

No Nonprofit Predictions Until Further Notice

12.29.21 | Linda J. Rosenthal, JD



Around New Year's Day 2020, the ubiquitous lists of top ten-or-whatever predictions popped up.

They were all wrong.

That, of course, included ours: [What's Up for Nonprofits in 2020?](#) (January 3, 2020). Promising an end-of-year lookback for accuracy, it wasn't necessary to wait until the final days of December. In [Revisiting Nonprofit Predictions For 2020](#) (November 17, 2020), we tossed in an all-too-true morsel of anonymous humor making rounds on the internet: "There's probably not a single person back in 2015 who got 'what do you think you'll be doing in five years?' right."

Around New Year's Day 2021, there were fewer-than-usual posts and articles about trends and predictions. But most of us had reason to expect, or at least hope, for a linear progression of good and then better and better news. That hasn't happened.

For the foreseeable future, all we can be certain of is ... [uncertainty](#).

No New Normal

Across the American economy, "chief executive officers," according to a CNBC reporter, say that "[any hope of a "return to normal" in 2022 is misguided and volatility will remain a primary ... challenge ... There will be a high level of uncertainty....](#)" There's no choice, many leaders conclude, but to "[see opportunity](#)" in "any changes already made during Covid...."

To a large extent, that's been our focus in this blog throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021. Within reason, a nonprofit need not slavishly adhere to rigid and traditional forms and practices. The organizational structure can bend and change much more than most members of the nonprofit community believe. Policies and practices long etched in stone can be surprisingly

malleable, adapting to (long-overdue) reform.

Change and Flexibility

By way of example, check out just a sprinkling of our 2021 posts in this “anything but normal” year.

- [*Endowments: Dipping in During Emergencies*](#) (January 14, 2021)
- [*Nonprofits: Update Your Scenario Planning*](#) (February 10, 2021)
- [*Nonprofit Mission in the Age of Coronavirus*](#) (February 11, 2021)
- [*Nonprofits in Crisis: Alternatives to Closing*](#) ([*Part One*](#), February 16, 2021; [*Part Two*](#), February 23, 2021; [*Part Three*](#), March 9, 2021; and [*Part Four*](#), March 10, 2021)
- [*Updating Nonprofit Corporate Policies*](#) (March 16, 2021)
- [*Charitable Crowdfunding: Then and Now*](#) (May 5, 2021)
- [*Reviewing Donation-Related Policies*](#) (May 18, 2021)
- [*Shared Leadership: A Primer for Nonprofits*](#) (July 29, 2021)
- [*A Look at Two Pandemic-Era Nonprofit Mergers*](#) (August 27, 2021); [*Exploring the Nonprofit Merger Option*](#) (September 9, 2021) and [*Nonprofit Mergers: A Bit More Exploring*](#) (September 14, 2021)
- [*Funder-Grantee Relationships: What The Future May Be*](#) (November 21, 2021) and [*Funder-Grantee Relationships: Navigating Change*](#) (November 30, 2021)
- [*The “Great Resignation” Problem in the Nonprofit Sector*](#) (December 7, 2021); [*The “Great Resignation”: Exactly How Bad Is It for Nonprofits?*](#) (December 9, 2021); and [*The Nonprofit Labor Crunch: An Update*](#) (December 15, 2021)

Conclusion

So let’s continue discussing uncertainty...and the flexibility needed to steer through the next year and beyond. We invite you to join us in exploring the contours of that challenge for philanthropy.

Warm holiday greetings and best wishes from all of us.

— Linda J. Rosenthal, J.D., FPLG Information & Research Director