

Beyond the Grant: Challenges Facing Virginia's Nonprofit Sector and How We Respond

Cristine Nardi, Executive Director, Center for Nonprofit Excellence

Dan Layman, President & CEO, Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge



Session Goals

- An Introduction
- A Dialogue
- An Action

An Introduction

Virginia Nonprofit Sector Report

2023
TOWN HALL

CNE 
Center for Nonprofit Excellence

philip reese



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PATH FOUNDATION


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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Participants and Secondary Sources

11

stakeholder
interviews

5

capacity builder sessions

242

surveys

24

nonprofit
interviews



Secondary Sources

IRS

U.S.
Census
Bureau

University
of Virginia

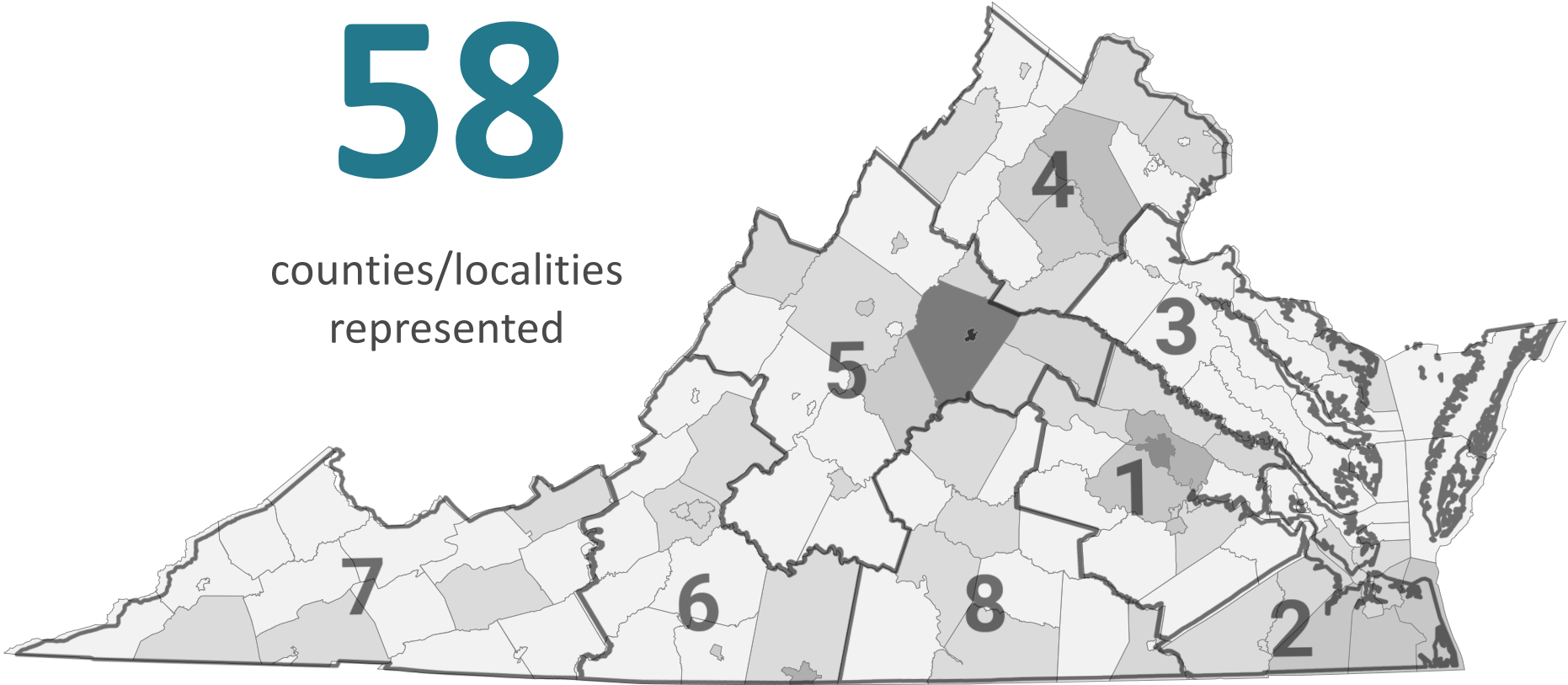
Frank Batten School
of Leadership and
Public Policy

