

Nonprofit strategic plan

Get Expert's Insights and 10 Real Templates Which Can Follow

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A well-devised strategic plan for a nonprofit organization is a chance to advocate their mission, receive regular funding, and attract society's attention to critical problems.

Strategic planning allows organisations to shape their future priorities and set clear and achievable goals. Moreover, with a well-thought-out plan, a nonprofit company will suffer less in such unexpected and challenging global circumstances as the COVID-19 pandemic.

A good strategic plan answers three questions:

- ▶ Where are we now?
- ▶ Where are we going?
- ▶ How do we get there?

Strategic plan templates help organizations create their strategic plans quickly and effectively. This piece contains 10 examples of strategic plans of different nonprofit organizations to encourage you to shape a unique strategic plan for your nonprofit.

Additionally, discover the main components of any nonprofit strategic plan, get tips for creating an actionable strategic plan template, and find out what tools to use to streamline strategic planning.

Key 10 components of a nonprofit strategic plan

The sections you might want to include in your strategic plan greatly depend

The sections you might want to include in your strategic plan greatly depend on the direction of your nonprofit's operations. However, experts in strategic planning for nonprofits, recommend including the following components:

1. Executive summary

This part of a strategic plan is prepared after all the other steps are completed. An executive summary provides board members, stakeholders, and the organization's staff with details of the company's current position. And briefly outlines where the nonprofit plans to move in the nearest future.

- ▶ **Note:** eough the executive summary is prepared at the end of the strategic planning process, it's recommended to place it at the very beginning of your nonprofit strategic plan.

2. Elevator pitch or company description

The only way for a nonprofit organisation to function and advocate its mission is to get funding. For this, a nonprofit should prepare a detailed company description and properly pitch it. Include information about the organisation's history, charity directions, and main achievements.

- ▶ **Note:** An elevator pitch is only required when presenting a strategic plan to outsiders (potential investors, for instance). If it's inside strategic planning, this component is rather optional.

3. Mission and vision statements

The company's mission statement defines its purpose. In short, it summarizes why the organization exists.

A vision statement explains how exactly the organization will achieve its purpose.

Mission and vision statements can remain the same throughout the company's lifespan. And a strategic plan draws inspiration from mission and vision statements by setting new goals to achieve the main company's purpose.

4. Organization's values

A nonprofit organization draws funds from government and non-government entities. Such institutions are more likely to donate when they clearly understand the company's values and see that they correspond to their mission.

By adding the organization's values to your strategic plan, you show potential contributors that your company believes in what it does and practice those values.

5. Goals and tasks

This section of a strategic plan is devoted to the exact objectives a nonprofit organization wants to achieve in the estimated period.

When setting up goals, it's recommended to follow the SMART rule, in which goals have to be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely. The list

of clearly defined objectives gives all employees an understanding of their upcoming tasks.

6. SWOT analysis

A qualitative SWOT analysis helps organizations to evaluate their current and future potential. It defines the company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. And when knowing your weak sides, you know how to compensate them with your strong sides.

SWOT analyses allow for defining achievable goals.

7. Risk analysis

Strategic planning is impossible without risk analysis. A nonprofit organization should estimate all the possible risks that may occur when achieving estimated objectives.

When listing all the potential risks, a nonprofit organization should define an action plan to avoid them or reduce the damage.

8. Marketing approaches

Even though nonprofit organizations' main purpose is not to make a profit but rather to raise funding, it still requires a well-thought marketing strategy.

A nonprofit organization should think of ways in which it can attract potential contractors and indicate them in a strategic plan.

9. Financial projections

Financial projections are among the main indicators of the company's success or failure when achieving established goals. Financial projections should show the current and forecasted financial state of the organization.

It's essential to clearly define amounts and deadlines.

10. Human resources

This component of a strategic plan shows existing human resources and also indicates additional manpower that is needed to achieve set objectives.

The human resources section indicates who is responsible for what tasks on the way to accomplishing goals, states what training is required for the staff, and defines the organizational hierarchy.

