

Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) Start-up Kit

Governance

Governance in the charity sector refers to the overall direction, effectiveness, supervision and accountability of an organisation.

As organisations working for public benefit, charities are accountable to the public. Good governance is important for the public to decide whether to donate or volunteer their services to a charity, and for people to decide whether to use the charity's services. [The Charity Council](http://www.charitycouncil.org.sg/)¹ developed the [Code of Governance](http://www.charitycouncil.org.sg/COG_abt.html)² in 2007, to set out principles and best practices in key areas of governance and management that charities are encouraged to adopt.

NPOs in Singapore are usually led by a Board of Directors. CNPL's [Board Volunteering Guide](http://cnpl.org.sg/content/board-volunteer-npo-guide-101)³ has useful information on the roles and responsibilities of a Board and items an NPO should consider when setting up its Board.

Legal matters

Legal Structure

Legal structure and a set of rules such as constitution have implications on tax benefits, reporting requirements and liabilities). Making the right decisions at the start can save your non-profit organisation considerable time, money, administrative headaches and perhaps even legal difficulties further down the track.

More information is available at the [Singapore NPO Legal Portal](http://docs.lawsociety.org.sg/Legal-info-charities/index.php/9-uncategorised/24-welcome)⁴, which contains a range of legal information specifically for Singapore non-profit organisations. The guide includes a table that gives an [overview comparison between different legal structures](http://docs.lawsociety.org.sg/Legal-info-charities/index.php/getting-started/types-of-legal-structures/a-clg-or-society-or-trust)⁵.

Registration and Applying for Charity Status

Information required for setting up the entity and the registration process differ depending on the legal structure. More information can be found in the [guide here](http://docs.lawsociety.org.sg/Legal-info-charities/index.php/getting-started/setting-up-your-group)⁶.

Registration as a charity in Singapore is a separate process from legal registration as a company/organisation. All charities in Singapore are governed by the [Charities Act](http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/aol/search/display/view.w3p?page=0;query=DocId%3A60ae56e8-9a80-42b4-ab39-52aaba2ec579%20%20Status%3Ainforce%20Depth%3A0;rec=0)⁷. Details of the conditions and application process can be found on the [Charity Portal Website](https://www.charities.gov.sg/charity/charity/viewCharities.do)⁸.

¹ <http://www.charitycouncil.org.sg/>

² http://www.charitycouncil.org.sg/COG_abt.html

³ <http://cnpl.org.sg/content/board-volunteer-npo-guide-101>

⁴ <http://docs.lawsociety.org.sg/Legal-info-charities/index.php/9-uncategorised/24-welcome>

⁵ <http://docs.lawsociety.org.sg/Legal-info-charities/index.php/getting-started/types-of-legal-structures/a-clg-or-society-or-trust>

⁶ <http://docs.lawsociety.org.sg/Legal-info-charities/index.php/getting-started/setting-up-your-group>

⁷ <http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/aol/search/display/view.w3p?page=0;query=DocId%3A60ae56e8-9a80-42b4-ab39-52aaba2ec579%20%20Status%3Ainforce%20Depth%3A0;rec=0>

⁸ <https://www.charities.gov.sg/charity/charity/viewCharities.do>

Resource Mobilization

Volunteerism

Volunteers play significant roles in building communities, reaching out to the less privileged and spreading the message of making a difference. NPOs can tap various platforms for volunteers with different levels of expertise.

Leadership Volunteering	Board or committee members Term based (2-4 years) Skill-based & governance	Board Match by Centre for Non-Profit Leadership (CNPL) www.cnpl.org.sg
Specialist Volunteering	Project-based Individual or teams Skill-based only	The Kind Exchange (TKE) www.thekindexchange.com
Generalist Volunteering	Episodic and recurring No specific skills required	SG Cares by NVPC www.sgcares.org

To help NPOs manage volunteers well, NVPC has developed a Volunteer Management System Guide available for download at [Research and Publications](#)⁹.

Philanthropy

[SG Gives](#)¹⁰, or Singapore Gives, is an online donation portal for donors who seek to give to Singapore-registered charities. Unlike fundraising through flag days, gala dinners or charity auctions, SG Gives allows donations to be made day and night, all week, all year round.

To help NPOs manage their fundraising efforts, NVPC has developed a Donor Management Guide available for download at [Research and Publications](#)⁹.

Finding Space

URA introduced [The Community/Sports Facilities Scheme \(CSFS\)](#)¹¹ to facilitate the co-location of compatible community uses with commercial uses for mutual benefit. NCSS facilitates the allocation and administration of six CSFS sites. More information, including eligibility criteria can be found in [NCSS's webpage](#)¹². NCSS also offers support and advice to member Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs) in their application for [HDB void deck](#)¹³ premises.

The [Tanglin International Centre \(TIC\)](#)¹⁴ is a dedicated cluster of office space for the international non-profit community.

[The HUB Singapore](#)¹⁵ provides a community of like-minded entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs to connect, mingle, and have coffee with in the co-working space.

⁹ <http://www.nvpc.org.sg/knowledge/researchpublications.aspx>

¹⁰ https://www.sggives.org/SGGives_P_Home.aspx

¹¹ <http://www.ura.gov.sg/circulars/text/dc12-01.htm>

¹² <http://www.ncss.org.sg/VWOCorner/csfs.asp>

¹³ http://www.ncss.gov.sg/VWOCorner/application_for_premises.asp

¹⁴ <http://edb.gov.sg/content/dam/edb/en/industries/International%20Non%20Profit%20Organisation/downloads/Tanglin-International-Centre-Brochure.pdf>

¹⁵ <http://singapore.the-hub.net/about/>