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Respondents operate in all regions of the state

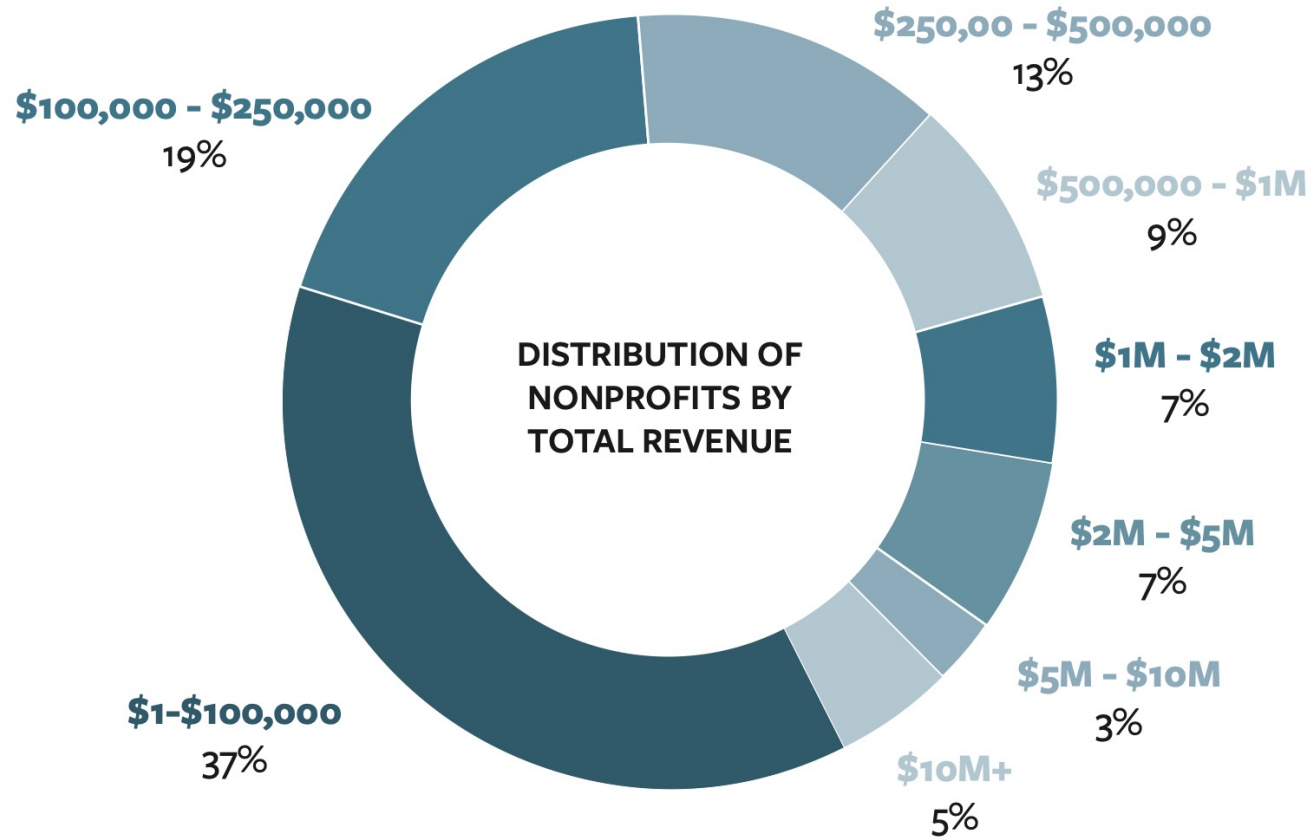
58

counties/localities
represented



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Respondents were well distributed across budget sizes



Capacity building is whatever is needed to bring a nonprofit to the next level of **operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational maturity**, so it may more effectively and efficiently advance its mission into the future.

