Community Leadership Assessment Tool

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CF INSIGHTS
by **Candid.**

About CF Insights

The idea behind CF Insights is simple: What if each community foundation could know what all community foundations collectively know? CF Insights, a service of Candid, responds to a hunger for shared knowledge and greater impact among U.S. community foundations. Community foundations grow stronger when their decisions are based on timely, accurate, and complete information. Through CF Insights, community foundations improve performance and sustainability—individually and collectively. For information about CF Insights membership, consulting services, and free tools and research, visit cfinsights.org or tweet @cfinsights.

About Candid

Every year, millions of nonprofits spend trillions of dollars around the world. Candid finds out where that money comes from, where it goes, and why it matters. Through research, collaboration, and training, Candid connects people who want to change the world to the resources they need to do it. Candid's data tools on nonprofits, foundations, and grants are the most comprehensive in the world. Foundation Center and GuideStar joined forces to become Candid, a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Find out more at candid.org.

Guidance for the Community Leadership Assessment Tool

About the Community Leadership Assessment Tool

The Community Leadership Assessment Tool focuses on foundations' engagement in community leadership activities, including their commitment to community leadership work and a self-assessment of their foundation's performance on these activities.[1] Its development was informed by conversations among community foundations who desired a structured mechanism to assess their community leadership activities and communicate the impact of their work beyond financial metrics.

The Community Leadership Assessment Tool has five sections:

1. **Community leadership activities.** The items in this section ask foundation staff whether or not they engage in seven distinct community leadership activities, such as shaping policy or helping to build nonprofit capacity.

In sections 2-5, foundations are asked to rate their level of engagement in several dimensions of community leadership on a scale from 1-7, 1 being "minimal" and 7 being "strong." Descriptions accompany the rating scale to tangibly define what "minimal," "basic," "intermediate," or "strong" engagement looks like in each of these dimensions. Space is also available in each section for respondents to provide clarifying comments.

2. **Organizational culture.** This section taps into organizational culture, policies, and practices that support community leadership work, including mission and values; community voice; a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion; learning; and integrity.

3. **Relationships.** This section focuses on how foundations engage with community stakeholders and includes items related to community trust; convening and collaboration; and shared leadership.

4. **Resources.** This section focuses on the extent to which the foundation has the resources and capacity to support community leadership activities through human capital; donor engagement; and business model.

5. **Understanding and skills.** These questions focus on foundation practices in the following areas as they relate to their community leadership efforts: community knowledge; community change processes; communications; strategic orientation; public policy; and evaluation.

Developing the Community Leadership Assessment Tool

The Community Leadership Assessment Tool emerged from an 18-month development process involving interviews with field leaders about their assessment needs, along with a review of related tools. Field leaders advocated for a tool that was easy-to-use and that could help them benchmark their progress, as well as a tool that could contribute to improving their community leadership practices.

Based on these initial conversations, two tools—a more detailed version and a shorter, less detailed version—were created and piloted with a small group of community foundation leaders. Both tools were substantially influenced by CFLeads' Framework for Community Leadership[2] as well as the Organizational Mapping Tool, which the Ford Foundation uses with its BUILD grantees[3].

In this initial pilot, stakeholders expressed a preference for the longer version of the tool, which allows for both quantitative ratings and qualitative responses. Following this pilot, some of the questions were adjusted and several new questions were added.

In the second pilot, the draft Community Leadership Assessment Tool was tested again, resulting in some minor tweaks. An analysis of survey responses showed sufficient variation among the survey items, suggesting the tool is nuanced enough to capture differences in practice. Pilot testers also gave high marks for relevance and ease of use.

Using the Community Leadership Assessment Tool

The Community Leadership Assessment Tool is available online[4] and is designed to be taken every two to three years and may be especially helpful as part of strategic planning processes. All staff involved in community leadership work can take the survey, which takes approximately 25–30 minutes to complete.

It is to be expected that foundations will engage in some practices and not others; thus, there is no value judgment placed on whether survey items are rated as "minimal" versus "strong." Keep in mind that no foundation will answer "strong" on every dimension. Honest responses about the assessment of the current (not desired) state of your foundation's efforts will help drive more meaningful discussion.

