Foundation Beyond Belief

Food Rescue Alliance

Compassionate Impact Grant: 12 Month Impact Report

Since hiring FRA's Network Designer in December we have spent time aligning with membership regarding priorities and focus of the network. To reflect the trajectory of a member-led network, FRA has two part time staff to support members in leading the work. We originally wrote the objectives with four staff members in mind, but we strategically decided to shift from a peer learning network to a generative social impact network, because member's having leadership and ownership over the work is vital. Our decision to downsize our staff engagement and encourage and increase member engagement enables the long-term sustainability of the network and allows for internal direction and decision making power from members. We feel that this shift in objectives allows us to focus on member connection and create accessible ways for members to participate and take leadership in the network. We have paused moving forward with certain objectives as they were not identified by members and will instead focus on member identified priorities, and plan to revisit objectives as members identify them.

Objective I: FRA facilitates connectivity, peer-learning, & strategic priorities among constituent-led food rescue initiatives.

1. Annual feedback surveys distributed to all FRA member organizations. Feedback data is collated & results are shared back throughout the whole network.
    - An annual survey was collected in January 2022 to capture the network's collective impact, through individual members' program numbers and to identify workshop topics and focus for the year.
    - Based on responses from 10 of our 30 members, FRA members rescued 11,121,981 pounds of food in 2021.
        i. We are looking for more seamless and low effort ways to collect a wider scope of member's programmatic impacts. We also recognize that pounds of food rescued, is a small component of the overall impact of FRA.
2. Host **every-other-month** member meetings to discuss questions and get relevant answers from peers. Document # of members in each meeting to track participation throughout the year: **shifted to every-other-month.**

- Monthly member meetings were temporarily paused during the staff transition from September - November. Members coordinated and facilitated a member meeting in December, which was completely member-led.
- In 2022 the regular bi-monthly member meetings have resumed and participation has ranged from 6-12 members in each meeting.
- The focus of member meetings is to facilitate connection and create opportunities for member's to take on leadership roles.
- In the January meeting members' identified action team topics that they would like to explore more together and ways that members can collaborate towards collective action, which will be the focus of future meetings.
- Moving forward, our goal is for members to have leadership roles during each meeting, including facilitating pieces of the meeting or supporting with developing the agenda.
- Meetings are occurring on a every other month schedule, alternating with member workshops. We have found that this structure works best and opens up more time for members to engage in other network activities and work, in addition to attending meetings.

3. Hold every-other-month workshop webinars. Track # of participants & and gather feedback in post-webinar surveys.
   - During the staff transition, from September - November, workshops were paused.
   - Members identified workshop topics for 2022 and workshops resumed in January. Half of the workshops will be facilitated by member organizations.
   - An average of 15 members have attended workshops in 2022.

4. Host every-other-month meetings centered around understanding members needs, wants and hopes for membership. Capture needs/feedback through interactive activities: **Incorporated within existing activities.**
   - We have shifted this goal and incorporated it within existing meetings and connections with members, in order to honor and preserve members capacity.
   - In our January meeting we built on and synthesized much of the prior work the network had done around collective visioning in 2022.
   - Additionally, the Network Designer collected feedback around member's vision for the network, from 18 members within individual check ins.
   - Moving forward member meetings will focus on collective action and putting into practice much of the visioning work members lead in 2020 and 2021.

5. Host open platform (via Slack application & e-mail listserv) for members to

evaluate, share, & receive peer-feedback on best practices in food recovery. Members share information and experiences, synthesize it, then share it back to the whole network. Organizers track the frequency with which platforms are used to establish efficacy of platforms.

- Members continue to engage and connect with members to share resources within slack and the email listserv.
- In an effort to support member leadership our goal is to allow members to lead engagement on these platforms, and use the platform to engage that best meets their needs.
- Members have engaged around 40 topics and made connections across slack and the listserve so far in 2022.

6. Create and circulate a member directory and a quarterly newsletter that spreads the news of what members are doing (e.g. milestones, developments, calls for action, etc.): **Paused.**
   - Member directory created and circulated in 2021.
   - We have incorporated newsletter updates into existing emails, in order to utilize existing platforms to disseminate information and to streamline network communications.

