high-capacity organizations become the default ecosystem shock absorbers, absorbing demand because they are trusted and capable. But even here, leadership over-reliance persists. Executive directors still hold too many relationships and too much institutional knowledge, and boards often hesitate to invest in leadership pipelines or capacity for reflection. These organizations aren't stuck; they're saturated.

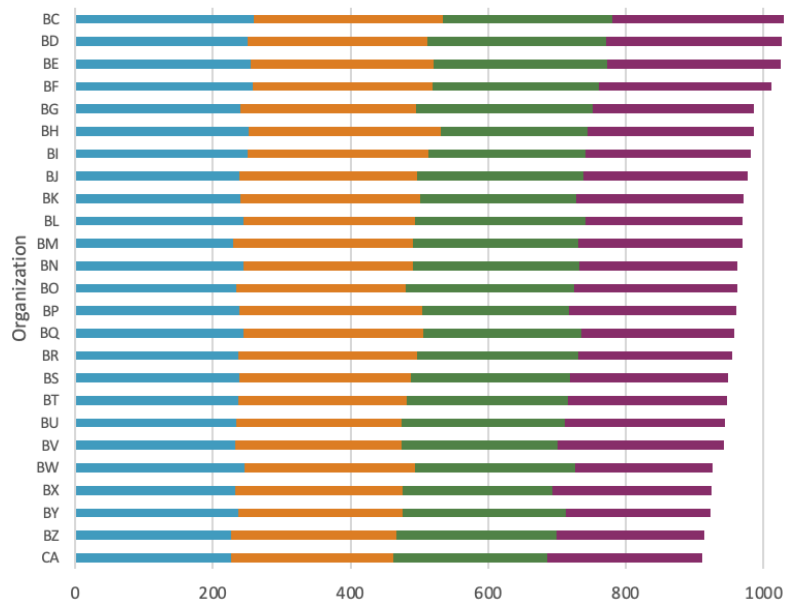
What Do They Have in Common?

Across all tiers:

- Leadership and Management are strengths; the sector can execute and sustain operations.
- Technical and Adaptive capacity are consistently low, limiting growth, learning, and innovation.

Capacity tiers differ in scale, but the root constraint is constant: Growth is determined by Technical and Adaptive capacity, not by how strong the programs are.

Figure 10: High Capacity Tier Organizational Core Capacity Scores



LIFECYCLE STAGE ANALYSIS

Based on their capacity pattern derived from the CCAT, the nonprofits were assigned to one of three lifecycle stages:



Core Program Development

Organizations lack some fundamentals related to programs and purpose.



Infrastructure Development

Organizations have reached a good threshold with their core programs and now need to develop more robust infrastructure to build the programming out in scale, efficiency, or effectiveness.

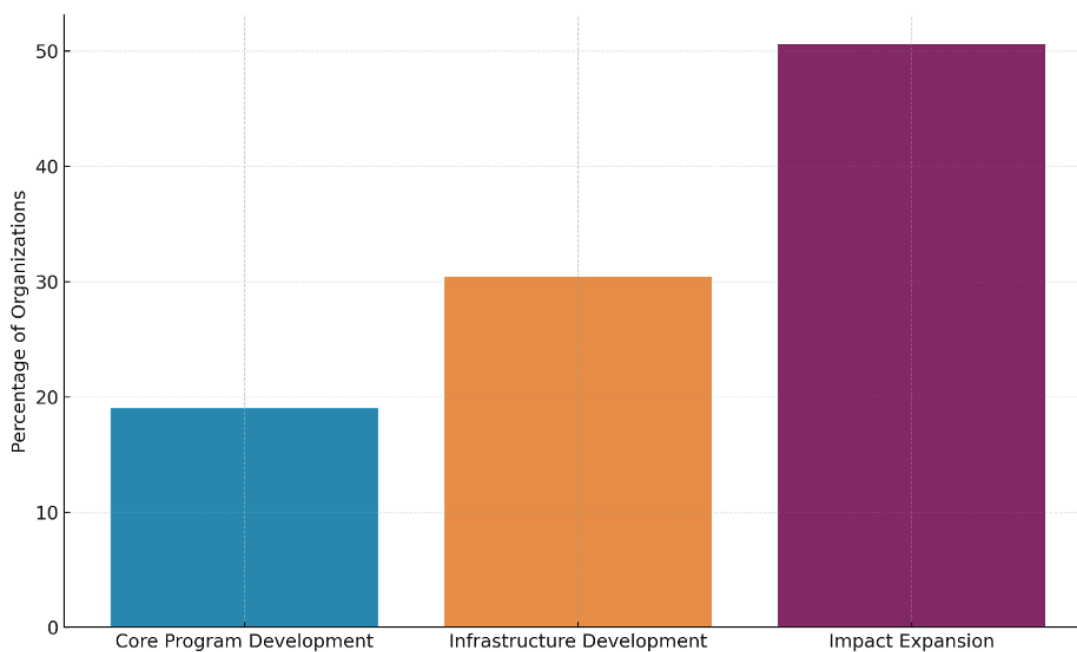


Impact Expansion

Organizations have appropriately balanced programs and infrastructure and should continue build out field-facing work.

Just over half of the Southern Nevada nonprofit organizations were classified as being in the Impact Expansion stage, while only around 19 percent of the organizations were in Core Program Development (Figure 11). This would suggest that about half of the organizations are currently right-sized for their current work. However, increased demand, the current adverse funding environment, and stressed leaders and staff mean that this is fragile and presents limited growth opportunity.

Figure 11: Percent of Organizations in Each Lifecycle



Core Program Development

Organizations in the Core Program Development stage exist because they see a gap in the community that needs filling. Their purpose is clear, urgent, and compelling, often grounded in lived experience or direct observation of unmet need. Leadership reflects that clarity: CCAT scores show emerging strengths here (Leadership average 193), indicating conviction and directional focus.

But the CCAT data and focus group discussions point to a critical nuance: They have program purpose, but they are still building program structure. These organizations score lowest across the four core capacities, especially in Technical (184) and Adaptive (191) capacity. They can run programs but lack the infrastructure to make those programs consistent or scalable. Systems for data, evaluation, fundraising, communications, and technology are either informal, improvised, or nonexistent. Workflows rely on personal relationships and heroic effort rather than documented processes. Leaders described this stage not as unclear, but as overloaded.

The CCAT lifecycle definition calls this stage the Development of Core Programs—“achieving a consistent level of desired results.” Organizations here are trying to move from “we can do it” to “we can do it consistently.” What is missing is the container around the work, the systems that hold programs up when the founder steps away.

Because these organizations understand their mission so deeply, they don't need more theory or planning. They need hands-on implementation support for essential infrastructure while the work continues, a simple donor management system, a program tracking process, and basic internal workflows for communications, fundraising, and monitoring results. Until those systems exist, growth is achieved through personal stamina rather than organizational strength.

“

We're overperforming
with under-capacity.

