



Board of Directors Candidate Information Kit

Updated November 2022

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1. CWCF Description

The Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation is a national, bilingual grassroots membership organization of and for worker co-operatives, related types of co-operatives (multi-stakeholder co-ops and worker-shareholder co-ops), and organizations that support the growth and development of worker cooperatives. CWCF was incorporated in 1992.

Vision

To be a growing, cohesive network of democratically controlled worker co-ops that provide a high quality of worklife, and support the development of healthy, just and sustainable local economies, based on cooperative values and principles.

Mission

1. To work in solidarity with our members to achieve our Vision of a Co-operative Economy;
2. To support the development of new worker co-ops;
3. To strengthen the Federation, to animate the worker co-operative movement; and
4. To represent and promote the Canadian worker co-op movement in Canada and internationally.

Snapshot

There are about 50 worker co-op members in CWCF, in addition to three regional federation members (Le Réseau de la coopération du travail, the Federation of Forestry Co-operatives and the Federation of Paramedic Co-ops - all in Québec) as well as associate members and developer members. For worker co-ops members, membership fees are 0.15% of a worker co-op's total wages. In 2020-21, CWCF revenues are projected to be approximately \$670,000. CWCF's *Tenacity Works* Loan Fund is valued at nearly \$400,000.

Board & Staff

The CWCF Board of Directors has one representative from each of the five regions: British Columbia/Yukon, Prairies/NWT/Nunavut, Ontario, Quebec and the Atlantic. There are also two At-Large Directors. The length of a Board term is three years. There is no maximum number of terms that a Director can serve.

CWCF has eight total employees, most part-time, for a total of about five full-time equivalent staff. The RRSP Program is run out of our Kentville office, with three staff members.

Hazel Corcoran	Executive Director	Calgary, AB
Kaye Grant	Communications & Member Services Manager	Winnipeg, MB
Kenzie Love	Communications Assistant	Calgary, AB
Rebecca Smyth	Executive Assistant	Calgary, AB
Janielle Maxwell	JEDI Social Acquisitions Project Coordinator	Brampton, ON
Kristin Van Hattem	RRSP Program Manager, CWCF Bookkeeper	Kentville, NS
Josh Dyke	RRSP Program Administrator	Kentville, NS
Laura MacDonald	RRSP Program Assistant	Kentville, NS

2. CWCF Board of Directors: Role and Eligibility

- To represent the interests of CWCF membership - and the worker co-operative movement as a whole – ensuring that the Federation is run in accordance with the mission, vision and strategic direction set out by membership.
- To provide stewardship to the Federation, ensuring that it is run in a financially sustainable matter.
- To hire, support and replace, as appropriate, the Executive Director of the Federation, and to evaluate the performance of and set compensation for the Executive Director.
- To be a conduit between the Federation and its membership and to propose, when necessary, changes to the Federation’s mission, vision, and strategic direction.

In order to be eligible to run for the CWCF Board of Directors, one must be either a worker member of a CWCF worker co-op member, or else be nominated by a regional federation member. There is a maximum of two directors from regional federations who can sit on the Board at any given time. Currently the only region with its own federations is Quebec.

3. CWCF Board Member Expectations

1. Attend and participate in the Board and members' meetings. There are typically four 90-minute conference call Board meetings and two 1.5-day in-person Board meetings each year. Board members' meeting expenses are covered by CWCF.

The in-person board meetings take place 1) immediately prior to the Annual General Meeting (October/November) & 2) In the spring. The location of the AGM rotates across the country and the Spring Board meeting takes place in a location easily accessible to most board members, typically in Ontario.

Note that after the start of the Covid19 pandemic, all meetings were held virtually until June 2022, when we resumed in-person meetings with hybrid capacity.

2. Come to the meetings prepared, having read the prepared documents. Count on 2-4 hours of preparation time.
3. Regional Directors provide a written regional report before each in-person Board meeting which provides highlights from the worker co-operative world within their region (e.g. new co-ops formed, updates on existing co-ops, news from regional co-op federations and provincial associations, etc.).
4. Complete the tasks to which one commits at the Board meetings in a timely manner.
5. Participate in communication with worker co-op members in one's region in each year, as well as potential members, in conjunction with co-op developers as appropriate. The exception is Quebec, where the focus is on contact with regional federations. (This task is primarily the responsibility of regional directors; at-large directors to help as appropriate and required.)
6. In some cases, help to lead or facilitate at least one workshop or other session at the annual Conference, and assist the CWCF staff in hosting the Conference.
7. Serve on CWCF committees: Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI), Government Relations, Business Succession, Strategic Plan

Implementation, Personnel, Director Nominating, Conference Planning, Resolutions, and the Tenacity Works Investment Fund Committee.

The work of each committee ranges from very little in a typical year (e.g. Resolutions Committee) to an additional 4-6 conference calls per year, (e.g. Conference Planning Committee).

It is reasonable to expect that a Board Director would sit on at least one or two committees.

8. Represent CWCF to other organizations such as the relevant provincial association, the regional body of The Co-operators, and/or, Co-operatives and Mutuels Canada, etc., as mutually agreed and when possible.
9. Fulfill other duties of a director in accordance with the federal Co-op Act, CWCF bylaws and CWCF policies.

4. CWCF Membership Benefits

Worker Co-operative Conferences, Workshops

Members receive discounts on fees (and travel subsidies, for worker co-op members) to attend the CWCF annual conference. The conference includes training workshops, worker co-op tours and great opportunities for networking.

Web-based Training

CWCF provides webinar-based sessions to members. These free sessions cover topics as diverse as Worker Co-ops 101, Financial management, Governance - and many more. In addition, CWCF has recently developed the Worker Co-op Academy in conjunction with the Quebec Réseau COOP, an intensive online program first offered in 2021 on a pilot basis. It provides training and coaching support to start-up worker co-ops.

Worker Co-op Resources

Staff can provide and help find worker co-op information and resources. CWCF helped create the CoopZone Developers' Network. CWCF also provides resources on www.canadianworker.coop. CWCF produces a monthly e-newsletter.

Access to Start-Up and Development Grants, and Capital

The CWCF allocates small grants for start-ups and existing worker co-ops to hire a co-op developer or other professionals. CWCF's Tenacity Works Fund provides loans, typically in the \$20,000 to \$50,000 range, to members.

RRSP/TFSA Program

The RRSP program allows the members of a worker co-op (or other type of co-op, or CED Investment Fund) to invest shares they own in their co-op into individual member's Self-Directed RRSPs, or TFSA's. There must be at least 10 people investing, preferably more, as rules require that no one can hold more than 10% of any class of shares and still use the RRSP Program. This Program has grown to become a successful social enterprise which helps to fund other CWCF programming.

Group Insurance Plan

The Co-operators Group offers insurance plans to CWCF members, through Co-op Guard and Member Benefits plans.

Lobbying Efforts on Behalf of Worker Co-ops

The CWCF is committed to ensuring that worker co-ops have a level playing field with other forms of business. For example, when worker co-op shares were not included in the RRSP regulations allowing small business shares as eligible investments, the CWCF lobbied successfully for their inclusion. In recent years, CWCF has been actively engaged in the lobby to create a Worker Co-op Business Succession program.

5. To Learn More

CWCF website: www.canadianworker.coop

Current Board Members: <http://canadianworker.coop/board-staff/>

CWCF Bylaws: <http://canadianworker.coop/about/cwcf-bylaws/>

CWCF's democratic structure: <http://canadianworker.coop/about/democratic-structure/>