



**TCC Group's
Foundation Core Capacity
Assessment Tool (FCCCAT)**

Report for

Deaconess Foundation

September 2016



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Overview of the Foundation Core Capacity Assessment Tool (FCCAT)

Welcome to the **Foundation Core Capacity Assessment Tool (FCCAT) report**.

The FCCAT is as an opportunity for organizational learning. The tool measures capacities that are considered critical for foundation effectiveness across a wide variety of foundation contexts and types. These include, for example, essential dimensions of grantmaking capacity (including the ability of a foundation to develop impactful grantmaking strategy and efficient grantmaking processes) as well as the capacity to make complementary resource investments (including the ability to leverage direct grants through aligned networking, convening, research, and advocacy strategies).

Importantly, however, the FCCAT looks more comprehensively at **how foundations function as a whole, embedding grantmaking capacity within a larger organizational effectiveness framework**. The FCCAT adopts TCC Group’s hallmark “core capacity framework,” which measures five overall capacity dimensions: leadership, management, adaptive ability, technical faculty, and organizational culture. (See page six for definitions of each core capacity area.)

The data presented in this report reflects the aggregated perceptions of individual respondents within your foundation. Selected foundation staff and board members answered a comprehensive set of survey questions about foundation behaviors and practices. The data provide a window into your foundation’s capacity strengths and challenges, enabling the foundation to collectively consider where you are and where you want to be. We urge foundation leadership, staff, and stakeholders to reflect and act on the findings of this report. We would anticipate that responses to some findings may be clear and straightforward, while others may require additional research and input. You may choose to put actions in response to some findings on hold until a later point in time.

In the “Taking Next Steps Together” section, we provide a set of questions and activities you may wish to consider as you reflect on your report findings. We encourage reviewers to adapt and/or add on to these questions to best address your foundation’s particular needs and interests.

Summary of Core & Sub-Capacities

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LEADERSHIP

- Advocacy
- Board championship
- Board-staff relationship
- Commitment to internal diversity, equity, and inclusiveness
- External leadership
- Foundation vision
- Internal decision-making

ADAPTIVE

- Data-informed approach
- Environmental learning
- Evaluation
- Foundation networks
- Innovation and experimentation
- Networking grantees
- Strategy development

MANAGEMENT

- Financial mission management
- Grant portfolio management
- Grantee relationship management
- Grantmaking processes
- Risk approach
- Staff communication
- Staff development
- Staff performance management

TECHNICAL

- Advocacy skills
- Cultural competency
- Evaluation skills
- Facilities
- Financial management skills
- Fundraising skills
- Grantmaking skills
- Knowledge management skills
- Legal skills
- Strategic communication skills
- Technology
- Technology skills

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

- Cohesion
- Demonstrating accountability
- Demonstrating clear and lived values
- Demonstrating transparency
- Empowerment
- Encouraging collaboration
- Supporting staff sustainability
- Valuing different perspectives
- Valuing learning

Reading Your FCCAT Report

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The Foundation Core Capacity
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Report for:
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This report provides your foundation's results on validated sub-capacities¹ that measure various elements of foundation capacity. The report is divided into five distinct overarching capacity areas:

Leadership capacity: the ability of all organizational leaders to create and sustain the foundation's vision. This includes the capacity of leaders to inspire, prioritize, make decisions, innovate, and provide appropriate direction to achieve an organization's mission.

Adaptive capacity: the ability of a foundation to monitor, assess and respond to changes in the internal and external environment.




Management capacity: the ability of a foundation to ensure the effective and efficient use of its diverse organizational resources.

Technical capacity: the ability of a foundation to implement its key organizational and programmatic functions through available technologies, tools, and staff skills.

Organizational culture: the values, assumptions and behavioral norms that guide how a foundation carries out its work.

Each overarching capacity area described in this report includes distinct sub-capacities. Definitions for each sub-capacity are provided alongside the data reported in each report section.