– Nonprofit Leader

”



Infrastructure Development

Organizations in the Infrastructure Development stage have moved beyond proving that their programs work. Core programs are stable, demand is growing, and the organization is no longer driven solely by a founder's hustle or personal network. CCAT scores reflect that shift: Management (224) and Leadership (215) show meaningful gains, signaling clearer systems, stronger coordination, and decision-making shared across more than one person. Leaders in this stage know where they are going and what needs to happen next.

Yet this is also the moment when the limits of infrastructure become visible. While Management and Leadership scores are solid, Adaptive (204) and Technical (198) capacity remain mid-range, evidence that systems, staffing depth, and technology are still catching up to the scale of the work.

Focus group conversations brought this pattern to life: organizations have a functioning program model, but growth exposes the fragility of internal systems. Staff juggle multiple roles, data is stored in multiple spreadsheets or platforms, and fundraising or communications efforts are still personality-driven rather than infrastructure-supported.

Leaders repeatedly described knowing what needs to be built but not having the bandwidth to build it.



This stage is not about deciding on a strategy; it's about operationalizing that strategy. Organizations are architecting the systems that will allow them to scale: documented processes, technology integrations, expanded fundraising, and staffing depth. The question shifts from "What program works?" to "How do we build the infrastructure to deliver it consistently, at a bigger scale, with fewer bottlenecks?" The programs are no longer fragile; the infrastructure is.

Impact Expansion

Organizations in the Impact Expansion stage have reached a point where programs and infrastructure are balanced and mutually reinforcing. Their program model is proven, demand is steady, and systems are built enough to support growth without relying on heroic individual effort. CCAT scores reflect this equilibrium—the highest of all lifecycle groups—with Management (249) and Leadership (234) indicating strong operations and distributed decision-making, supported by steady gains in Adaptive (224) and Technical (217) capacity. These organizations are not building programs or structure; they are building reach.

In the focus groups, leaders at this stage described moving beyond internal fixes and turning outward toward partnership development, field-building, shared learning, and policy or systems change. They are asking ecosystem-scale questions, including: How do we influence others? Who should we align with? How do we build momentum beyond our walls? Their program delivery is stable enough that attention shifts toward visibility, influence, and collective problem-solving.

This outward focus is often constrained not by lack of strategy but by brand awareness, visibility, or sustained funding for field-facing work. They can show impact but need more sophisticated storytelling and external positioning to amplify it. One leader summed up the importance of collaboration in addressing this issue at this stage: “Partner with agencies doing similar work—share staffing.”

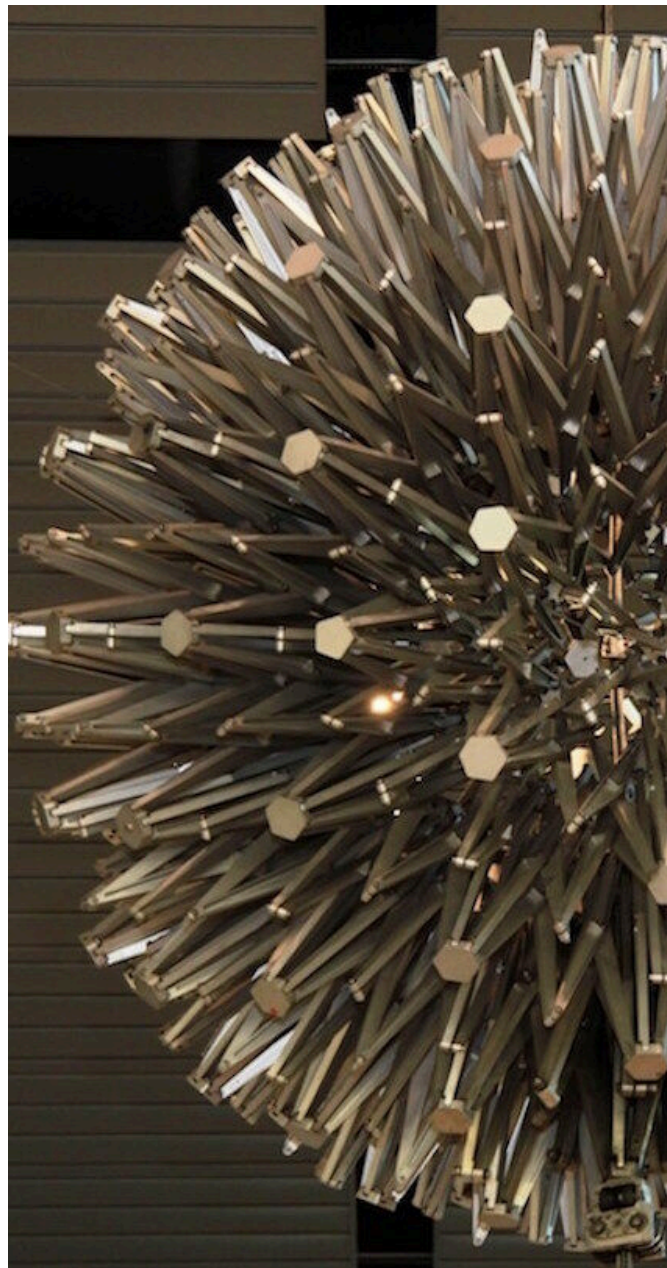
These organizations have capacity to contribute to sector-level solutions but expanding impact requires intentional investment in communications, partnerships, evaluation, and influence. Their challenge is not whether they can execute; it is whether others can see and join the impact. Programs are strong. Infrastructure is sound. The question now becomes: How do we maximize influence?

“

Giving our team ownership
has allowed us to grow.

