



Call for Nominations
Board of Directors of YWCA Canada
AMM 2021 Election
March 2021

* Nominations are due **April 19, 2021** and should be sent to: careers@ywcacanada.ca

* Background on the nominations process and recent updates are available [here](#).

Available Positions

Eight positions on the Board of Directors of YWCA Canada will be vacant as of the Annual Membership Meeting (AMM) in June 2021. Nominations to fill this position are requested and should be sent to the email address noted above.

Applicants should read this package (and the linked resources) carefully prior to submitting a nomination package. Information is provided on YWCA Canada, the Board of Directors, roles and responsibilities of Board Members, and the nomination and selection processes.

This package is prepared by the YWCA Canada Nominating Committee. Any questions should be directed to Nominating Committee Chair and National Board Member Kate Nelischer: knelischer@gmail.com. If the format of this package or requests of applicants pose any barriers to access, please contact Kate.

YWCA Canada

Incorporated in 1893, YWCA Canada is a charitable, voluntary organization, which serves as the national coordinating body for the YWCA movement in Canada. YWCA Canada is the country's oldest and largest women's multi-service organization. Our Member Associations across the country serve women and girls in nine provinces and two territories. YWCA Canada is the nation's single largest provider of shelter to women and children fleeing violence. For 150 years YWCA Canada has acted and advocated to right injustices faced by women and girls in Canada through timely research, responsive projects, proactive initiatives, and relevant advocacy campaigns.

YWCA Canada's informed advocacy aims to:

- [End gender-based violence](#)
- [Implement national child care](#)
- [Achieve economic equality](#)
- [End homelessness for women and girls](#)

Governance

YWCA Canada is a federated organization. Our members are YWCA associations—membership-based organizations that operate as independent entities. All YWCA Member Associations are autonomous and governed by a local board of directors.

YWCA Canada is a member association of the World YWCA, a global movement working for women's empowerment, leadership, and rights in more than 120 countries and 20,000 local communities.

YWCA Canada is governed by policies established by the World YWCA by-laws and our Canadian Member Associations and administered by a Board of Directors elected by Member Associations.

The National Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of YWCA Canada is responsible for the oversight of the national organization and for the development of strategic plans to achieve the mission of the YWCA. These plans are presented to the member associations for approval and drive the work of the organization.

Structure

The National Board has of between 11-15 directors. All directors are elected by the membership at the Annual Membership Meeting (AMM) to hold office for a four-year term. Directors are able to serve two terms, totaling eight years.

All directors must be members of a YWCA member association. If applicants are not currently members, they can register for membership when they are nominated to the National Board of Directors.

Time Commitment

The Board of Directors of YWCA Canada requires a substantial time commitment. At minimum, nominees should be prepared to meet the following commitments:

- Prepare for and attend two face-to-face meetings annually (running Friday evening, all day Saturday, and ½ day Sunday).^{*} These usually take place on the third weekend of November and the third weekend of February, both in Toronto. The cost of board members' transportation, accommodations, and meals is paid for by YWCA Canada.
- Prepare for and attend the Annual Membership Meeting (usually 4 days), held in early June, hosted by a Member Association. The Board holds its own meetings during this time. The cost of board members' transportation, accommodations, and meals is paid for by YWCA Canada.
- Prepare for and participate in Board conference calls (about 6/year, 2 hours in duration). These dates are set far in advance.
- Each Board member is expected to sit on a number of committees or task forces. This requires additional time for meetings, preparation, and reporting.
- Self directed learning and reading.
- Frequent email communication.
- Outreach and being a resource for regional Member Associations.

^{*} For the foreseeable future, these are held remotely and over video conference due to COVID-19.

Values and Commitment to Learning

Feminist, womanist, and gender equity philosophies inform the work of the National Board. The National Board engages in education and development sessions on an ongoing basis. This often includes participating in workshops facilitated by subject matter experts and completing individual reading/research prior to planned group discussions. Recently, these initiatives have included: effective board governance workshop; anti-harassment training; anti-racism training; gender identity and inclusion training; governance training; and, a blanket exercise. Candidates should be committed to respectfully engaging in these efforts, learning, reflecting and growing alongside fellow board members.

Important Policies and Documents

It is recommended that applicants thoroughly review the following material before applying for nomination to the National Board. This will assist applicants in better understanding the roles and structures of the National Board, the expectations of individual Board members, and the current priorities for Board work:

- [2018-19 YWCA Canada Annual Report](#)
- [National Office Anti-Harassment Policy](#)
- [YWCA Canada Mutual Respect Protocol](#)
- [Information on current National Board and Staff](#)
- [Recent Advocacy Campaigns and Policy Submissions](#)

YWCA Canada Nominating Committee

In accordance with the YWCA Canada By-laws, the Nominating Committee is responsible for preparing a slate of names for election to the National Board. This slate is presented at the Annual Membership Meeting (AMM) for consideration and voting. The Nominating Committee has additional responsibilities related to conducting annual surveys of National Board Members and working with the Board Chair to select Board Members for executive positions.

