

SECOND EDITION

Includes impacts of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act

The Best Charities for YOU

*A Practical Guide to
Becoming the Only Expert Needed
in Your Charitable Giving*



Define your own bang for your charitable buck

A SAVVY DONORS GUIDE

By Edward W. Long, JD

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What's a Strong Charity?

A **strong charity** is one that meets each of the following nine prerequisites. For background on each see the referenced **Section in this guide**.



1. A 501(c)(3) organization. (see Section 13)
2. Files its Form 990 or Form 990-EZ timely. (Section 20)
3. Has a clearly defined mission and supporting goals. (Section 27)
4. Has a clear plan for meeting its mission and goals. (Section 27)
5. Measures and tracks the results of its programs. (Section 27)
6. Collaborates with other organizations working on the same causes and challenges. (Section 27)
7. Responds readily and openly to requests for information. (Section 37)
8. Spends between 60% and 80% on programs (or between 50% and 80% with a satisfactory explanation). (Section 22)
9. Has a reserve ratio between 0.5 and 2.0 (or between 0.5 and up to 5.0 with a satisfactory explanation). (Section 26)

Feel free to add your own prerequisites, drawing from your Screen Tests (Section 33) or other experience. Evaluate charities using the accompanying checklist.



Go to thebestcharitiesforyou.com for a link to my blank checklist you can use . . .

Become The Only Expert Needed In Your Charitable Giving

Every year, “experts,” rating systems, media outlets, even grocery stores push *their* favorite charities.
But that’s their agenda, not yours.

Stop donating based on someone else’s agenda. If you want to **do good well**, you need an approach that serves **you** — not them.

- **Stop guessing** and start knowing whether the charity is strong and effective.
- **Be confident** that your generosity is funding strong, effective work that **you care about most**.
- **Ignore the noise** of unsolicited advice, mailers and checkout-counter guilt.

Inside, You’ll Discover How To:

- ✓ **Define Your Bang:** Develop your own personal metrics for charitable success.
- ✓ **Assess Like an Insider:** Use simple, rigorous methods to check a charity’s financial health (before you write the check).
- ✓ **Take Control:** Move beyond “expert” lists and ratings, and fund strong charities dedicated to your unique vision.
- ✓ **Master Your Giving:** Achieve the peace of mind that comes from knowing that you are the only expert needed.

Have absolute clarity and confidence about every dollar you give. The only expert who truly matters is you.

Ed Long brings 50+ years of expertise in finance, law, and nonprofit management. As a nonprofit founder and evaluator, Ed understands both sides of the charitable equation. He wrote this guide to empower you — the only expert who matters — to define and achieve your unique vision for making the world better.

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