

Board of Directors Recruitment Brief

This recruitment brief provides information regarding the opportunity and selection criteria to serve as a volunteer board member of YWCA Metro Vancouver (“YWCA”).

Overview of YWCA Metro Vancouver Background

Established in 1897, YWCA’s vision is to achieve women’s equality and its mission is to touch lives and build better futures for women and their families through advocacy and integrated services that foster economic independence, wellness and equal opportunities. YWCA serves over 48,000 clients annually, with 66 programs and services in 75 locations.

YWCA is appropriately described as an entrepreneurial non-profit. With an annual budget of just over \$35 million, YWCA generates annual revenue from social ventures: a hotel and residence and two health and fitness centres. Other revenues are generated through fundraising, government contracts, fee-for-service programs, investments, events and more.

YWCA has a large, highly engaged workforce, consisting of over 400 employees (239 FTE) and over 800 individual and group volunteers.

In 2015, YWCA received Imagine Canada’s Standards accreditation, reflecting YWCA’s demonstrated excellence in five areas of operations: board governance, financial accountability and transparency, fundraising, staff management and volunteer involvement. In 2017 and again in 2020, YWCA’s Employment Services division received a three-year accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). CARF commended YWCA on its outstanding work in leadership, governance, input from persons served and other stakeholders, financial planning and management, risk management, health and safety, human resources, and performance measurement and management, among others.

About YWCA Canada

YWCA is one of 32 member associations that comprise YWCA Canada. Incorporated in 1893, YWCA Canada is the country’s oldest and largest women’s multi-service organization; a charitable, voluntary organization, which serves as the national coordinating body for the YWCA movement in Canada. In turn, YWCA Canada is a member association of the World YWCA, which unites 25 million women and girls worldwide and spans 125 countries.

Each member association operates autonomously, governed by a local board of directors and serving the needs of its local community. Together, the Canadian member associations set policy for YWCA Canada and elect its board of directors.

Corporate Strategy

YWCA’s strategy for growth is developed through its strategic planning process and involves the Board of Directors (Board), management team and key community partners. The strategic plan defines high-level strategic directions for advocacy, core service areas and operations. It also documents progress and serves as a guide for departmental activities and program development as they relate to the ongoing, mission-based work of the organization.

YWCA uses a balanced scorecard, which is an integrated performance measurement system that links four perspectives: Be Financially Healthy; Run the Business; Learn and Grow; and Serve the Client. It balances objectives from both a financial and non-financial perspective and aligns the mission with resources and operations.

Programs and Services

YWCA offers numerous programs and services, including:

- Housing: transitional housing for women and children who have left abusive relationships; affordable housing for low-income single mothers and their children; supportive transitional housing for pregnant women and new mothers committed to overcoming addictions
- Support services for low-income single mothers and their children
- YWCA Crabtree Corner offers women and families in the Downtown East Side access to several community and parenting programs
- Youth education and development: delivery of mentorship programs and after-school programs for girls and boys, designed to build developmental assets, reduce violence against women and address urgent issues facing today's youth
- Employment services and programs for women, men and youth
- Four early learning and child care centres (in Vancouver) for children up to five years old
- Affordable hotel/residence: 220 rooms open to all travellers, that also offers emergency shelter and longer-term residency options
- Two YWCA health and fitness centres, both co-ed, state-of-the-art fitness facilities in downtown Vancouver
- Support for youth who are transitioning or have transitioned out of foster care

Advocacy

YWCA's approach to advocacy is rooted in front-line experience and supported by credible research. On the front-line, the YWCA advocates on behalf of individuals, and at a broader level the YWCA advocates for systemic changes that support the full realization of women's equality.

The YWCA is a feminist organization. We take an intersectional perspective, which means we understand that inequities related to race, Indigenous identity, socioeconomic background, gender, and sexual orientation (among others) are interrelated and work to compound the discrimination and disadvantage experienced by women. Our advocacy positions reflect this.

The following are some key policy and social issues that the YWCA takes position on. The YWCA's support for these positions is long-standing. This is not a complete list; we may advocate for other specific policy changes from time to time, but most of our advocacy work would fall under these broader issues.

- Stopping violence against women;
- Ensuring women have access to legal supports and services;
- Ensuring women's economic security and independence;
- Ensuring single mothers are provided with social and economic supports;
- Providing universal early learning and child care;
- Providing affordable housing to single women and their families;
- Supporting a woman's right to choose (i.e. pro-choice) with respect to sexual and reproductive issues.

