



# Good Governance Tips for Nonprofits

## *What's in Your Tech Stack?*

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As a nonprofit leader, you're juggling a million things at once. Because your plate is full, it's easy to overlook the digital tools that keep your organization running. But here's the thing: your tech stack might be either your secret weapon or your biggest headache.

### What Exactly Is a Tech Stack?

Think of your tech stack as your organization's digital toolkit. It's every piece of software, app, and online platform you use to get work done. This includes your email system, donor management platform, social media scheduling tools, video conferencing software, project management apps, and even that budgeting spreadsheet you can't live without.

Your tech stack is like the foundation of your house. When it's solid and well-organized, everything else runs smoother. When it's messy or unstable, even simple tasks become frustrating time drains.

### Why Your Tech Stack Matters More Than You Think

For organizations serving girls of color, operational effectiveness isn't just about efficiency, it's about maximizing every dollar and minute to create real impact. Your tech stack directly affects how much time your team spends on administrative tasks versus focusing on the young people you serve.

A thoughtful tech stack helps you work smarter, not harder. It can automate routine tasks, improve communication with families and community partners, and give you better insights into your programs' effectiveness. On the flip side, a chaotic tech stack can eat up precious resources and create unnecessary stress for your already stretched team.

### How Many Apps Are Too Many?

Most small nonprofits use between 15 and 25 different digital tools. While there's no magic number, the key is intentionality. Each tool should serve a clear purpose and integrate well with your other systems.

Common categories in nonprofit tech stacks include donor management systems, email marketing platforms, accounting software, project management tools, social media schedulers, video conferencing platforms, and cloud storage solutions.

## Watch Out for These Red Flags

**App Redundancy:** Many tools are packed to the gills with features these days. As a result, you may not be aware of the full capabilities of each tool you use and are likely paying for redundant features. This overlap wastes money and confuses your team about which tool to use when.

**Mystery Apps:** If someone on your team left and you're not sure what a particular subscription does, that's a problem. Every tool should have a clear owner and purpose.

**Subscription Creep:** Those \$10 monthly subscriptions add up fast. What started as a temporary solution might now be a permanent expense that's straining your budget.

## How to Take Stock of Your Tech Stack

Start with a simple audit. Create a spreadsheet listing every digital tool your organization uses, including who manages it, what it costs monthly or annually, and what specific function it serves. Don't forget about free tools – they count too.

Next, map out your workflows. How does information flow from one tool to another? Where do you find yourself manually copying and pasting data? These friction points are opportunities for improvement.

## Streamlining for Success

Once you have a clear picture, look for consolidation opportunities. Many platforms offer multiple features – your email marketing tool might also handle basic surveys, or your donor management system might include event planning features you haven't explored.

Consider integration possibilities. Tools that connect reduce manual work and data entry errors. Many platforms now offer direct integrations or work well with automation tools like Zapier.

Finally, don't be afraid to say goodbye to tools that aren't earning their keep. If you're paying for something that gets used once a quarter, it might be time to find a different solution.

## Moving Forward Thoughtfully

Your tech stack should evolve with your organization. Schedule regular check-ins to assess what's working and what isn't. Involve your whole team in these conversations. They're the ones using these tools daily and often have the best insights about what would make their work easier.

Remember, the goal isn't to have the fanciest tools or the most comprehensive setup. It's to have a thoughtful collection of digital resources that amplifies your impact and supports your mission.