CSF'S GUIDE TO CANDID REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICANTS OF YOUTH-LED FUNDING

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BACKGROUND

Beginning in 2025, CSF is requiring applicants with 501(c)(3) nonprofit status to obtain a current (2026) Gold Seal of Transparency on **Candid**. Applicants must complete these requirements to submit a proposal for funding to CSF.[1] If awarded a contract, funded partners are required to maintain a current Gold Seal of Transparency throughout the term of the contract to remain in good standing.

BRONZE SEAL

- ☐ Organization: About Us
- ☐ Organization: Contact Information

SILVER SEAL

- ☐ Organization: What We Do

GOLD SEAL

- ☐ People: Board of Directors
- ☐ People: Officers, directors, trustees, key employees
- ☐ People: Highest paid employees
- ☐ Financials: 990/990T/990N
- ☐ Financials: Most recent audit or financial statements
- ☐ Demographics: Leadership*

CSF'S CANDID REQUIREMENTS FOR NONPROFITS

If the applicant or funded partner is working with a fiscal agent or fiscal sponsor, **the nonprofit organization serving as fiscal agent or fiscal sponsor must earn the 2026 Gold Seal of Transparency** prior to the applicant submitting a proposal to CSF.

This document provides step-by-step instructions on completing the Candid requirements. Additionally, Candid provides a variety of articles, videos, templates, and live webinars.

[1] Governmental entities, applicants part of a large hospital or healthcare system, and applicants housed within a university system or higher education institution may be unable to claim a profile and complete requirements in Candid. In this case, Candid requirement will be waived, but these entities may be asked to submit additional information or documentation following proposal submission.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FROM CANDID

Helpful documents and links from Candid

1. **2026 Seals of Transparency Guide**
2. **Collecting and Sharing Demographic Data**
3. **Demographic Survey Templates**
4. **Demographic Survey Email Templates**

Helpful Videos to Get Started

1. **Candid Seals of Transparency Training** | Recorded by Candid for CSF Funding Applicants
2. **Claiming your Candid Profile in 3 Steps**
3. **Unlock Benefits with a Candid Seal of Transparency**
4. **Practical Tips on Adding Demographics data to your Candid Profile**
5. **Introduction to Foundation Directory** | Free for nonprofits with budgets under $1 million who earn a Gold Seal of Transparency

For assistance claiming and updating your organization's Candid profile contact **Support@candid.org**. Please note, Candid Customer Support Team is not available 24/7, and generally responds within 24-72 hours; please plan accordingly.

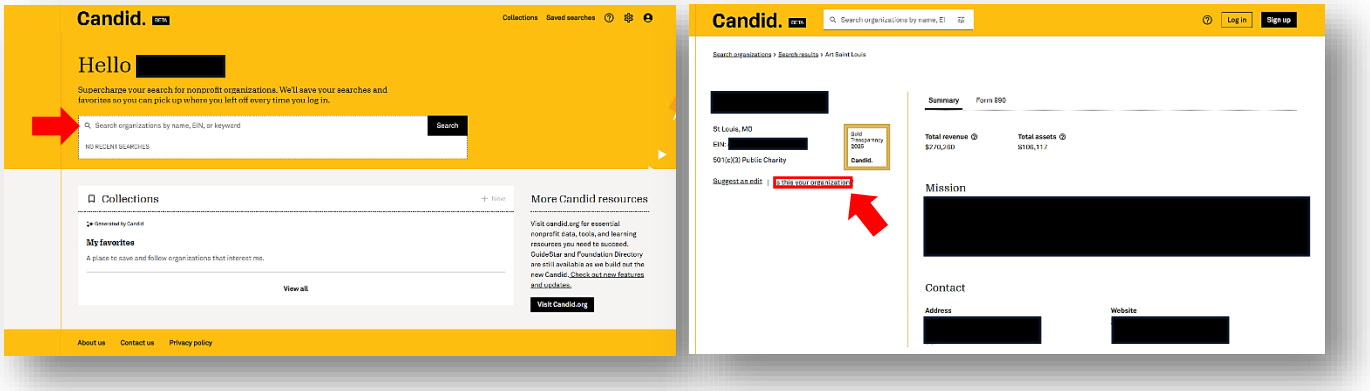
CREATE A USER ACCOUNT

Visit app.Candid.org/registration and create a free user account on Candid.

