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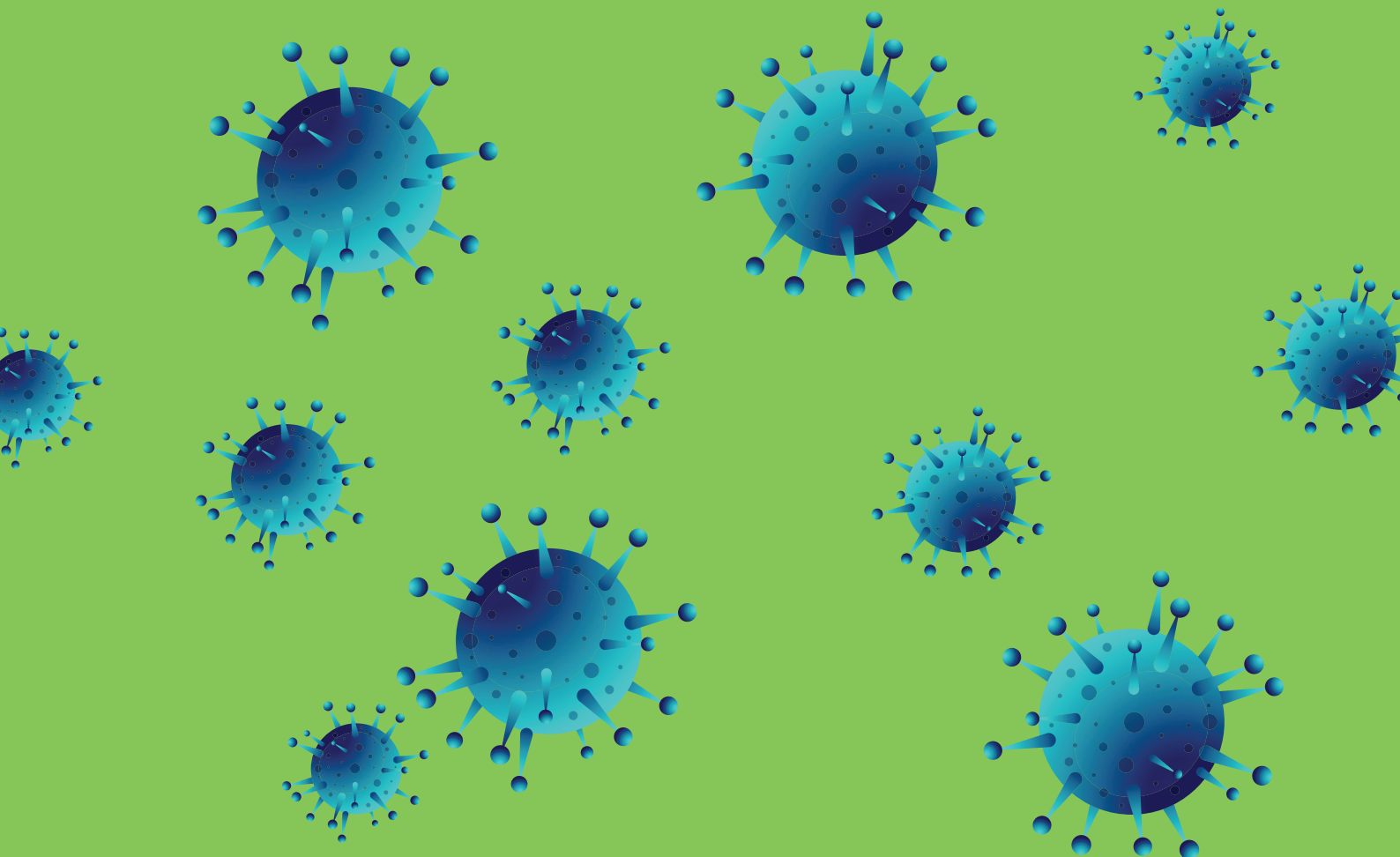
Working within the confines of Covid-19

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Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic presents new and urgent challenges for the operations and activities of not-for-profit organisations – including our own grantee partners. Oak staff have brought together a collection of key organisational resources, tools and ideas that have recently materialised in an effort to support not-for-profit organisations during these unprecedented times. In this collection of resources you will find;

1. Remote working
2. Employee wellness
3. Child Safeguarding
4. Health, safety and security
5. Funding and financial management
6. Leadership and management; and
7. Communications

These resources are grouped by organisational challenges, resources and tools (i.e. approaches that can be directly applied), or prompts and ideas (i.e., accessible and clear thought-pieces). Each link is accompanied by a short summary. We aim to update, curate and enhance this list regularly, not just simply to add more content. We want to share the most useful resources and relevant approaches as they become available.

