

4-1-2024

## Importance of Nonprofit Board Training on One Organization's Efforts to Raise Funding Through Foundations

Marsha Jackson  
*Walden University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>



Part of the [Public Policy Commons](#)

---

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu](mailto:ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu).

# Walden University

College of Health Sciences and Public Policy

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Marsha Lynn Jackson

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,  
and that any and all revisions required by  
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Gary Kelsey, Committee Chairperson, Public Policy and Administration Faculty  
Dr. Mark Gordon, Committee Member, Public Policy and Administration Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost  
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University  
2024

Abstract

Importance of Nonprofit Board Training on One Organization's Efforts to Raise Funding

Through Foundations

by

Marsha Jackson

MS, University of Phoenix, 2020

BA, University of Phoenix, 2018

Professional Administrative Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Public Administration

Walden University

May 2024

## Abstract

Resource development is a critical component in a nonprofit organization. Effective fundraising strategies may increase nonprofit organizations' ability to achieve philanthropic and development goals. Because board members are a vital element of the fundraising process, it is necessary to develop appropriate fundraising training to improve board members' skills and maximize their confidence in this role. A nonprofit organization (JKL) was selected for this qualitative case study. The study examined what JKL board members know about foundation fundraising to determine the challenges the board members face in meeting their fundraising role. The study also examined the skills and information needed by board members to meet their roles in foundation fundraising, as well as the curricular elements essential to include in a training curriculum on the role of the board in foundation fundraising. Stakeholder theory guided the project in explaining the relationships between organizational stakeholders and their responsibilities. Data were collected through semistructured interviews with nine JKL board members. The interview transcripts were analyzed using keywords from the research questions and inductive coding. Findings highlighted the necessity of training for board members and the challenges that lack of training causes for the organization's efficiency. Findings led to designing a board membership fundraising curriculum to facilitate the capacity of JKL to perform efficient resource development.

Importance of a Nonprofit Board Training on One Organization's Efforts to Raise

Funding Through Foundations

by

Marsha Jackson

MS, University of Phoenix, 2020

BA, University of Phoenix, 2018

Professional Administrative Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Public Administration

Walden University

May 2024

## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	iv
List of Figures .....	v
Section 1: Introduction.....	1
Organization Background and Problem Statement.....	2
JKL Background .....	2
Problem Statement .....	3
Purpose.....	5
Research Questions.....	5
Summary of Data Sources and Analysis.....	5
Definitions.....	6
Significance.....	7
Summary .....	7
Section 2: Conceptual Framework and Relevant Literature .....	9
Literature Search Strategy.....	9
Conceptual Framework.....	10
Literature Review for the Study.....	12
Resource Development in Nonprofit Organizations.....	13
Organization Background .....	16
Summary .....	17
Section 3: Data Collection Process and Analysis .....	19
Practice-Focused Research Questions and Research Design.....	19

Roles of the Researcher and Client Organization .....	20
Role of the Researcher .....	20
Board’s Role in Foundation Fundraising.....	22
Methodology .....	24
Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection.....	25
Strategy for Data Analysis .....	28
Issues of Trustworthiness.....	28
Ethical Procedures .....	29
IRB Approval.....	29
Recruitment.....	30
Consent .....	30
Data Collection .....	30
Participant Check .....	31
Summary .....	31
Section 4: Results and Recommendations .....	32
Data Collection .....	33
Data Analysis .....	33
Findings.....	36
Data Collection and Coding.....	36
Implications.....	37
Deliverables and Recommendations.....	40
Selecting Process .....	42

Training System .....	42
Evidence of Trustworthiness.....	43
Strengths and Limitations of the Study.....	43
Summary .....	44
Section 5: Dissemination Plan and Conclusion .....	45
Dissemination Plan .....	45
Conclusions.....	45
Summary .....	46
References.....	47
Appendix A: Participation Request Email.....	54
Appendix B: Nonprofit Board Approval .....	56
Appendix C: Scope of Work for PAS.....	57
Appendix D: JKL Grant Proposal Writing Policy .....	60
Appendix E: Email Interview Request .....	61
Appendix F: Interview Questions .....	63



## List of Tables

Table 1. Participants' Theme Coding Wording .....	34
Table 2. Participant' Theme Coding Results .....	35

## List of Figures

Figure 1. Autocode Themes.....	34
--------------------------------	----

## Section 1: Introduction

Nonprofit organizations are 501 C3 charitable entities that require external financing to support their mission and activities. In most nonprofit organizations, fundraising (also referred to as development) is used to generate financial resources and ensure operational training of the organization and the achievement of its goals. An enhancement of development-specific expertise allows charitable organizations to support their beneficiaries more effectively. It also helps nonprofit organizations attain funding from philanthropists. Therefore, development is a critical part of any charitable activity that should be fostered in the organization to improve its external financial support (Hanson & Peachey, 2022).

Donors often consider effective and sustainable development strategies indicative of organizational reliability. The success of any fundraising campaign, particularly foundation oriented, depends on the expertise of people engaged in the promotion of the process. The focus on foundation fundraising is predetermined by its major role in the context of philanthropy interest and funding. In the United States in 2017, support for thousands of nonprofit organizations reached almost \$67 billion (Columbia University, 2019). A foundation is an entity that facilitates charitable endeavors by providing grants to associations, institutions, or individuals for scientific, academic, cultural, or other objectives. Although most foundations are associated with the provision of grants, some may engage in direct charitable activities or initiatives.

Having developed a sound understanding of communication with foundations, a charitable organization boosts its chances to receive funding. Representatives of a

nonprofit organization play significant roles in funding development by endorsing the organization through promoting and advocating its agenda and policies to potential patrons. The success of these efforts yields rewards and generates substantial funding, assisting the nonprofit organization in attaining its long-term and short-term objectives. The purpose of the current qualitative case study was to prepare the leadership of JKL (pseudonym) for new approaches to fundraising and to strengthen the board of directors' capacity to raise support from a foundation by improving board members' expertise. This study investigated the nonprofit board members' knowledge gaps and JKL strengths to develop a board training program that would enable the board to play a more significant and influential role in foundation fundraising. The study examined nonprofit board members' challenges in fulfilling their responsibilities in the foundation's fundraising efforts. The essential skills of board members were also studied. The study was intended to provide evidence regarding the competencies that JKL board members must possess to carry out their foundation fundraising responsibilities effectively. The research also analyzed the curricular elements to be featured in a nonprofit board of directors training to ensure effective foundation fundraising.

## **Organization Background and Problem Statement**

### **JKL Background**

JKL is a nonprofit organization founded in 2019 in a major southern city in the United States. JKL has been pursuing the goal of ensuring health equity in a southern U.S. community with a focus on addressing environmental pollution. The organization's mission is to combat environmental, socioeconomic, and racial disparities through

instruction, collaboration, policy advocacy, and reciprocity. JKL visualizes the community as a place where Black, Latina, and Indigenous residents have a full range of social and economic options to support their development. Additionally, JKL encourages the city-elected officials to change the racial zoning in Black and Brown communities. In this section, I provide the research problem, purpose, and significance of the study for the organization and the greater community, including the two research questions that guided the study.

### **Problem Statement**

When seeking funds, charitable organizations may focus on two kinds of donors: individual and institutional. Each fundraising strategy comes with its challenges. Therefore, fundraising should be well-planned and carefully managed to be successful. Nonprofit organizations can focus on writing grant proposals and seeking funds from governmental or corporate donors to increase the efficiency of attracting resources. Individual donations are received predominantly through annual and quarterly campaigns and major donor fundraisers. Board members tend to acquire training on creating proposals and strategies to attract individual donations, whereas obtaining institutional support might be neglected. However, the scope of difference between individual and institutional approaches becomes pronounced in the case of foundation fundraising. The latter includes support from grant-making organizations including community foundations, company-sponsored corporate foundations, donor-advised funds, and international organizations (Columbia University, 2019). Given the financial capacity of

these types of grant-making entities, the role of foundation fundraising cannot be overlooked.

JKL faced two issues. First, the board lacked sufficient knowledge of the resource mobilization for foundation grants. Second, the organization did not possess the adequate knowledge to complete grant proposals, which hindered the achievement of its mission. The organization needed to assess its current board strengths to support foundation fundraising. The organization also needed to engage people knowledgeable in developing grant proposals to enhance the chances of winning support from foundation staff and the board of trustees. Improvement in foundation fundraising would allow JKL to ensure the sustainable functioning of its administrative and operational activities dealing with environmental pollution.

