

CWCF Board of Directors Nomination Statement - Atlantic Director



Kai McGilligan Oliver (he/him)

While attending a Co-op Mixer in Halifax, 2024, I met Executive Director Hazel Corcoran and other CWCF members. I was moved by their enthusiasm for the worker co-operative cause, and connected with the CWCF values. When I recently learned the Atlantic representative board position was open, I was immediately interested in the opportunity.

As a regular customer of three CWCF members (*Seed & Spark*, *Glitter Bean*, and *Just Us!*) and other Atlantic co-ops, I am inspired and enlivened by the co-operative movement. I'm motivated to help people find alternatives to profit-only enterprise models. In 2024 I began forming an Atlantic video game worker co-operative and more recently laid the foundations for a worker co-op education network called Game Makers 4 Co-operative Futures (GM4CF). I am consistently seeking out new knowledge and experience connected to the worker co-op model; I believe this appetite would be of great benefit to the CWCF board.

After completing a NASCO internship with the International Centre for Co-operative Management this summer, I started working as a Communications Specialist / Program Assistant while also studying at the Centre. This duality has rapidly exposed me to the complex history and present-day context for co-operatives in the Atlantic provinces, and the larger picture in Canada and other countries. My communications responsibilities, such as marketing, outreach, and public speaking, feel relevant to this position, where engaging and supporting a vibrant Atlantic co-op community is a priority.

Also in my time on the Co-operative Subcommittee of the CWA United Videogame Workers Union, and the Events Committee of the Interactive Society of Nova Scotia I developed applicable skills in budget management, strategically aligning on goals, remote team collaboration, communicating with membership, event planning, and executive leadership.

I'm excited to contribute to the CWCF's activities, and hope to exchange learning and friendship along the way.

Biography

Kai McGilligan Oliver, M.Phys, M.A. (he/him), is a queer, award-winning video game designer with 10+ years experience in the game industry and creates interactive experiences that have social good and 'play with purpose' at their heart. Kai is 35 and a white British settler originally from Northumbria, England. He is an ally and guest in Mi'kma'ki, Nova Scotia, the ancestral and unceded territories of the Mi'kmaq.

Kai works at the International Centre for Co-operative Management (ICCM) at the Sobey School of Business, Saint Mary's University. He aids in program management, communications and outreach. He is also a member of the NASCO Cooperative Internship Network and a student at the ICCM, taking a 10-month Certificate in Co-operative Management. His recent activities include forming an Atlantic video game worker co-operative and starting a supportive co-op education network called Game Makers 4 Co-operative Futures (GM4CF).

He is a 'game jam' judge and mentor to game industry professionals and students, a public speaker on topics related to ethical game making, and a dues paying member of the United Video Game Workers union where he participates on a subcommittee dedicated to co-operative and union relationships. Kai also works with his partner Francine Dulong as the interactive theatre company BAGEL+BALLOON, and has secured over C\$100,000 in funding from Invest Nova Scotia, Arts Nova Scotia and the Canada Council for the Arts for various game-related projects.