

The Accountable Nonprofit Organization

The Accountable Nonprofit Organization is a statement of principles to guide charities.

It outlines the operations and procedures a nonprofit undertakes to show it is accountable to donors, the people it serves, and the general public.

This statement was endorsed by AFP Board in 1995.*

The Accountable Nonprofit Organization

Each nonprofit organization holds a public trust to improve the quality of life.

The accountable organization clearly states its mission and purpose, articulates the needs of those being served, explains how its programs work, how much they cost and what benefits they produce.

The accountable organization freely and accurately shares information about its governance, finances and operations. It is open and inclusive in its procedures, processes and programs consistent with its mission and purpose.

The nonprofit organization is accountable to all those it exists to serve, to all those who support it, and to society.

The accountable nonprofit organization is responsible for mission fulfillment, leadership on behalf of the public interest, stewardship and quality.

The accountable nonprofit is responsible for:

Mission fulfillment

- Doing what it says it will do.
- Maintaining relevance by meeting needs in a changing environment.

Leadership on behalf of the public interest

- Enhancing the well-being of communities and society.
- Promoting inclusiveness, pluralism and diversity within society.
- Educating the public, business, nonprofit organizations and government, including appropriate advocacy and lobbying.

Stewardship

- Maintaining effective governance and management.

- Generating adequate resources, managing resources effectively, supporting and recognizing volunteers, and appropriately compensating staff.
- Avoiding conflict of interest and abuse of power.

Quality

- Striving for and achieving excellence in all aspects of the organization.
- Evaluating the total organization and its outcomes on an ongoing basis.

** The above statement, endorsed by AFP's board in 1995, was developed for nonprofit leaders by participants of Accountability and Nonprofit Organizations, a think tank program held in 1995 at the Mandel Center for Nonprofit Organizations. The think tank was co-sponsored by the National Assembly of Voluntary Health and Social Welfare Organizations and the National Health Council, and supported by a grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc.*