Your foundation's capacities have been given a score based on a 300-point scale. As a general guideline to understanding FCCAT scores, the following ranges are useful:

	230 and greater	Strong
	190 – 229	Satisfactory
	Less than 190	Challenging

It is important to remember that the FCCAT is, first and foremost, a learning tool. In this context, capacity scores should not be interpreted as “grades,” as each foundation must consider its unique results in the context of its particular values and priorities. While a “challenging” score may well reflect a capacity area that merits greater attention, it could alternatively denote an area where the foundation has explicitly chosen not to invest its resources. (For example, a low score in a foundation's capacity to “convene” or “network” its grantees could simply reflect a foundation's decision not to devote attention to this approach.) Accordingly, low scores in categories irrelevant to a particular foundation need not be taken into consideration as signifying an area for concern or change.

In this report, scores are visually conveyed in two different ways to maximize a reviewer's understanding.

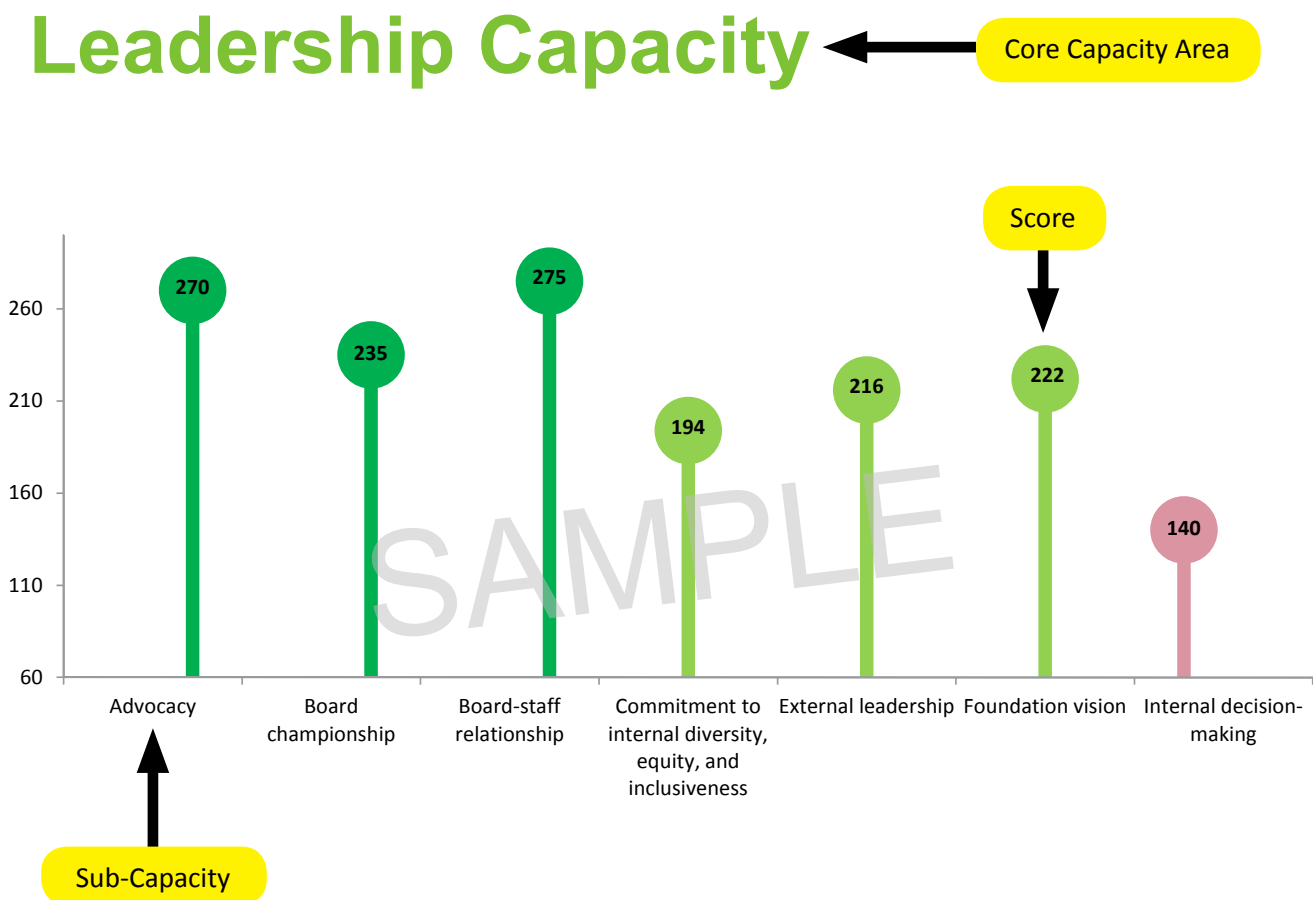
¹ Validated sub-capacities refer to items that have been proven by data analysis to “group” together into unique categories, each of which measures a different concept.