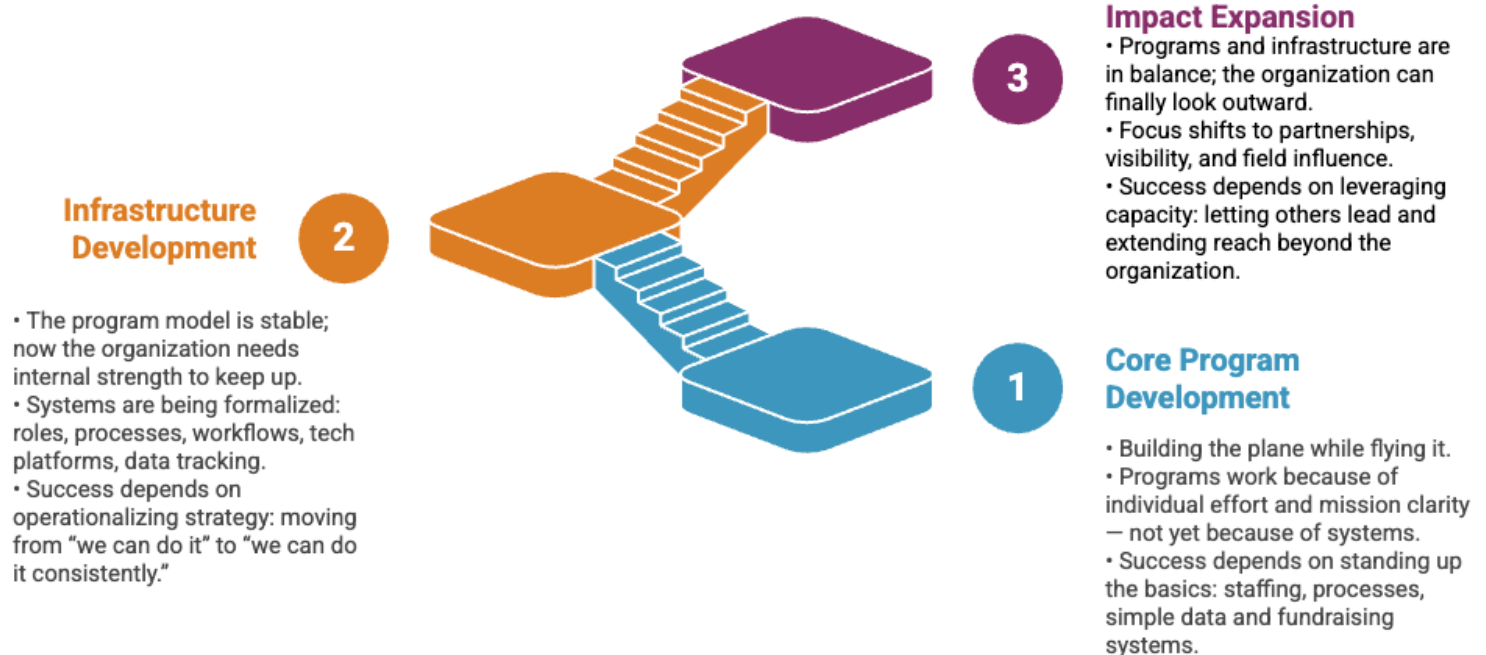
– Nonprofit Leader

”



LIFECYCLE STAGE ANALYSIS

How the Work Shifts Across the Three Lifecycle Stages



What Stays True in Every Stage



Leadership commitment is strong — passion and clarity of mission are consistent



Organizations are stretched thin — the constraint just moves (from systems → staffing → bandwidth).



Capacity, not vision, governs progress.

Put simply: none of these organizations stall for lack of mission; they stall because they lack the right kind of capacity for where they are in the journey. The right support looks different in every stage.

CHALLENGES & SURFACED SOLUTIONS

Despite strong management and leadership foundations, Southern Nevada nonprofits described challenges that are less about competence and more about capacity friction. These frictions reduce the ability of nonprofits to sustain momentum, scale their reach, and demonstrate impact.



Across the CCAT data, focus groups, and supplemental survey, challenges fell into five intertwined areas:

- Fundraising, Marketing, and Outreach
- Evaluation, Learning, and Technology
- Leadership Development and Succession Planning
- Board Engagement
- Infrastructure (People, Physical Space, Digital Systems)

We explore each of these challenges in greater depth below, including what's happening, how it feels inside organizations, and what nonprofits say they actually need.

Fundraising, Marketing, and Outreach

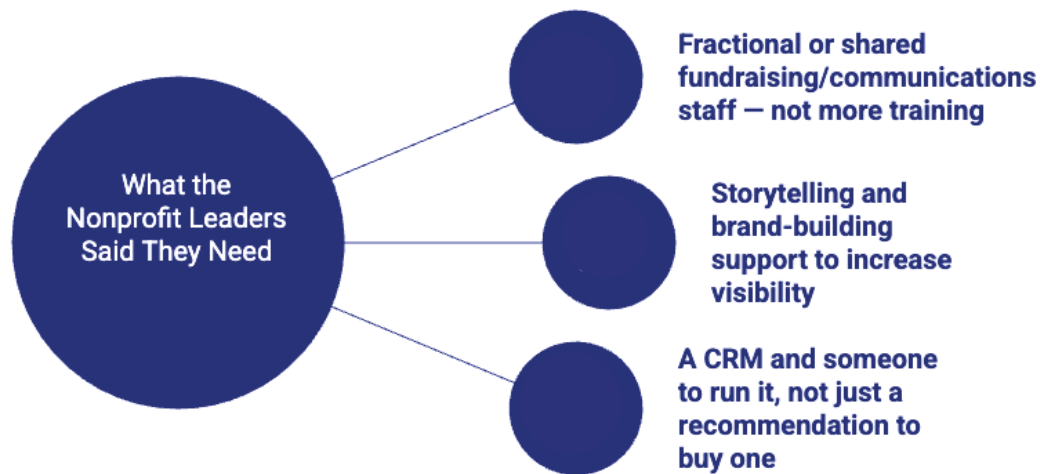
This was the most universal constraint, regardless of budget size, mission focus, or lifecycle stage. In every focus group, leaders described a cycle that traps otherwise strong organizations:



Even high-capacity organizations said their development work was fragile because it lived in the heads of one or two people. Growth organizations described feeling close to expansion but unable to get over the energy barrier required to bring in new funding streams. As one leader put it plainly: "We are drowning in success. The demand is there—we just can't build the capacity to meet it."

The CCAT shows Technical Capacity (which includes fundraising, marketing, and outreach) as the lowest-scoring domain region-wide. This aligns with what leaders expressed: knowledge is not the barrier; capacity to execute is. When asked what would change this, leaders didn't ask for more fundraising workshops. A great quote from one of the focus groups was, "Stop giving us homework. Give us help."

CHALLENGES

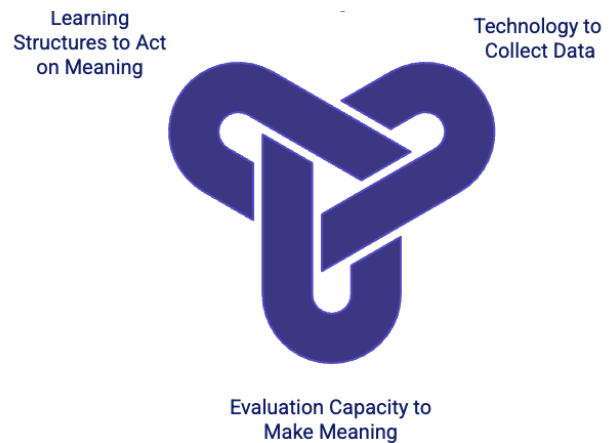


Fundraising capacity is not a content problem. It is a capacity + visibility + infrastructure problem.

Evaluation, Learning, and Technology

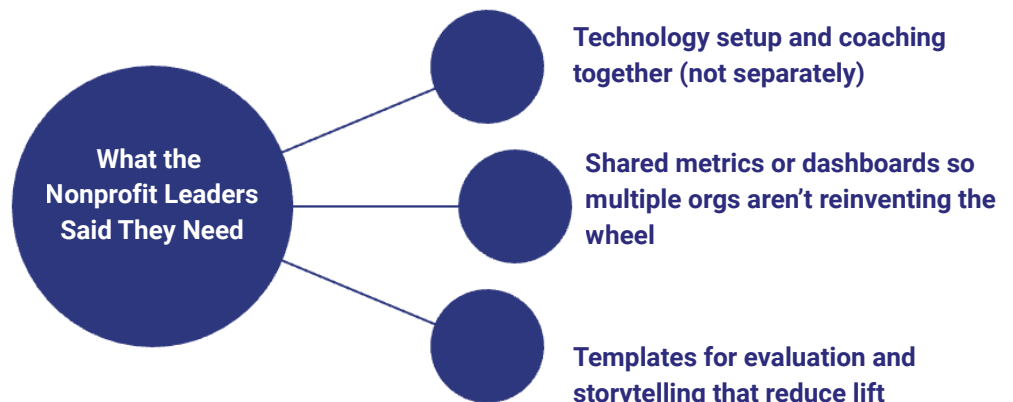
Evaluation, learning, and technology form a closed loop.

