

Cambridge VOLUNTEERS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS OVERVIEW (Updated May 2024)

MISSION

Cambridge Volunteers (CV) strengthens civic life in Cambridge by championing local volunteer opportunities and supporting an effective and inclusive volunteer corps.

WHAT WE DO

Cambridge Volunteers achieves its mission by:

- Strengthening community engagement through the volunteer sector
- Supporting nonprofit priorities in volunteer recruitment and preparation
- Hosting a free, public database of volunteer opportunities and a citywide volunteer fair
- Building and maintaining a ready pool of volunteers for nonprofit agencies
- Guiding individuals and groups toward transformative volunteer opportunities
- Supporting an inclusive volunteer sector through free workshops for potential program volunteers and board members
- Serving as a knowledge-sharing hub for agencies that rely on volunteers
- Offering businesses guidance to engage beneficially with their host community

BOARD VALUES

We adopt the values that shape a “Purpose-Driven Board”, which are:

- Purpose before organization: Our mission, vs. our continued existence, drives our efforts.
- Respect for the ecosystem: We are mindful of our impact on other organizations and individuals.
- Equity mindset: Our efforts support equitable outcomes and avoid reinforcing inequities.
- Authorized voice and power: Our work is informed and guided by the needs of those we serve.

BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring effective leadership and governance of the organization. As such, the Board works together to support the organization in the following ways:

- Mission: Oversee adherence to organizational goals and objectives and consistently assess the vitality of the mission in directing the organization’s work
- Future Planning: Promote strategic thinking by asking key questions, envisioning the future for the organization, sharing various perspectives and introducing new ideas; testing assumptions of the organization and assessing challenges from the environment.
- Financial: Review and approve annual budget.
- Ethical: Ensure transparency in governance; disclose any conflict of interest.
- Management: Hire, supervise and support the Executive Director; conduct regular performance reviews; oversee compensation and benefits.

Individually, each member of the CV Board of Directors serves as a steward of the organization and shares their abilities and contributions in support of the organization’s mission.

FINANCIAL EXPECTATION

Each board member makes CV one of their top three philanthropic priorities and makes a meaningful and impactful gift, according to their ability. As part of this, the board will set a collective annual minimum goal by vote no later than December of the preceding year.

MEETINGS

Full board meetings are every 2 months and attendance is required. It is a fundamental responsibility of each board member to review all meeting materials in advance, complete any pre-work, and take on action items as appropriate from each meeting. Full board meetings are now taking place via video conferencing at 5pm on Thursday evenings for one hour. To ensure full attendance the meeting time may be changed.

COMMITTEES

Board members are asked to participate in at least one committee. Goals and deliverables are determined with the Executive Director. Committees establish their own work and meeting schedules but all will report on progress at each bimonthly, full-board meeting. Committees often include non-board volunteers.

- Communications
- Fundraising and Sustainability
- Events
- Impact and Data

COMPOSITION and TERM LIMIT

Ideally, the board includes 12 members plus the Executive Director (ED), who votes. Term = 3 years, 2 max consecutive terms, with a 1-year extension as needed. One year off before rejoining. Every board member is expected to have knowledge that will shape strategies and goals for one of our committees or major program areas. We value and seek racial/cultural/age/abilities diversity across these specialties:

- Local nonprofit staff or EDs (current or former) with active and inclusive volunteer programs
- Community volunteers from diverse constituencies
- Corporate community relations professionals and university representatives
- City of Cambridge employees, current or former
- Fundraising/grants and communications specialists (web, mass email, social media)

One or two board members serve as the Chair or Co-Chairs (voted annually and renewable for their full Board term.) The Chair(s) serve as an Executive Committee and can make some decisions on behalf of the board as needed, typically because of time constraints.

If a board member joins under the auspices of a corporation or organization, that entity and not the individual representative, rotates off the board according to the standard term limit. In this way only, the corporation is considered the member.

HOW TO EXPRESS INTEREST

If you are interested in joining the CV board, please email CV Board Co-Chair Kavish Gandhi at kmbrgandhi@gmail.com.