When entering your user account details, use your email address associated with your non-profit organization to expediate the verification process of your user account in the next step. Review and agree to the terms and conditions, and click **Sign Up**.

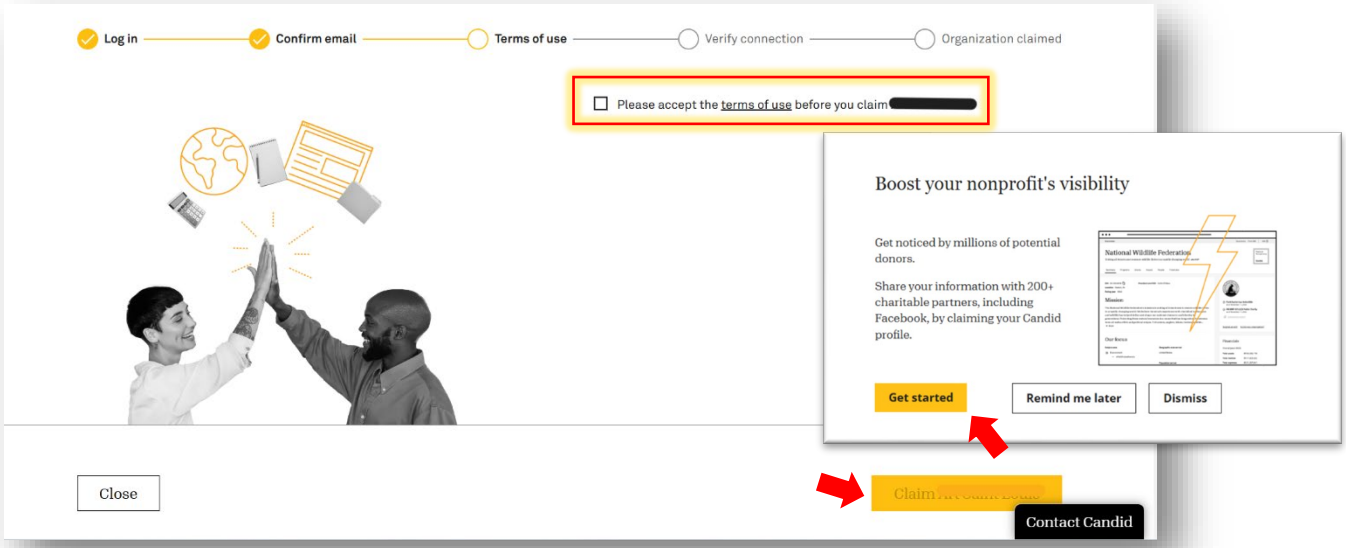
CLAIM YOUR ORGANIZATION'S CANDID PROFILE

Once you've successfully registered your user account and are logged in, enter your organization's legal name or EIN in the search bar. Select the correct organization profile from the results that match your organization's details.



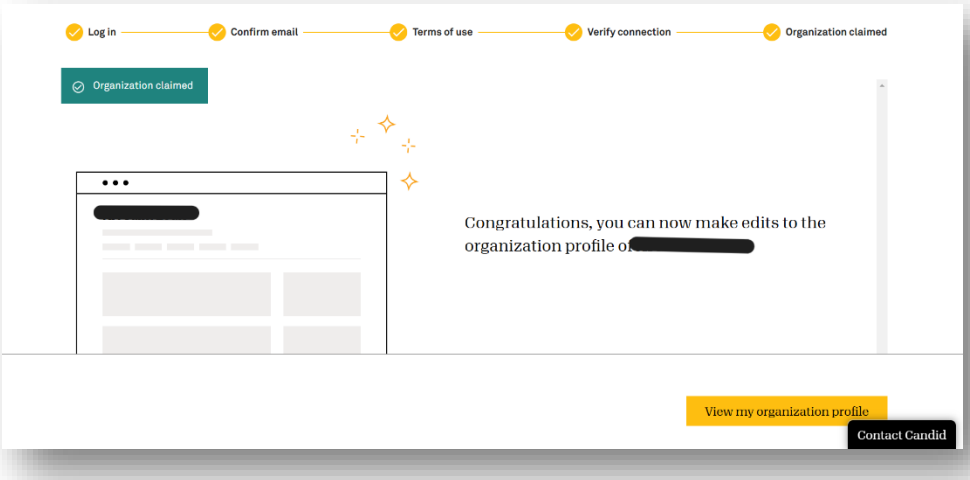
When you've selected the correct organization from the search results and you are on the organization's profile page, click **Is this your organization?**

A new page with a pop-up window will load encouraging you to **Boost your nonprofit's visibility**. In the pop-up window, select **Get Started**. Review and accept the terms of use.