Tips on creating a nonprofit strategic plan template

When working on your nonprofit strategic plan, remember the following:

- ▶ **Be clear and concise.** It's essential to make a strategic plan easy to comprehend for everyone. People should focus on execution, rather than get lost in complex terminology and long sections.
- ▶ **Make it visually attractive.** A strategic plan that is colorful and has lots of visuals attracts more attention and is easier to understand. It's a good idea to opt for PowerPoint or Keynote presentations when

creating a nonprofit strategic plan. Alternatively, you can use board portal software that offers lots of document templates including a strategic plan template, [board meeting agenda template](#), [board meeting minutes template](#), and [board resolution template](#).

- ▶ **Involve stakeholders.** Your nonprofit organization exists to serve stakeholders, that's why it is important to involve them in strategic planning. After all, your objectives for the future might greatly depend on stakeholders' opinions.
- ▶ **Ask questions.** During strategic planning, you should always question the current and future position of your company, as well as sort out how exactly you plan to achieve the desired results.
- ▶ **Measure results.** It's not enough to simply define objectives for the future and start achieving them. It's also essential to make sure you know how to measure results after a period of time. Indicate the way you'll conduct an assessment in a strategic plan.
- ▶ **Be flexible and ready to adjust.** Strategic plans are usually created for 3-5 years, and, naturally, a lot can change during this period. You should reflect about how you will act in case of unpredictable circumstances. Always have at least Plan B and Plan C, and be ready to adjust the nonprofit's objectives or ways of achieving them.

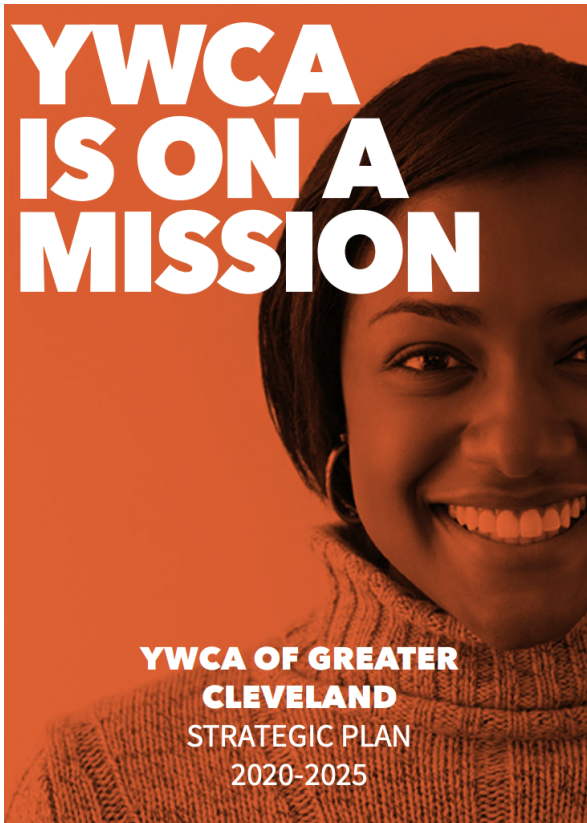
Examples of nonprofit strategic plan templates

Let's review several nonprofit strategic plan templates from organizations with different missions. To see a full version of each strategic plan, just click on its title.

▶ Remember, every strategic plan is different and greatly depends on the company’s purpose and goals they want to achieve. Use these examples for inspiration.

Direction	Templates
Community development and social justice	1. YWCA of Greater Cleveland’s Strategic Plan 2. YMCA DC Strategic Plan 2015 – 2017
Health nonprofits	3. Special Olympics Global Strategic Plan 2021 – 2024 4. Doctors Without Borders / Medecins Sans Frontieres Canada Strategic Plan 2020 – 2023
Animal welfare and environmental nonprofits	5. Nature Conservancy Strategic Roadmap 2022 – 2024 6. Environmental Defense Fund Strategic Plan 2017 – 2025
International aid	7. Feed the Children Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023 8. Americares Strategic Plan 2020 – 2029
Youth-serving and education	9. 4-H Strategic Plan 2017 – 2025 10. Girl Scouts Greater Los Angeles Strategic Plan 2018 – 2020

Now, find out a bit more about each strategic plan’s specifics.



1. YWCA of Greater Cleveland's Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Key elements: Organization's description, the context for strategic planning, mission and vision statements, values, goals and process, and list of participants.

Hallmark: Many visuals, clear and concise structure, glossary.

Link: <https://www.ywcaofcleveland.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/30/Strategic-Plan.pdf>



2. YMCA DC Strategic Plan 2015 – 2017

Key elements: Organisation's description, executive summary, goals, and measurements of success.

