

# Nonprofit 2.0: *Navigating the Road Ahead*

*Suzanne*  
SMITH

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**SOCIAL** Latest Trends In  
The Social Sector  
**TRENDSPOINTER**

#Nonprofit2\_0  
#FightForward

Suzanne Smith, MBA – Founder & CEO – Social Impact Architects / Adjunct Professor



SocialImpactArchitects



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#StrongerTogether



SHOWING UP EVEN  
WHEN THE ROAD WAS ROUGH



NAVIGATING  
IMPOSSIBLE DETOURS



DOING THE WORK BEHIND THE  
SCENES THAT ACTUALLY  
KEEPS THIS COUNTRY MOVING



# Our Remarkable Past



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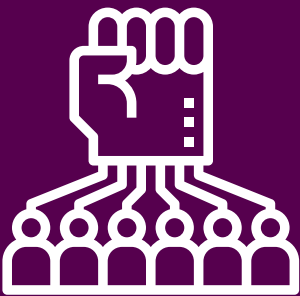
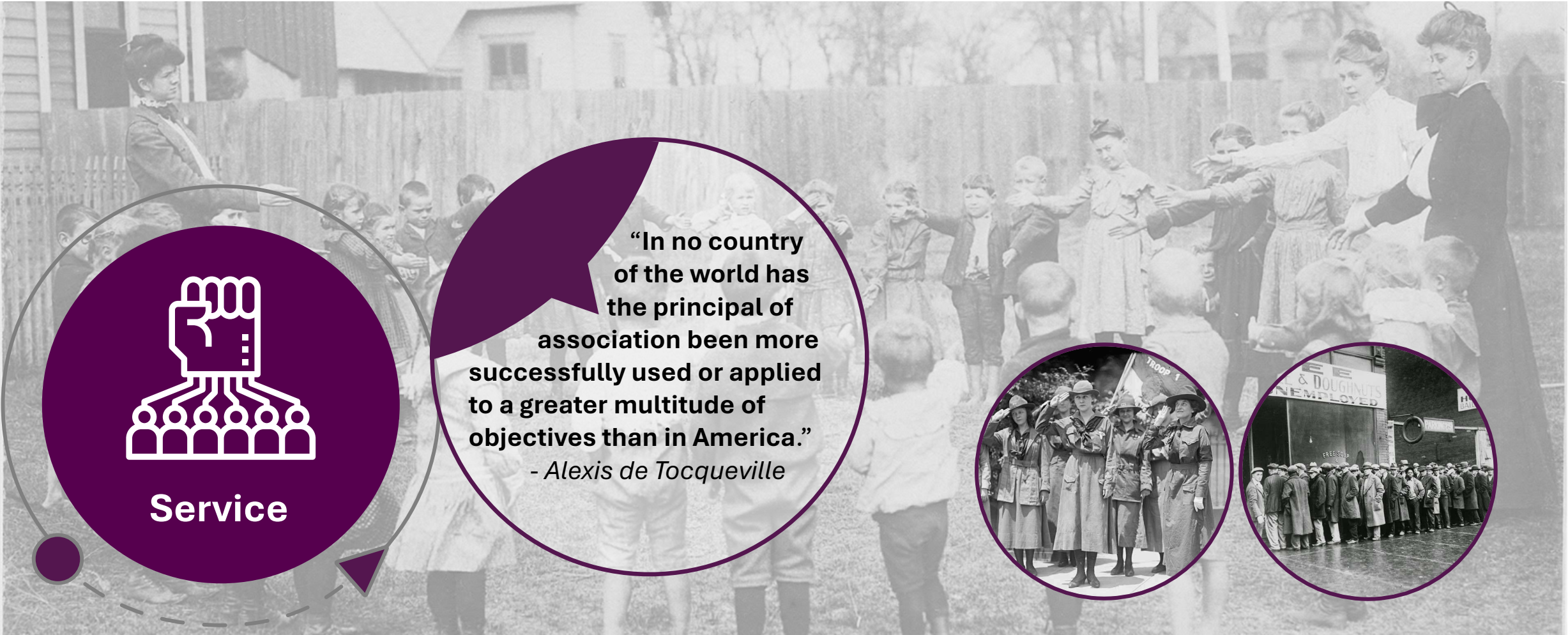
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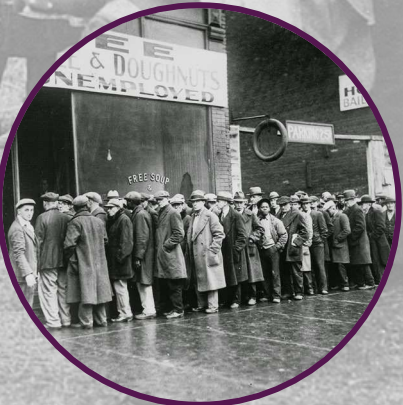
# Trailblazer Era

