

Leadership Application for Election to the Dietitians of Canada Board of Directors: Board Director Role & Commitment Guide

This Backgrounder is intended to support anyone who is interested in applying to serve on the Dietitians of Canada (DC) Board of Directors to understand what the role involves, including responsibilities, expectations, and time commitment.

DC is committed to Indigeneity, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. This document is designed to promote transparency and reduce barriers by clearly outlining what serving as a Director entails, how decisions are made, and what supports are available. Prior Board experience is not required to apply.

This Backgrounder complements the Board Leadership Recruitment Call-Out and is intended to help members assess whether this opportunity aligns with their interests, experience, capacity, and lived or learned perspectives.

Board Mandate and Governance Model

The Dietitians of Canada Board of Directors governs the association in the best interest of its members and the dietetic profession.

The Board operates within a policy-based governance framework and is responsible for:

- Setting strategic objectives and priorities
- Providing oversight of organizational performance, financial stewardship, and risk
- Approving key organizational parameters (e.g., operating budget, membership conditions and fees)
- Hiring, supporting, and evaluating the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who leads day-to-day operations

The Board's role is strategic and oversight-focused, not operational. Directors are supported by DC staff and do not manage programs or employees directly.

Members are encouraged to review DC's by-laws and Board policies, available on DC's website.

Board Composition and Eligibility

As outlined in DC's by-laws:

- The Board includes **7–12 Directors** from across Canada
- Directors are elected by and accountable to DC members
- Up to **three non-dietitian, non-member Directors** may serve to bring specific expertise
- To support national representation, **no more than three Directors** may reside in the same province or territory

Directors serve **three-year terms**, beginning immediately following election at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Eligibility criteria are set out in the by-laws. Members who are unsure about their eligibility are encouraged to contact the Board Leadership Recruitment Committee to discuss their circumstances.

Director Responsibilities and Expectations

Directors share collective responsibility for governing the association and are expected to:

- Act in the best interest of DC and its members
- Participate in strategic discussions and decision-making
- Provide oversight of organizational performance and risk
- Prepare for and participate in Board and committee meetings
- Maintain confidentiality and manage conflicts of interest appropriately
- Engage respectfully and collaboratively with other Directors, the CEO, and staff, contributing to culturally safe, inclusive, and respectful spaces where diverse perspectives are welcomed and valued

Directors are not expected to have expertise in all areas. Orientation, mentorship, and ongoing Board education are provided to support learning and confidence in the role.

What Makes an Effective Director

There is no single profile of an effective Director. The Board benefits from a range of perspectives, experiences, and ways of contributing.

Effective Directors may bring:

- Strategic or systems-level thinking developed through professional, community, academic, or lived experience
- Commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility
- Willingness to ask questions, learn, and engage in thoughtful dialogue
- Ability to work collaboratively and respectfully
- Integrity, transparency, and accountability

Experience in governance, leadership, finance, or policy can be helpful, but is not required to contribute meaningfully as a Director.

Application and Election Process

Each year, the Board Leadership Recruitment Committee identifies skills and perspectives that would support the Board's upcoming work.

When recruitment opens:

- Members are invited to submit an application describing their interest, experience, and what they would bring to the Board
- Applications are reviewed by the Board Leadership Recruitment Committee using consistent criteria
- Candidates may be contacted for clarification or additional information
- Candidates are presented to members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM)

All Directors are elected by members at the AGM through **Ordinary Resolution**, in accordance with DC by-laws. Successful candidates begin their term immediately following the AGM.

The Application Form includes the following sections, which applicants will be able to provide narrative or bullet-point text for each section:

- Section 1: Contact Information
- Section 2: Candidacy Comments
- Section 3: Education
- Section 4: Work Experience
- Section 5: Board Work and Offices Held
- Section 6: Professional Activities
- Section 7: Scholarships, Awards, Bursaries
- Section 8: Experience with Corporate Finances
- Section 9: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

- Section 10: Language
- Section 11: Consent to Act as a Director
- Section 12: Final Comments

Candidate application materials (including resumes, identity disclosures, scorecards, and interview notes) are retained and disposed of in accordance with an approved records retention schedule. Access is restricted to the Recruitment Committee and only for the duration required to complete recruitment and governance review. Retention timelines and access roles are reviewed by Governance annually.

Time Commitment and Workload

Serving on the DC Board requires an ongoing time commitment. The estimates below are provided to support informed decision-making and to reduce uncertainty about expectations. Workloads may vary depending on the Board’s annual priorities.

Description of Commitment of Directors	Estimated Time Commitment
<p>New Director Board Orientation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-directed learning (e.g., review of By-laws, policies, Board orientation material) • Attend virtual orientation sessions delivered by current Directors, CEO and/or consultants • Ongoing mentorship and Board education will support skill development throughout each Director’s term 	<p>Total: 5-10 hours over the first few months after election as a new Director</p> <p>Scheduled orientation sessions occur primarily on weekdays during regular employment hours. Self-directed learning can be managed outside of regular employment hours.</p>
<p>Board Meeting Attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual meetings • In-person meetings (most often in Toronto, but location may vary as determined by the Board) 	<p>Total for Virtual Meetings: 2 hours quarterly</p> <p>Total for In-Person Meetings: 2-3 days quarterly</p> <p>Virtual Board meetings generally occur during regular employment hours. In-person Board meetings generally occur on weekends (excluding travel).</p>
<p>Dietitians of Canada In-Person Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Conference (late May/early June) 	<p>Total: 3 days per year (excluding travel)</p> <p>In-person events generally occur on</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other in-person events (e.g., Nutrition Month, regional conferences) 	weekdays during regular employment hours (excluding travel).
<p>Routine Board Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and respond to Board emails and working documents Pre- and post-Board meeting reading and preparation Participate in ad hoc working groups, committees or events Participate in ad hoc professional development (e.g., Board development, strategic planning) 	<p>Total: 5-10 hours per month</p> <p>Most routine Board responsibilities can be managed outside of regular employment hours.</p>
<p>Board Committee Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of working groups and/or committees will vary with each Board work plan Most Directors serve on two committees (e.g., Governance, Board Leadership Recruitment, Audit & Finance, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Committee) 	<p>Total: 3-8 hours per month</p> <p>Committee meetings may occur on weekdays during regular employment hours, as determined by each committee. Besides meeting times, most committee work can be managed outside of regular employment hours.</p>

Support, Orientation and Expenses

Serving as a Director is a volunteer role. Dietitians of Canada reimburses reasonable expenses incurred on behalf of the Board, in accordance with DC policy.

To support equitable participation, Directors are provided with:

- Structured orientation and onboarding
- Ongoing mentorship and Board education
- Administrative and staff support

Members with accessibility needs or questions about accommodations are encouraged to connect with the Board Leadership Recruitment Committee.

Questions and Additional Information

Members who have questions, would like clarification, or want to better understand whether serving on the Board is a good fit are encouraged to contact the Board Leadership Recruitment Committee at: BoardLeadershipRecruitment@dietitians.ca.

Conversations are welcomed and intended to support informed and inclusive participation.