At the foundation-level, this tool is designed to inform practice. Foundations should carve out time to discuss the results, particularly any differences in ratings among staff members and/or areas where foundation staff ratings tended toward "minimal." For foundation-level discussions emerging out of the Community Leadership Assessment Tool, it may be useful to engage CFLeads or other external facilitators or consultants to guide conversations around practice. CF Insights can also assist the foundation in examining its operating model and ability to expand its investment of resources in community leadership efforts.

At the field level, results from this tool will be aggregated by CF Insights to provide a broader perspective on how foundations are engaging in community leadership efforts. Average scores for each of the items are available on cfinsights.org. Initial benchmarking averages are based on a sample of 34 responses collected during the pilot. Over time, as more foundations use the tool and submit their scores online, averages will become more reliable. CF Insights will also use aggregated, field-wide data to publish periodic briefs on the state of community leadership work.

If you have any questions about the survey, please email cfinsights@candid.org.

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1. Although there are several ways to define community leadership, the most widely referenced definition comes from CFLeads, which states on their website that "community leadership happens when community foundations move beyond grantmaking and act as valuable partners that drive positive change in the area(s) they serve."

2. cfleads.org/what-we-do/the-framework-for-community-leadership

3. This tool is adapted from the "Organizational Mapping Tool Individual Worksheet" (updated 2016) by Bess Rothenberg and is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

4. candid.org/howwelead

Community Leadership Assessment Tool

There are five main sections to the Community Leadership Assessment Tool. Section 1 asks respondents to indicate in which community leadership activities the foundation engages, and sections 2–5 focus on both internal and external-facing work related to executing community leadership: organizational culture; relationships; resources; and understanding and skills.

Section 1: Community leadership activities

Our foundation has engaged in the following activities in the past 12 months:	Yes	No	No, but has done so in the past	No, but plans to do so in the future
Commissioned and disseminated local data and research to help understand the nuances of community challenges and provide information to help solve problems.	○	○	○	○
Engaged residents to actively listen to their concerns and engage them in community problem-solving.	○	○	○	○
Worked across sectors, recognizing that community challenges cannot be solved by any one entity or sector.	○	○	○	○
Engaged in public conversations and other activities intended to influence the development of public policy, recognizing that government systems have a significant impact on community challenges.	○	○	○	○
Marshalled resources beyond the foundation's own grants—from private foundations as well as from local, state and federal government—to address community needs.	○	○	○	○
Developed and disseminated tools, resources, and training programs in areas of strategic interest to help build the community foundation field. (For example, COF Committee assignments, other commitments to field-related affinity groups, etc.).	○	○	○	○
Provided services to build the leadership, management, and governance capacity of local nonprofit organizations. (For example, training, technical assistance, peer networking facilitation, information on nonprofit management concerns, etc.)	○	○	○	○

Section 2: Organizational culture

2A. Mission and values

MISSION

Minimal	Basic	Moderate	Strong
◯ 1 　 ◯ 2	◯ 3 　 ◯ 4	◯ 5 　 ◯ 6	◯ 7
No written mission or widely shared set of values guide the Foundation's community leadership work.	Mission and vision related to community leadership are written but vague, and staff struggle to articulate either.	There is broad staff buy-in for the Foundation's mission and vision related to community leadership work, which express general ideas but don't identify specific goals.	Clear, specific, and compelling expression of the Foundation's community leadership mission to advance the common good; staff and board are fully committed to vision and mission.

CRITERIA

Minimal	Basic	Moderate	Strong
◯ 1 　 ◯ 2	◯ 3 　 ◯ 4	◯ 5 　 ◯ 6	◯ 7
No clear criteria related to community leadership work.	Some criteria for community leadership work exist but are rarely referenced.	Criteria for community leadership work exist and provide a general guide for the Foundation's work but do not regularly guide decision-making.	Criteria for community leadership work focus on desired impact and guide decision-making.

GOALS/OUTCOMES

Minimal	Basic	Moderate	Strong
◯ 1 　 ◯ 2	◯ 3 　 ◯ 4	◯ 5 　 ◯ 6	◯ 7
No articulated goals and outcomes for the Foundation's community leadership work.	Long-term goals for community leadership work are stated but not concrete; few staff and board members can explain them.	Long-term goals and outcomes exist and are known by most board and staff, but are not easily evaluated and do not guide the Foundation's community leadership work.	Clear goals and achievable outcomes for community leadership work can be evaluated, and guide the Foundation's community leadership work.

