cariclub

A FIRST-TIME GUIDE · ASSOCIATE BOARDS

# Start an Associate Board

## A first-time guide for nonprofits

From idea to a working board in four parts, with a toolkit for every step.



# Before you begin

**Who this guide is for.** You lead or staff a nonprofit that has never had an associate board, and you want to know whether one would help. This guide is for you, and for the staff member who will run it.

**Who wrote this.** CariClub, which connects nonprofits with professionals who want to serve on boards. More about us on page 40.

**What we mean by an associate board.** In this guide, an associate board is a selected volunteer group with defined terms and work obligations inside a host nonprofit. It is non-fiduciary: it has no legal duty to oversee the nonprofit's money and decisions. Some organizations use the same name for looser networks; those need a different operating model. Junior board, young professionals board, auxiliary board: whatever yours is called, we call it an associate board.

**How to read the evidence.** Associate boards are under-studied. Next to each claim you will see a label:

- **Associate board practice:** what real associate boards publish or report.
- **Board guidance:** advice, policies and studies about governing or advisory boards, applied here.
- **Volunteer research:** studies of volunteers in general.
- **Law or regulator:** a statute, an official agency page, or a lawyer's general explanation of the law.
- **Our recommendation:** our judgment where the evidence is thin.

**A note on advice.** This is general information, not legal, tax or insurance advice. The legal and tax checks in this guide are written for US charities that can receive tax-deductible gifts, usually 501(c)(3) public charities. Private foundations, other kinds of nonprofits and organizations outside the US need different checks, and state and local rules also apply. Chapter 7 tells you exactly which questions to take to your counsel, broker and finance lead.

Associate board practice | Board guidance | Volunteer research | Law or regulator | Our recommendation

# Contents


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Before you begin** | **2** |
| | **Your control panel** | **4** |
| | **The 10-minute version** | **5** |
| **PART 1 · DECIDE** | | |
| 1 | What this model is, and isn't | 6 |
| 2 | Readiness gates | 8 |
| 3 | Purpose and success | 11 |
| **PART 2 · DESIGN** | | |
| 4 | People and structure | 14 |
| 5 | Money and fairness | 18 |
| 6 | Staff capacity and decision rights | 20 |
| 7 | Risk and compliance checkpoint | 23 |
| **PART 3 · AUTHORIZE AND LAUNCH** | | |
| 8 | The authorization packet | 28 |
| 9 | Recruit and select the founding class | 30 |
| 10 | Orient the class and assign real work | 32 |
| **PART 4 · RUN AND REVIEW** | | |
| 11 | The first year | 33 |
| 12 | The liaison rhythm and board reporting | 35 |
| 13 | Score it, repair it, or close it | 36 |
| **BACK OF THE GUIDE** | | |
| | **Month-two rescue** | **38** |
| | **Sources** | **39** |
| | **About this guide** | **40** |

# Your control panel

**You will finish this guide with a complete launch file.** Chapters 2 to 13 each end with at least one tool from the separate toolkit.

| Part | Tool | Toolkit page | Done |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Decide** | A-T1 Readiness disposition | 3 | ☐ |
| | A-T2 Purpose and success | 5 | ☐ |
| **Design** | A-T3 Design canvas | 7 | ☐ |
| | A-T4 Money policy | 8 | ☐ |
| | A-T5 Decision-rights matrix | 11 | ☐ |
| | A-T6 Operating setup | 12 | ☐ |
| | A-T7 Compliance stop/check | 14 | ☐ |
| **Authorize and launch** | A-T8 Governing board resolution | 18 | ☐ |
| | A-T9 Charter | 19 | ☐ |
| | A-T10 Member agreement and conflict disclosure | 21 | ☐ |
| | A-T11 Data and confidentiality note | 24 | ☐ |
| | A-T12 Application and selection rubric | 25 | ☐ |
| | A-T13 Interview guide | 27 | ☐ |
| | A-T14 Orientation and first 30 days | 28 | ☐ |
| **Run and review** | A-T15 First-year calendar | 30 | ☐ |
| | A-T16 Board report page | 31 | ☐ |
| | A-T17 Scorecard and 12-month review | 32 | ☐ |

# The 10-minute version

Thirteen steps in four parts. Each chapter is one step.

### Part 1 · Decide

**1.** Understand the model and how it differs from your governing board.

**2.** Pass four readiness gates, or fix what blocks you.

**3.** Write one to three goals and what success looks like at 12 months.

### Part 2 · Design

**4.** Decide size, membership, terms, officers, committees and meetings.

**5.** Set a fair money policy and write down what counts.

**6.** Name a staff owner, agree who decides what, and set up the basics.

**7.** Check every activity that raises money or carries risk.

### Part 3 · Authorize and launch

**8.** Your governing board approves the packet: resolution, charter, member agreement, policies.

**9.** Recruit and select a founding class.

**10.** Orient them and give everyone real work.

### Part 4 · Run and review

**11.** Run the first 90 days and the first year.

**12.** Keep the liaison rhythm and report to your governing board.

**13.** Score it at 12 months. Continue, redesign, pause or close.

CHAPTER 1

# What this model is, and isn't

What it is, what it isn't, and how it sits beside your governing board.

**A selected group, inside your organization, without legal authority.** Members are usually early- to mid-career professionals. Each agrees to serve a term, reach a giving or fundraising goal (a "give or get"), and work on a committee. The group works through a staff liaison.

Associate board practice

**It is not your governing board.** Your board of directors is "charged by law with the oversight of the nonprofit organization," and "only the governing board has decision-making authority related to organizational strategy, budget, and the hiring of the CEO." [1] Under the third edition of the Model Nonprofit Corporation Act, a model law that states can choose to adopt, the board of directors is the group responsible for managing the nonprofit's activities and affairs, "regardless of the name used to refer to the group." [2] Any group it creates works under its direction and control. [35]

Board guidance | Law or regulator

**It is not an open membership group.** A friends group or young patrons circle anyone can join by paying dues is a different model.

**It is not only about money.** One young professionals board had no money requirement; instead each member "should be able to activate five additional volunteers." [3] Another focused on advocacy and education. [4]

Associate board practice



# How it compares

Typical arrangements; yours may differ.

Our recommendation

| Governing board | Associate board | Advisory council | Friends or membership group |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Picked by:** the board | **Picked by:** staff and associate leaders, as your charter sets | **Picked by:** staff or board invite | **Picked by:** anyone who joins |
| **Legal authority:** yes | **Legal authority:** no | **Legal authority:** no | **Legal authority:** no |
| **Fiduciary duty:** yes | **Fiduciary duty:** no | **Fiduciary duty:** no | **Fiduciary duty:** no |
| **Commitment:** attendance, giving, oversight | **Commitment:** term, give or get, committee work | **Commitment:** advice when asked | **Commitment:** dues or a gift |
| **Purpose:** govern | **Purpose:** money, awareness, volunteers, future leaders | **Purpose:** expert advice | **Purpose:** support and belonging |

**About the name.** Writing on BoardSource's blog, Zach Davis says BoardSource "believes that no body other than the fiduciary body should be called a board," and suggests that event-focused groups use a name like "an Emerging Leaders Network." [5] Many programs still use the word board.

Board guidance · Associate board practice

**A GOOD PLACE TO START**

If you keep the word board, add one plain sentence to your charter: the associate board is not the board of directors and has no authority to act for the organization.

CHAPTER 2

# Readiness gates

Four things must be true before you launch. Here is how to tell.

## Four launch blockers. You need all four.

BLOCKER

### 1. A written purpose

"A lack of clarity in purpose, role, or scope is a common problem with advisory councils," says BoardSource's guidance on advisory groups. [6]

Board guidance

BLOCKER

### 2. A governing board sponsor and a path to authorize it

BoardSource's blog post on junior boards warns that they "should only be implemented by boards that are confident in their ability to model good governance." [5]

Board guidance

BLOCKER

### 3. A named staff owner with protected time

BoardSource's advisory-council guidance: "If you and/or the staff are short on time and resources, think twice before forming one." [6] One guide gives the only time estimate we found: "at least 1-2 hours per week for this role to start." [7] Plan for more in launch and event months.

Board guidance | Associate board practice | Our recommendation

BLOCKER

### 4. Safeguarding and compliance coverage for what members will do

For example, one child advocacy center requires members to "pass an Illinois criminal background check and sex offender registry search." [8] Chapter 7 covers the rest.

Associate board practice

# Four repairs before you recruit

**Fix these before recruiting opens.** They won't stop a launch on their own, but each one left open makes the first year harder.

Our recommendation

REPAIR

### 5. A budget line

Even a small one. [9]

Associate board practice

REPAIR

### 6. One or two founding leaders

People who already care.

REPAIR

### 7. A realistic money expectation

See chapter 3.

REPAIR

### 8. A review date 12 months after authorization

Our recommendation

And a willingness to redesign or close. [6]

Board guidance

**What the budget line pays for.** The group's own costs: meetings and orientation, any background checks, events and their deposits, permits and insurance, payment fees, help for members who need it, and a small reserve. One nonprofit development director advises "a line item in the organization's budget that is specific to the junior board to cover costs." [9]

Associate board practice

**Who pays.** The nonprofit. A member pays a cost only if staff approve it first, and the nonprofit repays them. Set an amount you can afford even if year one raises little, then list the costs on A-T4.

Our recommendation

# Your disposition

## There is no score. There are three answers.

### Ready

All four blockers are clear and the repairs are done.

### Ready after these repairs

All four blockers are clear; one or more repairs remain, each with an owner and a date. Recruiting waits for them.

### Not yet

At least one blocker is open. Fix it first.

**For every open blocker or repair, write three things:** the next action, who owns it, and the date.

**Why not a score?** Because the conditions are not interchangeable. A program with a budget and eager founders but no staff owner is not 75% ready; it is not ready.

Our recommendation

**A common reason to wait:** nobody on staff has the time. In one study of associate boards, interviewees named "lack of organizational capacity, misalignment between the organization and associate board, and succession planning" as the greatest challenges. [10] (A small interview study: 11 people from nonprofits with budgets of $1 million to $27 million and nine or more full-time staff.)

