

STÓ:LŌ

COMMUNITY FUTURES



APPLICATION PROCESS

SCF Committee Member Application

STÓ:LŌ COMMUNITY FUTURES

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

The main skills that I bring to Stó:lō Community Futures are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Highlights of my work / life experience of relevance to volunteering as a Committee Member of Stó:lō Community Futures:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Highlights of my previous volunteer experience:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Highlights of my involvement in Stó:lō and Aboriginal Initiatives that would be beneficial to Stó:lō Community Futures:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Why I want to serve as a Committee Member of Stó:lō Community Futures:

What I feel Stó:lō Community Futures has to offer volunteers:

AREA(S) THAT MOST INTEREST ME AT STÓ:LŌ COMMUNITY FUTURES:

- Services to Aboriginal businesses**
- Education and training programs for entrepreneurs**
- Economic strategies and community development**
- Land development**
- Building strategic partnerships**
- Raising funds for programs**
- General operations**
- I am interested in the SCF Board**
- I am interested in sitting on an SCF Committee (mandates for each Committee at <http://www.stolocf.ca/board-of-directors.html>) :**
 - Stó:lō Strategic Vision – Implementation Committee**
 - Stó:lō Centre for Business – Champion Committee**
 - Business Networking /Communications Committee**
 - Education and Training Committee**
 - Finance Committee**

Time I have available (hours per month): _____

Other things Stó:lō Community Futures might like to know about me:

Please email this to:

Attention: Mike Watson

Stó:lō Community Futures

mwatson@stolocf.ca

Deadline is 12:00 pm on Friday, May 27th, 2016

Stó:lō

COMMUNITY FUTURES



COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION GUIDE

Welcome to Community Futures

The purpose of this guide is to give you some insight into the key roles and responsibilities of a volunteer Stó:lō Community Futures Corporation (SCF) Committee Member and the functions of the Staff of SCF.

The Stó:lō Community Futures Corporations and the Community Futures (CF) program started in 1985 and are currently funded through Western Economic Diversification Canada. CF is a community economic development program that is managed by a community representative Board of Directors. The focus of CF is to build community economic and entrepreneurial capacity, with an emphasis on long-range strategic planning and results. CF's are independent and non-profit organizations.

This Guide will explain some of the terminology you will hear over the next few months, and hopefully will give you a better understanding of what will be required of you as a volunteer Committee Member of SCF. You will play an important role in your community's economic development, a role that has been extremely gratifying to those who have gone before you.

Operations

What does a Community Futures do?

CFs work within the community in many ways:

- work to achieve the Vision of SCF.
- implement the SCF Strategic Plan.
- making business loans from SCF's various loan programs.
- providing technical support and advice.
- initiating and implementing special projects.
- establishing community partnerships and strategic alliances.
- operating a Library/Resource centre.

It is essential that new Committee Members become fully versed in the services provided by their SCF.

What are the roles and responsibilities of individuals within the organization?

For most non-profit organizations there is a clear organizational separation between the paid Staff who run the day-to-day operations and the Members of the volunteer Board and Committee who establish the strategic directions of the organization and govern its operation. Board Members need to be aware of their roles and responsibilities within the organization.

How is SCF organized?

There are a number of requirements necessary for the effective operation of SCF. The most important legal and organizational tool for the SCF is a comprehensive set of bylaws which elaborate on the organization's articles of incorporation.

Articles of Incorporation (also known as the Corporate Charter) constitute the basic organizational document for a non-profit corporation. They typically contain a statement of purpose and outline legal authority and limitations. As well, the articles contain governance provisions (e.g., how to select Board Members, etc.)

Bylaws help establish the "internal law" of the SCF. An effective set of bylaws are essential for ensuring good governance. The bylaws typically elaborate further on the corporate charter because they are more easily revised.

Because the organizing documents provide basic rules for governing a CFs, it is essential that each Board Member be very familiar and act in accordance with them. As well, the CF should revisit organizational documents periodically to determine the appropriateness to current needs.