2B. Community voice

ENGAGEMENT

Minimal		Basic		Moderate		Strong	
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7	

Minimal	Basic	Moderate	Strong
The Foundation does not engage community members in its work.	The Foundation occasionally engages community members in its work.	The Foundation consistently engages community members in its work and has processes in place to facilitate their engagement.	The Foundation has established processes in place to engage community members in its work that fosters a sense of shared ownership.

2C. Commitment to DEI

EQUITY

Minimal		Basic		Moderate		Strong	
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7	

Minimal	Basic	Moderate	Strong
The Foundation's choice of community leadership issues and actions do not take equity into account.	The Foundation takes equity into account in its issues and actions, but it is not a critical consideration.	Equity is a key consideration in Foundation decision-making.	The Foundation's understanding of and connection to equity is clearly articulated in its issues and actions.

INCLUSION OF UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Minimal		Basic		Moderate		Strong	
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7	

Minimal	Basic	Moderate	Strong
Voices of underserved communities served by the Foundation are not reflected in organizational decision-making; The Foundation does not include community members as part of its board, staff, and/or committees.	Voices of underserved communities are occasionally reflected in organizational decision-making. Community members may have some representation on board, staff, and/or committees.	Voices of underserved communities are often reflected in organizational decision-making. The Foundation consistently engages community members on its board, staff, and committees.	Voices of underserved communities the Foundation serves are proactively sought and have clear influence in organizational decision-making. Foundation board, staff, and committees are drawn from throughout the community and seen as representing a broad cross-section of the community.

ROLE OF POWER

Minimal		Basic		Moderate		Strong
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7

Minimal: The Foundation does not reflect on the role of race, class, culture, and/or power imbalances in its work with the community.

Basic: The Foundation acknowledges the role of race, culture, and/or power imbalances in its work with the community but doesn't have a clear way of addressing these factors in its work.

Moderate: The Foundation understands the role of race, culture, and power imbalances and has a variety of tools to address these factors in its work.

Strong: The Foundation is explicit about the role of race, culture, and/or power imbalances in its work with the community, and accounts for these factors.

2D. Learning

INFLUENCE OF LEARNING CULTURE

Minimal		Basic		Moderate		Strong
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7

Minimal: There is no interest in or available capacity to support reflection and learning, nor is evidence used to refine the Foundation's strategy or practices.

Basic: Capacity to allow for reflections and learning is limited; there is little evidence used to refine strategy and practice.

Moderate: Reflection and learning occur, but irregularly; evidence is inconsistently applied in strategy and practice improvement.

Strong: A culture of reflection and learning exists, and resources are available to ensure that learning from evidence and experience occurs. Improvements in strategy and practice and other lessons are shared internally and externally.

LONG-TERM FOCUS

Minimal		Basic		Moderate		Strong
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7

Minimal: The Foundation tends to use a short-term lens in its work.

Basic: The Foundation works on community issues, but those issues are not likely to address root causes or have long-term impact.

Moderate: The Foundation's strategy focuses on community issues that address root causes and have the potential for significant impact but is evolving with no clear theory of change.

Strong: The Foundation focuses its community leadership efforts on long-term impact; likely to be accompanied by theory of change and clear strategy.

2E. Integrity

COMMUNITY INTERACTIONS

Minimal

◯ 1   ◯ 2

Community members express concern that the Foundation's interactions with them are insufficient.

Basic

◯ 3   ◯ 4

Communications with community members are not timely or satisfying.

Moderate

◯ 5   ◯ 6

The Foundation maintains good relations with community members, who nevertheless express that the community foundation's actions do not reflect a fully realized understanding of their interactions.

Strong

◯ 7

Strong and positive reputation with community members. The Foundation is known for prompt, courteous, and caring interactions with community members.

RESPONSE TO FEEDBACK

Minimal

◯ 1   ◯ 2

The Foundation ignores or responds defensively to criticism; there are no attempts to solicit feedback proactively.

Basic

◯ 3   ◯ 4

The Foundation acknowledges criticism but does not take action to address concerns; feedback is sought on an ad hoc basis.

Moderate

◯ 5   ◯ 6

The Foundation accepts criticism and reflects on ways it can improve its practice but does not always follow through. Feedback is sought regularly through both informal and formal means.

