

# Give Your Organization a Competitive Edge



Presenter:  
Jenna Forner  
*Nonprofit Services Coordinator*

# About the Council...



- “Mobilize informed donors & accountable nonprofits for the greater good”
  - Accountability Standards
    - Basic Expectations
  - Tools for Nonprofits
    - Accountability Wizard Review
  - Resources for Donors
    - Nonprofit reviews & giving tips

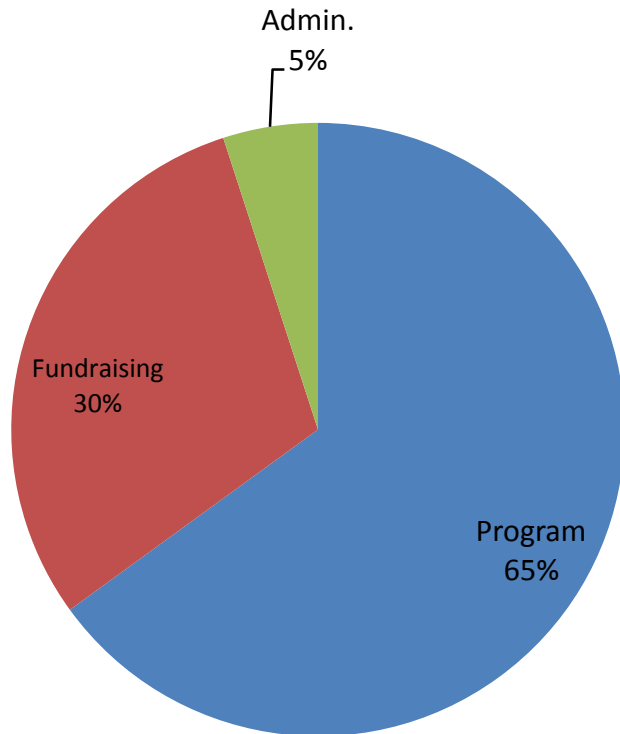
# What are we going to talk about?



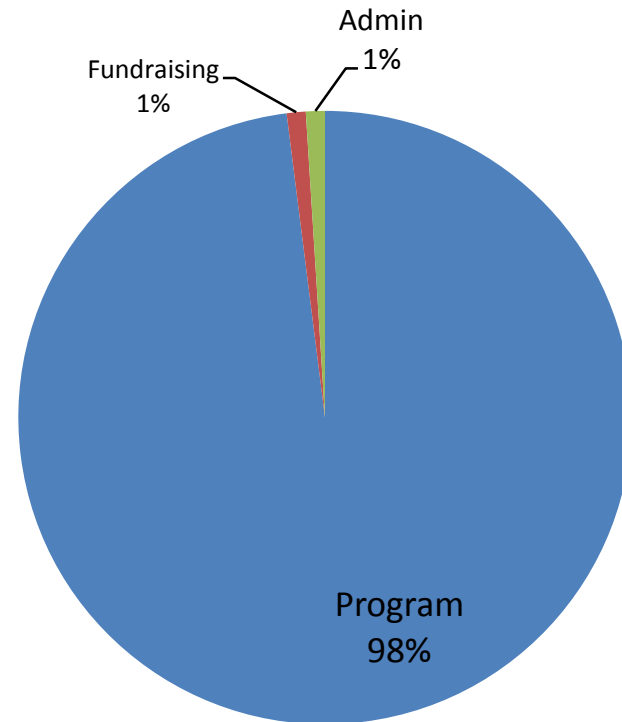
**Giving your organization a competitive edge**

# Low Overhead = Effective?

**Nonprofit A: Expenses**



**Nonprofit B: Expenses**



# Tell the whole story....



“Review of [the expense] ratio alone, without consideration of charitable impact would be akin to judging a book by its cover”.