First, each core capacity area (leadership, management, etc.) is presented in a graph, with an average score indicated for each of the sub-capacities identified within the core capacity arena. In some instances, sub-capacities are given the rating of N/A rather than a number, indicating that fewer than three FCCAT respondents chose to respond to items relevant to this particular capacity.

Second, a table is presented that describes results for each sub-capacity rating. Table information includes:

- A **definition** for the sub-capacity
- A **score** for the sub-capacity
- An identification of **variance** (denoted by the symbol ∇) indicating that survey respondents significantly differed in how they scored a particular capacity.²

The sample chart below indicates how table information is displayed.

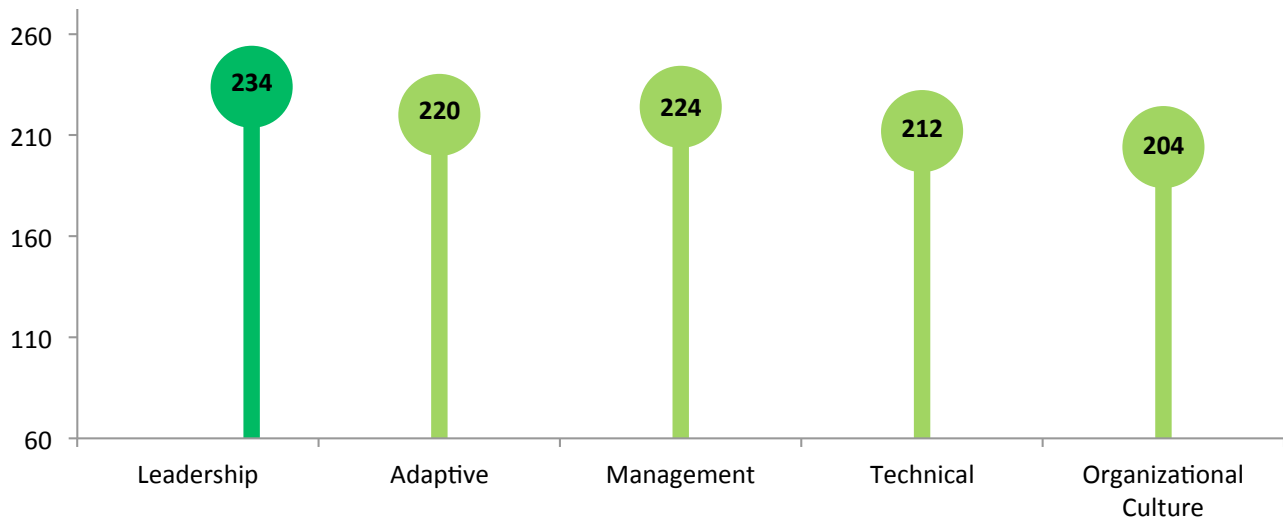


² Variance is between the highest and lowest average score ratings. Variance suggests that FCCAT respondents differed significantly from one another in response to the items in a given sub-capacity with some strongly agreeing and others strongly disagreeing.

Summary Findings

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YOUR OVERALL CAPACITY SCORES



SCORE	VARIANCE	CORE CAPACITY	DEFINITION
234		Leadership Capacity	The ability of all organizational leaders to create and sustain the foundation's vision. This includes the capacity of leaders to inspire, prioritize, make decisions, innovate, and provide appropriate direction to achieve an organization's mission.
220		Adaptive Capacity	The ability of a foundation to monitor, assess and respond to changes in the internal and external environment.
224		Management Capacity	The ability of a foundation to ensure the effective and efficient use of its diverse organizational resources.
212		Technical Capacity	The ability of a foundation to implement its key organizational and programmatic functions through available technologies, tools, and staff skills.
204		Organizational Culture	The values, assumptions and behavioral norms that guide how a foundation carries out its work.

