

Resources for Nonprofits

Resource 4 of 8: Building Your Board and Essential Staff

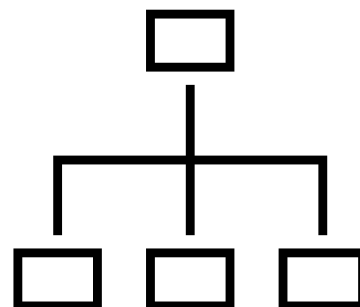
An energetic, professional staff and/or volunteer team, and a wise and well-connected Board can ensure the success and sustainability of an organization. Essential staff may be hired bit by bit and volunteers recruited, but a Board is required upon incorporation. The Board's capacity for leadership can be supported by regular training and clear bylaws.

Building your Board

Your board is the guiding body for your organization. Board members may bring one of three things to the organization: **wealth** (the board member has personal wealth or access to donors); **wisdom** (the board member has expertise in a needed area like law, human resources, or the organization's program area); or **work** (the board member has a proven track record of hard work and commitment to the organization's mission.)

Essential Staff

Determining if your organization needs paid staff members is a discussion for the Board. At a minimum, many organizations may require an Executive Director to ensure that the organization is working toward its goals and a bookkeeper or CFO to keep a careful accounting of the organization's finances. Financial accounting, budget, and human resources should be considered if paid staff will be essential to the organization. Volunteer management is crucial.



MU Extension Specialists are available to assist you in locating the resources that you need to make decisions for your organization. This series of resource sheets is designed to provide information to connect you to the knowledge you'll need to make decisions about your entity.

We do not, however, offer services to build, manage, or file nonprofit entities.

Services are intended for educational purposes only and do not constitute legal advice.

For legal guidance on nonprofit matters, individuals should consult an attorney.



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Extension Specialists
can help!
Use the QR Code to find
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Factors to consider before selecting a board:

- Does our organization's work involve risk? Whose advice would we need to manage that risk?
- Does our organization's work require expertise or certification? By whom?
- Is sustained funding required to be raised or renewed? Who will help with that?
- Who can connect us to expertise and resources in our community? Should they be on our board? Which members of the community have shown commitment to our type of work?
- How large does our initial board need to be?
- Will we have a 'working board' with members performing essential-staff and operational duties? Will financial and executive duties be done by hired staff or service contracts?
- What details need to be part of Article of incorporation, bylaws, policy, or procedure?

Some considerations for the Board's structure:

Length of term (number of terms) • How to handle vacancies or removal of board members
Regular, Annual & Special Meetings: in-person and/or virtual • Voting & Quorum
Officers (number of positions and titles) and Standing Committees • Parliamentary authority

Supporting All-Volunteer Organizations

Many nonprofits begin—and thrive as all-volunteer organizations. Board members and volunteers carry out day to day duties typically handled as paid staff. Clear role descriptions, reasonable expectations, and supportive bylaws can help volunteer-run organizations operate effectively. As your organization grows, you can revisit whether adding paid staff would help sustain or expand your mission.

Please visit these resources for more information:

[University of Missouri Kansas City's Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership](#)

[Volunteer Accountants & Lawyers for the Arts](#)

- [Nonprofit Connect](#)
- [Network for Strong Communities](#)
- [Nonprofit Missouri](#)
- [Missouri Attorney General's office](#)
- [Independent Sector](#)
- [MU Extension's Build Your Board](#)



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