Associate board practice

**A GOOD PLACE TO START**

Write your disposition on A-T1 and share it with your executive sponsor before you announce the program or invite anyone to join.

**Leave with: A-T1 Readiness disposition (toolkit page 3)**

CHAPTER 3

# Purpose and success

Pick one to three goals and decide what success looks like.

**Pick one to three goals.** “Zoom in on 1-3 things you really hope this group will do.” [7]

Associate board practice

- **Raise money**
- **Build awareness and ambassadors**
- **Volunteer in your programs**
- **Grow future leaders**

**Decide which goal comes first.** In one study, disagreement over whether a group should volunteer or raise money was a clear example of an associate board falling out of line with its organization. [10] Settle it now: your top goal is the one that wins when goals compete for the group’s time.

Associate board practice | Our recommendation

# Be realistic about money

**Expect modest sums.** The BoardSource blog post cautions that members' contributions "are not likely to be significant." [5] Some programs report more. These three are not typical:

Board guidance

**$100,000+**

One Chicago associate board reported raising "more than $100,000 in 2017." [11]

Associate board practice

**One year**

**$140,000+**

One New York junior board's annual event "raised over $140,000 and brought together 500 people" in fiscal 2018. [12]

Associate board practice

**One event**

**$40,000+**

One associate board started with 22 members and reported raising more than $40,000 in a little over two years. [13]

Associate board practice

**Over two years**

These are examples, not expectations. Plan for modest sums and treat more as a bonus.

Our recommendation

**What we mean by net.** The money the group raised minus the cash the nonprofit spent on it. Staff time and donated goods or services are not subtracted; list them beside the figure so the full cost stays visible.

Our recommendation

**MISTAKE TO AVOID**

Budgeting for the best case. Build year one on a modest figure; anything more is a bonus.

# What success looks like

**Write your 12-month success statement now.** Count the 12 months from authorization, not from when members join. You will score against it in chapter 13.

Our recommendation

| | |
|---|---|
| **VAGUE**<br>“Engage young professionals.” | **GOOD**<br>“Seat 10 members who each complete a committee project.” |
| **VAGUE**<br>“Raise money.” | **GOOD**<br>“Net $10,000 for our tutoring program.” |
| **VAGUE**<br>“Build a pipeline.” | **GOOD**<br>“Two members join a governing board committee as guests.” |
| **VAGUE**<br>“Volunteer in our programs.” | **GOOD**<br>“Screened members fill 12 tutoring shifts we could not staff.” |

(Illustrative. Set your own numbers.)

**For a mission goal, name what will change for the program,** not just hours or events. Agree how program staff will confirm it, using records they already keep.

Our recommendation

**Ask the question BoardSource asks of advisory groups:** “What would this organization be missing if this council was not in existence?” [6] If you can’t answer it yet, sharpen the purpose.

Board guidance

**A GOOD PLACE TO START**

Draft your success sentence today. If you can’t finish it, the purpose needs more work before recruiting does.

**Leave with: A-T2 Purpose and success (toolkit page 5)**

PART 2 · DESIGN

CHAPTER 4

# People and structure

Six decisions that shape who serves and how.

Six decisions. For each: options, what real programs do, and a starting point we recommend.

**Size.** We found no national standard. LatinoJustice launched with eight members [14]; ImpactLife's charter allows "at least 6 and no more than 19." [15] **Start:** a founding class of 8 to 12, sized to your liaison's time.

Our recommendation | Associate board practice

**Who can join.** Many programs publish an age range (ImpactLife: "approx. ages 20-49" [15]); others describe career stage (Compass to Care: "a minimum of 2 years professional work experience" [16]). Before setting any hard age rule, ask your counsel about state and local law, and ask whether the rule is necessary for your purpose. Inclusive criteria work for everyone: commitment to the mission, a perspective you need, a wish to grow as a leader, and the ability to do the role.

Associate board practice | Our recommendation

**Terms.** Two numbers set how long a member serves: the term (how long one appointment lasts) and the term limit (how many terms in a row a member may serve). Total service is the two multiplied. Terms run one year (The Bridge [17]; Lurie Children's, renewable each year [18]) or two years (Chicago Children's Museum [19]; ImpactLife [15]). ImpactLife allows "a maximum of three consecutive terms" [15], up to six years in all. **Start:** two-year terms, renewable once, so a member serves up to four years. Stagger them so about half the terms end each year: give about half the founding class a one-year first term.

Associate board practice | Our recommendation

**A GOOD PLACE TO START**

Size the founding class to your liaison's hours, not your hopes. We suggest 8 to 12 members.

# People and structure (continued)

**Officers.** One guide recommends co-chairs: “This works better than having one chair.” [9] ImpactLife staggers its co-chairs “in order to have stability in leadership roles.” [15] Others use a chair and vice chair. [10] **Start:** two co-chairs with staggered terms, a secretary, and committee chairs.

Associate board practice | Our recommendation

**Committees.** Real examples: “Nominating, Development, Volunteer” (The Bridge [17]); “Communications, Development, or Membership” (Advocates for Children of New York [20]); Events and Fundraising, Governance and Operations, and Recruitment and Retention committees (All Chicago [21]). **Start:** three committees: Events and Fundraising, Membership, Mission and Volunteer. Everyone serves on one. Fewer than 10 members? Start with two: Membership and one for your top goal.

Associate board practice | Our recommendation

**Meetings and attendance.** Quarterly (Advocates for Children: “Attending quarterly meetings” [20]) or monthly (Chicago Youth Centers: “one hour monthly meetings in-person or via Zoom” [22]). Attendance rules vary. ChicagoCAC asks for at least seven of its monthly meetings a year [8]; ImpactLife [15] and All Chicago [21] ask for “at least 75%”; UPchieve asks for “at least 80%.” [23] **Start:** monthly one-hour meetings, at least 75% attendance (9 of 12), remote counts.

Associate board practice | Our recommendation

**MISTAKE TO AVOID**

Committees with no job. Give each committee one deliverable for its first quarter, so new members have real work from the start.

# The link to your governing board

**Decide it now, not later.** BoardSource's advisory-council guidance suggests inviting the group's chair "to serve as a nonvoting member of the board or on a board committee," and to "make regular reports at governing board meetings." [6]

Board guidance

**Start:** the associate co-chairs report to your governing board twice a year, and one governing board member acts as a friendly connector. Ask governing board members, including the connector, to send any request for the group's work through the liaison, so members do not get mixed instructions.

Our recommendation

**Ask counsel first** whether a nonvoting seat on the governing board could make the chair a director under your bylaws or state law.

Our recommendation

**MISTAKE TO AVOID**

The "kids' table." Keeping younger members apart from real board work "can create resentment and distance them from the organization." [4] Instead, give members real work and regular contact with your governing board (chapters 10 and 12).

Associate board practice | Our recommendation

# Your design at a glance

**Our recommended starting point for the six decisions in this chapter, plus the link to your governing board and your liaison.** Change any of them to fit your organization, then write your choices on the design canvas.

Our recommendation

### Size

A founding class of 8 to 12, sized to your liaison's time.

### Who can join

Inclusive criteria: commitment to the mission, a perspective you need, a wish to grow as a leader, and the ability to do the role.

### Terms

Two-year terms, renewable once (up to four years), staggered so about half end each year.

### Officers

Two co-chairs with staggered terms, a secretary, and committee chairs.

### Committees

Three: Events and Fundraising, Membership, Mission and Volunteer. Fewer than 10 members? Start with two. Everyone serves on one.

### Meetings

Monthly, one hour, 75% attendance, remote counts.

### Link to your governing board

The associate co-chairs report to your governing board twice a year, and one governing board member acts as a friendly connector.

### Staff liaison

One named staff owner with protected time (chapter 6).

**Leave with: A-T3 Design canvas (toolkit page 7)**

CHAPTER 5

# Money and fairness

Three ways to ask members to contribute, and how to make it fair.

**Three ways programs ask members to contribute.** These are not comparable amounts, so we show them separately. Figures as published by each program; requirements change, so check current pages (accessed 2026-10-28).

Associate board practice

### 1. Flexible give or get

- Give personally, raise money from others, or both.
- **$250:** Association House of Chicago [24]
- **$500:** All Chicago [21]; The Bridge [17]; Prevent Child Abuse America [25]
- **$1,000:** The Foundling (2019) [12]; The People's Music School [26]; UPchieve [23]; Chicago Youth Centers [22]
- **$1,500:** Chicago Children's Museum [19]

### 2. Dues or a required personal gift

- **Shirley Ryan AbilityLab:** $250 annual dues [27]
- **Compass to Care:** $100 personally, plus $1,000 raised [16]
- **ChicagoCAC:** $100 dues, plus a $250 give or get [8]

### 3. Tasks or participation

- **Lurie Children's:** $125 dues, plus buying one event ticket and selling five more, asking for three annual appeal donations and finding donated auction items worth $500 [18]
- **One young professionals board:** no money; each member should be able to activate five volunteers [3]

**Amount not published:** Advocates for Children of New York [20]; Children of Bellevue [28]

Sixteen programs we checked; not a national average.

Our recommendation

**Members' own costs come on top.** They may pay for their own event ticket or travel. Write these costs down, say what you cover, and tell applicants who to ask privately about cost or access needs.

Our recommendation

# Write your money policy

**Write down what counts toward the "get."** Real programs count "event ticket sales, event sponsorships, in-kind contributions, raffle/silent auction items, providing pro bono professional services" [8] and "company matching" (2019). [12] In-kind means donated goods or services. Credit for any of these is an internal count, not a tax value (chapter 7).

Associate board practice | Our recommendation

**Write down who gets credit.** If two members bring the same sponsor, or a member's employer matches a gift, who is credited? Decide before it happens.

Our recommendation

**Count matches and sponsorships once the money arrives.** Members ask for an employer match only on their own gift, after checking their employer's current rules and deadline, including whether the match may count toward their give or get. Members never promise a sponsor anything in return; staff decide what a sponsor receives.