The analysis of scholarly literature illustrated a lack of appropriate research on foundation fundraising activities. This appeared to be a similar situation for JKL. This professional administrative study (PAS) investigated JKL's efficiency and potential challenges in foundation fundraising activities. Most scholarly publications related to fundraising as one of the nonprofit developmental activities focused on inactive initiatives, exposing the need for more relevant approaches to increasing the efficiency of financing charitable organizations. The current qualitative case study addressed the research gap in institutional foundation fundraising activities to contribute to a better understanding of grant writing processes.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this PAS was to focus on strengths and gaps in what JKL board members know and prepare a board training so the board could play a more meaningful and influential role in foundation fundraising. The curriculum development would recommend the training skills and elements necessary for the board's training. The PAS also explored the challenges nonprofit board members face in meeting their role in the organization's fundraising. The study further documented the skills board members should have to fulfill their roles in foundation fundraising. Finally, the study looked at the elements essential for being included in the curriculum for a nonprofit board of directors training to ensure effective foundation fundraising.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

RQ1: What skills, gaps, and strengths does the JKL board of directors possess in meeting their role in foundation fundraising?

RQ2: What curriculum elements are essential to include in a JKL nonprofit board of directors training to ensure effective foundation fundraising?

The results of the study were used to create a board training curriculum related to the role of the board members in foundation fundraising.

### **Summary of Data Sources and Analysis**

This qualitative study included conducting primary data collection and analysis. The study used primary data sources to obtain firsthand information. These sources offered up-to-date and pertinent data designed to meet the aims of the study and answer

the research questions. Data were gathered via semistructured interviews with the members of the JKL board that allowed me to explore the individual experiences and views of the JKL board members (see Greening, 2019). The collection of primary data focused on identifying the board of directors' skills, gaps, and strengths related to foundation fundraising. The data were analyzed using coding and thematic analysis with NVivo program. With the consideration of JKL as the case study, data were collected to provide an in-depth analysis of the organization. Section 3 provides a thorough explanation of the data collection and analysis process.

### **Definitions**

In its operational processes, JKL uses two key terms, developmental and ecological racism, to illustrate its strategic vision. During 3 years of fighting a recycling company in the courts, JKL spent considerable resources on lawyers and court costs. After defeating the opposition, JKL required additional financing to support environmental projects. Developmental activity was vital to support further projects dedicated to the well-being of the local community.

Another operational term widely used by JKL is environmental racism, which the organization is currently fighting against. People engaged in the JKL environmental safety practice believe that that because their local community consists of people of color, this increases the probability of different illegal activities related to the environmental pollution of their geographical area (Martinez, 2020). Completing the project focused on removing the toxic pollutants, and JKL continued to fight against other environmental problems their local community faced.



### **Significance**

Study outcomes narrowed the existent gap in practical knowledge on increasing the effectiveness of foundation fundraising for JKL. Findings may also be relevant and helpful for similar nonprofit organizations in the larger community. The focus on board members' roles in grant writing may help JKL address challenges in seeking funds from foundations. The study findings may also facilitate the provision of training for charitable organization boards to improve their skills in mobilizing resources from institutional investors. Recommendations for devising a grant-writing strategy comprise the managerial implications of the study.

### **Summary**

In this section, I outlined the research focused on improving proposals for foundation fundraising. The study aimed to determine what JKL board members know about foundation fundraising and what elements are necessary for enhancing their competencies. Another objective was to explore the challenging and successful cases of conducting fundraising campaigns. The study was conducted in a specific context with JKL as a case study. The PAS included an exploratory qualitative design to achieve research goals using primary data. Semistructured interviews with JKL board members provided primary data. Data were analyzed using the thematic approach. The study contributed to the existing academic and practical knowledge of grant writing, which may be used to increase the efficiency of development activities conducted by charitable organizations. The data gathered were necessary for providing an in-depth analysis of JKL as the organization under consideration. Section 2 provides the conceptual

framework and a review of previous literature on the study subject that served as the foundation of the study.

## Section 2: Conceptual Framework and Relevant Literature

Foundation fundraising is a vital part of the activity conducted by nonprofit and charitable organizations because it provides necessary sources to ensure its operations meet its mission and goals (Columbia University, 2019). According to MacQuillin and Sargeant (2019), foundation fundraising requires much from a nonprofit organization, including knowledge, skills, and experience from people involved. Solicitation is one of the most actively used forms of foundation development, which provides organizations with higher one-time payments compared with individual donations (Sargeant & Shang, 2016). The current study was dedicated to exploring successful grant application strategies in the context of an environmental charity. For this purpose, JKL was chosen as the case study company (see Appendix A).

Section 2 provides an overview of the conceptual approach and background for the study focused on exploring developmental challenges and the role of the board. The first section provides a discussion of the concepts and theories that grounded the research. The second section highlights the organization's background context by discussing JKL's needs for the PAS and the institutional context of the research.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

A critical review of the literature grounded the research. I explored of previous research on the study topic and developed an initial understanding of the challenges and strategies related to the grant proposal writing process. For the literature review analysis, I used the following search terms and combinations: *grant proposal writing*, *fundraising activity*, *environmental justice*, and *board training*. The research covered academic

publications published in peer-reviewed journals from 2017 to 2022. The research included all information related to the study area in the critical literature review to make the research exhaustive and comprehensive. This step ensured that all relevant knowledge about the study area was explored and critically analyzed to build a foundation for the study (see Appendix C).

### **Conceptual Framework**

The research was grounded by concepts included in the shareholder theory of corporate governance. The importance of the theory was a shareholder-centric approach. The theory equates to a clear view of the role of business in the community, which compels leaning toward the idea that managers have the sole responsibility of serving the interests of shareholders in the best possible way. One of the concepts of the theory is that the organizational board is responsible for delivering control and monitoring the organization's activity (Goel, 2018). The theory further views profit maximization as the only duty of the corporation, which is a traditional view of the purpose of a corporation. Klarner et al. (2021) argued that when describing a new conceptual framework for board governance, the organization's board is responsible for ensuring efficient management of activities dedicated to helping the organization achieve its goals in a highly competitive environment. Shareholder theory correlates the perspective on the position of business in society that supports the vision that managers' only professional duty is to serve most efficiently on the shareholders' behalf, using the resources at their disposal to grow the wealth of the latter by maximizing profits. According to the shareholder theory, such conduct pursued within the rules of law and without deceit or fabrication would benefit

society (Castelo, 2013). In this context, corporate social responsibility is perceived through the prism of economic profit making.

However, several assumptions should be considered while exploring the role of the organizational board in the development and developmental activities. The interests of the organization's board and other stakeholders may differ, resulting in cases in which the organization's board members start protecting their claims over the organization's interests (Gastrillón & Alfonso, 2021). Further, the organization's board has better access to information than other stakeholders due to the information asymmetry. In this case, organization's board members may have more opportunities to act in their personal interests. As a result, a conflict of interests may arise, which should be properly considered when evaluating the results of the organization's board activity.

Shareholder theory needs to consider the possibility that shareholders' and corporations' perspectives on business management may differ. For instance, corporations pursue multiple objectives (e.g., encouraging entrepreneurship, innovation, and building communities). Social corporate responsibility has been attracting more attention recently, as illustrated by an increasing interest in ethical investment funds (O'Connell & Ward, 2020). Such a tendency suggests that current and potential shareholders not only seek to attain financial gains but also are interested in making their organizations socially responsible (Kyriakou, 2018). Therefore, The shareholder value that has become fundamental to current business management ought to correspond to other stakeholders' interests, commonly referred to as an enlightened approach to shareholder value maximization. In the context of foundation fundraising activity, these

concerns may be expressed by donors and other institutional investors engaged in providing funds for charitable purposes. Developmental practice can be defined as a practice that a charitable and nonprofit organization uses to seek individual or institutional contribution (mainly financial) to support its mission and cover administrative costs. Therefore, by providing financial resources, donors show their support for the organization's goals (Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, 2022). The financial resources include cash payments, gifts, and grants to cover staff salaries, operational costs, and expenses to achieve charitable objectives.

The shareholder theory concept was integrated into the current study. With the theory, there is an expectation that corporations will prioritize reducing and mitigating conflict between shareholders. Shareholder theory further posits that corporate managers must consider the interests of all stakeholders. In this context, shareholder theory promotes an effective and efficient way of managing corporations in a highly competitive environment (Jan et al., 2022). The nonprofit accountability literature recognized stakeholders; theoretically, its approaches were grounded in fundraising ethics (MacQuillin & Sargeant, 2019). The stakeholder management approach to ethics in fundraising foregrounds the intentional examination of stakeholders in the fundraising process. Following this theory, the corporation's charitable mission must align with ethical fundraising activities.

### **Literature Review for the Study**

The review of the literature centered on the two research questions. The search encompassed the role of the board in foundation fundraising and on training board

members to actively engage in foundation fundraising. Key terms and phrases for the search included words used in the research questions. The literature was reviewed to build on the theoretical framework and ideologies for the current qualitative study.

