

COMMUNIQUE

Trends, Best Practices, and Opinions on Community Involvement

Pro Bono Today: Making Pro Bono Easier for Nonprofits *Part 2 of a 5-Part Series*

In Part 1 of our series based on our new research, “Pro Bono Today: What’s New, What’s Working,” we discussed how having a variety of pro bono programs with different levels of commitment and intensity allows more employees to serve more nonprofits. We also discussed how having projects with smaller scopes helps nonprofits not ready for an intensive engagement take the first step into pro bono.

That’s just one example of how corporations are addressing nonprofits’ barriers to pro bono. Our last research report, [“Balancing Pro Bono Supply and Demand: Challenges and Solutions From the Nonprofit Point of View,”](#) suggested ways in which corporations could respond to the challenges the nonprofits reported. Our latest research found three practices that break down the barriers.

Challenge #1: Getting Started with Pro Bono

The companies in the study offer two solutions. The first is the short-term, small scope opportunities we mentioned above. The second is offering a menu of pre-scoped projects. American Express and IBM both have sets of pre-defined projects that nonprofits can review and determine which best meets their needs. They know exactly what they have signed up for, and that makes it easier to take the leap and try pro bono.

Challenge #2: Finding the Time to Work with Volunteers

Time is a precious commodity and in short supply in many nonprofits. With staffing typically lean, it can be difficult to find enough time to work with pro bono volunteers. The study found that thorough preparation prior to the engagement—especially for Loaned Employees—makes a big difference in how well time is used during the engagement. Thorough preparation means that both sides are ready to hit the ground running. Macquarie Group’s Community Impact pro bono program includes comprehensive training for volunteers and its nonprofit partners, and its projects are planned out in six stages, which help keep them on track. JPMorgan Chase has an intermediary work with its nonprofit partners to get them prepared for its employee

teams.

Challenge #3: Funding the Implementation

Nonprofits told us in our prior research that being handed a great deliverable from a pro bono project and not having the funds to implement its recommendations is a big source of frustration. While no company can guarantee funding for implementation, some are adding a competitive element that gives the nonprofit a chance to win a grant. Morgan Stanley, American Express and Macquarie Group all have pro bono teams present their projects to a judging panel with the prize a grant for the nonprofit. It's a powerful motivator for both the volunteers and the nonprofits to produce a winning deliverable.

The full report can be downloaded for free at www.lbg-associates.com.

Part 1 of our series can be viewed [here](#).

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Coming next: The Elements of Pro Bono Success

About LBG Associates

LBG Associates is a woman-owned consulting firm focused on designing, implementing and managing corporate citizenship and employee engagement programs and initiatives. Founded in 1993 by Dr. Linda Gornitsky, LBG Associates drives social change through advice, implementation, research and training. Find more information at: www.lbg-associates.com.

LBG Associates ▪ 245 Long Close Road ▪ Stamford CT 06902 ▪ Tel: 203-325-3154 © 2018 LBG Associates