

Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity (CCGSD) Organization Overview

Vision

A world without discrimination

A world in which people can shape the decisions that impact their lives, enjoy freedoms, and navigate an equal world free of violence.

CCGSD will be a national force and partner of choice within the movement to end discrimination.

Mission

To empower gender and sexually diverse communities through education, research, and advocacy.

Guided by the goals of the communities in which we work, we undertake our mission with both empathy and compassion since it is what the communities we serve deserve.

Values Statements

CCGSD has committed to re-centering the communities in which we work. In our commitment to our diverse communities, we have deeply examined our individual and collective values and how to reflect these values in our work. We hold many values in esteem, but the Principles of Social Justice are the interrelated values at our core.

Core Values:

- **Equity:** We work to identify and eliminate societal barriers that prevent marginalized and oppressed individuals, peoples and communities from participating fully in society;

- **Access:** We are committed to ensuring that all people and communities have access to rights-based goods and services: education, healthcare, shelter, and food, among others;
- **Rights:** We believe in and protect the civil, political, economic, cultural, and social rights of all people and communities.
- **Participation for All:** We firmly declare that when rights-based or accessibility-related decisions will affect a person's life, or a community's well-being, that person or community needs to be included as a determining factor in the decision-making process.

In order to fulfil our Vision and Mission, all CCGSD's work is executed in accordance with five basic Principles.

Diversity is the cornerstone of the 2SLGBTQIA+ movements. We acknowledge and celebrate diversity in our communities and in our staff, volunteers and partners. One size cannot fit us all and we know that we cannot possibly understand the unique experiences of every person in our communities. But diversity is our strength and through finding commonalities in our differences we can work for social justice for all of us in this beautifully diverse world.

Intersectional Feminism: All feminism, to be socially just, must be intersectional. Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw, who coined the term, said intersectionality "is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects." Developed by Dr. Crenshaw within critical race theory, intersectionality is now widely used in various contexts in relation to social justice. We apply this lens to our work and our organization to seek out the intersections of power and the intersections of oppression experienced by gender and sexually diverse communities. We do so from a feminist perspective that acknowledges the cisheteropatriarchal oppression stemming from pervasive, systemic misogyny, the heritage of white superiority, and colonialism. We apply this intersectional and feminist lens to ensure that our work is intentionally anti-racist, decolonizing, class equitable, anti-ableist and gender and sexually diverse within and outside of our communities.

Education: For CCGSD, education is the continuous process of knowledge exchange between two or more people, and the foundation of social justice and a world without discrimination. We work not only to educate, but to learn. We exchange, we do not teach. Education is advocacy: it is widespread and helps us all learn about each other and our unique experiences of privilege and oppression so that we can build an equitable, accessible, participatory and rights-based world without discrimination together.

Empathy and Compassion: We lead with empathy and compassion, kindness and understanding. We believe that we can change the world through mutual understanding, knowledge exchange and a willingness to truly hear each other in our diverse communities. We extend the benefit of the doubt to each other and to those within and outside of our communities in an effort to understand actions and perspectives that we may not agree with or share. We believe that the acceptance of and ability to find similarity through our differences begins with empathy and compassion.

Open Communication and Integrity: Participation and inclusion require truthful and honest information and the expectation of confidentiality. We focus on openness, honesty and integrity. At the same time, we respect the rights of privacy of our staff, volunteers, participants, members, and members of the gender and sexually diverse communities. Both internally and externally, if information can be shared, it will be. We prioritize internal processes that are inclusive of staff and build organizational structures that welcome and respond to community feedback. We work to find the balance between safer spaces and openness to reach the goals of social justice: access, participation, rights and equity.

General Responsibilities of the Board of Directors

The Board is responsible for establishing the vision, mission, values, principles and strategic plan of CCGSD, and for ensuring CCGSD has adequate resources (fiscal and human) to fulfill this role. It is also responsible for monitoring and evaluating the progress made by CCGSD towards achieving CCGSD's vision, mission, values, principles and strategic plan, and for taking corrective action when necessary. The Board of Directors is also responsible for ensuring CCGSD complies with all legislation and regulations related to its operations and that its fiscal and human resources are employed and managed in the most effective manner possible.