– Denel Kopf, Vanguard Charitable Endowment Program

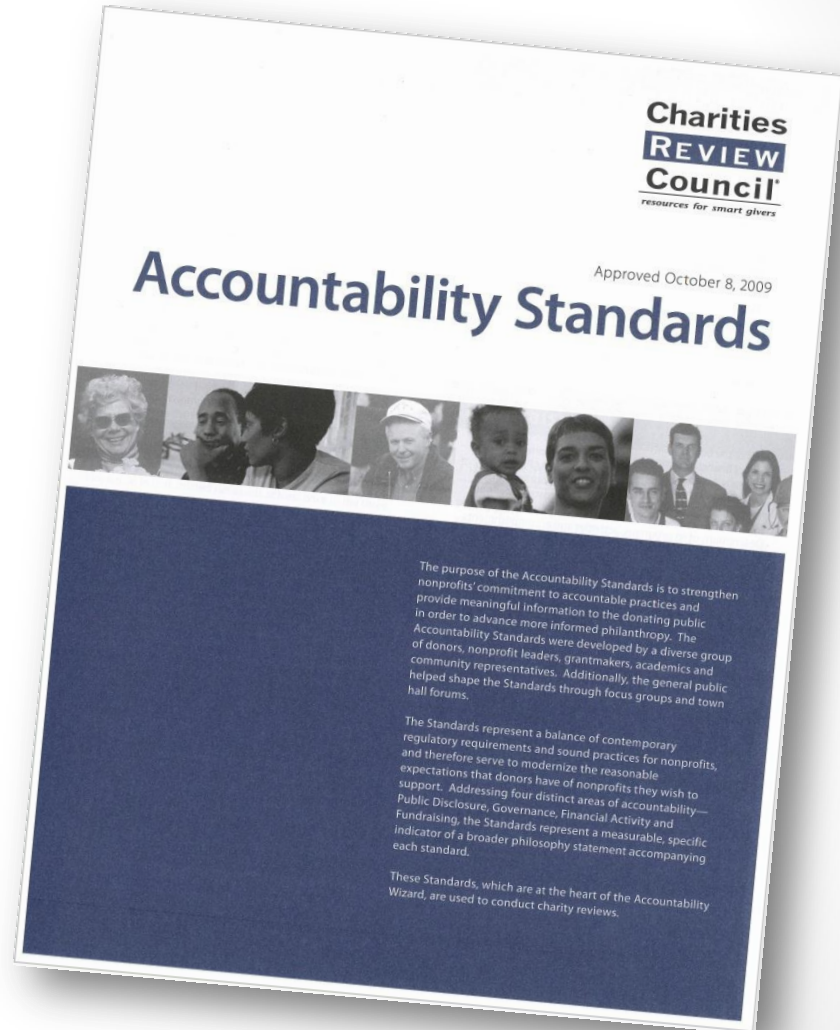
# So what is effectiveness?



**Effective** (adj) –  
adequate to accomplish a  
purpose; producing the  
intended or expected result

# Components of effectiveness

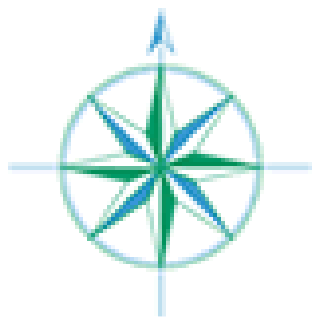
- Ethical Practices
- Engaged Board
- Financial Stability
- Public/Private Support





- Data source
  - Provides publically available information
  - Nonprofits can enhance profile
  - Earn “Exchange Seal” for completing in-depth profile





# CHARITY NAVIGATOR

Your Guide To Intelligent Giving

- “Watchdog”
  - Uses star rating system
  - Primary source is IRS Form 990
  - Only rates nonprofits with public support >\$500,000



- “Watchdog”
  - Charity reviews based on 20 principles
  - Collect information from charity
  - Review national charities based on public inquiries
    - Charities can also request to be reviewed
  - Earn BBB seal

## So what makes the Council different?

- Voluntary online assessment
- Comprehensive standards
- Opportunity to align practices with standards
- Tools to communicate with supporters

# The review process

## 1. Complete Assessment

- Submit enrollment fee
- Upload documents
- Answer questions

## 2. Receive review results

- Address action items
- Assistance provided by Council

## 3. Publish results (within 1 yr.)

- Results valid for 3 years
- Continue to address unmet standards (if necessary)

The screenshot shows the 'Charities Review Council' 'Accountability Wizard' interface. The header includes a 'Back to Home' link. The main content area is titled 'PUBLIC INFORMATION' with a link to 'Related Philosophy & Standards'. A sidebar on the left lists navigation options: REGISTRATION, PUBLIC DISCLOSURE (selected), Introduction, Public Information, Annual Reporting, Impact on Community, Financial Transparency, Legal Compliance, GOVERNANCE - PROCESSES, GOVERNANCE - PRACTICES, GOVERNANCE - POLICIES, FINANCIAL ACTIVITY, FUNDRAISING, ADDITIONAL INFO & EVAL, and REVIEW & FINISH. The main content area contains four numbered questions with text input fields and checkboxes. A 'More Info' pop-up window is visible over the first question, providing additional context about the IRS's encouragement of mission statements. The questions are: 1. What is the mission statement of your organization? 2. Describe the: a. Community or constituency served by your organization. b. Geographic area served by your organization. 3. How is your IRS Form 990 made available to the public? 4. How is your organization's IRS Form 1023 or IRS Form 1024 made available to the public?

