

BRIDGING THE GAP: UNDERSTANDING NONPROFIT EVALUATION NEEDS IN TALLAHASSEE



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Background

Existing Facts

- Nonprofit organizations rely on evaluation data to secure grant funding.
- Funders increasingly require measurable outcomes and impact reporting.
- Research shows that collaboration strengthens organizational capacity.
- Many nonprofits lack internal evaluation capacity.

Shortcomings in Current Research

- Limited research examines evaluation needs at the local community level.
- Few studies explore how universities can support nonprofit evaluation capacity.
- There is insufficient data on what types of evaluation support nonprofits value most.

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to assess the evaluation needs of Tallahassee nonprofit organizations and identify opportunities for university-supported partnerships.

Research Questions

RQ1: What evaluation methods do nonprofits in Tallahassee value most?

RQ2: What types of data strengthen their ability to secure grant funding?

RQ3: What barriers prevent nonprofits from collecting or using evaluation data effectively?

RQ4: What forms of university support would improve nonprofit evaluation capacity?

Methods

Research Design

- Mixed-methods design combining quantitative and qualitative approaches
- Community-based research framework

Participants

- 5–7 nonprofit organizations in Tallahassee
- Organizations representing multiple service sectors (e.g., human services, education, community development)

Data Collection

- Online Qualtrics survey

Quantitative measures:

- Multiple-choice questions
- Likert-scale items

Qualitative measures:

- Open-ended response questions
- Narrative descriptions of evaluation barriers and needs

Data Analysis

- Quantitative data analyzed using descriptive statistics
- Qualitative responses analyzed using thematic coding
- Findings integrated to identify patterns across numerical trends and reported experiences

Scan to view the survey questions or participate in the study.

Open to individuals with nonprofit experience.



Preliminary Results

- The majority of organizations report limited staffing for evaluation.
- Grant reporting requirements strongly influence what data is collected.
- Common barriers include time constraints, funding limitations, and lack of technical expertise.
- Organizations expressed interest in external evaluation support.

Conclusion

- Nonprofits value evaluation but face significant capacity challenges.
- Strengthening university–nonprofit partnerships may improve grant competitiveness and program effectiveness.
- Expanding this study could inform sustainable, community-driven research collaborations.

Strengths

- Community-centered research design
- Direct input from local nonprofit leaders

Limitations

- Small sample size
- Localized geographic focus
- Preliminary data collection

References

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