SUMMARY OF HIGHEST AND LOWEST SUB-CAPACITY SCORES

Highest Scores

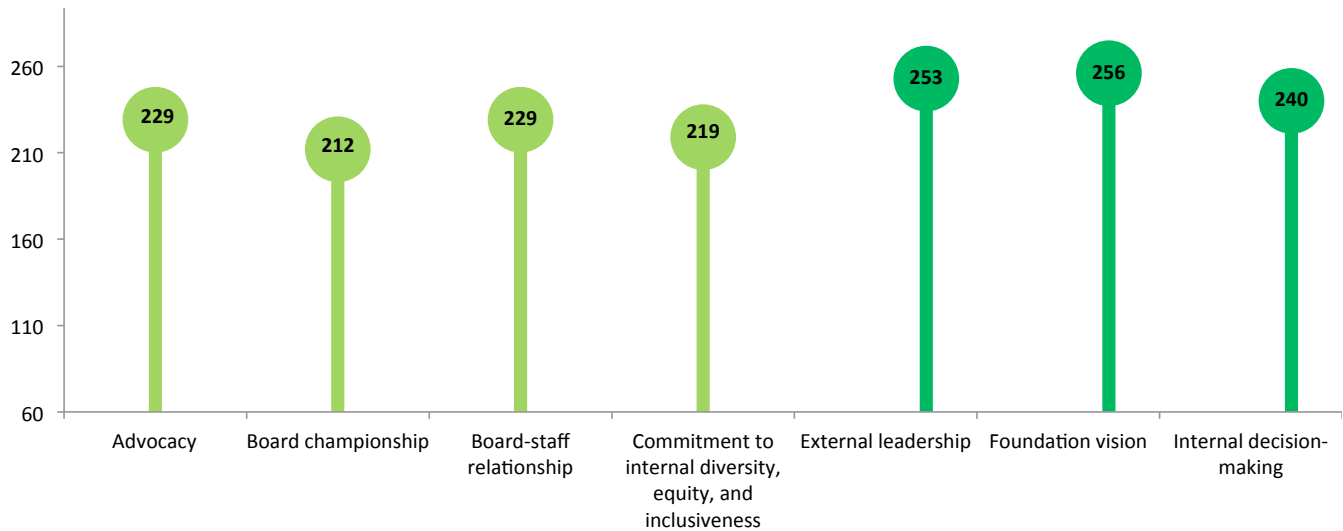
SUB-CAPACITY	SCORE
Financial management skills (in Technical)	257
Foundation vision (in Leadership)	256
External leadership (in Leadership)	253
Foundation networks (in Adaptive)	253
Financial mission management (in Management)	243

Lowest Scores

SUB-CAPACITY	SCORE
Technology (in Technical)	126
Facilities (in Technical)	171
Supporting staff sustainability (in Organizational Culture)	175
Cohesion (in Organizational Culture)	192
Demonstrating transparency (in Organizational Culture)	193

