

Additional Opportunities

Taking the Next Step: Nonprofits and For Profit Businesses

Registering as a Nonprofit Organization

Now that you have launched your Venture, where do you go from here? You may be looking for additional funding in order to continue serving your community. You may want to register as a nonprofit organization and apply for **501(c)(3) tax-exempt status**. This tax-exempt status will encourage more foundations, companies, and individuals to donate to your program because they will get a tax break for their donation. Some foundations or companies only give to organizations with 501(c)(3) status. Read below for details on how to obtain this status.

How to get certified

So, now that you know *why* your organization might want to be to be 501(c)(3) certified, *how* do you go about getting certified? The answer to this question is different from state to state. There are two basic steps that everyone can follow:

Create a not-for-profit corporation under the laws of your state

Often, a lawyer must be used to create and file the correct paperwork; in other cases an individual may file all the paperwork without the assistance of a lawyer. If you do decide to seek a lawyer's advice, you may want to ask if he/she will offer his/her services in-kind (free of charge). Once you are a 501(c)(3), the lawyer can deduct his/her service donation from his/her taxes.

Apply for 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status from the IRS

An application to the IRS for 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status is done using **IRS Form 1023**. This Form contains instructions and checklists to help you provide the necessary information. The IRS also publishes a pamphlet entitled "Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization (Publication 557)." Both the Form 1023 with instructions and this publication are available on the IRS web site, <http://www.irs.gov/> under "Forms and Publications."

Need help filling out these tax forms?

Answers to your questions can be found at: www.form1023help.com. Information for this page was provided by: <http://www.midrivers.com/Ruraldev/become501.asp>. Please visit this site for more details.

Starting a For Profit Business

If your Venture is a for-profit business that benefits the community, you may be eligible for assistance from the **U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)**. Through the DOL, you can register your small business, find out more about incorporating it as a Limited Liability Company, and search for grants that might be appropriate to your business. The **DOL Office of Small Business Programs** (<http://www.dol.gov/osbp/programs/main.htm>) is a great place to start.

You can also learn more from the **Small Business Association (SBA)** (<http://www.sba.gov>). The SBA offers free online courses about how to start a business, as well as advice, tools, and resources that might be relevant to your Venture. Other useful resources for starting a small business are www.entrepreneur.com, www.inc.com, and www.score.org.