If any one of the three is missing, none of them function well. As shared previously, one leader said, "we collect data. We don't have time to learn from it." Worse, for many organizations, evaluation is shaped by reporting requirements rather than learning needs. One leader shared the consensus view of the focus group, "evaluation feels like a funder task, not an improvement task."



The CCAT confirms this: sub-capacity scores show organizations have some evaluation infrastructure, but low Program Adaptability; they simply don't have time to reflect and change course.

Several leaders also asked for tools to reduce burden, with one remarking, "Give us one dashboard we can all use."



This isn't a training gap. It's a systems and staffing capacity gap.

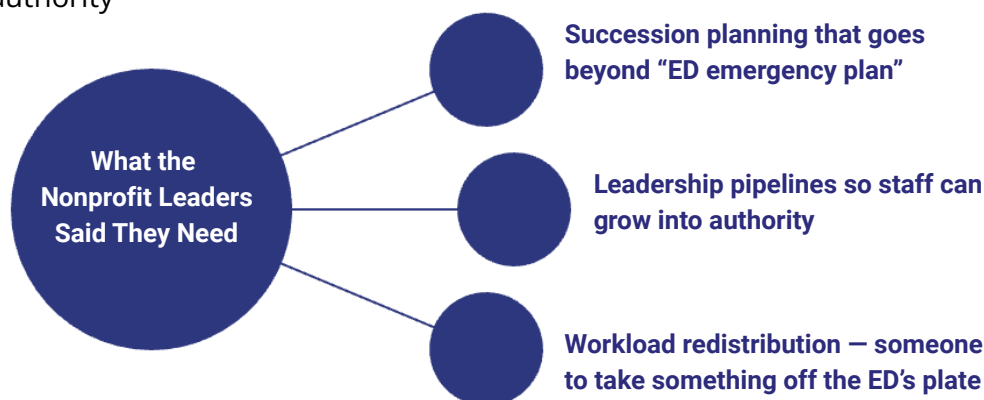
Leadership Development & Succession Planning

As mentioned previously, leadership scores are high on the CCAT, but they mask a structural fragility: Most organizations are still overdependent on a single leader.

In the focus groups, leaders described holding:

- Fundraising relationships
- Community partnerships
- Institutional memory
- Board management
- Internal decision authority

When asked what would happen if the ED left, one participant answered, “there is no succession plan. We’d just... stop.” Leadership development here is not about training leaders to lead better. It is about creating enough organizational capacity so leadership can be shared.



The organizations were not asking for coaching. They were asking for relief.

Board Engagement

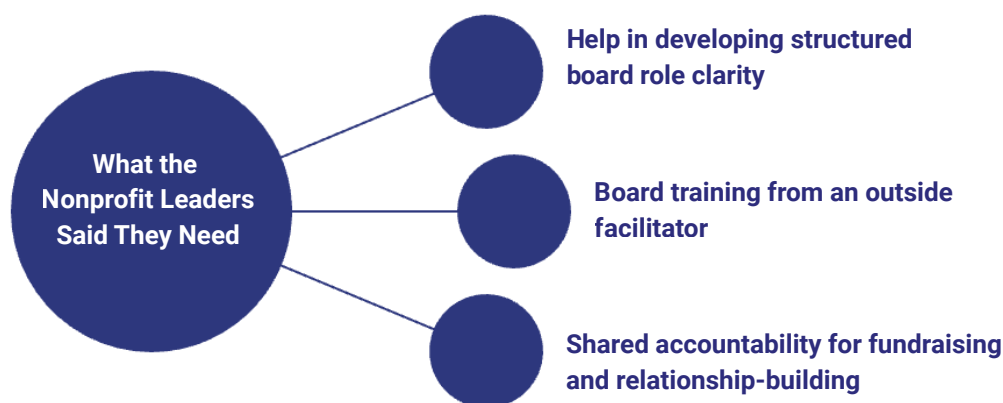
In the focus groups, organizations repeatedly described their boards as being:



Disengaged
Inconsistent
Reluctant to fundraise
Unsure of their role

The boards in Southern Nevada skew toward fiduciary oversight and away from strategic partnership. Further, one-third of the organizations’ board leadership scores were below 190 (rated as “needs strengthening”). One leader exemplified this challenge, stating that their board members, “want to be supportive. They just aren’t sure how.”

CHALLENGES & SURFACED SOLUTIONS



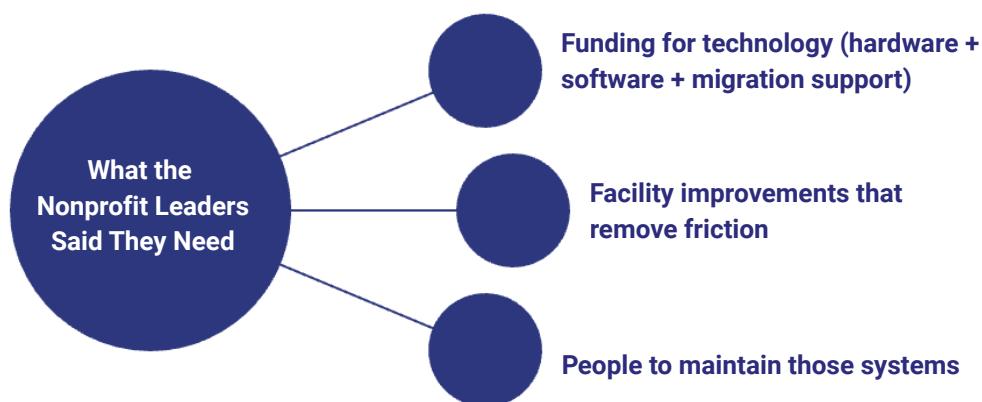
Board strengthening is not optional. It determines whether the organization can enter its next stage of growth.

Infrastructure (the Hidden Capacity Constraint)

"We lose time every day because our systems slow us down."

Infrastructure limitations were often invisible from the outside but deeply consequential inside the organization: outdated laptops that crash during presentations, little to no IT support, and physical space constraining growth.

There were two observations about how the nonprofits' infrastructure impacted their work. The first, "we lose time every day because our systems slow us down," spoke to the challenges in doing day-to-day operational work. The second, "you can't innovate when you're fighting with your tools," spoke to how key infrastructure prevented them from being able to improve their organizations and the programs they implement. These issues reflect an important insight: infrastructure problems masquerade as performance problems.