Leadership Capacity

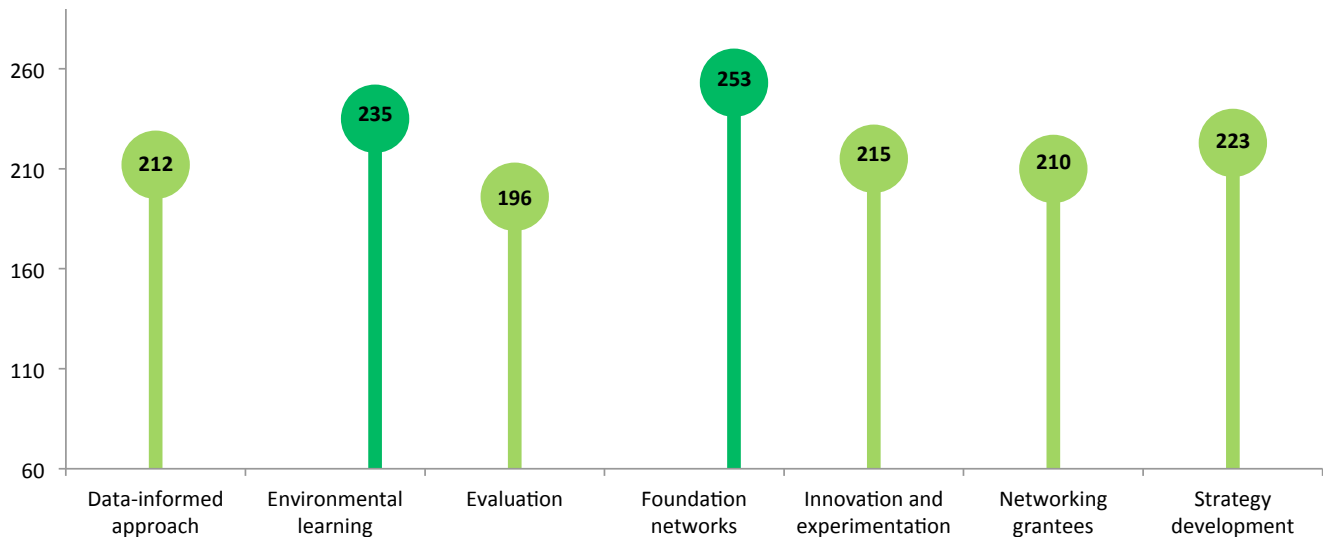
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SCORE	VARIANCE	SUB-CAPACITY	DEFINITION
229		Advocacy	Foundation directly undertakes and/or funds advocacy work and externally communicates advocacy goals.
212		Board championship	Board is knowledgeable about and an active champion of the Foundation's work and approach.
229		Board-staff relationship	Board works respectfully with senior staff leadership, ensuring shared strategy and accountability to meeting organizational mission.
219		Commitment to internal diversity, equity, and inclusiveness	Foundation practices reflect commitment to diversity of staff and board as well as meaningful inclusion of communities served.
253		External leadership	Foundation plays recognizable and credible leadership role on issues relevant to Foundation mission, including raising up other voices.
256		Foundation vision	Foundation leaders articulate and direct resources toward a clear and compelling vision.
240		Internal decision-making	Foundation leaders make decisions guided by mission priorities and inclusivity values, and are skilled at putting ideas into action.

Adaptive Capacity

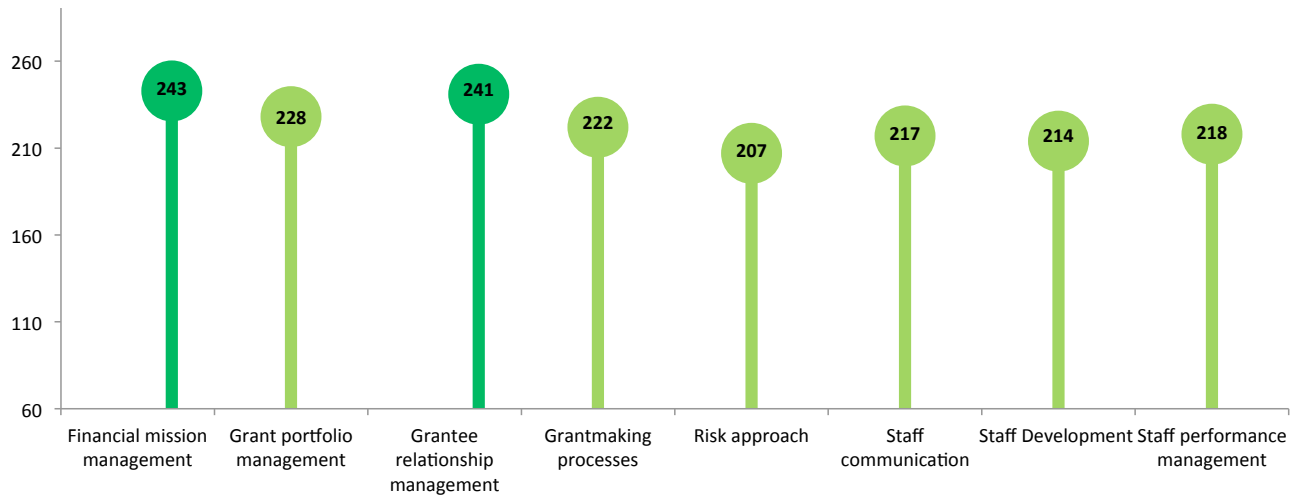
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SCORE	VARIANCE	SUB-CAPACITY	DEFINITION
212		Data-informed approach	Foundation uses different kinds of data to inform decision-making.
235		Environmental learning	Foundation stays abreast of needs, opportunities, and shifts in relevant environment through connecting to peer funders, community, and other relevant actors.
196		Evaluation	Foundation incorporates in formal and informal evaluation efforts and shares information with external stakeholders.
253		Foundation networks	Foundation actively participates in peer networks and other collaborative efforts to advance shared objectives.
215		Innovation and experimentation	Foundation demonstrates willingness to challenge assumptions, try new things, and modify existing approaches.
210		Networking grantees	Foundation actively connects grantees with potential allies, such as nonprofits and other funders.
223		Strategy development	Foundation intentionally develops, assesses, and revisits strategic priorities and practices.