Happy reading and stay safe and healthy,

Adriana Craciun,
Senior Adviser on Organisational Development and Capacity Building
Oak Foundation

Questions? / Get in touch
If you have questions about this guide, please contact Adriana Craciun
at adriana.craciun@oakfnd.ch

We appreciate your hard work and commitment and look forward to supporting your efforts.

1. Remote working

Resources and tools

Not-for-profit resources for remote work: TechSoup equips change-makers with transformative technology solutions and the skills they need to improve lives globally and locally. Currently limited numbers of free licenses are being offered in many different countries. Visit the website

Coronavirus tech handbook: A google doc that is being continuously updated by a large community of technologists, civil society groups and others. It has all kinds of resources, including guides on home working, volunteering and updates on global responses. Access the document

Building trust while remote working: This blog provides advice about remote working, based on the experience of our partner the Engine Room. Visit the blog

Tips on virtual meetings: The extensive tips and resources found at this link were developed by the Sierra Club's distributed organising team and based on years of experience. Access the document

Capacity building online support: For Oak partners that currently have access to Catchafire, see the COVID-19 project bundle to help identify projects and virtual volunteers related to challenges faced during COVID-19. If you are not registered with Catchafire but are interested, complete this online interest form

FREE volunteer online support: Taproot Plus matches non-profit organisations with expert volunteers to provide marketing, IT, and finance support needs to navigate these challenging times virtually. Visit their COVID-19 site for more info, including free webinars.

COVID-19 Resource Hub: International SOS publishes a series of accessible infographics on tips & best practices for working from home, from how to lead effective meetings to parenting at home. Registration required. Access the hub

Prompts and ideas

Managing home working: This article considers what issues Human Resources departments and leaders need to understand about staff working from home. Read the article

Virtual work skills: This Harvard Business Review article covers useful ideas on remote working. The key issue is for colleagues to work from a position of trust. Read the article

Five tips for switching to remote management: A quick guide to the five main considerations. Access the guide

2. Employee wellness

Resources and tools

Guide to wellbeing during Coronavirus: Practices, resources, and articles for individuals, parents and educators facing Covid-19. Access the guide

Prompts and ideas

People priorities in response to Covid-19: A Boston Consulting Group paper that provides a comprehensive people-centric list of management priorities. Access the document

Supporting working mothers during Covid-19 – and beyond: A short blog that outlines the main issues and offers four recommendations for what organisations can do to support all working parents, particularly mothers. Visit the blog

3. Child safeguarding

Resources and tools

In line with Oak Foundation's commitment to child safeguarding, we bring you helpful tools and resources to keep children safe through your work and at home.

Protecting children during crisis, online training: Our partner Darkness to Light offers a 30-minute free of charge online training in English & Spanish on how to better protect children during crisis. Although targeting parents and families, much of the content applies to organisations that work with children. Access the training

Remote and online safety for school staff: UK charity NSPCC has published a webpage with resources to help schools keep children and young people safe while teaching in a remote or unusual setting. Topics covered include: consent; contacting children at home; child protection concerns; online safety and mental health and wellbeing. Visit the website

Prevention essentials for emergency childcare: For those organisations providing emergency childcare services, please refer to this guide by our US partner Praesidium. Access the guide

Prompts and ideas

Minimising opportunity: A few ideas in a blog by our US-based partner Darkness to Light that can help you protect the children around you while schools are closed and risks for children facing abuse and neglect are significant. Visit the blog

4. Health, safety and security

Resources and tools

Supporting staff, volunteers and beneficiaries and keeping safe: These NCVO webpages provide information on a variety of issues, including: preventing the spread of COVID-19, protecting staff, volunteers and visitors, and how to manage events, board meetings and annual general meetings. Visit the website

Frontline defenders: physical, emotional and digital protection while using home as office: Ideas and tips on how human rights defenders can stay safe during the pandemic. This includes physical, emotional and digital protection. Visit the blog

COVID-19 rapid crisis response checklist: While covering global organisational issues, this Boston Consulting Group checklist provides a valuable team health and safety overview (page 4). Access the checklist

COVID-19 Resources for Women's Specialist Support Services & Women's Organisations: Information & materials, including technology-related guides and more general information on violence against women, compiled specifically for women's specialist support services & women's organisations. Visit the website