“A Nation of Joiners”



Service

“In no country  
of the world has  
the principal of  
association been more  
successfully used or applied  
to a greater multitude of  
objectives than in America.”  
- Alexis de Tocqueville





# Builders Era

“Be The Change”



Sacrifice

“You must never so much think as whether you like it or not, whether it is bearable or not; you must never think of anything except the need, and how to meet it.”

– Clara Barton



# Crusaders Era

“The Personal Is Political”

**Solutions**

**“No work is insignificant. All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence.”**  
—Martin Luther King, Jr.

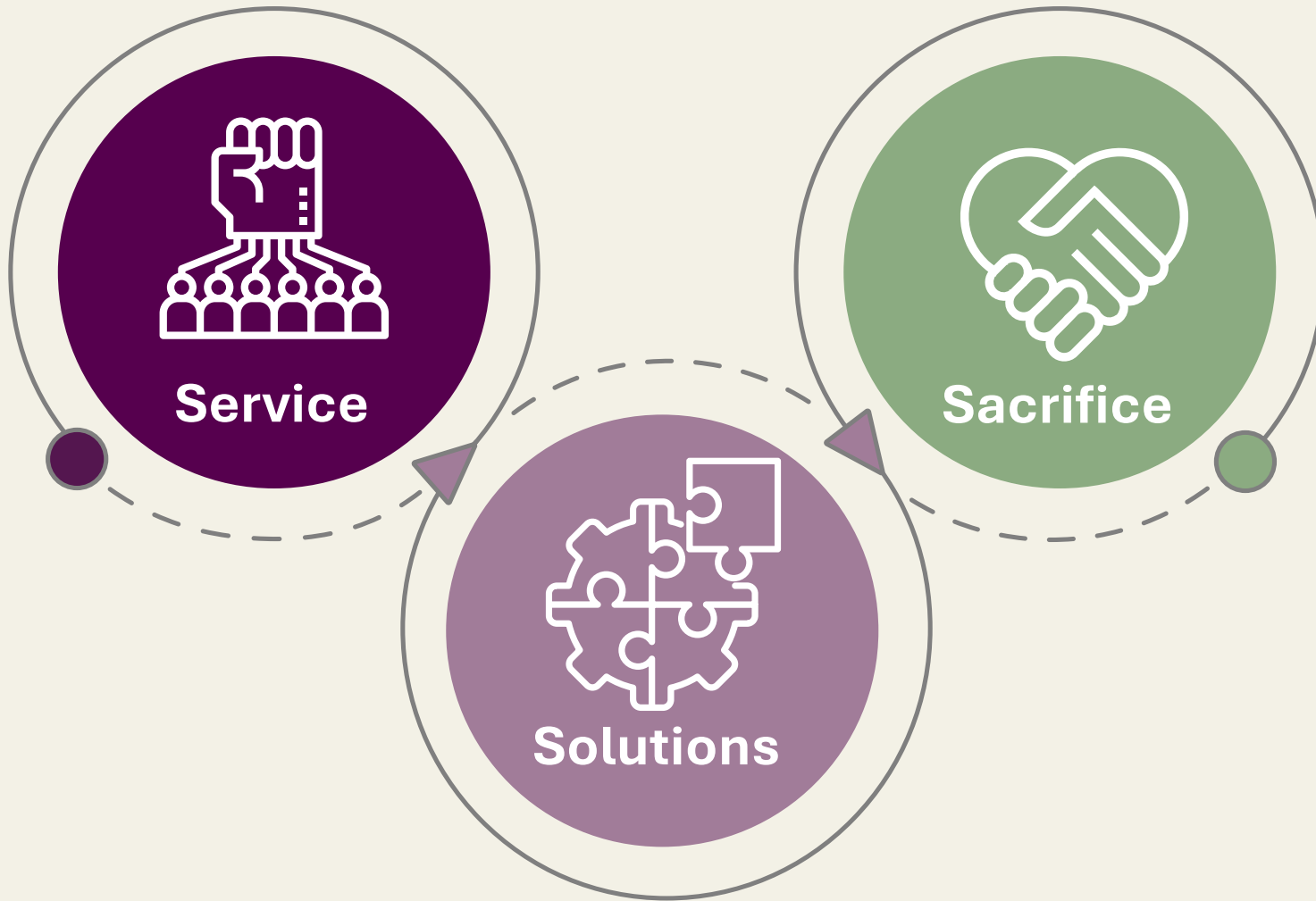
**madd**  
NO MORE VICTIMS

**The Center for Auto Safety**

**American Heart Association**

**MHA**  
Mental Health America







# Our Rough Present



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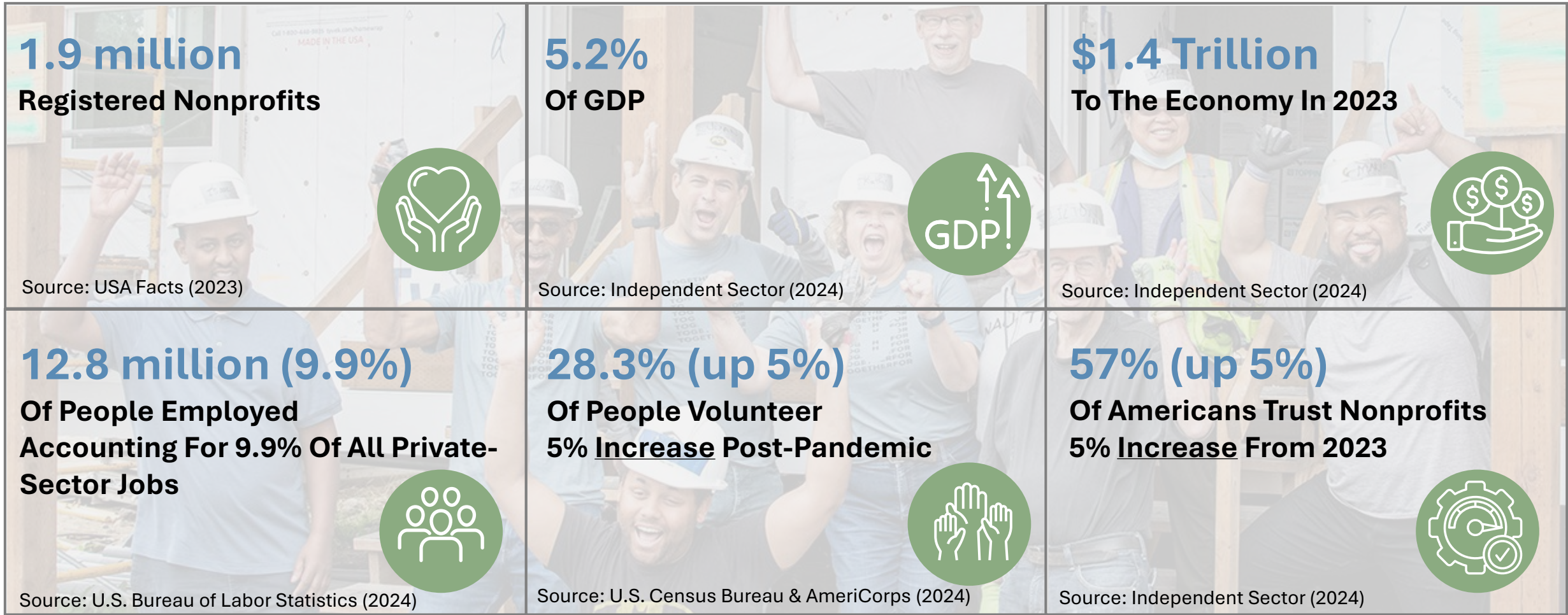
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# State of the Union: *The Nonprofit Industry*