Hallmark: Brevity, attractive visuals.

Link: https://www.ymcadc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/YMCA_StrategicPlan-3.pdf

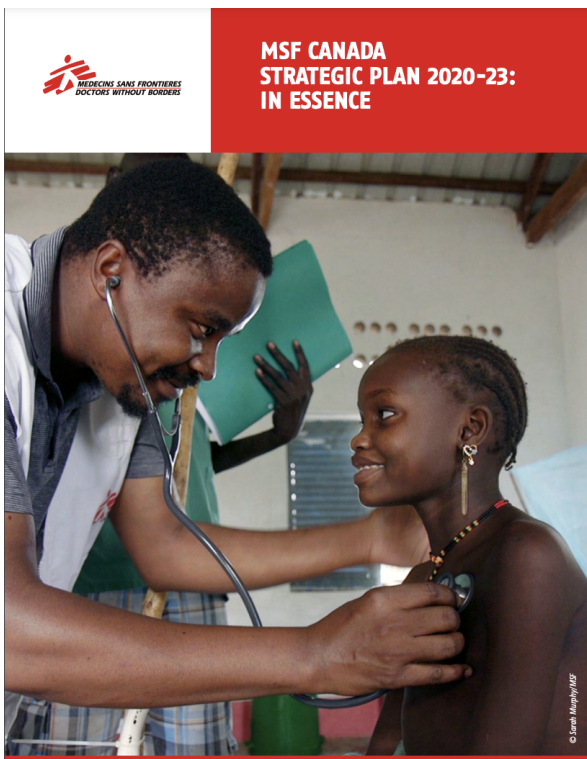


3. Special Olympics Global Strategic Plan 2021 – 2024

Key elements: Mission and vision statements, executive summary, organization’s description, goals, and strategic plans.

Hallmark: Colorful presentation, many visuals, clear and concise structure.

Link: <https://media.specialolympics.org/resources/strategic-plan/Strategic-Plan-November-18-2020-English.pdf>



4. Doctors Without Borders / Medecins Sans Frontieres Canada Strategic Plan 2020 – 2023

Key elements: Mission and vision statements, values, and strategic priorities.

Hallmark: Conciseness, attractive visuals.

Link: https://www.doctorswithoutborders.ca/sites/default/files/msf_canada_strategic_plan_in_essence_2020-2023_english_final.pdf

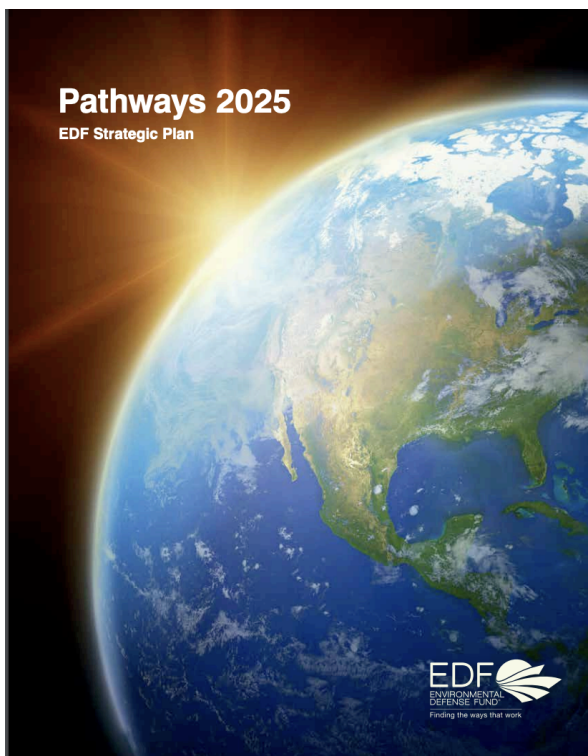


5. Nature Conservancy Strategic Roadmap 2022 – 2024

Key elements: Organization’s description, mission and vision statements, values, executive summary, goals, and objectives.

Hallmark: Clear and concise structure, attractive visuals.

Link: https://www.nature.org/content/dam/tnc/nature/en/documents/PADE-Strategic-Roadmap_FY22-24.pdf



6. Environmental Defense Fund Strategic Plan 2017 – 2025

Key elements: Organization’s description, executive summary, mission and vision statements, and goals for every direction.