To verify your identity, Candid will send an email to the address associated with your user account; click on the link in the email to validate your access to organization's profile in Candid. The time it takes to receive verification will be quicker if you use an email address associated with the nonprofit organization's web domain when registering your user account.

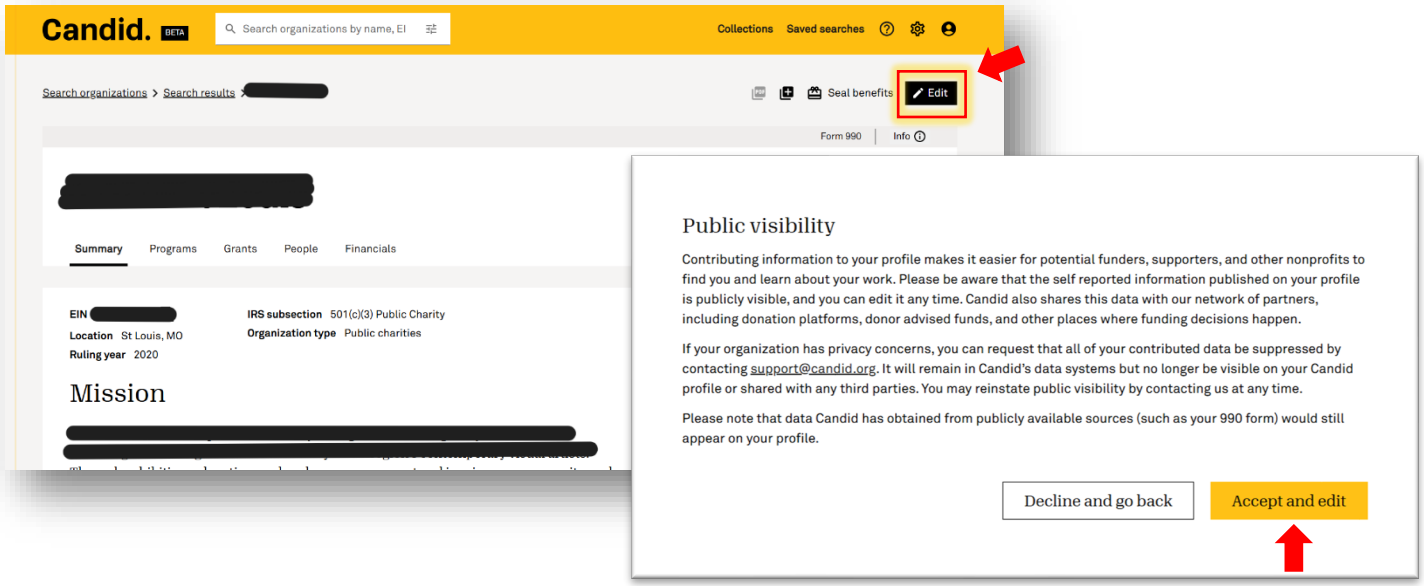
For example, if registering a user account as a member of CSF, staff would want to use an email address associated with St. Louis County Children's Service Fund such as xxxxx@stlouiscountymo.gov



You have successfully claimed your organization's profile on Candid! Now you can upload information about your organization on and earn your Gold Seal of Transparency!

EDIT YOUR CANDID PROFILE

From your organization's profile you can click the "**Edit**" button in the righthand corner to update and add information about your organization. Candid will remind you that information you post on Candid is publicly visible. To continue, click "**Agree and edit**".