-National Council of Nonprofits

Workforce Development

Securing and retaining skilled staff is a **major challenge** for the sector.

Nonprofits are competing with other parts of the economy, including remote work opportunities, the cost of living, and challenges with workforce development.

✓ **Action**

Work to build the sector's capability to **attract, train, and keep** committed people

➤ **Recommendation**

Encourage budgets that include **healthy, competitive salaries and benefits** to support people delivering the mission

Capacity Building

All nonprofits need accessible capacity building support, but the types can differ widely.

Most, regardless of region or budget, do not see their organizations as “strong” across key operational areas.

✓ Action

Facilitate access to and awareness about individualized capacity building resources

➤ Recommendation

Learn about the strengths and challenges of grantees, and seek budgets that reflect all necessary costs of doing business

Diversity. Equity. Inclusion.

Senior leadership tends to be white and female, while other positional leaders are more diverse.

There are opportunities develop and advance diverse leaders from finance, development, and program positions.

✓ **Action**

Challenge organizations to **examine leadership investments, selection, and succession** so they can more closely mirror their communities

➤ **Recommendation**

Meaningfully expand funding portfolios to include organizations led by and serving people and communities most impacted by systemic injustice

Collaboration & Convening

Most nonprofits seek opportunities to engage with new funders and each other.

Nonprofits seek enhanced or new funding relationships with foundations and government agencies, and **the opportunity to connect with and learn from each other.**

✓ Action

Expand opportunities for nonprofits, funders, and government to **connect and partner purposefully.**

➤ Recommendation

Learn about how the funder – nonprofit dynamic is affected by unconscious biases, **the capacity paradox**, and unequal access to relationships

Evaluation

A large majority of nonprofits expressed an **urgent need for evaluation support**.

Understanding that there is no one size fits all evaluation strategy, nonprofits need targeted investments to deepen their evaluation capacity.

✓ Action

Facilitate evaluation resources and support that **meet nonprofits where they are** to support continuous learning and growth

➤ Recommendation

Help nonprofits improve their services by **funding responsive program evaluation by people served** and program impact measurement.



A Dialogue

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Organizational Resiliency

Landscape

- Support for organizational infrastructure = support for roads, bridges & clean water
- # of “infrastructure organizations” have surged over the last decade
- Still local & regional gaps in service
- Funding sources can be inconsistent, which limits innovation

“... we all stand to gain when infrastructure organizations can strengthen the whole field.”

Organizational Resiliency

Leading Practices

- Designed in partnership w/ nonprofits
- Asset-based & responsive
- With acknowledgement of inequitable systems
- Checking our assumptions about the “right way” to do things
- To strengthen long-term sustainability

