

Working for Nonprofit Organizations

Career Lab
Lucina Hall Room 235

Careers that Make a Difference

If you are looking for a career that not only fits your skills and interests, but is meaningful, socially responsible, and allows you to make a living while contributing to society, then a career in a nonprofit organization is something to consider.

Opportunities are plentiful in the nonprofit sector. There are more than 1.5 million nonprofit organizations in the United States. More than thirteen million Americans work for nonprofits, accounting for ten percent of the workforce. The nonprofit sector is expected to increase by fourteen percent by 2018. During the next decade the nonprofit sector will need approximately 640,000 new senior managers, and the number of new executives needed annually by 2016 will be close to 80,000.

What Is a Nonprofit Organization?

Nonprofits are organizations that are governed by a board of directors and do not operate to make a profit for their shareholders or owners. Nonprofits may or may not be tax exempt. Many nonprofits promote social, political, environmental, and other causes as well as work with advocacy groups, museums, community groups, and foundations. The nonprofit sector is divided into ten areas.

- Arts, culture, and humanities
- Education
- Environment and animals
- Health
- Human services
- International and foreign affairs
- Religious organizations
- Public and society benefit
- Mutual membership benefit organizations
- Non-classifiable organizations

Working for Nonprofit Organizations

The nonprofit work place often provides a relaxed, informal environment allowing casual dress and flexible career paths. Since many nonprofits are small organizations with fewer resources, employees find more opportunities to take on increased responsibilities and varied work assignments. Other advantages of working for nonprofits include flexible work hours, job sharing, professional development opportunities, and special work assignments. Nonprofits are often diversity-friendly with women making up nearly sixty-eight percent of the work force.

The nonprofit sector hires people from varied

educational backgrounds from high school to doctoral levels. Employees often perform the same functions as workers in the business sector such as accounting, secretarial, marketing, advertising, event planning, and communications. Fund raising is often an important function of nonprofits.

Working for nonprofits doesn't always mean that you have to forgo the benefits employees in the business sector receive. Seventy-nine percent of nonprofits offer employer-paid health insurance. Sixty-four percent of nonprofits offer retirement benefits to which the organization contributes.

Disadvantages of working for nonprofits include working longer hours and lower salaries. Larger nonprofits tend to pay higher salaries. Health and science nonprofits tend to pay the highest median salaries. The lowest salaries tend to be found in food, religion, housing, animal-related, and youth development organizations.

Finding Opportunities with Nonprofits

The Internet can be a great place to begin your nonprofit job search. Go directly to the nonprofit organization's web site or search in nonprofit job-posting sites like Idealist.org, the Nonprofit Career Network, and Opportunity Knocks. Use library databases like Reference USA to find nonprofits to contact for opportunities in geographic areas where you want to live and work. Start out as a volunteer for a nonprofit you want to work for. Internships are plentiful in the nonprofit sector. Interning for a nonprofit that fits your interests is a good way to get hired as a full-time employee.

Decide if you want to work for one of the smaller nonprofits or one of the larger organizations. If you decide you want to go for the more competitive, higher-paying positions at one of the larger nonprofits, start your job search with the twenty largest nonprofit organizations listed below.

- American Red Cross
- YMCA
- United Jewish Communities
- Catholic Charities USA
- Salvation Army
- Goodwill Industries
- Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
- Boys and Girls Clubs of America
- Habitat for Humanity International
- Boy Scouts of America
- American Cancer Society
- The Nature Conservancy

- The National Easter Seal Society
- World Vision
- Planned Parenthood Federation of America
- Gifts in Kind International
- AmeriCare Foundation
- Food for the Poor
- Volunteers of America
- Girl Scouts of the USA

Resources in the Career Lab, Lucina 235

100 Best Nonprofits to Work For
Careers for Caring People and Other Sensitive Types
Careers for Good Samaritans and Other Humanitarian Types
Careers for Nature Lovers and Other Outdoor Types
Careers for Patriotic Types and Others Who Want to Serve Their Country
Careers in Focus: Social Work
The ECO Guide to Careers that Make a Difference
The Everything Alternative Careers Book
The Idealist Guide to Nonprofit Careers for First-Time Job Seekers
The Idealist Guide to Nonprofit Careers for Sector Switchers
International Directory of Volunteer Work
Making a Living While Making a Difference
Nonprofit Career Guide
Nonprofits and Education Job Finder
Opportunities in Event Planning Careers
Opportunities in Fund-Raising Careers
Opportunities in Religious Service Careers
Opportunities in Social Work Careers
Vault Guide to the Top Government and Nonprofit Legal Employers
The WetFeet Insider Guide to Careers in Nonprofits and Government

Websites

Bridgestar: <https://www.bridgestar.org>
 Chronicle of Philanthropy: Career Network: <http://philanthropy.com/jobs/>
 Commongood Careers: <http://www.cgcareers.org/>
 ExecSearches.com Nonprofit Job Board: <http://www.execsearches.com/>
 Foundation Center: <http://foundationcenter.org/search/>
 Guidestar: <http://www.guidestar.org/>
 Idealist.org: <http://www.idealists.org/>
 InterAction: <http://www.interaction.org/>
 National Nonprofit Job Postings and Resources: <http://www.nonprofitjobs.org/>
 Nonprofit Career Center: <http://www.nonprofitcareercenter.org/>
 Nonprofit Career Network: <http://www.nonprofitcareer.com/>
 NonProfit Times: <http://www.nptimes.com/>
 Opportunityknocks.org: <http://www.opportunityknocks.org/>
 OneWorld.net: <http://us.oneworld.net/>
 Public Interest Research Groups: <http://www.pirg.org/jobs/>
 Riley Guide: Nonprofits, Foundations and Think Tanks: <http://www.rileyguide.com/nonprof.html>
 Society for Nonprofit Organizations: <http://www.snpo.org/nonprofitcareers/>
 Social Service Network.com: <http://socialservicenetwork.org/>
 Work4agoodcause.com: <http://www.work4agoodcause.com/>