

## (Team) Project 3: Forming a Nonprofit Organization (30 points)

**Due: Thursday, April 20**

**Overview:** Drawing on your primary and secondary research skills, this assignment asks you to work with your peers to form a nonprofit organization that addresses a specific issue. You must study issues in our local community(ies)—business, academic, or city-wide—and develop an organization that proposes real-world solutions to the problem. In other words, you are being asked to become an agent of change. Because this is a team project, it requires that you negotiate, compromise, organize, and understand each other's working styles in order to achieve your goals.

**Note:** A nonprofit uses its income to benefit the community rather than its members or shareholders. There are many types of nonprofit organizations, but yours will be a 501(c)(3): a public, charitable, domestic (in-state) nonprofit. Your group will choose what kind of charitable organization you wish to be and what your mission will be, will learn how to legally incorporate your organization, and figure out budgets and fundraising, as well as writing grant proposals.

**How it works:** In this project, you and your group will form a public, charitable, domestic (in-state) nonprofit organization. I (your instructor) am the director/overseer of your project, and you and your team are all voting members of the organization. Although you will not be required to fill out actual legal forms, I will require you to research and compile lists of all forms and licenses needed. You will write a mission statement, articles of incorporation, bylaws, a budget, and both a fundraising plan and five-year plan for the organization. You will also choose a foundation to which you will write a grant proposal asking for funding. All of these documents will require you to use the rhetorical skills you have developed this semester in order to form a successful organization. After all, the success of your organization depends on your ability to convince the IRS that you should be eligible for tax exempt status, and to convince a foundation that you deserve a grant.

### **Process:**

1. Decide on a particular problem all group members are interested in working on.
2. Decide what type of charitable organization you will create to address the problem.
3. Determine your company's name, keeping in mind the image you wish to present, the state laws regarding which words can/cannot be included, whether the name is trademarked or how you can trademark it.
4. Allocate responsibilities (president or director, secretary, treasurer, etc.)
5. Plan out when and where your meetings will take place. I'll give you time to meet in class, but you'll have to meet outside of class as well.
6. Write a **mission statement** for your organization (**2 points, due 3/23**)
7. Write a **team progress report**. This will include a list of all the forms and licenses you will need, as well as a list of three foundations (or individuals) to solicit for your grant proposal, and why you chose them. (**4 points, due 3/30**)
8. Write a well-researched **grant proposal** to a foundation or individual (**6 points, due 4/13**)
9. Compose a **feasibility report** that includes the following: your **mission, articles of incorporation, bylaws, each member's role, a budget, your fundraising plan, your grant proposal, and your five-year plan** for the organization (**8 points, due 4/20**)
10. Write an **informative memo** to me, your project overseer, articulating your role in the project, which writing assignment(s) you took on, and what grade you think *you* deserve for your participation in the project. (**5 points, due 4/20**)

11. Create a 15-minute **Power Point presentation** in which you outline to the class your group's mission, structure, fundraising, and future (**5 points, due on the day of your in-class presentation: 4/25, 4/27, or 5/2**)

**Types of 501(c)(3) nonprofits you could consider:**

- Relief of poverty (soup kitchens, homeless shelters, natural disaster relief)
- Beautifying the community
- Lessening the burdens of government (assisting parks and recreation, etc.)
- Promoting health and safety
- Promoting social welfare (civil rights, etc.)
- Promoting environmental conservation
- Promoting the arts (festivals, youth programs)
- Promoting amateur sports (but not providing athletic facilities or equipment)
- Literacy
- Education (libraries, museums—programs without political agendas)
- Preventing child or animal cruelty

Please try to stay within these boundaries. If you come up with something else, it may not fall under the status of charitable organizations, which would endanger your tax exempt status.

**Requirements:**

- **Mission statement, grant proposal, progress report, feasibility report** (which includes your revised mission statement, articles of incorporation, bylaws, each member's role, a budget, your fundraising plan, your revised grant proposal, and your five-year plan for the organization), a **Power Point presentation**, and an **informative memo**.
- Successful team collaboration. It is up to your group to decide how to allocate responsibilities, but it is probably most effective for each group member to take on at least one significant writing assignment. If one person is solely responsible for writing the progress report, another individual should be responsible for writing the grant proposal. All group members should be involved in the research process.

**Grading:** Each project component (**mission statement, grant proposal, progress report, feasibility report, Power Point presentation**) will receive a separate grade, and each team member will receive the same grade on these components. Each team member, however, will receive an individual grade for their informative memo/participation in the project.

