



## GOVERNANCE AND BOARD DEVELOPMENT

### *SITUATION*

An organization needed to identify new trustees so that the board more accurately reflected the breadth of the organization's work as well as the scope of its geography. Because the organization's bylaws required that a portion of the board have a specific association, the organization wanted to reach out more broadly for new "unaffiliated" trustees than it ever had before. In addition, the ethnic diversity of the board was also an important consideration.

### *ANALYSIS*

The organization had tried to extend its reach through its own networks with limited success. It had also tried to identify support from other service providers, but had still come up short. The organization came to realize that while it wanted to devote concentrated time to thinking about what it really needed in new board members, there were few resources available to facilitate such a process. Some specifications were tangible: location, ethnic background, and professional experience. Others, however, were less quantifiable: the ability and inclination to be a good trustee, personal knowledge of the organization's issue areas beyond a layperson's view, and the versatility to interact effectively with the broad range of issues managed by the board. The organization realized the ways in which it could use outside assistance, but was not sure where it could find that assistance.

### *SOLUTION*

A process that provided an objective exploration of the organization's actual needs was key in developing the strategy for identifying candidates. After consulting with a wide network of thought leaders, we developed and put into place a strategy which generated a robust pool of potential trustees. As a result, we were able to provide the organization with a list of individuals that included several names previously unknown to the client. Seeing such a broad and diverse pool motivated the board to redouble its commitment to the organization's mission, using the prospect of new trustees to further refine the organization's current and future needs. For a modest investment, the organization now has a pipeline of prospective trustees that it can use over the near-to-intermediate term.