

Museum and Nonprofit Administration Basics

Running a museum or nonprofit can be complex, but building the right team, policies, and structure can mean all the difference in the world between stagnation or failure and growing capacity and sustainability. Below are several resources about starting and administering nonprofits, board structure and operations, finances, fundraising, ethics, legalities, and planning for the future. See also toolkits on “Grants”, “Event Planning”, “Volunteer Recruitment and Management”, and “Marketing and Social Media” further resources on managing your museum or nonprofit.

Starting a Museum or Nonprofit

- BoardSource: [“Forming the Nonprofit’s First Board”](#)
- Gerald George and Carol Maryan-George: [Starting Right: A Basic Guide to Museum Planning](#)
- Grantspace: [“How Do I Start a Nonprofit Organization?”](#)
- Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center, University of Iowa
 - Offers guidance on [starting a nonprofit as well as lectures and workshops](#).
 - [Starting an Iowa Charitable Nonprofit Corporation](#) (scroll to the bottom of the page)
 - [Starting a Small Iowa Charitable Nonprofit Corporation](#) (scroll to the bottom of the page)
- Museums Alberta: [Thinking About Starting a Museum?](#)

Administration and Leadership

- American Association for State and Local History: [StEPs Program \(Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations\)](#)
- Anne Ackerson and Joan Baldwin: [Leadership Matters](#)
- BoardSource: [The Board-Staff Partnership](#)
- Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko and Stacy Klinger: [The Small Museum Toolkit/Book 3: Organizational Management](#)
- Free Management Library: [“Checklist of Human Resource Management Indicators for Nonprofit Organizations”](#)
- Hugh Genoways and Lynne Ireland: [Museum Administration: An Introduction](#)
- Inc.: [“Is Your Team Out of Sync? 6 Questions to Spur Alignment”](#)
- Kotter International: [8-Step Process for Leading Change](#)
- Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center, University of Iowa
 - [Iowa Principles and Practices for Charitable Nonprofit Excellence](#)
 - [Professional Development opportunities](#)
 - [Various publications](#)
- National Council of Nonprofits
 - [Employment](#) (various articles)
 - [Leadership](#) (various articles)
 - [“Managing Nonprofit Employees”](#)
- U.S. Office of Personnel Management: [“Performance Management: Teams”](#)

Boards

- Board Effect: ["10 Tips for a Successful Board Meeting"](#)
- BoardSource
 - [Assessing Board Performance](#)
 - [Board Composition and Recruitment](#)
 - [Board Responsibilities and Structures - FAQs](#)
 - [Bylaws](#)
 - [Culture and Dynamics](#)
 - [Fiduciary Responsibilities](#)
 - [Orientation and Education](#)
 - [Oversight and Accountability](#)
 - [Roles and Responsibilities](#)
 - [Structures, Committees, and Meetings](#)
- CompassPoint
 - ["Sample Job Descriptions for Board Officers"](#)
 - ["Working Board vs. Governing Board?"](#)
- Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center, University of Iowa: [The Governing Board for Iowa Charitable Nonprofits](#)
- National Council of Nonprofits: [Boards and Governance](#) (various articles)

Finance and Fundraising

- Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko and Stacy Klinger: [The Small Museum Toolkit/Book 2: Financial Resource Development and Management](#)
- BoardSource
 - [Fiduciary Responsibilities](#)
 - [Fundraising](#)
 - [Measuring Fundraising Effectiveness](#)
- Eric Burgess, Aplos: ["Fundraising Guide for Nonprofit Organizations"](#)
- Ilona Bray, NOLO: ["Nonprofit Fundraising Methods: An Overview"](#)
- Joanne Fritz, The Balance: ["Fundraising Basics for Nonprofits"](#)
- John Massie Mutz and Katharine Murray: [Fundraising for Dummies](#)
- National Council of Nonprofits
 - [Financial Management](#) (various articles)
 - [Fundraising](#) (various articles)
 - ["Nonprofit Audit Guide"](#)
- State Historical Society of Iowa: ["Funding General Operating Expenses"](#)

Ethics and Legalities

- American Alliance of Museums: ["Ethics, Standards and Best Practices"](#)
- Independent Sector: ["Checklist for Accountability"](#)
- Larned A. Waterman Iowa Nonprofit Resource Center, University of Iowa: [Legal Guide for Iowa Nonprofits](#)
- Museums Association: ["Code of Ethics for Museums"](#)
- National Council of Nonprofits

- [“Code of Ethics for Nonprofits”](#)
- [“Conflicts of Interest”](#)
- [Ethics and Accountability](#) (various articles)

Strategic Planning

- American Association for State and Local History: [“DIY Strategic Planning for Small Museums”](#)
- BoardSource: [Strategy and Planning](#)
- GrantSpace: [“What is Strategic Planning? Where Can I Learn More About It?”](#)
- National Council of Nonprofits: [“Strategic Planning for Nonprofits”](#)