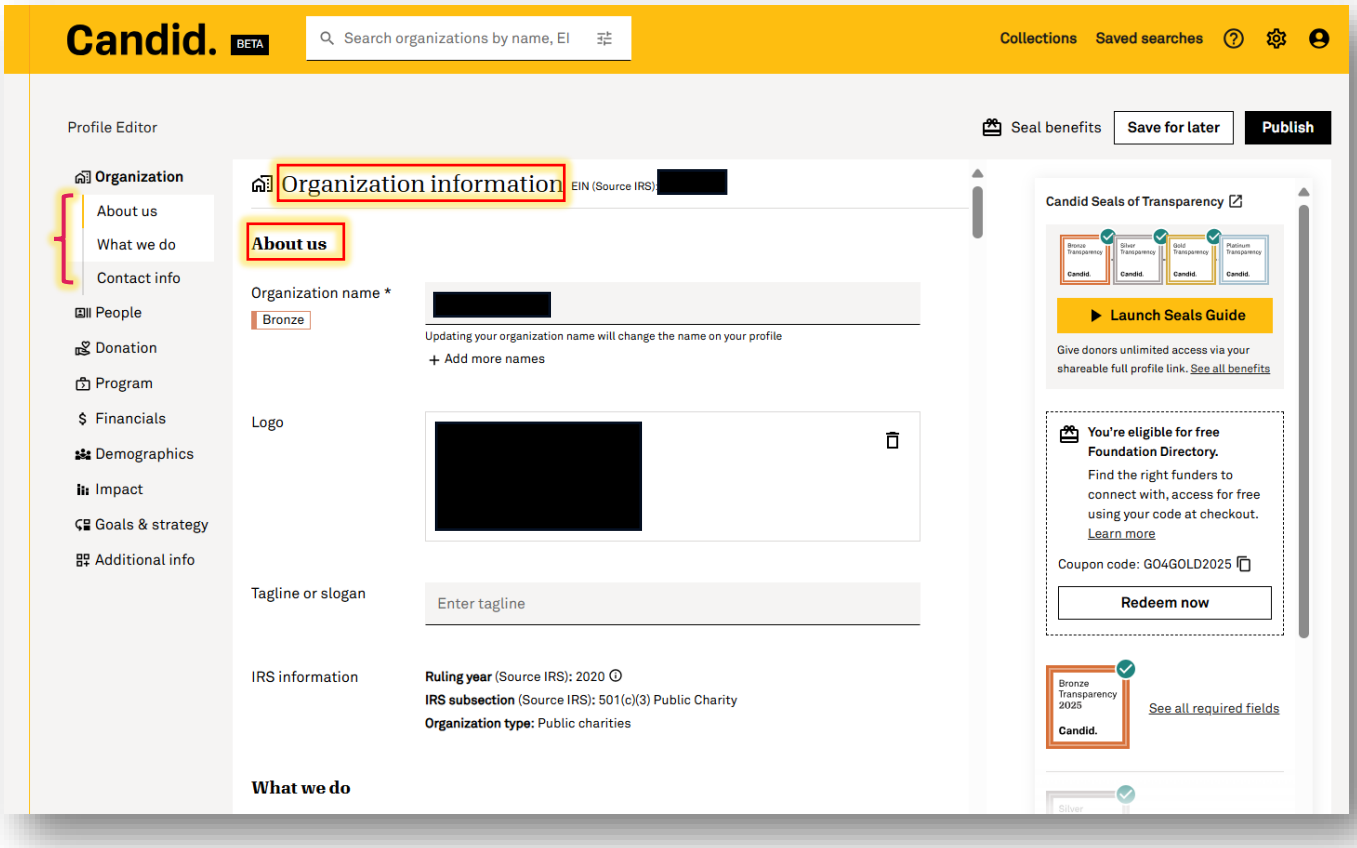
The Candid Seals of Transparency follow a sequential, tiered progression, meaning you must complete the information at the Bronze and Silver levels before you can earn a Gold Seal.

To be eligible for CSF funding, nonprofit organizations and fiscal partners must obtain the Gold Seal of Transparency prior to submitting a proposal.