Welcome back Martin  
Demo Account (EIN:444555666)  
[Introduction](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Logout](#)

Home > Dashboard > Accountability Wizard

**Charities REVIEW Council** **Accountability Wizard**

**PUBLIC INFORMATION**  
[Related Philosophy & Standards](#)

1. What is the mission statement of your organization? If you do not have a [mission statement](#), what is your organization's specific purpose? (Answer will appear in your final review report.)

2. Describe the:  
a. [Community or constituency](#) served by your organization. (Answer will appear in your final review report.)  
b. Geographic area served by your organization. (Answer will appear in your final review report.)

3. How is your [IRS Form 990](#) made available to the public? (Select all that apply)

4. How is your organization's [IRS Form 1023](#) or [IRS Form 1024](#) made available to the public? (Select all that apply)

**More Info**  
The IRS encourages charities to establish and review regularly the organization's mission. A clearly articulated mission, adopted by the board of directors, serves to explain and popularize the charity's purpose and guide its work. It also addresses why the charity exists, what it hopes to accomplish, and what activities it will undertake, where and for whom.

[IRS Guidance on Governance and related Topics - 501\(c\)\(3\) Organizations](#)

More info about [By postage paid mail](#)

# Benefits of a review

- **It creates a foundation for effectiveness**
  - Prompts accountability conversations
  - Access to technical assistance
  - Aligns practices with standards
  - Meet donor expectations



# Benefits of a review

- It creates a foundation for effectiveness
- **You stand out from the crowd**
  - Public review report (online)
  - Listing in *Smart Givers* newsletter (print)
  - Recognition on partner websites (i.e. GiveMN.org)
  - Assurance for Grantmakers and Donors



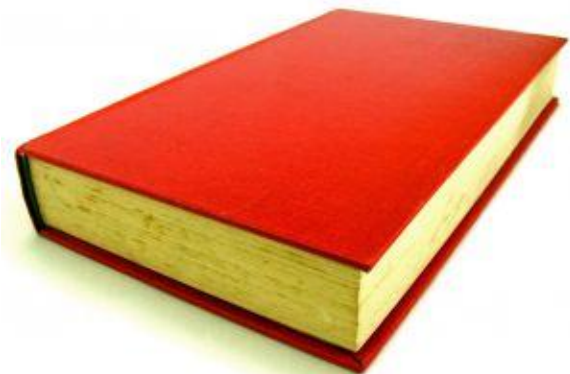
# Benefits of a review

- It creates a foundation for effectiveness
- You stand out from the crowd
- **Earn the Meets Standards seal**
  - Include on all materials



# Benefits of a review

- It creates a foundation for effectiveness
- You stand out from the crowd
- Earn the Meets Standards seal
- **Helps you tell your story**
  - Share the process & the changes you made
  - Highlight the significance of the standards & what it means to meet them
  - Communicate the effect it has on carrying out your mission





# What are other saying?

*"We want our donors to know that we spend their gifts carefully. The Accountability Wizard gave us the opportunity to examine ourselves and our policies and also provides information to givers about our organization."*

- Dorothy, Tree Trust

*"Meeting all the standards has given the organization, from the board on down, a feeling of confidence that we are doing the right thing."*

-Steve, Phyllis Wheatley Community Center

*"It really strengthens the infrastructure of the organizations and the stronger that it gets the more productive and efficient that it is".*

- Focus group participant

# How will you tell your story?



**Give your organization a competitive edge**

# Thank you!

Jenna Forner

Nonprofit Services Coordinator

[jforner@smartgivers.org](mailto:jforner@smartgivers.org)

651-224-7030 x 16

Charities Review Council

[www.smartgivers.org](http://www.smartgivers.org)

@smartgivers