

The Changing Face of the Nonprofit Economy

A Brief Annotated Internet Reference List

Resource List compiled by Dr. David Renz
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The following lists a selected set of web sites that provide useful content that I use to monitor changes and trends in the nonprofit economy, and how nonprofit organizations and their boards and executives are navigating these changes. This is merely a sampling of sites that provide useful information – it is not intended to be a comprehensive listing of all sites that offer useful and relevant information.

The Bridgespan Group (www.bridgespan.org)

- Very useful special section of site on “Managing in Tough Times” (which has both survey research and resource articles)
- Excellent set of research reports and articles compiled by topic
- Also see Bridgestar, site of Bridgespan’s sister organization that focuses largely on human resource and executive leadership succession issues (www.bridgestar.org)

Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University (www.philanthropy.iupui.edu)

- Multiple research resources, especially relevant for research on giving trends (nationwide) and the nonprofit sector in Indiana. Especially relevant for nonprofits is the information reported from the **Giving USA** research (accessible from this page).

The Chronicle of Philanthropy (www.philanthropy.com)

- News coverage of trends and issues, plus selected surveys and other resources that offer timely (although less in-depth) status information on the changing nonprofit economic environment.

GuideStar (www.guidestar.org)

- Guidestar is largely a reporting and watchdog site about nonprofits but it also provides a number of resources of value to operating agencies, including a few surveys that document the flow and nature of private giving in the current economy.

Foundation Center (www.foundationcenter.org)

- National compendium of articles on the sector in its Philanthropic News Digest
- The “Focus on the Economic Crisis” resource section, which includes research reports and supporting documents, foundation reports, and related resources
- Check out the research section of the Foundation Center’s site to get current and recent information about foundation practices and grantmaking and how affected by the economy.

Independent Sector (IS) (www.independentsector.org)

- General information on sector trends, especially with regard to regulatory and policy issues at the national level, plus some general statistics.
- IS site is especially valuable in ascertaining the impact of federal legislation, including the scope and nature of impacts on the sector of federal stimulus legislation.

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) (www.irs.gov/charities)

- The IRS provides an increasingly large number of informational resources designed to help nonprofits understand and comply with the U.S. federal tax code and associated rules and regulations. Most IRS data is processed and reported via the Urban Institute National Center for Charitable Statistics, but the basic information is provided at this site.

National Council of Nonprofits (NCN) (www.ncna.org)

- This association of nonprofits and state nonprofit associations (formerly known as National Council of Nonprofit Association) has a site with an extensive set of research and information resources.
- Preeminent resource on this site is the set of resources “Nonprofit Economic Vitality Center: A Resource Center for Nonprofits Coping with Uncertainty.”
- Also available on this site is a state-by-state itemization of publications, research reports, and recent changes to law related to nonprofit oversight, regulation, and accountability.

Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF) (www.nonprofitfinancefund.org)

- NFF, a national nonprofit that focuses largely on consulting and financial assessment for nonprofit organizations, provides a useful set of tools and resources on this site (including some useful survey and research reports on recent economic challenges). Be sure to look at resources in the web site section labeled “Dealing with the Recession.”

Nonprofit Risk Management Center (www.nonprofitrisk.org)

- The Risk Management Center offers an extensive set of resources, programs, publications and tools for nonprofits and their boards to use as they assess the best ways to manage risk and ensure that they are effective stewards of their resources. This site offers sample policies (including a sample whistle-blower protection policy) and a useful interactive on-line risk assessment tool for nonprofits.

Nonprofit Quarterly (www.nonprofitquarterly.org)

- This quarterly nonprofit management magazine provides a lot of practical management and organization development advice for small- to medium-sized nonprofits, including articles on addressing the issues and challenges of the current economic environment. A new feature: the Quarterly highlights news and statistics on the changing sector and the impact of the economy on nonprofits in its online NPQ NEWSWIRE (available free).

Nonprofit Times (www.nptimes.com)

- Another of the web sites that chronicles the current trends and issues confronting nonprofits and reports on surveys and other resources that document the state of the sector.

Opportunity Knocks (www.opportunityknocks.org)

- This site focuses on the jobs and workforce issues related to the sector and nonprofit organizations, and includes recent information on the economy and the nonprofit workforce.

Urban Institute/National Center for Charitable Statistics (www.nccs.urban.org)

- The NCCS site provides the most comprehensive set of data and reports on the changing face of the nonprofit sector in the U.S. The data is not current, since NCCS data and reports are developed from IRS filings of nonprofits and the time lag means that there is nothing to date on the site about the impact of the current economy (NCCS reports now discuss the sector as of 2006 and early 2007). The site will be an authoritative source of trend information regarding this recession in a couple years, when today’s data becomes available.
- The NCCS “parent” center, the Urban Institute Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy, is an excellent resource for research on selected issues and problems that challenge the nonprofit sector.

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