Nonprofits are pursuing many avenues in order to continue serving our community. Among the most practical are collaborations that can increase services while decreasing costs. Since our initial efforts to support restructuring in 2009, we have heard repeatedly from small to mid-sized nonprofits about an interest in exploring more deeply the prospect of strategic alliances. To that end, we have partnered with LaPiana Consulting to offer agencies the opportunity to assess their organizational readiness for strategic alliance using LaPiana’s Strategic Restructuring Assessment Tool (SRAT). The SRAT, 25-question survey to be completed through candid group discussion among the agency's board and senior staff, offers:

1. a framework for organizations to explore and test their readiness to enter into a strategic alliance or restructuring;
2. agencies a better understanding of the options for partnership,
3. key success factors and challenges for restructuring; and
4. a report with recommendations regarding additional resources the organization can access and steps it can take toward forging a strategic partnership.

The Forbes Funds will sponsor up to 20 agencies to work with LaPiana to:

1. Complete the SRAT;
2. Receive a SRAT Report;
3. Receive a one hour telephone consultation with LaPiana to interpret the report and help the organization develop an action plan based on the findings.

The desired outcome is that participant organizations will make informed decisions about pursuing strategic collaboration, merger, or other restructuring options.

Eligibility

An agency is eligible to apply if it:

- is located in Allegheny County;
- is a 501(c)(3);
- has board and leadership commitment to complete the tool and consultation by March 2013

Interested agencies should submit the SRAT Application and outlined materials by November 26, 2012. For additional information contact McCrae Martino at martino@forbesfunds.org.
ORGANIZATION INFORMATION
Federal Tax ID ____________________________________________
Organization Name _________________________________________
Address ___________________________________________________
City ________________________________ State ________________ Zip Code ______________
Website ___________________________________________________

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR INFORMATION & SIGNATURE
Name ______________________________________ Title ______________________________________
Telephone ________________________________ E-mail ___________________________________
By signing, I agree to complete the SRAT in the manner recommended by LaPiana, participate in individual session with LaPiana to discuss the results and to respond to follow up inquiries from The Forbes Funds regarding next steps.
Signature (required) __________________________________________________________________

BOARD CHAIR INFORMATION & SIGNATURE
Name ______________________________________ Title ______________________________________
By signing, I agree to support the agency in the completion of the SRAT
Signature (required) __________________________________________________________________

FINANCIAL INFORMATION
Annual Operating Budget $ _______________________ Fiscal Year Starting Month ______________
Number of Employees (Full Time) ________ (Part Time) ________
Please describe your agency’s current financial situation:
□ Stable and/or growing
□ Stressed and stretched but able to maintain programs and services
□ Vulnerable: cutting programs and concerned about sustainability.

What percentage of your agency revenue comes from the following sources?
_____ Government
_____ Foundations
_____ Individual donors
_____ Corporate donors
_____ Earned Revenue
_____ Other (please specify)
100% TOTAL
PLEASE SUBMIT THIS APPLICATION FORM IN ADDITION TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

A statement, which must be double-spaced and should not exceed 2 single-sided pages, that includes the following:

- A brief overview of the agency and its programs;
- A clear statement about what is motivating the organization to participate in this initiative;
- Explanation of the outcomes you hope to achieve through participating;
- Brief overview of the organization’s prior experience with mergers, collaborations or other forms of partnerships

Attachments required, but that do not count towards the 2 page maximum are:

✓ A copy of organization’s IRS determination letter
✓ A copy of organization’s most recent financial audit
✓ A copy of organization’s most recent financial statements and cash flow projection
✓ A copy of organization’s current year budget and prior year budget vs. actuals
✓ A list of organization’s board of directors

Applicants must submit 1 copy of the application (hard copy or electronic is acceptable). Please note that The Forbes Funds will not return any applications.

Send complete applications by Monday, November 26, 2012 at 5pm to:

The Forbes Funds
Attn: SRAT Application
Five PPG Place, Suite 250
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-5414
Email: martino@forbesfunds.org.
Strategic Restructuring Assessment Tool

FAQs

What is the self-assessment?

It is a 25-question online survey designed to help nonprofit organizations gain a better understanding of the options for partnership, key success factors and challenges, and overall readiness to undertake a partnership process. The questions are meant to stimulate thinking and discussion about an organization's strengths, assets, and challenges, and how it might leverage, strengthen, and/or address those through both a thoughtful exploration process and – if appropriate – a partnership with another organization.

Who in my organization will need to be involved in completing the self-assessment and how much time will be required?

The self-assessment is best accomplished through candid discussion within the organization, including representatives from the board and senior staff. Seeking various perspectives from within an organization enriches the discussions, and ultimately provides better guidance regarding strategic restructuring options. We recommend that nonprofit leaders (CEO, CFO, Director of Programs, members of the board’s Executive Committee) walk through the questions in the self-assessment as a group (a preview version can be downloaded for this review), recording their answers together and then tasking one person with entering them into the online instrument. After completing the online version of the assessment, the organization will be presented with a customized report designed to give feedback, information and resources specific to the situation.

The discussion of the self-assessment questions should require 2 – 3 hours and the review of the report prior to the meeting with the consultant should require another hour.

Will The Forbes Funds cover staff costs associated with participating in the Initiative?

No. The Forbes Funds contribution is covering the cost of the assessment and the consultation. The Forbes Funds may make additional resources available to support the organization’s exploration of partnerships, but will not fund staff time.

Does participation in this project imply future funding?

Participating organizations are being provided with an opportunity to explore partnerships, but there is no guarantee of future funding from the foundations supporting the initiative.

What can I expect from the consultation following completion of the self-assessment?

Each organization selected to complete the online self-assessment will have a telephone consultation with a La Piana Consulting Partner or Senior Manager with significant experience in assessing and facilitating strategic partnerships. Prior to the meeting, the consultant will review the report generated through the self-assessment, the organization's website, and information included in the application. The meeting between the consultant and organization will focus on the steps outlined in the self-assessment report; the consultant will advise the organization on its readiness to move forward with a partnership strategy and to develop a plan to implement the recommendations in the self-assessment report.

Will the funders receive a copy of my assessment report?

No. The assessment results will be held in confidence by the consultants. Reporting to the funders will only include aggregate data and trends, nothing you would consider confidential.
Do I need to have a prospective partner identified prior to completing the self-assessment?

No. The self-assessment allows you to explore how ready your organization is to implement a partnership strategy. The report and follow-up conversation may also be helpful to you in evaluating what you are seeking in a prospective partner and in developing a list of possible candidates.

My organization has had some initial discussions with another organization about partnership. Should we still consider participating and taking the self-assessment?

Yes. The self-assessment report will identify areas where you may need to spend additional time in internal discussion and in conversation with your prospective partner prior to implementing a partnership strategy. Your potential partner should also consider applying. You should each indicate in your application that you are both applying so that The Forbes Funds makes the connection.