PROPEL Programme

Accelerating Nonprofits to Build a Better Bermuda

The **PROPEL Programme** is an 18-month nonprofit accelerator programme that helps nonprofits define strategy, develop best practices, and build mechanisms toward sustainable financial health. It gives nonprofits and their supporters the confidence of knowing they are maturing to better execute, scale and sustain their community impact.

What PROPEL does for you, the nonprofit?

1. Gives you a robust assessment of your organisation
2. Guides you in developing organisational and programmatic strategy
3. Supports you in developing operational best practices
4. Gets you ready for the BNSC certification process
5. Provides you with a dedicated and experienced nonprofit coach
6. Creates relationship and network building opportunities
7. Builds your executive leadership skills

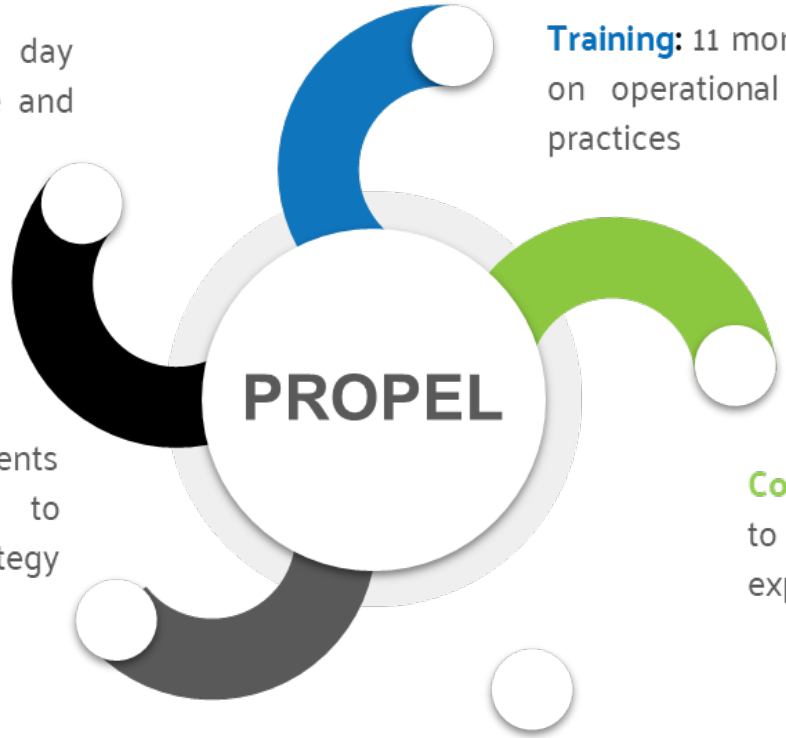
PROPEL Programme Components

The PROPEL Programme is an 18-month programme comprised of five components:

1. Training
2. Coaching and Mentorship
3. Cohort Peer Learning Sessions
4. Organisational Assessments
5. Strategy Retreat

Strategy Retreats: One day retreat to align on purpose and strategy

Training: 11 monthly training session on operational and strategic best practices



Org Assessments: Assessments and organisational review to provide data to inform strategy decision making

Coaching & Mentorship: Monthly one to one support and guidance with experienced nonprofit leader

Cohort Sessions: Quarterly group sessions on peer learning, executive leadership skill building, and collective problem solving

PROPEL Training Curriculum and Timeline

Tuesdays 9am-5pm

- July 8 : Nonprofit Strategy: A DIY Approach
- Aug 5: Theory of Change
- Sept 16: Programme Evaluation and Social Impact Measurement
- Oct 14: Build Your Brand: branding, marketing, and communications
- VIRTUAL Nov 4,5,10,12: The Nonprofit Board & Good Governance
- Dec 9: Building a Culture of Philanthropy
- Jan 13: Human Resource Management and PQI
- Feb 17: Administrative Service Environment / Client Rights
- Mar 17: Financial Management
- April 21: Running a Volunteer Programme
- May 19: Risk Management
- June 16: Systems Change: Advocacy, Collaboration & Campaigning

PROPEL Cohort and Coaching Sessions Timeline

2025

- June 24 Cohort Kick Off 1pm-3pm
- July- October one-to-one coaching
- Nov 18 Cohort Session 1pm-3pm
- Dec one-to-one coaching

2026

- Jan- Feb one-to-one coaching
- March 3 Cohort Session 1pm-3pm
- April-June one-to-one coaching
- July TBC Strategy Retreat
- Aug- October one-to-one coaching
- Nov TBD Cohort Session 1pm-3pm
- Dec TBD: Celebration

PROPEL Eligibility

Middle-Stage: The PROPEL programmes focuses on Bermuda registered charities who have progressed beyond start-up and who are focused on growth through core programme and infrastructure development. We find this most often in organisations that are in their early *adolescent* phase with: 1 – 10 years of operating history, 2 – 10 staff members, an annual budget between $100K and $1M and baseline internal processes established

Address Priority Issues: The PROPEL Accelerator track is open to all nonprofits but prioritizes organisations whose missions address Bermuda's priority social safety net supports, as indicated by the pursuit of Vital Signs Outcome Areas. See https://bermudavitalsigns.org/

High-Potential: The PROPEL Accelerator track focuses on organisations with:

- A paid full-time Executive Director, or ED-equivalent
- A functioning Board, with an active Board Chair and Treasurer