## The “Good” News



# State of the Union: *The Nonprofit Industry*

## The Bad News

**19% (1 in 5)**

**Turnover Rate / Higher Than  
Average Of 12%**



Source: Cerini & Associates (2024)

**22%**

**Of Nonprofit Workers Are Not  
Earning A Living Wage**



Source: Independent Sector (2023)

**\$592.50 Billion**

**In Donations**

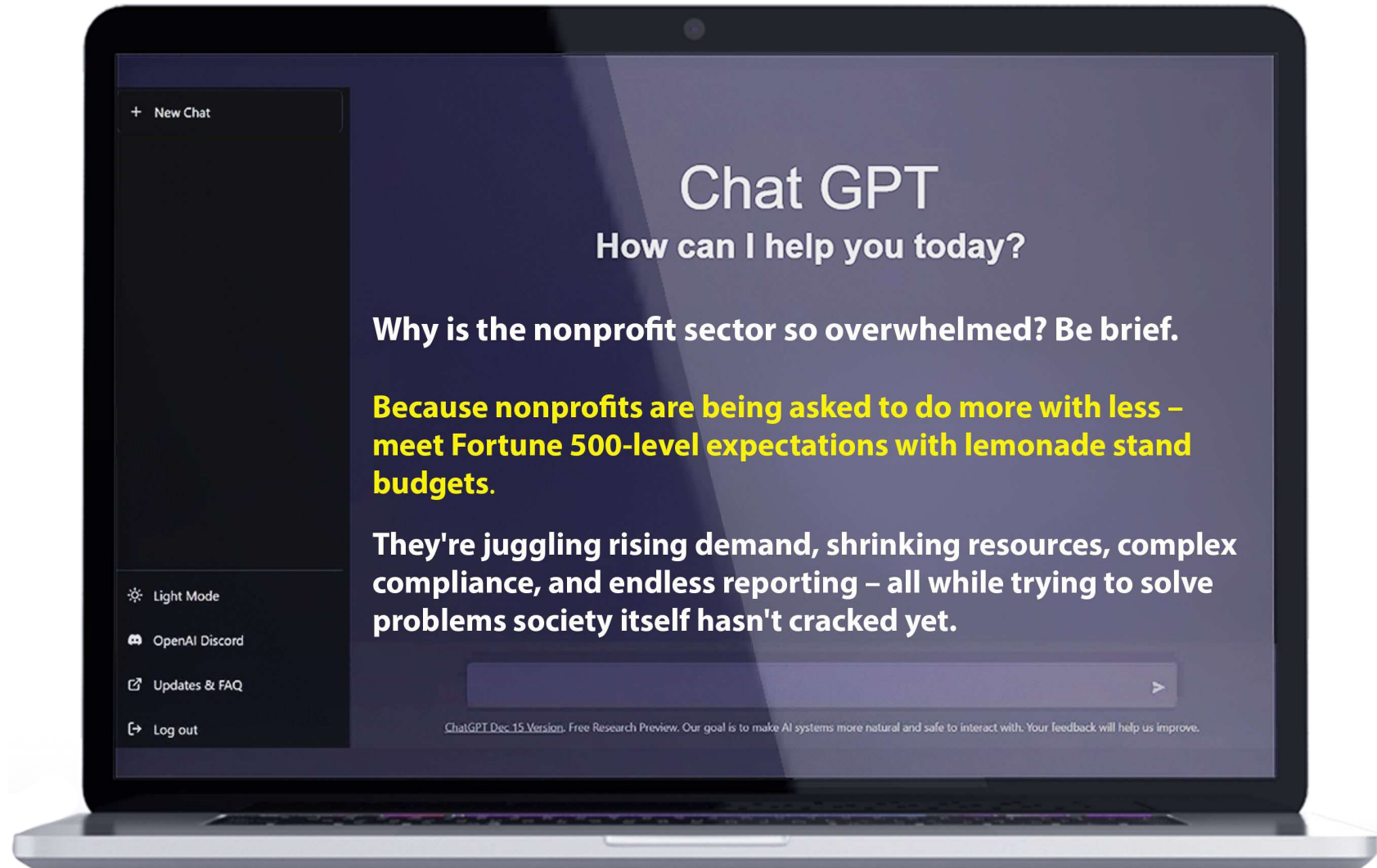
**3.4% Decrease In Number Of  
Donors**



Source: Giving USA (2024) & Vox (2024)



