



STRATEGIC BUDGET PLANNER

Use this checklist to evaluate whether your current tools and systems are helping your nonprofit operate efficiently—or holding you back from growth.

1. Mission & Vision Alignment

- ☐ Are your budget categories directly tied to your strategic goals?
- ☐ Have you prioritized investments in impact, not just operations?

2. Revenue Planning

- ☐ Identify all revenue sources: grants, donations, earned income, contracts, events
- ☐ Diversify income to reduce reliance on a single source
- ☐ Include both restricted and unrestricted funding

3. Core Expense Categories

- ☐ Program delivery and materials
- ☐ Staffing: salaries, benefits, training
- ☐ Technology and infrastructure
- ☐ Fundraising and communications
- ☐ Professional services (legal, accounting, consultants)
- ☐ Administrative and overhead costs

4. Communication & Collaboration Tools

- ☐ Capacity-building investments (e.g., new hires, systems upgrades)
- ☐ Reserves for sustainability (3–6 months of expenses)
- ☐ Pilot projects and innovation initiatives
- ☐ Strategic partnerships or expansion planning

5. Future-Focused Budgeting

- ☐ Are policies, bylaws, and compliance files stored in a centralized, secure location?
- ☐ Can you access what you need quickly for audits, funders, or state/federal agencies?
- ☐ Are outdated versions of documents causing confusion or mistakes?
- ☐ Is there version control or access level tracking on important files?

6. Budget Implementation & Review

- ☐ Set monthly and quarterly review points
- ☐ Track actual vs. projected income and expenses
- ☐ Adjust based on results and funder updates
- ☐ Present budget clearly to board and stakeholders