

Who is *Data You Can Use*?

Is it useful to look at school test scores over time if the tests have changed, and if a third of the population of students who attend that school changes each year? If police data in a neighborhood seems to indicate that a hospital is the epicenter of crime in a neighborhood- does it make sense to look a little closer or use the data as-is? What are the best indicators to use when you talk about neighborhood change? These are all questions our staff have encountered in the first three years of Data You Can Use's work in Milwaukee.

Data You Can Use is an independent nonprofit organization, established in 2016 to serve Milwaukee nonprofits and local funders in using data to address community problems and build community solutions. We are a diverse group of local professionals who help people access data and make it useful in improving neighborhoods. We work with clients to ask the right questions to get the right data, put it into a local context, present it visually and put it to work in addressing important issues. We democratize data by broadening access and building local capacity, sharing best practices, and helping users to sort through the data to surface, explain and address issues of concern. Our work requires technical expertise, understanding of local context, the ability to convene and collaborate with multiple stakeholders, and trust.

Over the past three years we have worked with 19 neighborhoods receiving CDBG funds, three Zilber neighborhoods, three Northwestern Mutual/ BNCP neighborhoods, four Greater Milwaukee Foundation neighborhoods, four neighborhoods affiliated with Reclaiming Our Neighborhoods, two Turning the Corner neighborhoods, and four independent neighborhood associations in providing training, data, analysis, visualization and application of neighborhood data. We are the Milwaukee representative to the Urban Institute's National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership (NNIP) and have shared the learnings and lessons of our 31 partner cities across the country with Milwaukee stakeholders. Our executive director has been elected to serve on the Executive Committee of this national organization, and we are proud to be hosting the 2019 national meeting, highlighting many of Milwaukee's accomplishments and ongoing challenges.

Our business model is designed to maintain a small core staff, contract with data and content experts locally and nationally to provide the necessary expertise at the best cost to clients and build capacity of future dataphiles by supporting local learning, fellowship and apprentice programs.

Context is key, according to our motto:

No data without stories, no stories without data.

