

PRESS RELEASE

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United Way Begins Search to Hire First-Ever Director for a New, Statewide Nonprofit Resource Center

Providence, Rhode Island (April 27, 2023) — A new, first-of-its-kind statewide resource center for Rhode Island nonprofits is becoming a reality. United Way of Rhode Island, which has convened the state's nonprofit community to establish the center, today announced it has opened the hiring for the center's inaugural director. A job description for the position, along with how to apply, can be found [A job description for the position, along with how to apply, can be found online.](#)

The Nonprofit Resource Center is being developed and incubated within United Way with the potential of spinning off as its own 501(c)3 in the future. The director will have overall strategic and operational responsibility for the center's development and growth, in alignment with the mission and values of the center. In collaboration with United Way leadership, and with the advice of the center's Advisory Board, as well as ongoing input from nonprofit staff across the state, the director will facilitate the development of the center's strategic plan and initiatives to meet the evolving needs of Rhode Island's nonprofit sector. Additionally, the director will ensure the programs and services of the center are accessible, responsive, and increase the capacity and resilience of local nonprofits and especially those organizations led by people of color.

"This is a transformational moment for all Rhode Island nonprofits and a testament to the passion and drive of hundreds upon hundreds of people who worked tirelessly to get us here," said Cortney Nicolato, United Way's president and CEO. "While there is more to be done, the excitement is palpable and for good reason. Nonprofits and their mission-driven work are the backbone of our state, and it is long overdue that they have a singular resource dedicated to their unique needs and their efforts to change lives for the better and strengthen our communities."

Posting for the director position culminates several years of exploratory discussions and work around a potential Nonprofit Resource Center and how it would serve Rhode Island organizations. In late 2021, United Way doubled down, launching a formal discovery process and engaging Community Wealth Partners — a social change consulting firm — to lead the design process for the new center. The effort gained substantial momentum throughout 2022 as 11 local nonprofit leaders were selected for the design team. The team was intentionally diverse to ensure voices from across the sector were represented, particularly those that often go unheard. They met biweekly, exploring all aspects of the center, facilitating stakeholder involvement, and designing a business model. All told, along with their own expertise, the design team engaged more than 400 nonprofit leaders, funders, and capacity building experts in focus groups, input surveys, broad visioning sessions, and interviews.

Simultaneous to the design team's work, United Way contracted research on the structure and scope of nonprofit resource centers from across the country. The research focused on understanding the public and philanthropic investment necessary for sustainability and how centers prioritize accessibility and racial equity.

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From this research and from community input, the design team identified four top target areas for the launch of the center. Those areas are: connecting nonprofits with funders to establish more equitable funding, coaching and tools to support small nonprofits' day-to-day operations, uniting nonprofits to share knowledge and resources, and advocating to state and local lawmakers on behalf of the sector to increase recognition and support. Additionally, the design team created a vision for the Nonprofit Resource Center, where "Nonprofits in Rhode Island — in particular, small, BIPOC-led organizations — have what they need to strengthen their communities and push for systemic change."

The position will be open for the next several weeks, and questions may be directed to human.resources@unitedwayri.org.

"We are beyond thrilled to open the search for the center's first leader," added Nicolato. "This individual will have an incredible opportunity to advance our state's nonprofit landscape and help elevate the vital work of so many great organizations. We're looking at a gamechanger for our nonprofits and for a sector that employs nearly one out of every five Rhode Islanders."

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United Way of Rhode Island is uniting our community and resources to build racial equity and opportunities for all Rhode Islanders. A member of the world's largest nonprofit network, we bring together individuals, businesses, nonprofits, community leaders, and government to tackle the root causes of inequity and achieve specific, measurable goals. Our programs include 211, the statewide front door connecting Rhode Islanders with social services, resources, and vital programs. Both directly and through grants to nonprofits, we are investing to build economic opportunity, advance childhood learning, expand philanthropy, and drive policy and participation. To learn more, visit unitedwayri.org, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), or [Twitter](#).