## **Resource Development in Nonprofit Organizations**

### ***Background***

An analysis of the latest academic publications revealed there is a significant number of studies about foundation fundraising. For example, Shang and Sargeant (2016) indicated that the perception of donors about public radio does not impact their feelings regarding their identity or the effectiveness of the foundations they fund. Further, organizations that have been gaining increases in their funding from donors have been concentrating on their teams, the structures of their foundations that support the teams, and the creation of a culture that encourages learning in the organization (Sargeant & Shang, 2016). At the same time, the fundraising code of ethics should protect not only the donor but also the public and organizations that represent them (MacQuillin & Sargeant, 2017). However, there were few peer-reviewed journal articles on the role of the board in foundation fundraising. Moreover, existing research in this area was limited by a narrow focus. For instance, Van den Besselaar and Mom (2022) conducted a linguistic analysis of the grant proposal texts focusing on the language of the grant application. Based on the analysis of grant abstracts, project descriptions, and curriculum vitae, Van den Besselaar and Mom were able to highlight critical text characteristics that may increase the probability of receiving a grant. However, grant application efficiency depends on

various factors that should also cover grant representation. In this case, the sole linguistic improvements cannot deliver sufficient support to the fundraisers.

Most of the foundation fundraising research was dedicated to the context of educational institutions, thereby providing specific theoretical frameworks for raising funds for educational purposes (Herrero & Kraemer, 2020). However, there was a lack of research on environmental charitable projects, which also illustrated a gap. As a result, I considered exploring JKL's characteristics in grant proposal efficiency. The primary focus of the JKL charitable practice was the dedication to the environmental issues appearing in the local community (Southern Sector Rising [SSR], 2022). The organization's representatives defined their practice as an activity dedicated to preventing environmental racism in their community. Environmental racism can be defined as environmental injustice that occurs in local communities (Montague, 2022). Due to environmental racism, communities are disproportionately burdened with environmental hazards and live in toxic environments. For instance, local communities may live near power stations, sewage works, mines, or landfills, which make them suffer from health issues. Low-income communities face these problems more frequently; however, the factor of race is also one of the most reliable indicators of environmental racism cases.

### ***Current State of Practice***

The JKL focus on fighting environmental racism complies with the latest global trends and can be used by the organization to strengthen its position. According to Abalo et al. (2022), racial justice centering is one of the growing global philanthropy trends. For instance, the Ford Foundation and the WK. Kellogg Foundation have identified a



commitment to advance racial equity and social justice in their local communities. Analysis of the current state of practice in raising funds for environmental charitable projects allows the conclusion that similar to other charitable organizations, environmental charitable organizations should comply with the same principles of efficient development. Recommendations are based on increasing the organization's capacity to advertise themselves and promote the need to deal with their environmental goals. Haris et al. (2022) agreed that globally there is a high interest in environmental issues and their effective resolution. As a result, charitable organizations should act in a highly competitive environment advertising their objectives for potential donors.

### ***Strategies and Standard Practices to Address the Problem***

In general, multiple recommendations are the guide to the general development activity. Chan (2016) discussed several forces critical to ensuring successful development practice. The first is provided by the professionals who are represented by organizational boards, development officers, or alumni. As Chan argued, developmental professionals bring their expertise, skills, and personal contacts to the chosen charitable organization to contribute to its developmental activity. These people align their attitudes, values, habits, and preferences with the organizational goals and build networks with philanthropic organizations to gain support for the chosen organization's mission. To increase the efficiency of their activity, these development professionals must be supported by the organization's leaders, which will allow for developing an effective team to balance the special organization's needs and interests.

The second force is related to the institutional support delivered to charitable organizations. To be effective in their developmental activity, development professionals must develop a clear understanding of history, traditions, rituals, already gained results, and other aspects of the organizational activity. Third, while developing their developmental practice, fundraisers should also consider environmental forces such as the current state of the economy and public attitude toward the focused problem. In this case, people engaged in the developmental practice must use their expertise to collaborate with different institutions that can contribute to the achievement of the organization's goals. Similarly, Herrero and Kraemer (2020) insisted on the need to develop an appropriate understanding of the problem that will be chosen as a focus by the charitable organization. Herrero and Kraemer argues that some fundraisers lack of appropriate understanding of the importance of developmental goals and therefore fail to develop efficient developmental strategies. It is necessary to develop a clear vision of how development should be organized within an organizational context.

### **Organization Background**

#### ***Summary of the Organization's Need for Greater Insight Into Foundation***

#### ***Development Efforts***

JKL is a nonprofit organization located in a major southern U.S. city with 11 volunteer board members and two staff employees. The primary purpose of this organization is to get rid of toxic pollutants and a toxic company causing harm to the residents, illegally created in the community of a major southern U.S. city. These toxic pollutants appeared in 2018 when a recycling company illegally dumped hundreds of tons

of roofing materials near the community in the southern city (SSR, 2022). As a result, people started to suffer from toxic evaporation and the spoiled appearance of the local environment. JKL appeared as a group of local stakeholders representing people interested in ensuring the well-being of the community. To ensure the achievement of its organizational goals, JKL needs to constantly raise funds. However, due to a lack of knowledge and experience, JKL cannot ensure efficient fundraising practice, which limits their ability to fight for environmental preservation.

### ***Institutional Context***

JKL is dedicated to improving the lives of people who live in the southern U.S. state. When the organization was founded in 2019, its major focus was to get rid of the toxic pollutants in the community near residents' homes. Later, when this process was completed and the pollutants of the six-story pile of debris were removed, JKL expanded its mission to the provision of environmental justice to all citizens living in its communities. The organization declared the provision of its services to the southern communities in the state. JKL was created as a nonprofit organization and is managed by a group of people representing community stakeholders. JKL combines local people, professionals, organizers, and other people interested in ensuring the well-being of their local community. The executive board of JKL consists of the residents of the southern U.S. state.

### **Summary**

This section provided an overview of the conceptual approach and background for the research focused on exploring foundation fundraising challenges and the board's role

in this process. This research was grounded in the stakeholder theory of corporate governance. The chosen framework helped me explain the relationships between the organization's board and other stakeholders. Given the limited research on the board's role in increasing developmental efficiency from institutional donors, I focused on conducting a JKL organizational case study. The study analyzed the scope of JKL nonprofit board members' knowledge about foundation fundraising to determine their challenges in fulfilling their fundraising role. JKL addresses two critical phenomena: developmental and ecological racism. These concepts illustrate the institution's strategic vision to address inequality and promote sustainability in multiple contexts. Section 3 outlines the methodology employed for the study to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

### Section 3: Data Collection Process and Analysis

Data collection for this study were obtained from primary sources. A literature review of books, published articles, journals, and websites containing critical information congruent with the study's objectives was also conducted. The primary data collection method was semistructured interviews with open-ended questions. After data collection, there was an application of qualitative data analysis, including coding participants' responses to identify themes and patterns.

In this section, I provide a detailed description of the research design implemented to investigate grant-writing challenges and recommendations for creating a successful development strategy for nonprofit organizations. The study focused on skills and practices that board members should gain to write a successful grant proposal for their organizations. The study was conducted in the context of JKL, a U.S.-based nonprofit organization engaged in environmental preservation (SSR, 2022). The study included practice-focused research questions that were developed from existing evidence and published outcomes of previous research. Furthermore, the section highlights archival and operational data used for the study and provides evidence generated for the study (see Aung et al., 2021).

#### **Practice-Focused Research Questions and Research Design**

The background of the study served as the basis for the literature review related to the developmental activities of nongovernmental organizations. The review indicated that most publications focused on educational institutions (Columbia University, 2019). Therefore, there was a research gap in addressing fundraising-specific activities, their

efficiency, and related challenges of attaining grants for environmentally nonprofit organizations. The current study focused on two research questions to address the challenges and find suitable strategies for nonprofit organizations. The first addressed the board members' roles in ensuring their organizations receive funding. The second addressed curricular elements integral to board training programs for adequate financial development. Findings were used to produce a board training curriculum that related to the role of the board members in providing an efficient fundraising strategy to their organization.

Answering the research questions required the identification of potential challenges to the grant-proposal writing process, and successful cases were used to create effective development strategies that would constitute a relevant curriculum. The context of the chosen case study required using two key terms to maintain the research focus. The first was developmental activity, which was defined as ensuring financial support for organizational operational and strategic activities. The second was environmental racism, which describes an illegal activity related to environmental pollution of geographical areas mainly populated by people of color.

### **Roles of the Researcher and Client Organization**

#### **Role of the Researcher**

As a member of several nonprofit organizations, I had noticed that the preparation of a well-structured grant proposal might pose difficulties. Few peer-reviewed journal articles focused on the board's role in foundation fundraising, and published research on foundation fundraising was narrowly focused. In addition, many nonprofit organizations'

projects do not receive their desired funding because of the inability to write effective grant proposals. I discussed this topic with my chair, and we concluded that there was no conflict of interest because I had no stake in the full approval of the board of authority. I like JKL because it aims to ensure environmental conservation and pollution reduction. JKL also fights climate change. My role in the study was to collect and analyze data and present the findings. This role enabled me to identify what board members know about foundation fundraising and what they need to know, which enabled me to develop a curriculum that would provide board training in resource development. I liked the study topic because it would promote effective resource sourcing and management among board members of JKL. The participants were welcoming and ready to provide needed information to achieve the purpose of the study.