The Nominating Committee is a standing committee of YWCA Canada. Committee members are elected by members at AMM. The Chair of the Committee is a member of the National Board of Directors and is nominated to this position by the Chair of the National Board. The Nominating Committee includes five members. All five members of the Nominating Committee must have previous experience as a volunteer or staff member of YWCA Canada or a member association. These members conduct the nominating process, carry out interviews, and prepare a slate of nominees (in consultation with the National Board Chair). Current members are:

- Kate Nelischer (Chair)
- Lynne Kent
- Francine Piché
- Ann Martell
- Jennifer Harrington

Board Selection Criteria

The Nominating Committee carries out its work in accordance with the requirements for membership of YWCA Canada in the World YWCA, as outlined in the bylaws, which stipulates that “all directors of YWCA Canada will be women,” meaning who self-identify as women, and “at least twenty five percent of directors and of delegates to the meetings of the World YWCA will be young women.” Young women are defined as between the ages of 18-30 at the time of nomination.

A wide range of experiences and skills are needed on the Board. The YWCA seeks to ensure that the Board of Directors is inclusive and parallels the communities it serves and through responsive nomination practices the diversity of the YWCA leadership is increased. YWCA Canada is strongly committed to equity in its policies, practices, and programs. YWCA Canada supports diversity throughout the movement, including on its Board and committees, and especially welcomes applications from women of colour; First Nation, Métis, and Inuit women; Black women; women with disabilities; LGBTQIA2s+ women; young women, and others who may contribute to the further diversification of perspectives, skills, lived experiences and ideas. Nominees are welcome to self-identify as a member of any of these groups, or others, but are not required to disclose at any point if they do not wish to do so.

“From Intent to Impact – the YWCA Leadership Diversity Strategy” (2015) shapes the work of the Nominating Committee in selecting National Board nominees. Particularly applicable passages are excerpted below:

- Goal: “Enhanced equitable environments across the Movement that fosters the development of diverse leadership.”
- How: “The development of best practice templates relating to organizational and board policies, procedures and leadership recruitment strategies. The implementation of best practice templates developed by YWCA Canada across all Member Associations.”
- Actionable Results: “Identifying and removing structural barriers within YWCA Canada and its Member Associations. The adoption of Movement best practices.”

In addition to the sentiments noted above, the Nominating Committee reviews applications with the following criteria in mind:

Criteria	Basis
Diversity	<p>The National Board should be reflective of the communities served by the YWCA. When assessing the composition of the National Board, the Nominating Committee will consider representation by the following groups (however this list does not limit consideration):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racialized women • GenderQueer, non-binary, gender fluid and gender diverse people • Indigenous women and Two Spirit people • Black women • Women living with disabilities • Deaf women • Blind women • Women with low vision • LGBTQIA2s+ women • Young women (18-30) • Francophone women • Refugee and immigrant women • Women with lived experiences relevant to the work of the YWCA • Women fluent in French and/or Indigenous languages (in addition to English) <p>Directors must support YWCA Canada's commitment to equity in its policies, practices, and programs.</p> <p>Directors must support YWCA Canada's commitment to diversity and inclusion throughout the movement.</p> <p>Directors must demonstrate previous commitment to issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion through professional or volunteer work.</p>
Skillsets	<p>The following skillsets are generally accepted as necessary or desirable in order to provide guidance for the board and CEO. Not all board members must have professional experience and/or volunteer dealings in these areas (listed alphabetically):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti oppression/anti racism knowledge • Auditing • Community development • Finance • Fund Development • Gender Equity Issues • Governance • Housing and Real Estate • Human Resources • Legal • Marketing and Communications • Policy development • Risk Management • Strategic Planning