Contracts. CFs are also bound by the contracts they sign with their funders (e.g. Western Economic Diversification, Human Resources Development Canada, etc.) and Board and Committee Members should be aware of this. As well, individual CFs may have special projects which require that contracts be signed with other government and non-government agencies.

The Board

Who are the volunteers and what are their roles?

Chair: The role of the chairperson, in essence, is to act as the “chief volunteer” for the organization. With the Board of Directors and the Staff, the Chair works to achieve the SCF’s Mission. The Chair often acts as a mediator of Board actions with respect to organizational priorities and governance concerns. The position of Chairperson of a SCF is not one of a “figurehead.” He or she is the focus of SCF activities and plays a leadership role in the organization.

Vice Chair: Acting as a support person for the Chair, the Vice Chair’s responsibilities often go unnoticed. He or she generally chairs one or more sub-committees as well as any regular Board Meeting the Chair is unable to attend.

Secretary & Treasurer: While some organizations have two separate offices for Secretary and Treasurer, many CFs have combined the office. Secretarial responsibilities include keeping records of Board actions, as well as ensuring that corporate records are maintained. Treasurer duties include chairing the finance committee, assisting in the preparation of the budget, helping develop fundraising plans, and making regular reports to the Board.

Board Members: Provide governance for the organization, represent it in the community and ultimately accept legal responsibility for it. Board Members act on behalf and represent the views of the SCF’s constituents – the citizens of the community. As a result, they have the principal responsibility for the carrying out of the organization’s mission and strategic objectives. Board Members accomplish their functions through attendance at regular meetings plus participation on committees and sub-committees. Board Members are charged with four phases of organizational development planning, organization, operations, and audit/evaluation.

What are Committees and sub-committees?

Committees are the primary way for organizations to engage the direct contribution of their Board Members. In addition, SCF uses a Community Empowerment Model that includes large numbers of community members sitting on the various Committees of SCF, especially in their area of professional expertise. Committees are delegated authority by the Board and thus are responsible back to the Board they do much of the preliminary work (i.e. research, etc.) to take pressure off the Board and Staff. All SCF Committees have their defined mandates and expected work areas.

The Committee/sub-committee is responsible for the following activities:

- to study and report;
- to recommend;
- to act; and,
- to promote.

Committees common to many CFs include:

Executive Committee; Business Development Committee; Audit Committee; Nominating Committee; Human Resources Committee; and, many ad-hoc committees specific to special projects.

The Staff

What are the key functions of the Staff of the SCF?

While each organization may be formally structured in many different ways, the key functions and responsibilities of Staff remain fairly constant. The key functions are:

General Manager:

- Management of the day-to-day operations including the supervision of all Staff and hired contractors.
- Consultation with the Chair and Board to ensure that the Vision and Strategic Objectives of the CFC are being met.

Community Economic Development;

- Fostering partnerships in the community.
- Assessing and evaluating the SCF role in the Community and reporting this position to the Board.

Business Loans:

- Delivering the various loans program(s).
- Reporting to the Executive Director and working directly with Community Futures clients and local financial institutions.

Special Projects:

- Implementation of the SCF Strategic Vision.
- Finding and possibly delivering new programs and services.

Technical Support and Advice:

- Working with Community Futures clients and potential clients to help write business plans, etc.

Clerical/Reception:

- Clerical, secretarial and office support functions.

Bookkeeping:

- Program bookkeeping, record keeping and office accounting as well as the financial reporting function.

Finances

What role does a Board Member play?

As a volunteer Board Member it is your responsibility to protect the integrity of the organization's finances. This means that you must ensure there are adequate finances and the money is responsibly spent. All policies and plans must be assessed against the availability of funds, and decisions made that guarantee the monies are well spent.

What does a Board Member have to do?

There are three major financial responsibilities of the Board:

- To set financial policies.
- To delegate implementation of policies to Management/Staff.
- To monitor and measure results of spending.

How are financial policies set?

