

REFLECTION POINT
ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Working Better Together



“
I never imagined
that discussing
stories would
help my team
work better
together – but
that’s exactly
what happened.”

—REFLECTION POINT PARTICIPANT

Letter to the Community.

Dear Partners, Participants, Facilitators, Supporters and Friends:

Diversity matters. But how we manage diversity matters even more.

A 2021 study from the Pew Research Center¹ found that a large majority of people in 17 of the world’s largest countries believe that diversity improves their society. But beyond that belief lies a bleaker reality. In the US, while 80% report a growing openness to the benefits of diversity, 90% feel our differences tear us apart rather than bring us together.

We all feel it. Right now, division runs deep. In fact, 59% of Americans believe that most people disagree not only on policies and perspectives but on basic facts. The Pew report ranks the US among the most fractured, wary and distrustful countries in the world.

We may understand in theory that diversity is an asset, but in practice it feels like a liability that causes conflict and discrimination.

Managing diversity is really hard. We know it matters. We see how it enriches and expands workplaces and communities. But if we can’t find a way to engage with each other, how can we bridge across differences to reach the benefits? The truth is, none of us have the training or skills we need to navigate this.

This is how Reflection Point changes the world. We help people work better together. And live better together, too.

We do this by helping people develop the collective skills we need to engage with each other, to make sense of different points of view and to open our minds to new perspectives. By bringing diverse people together – in workplaces and communities all over the world – we create the space for people to learn to leverage their diversity to foster a deeper shared understanding.

This is not fluffy stuff. It’s grounded in a set of five critical interpersonal skills:

- Listening with humility
- Asking good questions
- Challenging our assumptions
- Disagreeing with respect but without retribution
- Widening the circle of empathy.

These five skills unlock our collective intelligence and help us work better together. In today’s world, these capabilities are not nice-to-have, they’re must-have. Only by systematically learning and practicing these five skills can we see that different is good. And we harness the power of diversity to fuel innovation, performance and growth.

Reflection Point uses stories to level the playing field and create the conditions to explore challenging topics outside of the sensitivities and busyness of the day-to-day. Stories melt hierarchies, making room for all voices.

In the decade we’ve been doing this work, our participants tell us over and over that our approach works:

“It helped open my mind to different perspectives and at least understand the reason behind them, whether we agree or not.”

Whether at work, in neighborhoods or in community organizations, our ability to navigate diversity and use it as a force for good depends on our willingness to deepen our relationships, extend our curiosity and broaden our understanding. With your strong and steadfast support, Reflection Point is showing the world that different is good. That we can work better together. That diversity can help us build a better future.

We are deeply grateful for your partnership and your commitment to make real change happen. Thank you.

Best wishes,



Ann Kowal Smith
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Felix M. Brueck
BOARD CHAIR

¹ Diversity and Division in Advanced Economies, Pew Research Center, October 2021
<https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2021/10/13/diversity-and-division-in-advanced-economies/>

What is Reflection Point?

At Reflection Point we believe that inclusive communities (at work and in the world) require open and honest conversation.

We make it easier by starting with a story.

Reflection Point uses facilitated discussions of powerful stories to build bridges, flip perspectives, and deepen shared understanding. Our facilitators guide small groups through reflection and dialogue.

Why stories? Stories offer a low risk platform to practice honest conversations. A good story invites a group to gather and reflect about the ways they relate to each other and how to co-create a more inclusive future. It opens avenues for sharing more of each other and deepening the relationships that support inclusion, collaboration and innovation.

The Five Skills of Collective Intelligence

The last few years have provided a stark reminder that change is the only constant. A global pandemic, war, racial and ethnic discord and political polarization sent us into our separate corners. However, the wicked challenges that face us can only be overcome by collective intelligence and powerful partnerships.

But working together is not something most of us have learned how to do well. Effective collaboration is not a feeling, but a concrete outcome of a set of very specific interpersonal skills, grounded in learning and reinforced in practice. These skills are not soft, they are flexible, endowing us with the resilience and creativity to confront the challenges ahead. These are collective skills: they can only be learned together.

Reflection Point builds and deepens these skills.



Listening with humility.

So many times we listen only to wait our turn to speak or to catch someone in a mistake. Listening is not a weapon but a powerful tool for real learning. Listening well, with genuine humility, enhances our capacity for innovation and drives collaboration.

Asking good and curious questions.

Good questions are not “gotcha” or test questions, but curious questions with an authentic interest in learning. A good question is one where you genuinely want to hear the answer. Asking good questions unleashes new ideas by surfacing the hidden insights of others.

Challenging strongly-held assumptions.

We all navigate the world with a set of beliefs and understandings born of our education, upbringing and experience. But we become entrenched when we see the world only through the things we already know. By challenging our assumptions and suspending our “known truths,” we open our minds to others’ points of view and expand our mental models.