# ChatGPT's Answer





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*"We don't have to  
do all of it alone.  
We were never  
meant to."  
- Brené Brown*



# Shift Happens



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*“It's not the load  
that breaks you  
down, it's the way  
you carry it.”*  
– Lou Holtz





# Route 66: Lessons in Resilience



*Acceptance of Change  
Collective Strategy  
Unified Leadership*





# Our Rapidly Changing Future



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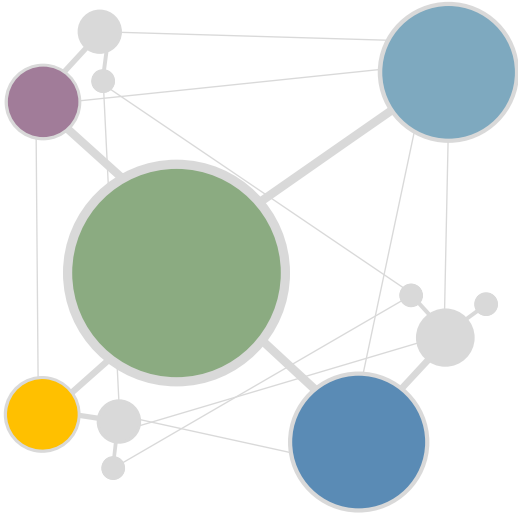
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# Movements Need a Playbook: 5 Elements of Success



## COMMON MOTIVATOR:

*Individuals or groups unite around a common belief or motivator.*



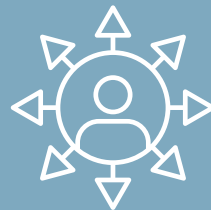
## RECRUITMENT:

*Individuals as well as organizations use their social networks to recruit friends and family to the cause.*



## COMMITMENT:

*Strong connection to the cause fueled by personal experience.*



## SYNERGY:

*Diverse groups learn about each other and join forces.*



## FIGHT:

*Real or perceived opposition.*



Source: Gerlach, L. P., & Hine, V. H.. People, Power, Change: Movements of Social Transformation. Bobbs-Merrill, 1970.