Management Capacity

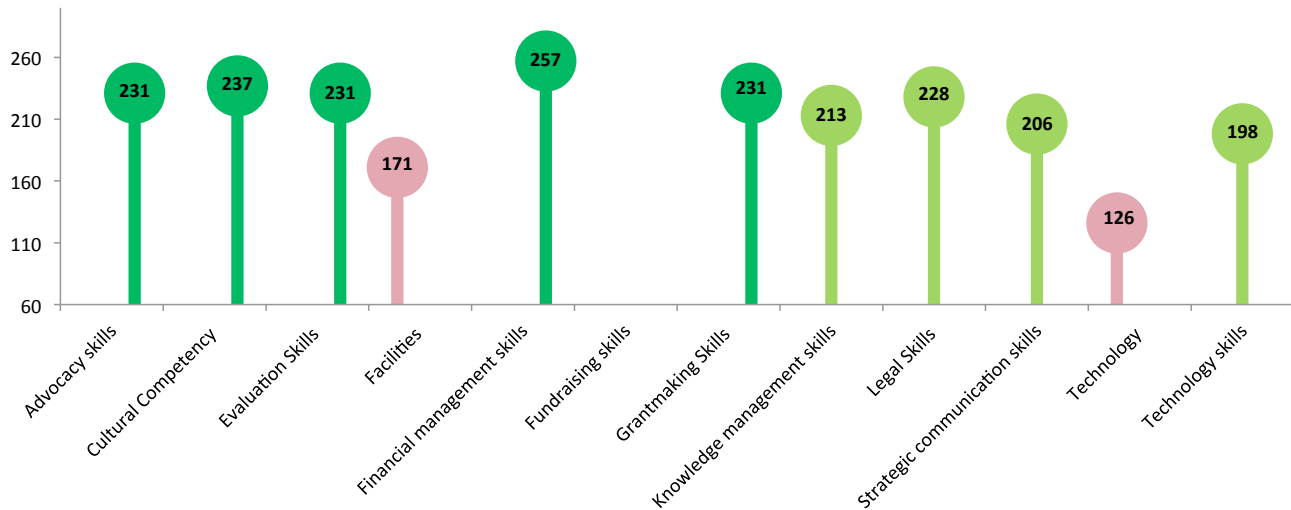
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SCORE	VARIANCE	SUB-CAPACITY	DEFINITION
243		Financial mission management	Foundation management of resources, including investments and budgeting, is well-aligned with the institutional mission.
228		Grant portfolio management	Foundation portfolio-level strategy is clear, intentional, and nimble, utilizing diverse funder tools and approaches.
241		Grantee relationship management	Foundation has effective, respectful, and thoughtful relationships with its grantees.
222		Grantmaking processes	Foundation has effective, efficient, and consistent processes and systems for making and monitoring grants.
207		Risk approach	Foundation is willing to take appropriate “risks” and utilize multiple strategies to achieve greater outcomes.
217		Staff communication	Foundation has open and respectful channels of communication and feedback across levels of staff.
214		Staff development	Foundation supports professional development of staff through coaching, mentoring, training, and other means.
218		Staff performance management	Foundation has effective human resource policies and practices, cultural sensitivity, and clear work expectations.

