

1 *What is an arts Board?*

Incorporated not-for-profit and/or charitable arts organizations are required to have a governing Board of Directors.

Their role is to **represent** the public interest with respect to the fiduciary operations of the company and to set long term strategic direction and management policies.

2 *Why should I join a Board?*

Develop leadership ability

Get practical, hands-on experience by participating in the leadership of a non-profit organization; deepen and broaden your professional skills.

Gain exposure

Increase the visibility of your business and/or professional profile through volunteerism.

Build your network

Form a broader base of relationships that can impact both your career development and social life.

Find a new outlet for your creativity

Use skills and explore interests in ways your working environment doesn't offer.

Strengthen community

Help build the economic and cultural vitality of your community by fostering the arts.

3 *What role could I pursue on an arts Board?*

Arts Boards require a diverse range of talent and experience to help achieve organizational goals. As a business professional, your **expertise, network and leadership skills** can add tremendous value.

Perhaps you have specific professional skills that you can offer, for example: legal, marketing, IT or accounting expertise. Arts organizations rely on their Board of Directors to help fundraise, so using your broad network and creative energy in this capacity would be invaluable.

4 *What kind of organizational structure would I be a part of?*

Essential roles on a Board:

Board Chair

The Chair is responsible to oversee the long-term direction and viability of the organization. The Chair coordinates the work and direction of the board and its committees by planning and chairing meetings and managing the Board-level decision-making processes. The Chair is responsible for the board membership - recruitment and succession planning - for reporting to the membership and, most often, for overseeing the contract/work of senior management.

Board Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair assumes the responsibilities of the Chair in his or her absence and often succeeds the Chair.

Board Secretary

The Secretary prepares, maintains and distributes the board's records, such as the minutes, agendas, correspondence and contracts. This position is often combined with the Treasurer.

Board Treasurer

The Treasurer oversees the organization's finances, ensuring overall financial accountability. The Treasurer usually chairs the finance committee, oversees the annual audit and reports on the audit to the Board and the Annual General Meeting.

Board Member

A Board Member attends board meetings and takes on specific Board or Committee responsibilities according to their skills and preferences. All members of a non-profit Board can be held responsible for staff salaries and government remittances should the company become insolvent.

Other roles that all Board Members play:

Advisor

Provides a particular expertise that the organization lacks - financial, legal, and marketing are typical examples.

Ambassador

Actively represents the company and introduces the organization to potential funding partners, supporters and the wider community at large.

5 *What is expected of me as a Board Member?*

Attend all Board meetings.

Attend and support organization's presentations and functions, such as special events.

Be informed about the organization's mission, services, policies, and programs.

Keep current with the issues: review agenda and supporting materials prior to Board and committee meetings.

Serve on committees or task forces attending meetings as required; offer to take on special assignments.

Make a personal financial contribution to the organization and/or fundraise.

Suggest new Board Members who can make significant contributions to the work of the Board and the organization.

Assist the Board in carrying out its fiduciary responsibilities, such as reviewing the organization's annual financial statements, mission, by-laws, mandate and strategic plan.

6 *How do I get started?*

Get out and see the arts in your community; go to concerts, exhibits, plays; find an arts organization that you feel passionate about.

Use tools such as Business for the Arts' BoardLink program to find out which arts organizations are looking for Board Members.

Introduce yourself, if you don't know anyone on the Board or staff of the arts organization of your choice, contact the administration by letter and telephone, arrange to meet for a coffee with the Board Chair or General Manager to discuss volunteer opportunities

Start as a volunteer or committee member first for a small to mid-sized arts organization and get to know the organization before joining the Board

Research and meet with several arts organizations to find the right fit.

**Business for the Arts: artsBoards 101
a guide for young professionals**

7 *What are the key questions to ask when I meet with an arts organization for an interview?*

What is the organization's mission?

How is the Board structured? Are there job descriptions/policies available, and an overall mandate for the Board?

What are the fiduciary responsibilities of Board Members?

What are the main issues the arts organization needs the Board to address?

Based on my CV, how can I best contribute to the arts organization as a Board Member? (If you are interested in starting off as a committee member, ask what volunteer committee roles are available.)

How much of my time will be required for meetings and special events?

8 *How do I know if I've found a good match?*

Ask yourself the following questions:

Does this organization truly engage me?

Do I respect and am I committed to their mission?

Will I be proud and willing to promote them to my network?

Am I excited at the opportunity to work with the Board and management team?

Will I be utilizing skills I am interested in developing?

Can I contribute the time necessary to be an effective Board/Committee member?

Can I wholeheartedly get behind and participate in the organization's fundraising strategies?

Can I contribute financial support consistent with the organization's expectations of Board Members and with my own means and priorities?

As a Board Member could I put the organization first, placing the organization's purpose and interests above my own professional and personal interests?



artsScene is a young professionals volunteer group hosted by Business for the Arts dedicated to connecting business professionals with the arts.

Business for the Arts is a national business-based organization working to broaden and deepen relationships between business and the arts.

More resources on arts boards can be found on our website www.businessforarts.org.

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HAVE YOU EVER...?

CONSIDERED USING YOUR BUSINESS LEADERSHIP SKILLS ON AN ARTS BOARD?

Here's what you need to know!

Business for the Arts: artsBoards 101
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