

Sonia Worcel

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SUMMARY

Mission-driven foundation executive skilled in adaptive leadership, leading and managing change, strategy and program development, grantmaking, organizational development, and research and program evaluation. Proven track record in developing and motivating teams, designing and implementing programs, and coalition and network-building.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Executive Leadership
- Strategic Planning and Execution
- Leadership and People Development
- Change and Growth Management
- Board Relations
- Program Development and Implementation
- Effective Communicator and Public Speaker
- Program Evaluation

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Principal/Owner, Strategy for Impact LLC, 2023-present

Provide strategic and organizational consulting to foundations, nonprofits, collaboratives, and other mission-directed organizations to transform communities.

Chief Community Impact Officer, Oregon Community Foundation (OCF), 2019-2023

Led 50-person Community Impact Department encompassing the Foundation's grant programs and initiatives, community engagement, research and evaluation, and grants management. Served on the OCF executive team, led strategy development, and assisted the President/CEO with overall organizational planning, budgeting and board management.

- Oversaw significant programs and initiatives spanning education, arts and culture, health, housing, economic vitality, and the environment, including pandemic and wildfire response.
- Deployed multiple tools to create positive impact in OCF's priority areas, including public policy and advocacy, convening, mission related investment, cross-sector partnership, research, and community engagement.
- Engaged in collaborative networks including regional and national funders networks.

- Set vision, culture and goals for the Community Impact Department and hired, mentored, and developed staff and teams.
- Oversaw development of agendas and content for the board Arts, Education, Community Engagement, and Strategic Opportunities committees.
- Planned content for quarterly board meetings and annual board retreat.
- Represented OCF in communities including public speaking and media relations.
- Led annual discretionary grantmaking budgeting process including setting target allocations across board committees and programs and reviewing multi-year projections.

Key Achievements

- Directed over \$350 million in grantmaking in 2021 and more than \$700 million since 2019.
- Led OCF's pandemic and wildfire response including the Oregon Community Recovery Fund, the Arts and Culture Recovery Program, Small Business Stabilization Fund, and the Community Rebuilding Fund.
- Led OCF's deployment of over \$200 million in state and federal relief dollars including funds for summer learning, undocumented worker relief, and for the conversion of motels to shelters.
- Led the development of the newly created Community Impact Department, including culture- and team-building and creating systems and processes.

Vice President of Strategy and Research, OCF, 2014-2019

Research Director, OCF 2010-2014

Directed the 6-person Research Department responsible for program evaluation, a portfolio of research about the state of Oregon, and internal institutional research. Led strategic planning and strategy development for the foundation. Served on the OCF executive team to assist the President/CEO with overall planning, budgeting, and board management.

- Championed the use of research and data for continuous improvement and learning and to inform foundation strategies.
- Partnered across the organization to develop new programs and initiatives and embedded research and evaluation into the programmatic life cycle.
- Embedded the principles and practices of equitable evaluation across OCF's research and evaluation portfolio.
- Oversaw program evaluations of the Foundation's programs and initiatives, research projects focused on Oregon's pressing needs, internal institutional research, and donor-directed research projects.

Key Achievements

- Led research and strategic planning process that resulted in OCF's focus on the opportunity gap facing low-income children, children of color, and rural children.
- As a member of the governing board, participated in design and program development for the Community Foundation Opportunity Network, a national network of community foundations committed to reducing the opportunity gap.
- Led research and strategy development that resulted in OCF's first portfolios in arts and culture, housing, and economic vitality along with expansion of the foundation's education portfolio.
- Created the first research unit for the foundation.
- Strengthened OCF's role as a leading voice and resource on priority issues for the state.

Research Associate and Vice President of Operations, NPC Research, 2001-2010

Principle investigator and project director for Oregon and national research and evaluation projects focused on early childhood care and education, child welfare, substance abuse treatment and prevention, youth services, and criminal justice. Oversaw day-to-day operations of the organization including grants and contract oversight, budgeting, and personnel management.

- With the President developed and monitored annual operating budget and forecasted future budget scenarios.
- Coordinated grant and contract application process and wrote grant and contract proposals.
- Created and maintained systems for monitoring grants and contracts and managed staffing assignments.
- Supervised up to 12 IT, office, and research staff.
- Convened meetings and made presentations for varied audiences, including academics, direct service providers, judges, public administrators, and policy makers.
- Wrote manuscripts including scholarly articles, technical reports, and research briefings.
- Responsible for evaluation design, data collection, and data analysis.

Analyst, Berkeley Policy Associates, 2000-2001

Analyst for research and evaluation projects focused on child welfare, child care, and after school programs. Conducted site visits, observations, interviews, and focus groups with program staff, school personnel, social workers, attorneys, judges, foster youth, and foster parents.

Information and Education Program Director & Policy Consultant, California Child Youth and Family Coalition (CCYFC), 1998-2000

Conducted policy analysis on a variety of topics including teen pregnancy prevention and the California legislature's emphasis on outcome evaluation for local service providers.

Assistant Director, CCYFC, 1996-1998

Coordinated membership activities and grassroots advocacy efforts for a network of youth service providers. Worked with a diverse and statewide group of community-based organizations and youth.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Founding Board Member, Women's Foundation of Oregon (WFOR), 2012- 2015

Served as a member of the board of directors overseeing the merger of two private foundations and the creation of the Women's Foundation of Oregon. Chaired the search committee for WFOR's first paid executive director.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Master of Public Policy
University of California, Goldman School of Public Policy, Berkeley

Master of Art, Psychology
University of California, Davis

Bachelor's degree, Psychology
Wellesley College

Executive Education: Leadership for the 21st Century
Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government