Governance and board performance in membership associations

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Abstract

The paper will offer preliminary descriptive data from a large study of board performance in member-serving organizations (expected n > 800). The project is collaboration between Indiana University and the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Foundation. ASAE is a national leader in association education, training, and research. This is part of a large study which include the following goals. (1) To produce high-quality, generalizable data on association governance practices; (2) To define features of highly functioning association boards: (3) To identify areas of concern to the smooth functioning of association boards, and the most promising solutions for addressing them: (4) To produce comparable benchmark data on board structure, selection, accountability and management practices; (5) To produce relevant data for specific subgroups and industries within the association sector; and (6) To test well-developed theories of effective governance from the charitable sector on the field of association management. The survey closed in January. Because of the timing, most of the analytic data presented in this paper will be descriptive, consisting mainly of comparisons across sub-sectors based on size, tax status, mission, membership, and other organizational characteristics.