Our recommendation

## Make it fair.

### Below the governing board

Set it below your governing board's expectation, as LatinoJustice did. [14]

Associate board practice

### Pro-rate for late joiners

Reduce the amount: one program asks $500 in the first quarter, down to $125 in the last. [17]

Associate board practice

### More than one way to serve

Raising money still takes time and ties to donors. Offer a task route too, and let your liaison approve exceptions privately.

Our recommendation

### No hierarchy

Watch for a hierarchy by capacity to give. One food bank leader worried it makes some members seem more valued than others. [4]

Associate board practice

**MISTAKE TO AVOID**

Setting a number before deciding what the money is for. Tie it to something concrete.

Our recommendation

**Leave with: A-T4 Money policy (toolkit page 8)**

CHAPTER 6

# Staff capacity and decision rights

Name an owner, agree who decides what, and set up the basics.

## Agree who decides what, before anyone asks.

| Decision | Associate leaders | Staff liaison | Executive director | Governing board |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Approve an event | Advises | Decides | Informed | |
| Ask a sponsor (after clearance) | Advises | Decides | Informed | |
| Use our name or logo | Advises | Decides | | |
| Post on our behalf | Advises | Decides | | |
| Seat a new member | Advises | Advises | Decides | |
| Give-or-get exception | | Decides | Informed | |
| Set the budget line | | Advises | Decides | |
| Speak to the press | | Advises | Decides | |
| Sign a contract | Never | Advises | Decides | |
| End a membership | Advises | Advises | Decides | Informed |

Decides · Advises · Informed · Never

Our recommended starting point. Fit it to your bylaws and governing board rules, then write it down.

Our recommendation

**Leave with: A-T5 Decision-rights matrix (toolkit page 11)**

# The operating setup

**Set up the basics before recruiting opens.** If no one owns the plumbing, a new program can stall by month two. Give each item one owner, usually staff, so records survive when chairs change. If an owner leaves, name a new one as soon as you know and end the old owner's access.

Our recommendation

| | |
|---|---|
| Roster with roles and term dates | **Staff** |
| Calendar and meeting invitations | **Staff** |
| One approved place for documents | **Staff** |
| Gift attribution rule (who gets credit) | **Staff, agreed with leaders** |
| Tax receipts to donors | **Development or finance** |
| Approval route for prospect clearance, events, asks, logo and official posts | **Staff** |
| Expenses and reimbursements | **Finance** |
| Monthly dashboard | **Staff, shared with leaders** |
| Who may see donor or client data | **Executive director** |
| Photo and story consent | **Communications** |
| Incident and escalation contact, and an incident form | **Executive director** |
| Alternate contact outside staff, for concerns that involve staff | **Governing board chair** |
| Backup liaison if the liaison is away or leaves | **Executive director** |

**MISTAKE TO AVOID**

Records in personal inboxes. Keep the roster, documents and gift records in the nonprofit's shared systems, so nothing is lost when officers or staff change.

**Leave with: A-T6 Operating setup (toolkit page 12)**

# Keep the liaison sustainable

**The liaison's job.** One study recommends a staff liaison who will help recruit and onboard members, "participate in monthly meetings to guide and develop its work," respond to requests, "approve and attend events," and "develop and push forward an annual road map." [10]

Associate board practice

**The right person** has the capacity and skills to develop people [10], replies quickly [9], and shares the members' perspective. [9]

Associate board practice

**Plan for a change of liaison.** Name a backup now to make the liaison's decisions when the liaison is away (A-T5, A-T6). If the liaison leaves, name an acting liaison, often the backup, as soon as you know, and tell the co-chairs. Before the liaison's last day, hand over open approvals, pledges, bookings, deadlines and access to the group's records.

Our recommendation

### A week in the life

Our recommendation

| | |
|---|---|
| A 30-minute check-in with the co-chairs | **Every week or two** |
| A meeting with the whole group | **Monthly** |
| Replies to requests | **Same week** |
| A note to members | **Monthly** |
| More time around recruiting and the main event or project | **Peak months** |

**MISTAKE TO AVOID**

No one has time. Some nonprofits "underestimate how much of an investment it's going to be on their end," one practitioner told a business journal. [3] Before you recruit, write the liaison's weekly hours on A-T1 and reduce their other work to make room.

Associate board practice Our recommendation

CHAPTER 7

# Risk and compliance checkpoint

Check every activity that raises money or carries risk.

**Before you announce, ask, sell, sign or serve, check this chapter.** Each row tells you who owns it, what to ask, and when to stop.

**Leave with: A-T7 Compliance stop/check (toolkit page 14)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Ask the public for donations, including online, by text, QR code or social media** | **OWNER**<br>Development<br>**ASK**<br>Are we registered in every state where we solicit?<br>**PERMIT OR REGISTRATION**<br>Many states require registration before soliciting [29]<br>Law or regulator | **DO NOT PROCEED UNTIL**<br>**Registration is confirmed** |
| **Sell tickets or sponsorships with benefits** | **OWNER**<br>Development<br>**ASK**<br>What is the fair market value of what guests or sponsors receive?<br>**PERMIT OR REGISTRATION**<br>IRS disclosure if a payment over $75 is partly a gift [30]<br>Law or regulator | **DO NOT PROCEED UNTIL**<br>**Receipts include the disclosure** |

# Risk and compliance: events and contracts

### Raffles or games of chance

**OWNER**
Finance

**ASK**
Is this allowed here, and what license, reporting and tax rules apply? [31]

Law or regulator

**PERMIT OR REGISTRATION**
State and local rules; California, for example, requires registration before any raffle tickets are sold [32]

Law or regulator

**DO NOT PROCEED UNTIL**
**Written approval and any license**

### Serve alcohol

**OWNER**
Operations

**ASK**
Does this event need a license or permit, and who holds it: the venue, a caterer or us? What conditions apply? Does insurance cover serving alcohol at this event?

**PERMIT OR REGISTRATION**
State and local rules; California, for example, requires a licensed caterer to get state approval for each catered event [40]

Law or regulator

**DO NOT PROCEED UNTIL**
**Written evidence for this event**

### Sign a venue or vendor contract

**OWNER**
Executive director or delegate

**ASK**
Who may sign for us? What deposits and cancellation fees apply?

**PERMIT OR REGISTRATION**
None

**DO NOT PROCEED UNTIL**
**An authorized person signs**

# Risk and compliance: people and your name

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **See donor or client data** | **OWNER**<br>Executive director<br>**ASK**<br>What may each member see, for which task, and where may it be kept? | **DO NOT PROCEED UNTIL**<br>**Access approved and data note signed (A-T11)** |
| **Work with minors or vulnerable people** | **OWNER**<br>Program lead<br>**ASK**<br>What screening and supervision are required? | **DO NOT PROCEED UNTIL**<br>**Checks complete** |
| **Drive or transport people** | **OWNER**<br>Operations<br>**ASK**<br>Are drivers and vehicles covered? | **DO NOT PROCEED UNTIL**<br>**Broker confirms in writing** |
| **Use our name or logo** | **OWNER**<br>Communications<br>**ASK**<br>Is this use approved? | **DO NOT PROCEED UNTIL**<br>**Written approval** |
| **Collect photos and stories** | **OWNER**<br>Communications<br>**ASK**<br>What uses does consent cover, and what may members post? | **DO NOT PROCEED UNTIL**<br>**Consent covers each planned use; photo rule shared** |

**Photos need a rule, not just a form.** Consent covers only the uses it names, so consent collected for the nonprofit's own use does not cover members' personal posts. Before orientation, communications staff add a photo rule to the social media policy members sign (A-T10). It says who may take photos and video and what members may post. Members ask before they post anyone, take a post down if asked, and don't photograph anyone who says no, including a child whose parent has signed. Images of children, clients or vulnerable people need staff approval, with no names or locations.

Our recommendation

# Risk and compliance: concerns and protection

**A route for concerns.** Extend your harassment, whistleblower and safeguarding policies to associate members; ask counsel to confirm. Your incident and escalation contact receives conduct and safety concerns. Name an alternate outside staff, usually your governing board chair, for concerns that involve staff, including you. Whoever receives a concern decides next steps and keeps the details out of minutes and shared files.

Our recommendation

**Some duties to report are personal.** In some states, anyone who suspects child abuse or neglect must report it to the authorities, and some states name volunteers at organizations that run activities for children. Telling the nonprofit may not meet that duty. [39] Ask counsel what applies to your staff and members.

Law or regulator | Our recommendation

**Volunteer protection has limits.** The federal Volunteer Protection Act protects volunteers only under conditions, for example acting "within the scope of the volunteer's responsibilities," and it states: "Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the liability of any nonprofit organization." [33] State laws differ.

Law or regulator

**Ask your broker for a written answer:** does the definition of "insured" in our directors and officers (D&O) and general liability policies include associate board members? [34] Which planned events and volunteer activities are covered, and which need extra coverage, such as alcohol, a venue's insurance requirements or driving? If a member is hurt while volunteering, what, if anything, pays their medical bills?

Our recommendation

**TALK TO YOUR COUNSEL**

Before your first event or volunteer activity, put the volunteer protection and insurance questions on this page to your counsel and broker, and keep their written answers in your launch file. Ask again before any new kind of activity or venue.

# Risk and compliance: politics and money

**Candidates, elections or lobbying**

**OWNER**
Executive director

**ASK**
Is it nonpartisan, and is any lobbying on a bill or ballot measure within our limits?

**PERMIT OR REGISTRATION**
Federal tax law bars campaigning for or against candidates and limits lobbying [38]

Law or regulator

**DO NOT PROCEED UNTIL**
**Written approval; never for or against a candidate**

**Money:** tickets, gifts and sponsorships go only to the nonprofit's accounts or to online pages staff approve, never to a personal bank or payment-app account. Before approving a page, check who is paid and when, the fees, who sends receipts and whether you will see donors' names. Any separate account needs written approval after counsel and accounting review.

