



Achieving Board Excellence

Program Overview

December 2013

Program Background/History:

“Achieving Board Excellence” is a program of the Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement (DANA) specifically designed to help develop the governance function of nonprofit Boards of Directors and thereby the community impact of the nonprofit organizations themselves. This program, which was created in conjunction with the *Standards for Excellence*® Institute in Maryland, pairs nonprofit organizations with trained governance consultants who take the organization through a hands-on learning and implementation process based on nationally accepted best practices.

The program was first piloted in 2011 with a cohort of six housing-related nonprofit organizations in Wilmington in conjunction with Trustees of Color and through a grant from JPMorgan Chase. Currently, DANA is working with a dozen nonprofit organizations from across the state and is also in negotiation to implement the program with a cohort of organizations from two additional nonprofit subsectors in 2014.

Services provided under the Program:

Phase 1

1. Initial orientation meeting between DANA Consultant, SN (Specific Nonprofit) Executive Director, and SN Board Chair to discuss SN Board and organizational needs and to discuss requirements of the SN Board – in terms of time and resources – as part of the Achieving Board Excellence program. During this meeting, SN agrees to (1) assign one of its Board Members to guide the administration of the program within SN’s Board and to serve as DANA Consultant’s point of contact – this is ideally the Board Chair; and to share key governance-related documents with DANA Consultant in advance of the Board Excellence Workshop.*. *SN Time Required: 1 hour.*
2. DANA Consultant reviews key governance-related documents provided by SN and uses the knowledge gained, along with the takeaways from the initial orientation meeting with SN’s

Executive Director and Board Chair, to develop a customized presentation for SN, which will be delivered at the Board Excellence Workshop. *SN Time Required: N/A.*

3. Four hour Board Excellence Workshop delivered by DANA Consultant to SN Executive Director, SN Board Chair, and the rest of SN's Board of Directors at an agreed-upon date/time/location. DANA's Board Excellence Handbook and other training materials will be distributed by DANA Consultant to SN Board Members at this time. NOTE: Workshop will only be scheduled at a time when a minimum of 70% of SN's Board Members are able to attend. *SN Time Required: 4 hours. (Note: SN will be responsible for securing and paying for the venue and any food or drink related to the workshop.)*

Phase 2

1. Online self-assessment survey provided by DANA Consultant to SN Board Members after the Workshop. SN Board Members agree to complete the survey in advance of the Post-Assessment orientation meeting. Typically, the self-assessment survey is only distributed to Workshop attendees, but actually recipients will be agreed upon by the DANA Consultant, SN Executive Director, and SN Board Chair. *SN Time Required: 1 hour.*
2. DANA Consultant collates and summarizes results of self-assessment survey. *SN Time Required: N/A*
3. Post-Assessment orientation meeting between DANA Consultant, SN Executive Director, and SN Board Chair to review the findings of the self-assessment and discuss relevant themes/topics that surfaced during the Workshop. The goal of this meeting is to determine and prioritize SN's needs in terms of additional training/technical assistance from DANA Consultant. *SN Time Required: 1-2 hours.*
4. DANA Consultant prepares agenda and materials for additional training/technical assistance to be provided to SN Board Members. *SN Time Required: N/A.*

Phase 3

1. Up to three hours of additional training/technical assistance provided by DANA Consultant to SN Board Members at an agreed-upon date(s)/time(s)/location. DANA Consultant will distribute additional training materials to SN Board Members at this time. *SN Time Required: 1-3 hours. (Note: SN will be responsible for securing and paying for the venue and any food or drink related to the additional training sessions.)*
2. Post-training orientation meeting between DANA Consultant, SN Executive Director, and SN Board Chair. The goal of this meeting is to discuss SN's key takeaways, immediate ideas for implementation, future next steps, and go-forward plan for continued progress check-ins by DANA Consultant. *SN Time Required: 1-2 hours.*

3. Program conclusion:

- Summary engagement report created by DANA Consultant with suggested training activities for ongoing improvement delivered to SN and funder, if applicable. *SN Time Required: N/A.*
- Learning report created by SN that identifies learnings and outlines current and planned actions delivered to DANA Consultant and funder, if applicable. *SN Time Required: 2-10 hours.*

Phase 4

1. Up to five hours of post-engagement coaching provided by DANA Consultant to SN during 12 months following program conclusion. *SN Time Required: N/A.*

2. At 12 months after the conclusion of the program:

- DANA Consultant will provide a second online board self-assessment survey to SN Board Members. SN Board Members agree to complete the survey based on current functioning of the Board. *SN Time Required: 1 hour.*
- DANA Consultant collates and summarizes results of self-assessment survey. *SN Time Required: N/A.*
- Check-up meeting will be held between DANA Consultant, SN Executive Director, and SN Board Chair to discuss results of second self-assessment survey, SN's continued Board development activities and accomplishments, and, if applicable, to determine and prioritize SN's new needs in terms of training/technical assistance from DANA Consultant. *SN Time Required: 1-3 hours.*
- Second summary engagement report created by DANA Consultant and delivered to SN (and Third-Party Funder, if applicable). *SN Time Required: N/A.*

* *Consulting Document Assessment materials. All materials will be held in strict confidence:*

- *List of Board members with mailing address, phone contact, email address, term start date, term expiration date, committee affiliation, area of expertise*
- *Detailed overview of committee structures, including members, mission, and meeting schedule*
- *Articles of Incorporation*
- *By-Laws*
- *Most recent audit (or IRS Form 990, if you do not have an audit)*
- *Most recent financials statements presented at your last Board meeting, including Balance Sheet, Statement of Profit and Loss, and Cash Flow Projection.*
- *Minutes of your four most recent Board meetings*
- *Minutes/Reports from all committees for last 12 months*
- *Most recent strategic plan and fundraising plan (if you have them)*

Program Pricing:

Program pricing will vary based on the details of the engagement (i.e. size of Board, number of focus areas, etc.), but average projects require approximately 40 - 50 hours of consulting time, (a portion of which is for planning and administration and a portion of which is for working directly with the client). In all cases, program pricing will reflect a significant discount for DANA members compared to available market rates. This is in part due to (a) DANA's ability to negotiate preferred rates from local and national consultants and (b) the fact that a portion of the cost is being subsidized by DANA as part of its mission.