Strong

◯ 7

The Foundation accepts criticism, admits mistakes, and takes proactive and timely steps to improve its practice. There are mechanisms to provide ongoing feedback.

HUMILITY

Minimal

◯ 1   ◯ 2

The Foundation takes full credit for its community leadership efforts.

Basic

◯ 3   ◯ 4

The Foundation takes credit for its community leadership efforts but acknowledges the work of other partners.

Moderate

◯ 5   ◯ 6

The Foundation shares credit with partners for its community leadership efforts.

Strong

◯ 7

The Foundation shares credit and at times even declines to take credit to advance community leadership goals.

2F. Provide clarifying comments on any items in
the Organizational Culture section.

Community Leadership Assessment Tool

Section 3: Relationships

3A. Community trust

ASSET-BASED (VS DEFICIT-BASED) PERSPECTIVE

Minimal	Basic	Moderate	Strong
○ 1 ○ 2	○ 3 ○ 4	○ 5 ○ 6	○ 7
The Foundation's analysis of community issues focuses on the problems facing them, without recognizing the assets (knowledge, relationships, capacities) of communities.	The Foundation's analysis focuses on challenges faced by the community, with little attention to its assets (knowledge, relationships, capacities).	The Foundation recognizes the assets (knowledge, relationships, capacities) that community members offer, but does not proactively tap into this expertise.	The Foundation values and leverages the range of assets (knowledge, relationships, capacities) that community members offer.

MEETING TIMES AND SPACE

Minimal	Basic	Moderate	Strong
○ 1 ○ 2	○ 3 ○ 4	○ 5 ○ 6	○ 7
The Foundation does not consult others in choosing meeting spaces and meeting times.	The Foundation sometimes considers the pros and cons of meeting times and locations, but tends to choose times and locations that discourage participation.	The Foundation regularly considers the pros and cons of meeting times and locations and makes an effort to meet at spaces and at times that encourage participation.	The Foundation works with community members and stakeholders to choose meeting venues and times that maximize participation.

3B. Convening and collaboration

COLLABORATION

Minimal	Basic	Moderate	Strong
○ 1 ○ 2	○ 3 ○ 4	○ 5 ○ 6	○ 7
Little awareness of and virtually no collaboration with other key players in the field.	Awareness of key players in the field but few direct collaborations with them.	Awareness of key players in the field and a number of productive collaborations with them.	Extensive and productive collaborations with key players in the field at local, national, and/or regional levels.

3C. Shared leadership

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Minimal

◯ 1 ◯ 2

The Foundation is not involved in any efforts to develop community leaders.

Basic

◯ 3 ◯ 4

The Foundation supports community leaders on an ad hoc basis.

Moderate

◯ 5 ◯ 6

The Foundation supports community leaders regularly and/or hosts programming or actively links community members to other resources to support their development.

Strong

◯ 7

The Foundation is intentional about building the capacity of leaders in the community through formal leadership training initiatives.

CONSULTATION WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Minimal

◯ 1 ◯ 2

Community leadership priorities are determined without input from community members.

Basic

◯ 3 ◯ 4

Community leadership priorities are determined by staff or donors; some consultation with community members occurs but their input is not prioritized.

Moderate

◯ 5 ◯ 6

Community leadership priorities are determined through consultation and research, but processes to engage community members may be uneven or not fully fleshed out.

Strong

◯ 7

Community leadership priorities are derived systematically; can include consultation with community stakeholders and pertinent research on community needs.

CONSULTATION WITH POLICYMAKERS

Minimal

◯ 1 ◯ 2

Community leadership priorities are determined without input from policymakers.

Basic

◯ 3 ◯ 4

Community leadership priorities are determined by staff or donors; some consultation with policymakers occurs but their input is not prioritized.

Moderate

◯ 5 ◯ 6

Community leadership priorities are determined through consultation and research, but processes to engage policymakers may be uneven or not fully fleshed out.

Strong

◯ 7

Community leadership priorities are derived systematically; can include consultation with policymakers and pertinent research on community needs.

CONSULTATION WITH PRIVATE SECTOR

Minimal

◯ **1**   ◯ **2**

Community leadership priorities are determined without input from the private sector and/or local business leaders.