Our recommendation

**Tax receipts come from staff.** Development or finance staff send them; members never do. The IRS calls them written acknowledgments. A donor needs one to deduct any single gift of $250 or more. A receipt describes donated goods, but not their value. Donors generally cannot deduct the value of donated time or services. [30]

Our recommendation Law or regulator

**A ticket example.** A guest pays $100 for a ticket that includes a $40 dinner, so the gift is $60 and the guest can deduct at most $60. Because the payment is over $75, the invitation, ticket page or receipt must tell the guest that the deduction is limited to what they paid above the dinner's value, and give the $40 estimate. [30] Staff set the estimate and approve the wording before tickets go on sale. At an auction, post each item's estimated value before bidding starts.

Law or regulator Our recommendation

**Credit is not a tax value.** Your policy may credit the member who sold that ticket with the full $100, or credit pro bono work at an agreed value. Those are internal counts. Never put them on a tax receipt or call them deductible.

Our recommendation

CHAPTER 8

# The authorization packet

Four documents your governing board approves together.

**Your governing board approves four documents together.** Everything you decided in Parts 1 and 2 feeds them.

Our recommendation

### 1. A resolution

Creates the group, approves its charter, member agreement and policies, names the staff liaison, and keeps the governing board's power to amend or dissolve it. A nonprofit law firm notes that written authorization, ideally in the bylaws, helps make clear who is and isn't a director. [35]

Law or regulator

### 2. A charter

BoardSource's advisory-council guidance lists what it should cover: purpose and goals; relationship to the governing board and to staff; membership criteria; selection; term and duration; member expectations; officers; meetings. [6]

Board guidance

### 3. A member agreement

Each member signs it.

### 4. Policies

Money policy (chapter 5), conflict of interest, data and confidentiality, conduct and social media. Details below.

**Policies in detail:** conflict of interest (one foundation's policy covers "Board advisor[s]" and requires an annual disclosure form [36]); data and confidentiality; conduct and social media (one charter expects members to be "a positive representative… in all public communications." [15]). Start from your governing board's conflict of interest policy and disclosure form, extended to associate members, and the social media rule in Lead Your Associate Board, chapter 11; ask counsel to confirm.

Board guidance | Associate board practice | Our recommendation

**Leave with: A-T8 to A-T11 Authorization packet (toolkit pages 18 to 24)**

# Who is a director?

### What the packet must say plainly

Our recommendation

**The associate board is not the board of directors and has no authority to bind the nonprofit.**

**Money raised belongs to the organization.**

**Staff approve events, asks and use of the name.**

**The governing board may change or close the group.**

**MISTAKE TO AVOID**

Blurred lines. If your bylaws and minutes are unclear, it can become unclear who counts as a director, which matters for votes and liability. One nonprofit law firm recommends using the group's chosen name consistently in minutes and documents. [35] Ask your counsel to read the packet before the vote.

Board guidance Our recommendation

CHAPTER 9

# Recruit and select the founding class

Find, try out and choose your first members.

**Start with one or two founding leaders.** "You don't need more than one or two people to play this role." [7] In most cases they end up as your first chair or co-chairs. [7]

Associate board practice

**Give your first leaders their own book.** When you know who your first chair or co-chairs will be, give them Lead Your Associate Board, our playbook for first-time chairs and co-chairs.

Our recommendation

## Where to look

### Your volunteers, donors and event guests

### Recommendations

From staff, young professional groups and LinkedIn. [37]

Board guidance

### Your own events and members' networks

Later, the two main sources in one study. [10]

Associate board practice

### Employers' volunteer programs and board-matching services

**Let people try first.** One program (in 2019) asked prospects to meet staff first, then serve "a minimum of four months as a provisional member." [12] Others invite prospects to a meeting or event. [18][27]

Associate board practice

Find | Info session | Apply | Conversation | Offer | **Orientation**

# Choose well

**The application** asks for a resume, why the person wants to serve, and whether they can meet the requirements. [25][20] Ask counsel before collecting date of birth. Make the resume optional.

Associate board practice · Our recommendation

**The selection rubric**

Our recommendation

| | Strong | Developing |
|---|---|---|
| **Commitment to the mission** | | |
| **Time available this year** | | |
| **Skills we need** | | |
| **Perspective and community ties** | | |
| **Willingness to do the work** | | |

## Five conversation questions

1. What draws you to our mission?
2. What do you hope to get from serving?
3. Which committee would you choose, and why?
4. How will you approach the give or get?
5. What else is on your plate this year?

Ask what people want from the experience, too; it helps both sides set fair expectations. [10]

Associate board practice

**Seat the founding class together.** Then run one recruiting cycle a year.

Our recommendation

**Leave with: A-T12 Application and selection rubric (toolkit page 25) · A-T13 Interview guide (page 27)**

CHAPTER 10

# Orient the class and assign real work

Welcome them, and give everyone real work in the first month.

**Orientation** teaches your "mission, vision, values, and strategic plan" and explains, again, the group's role and your expectations. BoardSource also suggests letting members experience "programs and services firsthand." [6]

Board guidance

**Bond early.** "Consider a retreat or social outing within the first month or two." [7]

Associate board practice

**Teach the message.** Show how to describe your work [35], agree who speaks for the organization, and go over the photo rule (chapter 7).

Board guidance | Our recommendation

**By week 4, everyone has a committee and a first task.** The co-chairs see to it. Members of large groups can "feel like they're unimportant or that they don't have anything to do." [7]

Our recommendation | Associate board practice




**Program visits:** if a visit involves children, clients or vulnerable people, it happens under staff supervision and after any required screening (chapter 7).

Our recommendation

**Teach the route for concerns.** Tell members they need no one's permission to raise a concern, should never investigate or confront anyone themselves, and will not be penalized for raising one in good faith. Give them both contacts (A-T10) and cover any duty to report (chapter 7).

Our recommendation

**Leave with: A-T14 Orientation and first 30 days (toolkit page 28)**

CHAPTER 11

# The first year

Plan a few things well, and leave room to adjust.

**Plan a few things well.** Co-create "an annual 'road map' with room for flexibility and focus on a couple of core events or initiatives." [10]

Associate board practice

**One main project plus real mission work.** Pick a main project that serves your top goal on A-T2. If that goal is raising money, we suggest a signature event. If not, the main project can be a volunteer day, a program visit for new supporters or a skills project. Associate board members in one study said young people "more readily rally behind opportunities to volunteer with direct service organizations." [10] One junior board (in 2019) ran "a career night for foster youth." [12]

Our recommendation | Associate board practice

**Plan the day itself.** For each event or volunteer day, name one staff member to be in charge on the day (the staff lead), and decide who can change or cancel it. Give each part a lead and a backup, and brief every helper first. Your chair can use page 2 of B-T14 in Lead Your Associate Board.

Our recommendation

**Expect to adjust.** "Especially when you're getting started, you'll get things wrong. Make sure there are built-in moments to correct course and to celebrate wins." [7]

Associate board practice

**A GOOD PLACE TO START**

Choose one main project and one mission activity for year one. Add more only after your 12-month review.

# A sample first year

**Month 1 is the month your governing board approves the authorization packet.** Members are seated in month 4, so at the 12-month review they will have served about eight months.

Our recommendation

This sample assumes your top goal is raising money, so its main project is a signature event. If your main project is something else, put it where the event is.

Our recommendation

| Months 1 and 2 | Months 3 and 4 | Months 5 to 8 | Months 9 to 11 | Month 12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Authorize and set up | Recruit, seat, orient | Committees and mission work | Signature event | Score, report, recruit |

- **Months 1 and 2:** authorization packet approved; operating setup done; founding leaders recruited.
- **Months 3 and 4:** recruit and select; seat the class; orientation and program visit.
- **Months 5 to 8:** committees start; first report to the governing board; one mission volunteer activity; plan the signature event; start its compliance check, including permits (chapter 7).
- **Months 9 to 11:** plan the event day with a staff lead in charge; signature event; thank-yous and net results.
- **Month 12:** scorecard; report to the governing board; update the charter; open the next recruiting cycle before the one-year first terms end.

**Keep everyone informed between meetings** with a short, regular note from staff (we suggest monthly). [6]

Board guidance

**MISTAKE TO AVOID**

Announcing an event before the compliance check. Nothing is announced until its rows on A-T7 are cleared.

**Leave with: A-T15 First-year calendar (toolkit page 30)**

CHAPTER 12

# The liaison rhythm and board reporting

Keep both boards connected, without promising seats.

**Report twice a year.** At ImpactLife, associate co-chairs join board leadership meetings "at least two times per year." [15] Invite governing board members to speak at associate meetings. [6] LatinoJustice holds mixers after some board meetings so trustees and junior board members can meet. [9]

Associate board practice | Board guidance

**Build a pathway, but don't promise a seat.** Decide in advance how strong members can be considered for your governing board. [35] One Dallas conservancy reported that at least six junior board members later joined its board. [4] Most members will serve in other ways: on committees, as donors, as alumni. Plan for them too.

Board guidance | Associate board practice | Our recommendation

**Decide about confidential sessions.** Agree whether associate members may attend executive sessions (the governing board's private meetings). [35] These are usually for directors only; ask counsel before inviting anyone else, because it can affect confidentiality and legal privilege.

Board guidance | Our recommendation

**MISTAKE TO AVOID**

Promising a seat. Describe the path to the governing board as a possibility, never as a reward for service.

**Leave with: A-T16 Board report page (toolkit page 31)**

CHAPTER 13

# Score it, repair it, or close it

Measure honestly. Then continue, redesign, pause or close.

**Score against your success statement** (chapter 3). Measures real programs report:

Associate board practice

- **Money raised, net of costs**
- **Event results**
- **New members**
- **Members later on governing board committees or the board**
- **Volunteers and supporters brought in**
- **Each member's attendance**

  Reviewed twice a year. [17]
- **Each member's give or get**

  Reviewed at year end. [17]
- **Mission work done**

**Ask program staff two questions.** What changed for the program because of the group's work? How much staff time did it take? Use records staff already keep, and write the answers on A-T17.

Our recommendation

**Give credit carefully.** Count only what the associate board did.

Our recommendation

# Continue, redesign, pause or close

**Decide with your executive sponsor.** Record the decision on the scorecard. Closing the group or changing its charter also needs your governing board's approval before you act (chapter 8).