7. FRA organizers offer one-on-one consulting. Track # of consulting sessions, and type of sessions (e.g.- volunteer support, development support, etc.).
   - In 2022 we have onboarded one new FRA member, and have had two consulting sessions with the member.

8. Connect members strategically (e.g. 2 members who don't know each other, active members to less active members, members in the same state or regional area working toward a common goal). Track # of member connections, and # of working groups created.
   - We are focusing on building member connection points through drop in sessions where members can connect and ask each other questions and share resources. The goal is for these more informal meetings to provide an avenue to facilitate connections between members organically.

9. Track comprehensive member information in FRA member profile database. Includes quantitative information (e.g. Track # of pounds of food, # of people served, & # of volunteers engaged annually by member organizations) and qualitative information (e.g. Where is support needed, Expertise that can be shared through the network, etc.)
   - We collect member information including individual organization's program numbers through an annual survey. We also began tracking qualitative information regarding member connections and leadership within the network this year.

10. Devise, curate & manage an open, web-based resource-sharing hub for community-based food rescues. Track the use of hub by FRA members, & how often new resources are shared: **Paused.**
    - We are pausing this objective for now to focus on ensuring existing resource sharing platforms are accessible to members. Members currently have access to and support in maintaining a shared google drive, with documents and resources applicable to food rescue.
    - We plan to collect feedback on member's interest in utilizing a different platform and barriers to accessing current document sharing. We will reassess this objective if members' identify it as an area of interest.
11. Roll-out FRA social media strategy. Document platform-specific, process-oriented goals (e.g. post frequency, engaging with other accounts, content themes): **Paused.**
    - We have paused this due to the network's priorities, and will resume when members are interested in taking leadership and managing FRA's social media engagement.
12. Onboard new membership organizations through an evaluative rubric that prioritizes organizations that are (1) BIPOC-led, (2) led by people who have experienced food insecurity, (3) based in the Southeast United States, and/or (4) co-located in the regions of existing FRA members. Additional considerations include (1) Affiliations, (2) Type of food rescue model, (3) Age of organization. Track # of new organizations onboarded each year.
    - We are currently not actively outreaching to new members, to focus on internal alignment. It is not a goal to grow the network currently, as we feel that internal alignment and connection is a priority, before we can bring others into the network. We hope to bring on new members as existing members are aligned on the network's values and vision.

    - We have onboarded 1 new member so far this year, who has a strong racial justice lens and is in a region with existing FRA members.

13. Roll-out new member outreach plan. Track # of organizations to reach out to, # of calls/emails made, # of organizations that fill out membership application, & # of organizations that become FRA members. Track separately for active and passive outreach: **Temporarily paused**.
    - We have paused this, as we mentioned above, to focus on alignment and connection between existing members.
14. Engage members in conducting an annual operating planning process in which members identify shared vision, objectives, opportunities. Track # of organizations that participate.
    - Have begun this process through collective visioning with members in 2021,

and plan on continuing to build on this and have a more formal planning process for 2023.

Objective II: FRA strengthens the collective power of community-led organizations across the country by providing open-source food reclamation logistics software.

1. Complete at least two iterations of software development.

   ○ From August 16th - October 15th Rootable executed a development milestone that included two software sprints, each lasting about 4 weeks.

   ○ Feature set was focused on shift improvements. For a complete set of features completed and additional information, please refer to the [issue tracker on GitLab](#).

2. Transition Robot users to another software platform. Provide guidance on how to choose and transition software. Track the # of members that switch to Rootable.

   ○ Continued providing walkthroughs of Rootable & guidance for switching to other systems.
   ○ Attempts to hand off the Robot to a willing maintainer, Denver Food Rescue failed due to their lack of capacity or interest. This does not affect our ability to move Robot users to Rootable. If nobody takes on the legacy software, it has no impact on FRA.
   ○ Onboarded one FRA member, Cafe Food Rescue, to use Rootable.

- Cooperative ownership strategy update.
   ○ Determined current cooperative strategy was incomplete & changed course.
   ○ New plan informed by the Masters Program in Cooperative Management at Saint Mary's University.
   ○ Created a project plan for getting more organizations actively involved in fundraising for final feature development.

- Web monetization research update.
   ○ Completed research & determined that we need a more viable business plan in order to continue with web monetization.