

A New Chapter in BoardSource's Evolution: A Shift Towards Community

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Collective wisdom leads to recommended practices
- Innovative solutions are found within impacted communities
- Centering race and intersectionality will advance equity
- Relationship leads to results
- Responsive and tailored resources build expertise

Explore BoardSource's new theory of change and shift towards community engagement.

Introducing BoardSource's New Theory of Change

Today, I'm excited to share BoardSource's new theory of change, marking a significant milestone in our leadership transition and organizational transformation.

Before sharing where we are heading, I'd like to take a moment to reflect on our evolution. For over thirty years, BoardSource has served the nonprofit ecosystem by providing governance resources and technical assistance. In the past, I, like many of you, have relied on BoardSource for my big and small governance questions ranging from board terms to enhancing board culture—and everything

in between. This has been and will remain a cornerstone of our work.

Almost a decade ago, BoardSource embarked on a transformative racial equity journey. We began by focusing internally, ensuring we lived our values, and then making an explicit **commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion** in the boardroom. As part of our thought leadership work, we introduced the **Purpose-Driven Board Leadership** framework, offering a fresh approach to governance.

When Anne Wallestad, my predecessor, announced her departure, our board grounded itself in Purpose-Driven Board Leadership. They approached the leadership transition with a broader focus on what would most benefit the sector, not just our institution. This thoughtful approach laid the foundation for my leadership transition as the first BIPOC leader at BoardSource.

As a long-time nonprofit executive with experience in human rights and civil rights organizations, I am a social justice advocate who believes that the solutions to the most complex issues of our time are found in community. Social movements around the world and many in our sector are community-driven for this reason. Today, I'm excited to share that BoardSource is also moving in this direction, finding solutions within community. Over the last year, we have been shifting our approach to listen and learn from those who are leading, governing, and supporting nonprofit organizations, including chief executives, board members, consultants, funding partners, and other key stakeholders. As we listen, we hear about the countless challenges organizations and boards are facing. We have also heard about the tools being developed and used across our sector. We are humbled and inspired by the brilliance of nonprofit leaders, and we want to amplify their innovative solutions.

What does transformation mean for BoardSource?

Fundamentally, we are shifting to a partnership model where we bring together our thirty-plus years of governance experience with the innovation of our sector's leaders. Historically, our expertise has been carefully curated amongst a select group of governance practitioners. We are now moving towards becoming a listening and learning organization that centers our community and the collective wisdom of our sector.

By listening with humility, systematically, and in new ways, we will develop mechanisms to promote greater dialogue with BoardSource. We will expand our reach by proactively identifying organizations we have not historically served—and will capture their stories, experiences, innovative approaches, and learnings for the benefit of our entire sector. Our resources and tools will be richer, informed by a wide variety of perspectives, and aligned with our governance expertise and the critical needs of nonprofit organizations, chief executives and boards. We will leverage technology to develop innovative content, trainings and practical tools to meet boards and leaders where they are. And, we will remain unwavering in our commitment to racial equity and an understanding that boards are one of the most powerful levers for change.

Key Drivers for BoardSource's New Vision

To realize this new vision, BoardSource will ground itself in four pillars:

- **Listening:** *developing organization-wide mechanisms for gathering data, gleaning best practices, hearing diverse perspectives, and receiving feedback, will expand and deepen our knowledge.*
- **Learning:** *a culture of continuous learning, which seeks new information to evolve and shift thinking, will allow BoardSource to remain at the forefront of current challenges, trends and innovations in governance.*
- **Co-creation:** *by learning from and partnering with those closest to the systemic challenges we aim to address and leverage BoardSource's thirty-plus years of governance experience. We will develop innovative tools and practices that reflect the collective wisdom of our sector.*
- **Expertise:** *expertise rooted in humility, listening, and learning will enable BoardSource's knowledge to be co-created and far-reaching. Our resources will capture the complexity of our continuously evolving field and will deliver tailored solutions to meet leaders where they are.*

Transforming and Empowering the Ecosystem

This work has already begun. Over the past year, we have hosted listening sessions, updated hundreds of resources, and launched a BIPOC Leadership Initiative in partnership with our inaugural cohort. We've also sought feedback in our conversations with many of you.

Transformation takes time, and we are diligently building our internal infrastructure to truly embody this new approach. We anticipate learnings along the way, and believe true transformation requires experimentation and fresh perspectives. We look forward to sharing our learnings and updates with you and hope you will continue to share feedback with us.

The work you do as executives, board members, and supporters of the nonprofit ecosystem, enriches and changes countless lives and communities across our country. You inspire us every day.

Thank you for joining us on this journey. We look forward to deepening our partnership with you and enhancing our support for the work you do.

Share with BoardSource

We'd love to hear from you. Tell us, what exciting developments have you seen happening in our sector? What innovative tools or resources are you using in the boardroom?