Resiliency Resources

Local

- Colleges, Chambers of Commerce, consultant & trainers

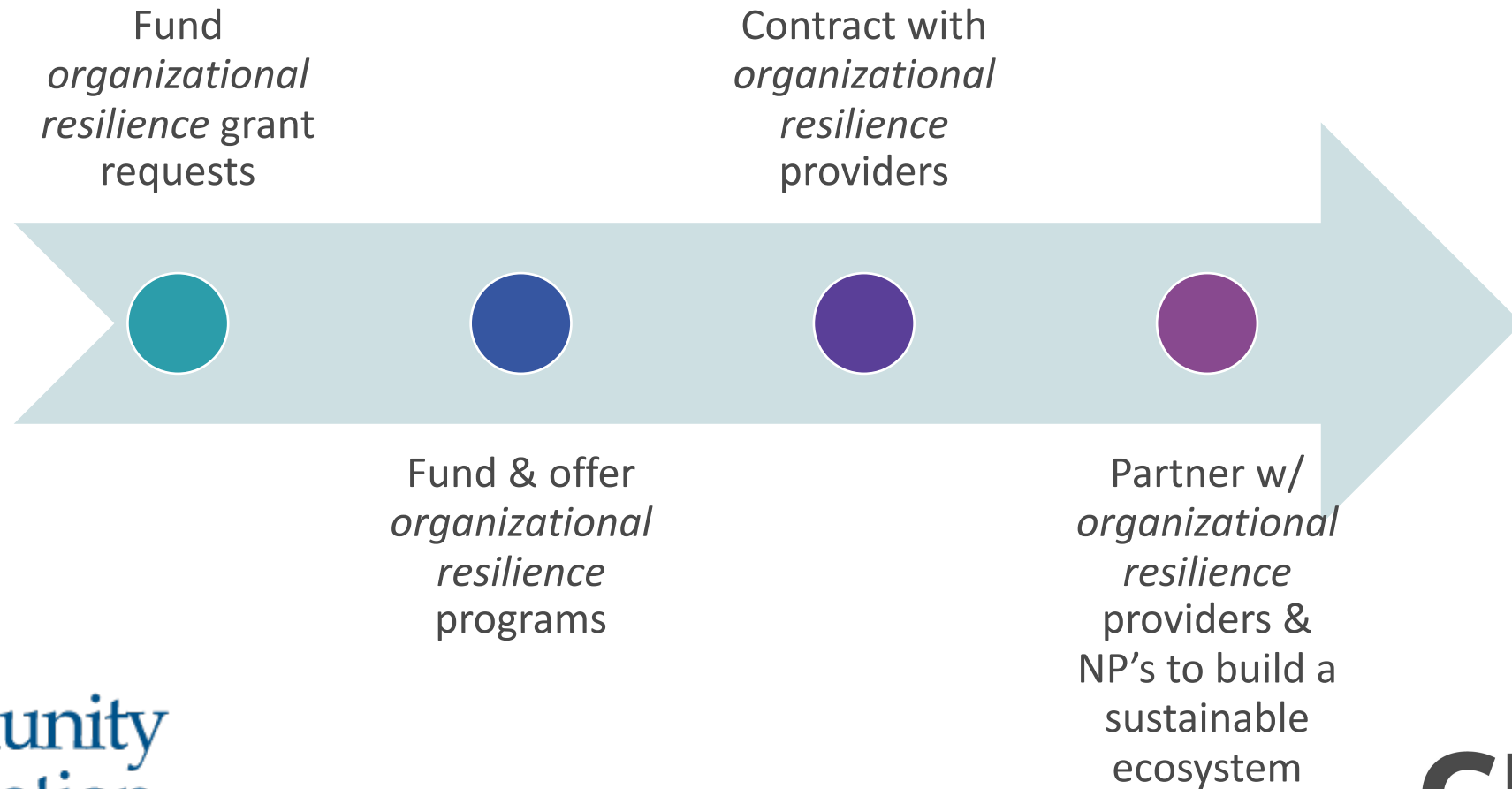
Statewide

- Regional providers who specialize in building sector networks & organizational resiliency

National

- National providers like Catch-a-Fire, Taproot Foundation, Tech Soup, Jumpstart (Bonterra)

Ways to Engage



Field Notes

- ❖ What capacity building | organizational resilience **lessons have we learned**, good and bad?
- ❖ How do we **make the case** to our boards for pulling programmatic grant dollars off the table **to invest in the capacity | resilience of our grantees**?
- ❖ How do you determine your **capacity building | organizational resilience budget**?
- ❖ Capacity building | organizational resilience **topics | issues for future discussion**?

An Action

What 1 new organizational resilience **idea or action** will you take away to try from today's session?

Thank You!

cnardi@thecne.org

dlayman@cfcbr.org