My motivation was for the board members to understand the importance of their role in foundation fundraising. The organization I cochair had to dissociate from a member because they shared the funding we received and our balances with other organizations, emphasizing the need for a fundraising code of ethics. However, the viewpoint that I was interested in was increasing funds in JKL. One potential bias in the study was selection bias, which involved selecting participants through a rigorous approach that prevented conflicts of interest. Selection bias undermines the possibility of proper selection, thereby sabotaging the credibility of the study findings. Additionally, researcher bias was mitigated by asking only the questions listed in the interview protocol. The study also faced question bias, which was mitigated by avoiding inappropriate questions that influenced respondents' answers. I also mitigated potential

bias by creating a journal reflecting my thoughts before, during, after the interviews. The last threat was reporting bias, which was addressed by providing the results obtained from analysis as the output without inserting my personal opinions. I also employed member checking to improve credibility and enhance trustworthiness of the findings.

### **Board's Role in Foundation Fundraising**

Nonprofit organizations address some of the most taxing social problems globally. A substantial portion of nonprofit organizations' success depends on external financial assistance to support essential work (Chapman et al., 2022). Nonprofit marketers and the board of directors are entitled to promote charitable giving. The focal responsibility of a nonprofit board is to guarantee that the organization has adequate resources to achieve its mission (Columbia University, 2019). For this reason, board associates have to partake in the fundraising endeavors of an organization. Some nonprofit organizations expect their board members to contribute extra time and effort to display their support for the community and to serve as an example for other patrons.

Furthermore, board members play a defining role in soliciting funds, in-kind contributions, and other services from individual donors, organizations, and businesses. Fundraising pertains not only to financial solicitations but also to attracting resources and talent to the organization to further its mission. The board members need to understand their organization's activities to be helpful in raising foundation funds, know the marketing techniques to foster fundraising, and have good communication skills to establish and maintain strong relationships with current and potential contributors.



To answer the research questions, I used several sources of evidence. The first was the literature review. Analysis of methods, findings, and conclusions provided by scholarly articles helped me develop the theoretical background for the study, thereby strengthening its empirical nature. The other source of evidence was the data provided by public funding entities and grant-making organizations.

The board of directors of any nonprofit institution formulates the organizational characteristics and directs its values essential for funders. Three categories (new entrants, returning players, and sustained players) are used to categorize nonprofits. Significant evidence showed that repeated players are in a better position to acquire funds from foundations or any other independent or individual donors (Wooddell, 2020). Funding and credibility are essential for productive donor relationships. The board of any organization seeking funds from foundations has to build appropriate organizational characteristics consistent with funders' ideologies. Having adopted the right to design the foundation funding application, the charitable organization increases its chances of receiving financial support.

The board is responsible for formulating strategies to build a diverse base of support for the nonprofit organization. MacIndoe (2021) noted that establishing a broad donor base is critical to ensure a nonprofit organization's long-term viability. This aspect comes with the responsibility to learn fund development, which necessitates knowledge of the science and art of fundraising. Such studies asserted the core responsibility of nonprofit organizations' boards of directors, which is the creation of policies and a brand image that will attract corporate funding.

Considering the board's responsibility of serving essential purposes and performing critical agency functions, scholars noted that boosting the capacity of a nonprofit charitable organization's training and education is necessary. Millesen et al. (2019) outlined the necessity for better training opportunities, targets, deliberate and customized hiring procedures, effective communication, more job characteristics, precision regarding board-expected outcomes, better awareness of best practices, and the need to add value and space to foster openness and collaboration among board members and between the board and staff. These aspects broaden the board's capacity to deliberate on various issues and create policies that expand the funding base. Training the board in these elements helps in financial management, thereby increasing credibility and donor trust, which are the priorities of foundation funding.

### **Methodology**

The current study included qualitative data from primary data sources. Semistructured interviews were conducted with the board members of the case-study organization to collect primary data. The participants were members of the organization's board who participated in developing grant proposals for the case study organization to ensure the relevance of collected data to the organization's problem. A pilot interview confirmed the validity of semistructured interviews as a source of evidence, as recommended by Aung et al. (2021). This pilot interview was conducted with a single person chosen from a list of prospective participants. After making necessary corrections to the interview protocol, I interviewed the remaining participants.

Several biases may have limited the credibility of the study:

- Interviewer bias is related to the respondents' answers being biased due to the researcher's appearance, expression, disposition, or relation with the respondent.
- Question bias is based on inappropriate questions that can influence respondents' answers (e.g., negative, loaded, double-barreled, or leading questions).
- Reporting bias is related to expressing the data analysis results based on the researcher's personal beliefs, attitudes, culture, or other factors.

### **Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

#### ***Participants***

The respondents for the interview process were chosen based on the purposive sampling method and contacted through emails requesting their participation (see Appendix A). The technique was chosen to recruit respondents based on my judgment. The researcher's judgment is fundamental for determining proper inclusion criteria to identify suitable participants. The researcher's knowledge of the population and peculiarities of the study enhances the validity and reliability of the research findings. Also, the researcher's expertise facilitates the identification of potential biases or errors in the data collection, thereby enhancing the validity and reliability of obtained outcomes. I suggested that all 11 board members participate in the interview process because the board is small. Overall, respondents were selected using the following inclusion criteria: The person is currently engaged in the organization's development activities, is a member

of the executive board, is English speaking, is established in a nonprofit organization, and has agreed to participate in the research. I conducted nine interviews.

During interviews, respondents were asked the following questions:

1. As a JKL board member, what is your understanding of the role board members play in foundation fundraising?
2. What challenges do you face in meeting your foundation fundraising role?
3. What information and/or skills do you need to meet your foundation fundraising role?
4. What fundraising information skills, etc. would you like included in a nonprofit board of directors fundraising training to be effective in assisting staff with foundation fundraising?
5. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about this topic?

### ***Procedures***

The data collection procedure was semistructured interviews. The interview sessions lasted approximately 60 minutes. I conducted each interview separately with each respondent to ensure a better communication process. Semistructured interviews include open-ended questions, and depending on the respondents' answers, researchers can change the questions' flow and formulation to enhance the interview process's efficiency. The use of semistructured interviews allowed me to explore respondents' personal experiences regarding the process of developing their organization's funding. Due to the nature of the semistructured interviews, I was able to gain advantages of the flexible and structured interview process. A pilot interview was conducted to ensure the

validity of the interview protocol (see Aung et al., 2021). Considering the comparatively small number of participants who matched the inclusion criteria, a pilot interview was conducted with a single respondent. Further interviews were scheduled after changes to the interview protocol were made.

The primary data collection period was 4 weeks. During the first week, I conducted a pilot interview to ensure the protocol's validity. The following week was dedicated to making necessary improvements to the interview protocol. During the final 2 weeks, interviews with the remaining board members were conducted. The interviews were recorded and transcribed to ensure the most accurate data analysis.

### ***Protections***

In this PAS, I utilized several strategies to ensure the ethical protection of the participants in the administrative research. The study developed a data retention plan to describe guidelines and practices for collecting, maintaining, and processing primary data received during the interview process. Respondents will be asked to sign an informed consent form which provides the necessary information about the research purpose, data collection process, ability to withdraw from participation at any stage of the research process, and contact information. Respondents were also informed to ensure their privacy; the research masked their names and the names of their organizations (See Appendix D). Appropriate implementation and explanation of these privacy guidelines were allowed permitting participants to withdraw participation (Aung et al., 2021).

I received approval from their research institution before conducting the data collection process as it is necessary to receive confirmation from Walden's Institutional

Review Board (IRB). Walden University's approval number for this study is 07-12-23-1057533. It expires on July 11, 2024.

### **Strategy for Data Analysis**

The interviews were recorded using Zoom on my computer. The recorded interviews were transcribed in a written (typed) format to simplify further analysis and ensure proper data interpretation. The descriptive methodology served as a preferred type of data analysis. Electronic data is stored on my password-protected personal computer and will be kept for five years. The final report includes all information about managing outliers and missing information to address the practice-focused questions. The analysis was a qualitative data analysis method based on identifying and analyzing themes, codes, and patterns that appear in the respondents' answers (Sundler et al., 2019). Based on their comparison and investigation of common themes provided the overall conclusion. (Peel, 2020). Common themes or patterns were identified using the most mentioned words and ideas (Tie et al., 2019). The critical literature review provides the theoretical background to develop preliminary themes to strengthen the data analysis.