Technical Capacity

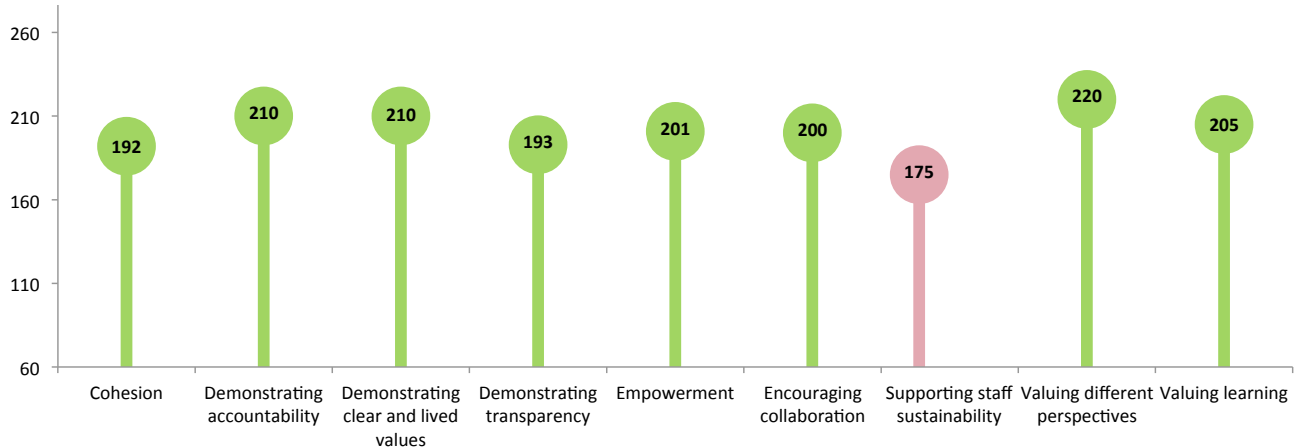
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SCORE	VARIANCE	SUB-CAPACITY	DEFINITION
231		Advocacy skills	Foundation has skills to engage in and/or support policy advocacy and overall issue advocacy.
237		Cultural competency	Foundation staff has skills to work and communicate effectively with people from different backgrounds and positions.
231		Evaluation skills	Foundation has skills to carry out evaluation and learning activities.
171		Facilities	Foundation has appropriate and well-managed facilities.
257		Financial management skills	Foundation has ability to effectively administer day-to-day financials and manage budget.
N/A		Fundraising skills	Foundation has ability to identify and cultivate new funders for the foundation's work.
231		Grantmaking skills	Foundation staff has effective skills for grantmaking activities (e.g., managing grantmaking process, budget development and management, developing grant strategy, conducting due diligence, and holding content-specific knowledge).
213		Knowledge management skills	Foundation staff has ability to share and codify information within the foundation, over time, and across teams.
228		Legal skills	Foundation has sufficient resources to guide the Foundation regarding legal issues.
206		Strategic communication skills	Foundation has skills to effectively message foundation priorities and work.
126		Technology	Foundation has necessary technology resources (equipment, systems, software, etc.) to run efficient operations.
198		Technology skills	Foundation has technological skills to effectively use and maintain technology resources.