Our recommendation

### Continue

The group is meeting its goals. Keep the design and set next year's goals.

### Redesign

The purpose still holds, but part of the design isn't working. Write down what changes and by when.

### Pause

Staff time or money is short for now. Set a date to decide again.

### Close

The group has met its goals, or can't meet them with the support you have. Thank members and close it well.

**It is fine to change course.** BoardSource advises ending an advisory group "when there is a lack of funds or staff time to support the group, when the council is not meeting its goals, or simply because the group has achieved its goals." [6]

Board guidance

**If you pause or close,** tell members first, then sponsors and supporters. Stop appeals for the group, settle anything booked or promised, and check with finance how gifts for its projects may be used. Keep records with staff and end members' access. A-T17 lists the steps.

Our recommendation

**A GOOD PLACE TO START**

On the day your governing board approves the authorization packet, put the 12-month review on your executive sponsor's calendar for a year from that day.

**Leave with: A-T17 Scorecard and 12-month review (toolkit page 32)**

# Month-two rescue

| IF THIS HAPPENS | DO THIS FIRST | |
|---|---|---|
| **No one applied** | → Ask founding leaders for five names each; host an info session | p30 |
| **Too many applicants** | → Use the rubric; offer a waitlist or a volunteer role | p31 |
| **The chair and liaison disagree** | → Reread the decision-rights matrix together; if still stuck, the executive director decides | p20 |
| **The first event idea is legally risky** | → Run it through the compliance check before any announcement | p23 |
| **Members are idle** | → Give each person one task with a date this month | p32 |
| **Two members claim the same gift** | → Apply your attribution rule | p19 |
| **The liaison has no time** | → Escalate to the executive director; pause recruiting | p22 |
| **The liaison leaves** | → Name an acting liaison as soon as you know; tell the co-chairs | p22 |

First moves we recommend when something stalls.

Our recommendation

**A GOOD PLACE TO START**

When something stalls, name one owner and one date before you discuss solutions.

# Sources

Accessed 2026-10-28 unless noted. Program requirements change; check current pages. Each entry links to its full web address.


**[1]** Alice Korngold, “When Is a Board a Board?”, 3BL Media, 2010.

**[2]** Gene Takagi, NEO Law Group, “NonprofitRadio: Board Committees and Other Committees,” 2014.

**[3]** Indianapolis Business Journal, “Not-for-profits’ latest strategy: junior boards,” 2016.

**[4]** Chronicle of Philanthropy, Rebecca Koenig, “Beyond the Traditional Junior Board,” 2015.

**[5]** BoardSource blog, Zach Davis, “Why Youth Diversity Matters,” February 23, 2016.

**[6]** BoardSource, Advisory Councils: Nine Keys to Success, 2023.

**[7]** Blue Avocado, Jess Blackshaw, “Bridging the Generation Gap,” 2022, updated 2023.

**[8]** ChicagoCAC, Associates Board Commitment and Application, undated (posted 2026).

**[9]** Chronicle of Philanthropy, Margie Fleming Glennon, “How to Ensure the Success of a Junior Board,” 2017.

**[10]** Korean American Community Foundation, Best Practices for Associate Board Development, 2023 (11 interviews at its grantees: budgets of $1 million to $27 million, nine or more full-time staff).

**[11]** The Night Ministry, “The Associate Board: Passion, Diversity, and Service.”

**[12]** The Foundling, Junior Board Info Sheet, undated.

**[13]** 826 Valencia, “We started the first 826 Valencia Associate Board. Here’s what we learned.”

**[14]** Chronicle of Philanthropy, “How a Board Revamped and a New Junior Board Kick-Started Giving at LatinoJustice,” 2017.

**[15]** ImpactLife, Associate Board Charter.

**[16]** Compass to Care, Associate Board.

**[17]** The Bridge, Junior Board Role and Responsibilities.

**[18]** Lurie Children’s, Children’s Research Fund Junior Board, Membership.

**[19]** Chicago Children’s Museum, Associates Board.

**[20]** Advocates for Children of New York, Junior Board.

**[21]** All Chicago, Associate Board.

**[22]** Chicago Youth Centers, Auxiliary Board.

**[23]** UPchieve, Join the Associate Board.

**[24]** Association House of Chicago, Auxiliary Board.

**[25]** Prevent Child Abuse America, Associate Board Application, undated (posted 2024).

**[26]** The People’s Music School, Associate Board listing.

**[27]** Shirley Ryan AbilityLab, Associate Board.

**[28]** Children of Bellevue, Associate Board Membership listing (archived May 2026).

**[29]** National Council of Nonprofits, Charitable Solicitation Registration; IRS, Charitable solicitation: state requirements.

**[30]** IRS, Charitable contributions: quid pro quo contributions; IRS Publication 1771, Charitable Contributions: Substantiation and Disclosure Requirements, Rev. 11-2023.

**[31]** National Council of Nonprofits, Games of Chance, Raffles and Charity Auctions; IRS, Instructions for Forms W-2G and 5754, Rev. January 2026.

**[32]** California Attorney General, Nonprofit Raffles.

**[33]** 42 U.S.C. §14503, Volunteer Protection Act.

**[34]** Ward and Smith, P.A., director and officer liability insurance, 2023.

**[35]** Emily Chan, NEO Law Group, “Advisory Board v. Board of Directors,” 2011, updated 2014.

**[36]** The Marfan Foundation, Board and Board Advisors Conflict of Interest Policy, 2002, revised 2014.

**[37]** Stanford Law School Mills Legal Clinic, “Recruiting Young People to Nonprofit Boards,” 2022.

**[38]** IRS, Exemption requirements: 501(c)(3) organizations.

**[39]** Child Welfare Information Gateway, Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect, state statutes current through May 2023.

**[40]** California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, Caterer’s Permit.

# About this guide

**About this guide.** Written by CariClub from public sources, real program documents and published research. General information, not legal, tax or insurance advice.

**About CariClub.** CariClub places accomplished professionals on associate, advisory and governing nonprofit boards, prepares them to serve well, and supports them through every stage of service. Building board leaders since 2016. Members bring experience from firms like KKR, Davis Polk, Morgan Stanley, Deloitte, EY and Unilever.

## Where CariClub can help.

### List your associate board seats

Members who fit tell you why they want to serve. You decide who joins.

### BoardLaureate™

A board-readiness program built specifically for associate board members.

**6,000+**

board placements

**10,000+**

nonprofit organizations across 15+ metro areas

**For nonprofits:** CariClub is available at no cost to approved nonprofits and their staff. Request access at cariclub.com/nonprofits · nonprofits@cariclub.com

**For associate board members:** if you already serve on an associate board, your staff liaison can invite you to limited CariClub access: your board's room on CariClub and the first three modules of BoardLaureate. For full access, including searching for other board roles, most members join through their employer. If yours isn't a CariClub partner yet, request access at cariclub.com and we'll work with you to bring your employer on, or you can join on your own.

**The toolkit.** Every tool in this guide is in the fillable toolkit, A-T0 to A-T17. Its samples, A-T8 to A-T11, and the A-T12 application page also come as a Word file.

**Companion guide:** Lead Your Associate Board, a playbook for first-time chairs and co-chairs. Give a copy to your first chair or co-chairs as soon as you know who they are. Tools coded B-T0 to B-T17, such as B-T14, are in its own toolkit.

cariclub

TOOLKIT · START AN ASSOCIATE BOARD

# Start an Associate Board: Toolkit

**Seventeen tools that turn the guide into a launch file.**

Print it at actual size (100%), or fill it in on a computer.
The samples, A-T8 to A-T11, and the A-T12
application page also come as a Word file.



A-T0 FILL-IN TOOL

# Control panel

Give every tool one owner and a due date. Check the Done box only once any approval is in writing.

**How to use these tools.** Write in the blank boxes and replace text in [brackets]. Pre-filled answers are starting points; change them to fit your nonprofit. A row that states a legal rule names its source; the rest is our recommendation. This is general information, not legal, tax or insurance advice.

| Tool | Page | Owner | Due | Done |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A-T1 Readiness disposition** | 3 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T2 Purpose and success** | 5 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T3 Design canvas** | 7 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T4 Money policy** | 8 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T5 Decision-rights matrix** | 11 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T6 Operating setup** | 12 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T7 Compliance stop/check** | 14 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T8 Governing board resolution** | 18 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T9 Charter** | 19 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T10 Member agreement and conflict disclosure** | 21 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T11 Data and confidentiality note** | 24 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T12 Application and selection rubric** | 25 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T13 Interview guide** | 27 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T14 Orientation and first 30 days** | 28 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T15 First-year calendar** | 30 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T16 Board report page** | 31 | | | ☐ |
| **A-T17 Scorecard and 12-month review** | 32 | | | ☐ |

**Approved location for the launch file:**

A-T1 FILL-IN TOOL

# Readiness disposition (1 of 2)

From chapter 2 of the guide, page 8.

Clear all four blockers before you launch. Finish all four repairs before recruiting opens. For every open blocker or repair, write the next action, who owns it, and the date.

## Launch blockers

| Gate | Next action · owner · date | What shows it is clear | Cleared |
|---|---|---|---|
| **A written purpose** | | | ☐ |
| **A governing board sponsor and a path to authorize** | | | ☐ |
| **A named staff owner with protected time (write the hours a week)** | | | ☐ |
| **Safeguarding and compliance coverage for what members will do** | | | ☐ |

A-T1 FILL-IN TOOL

# Readiness disposition (2 of 2)

From chapter 2 of the guide, page 8.

## Repair before recruiting

| Condition | Next action · owner · date | What shows it is done | Done |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Budget line (write the amount), from A-T4** | | | ☐ |
| **One or two founding leaders** | | | ☐ |
| **Realistic money expectation** | | | ☐ |
| **12-month review date (from authorization) and exit point** | | | ☐ |

**Our disposition (check one):** ☐ Ready ☐ Ready after these repairs ☐ Not yet

**Executive sponsor:** _____ **Date:** _____

**All repairs done on:** _____ **Executive sponsor initials:** _____

A-T2 FILL-IN TOOL

# Purpose and success (1 of 2)

From chapter 3 of the guide, page 11. Measure a mission goal by what changes for the program, as program staff confirm. The purpose you write here goes into the charter (A-T9) that your governing board approves (chapter 8).