Committed: The PROPEL Accelerator track requires that organisations have:

- An Executive Director willing to participate in all aspects of the programme
- Relevant staff and /or Board members willing to join sessions related to their areas of responsibility
- Management Team and Board willing to attend a 1-day Strategy Retreat
- Board commitment to support as needed based on Action and Strategic Plans developed

Application Process

An application process will be required, that will include an internal process checklist and questions to confirm eligibility requirements. This assessment will inform the selection and sorting process, and will also be used as a part of the programme. The application process itself is considered a capacity building exercise as it will serve as an internal tool to understand where internal process gaps exist. The application can be accessed through this link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QK5GPKY

Selection Process

The Application and Readiness Assessment will be used to select and sort applications into one of three categories

1) Accepted
2) Deferred *(ready but no capacity in this year's programme, deferred to future cohort)*
3) Not eligible *(not currently ready based on eligibility criteria. Action items will be suggested to support readiness for future cohort)*

The selection panel will consist of the core PROPEL Programme team

PROPEL Cost

There is NO fee associated with the programme.

Drop Out or Non-Completion Charge

There is a $7,000 drop out charge for organisations once they enroll and sign contracts. This is because the cost to run the programme is $14,000 per nonprofit. This means the Nonprofit Alliance and our donors are investing $14,000 in every participating nonprofit. If you drop out, this is a lost investment. Therefore, we take commitment and participation seriously, and so should any organisation considering the programme.

What is BNSC Certification

What is BSNC?

- The Bermuda National Standards Committee (BNSC) was established in 2005 as a local, independent collection of nonprofit representatives, seeking best practice standards for their organisations. In 2020, the BNSC became an internationally validated, locally registered nonprofit responsible for accrediting or certifying health and human serving organisations, in Bermuda.

- BNSC seeks to improve and demonstrate the quality of services in Bermuda, for health and human service organisations, through public and private partnership.
- BNSC established Bermuda as the first country to formally replicate the North America based Council on Accreditation (COA)
- COA is widely recognized as one of the best human service accrediting organisations and provides international validation for BNSC Accreditation and Certification.

What is Certification?

- A review process based on BNSC Standards of Excellence that cover governance, financial management, human resources, performance and quality improvement, risk prevention and management, administrative and service environment, and client rights.
- Demonstrates that an organisation provides high-quality services, ethically, and with the highest standards of care
- The standards guide organisations in developing best practices

Value of Certification

- Endorses an organisation as having a high standard of practice, over and above the basic requirements of the Charities Act
- Gives nonprofits the confidence to know they are functioning in a way that enhances their ability to deliver on their mission over the long term
- Gives donors and the public confidence that nonprofits who achieve certification or accreditation are operating with best practices
- Shows a nonprofit transitioning to adolescence and maturity is doing so with integrity

Q&A

Is PROPEL right for me? PROPEL is an intensive capacity building programme for nonprofits willing to invest considerable time in their growth and development over a two-to-three-year period (depending on programme track). The PROPEL Accelerator track is best suited for nonprofits in their adolescent phase (see page 4, paragraph 1), and the PROPEL Readiness track is designed for those requiring more support, who are potentially in decline or start-up phase. PROPEL is not a solution for organisations in full crisis (see below for description of crisis phase).

What is the format? Much of PROPEL will be delivered via virtual meetings, including the one-to-one coaching sessions. For the PROPEL Accelerator track, the cohort training sessions and the retreats will be in-person.

Who is the PROPEL Programme Team: The Lead Programme Coaches are Dr. Claudette Fleming and Dr. Nicola Paugh.

What is the cost? There is NO fee associated with the programme but if the organisation drops out, there is a drop out charge.

How is PROPEL promoted? The programme is promoted to all nonprofits in our database, and an open information session is held. The information session is also promoted on social media. Applications are open to any nonprofit interested in applying. For the PROPEL Readiness track, we may also conduct targeted outreach to organisations we believe could benefit from the intensive support, based on recommendations from key partners.

What information is required in the application? The organisation must provide information on the mission, problem statement, outcomes, clients served per year, current critical issues, projected expenses for the next fiscal year, number of FTE staff, and years in operation. You will also complete an internal process checklist. You must also submit your most recent financials as well as your programme logic model or Theory of Change.

How are organisations selected? Using the eligibility criteria listed for the PROPEL Accelerator track. If more eligible organisations apply than we have capacity for, we will defer organisations to future cohorts. We will consider factors such as outcomes measured and number of clients impacted when prioritizing. Organisations working towards Vital Signs outcomes (https://bermudavitalsigns.org/) will be prioritized, since these are evidenced-based community need priorities. For the Readiness track, organisations must

make the case that they are providing a basic, critical and essential service whereby if their organisation ceases to exist, clear hardship would be experienced by the beneficiaries.

What happens to those who are not eligible? We seek to serve nonprofits in all phases of their lifecycle who are invested in their growth and development. If an organisation is not currently eligible, we provide an alternate recommended capacity building plan that will assist in progressing to eligibility or in making progress until the programme has capacity for your nonprofit.

How do you know if your organisation is in crisis, where this programme may not be appropriate? A nonprofit in crisis refers to a situation in which a nonprofit organisation is facing significant, often unexpected challenges that threaten its stability, sustainability, or ability to fulfill its mission. As a result of this instability, focused attention on general capacity building would not be appropriate as full attention must be placed on resolving the crisis issues.