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

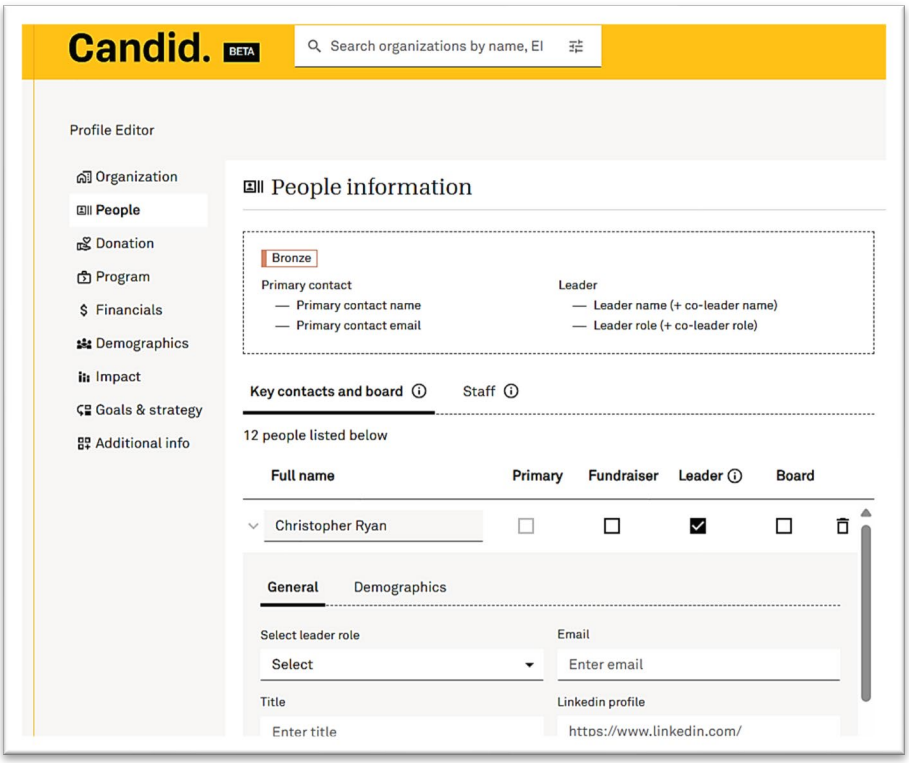
The first section to be completed includes basic information about the organization applying for funding from CSF. There are three elements of this section where fields must be completed, though CSF encourages organizations to share as much information in this section as possible to help others learn about your organization. The fields that are required to earn a Seal of Transparency are noted. The following fields must be completed in the Organization information section:

1. About us: Organization name, Logo
2. What we do: Mission statement, Subject area, Population served
3. Contact info: Mailing address, Website



PEOPLE

In this next section, you will list key **People** from your organization, including **Board** members and a key **Leader** (up to two) of your organization. You will also indicate a **Primary contact** (minimally a name and email address) who the public would reach out to if they want to learn more about your organization after viewing your organization's public Candid profile.



Indicate the role each of the People plays by clicking on the check box next their name in the matrix. Enter additional information about each of the People you list by clicking on the arrow next to each of their names.

For a Gold Seal, you are required to enter Demographic data about the Leader of your organization.

DONATIONS

Indicating if your organization accepts donations is a required component to earn your Seal of Transparency. You can choose to share information about where and how the public can donate to your organization or you can choose not to accept donations.

PROGRAMS

Sharing basic information about the Programs your organization provides is a required component to earn your Seal of Transparency. The minimum fields you must complete in this section include:

1. Program name
2. Program description
3. Program geographic area served

FINANCIALS

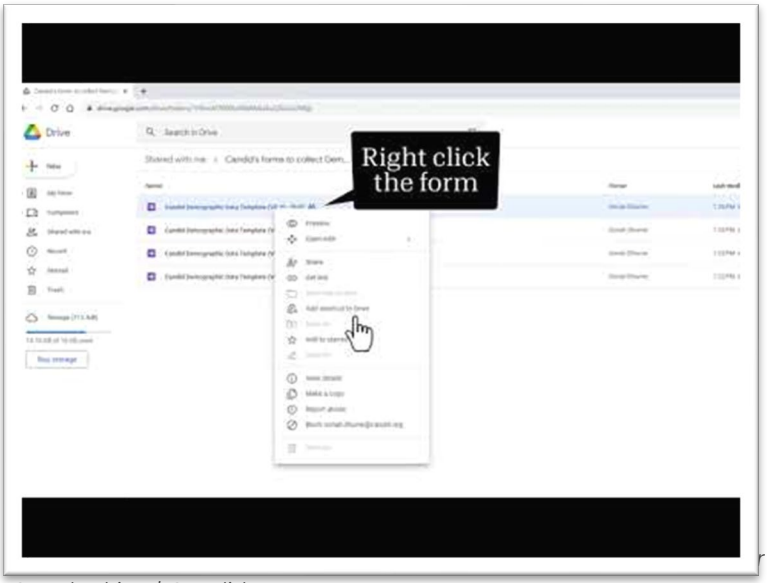
Uploading the organization's most recent **Audited financial statement** *(completed within last 12 months)* and/or the organization's **Form 990 / Form 990-EZ / Form 990-PF / Form 990-N** *(completed within last 12 months)* is a required component to earn your Gold Seal of Transparency; it is also a basic eligibility requirement for CSF funding.