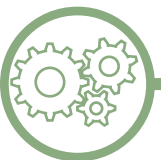
# Common Motivator: *We over Me*

## Commit to a higher calling



### Society

Rebuild civil society



### Community & Organization

Reengineer systems that work



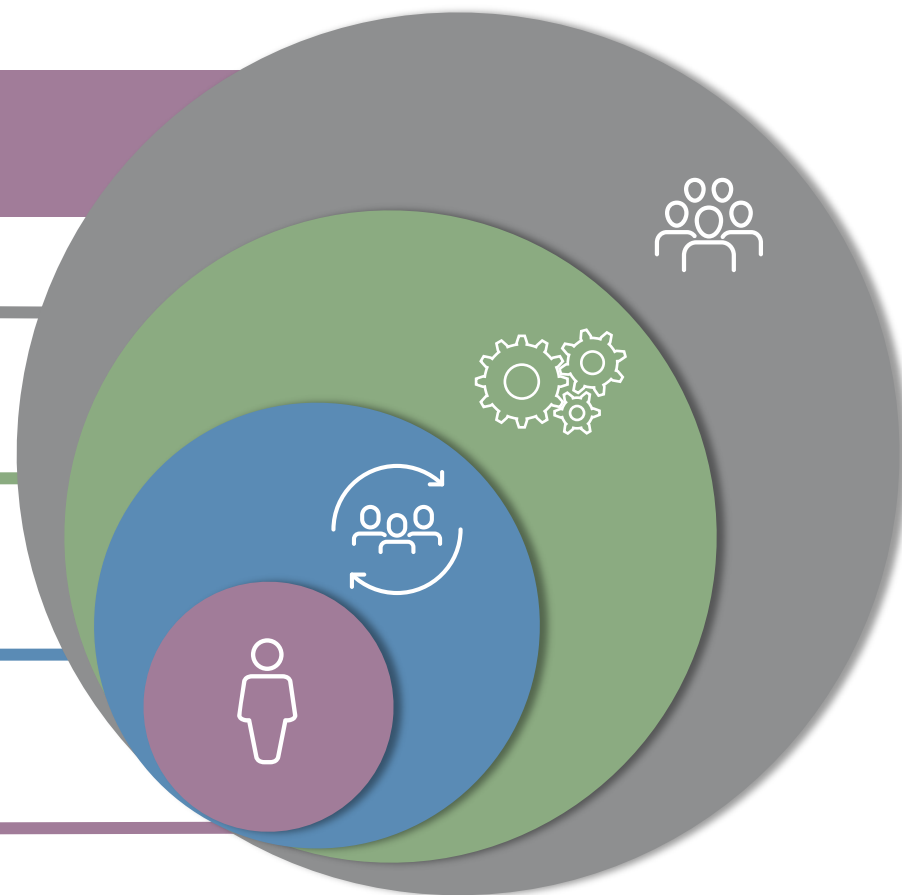
### Relationship

Reclaim connection by helping individuals find a “third place”



### Individuals

Rekindle desire to become a “nation of joiners” again

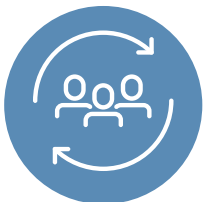


*Individuals or groups unite around a common belief or motivator.*

McLeroy, K. R., Bibeau, D., Steckler, A., & Glanz, K.. An Ecological Perspective on Health Promotion Programs. Health Education Quarterly, 15(4), 351–377, 1988.







# Recruitment: *Invest in the People Who Build Change*



**Be the gold standard for talent strategies**

## **Find the best talent**

- Share the stories of our profession
- Recruit on college campuses

## **Unlock the true cost of providing impact**

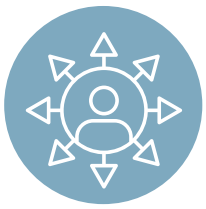
- Pay a living wage
- Pay interns

## **Upskill our workforce as managers and leaders**



*Individuals as well as organizations use their social networks to recruit friends and family to the cause.*





# Commitment: *Build the Army for Good*



## Give hope the airtime it deserves

### Train the army to tell their story

- Teach every stakeholder (e.g., board, staff, volunteer, client) to know their why AND share it

### Be an influencer (for good)

- Write Op-Eds
- Testify at City Hall & State Legislatures
- Invite policymakers on a tour to see the work

### Ensure hope and impact gets equal time

- Share your stories of triumph
- Shift the narrative around our work

*Strong connection to the cause fueled by personal experience.*





# Synergy: We're Stronger Together



## Strengthening nonprofits strengthens America

Revisit **collaborations** to ensure they are really working

**Support all nonprofit work** – across all missions and causes

- Support accessibility efforts
- Encourage recycling at your offices
- Showcase art from local artists (and pay them)

**Advocate across sectors** about everyone's importance to the collective good

*Diverse groups learn about each other and join forces.*





# Fight: *Don't Fight Back. Fight Forward.*



**Purpose + Performance + People = Progress**

- Claim our seat at the decision-making table
- Take research-based models to scale
- Replace “we can’t afford it” with “what is the cost of not building it?”
- Step up with clarity, capacity, and courage