## Our associate board exists to:

| Goal | How we will measure it | 12-month target |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 (optional) | | |

**Our top goal this year (check one):**

- ☐ Raise money
- ☐ Volunteer in our programs
- ☐ Build awareness and ambassadors
- ☐ Grow future leaders

**Why it wins when goals compete:**

A-T2 FILL-IN TOOL

# Purpose and success (2 of 2)

From chapter 3 of the guide, page 11.

**Realistic money expectation for year one (net, after costs):**

$ _____. Anything more is a bonus.

Fill this in even if money is not your top goal. If a goal has a dollar target, set it to this figure.

## What would we be missing if this group did not exist?

A-T3 FILL-IN TOOL

# Design canvas

From chapter 4 of the guide, page 14. Write your choice beside each decision. These choices go into the resolution and charter (A-T8 and A-T9) that your governing board approves (chapter 8).

| Decision | Our choice |
|---|---|
| **Size of the founding class** | |
| **Who can join (inclusive criteria) and the skills we need** | |
| **Any age or career-stage rule? Counsel reviewed on:** | |
| **Term length and term limit; staggered?** | |
| **Officers** | |
| **Committees** | |
| **Meeting frequency, length and format (in person, online or hybrid)** | |
| **Attendance expectation; remote counts?** | |
| **How we report to the governing board** | |
| **Governing board connector** | |
| **Staff liaison** | |
| **12-month review date** | |

A-T4 FILL-IN TOOL

# Money policy (1 of 3)

From chapter 5 of the guide, page 18. A give or get is a yearly amount each member gives, raises from others, or both.

**Our model**

☐ Flexible give or get $ _____

☐ Dues $ _____

☐ Required gift $ _____ plus raise$ _____

☐ Tasks: _____

## What counts toward the get

☐ Personal gifts ☐ Money raised from others ☐ Ticket sales beyond my own

☐ Sponsorships ☐ In-kind gifts ☐ Auction items

☐ Employer matches ☐ Pro bono services

| Rule | Our answer |
|---|---|
| **Credit for in-kind gifts (donated goods or services): an internal count, not a tax value** | |
| **Credit when two members bring the same gift** | |
| **Credit for employer matches (as the employer's rules allow)** | |
| **When a match or sponsorship counts (we suggest: once the money arrives)** | |

A-T4 FILL-IN TOOL

# Money policy (2 of 3)

From chapter 5 of the guide, page 18.

| Rule | Our answer |
|---|---|
| **Reduced amounts for late joiners, by quarter joined (Q1 / Q2 / Q3 / Q4)** | |
| **Who members ask privately about a lower amount, tasks instead, or access needs** | |
| **Who approves exceptions (record the new commitment, never the reason)** | |
| **Costs members pay themselves (such as their event ticket or travel) and what we cover** | |
| **When attendance is reviewed** | |
| **When the give or get is reviewed** | |
| **Who may see each member's give-or-get progress (others see group totals only)** | |
| **What the money funds** | |

**Net** is the money the group raised minus the cash the nonprofit spent on it. Staff time and donated goods or services are not subtracted; list them beside the figure. Finance confirms the figures.

A-T4 FILL-IN TOOL

# Money policy (3 of 3)

From chapter 5 of the guide, page 18.

## First-year budget

The nonprofit pays the group's costs, including event costs it expects ticket sales to cover later. For each cost, write the amount, who pays it (our budget, a sponsor confirmed in writing, or donated) and when payment is due. A deposit can be due well before any ticket money comes in.

| Cost | Amount ($) | Who pays | Due |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Meetings and orientation** | | | |
| **Background checks or training, if needed** | | | |
| **Event venue, food, drink and supplies** | | | |
| **Permits, licenses and event insurance** | | | |
| **Online ticket and card payment fees** | | | |
| **Member support: tickets, travel, childcare, access needs** | | | |
| **Reserve for surprises** | | | |
| **Other, such as printing or thank-yous** | | | |

**Total cost:**

$ _____

**From our budget:**

$ _____

**Staff hours a week:**

_____

**Approved by:**

_____

**Date:**

_____

**Who pays.** The nonprofit pays vendors directly. A member pays a cost only if staff approve it first, then sends the receipt to [finance contact] within [number] days and is repaid within [number] days. Repay documented costs only; ask counsel before paying members anything else.

A-T5 FILL-IN TOOL

# Decision-rights matrix

From chapter 6 of the guide, page 20, which shows our recommended starting point. In each box, write D (decides), A (advises) or I (informed), or leave it blank. Associate leaders never sign contracts. When the liaison is away or has left, the backup or acting liaison makes the liaison's decisions.

| Decision | Associate leaders | Staff liaison | Executive director | Governing board |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Approve an event** | | | | |
| **Ask a sponsor (after prospect clearance)** | | | | |
| **Use our name or logo** | | | | |
| **Post on our behalf** | | | | |
| **Seat a new member** | | | | |
| **Give-or-get exception** | | | | |
| **Set the budget line** | | | | |
| **Speak to the press** | | | | |
| **Sign a contract** | Never | | | |
| **End a membership** | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Before the executive director signs, check each row against your bylaws and governing board rules, such as who may sign contracts or approve spending. Change any row that does not match.

**Executive director:** _____ **Date:** _____

A-T6 FILL-IN TOOL

# Operating setup (1 of 2)

From chapter 6 of the guide, page 20. Set up every system before recruiting opens, with one owner each, usually staff. Records stay in the nonprofit's systems when officers or staff change. If an owner leaves, name a new one as soon as you know. Give the new owner their own access and end the old owner's access.

| System | Owner | Where it lives | Done |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Roster with roles and term dates** | | | ☐ |
| **Calendar and meeting invitations** | | | ☐ |
| **One approved place for documents** | | | ☐ |
| **Gift attribution rule** | | | ☐ |
| **Tax receipts to donors** | | | ☐ |
| **Approval route (prospect clearance, events, asks, logo, official posts)** | | | ☐ |

A-T6 FILL-IN TOOL

# Operating setup (2 of 2)

From chapter 6 of the guide, page 20.

| System | Owner | Where it lives | Done |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Expenses and reimbursements** | | | ☐ |
| **Monthly dashboard** | | | ☐ |
| **Donor and client data access rule** | | | ☐ |
| **Photo and story consent** | | | ☐ |
| **Incident and escalation contact, and an incident form** | | | ☐ |
| **Alternate contact outside staff, for concerns that involve staff** | | | ☐ |
| **Backup liaison if the liaison is away or leaves** | | | ☐ |

A-T7 FILL-IN TOOL

# Compliance stop/check (1 of 4)

From chapter 7 of the guide, page 23, which suggests an owner and a question for each activity. Do not announce, ask, sell, sign or serve until the row is cleared for every state and city where it happens. Keep each written answer in your launch file and list it under Evidence.

## Ask the public for donations (online, text, QR, social, several states)

**Planned?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Staff owner**

**Permit or registration (or write None)**

**Question for counsel, broker or finance**

**Evidence (document, date, expires)**

**Cleared** ☐

## Sell tickets with benefits (IRS rule: disclose if over $75 and partly a gift)

**Planned?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Staff owner**

**Permit or registration (or write None)**

**Question for counsel, broker or finance**

**Evidence (document, date, expires)**

**Cleared** ☐

## Sell sponsorships with benefits (tickets, recognition, exclusivity)

**Planned?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Staff owner**

**Permit or registration (or write None)**

**Question for counsel, broker or finance**

**Evidence (document, date, expires)**

**Cleared** ☐

## Raffle or games of chance

**Planned?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Staff owner**

**Permit or registration (or write None)**

**Question for counsel, broker or finance**

**Evidence (document, date, expires)**

**Cleared** ☐

A-T7 FILL-IN TOOL

# Compliance stop/check (2 of 4)

From chapter 7 of the guide, page 23. Do not announce, ask, sell, sign or serve until the row is cleared for every state and city where it happens.

## Serve alcohol (license or permit and insurance for each event)

**Planned?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Staff owner**

**Permit or registration (or write None)**

**Question for counsel, broker or finance**

**Evidence (document, date, expires)**

**Cleared** ☐

## Sign a venue or vendor contract (who may sign, deposits and cancellation fees)

**Planned?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Staff owner**

**Permit or registration (or write None)**

**Question for counsel, broker or finance**

**Evidence (document, date, expires)**

**Cleared** ☐

## Access donor or client data (access approved and A-T11 signed)

**Planned?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Staff owner**

**Permit or registration (or write None)**

**Question for counsel, broker or finance**

**Evidence (document, date, expires)**

**Cleared** ☐

## Work with minors or vulnerable people

**Planned?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Staff owner**

**Permit or registration (or write None)**

**Question for counsel, broker or finance**

**Evidence (document, date, expires)**

**Cleared** ☐

A-T7 FILL-IN TOOL

# Compliance stop/check (3 of 4)

From chapter 7 of the guide, page 23. Do not announce, ask, sell, sign or serve until the row is cleared for every state and city where it happens.

## Drive or transport people

**Planned?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Staff owner**

**Permit or registration (or write None)**

**Question for counsel, broker or finance**

**Evidence (document, date, expires)**

**Cleared** ☐

## Use our name or logo

**Planned?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Staff owner**

**Permit or registration (or write None)**

**Question for counsel, broker or finance**

**Evidence (document, date, expires)**

**Cleared** ☐

## Collect photos and stories

**Planned?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Staff owner**

**Permit or registration (or write None)**

**Question for counsel, broker or finance**

**Evidence (document, date, expires)**

**Cleared** ☐

## Candidates, elections or lobbying

**Planned?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Staff owner**

**Permit or registration (or write None)**

**Question for counsel, broker or finance**

**Evidence (document, date, expires)**

**Cleared** ☐

A-T7 FILL-IN TOOL

# Compliance stop/check (4 of 4)

From chapter 7 of the guide, page 23. Do not announce, ask, sell, sign or serve until the row is cleared for every state and city where it happens.