DEMOGRAPHICS

This section is most likely to include new information your organization will need to collect if you have not already. To complete the required fields, you will survey your organization's leadership. Fortunately, Candid has provided **excellent resources** to assist organizations in this data collection process, including Google survey templates and email introductions for you to save, edit, and share with your stakeholders to collect demographic information for your organization.

Access the **Survey Templates** on Google drive.

Step 1. Save a copy of each survey template to your Google Drive.



Google drive. | Candid

Step 2: Update the survey(s) for your organization's use.

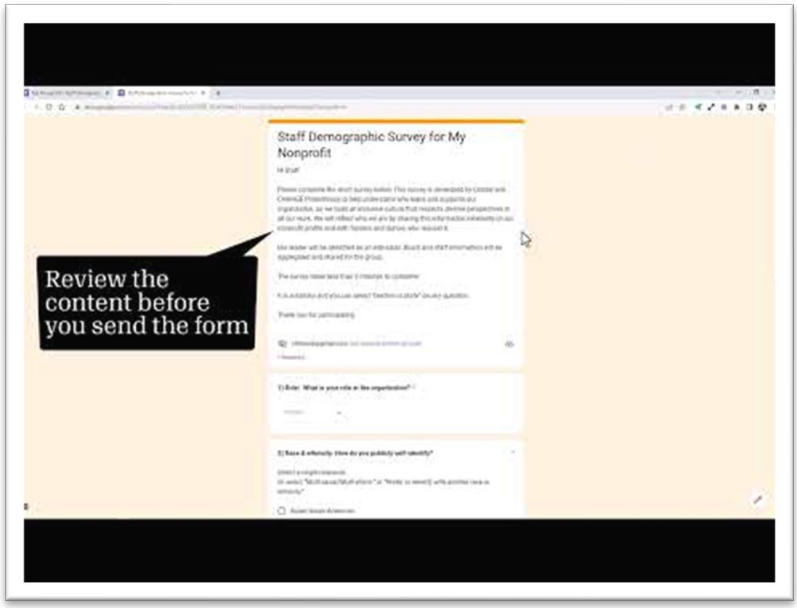


Figure 2 Demo: Update your copy of the survey templates with your organization's name and information. | Candid

Open your copy of the survey template(s) in your Google drive. Edit the survey title and introduction text to reflect your organization's name and identity. **Do not edit** the survey questions or responses. Repeat this editing step for each of the survey templates.

Step 3: Send the surveys to your stakeholders.

In addition to the survey templates, Candid also provides **email templates** for contacting your

stakeholders to collect their responses. You can use these email templates or create your own message to introduce Organizational Demographics from Candid to your team.

If you choose to create your own message, remember to explain **why** you are requesting the information, **what** their options for responding are, **when** the deadline is for completing the survey, and **how** it will be shared.

Once you have created your email message, insert the correct hyperlinks and the date of the deadline you are setting for completion *(give yourself enough time to review the survey responses and enter the data in Candid)*, include the addresses of the recipients you will collect demographic data from, and send.

Step 4: Enter your survey results in Candid.

When your survey results are in, access the spreadsheet with the survey results in your Google drive, and enter the data in your Candid profile.