*Real or perceived opposition.*



# Putting It Into Practice



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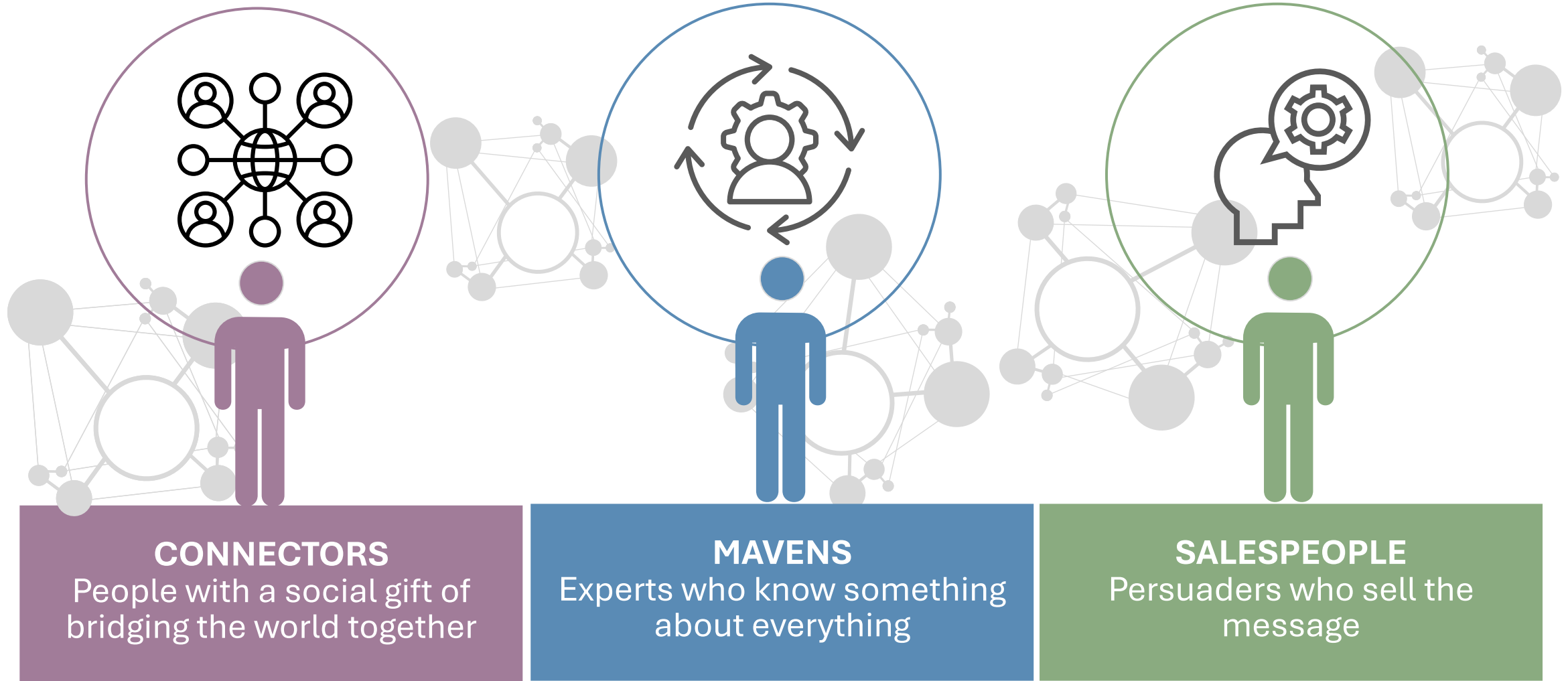
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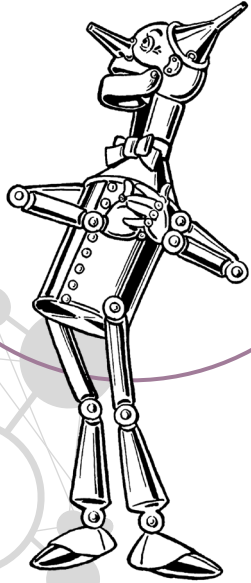
# Movements Need People Sharing Their Gifts



Gladwell, M.. The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make A Big Difference. Little, Brown and Company, 2000.