Boards of Directors set broad financial policies, such as identifying where they want the available funding and revenues earned to be allocated. In order to set budgets and approve any spending they must first define the mission and establish the goals and objectives for the organization. This ensures that there is money set aside to meet those goals.

What is meant by "delegation" to Staff?

As a Board Member you are a "trustee" of the organization's money. However, this does not mean you must approve every expenditure. Rather, you need to know the money was spent effectively to deliver the products and services you have authorized. This can be achieved through regular attendance at Board meetings and by having a clear understanding of the monthly financial reports presented by Staff.

How to monitor and measure?

In order to ensure that a Board Member is aware of the results of expenditures, some key questions need to be asked. They are: Are we on target with planned expenses and revenues? Are we financially solvent? Will we have income to meet future expenses?

The answers, in conjunction with the monthly financial reports, will indicate if the financial forecasting is on target or requires adjustment. Budgets set out at the beginning of the fiscal year will generally require several minor adjustments, as a result of unexpected expenses or increases in revenue.

As well, government requirements are that each CF must be audited on an annual basis.

Legal Liabilities

What are “legal liabilities”?

To accept a position on a Board of Directors of the SCF is to accept responsibility for the administration of the organization, its assets, liabilities, contracts and overall policies.

A volunteer Director must fully understand the role and what his or her responsibilities are. The legal duties are clearly outlined in the Act under which incorporated you’re your SCF and state that Directors SHALL:

1. Act honestly and in good faith and in the best interest of the Corporation.
2. Exercise the care, diligence and skill of a responsible prudent person in exercising powers and performing functions of a Director.

What is “legal risk”?

The main areas of “legal risk” are:

Funds – a Director must be satisfied that an adequate system exists for the control of all funds.

Wages – a Director can be personally liable for unpaid Staff wages should the SCF become insolvent.

Negligence of Staff (for example in operating a motor vehicle or negligent maintenance of premises) – requires that a Director is confident there is adequate insurance in place.

Contracts – a Director must ensure the By-laws clearly define who can commit the organization to expenditures and obligations under contracts.

Disclosure of Interest – a Director must disclose any conflict of interest, whether direct or indirect in a proposed contract or transaction.

Assets – a Director should be satisfied there is insurance to cover the buildings and equipment of the organization

Delegation – a Director may delegate authority to Staff but CANNOT delegate responsibility

Fulfilling Government Requirements – a Director can be liable for non-compliance with government regulations.

How can risk be avoided?

In order to minimize risk, directors should get to know the people involved with the organization; be aware of the constitution and By-laws; and have a working knowledge of what is “going on” in the organization through Staff reports on activities, financial statements, and policies regarding employment practices, contracts and management of funds.

What about insurance to cover liabilities?

Each organization must have insurance in order to protect directors against personal liability and all directors should be cognizant of the coverage which their organization has. It is also important to know exactly what is and is not covered. Generally Directors’ Liability policies do not cover such things as libel and slander, personal gain found to be illegal, dishonesty of directors, and improper reimbursement.

By attending Board meetings on a regular basis, reading minutes, reports and publications, becoming familiar with the organization’s goals, objectives, programs and projects, and knowing the budget process and financial situation, volunteer directors can reduce or eliminate the possibility of any legal action against the organization or themselves.

Community Economic Development (CED)

What is CED?

Community Economic Development is a community-controlled process of legal/regional revitalization. It is a perspective which makes the community the foremost player in its growth or renewal.

CED focuses on the economic, social, cultural environmental and educational needs of a community as a whole, for all must be addressed if the community is to develop and still maintain its quality of life.

CED emphasizes that the people of a community should be directly involved in pursuing and managing their own economic development. It recognizes the different regions have different needs and opportunities and all economic development must be charged with local community-led planning and implementation.

CED is driven by a community-based, bottom-up approach to economic development.

What role does a SCF play in CED?

Community Futures Development Corporations, through their Strategic Planning determine the role they will play in CED in their communities. For example they may decide to be the leaders; or the facilitators; coordinators; partners, etc. The SCF has many “tools’ which they can use to affect CED within their area. These tools can include such things as a loan portfolio, technical support, a counseling function training programs and project development.

