

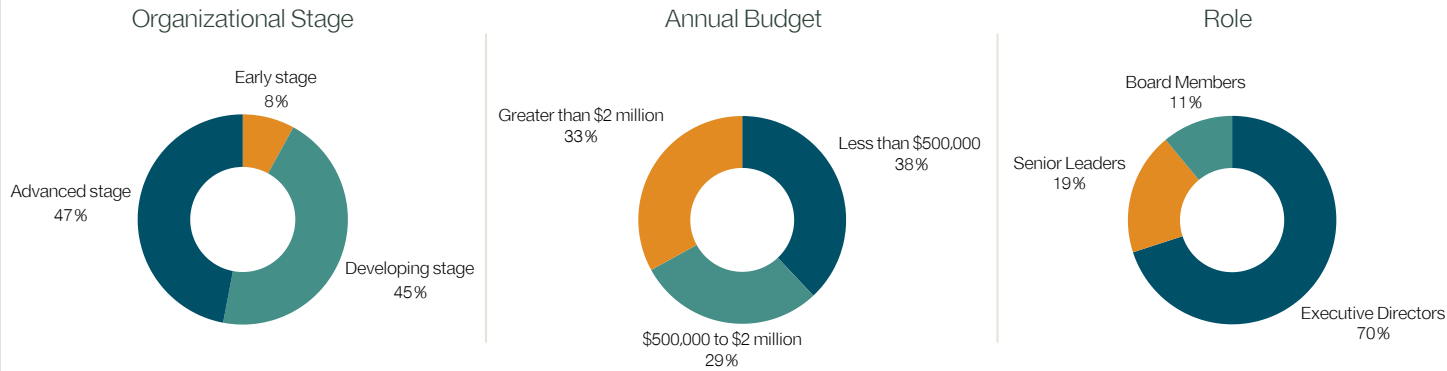
Nonprofit Capacity in Oregon

5 State Survey — Oregon Report



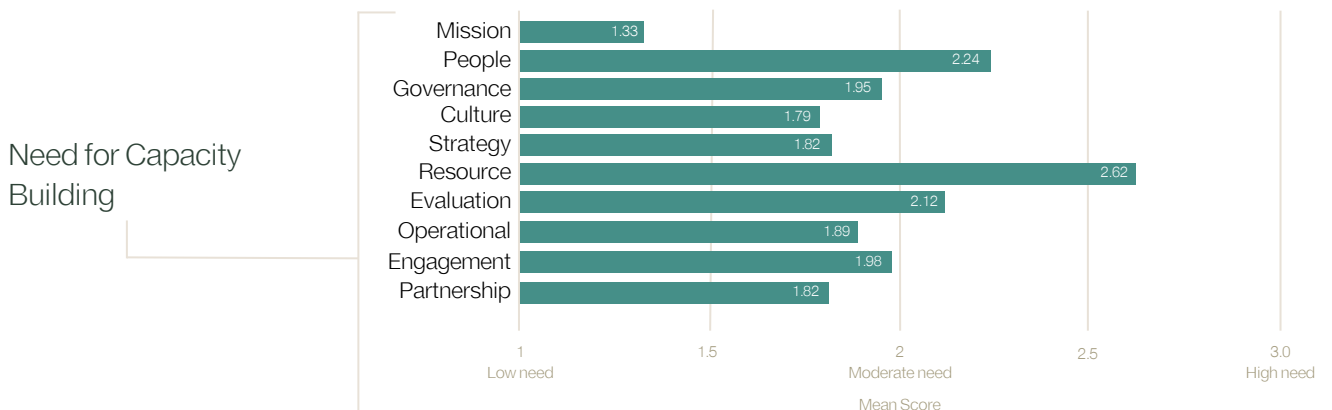
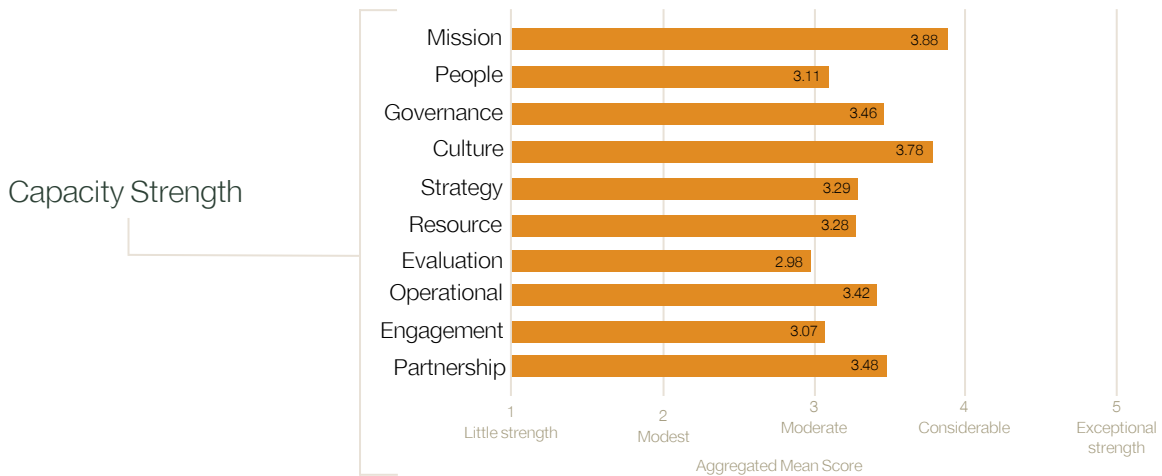
2024

The [Nonprofit Association of Oregon](#), along with four other states in the Northwest, administered a survey to measure perceptions in capacity and needs to the nonprofit sector during the Spring of 2024. The aim of the survey was to learn more about the capacity of nonprofits in the Northwest and tailor support interventions to meet the identified needs.