### **Issues of Trustworthiness**

The issues of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were considered to bolster the study's trustworthiness. The study analyzed each participant's interview to boost credibility and establish trustworthiness. The study provides a comprehensive description of the participants and the methodologies employed to improve the ability to apply the findings to other contexts and enhance the transferability of the study. The study also produced a precise and thoroughly documented research

design, which includes comprehensive explanations of the study's objectives, methodologies, and procedures for collecting data to ensure dependability (Stahl & King, 2020). This level of transparency enables other researchers to replicate and verify the research procedure, eliminating any potential reporting bias; the study presents the data obtained from the output without any alterations. Confirmability is improved by thoroughly verifying the data at every stage of data gathering and processing (Nowell et al., 2017). The verification guarantees that the data gathered, and the following analysis are grounded in the respondents' points of view and experiences rather than influenced by biased interpretations or personal prejudices of the person conducting the research. The research study involved participants checking, referring to actively involving study participants by discussing the research outcomes with them and obtaining their feedback and suggestions (Candela, 2019). This approach enables participants to validate the precision of interpretations, enhancing the confirmability of the research. Reflexivity refers to recognizing and thoroughly analyzing the researcher's personal biases, values, and preconceived notions during the entire study procedure. Researchers can enhance the confirmability of their research by minimizing subjectivity through self-awareness of their own opinions.

## **Ethical Procedures**

### **IRB Approval**

Walden University's approval number for this study is 07-12-23-1057533. It expires on July 11, 2024.

**Recruitment**

Once IRB approval was received, the power of social media platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter was utilized to recruit participants for this study. Professional networks were also leveraged, seeking referrals of potential participants who met the eligibility criteria. The social media post included with the IRB application for recruiting participants was emailed to potential participants.

**Consent**

A clear understanding of the study's aims and anticipated findings was provided to all participants involved. A consent form outlining the study's nature, benefits, and possible drawbacks was emailed to each participant to ensure they understood the nature of the study, their rights as participants, and the risks and benefits of participation.

Participants were given time to review and ask questions about the consent form. Participants were informed if they understood the study and wished to volunteer, please indicate your consent by replying to the email with the words ' I Consent. The study and data collection began once the consent forms from the participants were acknowledged. The participant's consent forms are stored securely to protect participant confidentiality.

**Data Collection**

One-on-one interviews were conducted with participants via Zoom. The participants were ensured all data collected was securely stored in a manner that protected the participant's confidentiality. The interviews were recorded with the participant's permission, and a standardized interview guide was used to ensure consistency across interviews. Open-ended questions were asked to encourage detailed



and thoughtful responses. Data is stored and will be archived for five years on my password-protected laptop. I am the only person with access to the data and my computer. After five years, all data will be destroyed, including handwritten notes, if any, and recordings.

### **Participant Check**

After transcribing and analyzing the interview data, participants were contacted two weeks after the interview for a 30-minute Zoom or phone call to confirm the accuracy of the interpretations and gather additional feedback on the interview process if necessary. Participants demonstrated or clarified their responses, and my takeaways from the interviews were offered via phone or email according to the participants' preferences. Necessary changes were made to the data analysis and interpretation based on the participant's feedback.

### **Summary**

This section presents the research design I utilized to provide recommendations for creating a successful funding development strategy and training curriculum for the JKL non-profit organization. The data analysis researched and reviewed the qualitative data collected from primary and secondary sources in considering the nature of the study. In the course of the research, ethical considerations are taken into account. The research included several strategies to protect the organization's and participants' identities. Given that the issues of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were considered, the research also covered techniques to improve trustworthiness. I provided a list of devices to record the participant's interviews for analysis and synthesis.

#### Section 4: Results and Recommendations

JKL is a nonprofit organization focusing on health equity issues, particularly environmental pollution issues. The organization's primary fundraising problem was the need for more diversification of the resources and the insufficient training of the organization's board members to arrange this diversity. The knowledge gap resided within the theoretical foundation of communication skills, the ability to structure and present the campaign's purpose, and the need for a systematic vision of the organization's long-term goals. The current study's data collection focused on five interview questions:

1. As a JKL board member, what is your understanding of the role board members play in foundation fundraising?
2. What challenges do you face in meeting your foundation fundraising role?
3. What information and/or skills do you need to meet the foundation fundraising role?
4. What fundraising information skills, etc. would you like included in a nonprofit board of directors fundraising training to be effective in assisting staff with foundation fundraising?
5. Is there any additional information a JKL board member would like to share about this topic?

The purpose of the study was to define how training of board members in planning, arranging, and running fundraisers influences the stability of the financial aspects of the organization's operation. The findings addressed the practice-focused results based on interviews. The academic resources suggested the importance of the

training in implementing the company's fundraising strategies. Hommerová and Severová (2017) argued that fundraising is a dynamic activity that depends on evolving techniques and methods. Therefore, up-to-date training of the board members is essential in using the most effective ways to ensure the organization can achieve its goals.

Several studies demonstrated the power of training. Maqbool et al. (2019) asserted that systematic training aimed at developing fundraising skills and teaching effective techniques positively influences an organization's ability to meet its financial goals. In addition to the theoretical framework, the current study relied on the results of the interviews. The efficiency of the fundraising campaign can be increase by implementing creative marketing strategies, which include social media and online campaigns to ensure sustainable participation of a more significant number of donors (Nageswarakurukkala et al., 2019).

### **Data Collection**

Nine environmental justice nonprofit board members were selected to participate in the qualitative research for the data collection. The participants agreed to a 30-minute interview recorded by Zoom. The interview responses were reviewed with the participants within 48 hours. Once the responses were approved, the interviews were analyzed through NVivo using keywords from the research questions.

### **Data Analysis**

The participants' interviews were analyzed through NVivo using keywords from the research questions, such as challenges, foundation, foundation fundraising, fundraising, member, membership, nonprofit board, organization, roles, and skills. Figure



**Table 2***Participant' Theme Coding Results*

Keyword	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Interview 4	Interview 5	Interview 6	Interview 7	Interview 8	Interview 9
Challenge	0	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	0
Foundation	2	2	2	1	1	3	1	1	1
Foundation on fundraising	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	0	0
Fundraising	6	7	6	3	7	3	2	4	2
Member	4	3	6	4	1	4	4	2	2
Membership	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	2	0
Nonprofit board	0	1	1	3	0	2	1	1	2
Organization	1	2	0	1	2	4	1	1	2
Roles	2	0	3	4	0	0	0	0	1
Skills	5	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	0

## **Findings**

### **Data Collection and Coding**

Qualitative data from nine interviews created the basis for the results in an attempt to answer the research questions of the current study. The interviewees agreed to participate through the Zoom platform. Each interview lasted 25–30 minutes and included five open-ended questions for the participants to answer. Each interviewee consented to participate in the study with the condition of preserving confidentiality. The participants were asked five questions regarding their experience in their organization's fundraising campaigns and their training and skill set. Participants were also asked to share their suggestions regarding the organization's fundraising strategy and available training options for the board members on methods and techniques of efficient fundraising campaigns. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcriptions were sent to the interviewees within 48 hours. Collected data were analyzed through the framework of the research's questions.

Within 48 hours following the interview, each set of answers was transcribed and delivered to the interviewees to obtain their consent for further analysis. Upon receiving and ensuring that confidentiality was followed, I read the interviews again to identify themes and tendencies and proceeded to the data coding. The text was then uploaded to NVivo for a narrower analysis and coding. Inductive coding was applied in the data analysis based on this method's higher efficiency to ensure better flexibility with answers to open-ended questions (see Vears & Gillam, 2022). Unlike deductive coding, which includes a set of options, inductive coding provides wider possibilities for interviews with

open-ended questions. The answers were run through the NVivo tool for automatic analysis and color coding of the common themes and trends in all the answers given by the participants.

## **Implications**

### ***Interview Question 1***

Interviewees 4 and 8 admitted they did not understand the roles of board members clearly. Their perception of the roles was vague, and they admitted training with precise definitions of the roles would have a positive effect on their overall efficiency.

Interviewee 2 stated the roles were understood. Interviewees 3, 5, and 6 mentioned that the role included strategic planning and execution, particularly through advocating for the organization's mission, chairing events, recognizing fundraising opportunities, and presenting the mission of the organization attractively. Interviewee 3 stated "and some of our board members for my organization understand that part of their role in not only guiding strategy, and helping staff and the executive director determine next steps for the organization." Interviewees 1 and 9 pointed out that the board members were expected to understand the organization's mission and be eloquent enough to present it to potential donors. Interviewee 1 stated "I believe my understanding is that one, the borders are in place to help guide the organization in the right direction towards his mission, vision, and values, helping the board to maintain compliance."

### ***Interview Question 2***

The lack of knowledge about defining and prioritizing fundraising opportunities was mentioned as the core challenge by Interviewees 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 9. Interviewee 6

stated “I think the biggest challenge for us, to be honest with you, is identifying the funding opportunities in the foundation space.” In addition, the recruitment of new board members was defined as a challenge by Interviewees 3 and 5. Interviewee 3 stated “at that time trying to recruit board members, the board, larger the board, you know, we had bylaws and a limit on how many people could serve on the board.” The equality and diversity among board members was a significant issue based on the replies of Interviewees 2, 4, and 9. Interviewee 5 addressed the lack of resources such as space. Interviewee 7 stated that miscalculations in needs were a problem.