In order to maintain good governance practices and to achieve this effectiveness the Board will:

1. Include evaluation components for CCGSD programs and activities that engage staff and communities about the needs the organization is meeting and its effectiveness in meeting these needs;
2. Invite and be open to dialogue with staff, management and the communities CCGSD serves to ensure that its activities are meeting their needs;

3. Ensure that policies, priorities and strategies are developed jointly with stakeholders and community members who are directly affected, as well as staff and Board, by forming committees and conducting public consultations and town halls to actively engage the community
4. Engage in an ongoing dialogue with the Executive Director with regard to the power sharing arrangements required to meet the evolving services and needs of CCGSD; and
5. Assess and monitor its own work and address and resolve any urgent matters.

The Executive Director is the only employee of the Board and has the authority and autonomy to organize and manage the resources and work of the organization within the limits established by the Board of Directors. This position is responsible for ensuring that the financial and human resource assets of CCGSD are protected and that the human resources effectively meet the demands placed on CCGSD. The Executive Director has a key reporting role and communicates the operational issues to the Board on a monthly basis. It is essential that the Executive Director accurately monitors changes in the internal and external operating environment and develops potential remedies and innovations that address these changing conditions. Specific Duties of the members and officers of the Board of Directors and the Executive Director are outlined in the respective job descriptions.

Summary of the Essential Tasks of the Board

1. The Board determines the Vision, Mission, Values, and Principles of the organization.
2. The Board works with the Executive Director to ensure that the services provided by the CCGSD reflect its vision, mission, values, and principles.
3. The Board approves, directs and monitors the strategic priorities of the organization.
4. The Board is responsible for the overall financial health of the organization and ensures that finances are handled responsibly.
5. The Board ensures that the CCGSD meets all its legal obligations.
6. The Board works with the Executive Director to ensure the CCGSD has appropriate human resources to fulfill its role.
7. The Board hires and recruits new Directors.
8. The Board represents the organization and its programs positively to key stakeholders.
9. The Board ensures regular performance and program review and evaluation of the Executive Director.
10. The Board, together with the Executive Director, mediates, anticipates, mitigates, and manages potential conflict and risk.

Director Functions

Directors are collectively responsible for the governance and oversight of CCGSD. More specifically, the role of Director includes: determining and monitoring the vision, mission, values and principles of CCGSD; ensuring services satisfy the vision, mission, values and principles of CCGSD; approving and monitoring CCGSD's strategic direction; ensuring the finances of CCGSD are handled responsibly; ensuring CCGSD meets all of its legal obligations; recruiting new Directors; nominating potential new Directors at the Annual General Meeting; overseeing the human resources of the Executive Director and communicating regularly with the Executive Director. In addition to these responsibilities, in accordance with the policy statement and the acknowledgement of issues arising from the not-for-profit system, Directors are responsible for finding new and innovative ways to ensure staff participation, inclusion and discussion related to Board functions.

Specific Responsibilities

1. Understand and demonstrate a commitment to the organization's vision, mission, values and principles
2. Stay up to date with issues and trends that affect the organization
3. Prepare for meetings by reading agendas, minutes, resolutions, reports, and other documentation required to actively participate in them
4. Attend meetings regularly
5. Contribute skills and knowledge by participating actively in meetings, committee work, and other ways
6. Make inquiries when clarification or more information is needed
7. Understand and monitor the organization's financial affairs
8. Avoid any potential conflicts of interest
9. Understand and maintain confidentiality
10. Ensure the organization is complying with all legal and regulatory requirements
11. Participate in Board Committees as required
12. Appoint, evaluate and terminate the Executive Director as required
13. Oversee the development and implementation of the CCGSD strategic plan and strategic direction

Qualifications

- Over 18 years of age
- Does not have a bankruptcy status

- Satisfies the specific competency and skills required by the Board of Directors (as posted for the specific recruitment initiative, e.g., Legal Director, Fundraising Director, Information Management Director, etc.)
- Skills to work collaboratively with other Board members, senior management and other stakeholders
- Knowledge of governance and/or financial management structures and/or not-for-profit experience
- Demonstrated allyship to and/or lived experience in 2SLGBTQIA+ Communities
- Demonstrated commitment to the vision, mission, values and principles of CCGSD

In addition, each Board member is expected to act in the best interest of the organization. The Directors are expected to uphold ethical standards, earn and maintain the trust of the communities CCGSD serves and other stakeholders of the organization, including, but also alongside staff and management. Directors are also expected to act in accordance with a standard of care that requires them to apply a level of judgment that a reasonable and prudent person would apply in the same circumstances, and to carry out their fiduciary duty to the organization. Both of these principles require that Directors act with honesty, integrity and good faith in order to maintain a good reputation of the organization within the community. These principles also maintain the duty of loyalty of each member while respecting confidentiality and the rules of the in-camera session.