Basic

◯ **3**   ◯ **4**

Community leadership priorities are determined by staff or donors; some consultation with the private sector and/or local business leaders occurs but their input is not prioritized.

Moderate

◯ **5**   ◯ **6**

Community leadership priorities are determined through consultation and research, but processes for engaging the private sector and/or local business leaders may be uneven or not fully fleshed out.

Strong

◯ **7**

Community leadership priorities are derived systematically; can include consultation with the private sector and/or local business leaders and pertinent research on community needs.

3D. Provide clarifying comments on any items in the Relationships section.

Section 4: Resources

4A. Human capital

DIVERSE REPRESENTATION

Minimal

◯ 1   ◯ 2

Board, staff, volunteers, vendors, and others are drawn from a limited pool and have little relevant experience and do not include underserved communities.

Basic

◯ 3   ◯ 4

Board, staff, volunteers, vendors and others are drawn from a small range of fields and some have relevant experience; there is minimal representation of people from underserved communities.

Moderate

◯ 5   ◯ 6

Board, staff, volunteers, vendors, and others are drawn from several appropriate fields and include representation from underserved communities; most have some relevant experience.

Strong

◯ 7

Board, staff, volunteers, vendors and others are drawn from a wide variety of appropriate fields; underserved communities are well represented; members have extensive experience and practice expertise.

CEO EVALUATION

Minimal

◯ 1   ◯ 2

Community leadership is not a criterion for evaluating the CEO.

Basic

◯ 3   ◯ 4

Community leadership is part of the job description, but the CEO is not evaluated on related performance.

Moderate

◯ 5   ◯ 6

Community leadership is a secondary criterion for CEO evaluation.

Strong

◯ 7

Commitment to community leadership is a key criterion in evaluating the CEO.

STAFF STRUCTURE

Minimal

◯ 1   ◯ 2

Community leadership work is ad hoc and not reflected in job descriptions or staff structure.

Basic

◯ 3   ◯ 4

Community leadership is an emerging area of work but tends to be siloed; job descriptions and staff structure to support community leadership work are not fully fleshed out.

Moderate

◯ 5   ◯ 6

Community leadership is integrated into the Foundation's work; this is reflected to some extent in job descriptions and staff structure.

Strong

◯ 7

Community leadership work is integrated into all functional areas. This is reflected in job descriptions and staffing structure.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Minimal

○ 1   ○ 2

There is no
professional
development for
staff on community
leadership.

Basic

○ 3   ○ 4

Professional
development
related to community
leadership is
ad hoc.

Moderate

○ 5   ○ 6

There are regular
opportunities to
deepen community
leadership skills.

Strong

○ 7

Professional
development
on community
leadership skills
is ongoing.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT/EDUCATION

Minimal

○ 1   ○ 2

The Foundation does
not actively educate
Board members on
community issues.

Basic

○ 3   ○ 4

The Foundation
occasionally engages
Board members on
community issues,
through guest
presentations or site
visits, for example.

Moderate

○ 5   ○ 6

The Foundation
regularly engages
Board members on
community issues
through ongoing
opportunities
to learn and
participate.

Strong

○ 7

The Foundation
keeps Board
members abreast of
community issues
and encourages
them to serve as
advocates.

4B. Donor engagement

DONOR EDUCATION

Minimal

○ 1   ○ 2

The Foundation does
not have any donor
education initiatives
related to critical
community issues.

Basic

○ 3   ○ 4

The Foundation
conducts some
donor education
events related to
critical community
issues.

Moderate

○ 5   ○ 6

The Foundation
conducts regular
donor education
events related to
critical community
issues.

Strong

○ 7

The Foundation
systematically
helps current
and prospective
donors deepen
their understanding
of community
issues via multiple
channels.

DONOR LEADERSHIP

Minimal		Basic		Moderate		Strong	
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7	

The Foundation supports donors' financial contributions to community causes, but the Foundation has little additional contact with donors.	The Foundation makes some effort to connect donors to co-investors, policymakers, and/or community organizations. Donors are not equipped to leverage their influence in substantial ways.	The Foundation connects donors to co-investors, policymakers, and/or community organizations. Some donors are comfortable leveraging their influence beyond their financial contributions.	The Foundation's donors use their influence and connections to advance community leadership efforts; The Foundation facilitates connections to other co-investors, policymakers, and/or community organizations.