### ***Interview Question 3***

The interviewees were more confident and provided their understanding of the necessary skills. Interviewees 1 and 6 pointed out the importance of organizational skills, ability to plan and prioritize, and time management. Interviewee 1 also included networking in the list of the necessary skills. Interviewee 1 stated “I think, the skills needed are to, like really be able to network very well.” Interviewees 2, 5, 6, 8, and 9 emphasized the importance of communication, storytelling, and interpersonal skills. Interviewee 2 stated “you need to have like those interpersonal skills that are just being able to talk to people.” According to Interviewee 3, possessing knowledge in the field is an important skill. Software skills, such as financial documentation, skills to write for grants, and resourcefulness were defined as important by Interviewees 2, 5, 6, 7, and 9. Interviewee 2 stated “we need to be able to, like organize and keep track of who we have been talking to.” Interviewer 6 stated “so making sure information is up to date. Certainly, grant writing experience.” Interviewee 9 also emphasized the necessity to have



a passion for the mission of the organization and eloquence to express it clearly to the audience or potential donors and set a mindset as necessary for a board member.

#### ***Interview Question 4***

Communication and interpersonal skills were mentioned the most often. Interviewees 2, 3, 4, 5, and 9 emphasized the need to include specific training on developing these skills into the standard training curriculum. Interviewee 5 stated “I think going back to storytelling, training, and then also just a general like an explanation of how foundations, how grants and how individual donors work.” According to Interviewees 1, 6, and 8, knowledge of the fundraising process and strategies, including writing for the grant and negotiating with the donors, are necessary skills. Interviewee 1 stated “so I think grant writing and event planning are some good training.” Along with these skills, the training curriculum should also cover networking, leadership, soft skills, and a deep understanding of the organization’s mission and the goal of the fundraising initiative, as stated by Interviewees 1, 3, 5, 7, and 8. Interviewee 3 reported the need to be able to talk to different people in different audiences, and listening skills are important, as well. Interviewer 1 stated “so networking skills are important. And not just networking to meet people, but networking, and being able to keep a database of people.”

#### ***Interview Question 5***

The participants shared their experiences and expressed inconsistency in the organization’s operation. Remarkably, three interviewees addressed the exclusivity of the financial position of the board members, which did not influence the training curriculum directly, but it contributed to general insights about the evaluation of the existing policies

from the board members' perspective. The biggest concern was the mandate financial contribution, which was negatively evaluated by Interviewees 2, 3, 4, 7, and 8.

Interviewee 3 stated "I think it can be, you know, suggested that, you know, people if, you're able and you would like to contribute, you know, that's one thing, but to make it a requirement. I don't I don't agree with that on a volunteer board." Another dimension of the same problem was discomfort from asking for the contribution. Interviewee 5 stated "I agree, I've had mixed feelings about asking our board for money." According to Interviewee 9, favoritism, as well as lack of diversity and exclusivity, harmed the organizational operations. Interviewee 6 asserted that the difficulty with the officials was an issue that negatively impacted the organization. All nine interviewees agreed on the necessity of developing personal skills such as resilience, a specific mindset, and understanding the responsibilities.

### **Deliverables and Recommendations**

Based on the insight obtained from the interviews, I identified several emergent themes. First, gaps in communication skills led to difficulties in arranging fundraising and executing events to meet organizational goals. The need for training was expressed in all interviews, and the difference was determined only by the variety of skills in the curriculum. The interviewees pointed out the connections between the existing challenges and the lack of necessary training. Several studies supported the power of training. Maqbool et al. (2019) asserted that systematic training aimed at developing fundraising skills and teaching effective techniques positively influenced the organization's ability to meet its financial goals. The efficiency of the fundraising campaign could be achieved by

implementing creative marketing strategies, which include social media and online campaigns to ensure the sustainable participation of a more significant number of donors (Nageswarakurukkala et al., 2019). Training with a wide range of curricular subjects may positively influence the board members' efficiency and lead to a higher productivity of the organization as a whole.

Exclusivity and lack of diversity were important themes that emerged after the analysis of the interviews. Imperfect policies led to favoritism and replacement of the objective decision-making with family connections. These aspects resulted in loss possibilities when the professional approach was less valued as compared to personal connections. At the same time, strict financial demands regarding financial contributions and membership fees excluded individuals who could have contributed to the organization's goal but could not join it due to financial restrictions.

Difficulty in clear understanding of the organization's mission and clear goal of the fundraising event appeared as another theme in the interviews. The participants pointed out the negative impact on the board members' efficiency. Interviewees 1, 2, 5, 6, and 9 stated that the understanding of the mission and the ability to clearly articulate it to the audience and potential donors were crucial for the success of a fundraising event and the organization's efficiency. The interviews relied on the organization's mission in determining their readiness to face the challenges. Therefore, understanding the mission and goal must be an integral part of the training curriculum and should be updated per the fundraising goal of a specific fundraising event.

**Selecting Process**

Based on the collected results, JKL is recommended to amend its approach to selecting board members, as well as the training philosophy. Board members should possess proficient social, interpersonal, and networking skills. Next, existing board members should have access to the latest, most effective fundraising strategies. The board members should receive systematic training, including analyzing past cases and evaluating both effective and ineffective methods. In such a manner, the interviews confirm the connection between the organization's efficiency in conducting fundraising events and the level of the board members' proficiency in fundraising strategies.

The academic literature emphasized the importance of training and skill development in a nonprofit organization to conduct fundraising campaigns successfully. Based on the current research results, the training implementation recommendations will be given to JKL.

**Training System**

The second recommendation is to develop a training program for new board members. Ensuring the effective utilization of new talents and ideas is a condition of the organization's successful operation. While the selection process and the recruiting will be founded on traditional human resource concepts, training will ensure that a candidate understands the organization's vision, goal, and philosophy. The board members conclude the above based on the process and personal perception. The training program will allow for a systematic representation of the organization's core values, initial goal,

and vision, and provide practical methods and techniques, including the most recent and fruitful approach, to reach the goal set by the organization.

### **Evidence of Trustworthiness**

The results from the analysis of interviews demonstrated the inconsistency in the company's policies. As a result, exclusivity and lack of diversity became an issue, which negatively impacted the organization's efficiency. Amending the membership fee policies and focusing on inclusivity will contribute to meeting organizational goals. As a result, gradual progress lies within the fundamental policies.

### **Strengths and Limitations of the Study**

The current research has its strengths and limitations. Among the strengths, the study addresses a real-life systematic issue: a lack of an internal training system and internal recruiting. The research results can be converted to other nonprofit organizations disregarding the goals of their organizations. In addition, the research demonstrates the importance of nonprofit organizations' activities for the community and society through addressing complicated issues and implementing various approaches to solve them.

The research has limitations. The interviews did not include the opinion of the community members concerning the effectiveness of board members. Ideally, a comparison between non-trained and trained activities would be beneficial for evaluating the importance of training programs. The research requires the implementation of social and psychological aspects and consequentially needs a research team to study and evaluate all aspects of training regarding the efficiency of fundraising skills. Finally, a small sample size and the subjective nature of interviews are also significant limitations.

The research can be given to the organization to develop effective training programs. This data will be valuable for human resource specialists and operational managers. The study can be presented to a broader audience but with the simplification of the results. Sharing the information will motivate the community members to engage in the educational process and eventually join the organization.

### **Summary**

The research contributed to the theoretical foundation for the need for board members' training programs for nonprofit organizations. JKL received affirmative data that the training has a positive effect on the organization's efficiency and a confirmation of this data from the members. Additionally, Interview Questions 2, 3, and 6 provided insights about the challenges, and understanding of necessary skills and ideas from the participants, which can constitute a foundation for the training curriculum.

## Section 5: Dissemination Plan and Conclusion

### **Dissemination Plan**

The results of this study highlighted the necessity of training for the board members and the challenges that the lack of it causes for the organization's efficiency. The study also narrows the skills that should be presented in the training curriculum. A comprehensive presentation, including background information, results, recommendations, and a detailed implementation plan, was delivered to the JKL leadership and management.

### **Conclusions**

Following the presentation of the study, JKL leadership and management were encouraged to engage in further research, if necessary. The audience for this research included JKL, as well as similar nonprofit organizations looking to increase the efficiency of the organization's board members. Several factors are essential to successful development practices, according to the literature review. The first is exerted by professionals, including the organization's board members and the development officers. The developmental professionals use their experience, talents, and personal connections to support the chosen nonprofit organization's developmental efforts. This is consistent with the interview findings, which indicated that for the board to be successful, members must possess the necessary skills that can be acquired through proper training. Interviews indicated a clear need for training that covers a broad range of curricular disciplines. This would enhance the board members' performance and result in increased output for the organization.