Values	<p>The following characteristics are of fundamental importance in the recruitment of new Board members:</p> <p><i>Commitment to Feminist, Womanist, and/or Gender Equality Issues</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors must be committed to the achievement of equality for women everywhere and should be knowledgeable about relevant issues and be prepared to support the YWCA advocacy positions. • Directors must be committed to volunteerism and understand the positive role of the voluntary sector. • The work of Directors is guided by feminist, womanist, and gender equity philosophies <p><i>Leadership</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors must have an ability to create a vision and a capability of devising strategies towards achieving the vision • Directors must have an ability to work towards a long term national perspective within a movement philosophy • Directors must be able to work collaboratively with fellow Board Members and partners <p><i>Integrity and Accountability</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors must have demonstrated high ethical standards and integrity in their personal, professional, and volunteer dealings, and must be willing to act on – and remain accountable for – their boardroom decisions. • Directors must understand the duties and responsibilities of a board of directors. • Directors must support inclusion and diversity with passion and compassion, and with courage • Directors should contribute to a Board culture characterized by integrity, diligence, and active participation. <p><i>Informed Judgment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors should be able to provide wise, thoughtful counsel on a broad range of issues. • Directors should engage in a practice of continuous learning and self-reflection. <p><i>Financial Contribution</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors should be willing to make a financial contribution to YWCA Canada (<u>only in line with their means</u>) as a demonstration of personal commitment and establishment of credibility if called upon to ask others to give. <p><i>Mature Confidence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors must value the performance of the Board as a whole over individual performance and should demonstrate respect for others in executing their responsibilities to the YWCA. <p><i>Time Availability:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors must be willing and able to devote the time and effort necessary to fully participate in the governance of the organization.
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Geographical representation	East and Ontario West North Quebec
YWCA / Board / Peer Organization experience	<p><i>Mission and Vision</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors must agree to support the organization's mission, vision, and goals, and its role in World YWCA, and demonstrate alignment with the mission, vision, and goals <p><i>YWCA/Board/Peer Organization Experience</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors should have prior involvement with YWCA Canada, whether at the local or national level, and whether as staff or volunteer • Up to 20% of the board can be composed of members who do not have previous YWCA experience. These Directors must have previous relevant experience and a strong commitment to the mission and values of YWCA Canada. These candidates will be considered only if the pool of candidates with YWCA experience does not meet the goals outlined in the Call for Nominations. <p><i>Membership</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors must be members in good standing of a Member Association within Canada at the time of election to the National Board
MA size and type	Small, medium and large Urban and rural
Age	25% of board members must be aged 18-30 at the time of their nomination, as required by World YWCA.
Language	YWCA Canada seeks to ensure representation on the National Board by women who speak English, French, and Indigenous languages.
Conflicts of Interest	National board members should not be current YWCA staff members.

Focus for 2021

This year, the Nominating Committee is specifically interested in recruiting a diverse slate of candidates with the following areas of expertise. However, this list is not intended to be exclusive and we encourage everyone who might be interested in a Board position to apply.

- Law and governance
- Finance
- Policy development
- Human resources

Support for New Board Members

The National Board is aware that joining a new board can be challenging. There is a lot of new information to take in, new processes to learn, and new people to meet. As new members come to the National Board with a wide range of previous experiences, the National Board supports new board members and works diligently to make them feel comfortable and empower them to ask questions and request support when needed.

New board members are provided with orientation packages that include information about the National Board, including responsibilities of board members, constitution, bylaws, and committee information. This is to be reviewed prior to the first National Board meeting in September (via phone). A new board member orientation session is also organized at the first in-person meeting (in November), which includes a presentation by existing board members and staff and opportunities to ask questions.

The National Board is aware that it takes new board members a long time to feel comfortable in their new

positions. Each new member is paired with an existing board member to provide mentorship and support throughout the first year of service.

Nominations

Interested candidates are requested to fill out the Nominations Package on the following pages and submit this (in Word or PDF format) along with an updated CV or summary of skills and experience, and any other relevant information candidates would like to share with the Committee.

Note that candidates must include contact information for two references. If the candidate has previous experience with a YWCA member association or peer organization, one of these references should be associated with the YWCA.

The deadline for applications is April 19, 2021. If you have any questions, please contact Kate Nelischer, Chair of the Nominating Committee, at knelischer@gmail.com. All applicants will be interviewed in May.

Nominations Package Board of Directors of YWCA Canada

Full Name:

Pronouns (note that sharing non-binary pronouns will not result in disqualification):

Email Address:

Phone Number:

Home Address:

Birthdate:

YWCA Member Association, and position (staff/volunteer):

If Candidate does not have previous YWCA Member Association experience, previous relevant experience is required.

References

Please provide two references. At least one must be a representative of YWCA (Member Association Board or Staff, or National Office staff) if you have prior experience with the YWCA.

Reference 1	Reference 2
Name:	Name:
Position:	Position:
Relationship:	Relationship:
Email:	Email:
Phone Number:	Phone Number:

Questions

Please limit responses to 100-200 words.

1. Why are you interested in serving on YWCA Canada's Board of Directors?
2. What skills and experiences will you bring to the YWCA Canada Board of Directors?
3. Please describe your understanding of the mission and vision of YWCA Canada, and any involvement you have had with the YWCA movement. If you do not have experience with the YWCA movement, please describe other relevant experience and your understanding of the YWCA mission and vision.
4. The work of the National Board is informed by feminist, womanist, and gender equity philosophies. Please describe how your professional and/or volunteer work incorporates these philosophies.
5. As noted in the Call for Nominations, YWCA Canada is strongly committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in its policies, practices, and programs. YWCA Canada supports diversity throughout the movement,

including on its Board and committees, and especially welcomes applications from young women 18-30, women of colour; First Nation, Métis, and Inuit women; women with disabilities; LGBTQIA2s+ women; and, others who may contribute to the further diversification of ideas. If you would like to self-identify as a member of any of these groups, or others, please do so below. Please note there is no requirement to do so.

Please attach your CV and any other relevant information you would like the Committee to review.