Executive Committee Roles within Board of Directors

President (and Vice President)

Summary of Responsibilities

The President is responsible for ensuring that the Board of Directors and its members: are aware of and fulfill their governance responsibilities; comply with applicable laws and bylaws; conduct Board business effectively and efficiently; and are accountable for their performance.

Specific Responsibilities:

Toward the Board of Directors and its Committees

To fulfill these responsibilities, and subject to the organization's bylaws, the President presides over meetings, proposes policies and practices, Chairs the Policy & Bylaw Committee, Chairs the Executive Committee, sits on or chairs other committees of the Board or ad hoc committees as necessary, monitors the performance of Directors and Officers, submits various reports to the Board, to funders, and to other stakeholders; proposes the creation of committees; appoints members to such committees; and performs other duties as the need arises and/or as defined in the bylaws.

Qualifications

- Over 18 years of age
- Does not have bankruptcy status
- Understands the fiduciary responsibilities of a non-profit Board of Directors
- Demonstrated ability to chair meetings in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order
- Demonstrated ability to coordinate Board functions
- Strong knowledge of not-for-profit governance procedures
- Strong knowledge of policy development
- Previous experience as an Officer on the Board of Directors of a charitable organization
- Education in Political Science, Public Administration, or a related field (certificates and professional training are included). A combination of education and experience, or experience only may be acceptable in certain circumstances.

Treasurer

Summary of Responsibilities

The Treasurer oversees the financial matters of CCGSD in line with Best Practices and in accordance with By-law No. 2 and legal requirements, and reports to the Board of Directors at regular intervals about the financial health of CCGSD. The Treasurer ensures that effective financial measures, controls and procedures are put in place, and are appropriate for CCGSD.

Specific Individual Responsibilities

- Reports the current financial position of CCGSD at each Board meeting and ensures their report is recorded in the minutes. The report will include an update on funds received and spent since the last report.

- Ensures all financial decisions taken are recorded in the Board minutes
- Liaises with staff responsible for the financial management of CCGSD, especially the Executive Director
- Oversees the financial matters of the Board and ensures other Directors are adequately informed of finance related issues
- Acts as a counter-signatory on CCGSD cheques and any applications for funds
- Chairs the finance committee in line with standing orders and approved Terms of Reference, then reports on the work of the committee to the Board
- Liaises with the CCGSD's auditor or public accountant, where appropriate in order to monitor and advise on the financial viability of CCGSD after liaising with the charity's auditors
- Liaises with the external bookkeeper of CCGSD on an as-needed basis

Qualifications

- Over 18 years of age
- Does not have a bankruptcy status
- Knowledge of and experience in not-for-profit financial management
- Accounting/CPA designation or similar education (e.g., background in economics)
- Knowledge of not-for-profit governance
- Ability to and experience chairing committee meetings and leading their activities

Secretary

Summary of Responsibilities

The Secretary will ensure that Board meetings, Board committee meetings and all Board decisions are properly documented and that adequate Board records are maintained. The Secretary shall attend and be the Secretary of all meetings of the Board, the Annual General Meeting and all Special Meetings of the Members. In the event that the secretary cannot attend a meeting, they will designate another board member to record the minutes. The Secretary shall be the custodian of all books, papers, records, documents and other instruments belonging to the Corporation. In the absence of the President and/or Vice-President, the Secretary calls the meeting to order, presiding until a temporary chairperson is elected. The secretary records meeting minutes as described below.

Specific Responsibilities:

- Signs a copy of the final, approved minutes and ensures that this copy is maintained in the corporate records
- Ensures accurate meeting minutes are taken and approved, according to the minutes template, which includes:
 - date, time, location of meeting;
 - list of those present and absent;
 - list of items discussed;
 - list of reports presented; and
 - text of motions presented and description of their disposition
- Ensures that the records of CCGSD are maintained as required by law and made available when required by authorized persons. These records may include founding documents, (e.g. letters patent, articles of incorporation), lists of Directors, minutes of Board and committee meetings, financial reports, and other official records.

Qualifications

- Over the age of 18
- Does not have bankruptcy status
- Administrative experience
- Knowledge of not-for-profit governance procedures
- Experience as a not-for-profit Director