## **Summary**

This study demonstrated a connection between the lack of necessary skills and the efficiency of the nonprofit organization. Appropriate training is a solution to the lack of skills and knowledge to conduct the activities properly and effectively by the board. The training curriculum should cover leadership, networking, communication, software, grant writing, and presentational skills, as well as organizational and time management. Along with improving proficiency, JKL is advised to amend certain policies to eliminate exclusion and increase diversity.



## References

- Abalo, T., Bauer, K., Behrens, T., Brenner, E., Couturier, J., DeLeeuw, J., Engwis, A., Hawver, T., Hoekstra, K., Layton, M., Martin, T., Moody, M., Peterson, K., Eizinger, M. S., Spicer, T., & Yore-VanOosterhout, A. (2022). *11 trends in philanthropy for 2022*. Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy. [https://johnsoncenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/11-Trends-for-2022.pdf?utm\\_source=Johnson+Center+e-Newsletters&utm\\_campaign=1b924a7824-FieldNotes-Jan2022&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_e86623ff86-1b924a7824-398964973&mc\\_cid=1b924a7824&mc\\_eid=2e32aeaf08](https://johnsoncenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/11-Trends-for-2022.pdf?utm_source=Johnson+Center+e-Newsletters&utm_campaign=1b924a7824-FieldNotes-Jan2022&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_e86623ff86-1b924a7824-398964973&mc_cid=1b924a7824&mc_eid=2e32aeaf08)
- Aung; K., Razak, R., & Nazry, N. (2021). Establishing validity and reliability of semi-structured interview questionnaire in developing risk communication module: A pilot study. *Edunesia: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan*, 2(3), 600–606. <https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v2i3.177>
- Candela, A. G. (2019). Exploring the function of member checking. *The Qualitative Report*, 24(3), 619–628. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2019.3726>
- Castelo, B. M. (2013). Shareholder theory. In S.O. Idowu, N. Capaldi, L. Zu, & A.D. Gupta (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of corporate social responsibility* (pp. 2136–2141). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-28036-8\\_31](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-28036-8_31)
- Chan, R. Y. (2016). Studying philanthropy and developmental in the field of higher education: A proposed conceptual model. In H. C. Alphin, J. Lavine, S. Stark, & A. Hocker (Eds.), *Facilitating higher education growth through developmental*

*and philanthropy* (pp. 1–27). IGI Publisher Editors. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-4666-9664-8.ch001>

Chapman, C., Louis, W., Masser, B., & Thomas, E. (2022). Charitable triad theory: How donors, beneficiaries, and fundraisers influence charitable giving. *Psychology and Marketing*, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21701>

Columbia University. (2019). *Guide to foundation fundraising*.

[https://research.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/Foundation\\_Fundraising\\_Guide\\_2019.pdf](https://research.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/Foundation_Fundraising_Guide_2019.pdf)

Fears, D. (2021). *Something to sing about: Shingle Mountain, a giant pile of pollution, finally gone*. Washington Post. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2021/02/26/shingle-mountain-dallas-removal/>

Flannigan-Lewis, E. L. (2019). *Grant-proposal writing as a craft and potential ways to improve grant-proposal writing knowledge and application readiness for students seeking funding assistance attending postsecondary education* (Unpublished thesis). University of Montana. Graduate Student Theses, Dissertations, & Professional Papers. <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/etd/11506>

Gastrillón, G., & Alfonso, M. (2021). The concept of corporate governance.

*Revista Científica “Visión de Futuro”*, 25(2), 178–190.

<https://doi.org/10.36995/j.visiondefuturo.2021.25.02R.005.en>

Goel, P. (2018). Implications of corporate governance on financial performance: An analytical review of governance and social reporting reforms in India. *Asian Journal of Sustainability and Social Responsibility*, 3(1), 1–21.

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s41180-018-0020-4>

Greening, N. (2019). Phenomenological research methodology. *Scientific Research Journal*, 7(5), 88–92. <https://doi.org/10.31364/SCIRJ/v7.i5.2019.P0519656>

Hanson, A., & Peachey, J. (2022). Athletic development: An in-depth analysis of the challenges faced and strategies utilized in the NCAA division II athletic landscape. *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*, 15(1), 101–124.

<https://doi.org/10.17161/jis.v15i1.15609>

Haris, S., Firuza, M., & Ariffin, R. (2022). Exploring the roles of environmental non-governmental organisations in the context of Malaysian climate change governance. *International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning*, 17(2), 513–521. <https://doi.org/10.18280/ijstdp.170216>

Herrero, M., & Kraemer, S. (2020). Developmental as organisational knowing in practice: Evidence from the arts and higher education in the UK. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 24(4), Article e1673.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/nvsm.1673>

Hommerová, D., & Severová, L. (2018). Fundraising of nonprofit organizations: Specifics and new possibilities. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 45(2), 181–192. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01488376.2018.1479678>

Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. (2022, January). *The giving environment: Understanding how donors make giving decisions*.

<https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/1805/27562/UnderstandingHowDonors2022.pdf>

- Jan, A. A., Lai, F. W., Draz, M. U., Tahir, M., Ali, S. E. A., Zahid, M., & Shad, M. K. (2022). Integrating sustainability practices into Islamic corporate governance for sustainable firm performance: From the lens of agency and stakeholder theories. *Quality & Quantity*, 56(5), 2989–3012. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-021-01261-0>
- Kang, E., & Hwang, H. J. (2021). Ethical conducts in qualitative research methodology: Participant observation and interview process. *Journal of Research and Publication Ethics*, 2(2), 5-10. <https://doi.org/10.15722/jrpe.2.2.202109.5>
- Klarner, P., Yoshikawa, T., & Hitt, M. A. (2021). A capability-based view of boards: A new conceptual framework for board governance. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 35(1), 123-141. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amp.2017.0030>
- Kyriakou, S. (2018). Advisors may lose clients if they ignore ethical investments. *FTAdvisor*. <https://www.ftadviser.com/investments/2018/10/03/advisers-may-lose-clients-if-they-ignore-ethical-investments/>
- MacIndoe, H. (2022). Understanding foundation philanthropy to human service organizations: Funding stratification in an urban grants economy. *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance*, 46(3), 202-223. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23303131.2021.1964010>
- MacQuillin, I., & Sargeant, A. (2019). Fundraising ethics: A rights-balancing approach. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 160, 239-250. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3872-8>
- Maqbool, N., Razzaq, S., Hameed, W. U., Nawaz, M. A., & Niaz, S. A. (2019). Advance

fundraising techniques: An evidence from non-profit organizations. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 7(1), 147-157.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.52131/pjhss.2019.0701.0077>

Martinez, A. (2020). *In the shadow of “Shingle Mountain,” southeast Dallas neighbors fight to dismantle a legacy of environmental racism.* The Texas Tribune.

<https://www.texastribune.org/2020/12/09/southeast-Dallas-shingle-mountain-environmental-racism/>

Millesen, J. L., & Carman, J. G. (2019). Building capacity in nonprofit boards: Learning from board self-assessments. *Journal of Public and Nonprofit Affairs*, 5(1), 74-94.

<https://doi.org/10.20899/jpna.5.1.74-94>

Montague, D. (2022). Systemic environmental racism exposed. *Nature Sustainability*, 5, 462–463. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-022-00875-y>

Nageswarakurukkala, K., Goncalves, P., & Moshtari, M. (2019). Improvind fundraising efficiency in small and medium sized non-profit organizations using online solutions. *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*, 32(3), 286-311.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10495142.2019.1589627>

Neuendorf, K. A. (2018). Content analysis and thematic analysis. In *Advanced research methods for applied psychology* (pp. 211-223). Routledge.