As the nonprofits noted, infrastructure is not glamorous, but without it, nothing else sticks.

PATH FORWARD —CAPACITY AS THE ENABLER OF IMPACT

Southern Nevada's nonprofits are not constrained by vision or commitment. Leaders consistently described that what limits their ability to deepen impact is not strategy or passion, but the absence of time, staffing, infrastructure, and technical capacity to sustain and scale what works. When funders invest in capacity, they accelerate impact; when they fund programs without capacity, they reinforce burnout and fragility.

To support organizations effectively, we need to distinguish what kind of capacity is needed and why. The data reveal three distinct types of needs:

1. **Universal needs** — experienced by every organization, regardless of maturity or strength
2. **Capacity tier needs** — driven by how strong or thin current capacity is
3. **Lifecycle stage needs** — driven by the type of work the organization is focused on

Southern Nevada's nonprofits are not constrained by vision or commitment. Leaders consistently described that what limits their ability to deepen impact is not strategy or passion, but the absence of time, staffing, infrastructure, and technical capacity to sustain and scale what works. When funders invest in capacity, they accelerate impact; when they fund programs without capacity, they reinforce burnout and fragility.

These three views are designed to work together. One explains the *floor*, another explains the *ceiling*, and the third explains the *path*.

Universal Needs Across All Organizations

No matter their size, age, or CCAT score, nonprofits experience the same structural pressures. Leaders repeatedly described the emotional weight of balancing day-to-day delivery with the strategic thinking required for growth.

Across all data sources, four universal needs emerged:

Time to focus on the important, not only the urgent. Leaders described constant reactivity, more demand, more complexity, and more interruptions.

Resource development that is stable, not episodic. Fundraising consumes significant executive bandwidth, yet remains unpredictable.



PATH FORWARD —CAPACITY AS THE ENABLER OF IMPACT

Boards that are active partners, not passive observers. Nearly 80 percent of the organizations did not score “strong” in Board Leadership on the CCAT. Boards often care deeply, but do not yet function as strategic assets.

Support to turn learning into improvement. Many organizations collect data, but few have the time or systems to analyze it and make decisions from it.

These universal needs reflect the constant headwind that nonprofits face: a sector built on constrained infrastructure and unlimited expectation.

Needs Unique to Capacity Tier

Capacity tier answers a different question than lifecycle stage. It tells us how much lift is required to help an organization progress. It is a measure of readiness.

Modest Capacity Tier

These organizations are operating with minimal infrastructure. Capacity is thin across multiple domains: leadership, management, adaptive learning, and technical systems. They are doing important work with improvised systems, often held together by personal commitment and stamina. These organizations don’t need theory or extensive planning. They need relief; someone to help them build systems while they continue to serve.

Moderate Capacity Tier

These organizations have pieces of capacity that are working, but inconsistently. Systems exist but depend on individuals rather than institutionalization. Moderate-tier organizations are often one or two structural changes away from much greater effectiveness. The challenge here is not vision but fragmentation — too many workarounds, not enough clarity.

High Capacity Tier

These organizations have a strong foundation of infrastructure, staffing, and processes. They are capable of growth, innovation, and partnership — but lack the time to pursue opportunity because they are still absorbing operational tasks.

They Need:

Modest Capacity Tier	Moderate Capacity Tier	High Capacity Tier
Hands-on support to stand up systems (e.g., donor tracking, financial workflows) Help reducing reliance on a single leader Tools that are simple, right-sized, and useable immediately	Streamlining (fewer tools, more integration) Clear roles and documented processes Delegation and distribution of leadership	Strategic elevation (visibility, partnerships, influence) Leadership bandwidth (protected time to pursue opportunities) Advanced analytics/evaluation to demonstrate outcomes and attract investment

Needs Unique to Lifecycle Stage

Lifecycle stage describes an organization’s developmental focus, not its strength. It explains what needs to be built next, not how strong the organization currently is.

Core Program Development

Organizations are actively defining how their programs work and building internal structure while delivering services. At this stage, everything moves through people instead of systems. Staff roles are fluid; communication is informal; data and fundraising systems are basic or nonexistent. These organizations don’t lack purpose, they lack scaffolding.

Infrastructure Development

Programs are working; now the organization sees that its internal infrastructure must catch up. The organization is no longer trying to prove its value; it is trying to manage its growth. Processes that once worked informally now produce friction. Leaders know what needs to change; they simply lack the time and depth to architect the next layer.

Impact Expansion

Programs and infrastructure are aligned; the organization is ready to influence beyond itself. Here, internal stability enables external ambition. Organizations shift from managing operations to shaping their ecosystem. The constraint becomes space to think, not structural readiness.

They Need:

Core Program Development	Infrastructure Development	Impact Expansion
<p>Fundamental systems (basic fundraising, staffing, data collection)</p> <p>Clear internal processes so work does not depend on individual memory</p> <p>Help converting tacit knowledge (“how we get things done”) into shared practice</p>	<p>Integration of systems (CRM, donor pipeline, program data)</p> <p>Documented workflows and reduced bottlenecks</p> <p>Leadership and staffing depth to distribute work</p>	<p>Communications and storytelling to amplify results</p> <p>Partnership development and field-facing engagement</p> <p>Strategic time to guide opportunity, not just respond to it</p>

What Southern Nevada nonprofits want in capacity-building support

The nonprofits don't need to be taught how to build capacity; they need someone to build it with them. Nonprofits in Southern Nevada were strikingly aligned on one point: capacity building should help them do the work, not teach them about the work. Across survey responses and focus groups, organizations strongly favored hands-on execution support over traditional workshops or trainings.

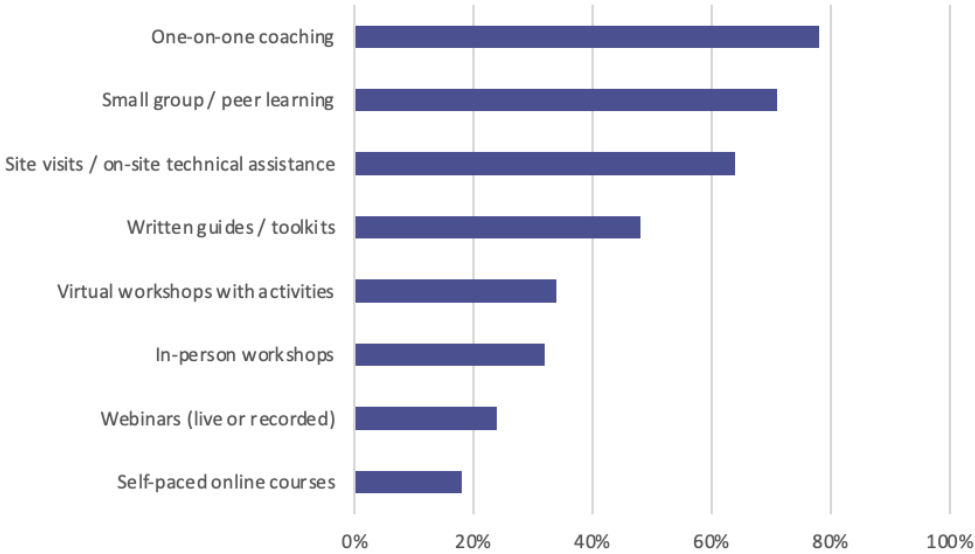
They do not want to attend another webinar—they want support that gives them time back, reduces burden, and results in tangible progress. They are looking for partners to help them execute capacity-building efforts.

