

The RISE Framework for Social Change

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THE SOCIAL IMPACT LAB AT NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

The Social Impact Lab

Let's change the world

Empowering social change agents

to think, work, and collaborate

across sectors, disciplines, and generations

to achieve greater impact

in their communities and around the world



Experiential Philanthropy Education

Exploring Social Change through Grant Making

Giving With Purpose

The world's first massive open online course (MOOC) on effective charitable giving. 18,000 students, \$250,000 in grants. Created with the Buffett family's Learning by Giving Foundation.



Northeastern Students4Giving

Exploring the intersection of social change and funding through grant making. Students have awarded over \$100,000 to 15 Boston nonprofits.



Teaching by Giving

Supporting the advancement of experiential philanthropy education at colleges and universities across the country.

The RISE Framework for Social Change

A new mindset for building and funding effective nonprofit organizations

- ✓ **Shared** Provides a common language for building and funding effective nonprofit organizations based on a shared commitment to social change.
- ✓ **Dynamic:** Views planning as a mindset geared toward informed decision-making and continual improvement and learning, rather than a terminal event.
- ✓ **Outward-focused** Focuses on the community, the need being addressed, and an inclusive understanding of clients and stakeholders.
- ✓ **Holistic** Emphasizes the connections between doing the work and paying for it; program design, implementation, and evaluation; and doing and learning.
- ✓ **Flexible** Can be adapted and scaled to meet various needs, interests, time availability, and funding constraints. Can be used as dashboard for check-ins or a road map for thorough planning.
- ✓ **Accessible** Consistent with research and best practice in the social change arena, but not laden with jargon or dependent on “insider” knowledge.

The RISE Hallmarks

R	Relevance	Is the work meaningfully connected to the community and stakeholders it serves and the need it addresses?
I	Impact	Is the work making a difference?
S	Sustainability	Is the organization financially viable?
E	Excellence in Management and Operations	Is the organization built to get the job done?

A Shared Orientation for Nonprofits, Funders, and Educators

Nonprofit Organizations	Donors	Educators and Students
<p>Internal assessment</p> <p>Business and strategic planning</p> <p>Program design and evaluation</p> <p>Internal and external communications</p>	<p>Clarity of purpose</p> <p>Maximum affinity with organizations supported</p> <p>Assessment of nonprofit organizations</p> <p>Effective giving</p>	<p>Structure for organizing and presenting key concepts in NP sector, civil society, and social change</p> <p>Assessment of nonprofit organizations</p> <p>Effective giving</p>

Relevance

Does the work matter?

R	Relevance	Characteristics of Effective Nonprofits	Additional Questions for the Donor
		<p>Has respectful and meaningful relationships with and a deep understanding of the individuals and community it serves; engages the community.</p> <p>Clearly articulates the need or issue it addresses.</p> <p>Knows what other actors or stakeholders are affected by or engaged with this need or issue and works collaboratively with them.</p> <p>Understands “what works” in relation to the need or problem.</p> <p>Has identified a real opportunity to effect change.</p>	<p>What can/should I understand about this community, issue, and organization in order to make an informed decision?</p> <p>Does this organization's work have meaning for me?</p> <p>Are its mission and goals consistent with my mission, goals, and values?</p>

Impact

Is the work making a difference?

I	Impact	Characteristics of Effective Nonprofits	Additional Questions for the Donor
		<p>Has a clear definition of "success" relative to the need it has identified and knows what results it is working toward.</p> <p>Uses research, data, experience, best practice or other reliable information to design its programs or activities.</p> <p>Program design logically "connects the dots" between its activities and their intended results.</p> <p>Holds itself accountable for results and can explain how it is making a difference.</p>	<p>Is supporting this organization the best way for me to make a difference with my resources?</p> <p>Is a cash gift going to make a meaningful difference to this organization?</p> <p>Are there other ways that I can engage with this organization to increase its impact and my own?</p>

Sustainable

Is the organization financially viable?

S	Sustainability	Characteristics of Effective Nonprofits	Additional Questions for the Donor
		<p>Has calculated the real cost of doing business, including fair salaries and the overhead necessary to be successful.</p> <p>Business model is clearly defined and logically connected to the benefit it provides.</p> <p>Offers a strong value proposition to potential funders.</p> <p>Has reliable funding streams from multiple sources.</p> <p>Manages income and expenses effectively, with accountability and transparency.</p>	<p>Does a gift to this organization fit into my giving plan?</p> <p>Is the kind of funding this organization needs (e.g., program, capacity building, endowment) consistent with how I want to give?</p> <p>Is there a matching gift opportunity from another donor or employer?</p> <p>Is this gift tax-deductible?</p>

Excellence in Management & Operations

Is the organization built to do the work of R, I, and S well?

E	Excellence in Management and Operations	Characteristics of Effective Nonprofits	Additional Questions for the Donor
		<p>Complies with state and federal requirements for nonprofit organizations.</p> <p>Executive director and staff are qualified for their roles.</p> <p>Composition, skills, and experience qualify Board of Directors to govern, plan, and fundraise effectively.</p> <p>Marketing and communication materials are professional and engaging; they provide the information donors deserve to know.</p> <p>Legal, financial, HR, IT, and facilities management systems are professional and consistent with the organization's needs.</p>	<p>Have I sufficiently educated myself about this need or issue and community?</p> <p>Have I done my due diligence on this organization using the RISE Framework?</p> <p>Am I managing my giving to this organization responsibly (e.g., record keeping, confirming online donations are secure)?</p>

Connect with The Social Impact Lab!

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