COVID-19 Resource Hub: International SOS publishes a series of accessible infographics on mental health & wellbeing, from how to cope in stressful times to eating healthy w Registration required. Access the hub

Prompts and ideas

Security awareness work-from-home deployment kit: Everything you need to know to create secure work-from-home environments during the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond. Access the kit

Psychological resources for coronavirus: This page collates links targeted for mental health practitioners but might help general population as well. Visit the website

5. Funding and financial management

Resources and tools

Contingency planning and financial implications: National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) webpages that focus on dealing with the potential financial impact on organisations. It includes: developing a contingency plan; insurance issues; immediate actions to manage finances; what to expect from funders, and more. Visit the website

Emergency funding for not-for-profit organisations (UK mainly): The Charity Bank has brought together a list of emergency funds for charities and social enterprises that are experiencing difficulties. Visit the website

Resource on Paycheck Protection Programme (PPP) Toolbox: PPP Toolbox is designed by FMA to support nonprofit organisations in the USA as they navigate the Paycheck Protection Program, from Application, through Loan Management and Reporting, and Forgiveness, designed primarily with the needs of nonprofit organizations in mind. Follow this link for more information.

Prompts and ideas

Eight steps for managing through tough times: Considering it takes the not-for-profit sector 1.5 times longer than the for-profit sector to recover from a recession, Bridgespan usefully highlights good financial planning steps. Visit the blog

Eight actions for Executive Directors and Boards: SeaChange's new report "Tough Times Call for Tough Action: A Decision Framework for Nonprofit Leaders and Boards" summarises best practices and advices given to leadership if their nonprofits they are to survive the COVID-19 crisis. Read the report

6. Leadership and management

Resources and tools

GAIA (Global Activation of Intention and Action) of Presencing Institute, MIT is offering a free, online 14-week journey (leading up to the July 10-11 virtual Global Forum) designed to help individuals and communities to lean into the current moment of disruption with awareness and presence, and to use this moment to create transformation and evolution. In English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, German and Dutch. Visit the website

Courses and webinars (mostly FREE): a crowdsourced list of lockdown learning courses & webinars on a range of topics for non-profits from Digital Charity Lab. Click here to see the list

SSRI's 15th annual Nonprofit Management Institute "COVID-19: Reshaping Social Innovation": join the Stanford Social Innovation Review on Sep 22-24 for a virtual convening with nonprofit and business leaders, noted academics, and prominent public-sector leaders to share experiences and insights on how organizations have weathered the impact of COVID-19 and what can we learn from these experiences. Register here

Columbia Business School's Online Program "Leading the Agile Organization" (Aug 17-21): Program for leaders to acquire the skills and mindsets vital to leading an agile and adaptive organization More info here

Columbia Business School's Online Program "Crisis Leadership" (date TBA): 6-week course with the CBS' co-directors for leaders on how to approach the present crisis with authenticity and agility and to draw out the best in themselves and their teams in making the right strategic moves. More info here

Prompts and ideas

Leadership in a crisis: A McKinsey thought-piece that covers five noteworthy leadership practices to help you respond effectively. Read the article

When leadership matters most: This Boston Consulting Group article offers a synthesis of the traps for managing in a crisis, and then presents six guiding principles for leaders need to consider. Visit the blog

Past leadership lessons for the Coronavirus pandemic: Three leaders give their lessons on leading in a crisis situation, notably the importance to resist the desire to centralise control. Read the article

Leading in times of trauma: This Harvard Business Review article is useful for leaders to understand the need to foster organisational compassion. Read the article

FREE Virtual Meetings Untangled: BoardSource is making their guide available for free. Virtual Meetings Untangled guides the board and the CEO or executive director toward understanding the possibilities and preparing for the challenges of virtual board meetings. Download the guide here

Post-COVID scenarios for resilient leaders: Deloitte & Salesforce present four COVID-19 scenarios for society and business that illustrate different ways we could emerge from the crisis—and what's required to thrive in a world remade. Read the article

7. Communications

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Resources and tools

COVID-19 messaging document: A practical guide on messaging which addresses insidious rhetoric.
Access the guide

Framing COVID-19: A guide from our partner Frameworks Institute for effective and inclusive communication during a time of genuine crisis.
Access the guide

Talking about human rights during COVID-19: A guide offering suggestions on how to frame human rights when speaking about measures that authorities are taking (or failing to take) to halt the spread and minimise the impact of coronavirus.
Access the guide.