

# Before You Fill Out Your Application

Starting a 501(c)(3) organization involves many tasks:

- Identify your organization's mission.
- Recruit people for the board of directors.
- Adopt governing documents - Articles of Incorporation/Bylaws.
- Draw up a business plan.
- Plan how to raise funds.
- Hire employees or enlist volunteers.
- Establish recordkeeping systems.
- Apply for state and local licenses, registrations and exemptions.
- Obtain a bulk mailing permit.
- Purchase insurance.

You will need resources other than this book to help you do these things. This book is dedicated to the single task of preparing your 501(c)(3) application.

Section I focuses on work you might need to do before you fill out your 501(c)(3) application. Chapter 1 covers specific IRS requirements for 501(c)(3)s, and provides a comparison chart with other types of exempt status, so that you can be sure 501(c)(3) is the right fit for your group. Chapter 2 discusses financial data and budgeting, and Chapter 3 points the way for readers who would like to research IRS laws and procedures or other 501(c)(3) organizations.