

BUSINESS PLAN TEMPLATE

Produced by the National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD®)

OVERVIEW:

- When forming a nonprofit organization, consider creating a business plan. A business plan acts as the blueprint of your organization explaining what you intend to do, how, and why and it includes a financial plan in order to demonstrate the viability of your organization.
- By creating a business plan, your board members will share a common understanding and vision for what they want to accomplish and be better situated to make well informed decisions.
- A business plan will prepare you for applying for tax-exempt status. Much of the plan information aligns with the [IRS form 1023](#), which is the application required by the IRS to receive 501(c)(3) nonprofit status.
- A business plan encompasses your organization's program, operations, and finances while also incorporating aspects of strategy and marketing.
- BoardSource clarifies the difference between a business plan and a strategic plan. A strategic plan "has a broad focus that sets the overall direction for a nonprofit and defines the mission-related goals and strategies the nonprofit is going to achieve over a period of time" while a business plan "has a narrower and more specific focus and it analyzes the financial viability of the proposed project."
[\(https://boardsource.org/resources/nonprofit-business-plan/\)](https://boardsource.org/resources/nonprofit-business-plan/)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A business plan should contain the following elements:

- Executive Summary
 - High level overview and summary of the business plan
- Introduction
 - Explanation of the rare disease and its impact on the people living with it, which sets the stage for why your organization is needed
- Mission Statement and Guiding Principles
 - Description of the organization's mission and principles
- Proposed Activities to Further the Mission
 - List of the pending activities and a marketing strategy to execute on the mission
- The Need for an Organization
 - The reason why your organization should exist and how it serves a unique need in the market
- Target Beneficiaries of the Organization
 - Who will benefit from your organization and how (via the programs and resources you will develop)
- Communities where Activities will be Conducted
 - Describe the geographical reach of the organization

- Fundraising Plans and Research Grants
 - List the opportunities and grants your organization plans to target to support fundraising efforts
- Proposed Budget
 - Insert your proposed operating budget for the next three (3) years
- Proposed Staffing
 - Description of the organizational structure and committees

Access an example of a rare disease business plan: bit.ly/business-plan-example



[ORGANIZATION NAME]

BUSINESS PLAN

Executive Summary

Specify the name of your organization and confirm that it will operate as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in service of a specific cause:

High level summary about the unmet need your organization is meeting (i.e. why your organization exists):

Brief description about why this business plan was created and how it demonstrates an outline for success:

Introduction

Describe the impact of a diagnosis with your rare disease:

Provide details about your rare disease, which can be pulled from medically vetted sources such as [NIH GARD](#) or the [NORD Rare Disease Report Database](#):

Mission Statement and Guiding Principles

Share your organization’s mission statement:

Detail the guiding principles of your organization:

The Need for [ORGANIZATION NAME]

Make your case and highlight the need for a nonprofit organization for your disease state (e.g. the history of the disease, why now, what need will you meet?):

Target Beneficiaries of the Organization

Detail who will benefit from your organization and how your website, services, network, etc. will serve your beneficiaries:

Proposed Activities to Further the Mission

Describe the short term plans your organization will execute on to start, manage and grow a healthy nonprofit (i.e., approve bylaws, establish a website, and recruit a Medical Advisory Board):

Initial actions: _____

Essential next steps: _____

Ongoing action steps: _____

Detail your marketing plan (how will your organization engage the community to reach your mission?): _____

Communities Where Activities Will Be Conducted

Confirm where your organization is headquartered and if you serve a local, regional, national or international population:

Fundraising Plans and Research Grants

Detail opportunities you plan to target to raise funds to reach your mission:

Personal fundraising: _____

Corporate grants: _____

Government groups: _____

Partnership with other philanthropic organizations: _____

Proposed Budget

Insert your proposed budget for the next three (3) years. NORD’s template budget is available for download: bit.ly/NORD-budget-template.

Proposed Staffing

Who governs your organization and what do they do to support a thriving organization? Describe your organizational structure (volunteer, paid staff, etc.) and the composition of your Board of Directors. You can also describe other organizational committees here and how you plan to form them, such as a Medical Advisory Board.

Board Members and their roles: _____

Medical Advisory Board (composition and primary function): _____

