Consider Five Alternatives to Starting a New Nonprofit

Start with a good idea for a nonprofit.

Scan the field to learn whether a nonprofit is already doing this work.

By scanning the field, you determine the following...

A good local nonprofit exists with a similar mission.

A good nonprofit exists with a similar mission, but it's not local.

No nonprofit does similar work.
Or, no nonprofit has the capacity/interest to support your good idea.

...talk with that nonprofit about your idea...

...contact that nonprofit to find options for bringing their work to your community...

Get permission to

by creating a local

nonprofit based on

their model.

replicate their work

...consider issues of liability, filings and paperwork, tax deductibility and costs/ labor associated with incorporation...

...prepare to start from scratch a new entity...

1. Join an existing effort.

Volunteer for the nonprofit; join their board; or apply to work for them as a staff member. 2. Create a special program.

Start a new initiative within that nonprofit and operate as part of their organization.

3. Find a sponsor organization.

Pursue fiscal sponsorship and operate under another nonprofit for short or long-term. 4. Start a local chapter.

Join the existing nonprofit and start doing work locally under their umbrella as a chapter or affiliate.

5. Maintain an unincorprated association

As a small organization, you may avoid the hassles of incorporating and still get many benefits of formal nonprofits.

Choose to incorporate and move forward with starting a nonprofit.

Over time,
you may
decide that
you are ready
to start a new
entity.

Start a Successful Nonprofit
After carefully weighing all of your options, slowly move forward with starting a new nonprofit.