

IRE 2019 - Tracking dark money tips

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The following resources are among the best places to find information on dark money in politics.

Issue One's "[Dark Money Illuminated](#)" project, with [profiles](#) of the largest dark money groups and a [searchable, sortable, online database](#) featuring more than 400 unique dark money donors. [Methodology](#).

OpenSecrets.org allows you to search data on [dark money spenders](#) and [over 4.9 million ad records](#).

Business records - for LLCs, nonprofits and corporations

- Charitable solicitation records - NC, FL, NY, CA, WV (among others) require lots of information.
- State-level incorporation documents - annual reports often list directors and addresses.
- IRS Form 1023/Form 1024 applications for tax-exempt status

IRS Form 990s

- [IRS exempt-organization business master file](#) can help you ID the EIN of a dark money group
- [IRS tax exempt organization search](#)
- [ProPublica's Nonprofit Explorer](#)
- [Foundation Center/Guidestar.org](#)
- [CitizenAudit.org](#)
- [OpenSecrets.org Nonprofit Data Search](#)
- Pro tip: Request 990s from the organization itself and ask for a Schedule B, which shows amounts each donor gave (while redacting the donors' names).
- List of [past nonprofit dark money donor organizations and when their next Form 990s are due](#)

Ways to find nonprofits' receipts and grants (which are reported on Schedule I of IRS Form 990s)

- [ProPublica's Nonprofit Explorer](#)
- [CitizenAudit.org](#) - you can search for any word, phrase, or number across multiple Form 990s
- [OpenSecrets.org Nonprofit Data Search](#)
- [Center for Public Integrity's Nonprofit Network search tool](#)

Other good ways to look for money flowing into dark money groups

- LD-203 filings for contributions from lobbyists ([House version search](#) / [Senate version search](#))
- [LM-2 filings](#) by labor unions with Dept. of Labor - search "payer/payee" field
- [FEC expenditure data](#) - search "recipient name" field
- Voluntary corporate disclosures (often posted annually on their websites)
 - [Center for Political Accountability-Zicklin Index](#) - tracks corporate disclosure policies
 - CPA's [TrackYourCompany.org](#) search tool - search by "recipient" for 2015-2017
 - Center for Public Integrity's [database of 2012 corporate disclosures](#)

Other good ways to look for money flowing out of dark money groups

- OpenSecrets.org's AdData.org for [FCC political ad file data](#) - search any word or phrase
- Online political ad resources from [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Google](#)
- ProPublica's [archive of political ads on Facebook](#)
- [Spending reported to the FEC](#) (also tracked by [OpenSecrets.org](#) and [ProPublica's itemizer tool](#))