Enterprise Risk Management

Risk management is fundamental to the YWCA's governance, planning, budgeting and compliance framework. It is an integrated part of all activities and processes, including strategic and business planning, operational performance and all organizational and program objectives.

The Opportunity

The Board is responsible, under law, to manage or oversee the management of the affairs and business of the YWCA. The Board oversees the conduct of business of the YWCA and provides strategic guidance to management, which is responsible for the day-to-day conduct of business. Although directors are nominated to the Board to bring special expertise or a point of view to Board deliberations, the best interests of the YWCA are paramount at all times.

The Role

Our volunteer Board of Directors are engaged, strategic thought leaders whose responsibilities include the governance and oversight and monitoring of:

- Strategic plan and organizational performance
- Annual operating and capital budget and results
- Enterprise risk management
- CEO Recruitment, retention and evaluation
- Management succession planning and development

Board members will be required to:

- Be members in good standing of YWCA Metro Vancouver, when nominated
- Understand and be willing to carry out the duties and responsibilities of a Board of Directors
- Support the vision, mission and values of YWCA Metro Vancouver and its role in both YWCA Canada and World YWCA
- Be committed to the achievement of equality for women everywhere and should be knowledgeable about women's issues
- Support the YWCA's advocacy positions
- Where possible, make a personal financial contribution that demonstrates personal commitment and establishes credibility if called upon to ask others to give
- Devote the time and effort necessary to fully participate in the governance of the organization
- Contribute personal expertise to further the aims of the organization
- Where possible, recommend individuals or corporations as potential donors
- Participate fully on board committees as assigned
- Have prior involvement with or demonstrate a strong understanding of YWCA programs, or their equivalent

Experience and Competencies

The Board is strongest and most effective when the following core competencies are represented. Ideally, each Director will contribute knowledge, experience and skills in at least one or two domains:

Previous Boards/Governance	Risk Management	Human Resources
Strategic Planning	Finance and Investments	Land Development
Executive Leadership	Fund Development	Communications
Community Profile	Legal	Information Technology

These skills and experience should be reflected in an appropriate balance of diversity, including Indigenous, ethnic, cultural, LGBTQ2S+ and age. Further, it is understood that emphasis should be on recruitment of directors who bring more than credentials or designations by contributing to a culture characterized by integrity, diligence and active participation.

The following competencies are of fundamental importance in the recruitment of new board members:

Values and Commitment to Women’s Issues

- Demonstrates values and leadership that are aligned with the vision and mission of the YWCA
- Passionate about the cause of women’s equality
- Committed to volunteerism and understand the positive role of the voluntary sector

Integrity and Accountability

- Has demonstrated high ethical standards and integrity in their personal and professional dealings and must be willing to act on – and remain accountable for – their boardroom decisions
- Demonstrates high moral and ethical behaviour
- Respected and influential in the community and/or possess special knowledge, skills or experience which would assist the work of the Board

Strategic Thinking

- Demonstrates strategic and forward thinking, helping the organization to prepare for the future
- Addresses complex issues by analyzing and integrating information, considering risks, implications, detractors, and contradictory information to highlight potential problems
- Capable of providing wise and thoughtful counsel on a broad range of issues

Relationship Management

- Seeks and builds collaborative relationships with all stakeholders to engage, mobilize and advance the objectives of the YWCA
- Fosters a strong and collaborative working relationship with the CEO, senior management team and staff
- Facilitates and contributes to a culture of trust and respect

Business Acumen

- Financially literate and familiar with processes for evaluating organizational performance
- Has a keen business sense to ensure that management is fiscally responsible in ensuring that funds are used to most effectively meet the organization's mission
- Uses sound judgment and logic in all decision-making

Organizational and Environmental Awareness

- Demonstrates a broad understanding of the social and economic context within which the YWCA operates, understanding and anticipating the potential trends of the political environment and the impact this might have on the organization
- Always focused on what is in the best interest of the YWCA and the people it represents

Mature Confidence

- Values the performance of the Board as a whole over individual performance and should demonstrate respect for others in executing their responsibilities to the YWCA

High Performance Standards

- Has a history of achievements that reflect high standards for themselves and others, enabling them to contribute to the superior performance of the YWCA Board