With their organizations operating at or beyond capacity, many of the nonprofit leaders are seeing capacity building as just adding more work. They are looking for efforts that reduce workload, not increase it. As one leader pointed out in a focus group, “every time we do capacity building, there are more deliverables for us, none of which help us do the actual work.” Where many funders and capacity-building support organizations see these efforts as learning opportunities, the nonprofits framed them as a time trade-off, as even though capacity-building support might be free, there is still a cost in time not spent running programs, fundraising, or managing operations.

How organizations prefer to receive support

Across survey responses, CCAT results, and three focus groups, organizations described a shared experience: capacity isn't the absence of knowledge; it's the absence of time, structure, and hands. When offered multiple options for how capacity-building support could be delivered, nonprofits overwhelmingly prioritized coaching, hands-on technical assistance, and peer learning (Figure 12). Workshops and one-way instruction ranked far lower. Taken together, the data show that organizations do not want capacity building that adds work; they want capacity building that moves work forward.

Figure 12: Nonprofits' reported preferences for capacity-building support



This became especially clear in the focus groups, where leaders repeatedly said that the challenge is not knowing what to do, but finding the capacity to do it. Many described sitting through trainings or webinars, only to return to the office and not do anything with the information.

Nonprofits want support that produces tangible results, not just learning.

The survey revealed that top-ranked options all involved direct support (Figure 12).

- Coaching
- Hands-on technical assistance
- Peer learning

These formats share a common thread: they result in work getting done with the organization, not assigned to the organization.

Focus groups added depth to this preference. Leaders described an ideal model where capacity building includes short bursts of concept learning (10–20% of the time) followed immediately by guided implementation (80–90% of the time). Several described leaving trainings with worksheets or planning templates that “lived in a drawer” because they lacked the time or staff capacity to finish them. As one leader stated, “training is only useful if I leave having already applied it.”

They are not asking for less coaching—they are asking for coaching embedded in action. Specifically, they want support formats that:

- Produce usable deliverables during the session, not after it;
- Create protected time to make decisions or complete tasks;
- Bring the right staff into the process, not just the ED.

As one leader put it: “if I’m in a workshop, it means I’m not fundraising or solving a crisis. Something has to move forward while I’m gone.”

Capacity building must reflect the operational reality of small teams.

The survey data showed that organizations prefer coaching and direct support. The focus groups explained why: they don’t have staffing slack.

Most organizations in the dataset operate with extremely lean staffing models:

- The executive director is often responsible for both strategy and execution.
- Key operations (fundraising, HR, communications, data) are held by one person.
- A sick day, vacation, or board meeting can halt entire functions.

Capacity building that assumes leaders can take days away from operations is unrealistic.



When asked about delivery preferences, leaders said:

“We cannot attend multi-day retreats.”

“We don’t have the luxury of stepping away for long stretches.”

“Break it into small chunks so it’s not overwhelming.”

“Give us smaller, shorter commitments. Let us apply the learning and come back.”

– Nonprofit Leader

PATH FORWARD —CAPACITY AS THE ENABLER OF IMPACT

They want a model where the work happens in real time, inside their environment, and where support adapts to their bandwidth—not the other way around. Many described a preference for hybrid working-learning sessions:

Learn → Apply → Leave with something finished.

This isn’t resistance to learning; it’s a reflection of how constrained capacity really is.

Nonprofits want to learn alongside peers, not in isolation.

Peer learning was one of the top-ranked survey options, and focus group participants spoke passionately about its value. Leaders gained relief from hearing someone else articulate a challenge they thought was unique to them. Peer learning serves three purposes:

- **Practical problem-solving.** Organizations share templates, contractors, tools, and shortcuts.
- **Benchmarking.** Leaders can see whether their struggles are normal rather than signs of failure.
- **Emotional resilience.** Talking to peers reduces isolation and burnout.

One leader shared, “sometimes I just need to know we aren’t the only ones figuring it out as we go.”

Peer learning helps organizations feel capable and supported—something no report or webinar can offer.

Conclusion: Capacity building should create capacity—not consume it.

The data from Southern Nevada nonprofits point to a fundamental shift in how capacity building should be designed—capacity building should build capacity, not chores.

The strongest preference across all data sources is for a model that combines:

- Short, relevant bursts of learning
- Hands-on implementation support
- Connection to peers

This model honors the constraints nonprofits face and accelerates progress while learning occurs. What nonprofits are asking for is not “less accountability” but support that respects the reality of their work.

Old model	New model (requested)
Teach about best practices	Build best practices into their systems
Workshops → assignments	Working sessions → completed deliverables
Capacity building as content	Capacity building as progress

Or as one leader summarized, “Help us move the work forward while you’re with us.”

APPENDIX

Organizational Data

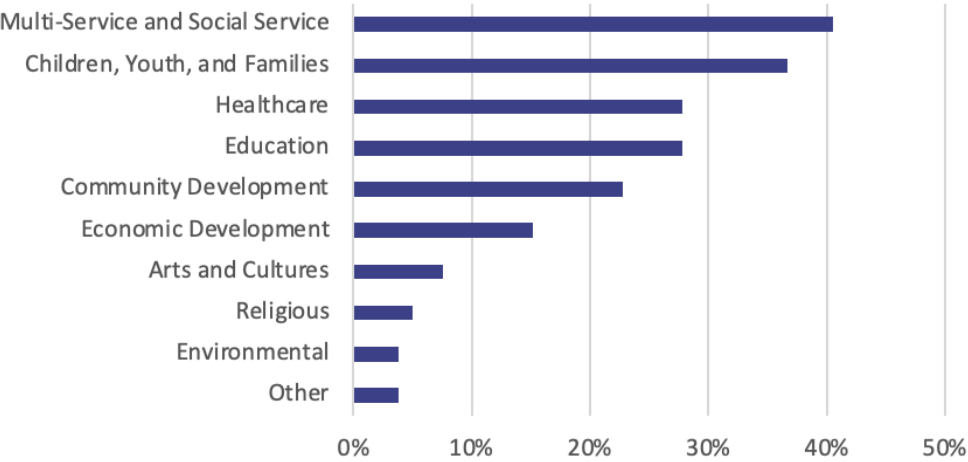
The following provides supplemental data and analyses that deepen understanding of the findings presented in this report. While the main sections summarize key trends and insights related to nonprofit capacity, leadership, and readiness for growth, the appendix offers the detailed evidence and supporting materials that informed those conclusions.