Summary of Survey Data

The survey reveals the relative strength of capacity in each domain using six indicators and the corresponding level of perceived need for capacity-building.



Deeper Dive into the Capacity Domains



Mission Capacity

Nonprofits in Oregon rate themselves highest in their identity, clarity of cause and purpose, and alignment of their priorities to their mission. They have the most room to grow in their ability to listen and respond to the historically marginalized in their communities as they shape their organizational strategies and goals.



People Capacity

Nonprofits in Oregon rate people capacity as the second to the lowest capacity. Finding and sustaining the level of people capacity to fulfill the mission's opportunities is challenging. Oregon nonprofits rate themselves highest in their ability to retain their most capable staff and volunteers over time. They are most vulnerable to having a leadership succession plan that prepares them for the future as well as having consistent and meaningful professional development strategies for staff and volunteers.



Governance Capacity

The leading items in this domain relate to the technical areas of governance, the board's practices of guarding financial and missional integrity, and having clear policies and practices on board issues like term limits, conflicts of interest, board orientation, and board conflict. The area for possible improvement is the ability of the governing body to provide strategic guidance to shape the organization's future.



Culture Capacity

The culture capacity of nonprofits in Oregon shows considerable strength. The highest-rated item concerns the internal culture of authenticity: when staff are comfortable expressing their thoughts and opinions, including their disagreement and dissent. The lagging item in this domain is staff and volunteers to thrive and to experience well-being.



Strategy Capacity

Oregon nonprofits report that they are strong in being disciplined and courageous to try new and emerging approaches to improve their strategy for impact. They also report strength in adapting their strategy to meet the shifting needs of the community, respond to challenges, and make the most of opportunities. However, the two needs of this capacity domain are crucial: 1) having effective monitoring in place to hold nonprofits accountable and communicate progress on strategy and 2) engaging a diverse group of people, both within and outside the organization, to inform the setting of strategy.

Deeper Dive into the Capacity Domains



Resource Capacity

Oregon nonprofits' strongest resource capacity areas are related to finance and financial practices. There are the most opportunities for improvement in fundraising. Nonprofits struggle to have sufficient and diverse funding to meet the mission's commitments.



Evaluation Capacity

Evaluation capacity is the lowest capacity measured in the survey. The only item in the domain of evaluation capacity that shows strength among the nonprofits in Oregon is the perception of organizations having a robust culture of learning and improvement. There is an opportunity for developing capacity in nonprofit skills, resources, methodologies, and personnel to effectively evaluate and communicate their impact.



Operational Capacity

Overall, nonprofits in Oregon show moderate to considerable strength in operations. The highest-rated items in this capacity are related to financial and administrative procedures. The lowest-rated items are about having the right level of resources to match the scale and scope of their commitments and their relative strength. The highest rating is for the item of timely financial reporting. Also showing strength of capacity is the knowledge and skills to manage finances and financial policies. In addition, clarity about administrative procedures is demonstrated as a strength for nonprofits.



Engagement Capacity

Nonprofits in Oregon are present and visible in their communities. They have inclusive policies and practices that involve diverse groups of people. Where they struggle the most is in mobilizing people to influence public policy.



Partnership Capacity

Nonprofits in Oregon report considerable strength in partnership capacity. The highest-rated item involves partnering and collaborating strategically with other organizations. The lowest-rated items in this category are (a) the ability to work effectively across sectors to influence changes in systems and society and (b) the ability to take a strategic role in building a movement. 1. We should all be proud of the large response rate across the Northwest – the large response rate is illustrative of the level of connection and support organizations have through our networks and the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust.

5 Takeaways for Capacity Building

1

Large pool of statistically relevant data; Membership matters

The large response rate across the Northwest – specifically here in Oregon – illustrates the level of connection and support nonprofits have through the network of state associations and the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust. In fact, the closer the relationship with NAO, the higher the rating for capacity tracked in the survey response.

2

Resources and People

Economic strains; closing down of big federal government funding; and the business and emotional recovery from the pandemic have been slow for Oregon's nonprofits. This has left many nonprofit leaders and workers depleted and, in some cases, demoralized. The overwhelming sense that there are not enough resources and people to do this work came through clearly as the highest need stated. This matches the constant pressures nonprofits feel as fundraising models are overturned.

3

Mission, Strategy and Culture vs. Resources and People

The survey showed that the responding organizations gave themselves high marks across the board for mission and strategy. Culture ranked highly as well, but when we looked at the responses about People, that rating was much lower. Could this dichotomy be a product of the large number of CEOs/EDs who answered (as opposed to worker-level staff)?

4

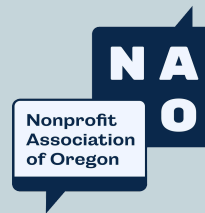
Planning for the future

The report states that planning for leadership succession is critical. That finding closely matches what we often hear and the support we give to organizations going through these important transitions.

5

Engaging in advocacy

With an especially contentious political season that has already seen political violence, we believe that the data shows nonprofits and philanthropy must find ways to engage more fully in discussions with elected officials and policymakers. Nonprofits must nudge the government towards impactful strategies (rather than basic outputs) and unleash the billions of \$\$ of government money that can make real change in our communities.



Oregon

The Nonprofit Association of Oregon is the statewide nonprofit membership organization representing and supporting charitable nonprofits of all sizes, geographic locations and missions across Oregon. NAO's work ensures a future in which Oregon nonprofits are visible and valued as essential contributors to our society. NAO strives to connect, improve, and advance all nonprofits to help build thriving and vital communities across the state.

www.nonprofitoregon.org

For more information on the NWCS or to explore partnership opportunities in disseminating the 2024 Oregon results, please contact one of the following partners:

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