Why is CED needed?

The principles of CED require that residents get together to confront those issues affecting the quality of life in their community. Using those principles, SCFs assist in wealth creation, job creation, value-added activities, business and cooperative development, and enhanced viability for the community, the region and the province.

What are the objectives of CED?

- Diversifying the local economy.
- Reducing economic vulnerability.
- Making the community more competitive.
- Improving existing infrastructure.
- Replacing declining business and industry sectors.
- Reducing the outmigration of youth by providing job opportunities in the community.
- Enhancing the investment and entrepreneurial environment.
- Building capacity within the community by developing people and organizations capable of managing positive change.

Accountability

What is Community Accountability?

Community accountability is a fundamental principle of community economic development. Without accountability to its community, the community economic development process and the organization leading this process will not reflect the needs and vision of the community.

Why have it?

Without community accountability, the community itself is not a full participant in the realization of the community's long-term vision. The Community Futures Development Corporations across Western Canada understand this and are committed to being accountable to their communities. The business plans written by each SCF clearly demonstrate the active consultation with the community through a variety of mechanisms ranging from town hall meetings to client services feedback mechanisms such as surveys and data bases.

Community accountability is comprised of the following six general areas:

Communication – “The organization will maintain a highly visible profile and will regularly and clearly communicate its plans, activities and results.”

Planning – “The organization's vision, strategic and operational plans are fundamentally driven by its communities' needs and realities.”

Programs and Services – “The Programs and Services are designed and delivered in a manner which meets the communities' needs, creates self reliance and increases the capacity to manage change.”

Governance – “The organization will be governed by the communities through a system which is effective, equitable and representative of the developmental interests and needs of the communities.”

Partnership Development – “The organization will work through partnerships in order to strengthen the impact of its community development activities, streamline access to services and contribute to cost effectiveness.”

Assessment – “The organization will regularly assess and communicate the impact of its activities on the life of the community.”

Communications

All SCF Board Members are responsible for ensuring the SCF has a Communications Policy. Those organizations who have clear consistent communications strategies that promote their vision, mission and values will earn public respect and support. Strategies should explain the role each Member plays in communications and how he or she can serve as visionaries, advocates and spokespersons for their organization.

What are some elements of “communications”?

The following activities generally make up a communications “strategy”:

Media Relations – proactive and ongoing contact with Members of the media who cover the organization and its issues

Marketing – using ‘tools’ to promote ideas or services to targeted audiences. (Such as paid advertising, direct mail outs, signage, etc.)

Community Relations – identifying community leaders and delivering the SCF message in person, through letters, luncheons, focus groups, speeches, joint partnerships, etc.

Government Relations – keeping funding agencies and government partners informed of activities

External Communications – communicating with community Members, partners, and prospective Board Members through annual reports, programs and services brochures, newsletters and press clippings

Internal Communications – keeping the Board, Staff and other volunteers informed about operations, programs and issues. This is accomplished through Board Meetings, Staff Meetings, informal briefings and retreats.

What information can’t be released?

Members must at all times respect the SCF client’s right to privacy. No information regarding a client (or personal information regarding a Board or Staff Member) can be released to anyone without their written consent.

Board Members should also be aware that it is important to check with the Chairperson regarding the SCF’s policy on release of information about the financial or personnel policies or issues. This guideline would also apply before discussing these issues in the public domain. While all SCFs are accountable to their communities it is also important that the Board of Directors, as a whole, is making the decisions on the format in which information is released.

What are some communication guidelines for Board Members?

- Know the facts and tell the truth.
- Be proactive.
- Know your audience.
- Learn how to listen then share feedback.
- Be consistent and succinct.
- Don't confuse tactics with strategy.
- Become a media source.
- Build goodwill and create new forums.

The most important role Board Members can perform is to provide perspective for the organization. The bottom line is that they must continually simplify the organization's message to ensure that it is clear and convincing.