Included here are tables and figures summarizing the results of the Core Capacity Assessment Tool (CCAT®), as well as complementary data collected through the survey of participating Southern Nevada nonprofit organizations. These materials include descriptive statistics for each capacity domain and item, distributions of organizational budgets, leadership demographics, community and population characteristics, and additional analyses that highlight variations across the sector.

Sectors Served

Human services organizations make up the largest portion of TCC Group’s assessment (Figure 10), reflecting both Southern Nevada’s needs and the composition of the nonprofit sector. These organizations provide essential services like food access, housing support, and direct assistance to vulnerable populations. TCC also assessed significant numbers of education, health, and community development organizations. The most striking finding is how similar the capacity challenges are across sectors. Whether an organization focuses on health, education, housing, or community development, they face remarkably similar struggles with fundraising, marketing, and technology.

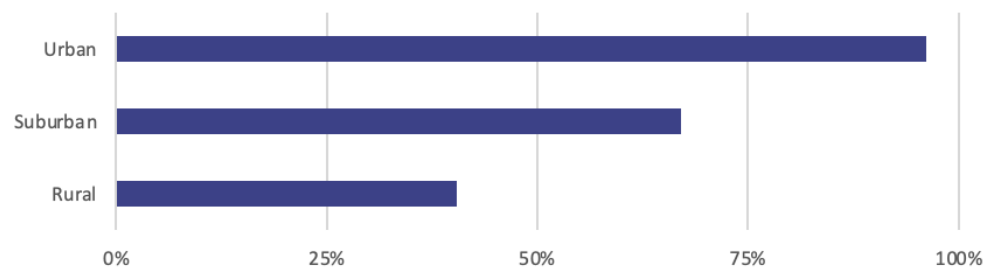
Figure 10: Service Sectors



Populations Served

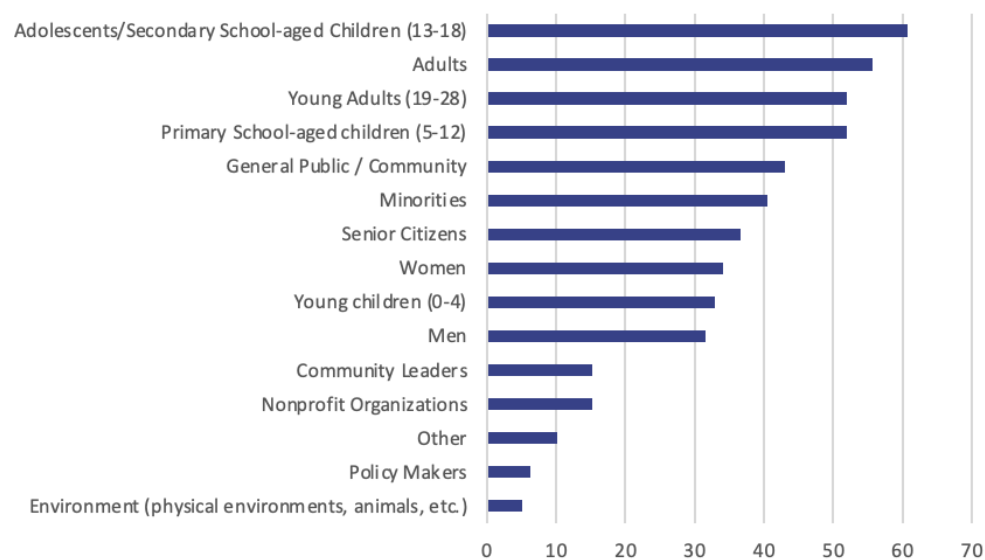
Nonprofit organizations in Southern Nevada serve vastly different population sizes—from highly targeted neighborhood initiatives serving dozens of people to statewide organizations reaching thousands annually. Most serve the urban Nevada population, but over a third also serve suburban and a sizeable percentage also provide services to rural parts of the state (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Geographies Served



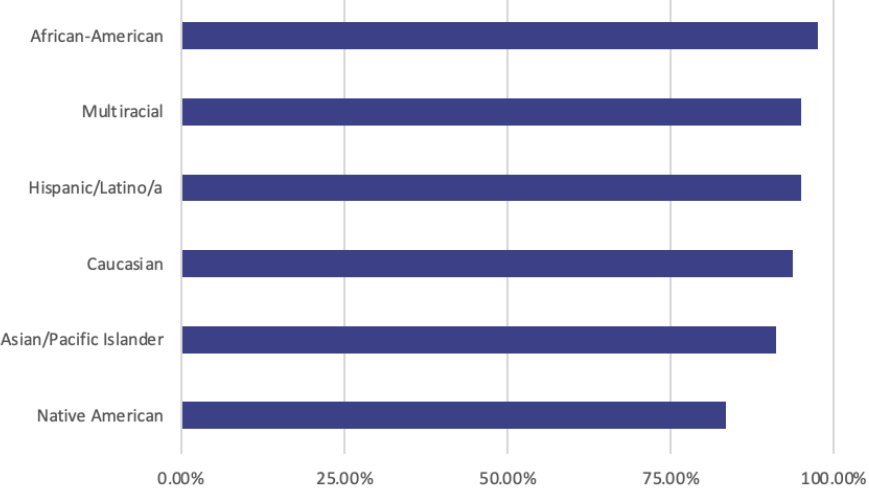
The organizations provide programming for multiple age, gender, and ethnicity segments of the population (Figure 12) - with most often focused on group are adolescents (ages 13 to 18). However, there are nonprofits that do focus less on direct services. Approximately 15% work with nonprofit organizations, another 15% engage community leaders, and a smaller number focus on policy makers and the environment.

Figure 12: Populations Served



The Southern Nevada nonprofits serve a broad spectrum of racial and ethnic groups (Figure 13).

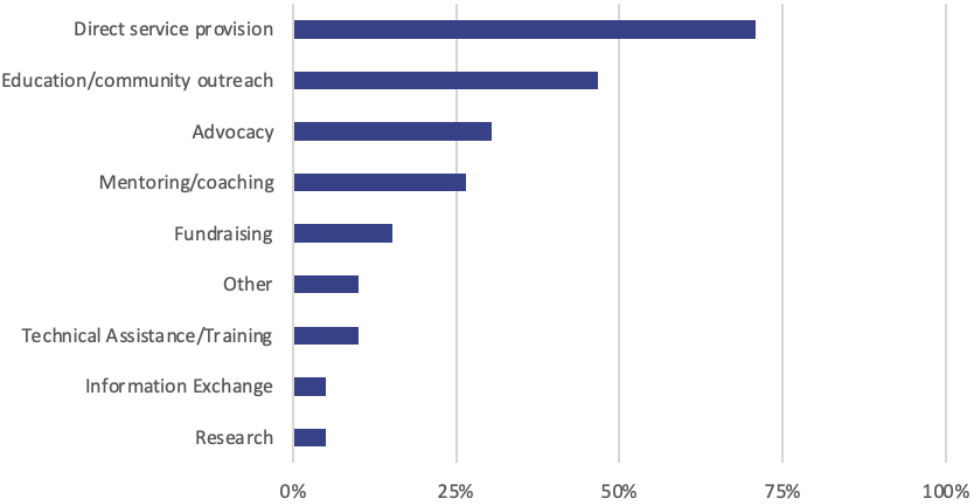
Figure 13: Racial and Ethnic Groups Served



Services Provided

Most of the nonprofits provide direct services to clients, but nearly half are involved in community outreach or education and nearly a third conduct advocacy work (Figure 14).