**Other:** _____

| Planned? | Staff owner | Permit or registration (or write None) |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Yes ☐ No | | |

| Question for counsel, broker or finance | Evidence (document, date, expires) | Cleared |
|---|---|---|
| | | ☐ |

**Ask your broker in writing:** does "insured" in our directors and officers (D&O) and general liability policies include associate board members? Which planned events and volunteer activities are covered, and which need extra coverage, such as alcohol, a venue's insurance requirements or driving? If a member is hurt while volunteering, what, if anything, pays their medical bills? Ask again before any new kind of activity or venue, and at each policy renewal.

**Answer received on:**

_____

**Activities covered:**

_____

**If a member is hurt:**

_____

**Still open (owner and date):**

_____

**Money:** tickets, gifts and sponsorships go only to the nonprofit's accounts or to online pages staff approve, never to a personal bank or payment-app account. Any separate account needs written approval after counsel and accounting review.

☐ Confirmed

A-T8 SAMPLE TO ADAPT

# Governing board resolution

From chapter 8 of the guide, page 28. To make your own, get this sample as a Word file at cariclub.com/nonprofits and replace every [bracketed] item. Sign or approve your copy, not this page.

**Sample only. Have your counsel adapt it to your bylaws and state law.**

RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of [Organization] establishes the [Name] Associate Board as a volunteer group of [Organization];

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Associate Board is not the Board of Directors or a committee of it, has no authority to act for or bind [Organization], and serving on it does not make anyone a director;

RESOLVED FURTHER, that the Board approves the attached Associate Board Charter and Member Agreement and the policies listed below for Associate Board members, and only the Board may amend the Charter or dissolve the Associate Board;

RESOLVED FURTHER, that [Name, title] is appointed staff liaison, and that [the executive director] may name an acting liaison or a successor in writing;

RESOLVED FURTHER, that all funds raised in connection with the Associate Board are payable to and held by [Organization], and no separate account will be opened without written approval of [role] after counsel and accounting review.

| Policy | Version date | New or existing? |
|---|---|---|
| **Money policy (from A-T4)** | | |
| **Conflict of interest** | | |
| **Conduct, including how to report a concern** | | |
| **Data and confidentiality** | | |
| **Social media** | | |

**Adopted on:** _____

**Secretary:** _____

A-T9 SAMPLE TO ADAPT

# Charter (1 of 2)

From chapter 8 of the guide, page 28. To make your own, get this sample as a Word file at cariclub.com/nonprofits and replace every [bracketed] item. Sign or approve your copy, not this page.

**Sample only. Have your counsel check it against your bylaws.**

1. **Name and status.** The [Name] Associate Board is a volunteer group of [Organization], not a separate organization, created by resolution of the Board of Directors on [date]. It is not the Board of Directors or a committee of it, and serving on it does not make anyone a director. It has no authority to act for or bind [Organization]. Members may not sign contracts, commit funds or accept a gift with conditions on [Organization]'s behalf.
2. **Purpose.** [From A-T2.]
3. **Reporting.** The Associate Board works through the staff liaison and reports to the Board of Directors [twice a year]. The Board of Directors names one of its members as the Associate Board's connector.
4. **Membership.** [Number] to [number] members. Criteria: [inclusive criteria from A-T3]. Members are selected by [the membership committee and staff liaison] and approved by [the executive director].
5. **Term.** [Two] years, renewable [once], so a member serves up to [four] years in all. Terms are staggered: about half the founding class serves a one-year first term[, which does not count toward the limit].
6. **Expectations.** Attend at least [75%] of meetings (remote attendance counts); serve on at least one committee; meet the money commitment in the Member Agreement; represent [Organization] positively, including online.
7. **Officers.** [Two co-chairs with staggered terms], a secretary and committee chairs. [The executive director] names the founding co-chairs. After that, members elect officers [by majority vote], and [the executive director] confirms them. If an officer leaves early, [the co-chairs and staff liaison] name someone to finish the term.

A-T9 SAMPLE TO ADAPT

# Charter (2 of 2)

From chapter 8 of the guide, page 28.

**Sample only. Have your counsel check it against your bylaws.**

8 **Committees.** [List.]

9 **Meetings.** [Frequency and length.] Members aim to agree; when they vote, [a majority of members present] decides. If a vote ties or members stay split, [the staff liaison] decides. Minutes record decisions, action items and anyone who sat out because of a conflict of interest.

10 **Money and name.** Tickets, gifts and sponsorships go only to [Organization]'s accounts or to online pages staff approve, never to a personal bank or payment-app account. Any separate account needs written approval after counsel and accounting review. Staff approve events, sponsorship requests and use of [Organization]'s name and logo.

11 **Policies.** Each year, members sign the conflict of interest, conduct, data and confidentiality, and social media policies named in the Board's resolution. They also disclose possible conflicts of interest to the staff liaison in writing when they join, each year and whenever something changes. A member with a conflict says so, answers any questions and then sits out the discussion and the decision. Anyone may raise a concern about conduct or safety with [incident and escalation contact] or, if that person is involved, with [alternate contact]. [Organization] does not allow retaliation against anyone who raises a concern in good faith.

12 **Safeguarding.** Members follow [Organization]'s [safeguarding] policy. They work with children, clients or vulnerable people only under staff supervision and after any required screening.

13 **Leave and departure.** A member may take a leave agreed with [the staff liaison], or resign in writing to the co-chairs and staff liaison. A member who falls below the attendance expectation or misses the money commitment meets the co-chairs and staff liaison to agree on a plan. If the plan is not met, [the executive director] may end the membership after hearing from the co-chairs and staff liaison. A concern about harassment, abuse or other misconduct follows the conduct policy instead; staff may pause the member's participation while it is reviewed.

14 **Review and amendment.** The Board of Directors reviews this charter each year and may amend it or dissolve the Associate Board at any time.

**Approved by the Board of Directors on:**

_____

A-T10 SAMPLE TO ADAPT

# Member agreement (1 of 2)

From chapter 8 of the guide, page 28. To make your own, get this sample as a Word file at cariclub.com/nonprofits and replace every [bracketed] item. Sign or approve your copy, not this page.

**Sample only. Have your counsel review it.**

I agree to:

- serve a [two]-year term starting [date];
- attend at least [75%] of meetings;
- serve on at least one committee;
- meet my money commitment of [model and amount] by [date], counted as set out in [Organization]'s money policy;
- follow the conflict of interest, conduct, data and confidentiality, and social media policies;
- give [liaison] my conflict of interest disclosure when I join and each year, and tell [liaison] as soon as anything changes;
- follow [Organization]'s [safeguarding] policy, and work with children, clients or vulnerable people only under staff supervision and after any required screening;
- raise any concern about harassment, abuse or safety with [incident and escalation contact], or with [alternate contact] if that person is involved, and make any report the law requires of me;
- never penalize anyone for raising a concern in good faith;
- speak for myself, not for [Organization], unless staff ask me to;
- never use [Organization]'s name, logo, events, lists or money for or against any candidate for public office;
- never sign or commit anything on [Organization]'s behalf;
- never collect money myself: tickets, gifts and sponsorships go only to [Organization]'s accounts or to online pages staff approve, never to my personal bank or payment-app account;
- tell the co-chairs early if I can't meet these commitments, or [liaison] privately if the reason is cost or an access need.

A-T10 SAMPLE TO ADAPT

# Member agreement (2 of 2)

From chapter 8 of the guide, page 28.

**Sample only. Have your counsel review it.**

The Board of Directors of [Organization] approved this agreement on [date].

**Name:**

_____

**Signature:** **Date:**

_____ _____

A-T10 SAMPLE TO ADAPT

# Conflict of interest disclosure

From chapter 8 of the guide, page 28.

**Sample only. If [Organization] has its own disclosure form, use that instead.**

List any business or organization that could gain from an associate board decision or event, such as a vendor, venue or sponsor, if you or a family member work for it, own part of it or are its client. Give this form to [liaison] when you join and each year, and tell [liaison] as soon as anything changes.

☐ I have nothing to disclose. ☐ I have listed my possible conflicts below.

| Business or organization | Relationship | What it could affect |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

**Name:**

_____

**Signature:** **Date:**

_____ _____

## For staff

Keep this form in a private staff file, not in the minutes or with the associate board. Tell the co-chairs only which decisions the member sits out.

**Received by:** **Date:**

_____ _____

**How staff will handle any conflict (for example, the member sits out decisions about the venue):**

_____

A-T11 SAMPLE TO ADAPT

# Data and confidentiality note

From chapter 8 of the guide, page 28. To make your own, get this sample as a Word file at cariclub.com/nonprofits and replace every [bracketed] item. Sign or approve your copy, not this page.

**Sample only. Have your counsel review it.**

I will:

- use donor, client or member information only for the task I was given;
- keep it in [approved location], never in personal email, phones or spreadsheets;
- share it only with people approved by staff, or when the law requires it;
- when a task ends or I leave, give staff any records they need, then delete my copies unless staff tell me otherwise;
- tell [liaison], or if unavailable [the executive director's office], at once if information is lost, stolen, shared by mistake or kept where it should not be, stop using it and delete nothing until staff say what to do;
- clear any company or donor name with [liaison] before I contact them, because staff may already be in touch;
- keep the information confidential after my service ends.

This note does not stop me from reporting a crime, abuse or a safety concern to the authorities.

**Name:**

_____

**Signature:** **Date:**

_____ _____

## For staff use

**Access approved by:** **Date:**

_____ _____

**Access ended, records returned and copies deleted. Date and staff initials:**

_____

A-T12 FILL-IN TOOL

# Application and selection rubric (1 of 2)

From chapter 9 of the guide, page 30. Staff fill in the top row and brackets, or set them in the Word file at cariclub.com/nonprofits; applicants fill in the rest.

**Organization:** _____ **Meetings (how often):** _____

**How to apply.** Send this form to [name and email] by [date]. We reply by [date]. [The membership committee and staff liaison] will read it. We keep it for [period] under our data policy.