Greetings colleagues,

I'm writing to ask that you complete the following short demographic survey by [*insert deadline*]: [*insert survey url*] **WHEN**

To demonstrate our own organization's commitment to equity and to building an inclusive culture that values diverse perspectives in our work, we are using this survey, which was developed by Candid and CHANGE Philanthropy to help understand who leads and supports our organization. **WHY**

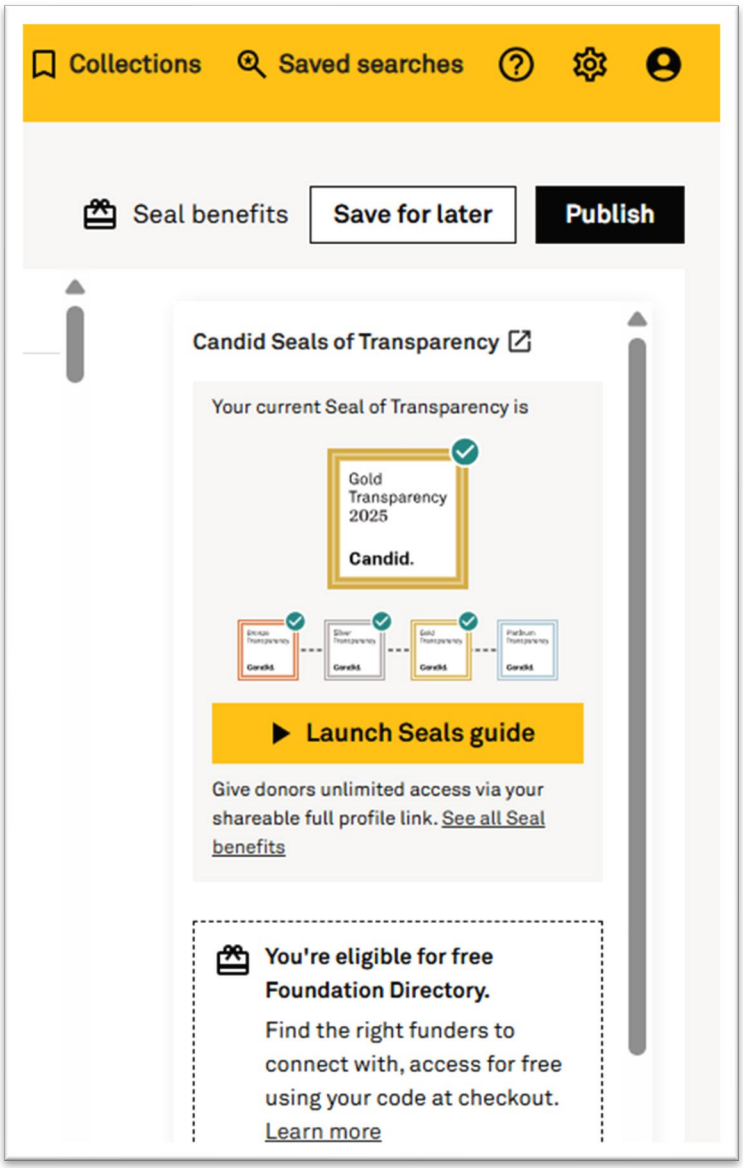
We will be transparent about the progress we are making by sharing this information externally on our nonprofit profile and with funders and donors who request it. Our leader will be identified as an individual. Board and staff data will display in aggregate form providing a snapshot of the group. **HOW**

The survey takes less than 5 minutes to complete. It is voluntary and you can select "Decline to state" on any question. Thank you for participating. **WHAT**

[*Your name/title*]

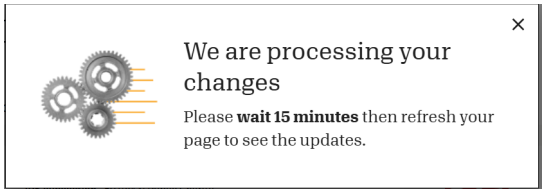
REVIEW AND PUBLISH YOUR PROFILE

Congratulations, now you completed all of the required components to earn your 2025 Gold Seal of Transparency! The last step is to review your information and publish your profile.



In the upper right hand corner of your internet browser window, below your user account and settings icons, click on “Publish”.

It may take a few minutes for Candid load the updates to your profile.



After a few moments, refresh the page or search your organization in the ribbon’s Search bar. You will know your organization’s profile has completed loading and the data is fully published when you see the Gold Seal icon next to the organization’s name.