**Turning it in:** Each component of Project 3 will be turned in and graded separately, according to the due dates above. The feasibility report component of Project 3 is due to Blackboard by 11:59 PM on Tuesday, 11/22, along with the informative memos. Each member will submit their informative memo to the drop box *separately*, and one member (the designated president or director) will submit the group's feasibility report.

## Team Progress Report (4 points)

**Due: Thursday, March 30**

**Overview:** The purpose of a progress report is to let your project supervisor (me) know where you stand with your project: what you have completed and what you have yet to complete. See *STC* pp. 283-86 for details on how to write and format a progress report. **Yours should follow the format on p. 286:**

- Work Completed to Date
- Work in Progress
- Work to be Completed
- Date for Completion: 3/30/17

You must also include a section that lists your **forms and licenses**, as well as the **three individuals or foundations** you will solicit/have solicited for your grant proposal. You must also include a **description** (300 words) of the research process and justification for your decisions on these matters.

One member of your group will be responsible for uploading this to the blog forum on the day it is due.

## Grant Proposal (6 points)

### Due: Thursday, April 13



**Overview:** The purpose of any research project is to define a need or problem that currently has no solution, or requires change. The purpose of the grant proposal is to lay out what you know about your topic at the moment, in order to see where your future research could possibly take you, and to outline your plan for completing your Feasibility Report. The following guidelines are borrowed from “How to Write a Winning Grant Proposal in 11 Steps,” from *thebalance.com*. For more information about the specific documents to include, go to: <https://www.thebalance.com/how-to-write-a-grant-proposal-2501980>

**Directions:** You should address your proposal to a foundation or individual from which you would like to solicit a donation. You must include each of the following components:

- **Cover Letter:** (one page) addressed to a particular person, which states what your proposal asks for and summarizes your program.
- **Executive Summary:** (a few sentences/paragraph) describing (at a glance) what, exactly, you’re asking for. This should be complete, but brief, and should incite your reader to keep reading.
- **A Need Statement:** (one page) “The meat” of your proposal. This should persuade your grantor that your project is important and detail how you can follow through with it.
- **Methods and Strategies/Work Plan:** List step-by-step how you will achieve the goals and objectives, including a detailed timeline.
- **Information About Your Organization:** Explain in a few paragraphs why you are trustworthy and how you will use the funds responsibly. Give a short history of your organization, your mission statement, the population you serve, and what you do.
- **Project Budget:** Attach a budget of expected expenses (personnel costs, direct project costs, administrative and overhead expenses) and income (contributed and earned).
- **Evaluation:** The impact your organization will have on the community you serve if you are successful in obtaining the grant.

One member of your group will be responsible for uploading this to the blog forum on the day it is due.

## Feasibility Report: (8 points)

Due: Thursday, April 20

**Overview:** For this part of the assignment, you will complete a **feasibility report**, which, according to the textbook, is “used when decision makers need to assess whether an idea, plan, or course of action is realistic and practical.” This is the culmination of Project 3, and will include the revisions of the parts you have already turned in, as well as a few new features.

The feasibility report will include the following: your **mission, articles of incorporation, bylaws, each member’s role, a budget, your fundraising plan, your grant proposal, and your five-year plan** for the organization.

*This assignment corresponds to Chapters 15 and 16, “Informal Reports” and “Formal Reports,” in STC.*

The **feasibility report** addresses the questions: Should we do \_\_\_\_? What are the potential solutions to this problem based on extensive research? The answers to these questions will be compiled in a report that is based on your own careful and extensive research. Your audience will consist of managers and other decision makers. I will provide you with examples of effective analytical **feasibility reports**, but here is a basic outline of what yours should include:

- Title page
- Table of contents
- Mission statement
- Team progress report
- List of Forms and Licenses
- Foundations (or individuals) to solicit
- Feasibility Report
  - Introduction
  - Articles of incorporation
  - Bylaws
  - Member roles
  - Budget
  - Fundraising plan
  - Grant proposal
    - Cover Letter
    - Executive Summary
    - Need Statement
    - Methods and Strategies
    - Outcomes/Impact of activities
    - Organization information
    - Evaluation
  - Five-Year Plan
  - Works Cited page

Revised from originals

This is just a revised version of what you turned in for the original grant proposal.

**Turning it in:** One member of your team will be responsible for submitting this project to the drop box when it is due. Each member of the team will upload his/her own reflective memo.