# Movements Need People Sharing Their Gifts



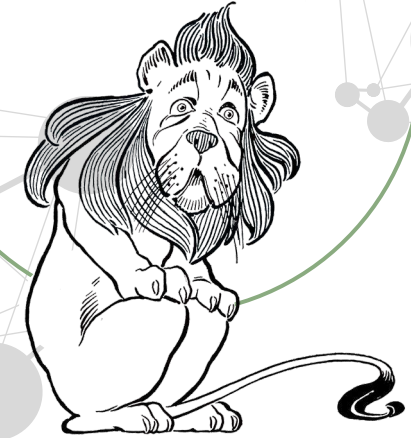
## CONNECTORS

Convey the Heart



## MAVENS

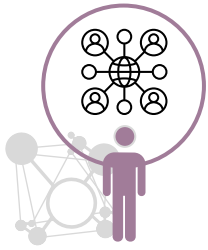
Share Their Brain



## SALESPEOPLE

Bring Their Courage

Gladwell, M.. The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make A Big Difference. Little, Brown and Company, 2000.



# Connectors: *Build Belonging & Connection*



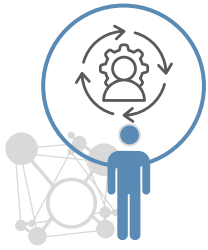
## Gift of Heart

- Use skills to rebuild community – from dinner tables to town squares
- Make people feel seen and valued – every time they connect with us at nonprofits
- Strengthen culture inside your own nonprofit
- Share your superpower of Emotional Intelligence with Mavens and Salespeople



People with a social gift of bridging the world together





# Mavens: *Share the Insights*



## Gift of Brain

- Use skills to rebuild trust
- Be the go-to expert
- Document and share insights
- Write Op-Eds
- Testify at City Halls and State Legislatures



**Experts who know something about everything**



# Salespeople: *Spread Hope*



## Gift of Courage

- Use your skills to draw people to the sector
- Practice creativity and influence for good
- Help experts tell their stories
- Amplify hope and solutions



Persuaders who sell the message



# Nonprofit 2.0: For the Greater Good



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#ForGreaterGood







Your journey matters – to your community, to this country, and to the future we are building together.



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# CHANGEMAKERS PIONEER AWARD

## Presented to [Changemaker Pioneer]

FOR EXTRAORDINARY IMPACT OVER A LIFETIME OF SERVICE

You have not just served — you have shaped.  
With vision, resilience and heart, you have built  
better systems, stronger communities and lasting change.  
The road is forever different because you walked it.

With deepest gratitude.

SECURING  
THE FUTURE



LEADERSHIP COUNCIL  
FOR NONPROFITS  
ADVANCING OUR COMMUNITY



October 29, 2025



**May the road rise to meet you—and lead you toward greater purpose.**

**May the wind be at your back—as you carry the weight of change.**

**May the sun shine warm upon your mission,**

**And your vision stay clear, even in stormy times.**

**May your community walk beside you,**

**And may you always find strength in the steps still ahead.**

**And until we meet again—may you never forget:**

**You were made for this moment. And together, we will rise to meet the road.**





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#StrongerTogether

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- **USAFacts.** How Many Nonprofits Are There in the U.S.? Nov. 16, 2023.
- **Vox / Fundraising Effectiveness Project.** Are Americans Still Generous? Vox, Jul. 2024.





**Suzanne Smith, MBA**  
Founder & CEO,  
Social Impact Architects

### EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

- MBA, Duke University's Fuqua School of Business
  - Selected as CASE (Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship) Scholar
- Adjunct Professor – The University of Texas at Arlington

### AWARDS & HONORS

- Best for the World Small Business Award, B Lab
- Top 10 Social Sector Blog, Huffington Post
- Next Generation Social Entrepreneurs Award, Social Enterprise Alliance
- Young ATHENA Award, Dallas Regional Chamber
- 40 Under 40 Award, Dallas Business Journal
- Top Women in Business Award, City of Dallas
- 2014 Collaboration of the Year, Workforce Solutions of Greater Dallas

### COMMUNITY LEADER

- TEDx Speaker, “Everyone Can be a Changemaker”
- City of Dallas – Past Appointments to City of Dallas’ Arts and Culture Commission, Library Board, Landmark Commission, Mayor’s Task Force on Poverty, Mayor’s Commission on Homelessness, South Dallas/Fair Park Trust (Vice Chair), Landmark Commission, and Board of Adjustment (Vice Chair)
- Member, Junior League, Leadership Dallas, Dallas Summit and Leadership North Texas



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