4C. Business model

AWARENESS OF COSTS FOR COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Minimal		Basic		Moderate		Strong	
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7	

The Foundation does not have a clear sense of costs associated with its services, including its community leadership work.	The Foundation has a general sense of the cost of each service relative to the revenue it generates, with a limited sense of the cost of its community leadership work.	The Foundation has a strong sense of the cost of each service it provides relative to the revenue it generates, with a growing, but incomplete, sense of the cost of its community leadership work.	The Foundation knows the cost of each service it provides relative to the revenue it generates, including community leadership work.

SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Minimal		Basic		Moderate		Strong	
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7	

The Foundation does not maintain a budget in support of its community leadership work.	The Foundation allocates limited resources toward its community leadership work, but is not currently seeking to increase that allocation.	The Foundation sustainably supports its community leadership efforts through the allocation of resources, but is not actively seeking to increase that allocation or develop new revenue sources for increased investment in community leadership.	The Foundation aligns resources as needed to serve community leadership efforts and/or seeks to develop new revenue sources to support community leadership.

INVESTMENTS OUTSIDE OF GRANTMAKING

Minimal		Basic		Moderate		Strong	
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7	

The Foundation does not have extensive expertise about community and portfolio investments outside of grantmaking outside of grantmaking (real estate, venture capital, permanent community endowments, etc.).	The Foundation has expertise related to community and portfolio investments outside of grantmaking and uses some of these resources to support community leadership efforts.	The Foundation maintains community and portfolio investments outside of grantmaking and uses a significant portion of these resources to support community leadership efforts.	The Foundation knows how to use community and portfolio investments outside of grantmaking to support community leadership efforts.

SOCIAL IMPACT INVESTING

Minimal		Basic		Moderate		Strong	
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7	

The Foundation does not engage in social impact investing (including program-related investing, mission-related investing, and socially responsible investing).	The Foundation occasionally makes program-related investments on a case-by-case basis.	The Foundation occasionally makes program-related investments on a case-by-case basis and maintains a separate SRI pool into which donors can place their assets.	The Foundation maintains a SRI pool and has an ongoing focus on supporting local initiatives through impact-driven investments.

4D. Provide clarifying comments on any items in the Resources section.

Section 5: Understanding and skills

5A. Community knowledge

COMMUNITY CONTEXT AND HISTORY

Minimal		**Basic**		**Moderate**		**Strong**	
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7	
Foundation staff have little knowledge of the community's history and current leadership, economy, or demographics.		Foundation staff have some current and historical knowledge.		The Foundation has begun efforts to enhance staff knowledge about the community's history and current landscape.		The Foundation has current and historical knowledge of the institutions, leadership, economy, demographics, natural and built environment and culture of its area. The Foundation commits to continued learning through learning events and monitoring community well-being indicators.	

RESEARCH

Minimal		**Basic**		**Moderate**		**Strong**	
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7	
The Foundation does not commission research or seek out research on community needs, assets, and solutions.		The Foundation seeks out research on community needs, assets, and solutions, but this data does not inform its work and is not shared with the community.		The Foundation seeks out objective information and/or also commissions research, and sometimes shares this information with the community and sometimes uses this data to inform its work.		The Foundation finds or generates objective information it needs but may not have. The Foundation shares the information with the community and uses this information to inform its work.	

5B. Community change processes

NETWORKS

Minimal		Basic		Moderate		Strong	
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7	

Minimal — The Foundation has a limited understanding of the organizations, individuals, and associations working on community improvement.

Basic — The Foundation has some understanding of the organizations, individuals, and associations working on community improvement but are not aware of where to seek expertise in a particular area.

Moderate — The Foundation understands the organizations, individuals, and associations working on community improvement; Foundation staff can name entities and have a sense of what each entity does.

Strong — The Foundation understands the networks of organizations, individual, and associations working on community improvement. The Foundation knows who is leading or could lead work in areas of interest.

COORDINATION AMONG NETWORKS

Minimal		Basic		Moderate		Strong	
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7	

Minimal — The Foundation does little work to coordinate and collaborate among stakeholders (community members, policymakers, and/or business) that support community improvement.

Basic — The Foundation has a sense of how to coordinate and collaborate among stakeholders that support community improvement, but rarely does so.

