

Center for Philanthropy Studies



Video Transcript

ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN NONPROFITS

Entrepreneurship in nonprofits: a holistic perspective

[Georg von Schnurbein] You are nearly at the end of this online course, and I already want to congratulate you on your commitment and your perseverance. Before you get to the final tasks of this course, I would like to highlight some cross links between the different modules. We started this online course on entrepreneurships in nonprofits with an analysis of the organizations using organizational theories: path dependency, institutional isomorphism, and resource dependency are very helpful concepts to get a distant perspective on the organization.

Path dependency may have an enduring influence on the financing of your organization. The use or conduct of impact measurement may be driven by isomorphism. And resource dependency may help to understand social innovation, especially if you aim to create a collaborative model. The concept of social entrepreneurship is important to understand and improve entrepreneurship in nonprofits. Not everyone is an entrepreneur, and not every organization has a mission that is easy to market. But remember the zoo metaphor and the broad international implementation of the concept. There are important driving forces behind the concept that might be of help in other cases as well.

Then we talked about social innovation and looked at many different examples. One of the most important insights for you should be that innovation is a very broad term, and you should search for innovation in your project or initiative, not only from one perspective. Perhaps the service itself is not innovative, but the target group is new or the way of fundraising is different. Not all innovations need to be disruptive. Often, evolutionary ideas are just fine.

In the module on financing, we first started with some basic information. We have made the experience that finance competence is not well distributed among nonprofits. But a good financing strategy is becoming more and more important, especially if you aim to apply some of the newer methods, such as 'pay for success' or 'conditional conversion model'. You need to have the necessary finance competence in your team. Finally, we ended up with impact measurement. But you will have realized that impact measurement is a task from A to Z.

The results of one project are the basic information for the following one. Developing and pondering on a theory of change and the logic framework will lead you to many crucial and immediate opportunities for social innovation and entrepreneurship. But it is important to keep in mind the capabilities of your organization and the financing potentials. Entrepreneurship in nonprofits is probably not so much about 'fail fast, fail often', but more about get started and spread the word.