<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315517971-21>

Nowell, L.S., Morris, M.J., White, E.D., Moules, J.N. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16,

1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>

- O'Connell, M., & Ward, A. (2020). Shareholder theory/Shareholder value. *Springer Nature*.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340620401\\_Shareholder\\_TheoryShareholder\\_Value](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340620401_Shareholder_TheoryShareholder_Value)
- Peel, K. (2020). A beginner's guide to applied educational research using thematic analysis, *Practical Assessment, Research and Evaluation*, 25(2), pp. 1-16.  
<https://doi.org/10.7275/RYR5-K983>
- Sargeant, A., & Shang, J. (2016). Outstanding fundraising practice: How do nonprofits substantively increase their income? *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 21, 43-56. <https://doi.org/10.1002/nvsm.1546>
- Shang, J., & Sargeant, A. (2016). Social norms and fundraising: The trade-off between enhanced donations and donor identity esteem. *Journal of Nonprofit & Public Sector Marketing*, 28(4), 351-363.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10495142.2016.1237924>
- Sohn, E. (2019). Secretes to writing a winning grant. *Nature*.  
<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03914-5>
- Southern Sector Rising [SSR]. (2022). *Our mission*. <https://southernsectorrising.org/our-mission/>
- Stahl, A.N., & King, J.R. (2020). Expanding approaches for research: Understanding and using trustworthiness in qualitative research. *Journal of Developmental Education*, 26-28. <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/expanding-approaches-research-understanding-using/docview/2467348904/se-2>

- Sundler, A., Lindberg, E., Nilsson, C., & Palmér, L. (2019). *Qualitative thematic analysis based on descriptive phenomenology*. John Wiley & Sons.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/nop2.275>
- Tie, Y., Birks, M., & Francis, K. (2019). Grounded theory research: A design framework for novice researchers. *SAGE Open Medicine*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/2050312118822927>
- Van den Besselaar, P., & Mom, C. (2022). The effect of writing style on success in grant applications. *Journal of Informetrics*, 16(1), 101257.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2022.101257>
- Vears, D. F., & Gillam, L. (2022). Inductive content analysis: A guide for beginning qualitative researchers. *Focus on Health Professional Education: A Multi-Professional Journal*, 23(1), 111-127.  
<https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.455663644555599>.
- Wooddell, M. (2020). Fundraising and resource development. In *Teaching Nonprofit Management*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Young, J., & Nobes, A. (2022). *Research proposal and grant writing for development impact*. Inasp.  
<https://cscuk.fcdo.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CSC-WS-2022-Session-2.pdf>
- Young, J., & Nobes, A. (2022). *Research proposal and grant writing for development impact*. Inasp. <https://cscuk.fcdo.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CSC-WS-2022-Session-2.pdf>

## Appendix A: Participation Request Email

**Purpose**

Email to nonprofit agency requesting permission to use organization in dissertation research. Emails, board members, and nonprofit names are masked in the final paper.

█-Client Agency Support for my Dissertation Subject - Yahoo/Dissertation Approval Email

**From:** MARSHA JACKSON <█>

**To:** █ Wed, Apr 27, 2022 at 1:52 PM

Hi Board Members:

I am completing my Prospectus to Focus my Dissertation on █ and the working title of: “*A Study of █ Fundraising Plan and Board Training.*”

My research questions will be the following:

1. How does increasing the █ Board Member’s role and involvement increase the possibility of enhancing the development agenda with relation to funding of the organization?
2. What curriculum elements are important to include in a nonprofit board of directors training curriculum on the role of the board in development?

I am writing to ask if you can provide a document or email message from █ to show the willingness to participate in the study which is required to be for the Program Director’s review followed by the committee member’s review and approval.

If you agree, I need the email or document as soon as possible.

I finally received the approval from my chair to submit for final approval but need the approval from █ to use the organization as a subject, and also, if approved, will probably ask you guys for comments and interviews for my dissertation.

Thanks,

**Marsha Jackson**

Doctoral Candidate, Public Administration



MBA/HRMC, CERT/G HRM, BSB/M  
Notary Public

---

Appendix B: Nonprofit Board Approval

**Purpose**

Approval from Nonprofit organization Board Members approval to use the organization in the research. The Board members and emails are mask in final paper.

Marsha's project

From: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Date: Friday, April 29, 2022 at 06:37 PM CDT

I have taken the liberty of attaching your names to this document so Marsha can submit her paper.

[REDACTED]

- Document 68 (3).pdf

104.1kB

[REDACTED]

To whom it may concern:

The Board of Directors for [REDACTED] do hereby approve Marsha Jackson to use our organization for her project titled “*A Study of Fundraising Plan and Board Training.*” in her PAS.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

Secretary

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Co-Chair

## Appendix C: Scope of Work for PAS

<b>1. Client Information</b>	
<i>Name of Client Organization</i> ████████████████████	<i>Name of Student/Researcher</i> <b>Marsha Jackson</b>
<i>Name of Client Contact Person</i> ██████████	<i>Email of Client Contact Person</i> ████████████████████
<i>Client Contact's Mailing Address</i> ████████████████████ ██████████	

<b>2. Project Description</b>
<p>The project focuses on addressing ██████████ lack of sufficient knowledge regarding resource mobilization for foundation grants.</p> <p>This qualitative study aims to determine the challenges ██████████ board members face in meeting their foundation fundraising role. It examines the board members skills needed to fulfill their role in foundation fundraising and identifies the curriculum elements essential to include in a nonprofit board of directors training. For this study, you are invited to describe your experiences in a foundation fundraising role and the required skills for a board training curriculum.</p> <p>Having learned how to complete grant proposals, the given organization will have a better chance to achieve its mission.</p>

<b>3. Tasks to be completed by Researcher</b>
<p>To handle the public administrative problem highlighted above, information for this research will be obtained from a literature review and interviews with structured and open questions. ██████████ and board members name will be masked in the research.</p>

<b>4. Assistance (including data) to be provided by Client Organization</b>
<p>Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the board members of ██████████ ██████████ to obtain preliminary data. Study participants are among members of the organization board that already participated in developing grant proposals for the case</p>

study organization to ensure the relevance of collected data to the organization's problem.

<b>5. Deliverables for the Client Organization</b>
--

The findings of the study will be presented in the form of a report and a presentation. The final report will include all information about managing outliers and missing information to address the practice-focused questions. Based on data comparison and investigation of common themes in the interviews, the overall conclusion will be provided.
--

**Terms of confidentiality and compliance:**

In all reports (including drafts shared with peers and faculty members), the student is required to maintain confidentiality by removing names and key pieces of information that might disclose an Institution's/individual's identity or inappropriately divulge proprietary details. If the client organization wishes to publicize the findings of this project, that is the organization's judgment call.

The student will publish the study in Proquest as a doctoral capstone (with site and participant identifiers withheld). The study is based upon the academic research completed by the student as well as the data provided by the Client Organization and/or collected by the student as outlined in the above agreement. If the data collected include interviews, interview recordings and full transcripts will be shared with any interviewee (upon request), and the student will provide opportunities for clarifying previous statements. Transcripts with identifiers redacted may be shared with the doctoral student's university faculty, peer advisors, and site leadership (upon request).

The student will not use these data for any purpose other than the project outlined in this agreement. The doctoral student is responsible for understanding and complying with all of the Client Organization's policies and regulatory requirements.

The Code of Conduct in the current Walden University Student Handbook and the ethical requirements for IRB compliance will also govern the research completed by the student. Students are required to uphold professional principals in fulfilling their roles as consultants to client organizations. In addition to confidentiality requirements and protections as outlined above, students also will protect the integrity of the Walden University and the Client Organization and exhibit professional conduct at all times.

<b>6. Project Approval &amp; Signature</b>	
--	--

<i>Signature of Client Contact Person</i>	<i>Date</i>
---	-------------

<i>Date</i>
-------------

2/2/2023
----------

<i>Name of Client Contact Person</i> ██████████	
<i>Title of Client Contact Person</i> <i>Secretary</i> ██████	

## Appendix D: JKL Grant Proposal Writing Policy

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide JKL board members with guidance on their grant proposal writing training.

### **Training**

The purpose of this policy is to provide JKL board members with guidance on their grant proposal writing training.

### **Training Curriculum**

The training curriculum should entail the following elements:

- Planning for grant writing
- Online application for grant proposal and basic technology use
- Effective management of time
- Writing of proposal outlines
- Strategies for writing compelling grant proposals.

## Appendix E: Email Interview Request

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the email is to request approval to interview the respondent discussing the Importance of a Nonprofit Board Training on One Organization's Efforts to raise funding through Foundations.

### **Subject Line**

Interview request for the Importance of a Nonprofit Board Training on a Nonprofit Organization's Performance Study.

### **Email Message**

This qualitative study aims to determine the challenges the board members face in meeting their foundation fundraising role. It examines the skills needed by board members to fulfill their role in foundation fundraising and identifies the curriculum elements essential to include in a nonprofit board of directors training. For this study, you are invited to describe your experiences in a foundation fundraising role and the required skills for a board training curriculum.

### **About the Study**

- One 60-minute zoom or phone interview that will be recorded
- Semi-structured interviews are in the form of open-ended questions
- To protect your privacy, the published study would use redacted names

### **Volunteers must meet these requirements**

- 18 years old or older
- A member of the Executive Board

- Currently engaged in a nonprofit organization
- Currently engaged in the organization's development activities
- Agreed to participate in the study

This interview is part of the doctoral study for STUDENT, a DPA student at Walden University. Interviews will take place during January 2023.

Please respond to this email to let the researcher know of your interest. You are welcome to forward it to others who might be interested.



## Appendix F: Interview Questions

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the form is to provide a list of interview questions for the participants.

### **Study Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to determine the challenges the board members face in meeting their foundation fundraising role.

- As a JKL board member, what is your understanding of the role board members play in foundation fundraising?
- What challenges do you face in meeting your foundation fundraising role?
- What information and/or skills do you need to meet your foundation fundraising role?
- What fundraising information skills, etc. would you like included in a nonprofit board of directors fundraising training to be effective in assisting staff with foundation fundraising?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell me about this topic?