

What to Expect if You're Elected Folk Music Ontario Board of Directors



Thank you for your interest in becoming a candidate for election to a three-year term on the Folk Music Ontario Board of Directors. Election to the board represents an opportunity to serve the community, to develop new relationships, and to hone new skills.

That said, Folk Music Ontario board membership should be considered carefully. This document serves to inform your decision whether to stand for election, and to help you manage your board duties if elected.

Note: FMO aims to reduce financial barriers to participating in Board activities. If the purchase of an FMO membership is prohibitive to you, feel free to contact FMO and inquire about accommodations.

Overview

Folk Music Ontario (formerly Ontario Council of Folk Festivals) was founded in 1987 by six Ontario folk festivals. Folk Music Ontario exists to foster and promote the Folk, Roots and Traditional Music industry in Ontario.

The board solicits candidates from the membership and community. Board members may be encouraged to participate in committees and support initiatives outside their skill sets, in addition to working within their existing knowledge base, depending on the current needs of the organization.

What does the board do?

While many directors may bring their own expertise and particular areas of interest to their board participation, the essence of their role is to act as caretakers and overseers of the organization on behalf of the community at large. More specifically, a board member works to:

- set the organization's mission, vision, and overall strategy, and modify both as needed.
- monitor management and hold it accountable for performance.
- select, evaluate, support, and, if necessary, replace the Executive Director.
- develop and conserve the organization's resources—both funds and property.
- serve as a bridge and buffer between the organization and its environment, advocating for the organization, representing the interests of its stakeholders, and building support in its wider community.

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Expectations

Folk Music Ontario operates at a level of commitment and quality of a professional non-profit arts organization. As with any other board, directors are expected to maintain duties in three critical areas:

- *Duty of care*: exercising proper care and prudence as a board member, including attendance at meetings, proper preparation, independent judgment, proper review of finances and other reports.
- *Duty of loyalty*: putting the organization's interests before one's own in board matters, including speaking as "one" voice on important public issues, respecting confidentiality, and avoiding (or declaring) conflicts of interest.
- *Duty of obedience*: ensuring that the organization's central purpose guides all decisions and the 'laws of the land' are respected, including compliance with government regulations (charitable, remittances, etc.), awareness and adhesion to Folk Music Ontario bylaws and policies.

Our Vision, Purpose and Strategies

Vision: A thriving, inclusive folk music community with local and international impact

Purpose: Supporting the growth and development of the folk music community and industry

Strategies:

- Embed Inclusivity and Diversity: By everyone in everything, everyday
- Increase & Diversify Revenue: Strengthen existing and develop new and innovative revenue streams
- Expand Member Value: Deliver services year-round targeted to evolving member needs
- Maximize Collaboration: Create collaborative opportunities to achieve our vision
- Be the Advocate: Raise the profile of FMO and champion folk music

General information about the board, including a list of current board members, is available [here](#).

For more details about board procedures and expectations, please consult the Folk Music Ontario Bylaws [here](#).

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Some points to highlight include:

Conference - October 13-16, 2022, London, Ontario

Board members are expected to attend the Annual General Meeting (held online in the Fall), The Folk Music Ontario Conference, and various meetings held throughout the year. Board members receive a complimentary registration to the conference and - when possible - a complimentary night's stay at the conference hotel.

Board Meetings

The entire board meets four times a year in addition to the Annual General Meeting. Review of documents and follow-up of action items may require several additional hours of work connected to each meeting. Board meetings typically take place on weekends (usually Saturdays) at times agreed upon well in advance. Board meetings will take place online.

Committee Meetings

Folk Music Ontario directors are expected to participate in at least one committee. You can anticipate spending as much time on committees as on-board business itself. A full listing of all Board committees can be found here.

Executive Committee Meetings

Directors are encouraged to take on leadership roles at some point during their tenure (President(s), Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Executive Committee Member-at-Large). The Executive Committee may meet more often and/or on an emergency basis, meaning there may be an additional commitment for those who step into these roles.

Other Service

To the extent possible, board members are asked to attend/support FMO events outside of board and committee meetings, including the annual conference, AGM, and other events

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Responsibility and Liability

The board is accountable to the Membership for the implementation of the vision and mission of Folk Music Ontario. The board operates on a robust legal foundation and carries liability insurance.

Remuneration

Directors serve without remuneration. Expenses are covered where possible, but as a rule, board members must cover their own expenses. These are therefore kept to a minimum.

Summary

Before standing for election to the board, you should very carefully weigh your work, family, professional and charitable commitments and consider whether you can accommodate more. Generally, a board member can expect to contribute an average minimum of 4 hours per month to their duties, not including meetings or special roles they may take on.

This document cannot fully capture the personal, social, professional, and artistic rewards that come with being a director of Folk Music Ontario. Directors serve in a respected position within a dynamic, dedicated organization.

On the board and throughout the organization, Folk Music Ontario aims to nurture a safe and welcoming community. Should you choose to let your name stand and become elected as a director, you should expect to be respected for who you are, valued for your contributions, and encouraged to grow during what will hopefully be a transformative experience in your life.