Hallmark: Summary, references, volume.

Link: https://www.edf.org/sites/default/files/Pathways_2025-EDF_Strategic_Plan.pdf



7. Feed the Children Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023

Key elements: Executive summary, mission and vision statements, challenges, values, and goals.

Hallmark: Extremely clear and concise format, brevity, attractive visuals.

Link: <https://www.feedthechildren.org/assets/documents/strategy-for-children-2019.pdf>

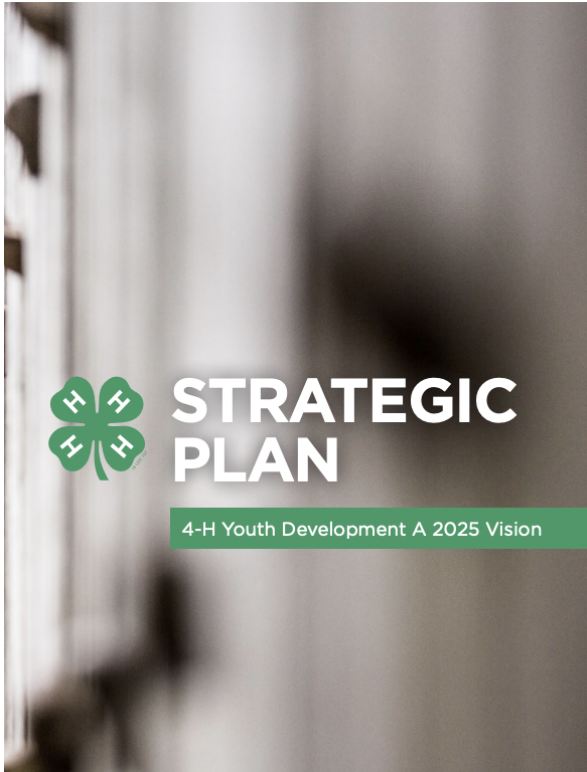


8. Americares Strategic Plan 2020 – 2029

Key elements: Vision and mission statements, values, organization's description, strategic objectives.

Hallmark: Attractive visuals, clear and concise structure.

Link: <https://www.americares.org/wp-content/uploads/americares-fy20-strategic-plan-summary.pdf>



9. 4-H Strategic Plan 2017 – 2025

Key elements: Vision and mission statements, values, goals, and expected outcomes.

Hallmark: Extremely clear and concise structure, attractive visuals.

Link: <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resources/National%204-H%20Strategic%20Plan%202017.pdf>



10. Girl Scouts Greater Los Angeles Strategic Plan 2018 – 2020

Key elements: Extensive list of initiatives and deliverables, strategy owners, and supportive resources.

Hallmark: Attractive visuals, colorful presentation, concise structure.

Link: <https://www.americares.org/wp-content/uploads/americares-fy20-strategic-plan-summary.pdf>

Modern tools for a board secretary

Creating a strategic plan is a daunting and time-consuming process. Corporate secretaries and other parties involved in strategic planning often use dedicated software products to facilitate and automate it. Below are a few examples of tools:

- ▶ **SWOT analysis tools.** There are many software products that allow conducting the SWOT analysis digitally. It enables determining areas for new opportunities and improvement in your organization.
- ▶ **PEST analysis tools.** This is a great addition to the SWOT analysis — the PEST analysis tool helps nonprofits assess how external factors can influence their operations. Those external factors include political, economic, social, and technological.
- ▶ **Secure messenger.** When planning where your nonprofit organization wants to be in a few years, it's essential to discuss a good deal of confidential information with board members, executives, stakeholders, and staff. For this, it's essential to use a secure messaging system rather than usual social messengers or email.
- ▶ **Board portal.** Board management software, or board portal, covers many nonprofits' needs in one place. With a board portal, you can conduct a [paperless board meeting](#) to discuss strategic planning, securely cooperate with board members, and even use strategic plan templates when creating one for your organization.

After a thorough [board portal comparison](#), our experts have chosen [iDeals Board](#) as the TOP board portal solution for the needs of nonprofit and for-profit organizations. The vendor provides a great variety of features that streamline the board's operations, allows a [virtual board meeting](#), secures the confidential data you share within it, and offers many document templates.

Want to learn more about iDeals Board or have a sales, support or billing request, follow the <https://www.idealsvdr.com/contacts/>



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