



What is SustainED?

SustainED is an innovative method of supporting Executive Directors who hold identities that have historically been underrepresented in nonprofit leadership. Using a holistic approach that focuses on *existing* structures to support leaders, it engages a cohort of early-tenure Executive Directors with individual and peer support while providing tailored engagement for their boards and staff. SustainED supercharges the ability of newer Executive Directors to address key challenges that can otherwise limit their impact and tenure.

Who is SustainED for?

SustainED is for a cohort of 15 newer-tenured nonprofit Executive Directors who are BUILD grantees and/or receive multi-year funding from the Ford Foundation.

The program is designed for individuals who have stepped into a top leadership position in a nonprofit since 2020, particularly those who hold identities that have historically been underrepresented in nonprofit leadership. Many newer leaders report systemic obstacles to their leadership as they feel the weight of unrealistic expectations from staff, board, and other stakeholders. SustainED aims to address these organizational barriers. **SustainED is not a technical assistance or “training” program. It is a transformative leadership experience that strengthens structures and relationships, provides tools and connections, and activates allies in dismantling obstacles to successful leadership.**

Who is behind SustainED?

SustainED is the latest offering coming from La Piana Consulting supported by the Ford Foundation. La Piana has, for over 26 years, observed critical challenges, researched their underlying dynamics, and developed effective responses that have been widely embraced across the sector. La Piana’s recent work with Ford’s BUILD grantees helped over 60 social justice organizations manage rapid growth.

La Piana’s mission is to help nonprofit leaders and their organizations achieve their greatest social impact. SustainED was designed as a response to mounting and compounding pressures leading to high leadership turnover. Our team is from and for the sector, having held top leadership positions in a wide variety of nonprofit organizations. We get it.

SustainED is led by a team of leadership development specialists at La Piana, all of whom have held positions of leadership in nonprofits and bring their individual lived experience to this program. Senior Consultant [Ali Carella, Ph.D.](#), who served as Director of the Ford [BUILDing for Growth](#) initiative, will lead the effort, working closely with Senior Consultants [Humberto Camarena](#) and [Christine Chen](#). Founder [David La Piana](#) will support the effort by providing strategic guidance and applying his extensive experience working with nonprofit organizations.