Organizational Culture Capacity


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SCORE	VARIANCE	SUB CAPACITY	DEFINITION
192		Cohesion	Foundation climate is congenial.
210		Demonstrating accountability	Foundation leaders are held accountable for making decisions that advance the organization's mission.
210	⊖	Demonstrating clear and lived values	Foundation holds clear values that guide foundation practices for interpersonal interaction both internally and externally.
193		Demonstrating transparency	Foundation is open with sharing information with external audiences.
201		Empowerment	Foundation staff is given the support and space to exert their own ideas and feel like they can be successful.
200		Encouraging collaboration	Foundation climate and practices foster collaboration for shared purposes.
175	⊖	Supporting staff sustainability	Foundation climate and work conditions support staff's sustained enthusiasm for and ability to manage work activities and responsibilities.
220		Valuing different perspectives	Foundation actively considers diverse viewpoints when making decisions.
205		Valuing learning	Foundation staff is encouraged to reflect on their work and to see mistakes as an opportunity for learning.

Taking Next Steps Together

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. What resonates and what surprises you about your foundation's capacity results?
2. Does the data raise any questions you wish to explore further?
3. If differences among respondents were indicated (), what might account for them?
4. Which capacity challenges most concern you? How come?
5. Are there any low hanging fruit that are ripe for improvement?
6. What would it take to initiate change – who needs to be engaged and what key supports are needed?
7. What can your foundation do in the near term to get started?

ACTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1. Convene staff across the foundation to reflect on report findings.** Deeper understanding typically results when staff come from different portfolio areas and hold different organizational positions.
- 2. Reflect on capacity strengths.** Consider what factors account for perceived strengths and whether they apply similarly across the foundation.
- 3. Prioritize among capacity challenges,** developing a plan of action that reflects the foundation's chief interests and existing capacity to move forward.
- 4. Explore options for securing additional resources** if capacity needs exceed available knowledge, labor, and resource supports.
- 5. Engage professional services to dig deeper and effectively plan.** An impartial, third-party facilitator with philanthropy sector experience may help internal stakeholders reflect on constraints, address tough questions, and situate institutional challenges within the larger philanthropic universe. (TCC Group is available to facilitate these deeper learning opportunities, if desired.)

Notes

About TCC Group

At TCC Group, we are committed to addressing complex social problems by heightening our clients' understanding of their collaborative role in society and helping them strengthen strategy, build capacity, and advance assessment and evaluative learning. We envision an effective social sector that addresses society's complex problems through a collaborative approach that harnesses the diverse skills, energy, and visions of its stakeholders.

For more than 35 years, TCC Group has provided strategic planning, grantmaking and program development, evaluation, and grants management services to foundations, nonprofit organizations, and corporate citizenship programs – fulfilling our passion to help the social sector achieve greater impact. Our team brings years of practical experience and leadership with foundations and nonprofit organizations. We work with organizations of various lifecycle stages, across a broad range of issues, in local, national, and international settings.

TCC Group is pleased to be a Certified B Corporation, recognized for work that meets higher standards of social and environmental performance, transparency, and accountability.

To learn more about TCC Group, please [visit us on the web](#) or call us toll-free at 1-888-222-2283.

ASSESSING FOUNDATION CAPACITY



The [Foundation Core Capacity Assessment Tool \(FCCAT\)](#) is a statistically validated online assessment tool that measures capacities critical to a wide variety of foundations. The tool has been carefully crafted to draw upon the field's current understanding of the capacities foundations need to advance their mission. It is further informed by TCC Group's own experience in working with a diversity of foundations on strategy and operations, as well as in evaluating capacity building initiatives foundations have developed for their grantees. The FCCAT also builds on TCC Group's experience developing, administering, and refining its Core Capacity Assessment Tool (CCAT).

ASSESSING NONPROFIT CAPACITY



The [Core Capacity Assessment Tool \(CCAT\)](#), is a statistically validated online assessment tool that measures a nonprofit organization's effectiveness. It has helped over 5,000 nonprofits learn about their organizational capacity and take action to improve their effectiveness. The CCAT is intended to help a nonprofit organization determine its strengths and opportunities for improvement within core capacity areas, prioritize the area which most urgently needs to be addressed, and devise an actionable plan to enhance its capacity. Foundations partner with TCC in providing CCAT learning opportunities for their grantees and in building or strengthening their own capacity building programs.