

The Boston Foundation

About the Organization

Established in 1915, the Boston Foundation (TBF) is one of the nation's first and most influential community foundations. Every day, the Boston Foundation works closely with nonprofit organizations, philanthropists, civic and business leaders, and public officials to advance equity and build a Greater Boston that works for everyone.

The Boston Foundation's Social Justice Ecology Framework supports conditions for social justice to thrive by providing access to resources and support for people, movements, and nonprofit organizations working to disrupt persistent structural and institutional inequity.



The Boston
Foundation **tBf**

Challenge

Institutional philanthropy has historically underinvested in small, movement-based grassroots nonprofits, especially organizations with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) leaders. These nonprofits need capacity-building and technical assistance that is on-demand and responsive to their needs, but this is typically out of reach due to costs or lack of funding support. In order to be sustainable and increase their impact, the Boston Foundation's nonprofit partners needed high-quality training, resources, and advice on crucial topics ranging from fundraising and board governance to program design and collecting feedback from community partners. Capacity-building approaches and beyond-the-grant support often fail to recognize and adapt to the strength and power of grassroots organizations; TBF was interested in an offering that challenged the status quo and saw the unique value and leadership of small, movement-based nonprofits.

Solution

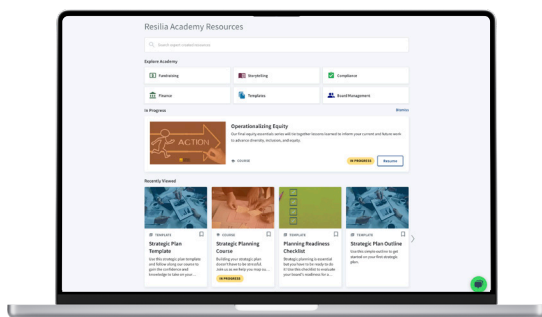
The Boston Foundation partnered with Resilia to help build the capacity of a cohort of mostly BIPOC-led nonprofits with budgets below \$5 million. The Boston Foundation's nonprofit partners receive unlimited 1:1 nonprofit coaching, peer-to-peer learning, and access to the online Resilia Nonprofit Platform, which includes courses and tools to build back-office capacity as well as mission-facing capabilities that drive advocacy and fundraising. All invited organizations are able to access Resilia's multi-faceted program offerings in ways that best suit their organizational journey to improve sustainability and community impact.



Results

The Boston Foundation:

- Has learned from the Resilia team about overarching challenges and opportunities nonprofit partners are facing. This allowed the organization to not “over survey” and instead use aggregate data and stories to inform its grantmaking.
- Has seen staff collaborate more and become better equipped to serve organizations, thanks to data and feedback from the program and insights from growing relationships with nonprofit partners.
- Has seen how sustained coaching enables nonprofit leaders to more effectively advance organizational projects, with a trusted partner at their side, instead of being given a plan or recommendation and left to implement it without support.



Results

The Boston Foundation’s Nonprofit Partners:

- **83%** of nonprofits in the cohort engaged in the program within the first 4 months
- **88%** of the cohort utilized **multiple** areas of support within the first 6 months
- **80** coaching sessions completed in the first year, totaling **55** hours of support
 - 43 coaching sessions in first 6 months
 - Early adoption & continuous engagement
- Increased to **105** users on the platform from the original 34 provided login access
- Resource topics utilized most often:
 - Diversifying funding streams, prospecting and stewarding donors, grant funding and reporting
 - Authentic storytelling and impact reporting
 - Strategic planning
 - Board management and recruitment
 - Finance and budgeting
 - Compliance and people operations support



Quote from The Boston Foundation

The Boston Foundation has really benefited from working with Resilia. For instance, we’re able to get aggregate information and learn—without taxing nonprofit leaders’ time and energy—what organizations are dealing with and where they need support. That helps inform our grantmaking and beyond-the-grant support decision making. Resilia’s coaches are both effective and in tune with the needs of historically under-resourced nonprofits and, most importantly, center care for the people in this work.

LEIGH HANDSCHUH

Senior Program Officer
Learning & Engagement,
The Boston Foundation



Nonprofit Grantee Quote

I am not exaggerating when I say how helpful this platform is for the work that I do. It makes things so much easier and if I can’t do it all at one time, I know the path that I need to take and can always talk to somebody who can tell me how to get there...You can schedule coaching sessions whenever you want with one click...It’s just that easy to do, and I like that.

MARTIN HENSON

Executive Director,
BMEN Foundation

