

## Capacity Statement

# Nonprofit Networks and Associations

Now more than ever, nonprofits are joining forces to address society’s most critical needs at a systemic level. Networks of nonprofit organizations – ranging from local coalitions to regional associations and national federations – can amplify their collective impact in the face of economic challenges and increased demand for services.

### What We Do

TCC Group serves nonprofit networks and associations of all sizes and in every sector.

We work with the lead agency, as well as sets of affiliates, chapters, franchisees, or member agencies. We provide strategy, organizational development, and evaluation services to the coordinating agency so that it can better serve its members. In addition, we work in a “ground-up” manner to strengthen networks of non-profits, offering organizational assessments, strategic and business planning, capacity building, and program evaluation assistance. TCC’s consulting, coaching, peer exchange, convening, training, and online communities, build and support the skills and capacities needed to achieve meaningful change.



### Strategic and Business Planning

TCC Group helps nonprofit associations and federations articulate desired outcomes, set priorities, and devise clear strategies to guide decision-making. This can entail conducting needs assessments and competitive analyses, benchmarking best practices, designing scenarios and logic models, and creating detailed implementation plans that explain where the organization is headed and how it will allocate resources. We harness the combined power of network members by enhancing their coordinated activities, communications, knowledge sharing, and advocacy.

Recently, TCC Group helped the **Water Environment Federation**, comprised of 75 member organizations, develop a comprehensive strategy for cultivating mutual action to enhance water quality around the world. Likewise, **The Anti-Defamation League** asked TCC to assess its multi-site CyberALLY program, which aims to protect youth from bullying and abate social cruelty in online forums. TCC helped refine the program's strategy and design to ensure that its outcomes could be replicated in different parts of the country.

Furthermore, we assist cohorts of nonprofits to create business plans and hone their business models. This can include financial management training, resource development, financial scenario preparation and cash flow analysis, coaching to build more realistic budgets and diversify funding streams, and planning to strengthen financial viability. TCC also helps devise detailed plans to increase revenues through board development, individual and institutional giving, or earned income generation. For example, in 2011, we led a cohort business planning engagement with 30 state and regional affiliates of the **American Public Health Association** (APHA). This process was part of a \$5.9 million, multi-year grant funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to build the capacity of APHA's affiliates.

### Organizational Capacity Building

TCC Group can bolster the performance of a nonprofit network by helping to develop its board, improve its organizational structure, and upgrade its operations. We recently worked closely with the **Case Management Society of America** (CMSA) to enhance its board composition, structure, and processes, and conducted a governance audit to increase CMSA's effectiveness.

TCC Group also helps nonprofit associations and federations plan and implement multi-year

initiatives to strengthen members' organizational capacity. Our staff are skilled at designing and managing initiatives, conducting ongoing assessments, and fine-tuning plans. **Feeding America**, which has a national network of more than 200 food banks, engaged TCC to develop a long-term capacity-building strategy for its affiliates. After analyzing existing capacity-building resources and self-assessments, we then designed a framework that enabled Feeding America members to enhance their organizational performance.

Frequently, this type of capacity-building begins by offering network partners TCC's online Core Capacity Assessment Tool (CCAT). This comprehensive, research-based survey allows the coordinating agency to collectively diagnose members' common strengths and challenges and customize support. The CCAT also provides participating nonprofits with feedback on their leadership, management, adaptability, and operations as well as tailored recommendations for improvement. **Girl Scouts USA**, for example, offered the CCAT to 23 of its independent councils and, based on the results, received advice from TCC on ways to realign and fortify these organizations. (More information is available at [www.tcccacat.com](http://www.tcccacat.com).)

TCC not only strives to track outcomes, but also learns from the process of "getting there" and understands the value of partner engagement.

### Program Evaluation

We can help a nonprofit network determine specifically how it adds value to member groups contributes to a wide-ranging movement, and whether it has an ultimate impact. TCC not only strives to track outcomes, but also learns from the process of "getting there" and understands the value of partner engagement. Our approach ensures that leaders and key stakeholders receive and use accurate, timely, and rigorously collected data to pinpoint the specifics of "what worked, for whom, and under what conditions." Working with the **National Association of County and City Health Officials**, TCC conducted a comprehensive outcomes evaluation

of its food safety, immunization, and public health informatics programs.

We also use evaluation to develop aggregate strategy across network members and to assess their own capacity to deliver on that strategy. TCC was recently engaged by the **American Society of Adaptation Professionals**, a newly formed association that addresses climate change. Through evaluation activities, we identified an appropriate organizational model and established strategic goals for the network.

Cluster evaluations of coordinated programs can derive "big picture" findings and collective learning. TCC works with sets of nonprofits to define desired outcomes, articulate theories of change, develop tools to collect and analyze data, and report findings. **International Planned Parenthood Federation** asked TCC to assess and refine "Joining Forces for Voice and Accountability," a five-year advocacy project in countries across Latin America, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe. By collecting and analyzing data at mid- and end-points, we are evaluating the member associations' progress towards goals and identified culturally appropriate ways to better influence public policy.

Additionally, TCC builds the internal capacity of cohorts of nonprofits to evaluate their own programs. This encompasses gauging the ability to conduct evaluation, develop systems that measure quality and impact, and build a culture of learning. Working in groups allows cohorts to share concepts, improve skills, and address questions and concerns. An evaluation consultant provides technical assistance, such as designing evaluation research methodology, creating data collection tools, and providing feedback to each cohort member. Recently, TCC built the evaluation capacity of **EnvironMentors**, a program that prepares high school students from underrepresented backgrounds for a college degree in environmental science. TCC assisted eight chapters in identifying drivers of success and helped EnvironMentors take the programs to scale. We

also analyzed how support at universities, high schools, and among donors could be replicated across sites.

## Our Results

Through our strategic and business planning, organizational capacity building, and program evaluation services, TCC Group enables nonprofit networks and associations to thrive in challenging operating environments, work smarter, and become more resilient and successful. Working in collaboration, effective nonprofit networks can positively influence specific places, populations, fields, and policies.