**Our commitment** is [model and amount], and there is more than one way to meet it. Members also pay [own costs]; we cover [what we cover]. To talk privately about cost or access needs, contact [name and email] before you apply. Please leave health and money details off this form.

**Name:** _____ **Email:** _____

**Phone:** _____ **How did you hear about us?** _____ **Date:** _____

**Employer and role, if any:** _____ **Which committee interests you most?** _____

**Why do you want to join our associate board?**

**What experience or skills would you bring? Volunteer and community work count too.**

**Can you attend the meetings shown above?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Resume or LinkedIn profile, if you have one:** _____

A-T12 FILL-IN TOOL

# Application and selection rubric (2 of 2)

From chapter 9 of the guide, page 30. Keep this sheet with the application in [approved location].

**Staff and reviewers only.** Do not send to applicants. Ask counsel before collecting date of birth.

**Applicant:** _____ **Reviewed by:** _____ **Date:** _____

Rate each row against your criteria (A-T3) and member agreement (A-T10). Strong: clear evidence. Developing: some. Not yet: none. In Notes, write what you saw or heard. Note if you referred them.

| | Strong | Developing | Not yet | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Commitment to the mission** | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | |
| **Time available this year** | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | |
| **Skills we need** | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | |
| **Perspective and community ties** | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | |
| **Willingness to do the work** | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | |

**Decision (check one):**

☐ Offer ☐ Waitlist, if they agree

☐ Invite to volunteer first ☐ Not now

**Approved by:** _____ **Date:** _____

**Applicant told by:** _____ **Date:** _____

A-T13 FILL-IN TOOL

# Interview guide

From chapter 9 of the guide, page 30. Thirty minutes, with one staff member and one founding leader. Anyone with close personal or work ties to the applicant should not interview or rate them.

**Applicant:** _____ **Interview date:** _____

**Interviewers:** _____

**Notes.** Write only what relates to the A-T12 rubric and the next step you agree on. If someone mentions health, family or other private matters, do not ask more or write it down; if they need support, refer them to [staff liaison]. Keep this sheet with the application in [approved location].

| Time | Section | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| **5 min** | Welcome and introductions | |
| **15 min** | What draws you to our mission? | |
| | What do you hope to get from serving? | |
| | Which committee would you choose, and why? | |
| | How will you approach the money commitment? | |
| | What else is on your plate this year? | |
| **5 min** | Their questions | |
| **5 min** | Next steps and timing | |

A-T14 FILL-IN TOOL

# Orientation and first 30 days (1 of 2)

From chapter 10 of the guide, page 32. If a program visit involves children, clients or vulnerable people, it happens under staff supervision and after any required screening (A-T7).

**Orientation date:**

_____

## Two-hour orientation

| Time | Item | Lead |
|---|---|---|
| **10 min** | Welcome from the executive director | |
| **20 min** | Mission, programs and strategy | |
| **20 min** | The associate board's role, limits and expectations, and how to raise a concern | |
| **15 min** | How we talk about our work, who speaks for us, and the photo rule | |
| **15 min** | Committees, and choosing one | |
| **10 min** | Paperwork: agreement, policies and conflict disclosure | |
| **20 min** | A program visit or story | |
| **10 min** | Social time | |

## First 30 days

- ☐ Welcome note (day 1)
- ☐ Orientation (week 1)
- ☐ Program visit (week 2)
- ☐ Committee chosen (week 3)
- ☐ First task due (week 4)
- ☐ Retreat booked (month 2)

A-T14 FILL-IN TOOL

# Orientation and first 30 days (2 of 2)

From chapter 10 of the guide, page 32.

**Each new member.** Use one row per member. Fill in each step as it is done. Keep it confidential, in [the nonprofit's approved location], never on a personal device or in personal email.

| Member | Orientation | Agreement and policies signed | Cleared for program visits | Committee | First task and due date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |
| | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | | |

**Cleared for program visits:** check this box only when staff confirm that any required screening is done. Screening results stay with staff. Never write them here.

**First task:** the co-chairs make sure every new member gets one, and check that it gets done.

A-T15 FILL-IN TOOL

# First-year calendar

From chapter 11 of the guide, page 33. Month 1 is the month your governing board approves the authorization packet. Your main project serves your top goal on A-T2.

**Month 1 (month and year):**

_____

| Month | What happens | Owner | Done |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Authorization packet approved | | ☐ |
| **2** | Operating setup; founding leaders recruited | | ☐ |
| **3** | Recruit and interview | | ☐ |
| **4** | Seat the class; orientation | | ☐ |
| **5** | Committees start | | ☐ |
| **6** | Mission volunteer activity, after its compliance check (A-T7); first board report (A-T16) | | ☐ |
| **7** | Plan the main project; compliance check (A-T7) | | ☐ |
| **8** | Once cleared on A-T7, line up what it needs: sponsors, tickets or volunteers | | ☐ |
| **9** | Plan the event day: staff lead, schedule, helper briefing | | ☐ |
| **10** | Main project, such as a signature event | | ☐ |
| **11** | Thank-yous and results (money net of costs) | | ☐ |
| **12** | Scorecard; report; next recruiting cycle | | ☐ |

A-T16 FILL-IN TOOL

# Board report page

From chapter 12 of the guide, page 35. For the governing board, twice a year. One page. Take figures from the monthly dashboard. Report money and attendance as group totals. Leave out anything that could identify a client. Complaints, conduct issues and personal details stay with staff.

**Prepared by:** _____

**Period covered:** _____

| Section | What to write |
|---|---|
| **Goals and progress (from A-T2)** | |
| **Money raised, net of costs** | |
| **Members, attendance and retention** | |
| **Mission work and what it changed** | |
| **Members moving into leadership** | |
| **What we learned** | |
| **Decisions or support we need from the governing board, and by when** | |
| **Next six months** | |

A-T17 FILL-IN TOOL

# Scorecard and 12-month review (1 of 2)

From chapter 13 of the guide, page 36. **Green:** target met. **Yellow:** short, with a clear fix. **Red:** short, with no clear fix yet.

**Period covered:**

_____

| Measure (from A-T2) | Target | Actual | Signal color | Action · owner · date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Staff time it took (plan on A-T1) | | | | |

## What would we be missing if this group did not exist?

_____

_____

## Keep, change, stop:

_____

_____

A-T17 FILL-IN TOOL

# Scorecard and 12-month review (2 of 2)

From chapter 13 of the guide, page 36. A filled example is on the next page.

**Decision (check one):** ☐ Continue ☐ Redesign ☐ Pause ☐ Close

**If you redesign:** what changes and by when?

**If you continue, redesign or pause:** the date of your next review, and who will lead it

**If you close or change the charter:** the date your governing board approved it

**Executive sponsor:** **Date:**

## If you pause, or close after your governing board approves

| Step | Owner | Due | Done |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Tell members first: their terms, give or get, and how to stay involved** | | | ☐ |
| **Tell sponsors and supporters, using one approved message** | | | ☐ |
| **Stop appeals for the group; update its web page and social accounts** | | | ☐ |
| **Settle anything booked, signed or promised (venues, sponsors, tickets)** | | | ☐ |
| **Check with finance how gifts given for the group's projects may be used** | | | ☐ |
| **Keep records with staff; end members' access (A-T11)** | | | ☐ |

# Filled example: A-T17 scorecard

From chapter 13 of the guide, page 36. A tutoring nonprofit scores three of the Good statements on page 13 of the guide at its 12-month review. Your measures and numbers will differ.

**Sample only. A fictional nonprofit. Every name, number and date is made up.**

**Period covered:** months 1 to 12 after the governing board approved the packet

| Measure (from A-T2) | Target | Actual | Signal color | Action · owner · date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Net raised for the tutoring program, as finance confirms** | $10,000 | $7,400 | Yellow | Smaller venue to cut costs; event co-chairs with the liaison; new budget by March 1 |
| **Tutoring shifts filled that staff could not cover** | 12 | 14 | Green | Program staff set next year's number; liaison; by February 15 |
| **Members who joined a governing board committee as guests** | 2 | 1 | Red | Find a fix with the governing board chair; executive sponsor; by February 28 |
| **Staff time it took (plan on A-T1)** | 2 hours a week | About 4 a week; 8 in event months | Yellow | Members run event tasks, with the staff lead in charge; co-chairs; by March 1 |

**What would we be missing if this group did not exist?** Fourteen tutoring shifts that staff could not cover, and nine members who now give and bring new people to our events.

**Keep, change, stop:** Keep the tutoring shifts and the signature event. Change to a smaller venue, with members running event tasks. Stop the extra event added in month 6, which took staff time and raised little.

**Decision:** Redesign. What changes and by when: a smaller venue and member-run event tasks, agreed by March 1.

**Next review and who leads it:** February 1 next year, the executive sponsor.

**Governing board approval:** not needed, because the charter does not change.

**Executive sponsor:** signed February 1.

# About this toolkit

**About this toolkit.** These tools go with Start an Associate Board, a first-time guide for nonprofits, written by CariClub. They are general information, not legal, tax or insurance advice. Have your counsel review the resolution, charter, member agreement, conflict disclosure and data note first.

**About CariClub.** CariClub places accomplished professionals on associate, advisory and governing nonprofit boards, prepares them to serve well, and supports them through every stage of service. Building board leaders since 2016. Members bring experience from firms like KKR, Davis Polk, Morgan Stanley, Deloitte, EY and Unilever.

**For nonprofits:** CariClub is available at no cost to approved nonprofits and their staff. Request access at cariclub.com/nonprofits · nonprofits@cariclub.com

**For associate board members:** if you already serve on an associate board, your staff liaison can invite you to limited CariClub access: your board's room on CariClub and the first three modules of BoardLaureate. For full access, including searching for other board roles, most members join through their employer. If yours isn't a CariClub partner yet, request access at cariclub.com and we'll work with you to bring your employer on, or you can join on your own.



cariclub

# Start an Associate Board: Toolkit

**Seventeen tools that turn the guide into a launch file.**

Available at no cost to approved nonprofits and their staff. Request access at cariclub.com/nonprofits · nonprofits@cariclub.com

Companion guide: Lead Your Associate Board, for first-time chairs and co-chairs.