Moderate — The Foundation understands how to coordinate and collaborate among stakeholders that support community improvement, and often facilitate or are involved in such processes.
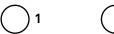
Strong — The Foundation helps to ensure coordination and collaboration among stakeholders that support community improvement and when necessary works to reform or strengthen those systems.

5C. Communications

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Minimal		**Basic**		**Moderate**		**Strong**	
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7	

Minimal: Rare engagement in external outreach and no strategy for doing so; key target audiences for community leadership work have not been identified.

Basic: No formal communications strategy for community leadership work exists but organization does occasional general outreach when opportunities arise.

Moderate: Communications strategy exists but is not tailored to key target audiences and messages for community leadership work are not typically revised to adjust to changing contexts.

Strong: The Foundation maintains a clear strategy for communications with distinct messaging about its community leadership work to prioritized audiences; strategy and messaging are regularly revised in light of changing contexts.

GOAL AND MESSAGE ALIGNMENT

Minimal		**Basic**		**Moderate**		**Strong**	
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7	

Minimal: Key messages at times fail to support the Foundation's community leadership goals.

Basic: Key messages generally support the Foundation's community leadership goals but they are not always tailored with community leadership goals in mind.

Moderate: Key messages are tailored to support and align with the Foundation's community leadership goals.

Strong: Messages are highly effective at furthering the Foundation's community leadership goals.

DISSEMINATION

Minimal		**Basic**		**Moderate**		**Strong**	
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7	

Minimal: The Foundation does not disseminate information about is community leadership work to key audiences.

Basic: The Foundation disseminates information about its community leadership work but does not adjust messages for different target audiences.

Moderate: The Foundation broadly disseminates information about its community leadership work to target audiences, but could make such messages more timely, tailored, and specific.

Strong: The Foundation broadly disseminates timely, easily accessible information about its community leadership work through specific messaging tailored to key audiences. Foundation is a trusted source of information; Others cite the Foundation's research.

5D. Strategic orientation

Minimal

( ) 1   ( ) 2

The Foundation has no clear sense of its leadership role and has not operationalized how to deploy its resources to leverage change.

Basic

( ) 3   ( ) 4

The Foundation claims a leadership role but has not defined that role or operationalized how to deploy its resources to leverage change.

Moderate

( ) 5   ( ) 6

The Foundation understands and embraces its overall leadership role but has not operationalized how to deploy its resources to leverage change.

Strong

( ) 7

The Foundation understands the multiple roles and range of tools it can use to leverage change.

5E. Public policy

INFLUENCING POLICY

Minimal

( ) 1   ( ) 2

Influencing policymakers is not part of the community foundation's work.

Basic

( ) 3   ( ) 4

Influencing policymakers is relevant to the foundation's work, but not done in a systematic way.

Moderate

( ) 5   ( ) 6

Influencing policymakers is a core strategy for the foundation that lacks sophistication.

Strong

( ) 7

The Foundation employs a sophisticated and effective approach to influencing policy.

CAPACITY TO ENGAGE IN POLICY CHANGE

Minimal

( ) 1   ( ) 2

No readiness, skills, or contacts to participate in substantive policy discussions.

Basic

( ) 3   ( ) 4

Some readiness and skills to participate in policy discussions, but the organization does not have the contacts to influence them.

Moderate

( ) 5   ( ) 6

Readiness and skills and some contacts to influence policy discussions but they need strengthening.

Strong

( ) 7

Staff are well-respected and regularly called upon to participate in or lead policy discussions.

5F. Evaluation

EVALUATION

Minimal		Basic		Moderate		Strong
◯ 1	◯ 2	◯ 3	◯ 4	◯ 5	◯ 6	◯ 7
There are no learning and evaluation systems in place.		Learning and evaluation systems are inconsistent, do not guide organizational learning, and not linked to the Foundation's priorities and/or theories of change.		Learning and evaluation occurs but is not clearly linked to the Foundation's priorities and/or theories of change; evaluation information is inconsistently used to guide strategic decision-making and organizational learning.		Systematic learning and evaluation efforts are in place and generally defined by the foundation's priorities and/or theories of change; what is learned provides relevant information for strategic decision-making and organizational learning.

5G. Provide clarifying comments on any items in the Understanding and Skills section.