

Fundkit

New Nonprofit Checklist

With more than 1.5 million nonprofits in the United States today, it is important to first consider how your nonprofit fits into the work already being done in your community. Starting and growing a nonprofit is a heavy undertaking and it would be wise to consider whether establishing a new nonprofit versus partnering with a current one will be more beneficial. This consideration will be beneficial as you approach potential donors, and it also helps you identify potential long-term partners and collaborators. It shows you have taken the time to understand why your nonprofit's approach is a unique and complementary asset to your community. Below is a list of things to consider if you have recently started or are considering starting a nonprofit. Keep your end goals in mind and start off on the right footing.

Legal

- Establish 501c3 status
- File License to solicit. Visit your state charitable trust government page about how to do this
- Create Bylaws
- Recruit founding board members
- Prepare and file Articles of Incorporation

Messaging and Program

- Identify what makes your organization unique to other nonprofits doing similar work
- Identify the qualifications that make your organization the right organization to do this work
- Identify ways to measure the impact of your nonprofit and program outcomes
- Create mission, vision statements, and determine goals for diversity, equity, and inclusion

Board

- Select board members:
 - Is the majority of your board non-family members?
 - Do you have more than three?
- Draft a Board Expectation Policy
- Set up board structure with designated terms for members and leadership positions

Infrastructure

- Create a business and/or strategic plan, one-year Fund Development Plan, 1- and 3-year budgets
- Create a tracking tool for donors and donations, or purchase donor software (*recommendations: Little Green Light or Bloomerang*)
- Adopt a gift acceptance policy
- Create a website with platform for online giving
- Establish a social media presence
- Create a tax receipt / thank you letter with IRS language and receipting process
- Build a list of potential donors and volunteers
- Build a list of potential corporate/business partners
- Plan for the first fundraising event, with a purpose of acquiring new donors

Resources

- <https://www.harborcompliance.com/information/nonprofit-startup-checklist>
- <https://www.boardeffect.com/blog/checklist-for-starting-a-nonprofit-organization/>
- www.getfundkit.com
- <https://bloomerang.co/template/development-plan-template/>