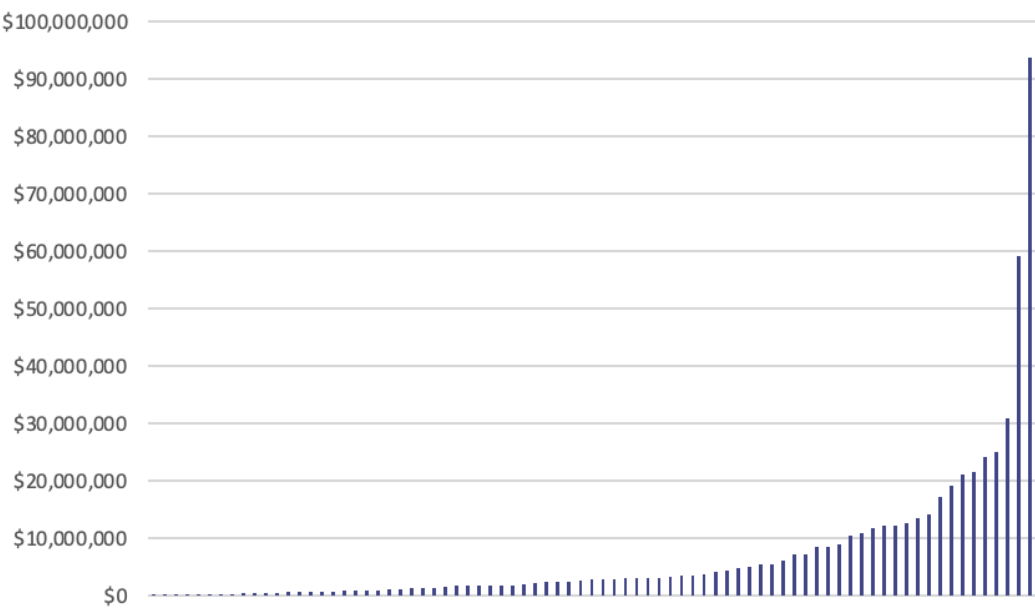
Figure 14: Programming Type



Organizational Size

The nonprofits reported a broad spectrum of organizational budgets for the past fiscal year (Figure 15), ranging from as low as \$2,000 up to \$93,796,000. The average budget was \$7,102,035, and the median was \$2,769,280.

Figure 15: Organizational budgets



APPENDIX

Table 1: Organizational Boards and Staffing

	Average Number	Median Number	Minimum	Maximum
Board members	3	3	0	12
Full time organizational leaders	3	2	0	31
Full time management staff	7	3	0	96
Full time program staff	21	9	0	296
Full time outreach staff	2	0	0	12
Full time administrative/clerical staff	3	1	0	35
Part time organizational leaders	1	1	0	12
Part time management staff	<1	<1	0	5
Part time program staff	14	1	0	635
Part time outreach staff	1	0	0	4
Part time administrative/clerical staff	<1	0	0	2

Staffing and board size were also rather variable—with some organizations operating without a budget or without full-time organizational leaders (Table 1).

Methods

Overview

To understand the current strengths, challenges, and opportunities within Southern Nevada's nonprofit sector, TCC Group employed a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative assessment through the Core Capacity Assessment Tool (CCAT®) with qualitative insights gathered through focus groups with nonprofit leaders. This combination enabled a robust and multi-dimensional understanding of the region's organizational capacity, leadership, and readiness for growth.

The Core Capacity Assessment Tool (CCAT®)

The CCAT®, developed by TCC Group, is a statistically validated online instrument that measures nonprofit organizational effectiveness across four core capacities - Leadership, Management, Adaptive, and technical—and the overarching influence of organizational culture.

Each participating organization invited at least three board members and three staff members to complete the confidential online survey. Participants responded to a series of Likert-scale items designed to capture perceptions of the organization's practices, systems, and capacities. Responses were averaged to generate organization-level capacity scores on a standardized scale of 1 to 300, interpreted as follows[1]:

- Exceptional Capacity (230–300) - The organization demonstrates strong, sustainable capacity in this domain.
- Satisfactory Capacity (190–229) - The organization shows functional capacity with identifiable areas for improvement.
- Inadequate Capacity (below 190) - The organization requires targeted investment or improvement in this domain.

A total of 79 Southern Nevada nonprofit organizations completed the CCAT, with more than 400 board and staff members participating. The resulting dataset was aggregated and analyzed to determine average scores across the region for each of the four capacities, providing a regional snapshot of organizational strength and need.

[1] The ranges presented are guidelines and not hard and fast markers. As such, some areas of focus of the report addressed scores that were in the satisfactory capacity range, but fell on the low side and/or were in combination with other scores demonstrating a pattern.

Focus Group Discussions

To complement and contextualize the CCAT data, TCC Group conducted three focus groups with a total of 26 nonprofit leaders from across Southern Nevada. Participants represented a cross-section of the region's nonprofit ecosystem—including organizations of varying sizes, missions, and maturity levels.

The focus groups explored several key areas:

- The lived experiences behind the CCAT results,
- Perceptions of current capacity challenges,
- The conditions that help or hinder adaptation and innovation, and
- Practical strategies and supports that could strengthen nonprofit effectiveness in the region.

Conversations were semi-structured and facilitated by experienced TCC consultants. Notes and recordings were reviewed to identify recurring themes, illustrative examples, and areas of alignment or divergence from the CCAT quantitative findings. These qualitative insights provided critical depth to the interpretation of the assessment data and informed the development of recommendations for funders and capacity builders.

Supplemental Survey

In addition to the CCAT, leaders at each of the nonprofits were asked to complete a supplemental survey, querying them as to their own perceived capacity-building needs, their preference around method of provision of support, and who in their organization they feel should be involved.




Data Integration and Analysis

Findings from the CCAT and focus groups were synthesized to identify patterns across the four capacity domains and to highlight sector-wide strengths and challenges. This integrated approach ensured that the report reflects both quantitative measures of organizational effectiveness and qualitative perspectives of nonprofit leaders, resulting in a nuanced understanding of the Southern Nevada nonprofit landscape. Information from the supplemental survey was used to both test organizational perceptions of need and to speak to preferred methods of technical assistance provision.



NEW YORK
333 7th Avenue
9th Floor
New York, NY 10001
212-949-0990

PHILADELPHIA
1500 JFK Boulevard
Two Penn Center
Suite 1910
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-568-0399

 www.tccgrp.com
 info@tccgrp.com
 212.949.0990

FOR MORE INSIGHTS AND RESOURCES FROM TCC GROUP, SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER