

Community Foundation Leadership in Action Stories

The Boston Foundation: Research ⇒ Action ⇒ Change

The Boston Foundation's (TBF) well-known Boston Indicators Project is just the first step in a multi-stage strategy that uses research to drive action and change. In a region noted for its great universities and research centers, the biennial Indicators Project positions the community foundation as a go-to source on community trends and data and provides a platform for focusing attention on issues of grave importance. Acting on issues surfaced by the Indicators Project, TBF digs deeper through research and analysis contained in its *Understanding Boston* reports, which in turn set the stage for civic engagement and thoughtful debate through a series of well-publicized and widely-covered public forums.

Building on the information generated through this process, TBF convenes task forces that are charged with deeper examination of identified issues and exploration of policy solutions.

Working with coalitions and other partners, TBF is an active player in the policy process, targeting administrative as well as legislative changes based upon the priorities recommended by the task forces. Two senior staff members are registered lobbyists.

TBF has successfully addressed many issues using this strategy, notably housing and education. Arts and culture provide another recent example. After a series of reports highlighted the importance of cultural tourism to the state's economy and the fragile condition of many historically- and culturally-significant buildings, TBF created a culture task force, which elevated public awareness and rallied public support through forums and a report entitled *Culture is Our Common Wealth*. Ultimately, the task force's chief recommendation led to the creation of a state-financed, competitive matching grants program that provides \$25 million annually to cultural facilities across the state.

To learn more
about the Framework for
Community Leadership by
a Community Foundation
and the building blocks
illustrated in this story,
visit www.cfleads.org.