



Nelson & District Women's Centre

Information Package for Board of Director Applicants

Thank you for your interest in the Nelson & District Women's Centre. This package includes the following information about the organization:

- 1) History
- 2) Organizational information
- 3) Governance and structure
- 4) Board Member expectations
- 5) Board Member recruitment procedure

Applications for Board Membership should be returned to:

Attn: Coordinating Collective
Nelson & District Women's Centre
420 Mill Street, Nelson BC
V1L 4R9

If you have any questions or are interested in learning more about the Women's Centre, please email info@nelsonwomenscentre.com or call 250-352-9949. You can also visit our website at www.nelsonwomenscentre.com.

1) History of the Nelson and District Women's Centre

The West Kootenay Women's Association started the Nelson & District Women's Centre in 1973. From this time until now the Women's Centre has had a drop-in, which has included free food, a free store, and peer counselling. WKWA also currently has a feminist library in the Women's Centre, a project to show the history of feminism in the West Kootenay region (see kootenayfeminism.com), a youth project, a volunteer program, and a garden program. The Women's Centre Drop-in hours are currently noon to four pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.

2) Organizational Information

Mission Statement

Building health community by providing support to women and advancing gender equality.

Our Mandate

The mandate of the Nelson & District Women's Centre is as follows:

- a) To supply and render service of a charitable and educational nature to women;
- b) To establish resources for women;

- c) To cooperate with other organizations, whether incorporated or not, which have similar objectives, in whole or in part, to the objectives of the Nelson & District Women's Centre;
- d) To operate as a charitable organization to administer and employ its property, assets, and rights for the purpose of promoting, or aiding in the promotion of the welfare of all women in need of help; and
- e) To receive, acquire, and hold gifts, donations, legacies, and devices.

3) Governance and Structure

Our Coordinating Collective, made up of Board of Directors and staff, legally maintains the Nelson & District Women's Centre. The Board members are voted in annually and support the Women's Centre by attending scheduled monthly meetings, participating on committees, raising awareness of women's issues and aiding in fundraising. We have three part-time staff members. The Centre is supported by more than 100 volunteers and has a membership of approximately 50 people.

Included in the Board is the Executive Committee, made up of the two Co-Chairs, two Co-Treasurers and the Secretary. We regularly establish committees as required, which presently include the following:

- House and Health/Safety
- Financial
- Policies
- Drop-In
- Events
- Other Programs
- Human Resources

These groups may meet externally as required to address specific issues.

4) Board Member Expectations

General

- Support of and respect for our mission and process;
- Interest in and commitment to women in Nelson and the surrounding area, and feminism; and
- Commitment to teamwork and consensus-based decision-making in a non-hierarchical environment.

Meetings

Regular meetings are held once per month on the third Tuesday of each month (with a break in July). From time to time, we review whether or not the choice of this day of the week for meetings is sustainable for members. The meetings start with a potluck and check-in at 5.00 pm, followed by a business meeting from 5:30 to 7:30. All decisions are made by consensus and we ask for consistent attendance.

In addition to regular monthly meetings, Board Members are encouraged to participate on committees where their interest and experience will support the goals of WKWA. Board members are also encouraged to participate in some annual events held by the Centre,

including International Women's Day, Take Back the Night, a yearly November fund-raising event and December 6th Day of Remembrance.

A total of approximately seven hours per month is an adequate estimate of time required for Board participation, but some months require less of a commitment.

Board members are asked to commit to staying on the Board for two years. This level of commitment is preferable to ensure stability on the Board. However, a one-year commitment is possible with a view towards renewing that commitment near the end of this term. Applicants should also feel that they can discuss this aspect with the Board if they need further clarification. Members can remain on the Board for a maximum of four years, or longer with agreement by the Coordinating Collective.

Benefits to Board members

- Participation and experience with mature and effective Board governance
- Opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to our community and help make positive social change
- Acquisition of leadership skills and access to training opportunities
- Increased and broadened community knowledge and perspective
- Participation in building stronger networks
- Opportunity to learn about many different areas of non-profit management: finance, human resources, fundraising, legal issues, ethics
- Opportunity to enjoy sharing and enacting ideas with dedicated women.

5) Board Member Recruitment Procedure

1. You may have been approached by a Board member about joining or you may have heard about a Board vacancy. In any case, once you have read this information package and determined that you are interested in further exploring the idea of joining the WKWA Board, please fill out and submit an application.

2. Someone on the Board will review your application. You will then be invited to attend a meeting to see what one is like, become acquainted with the Board members, and ask any questions you may have. If after that you are interested in joining the Board, and if the Board members approve, you will be invited to come to a second meeting. Should you decide that your being a CC member would be beneficial, you would then be on the Board and would begin attending meetings regularly.

3. You will be officially nominated at the Annual General Meeting held in September, but are welcome to join at any time in the year.