

A Seat at the Table

Connecting Government and Nonprofits to Strengthen Our Communities and Nation

Communities and families still feel the crush of COVID, an uncertain economy, racial injustice, and a changing climate. They also trust nonprofits to strengthen our nation in times like this.

Despite its scale and unique understanding of community needs, nonprofits are often on the “outside looking in” when federal-level policies are decided. While we are the “frontline” in making our communities vibrant and more equitable, our voice is not always heard by policymakers.

The Executive Order on Strengthening the Nonprofit Sector and its Partnership with the Federal Government and forthcoming legislation give us the best opportunity we have had to make certain nonprofit expertise and experience is at the table. Permanently.



Why we need a seat at the table

- ★ Communities trust the nonprofit sector – the greater role nonprofits play in people’s lives, the more trusted they become – and this trust is the necessary precondition for making sustainable change possible. This is an invaluable asset we bring to government partners.
- ★ Nonprofit organizations are the third largest employer of the private workforce, employing more than 12 million people in the US and representing 5.9% of overall GDP. Yet, unlike the small business sector, we have no permanent voice in federal government.
- ★ More efficient collaboration with the federal government means nonprofits nationwide can spend less time explaining to lawmakers the importance and uniqueness of the sector and more time fulfilling their missions.
- ★ Nonprofits have the expertise, the reach, and the trusted status needed to drive hard systemic change. No sector is closer to the realities or people on the ground or has as deep an understanding of the problems communities face.
- ★ Support for the Seat at the Table initiative will directly lead to better policy formulation and implementation, more support and opportunity for people in the U.S., and stronger, more equitable communities.
- ★ Nonprofits need infrastructure and resources they can plan on year after year. Leaders from across the sector can have these critical discussions and seed lasting change at the highest levels of government so that the important work of nonprofits can scale and become more sustainable.



The proposal

White House Office on the Nonprofit Sector	Ensures policies are designed with an understanding of the sector’s capacity to realize critical priorities in a way that maximizes the benefit to communities
Interagency Council	Streamlines coordination across offices and departments in the Administration
Advisory Board	Community-based and national nonprofit and philanthropic leaders that will consult with policymakers

Additional asks

- ★ Bureau of Labor Statistics to collect and disseminate quarterly economic data on the nonprofit sector
- ★ Make it easier for charities to register and fundraise in multiple states
- ★ Improve access to national service programs for organizations representing/serving underserved communities
- ★ Streamline the federal government’s contracting and granting process with the nonprofit sector
- ★ Clarify rules on nonpartisan civic engagement and advocacy

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