Disagreeing with respect and without retribution.

In the healthiest and most productive communities and organizations, people feel empowered to speak up and offer alternative points of view. Positive disagreement is the bedrock of learning that cannot happen without psychological safety, grounded in trust and mutual regard.

Widening the circle of empathy.

Science confirms that despite our best intentions, we are most empathetic with people we already know or who look and feel like us. It’s much harder to be open to those we dislike or with whom we fundamentally disagree. By deepening our relationships and expanding our understanding, we widen the circle of empathy and naturally expand inclusion and belonging.

“Reflection Point helps with the company culture we want to have – being open and respectful, appreciating others’ opinions. Reflection Point is a vehicle to drive better collaboration and better understanding.”

FISCAL YEAR 2021

Financials

By the Numbers

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2021 (AND SINCE INCEPTION), WE HAVE WORKED WITH:

12,801

Participants

102

Organizations

8

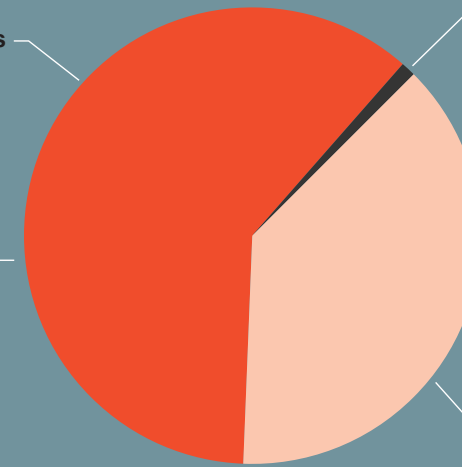
Languages

Sources of Funds

TOTAL REVENUE (\$ IN THOUSANDS): \$381.6

61%
Contributions,
Gifts and Grants

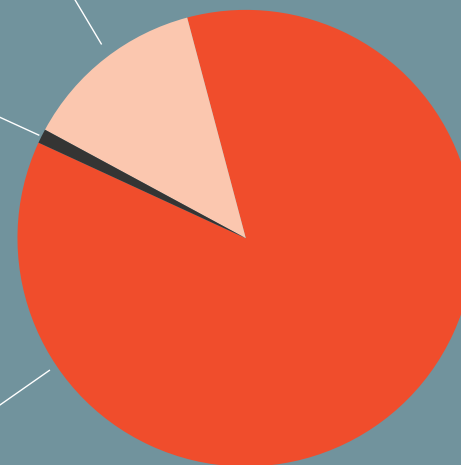
1%
Other



38%
Program
Income

13%
Management

1%
Fundraising



Uses of Funds

TOTAL EXPENSES (\$ IN THOUSANDS): \$350.2

86%
Program

LESSONS LEARNED

Hybrid work requires a different way to think about culture.

Culture doesn't only happen in person. As we increasingly engage with colleagues in virtual settings, we are challenged to think about culture with intention and commitment. No longer fueled by happy hour or the watercooler, we must create new spaces and more time to hear other voices and deepen belonging.

Diversity is in the details.

So many organizations tend to think of diversity in broad brush strokes, checking the "box" when they honor Black History or Pride months. But it's the detailed brush strokes (that take time, repetition and practice) that leave lasting impressions: the complex lived experiences of our colleagues enrich our understanding of other worldviews. Celebrating diversity is less about teaching concepts and more about prioritizing genuine relationships.

Psychological safety matters.

One of the most powerful lessons of the past year is that external factors can irreparably alter the ways we work and live together. But strengthening the skills of interpersonal connection helps us give each other the benefit of the doubt, deepens our relationships and empowers us to weather uncertainty together.

“

Particularly now, because as a society we are so fractured and divided, you need to find reasons to make people see each other as human. That only leads to better things.

—REFLECTION POINT PARTICIPANT

Thank You.

You – our donors, partners, participants and facilitators – give life to Reflection Point. Your dedication to lifelong learning helps individuals, teams and communities. You are making learning inspiring and relevant. Together we are breaking down barriers and building collaborative and inclusive workplaces and communities.

“
I love that Reflection Point creates a discussion that’s outside of work which dissolves some of the power structure, but also creates a safe space for challenges and differences of opinion.”

— REFLECTION POINT PARTICIPANT

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The City Club of Cleveland
The City of Hudson Ohio
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Tremco
TWG Plus
University Hospitals Ahuja Medical Center
University of Massachusetts Medical School
University of Michigan
Valmet Inc.
Veterans Domiciliary at Wade Park
Whirlpool Corporation
Workplace Learning System

“

It's the best part of my week. I have meaningful interactions with colleagues that I simply wouldn't have otherwise.”

—REFLECTION POINT PARTICIPANT



**Reflection
Point**

We help you work better together.

That Can Be Me, Inc.
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