

How to Create a Non-University Bank Account

For Registered and Affiliated Student Organizations

Setting up a bank account for your Recognized Student Organization (RSO) is a smart move. A bank account allows payments to be directed to your RSO instead of an individual, avoiding financial mismanagement and giving a professional appearance to potential donors.

RSOs under the Registered and Affiliated classifications are not officially recognized as part of the University of Utah, meaning they cannot conduct financial transactions through a University bank account or use the University's tax ID number. These RSOs are recommended to establish a non-university bank account in order to conduct financial transactions.

To create a non-university bank account, you will need:

- Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- Doing Business As (DBA) certificate (also known as fictitious or trade name certificate)
- Government-issued ID of the person(s) opening the account
- Funds for the initial deposit
- Constitution/bylaws of your RSO

Follow the steps below to create a non-university bank account for your Registered or Affiliated RSO:

1. Obtain a **DBA certificate** under your RSO's name through the [Utah Division of Commerce](#). RSOs are recommended to file a DBA as a **general partnership**.
2. Complete an "**SS-4**" **application** through the [Internal Revenue Service \(IRS\)](#) to obtain an **EIN**.
 - a. In "Box 9a" of the form, for the type of entity, select "other nonprofit organization" and specify the type of club in the area provided.
 - b. In "Box 16," which indicates the principal activity of your business, select "other".
3. Take the following information to a bank of your choosing:
 - a. Copy of your RSO's DBA certificate.
 - b. Copy of your RSO's EIN.
 - c. Personal identification (driver's license, passport, etc.)
 - d. Funds for the initial opening deposit (contact the bank to inquire about opening deposit minimums).
4. Complete the necessary paperwork for your RSO's bank account. Complete a **signature card** with the names and signatures of all officers authorized to conduct financial transactions on behalf of the RSO (such as the treasurer, president, vice-president, or secretary).

How to Incorporate and Obtain Nonprofit Status

For RSOs whose annual income exceeds \$5,000

To incorporate your RSO, you will need:

- Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- Doing Business As (DBA) certificate (also known as fictitious or trade name certificate)
- Government-issued ID of the person(s) opening the account
- Funds for the initial deposit
- Constitution/bylaws of your RSO

Follow the steps below to incorporate your RSO:

1. RSOs must keep their gross receipts under \$5,000 per year or must **incorporate and apply to the IRS for [501\(c\)\(3\) status](#)**. If your anticipated annual income is larger than \$5,000, you are recommended to [incorporate your RSO](#).
2. Draft bylaws for your organization. These documents will lay out the structure and purpose of the group, including operating procedures, membership types, and officer titles and duties.
3. Using the bylaws, file Articles of Incorporation with a secretary of state. A modest fee usually is associated with this application. The state will respond to establish your organization as an incorporated entity.
4. Obtain a new EIN from the IRS using the name that appears on your DBA certificate. Be sure to fill in the purpose of your organization as nonprofit.
5. Use your new EIN to open a new bank account specifically for your incorporated nonprofit. You can then begin to pursue nonprofit status with the IRS, usually under the guidance of a nonprofit lawyer.

*Note 1. **Do not** file for nonprofit status with the IRS **until you have established a checking account record**. Showing your good record-keeping skills will encourage your approval.*

*Note 2. **Two-signature checks** for all payments are **strongly recommended**.*

*Note 3. **Obtaining debit/credit cards** tied to your non-university account is **strongly discouraged**.*

*Note 4. Organizations generating less than \$5,000 in annual revenue **have tax-exempt status without filing for 501(c)(3) status**.*

*Note 5. **Incorporated nonprofits are not tax-exempt and must pay annual income tax in the state of Utah**. Refer to this [guideline for paying taxes as a small business](#).*