



Board Special Resolution III.8:

Appointment of Members of the Board of Governors – Board Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Category: Board of Governors

Approval: Board of Governors

Responsibility: University Secretary

Date: June 22, 2012; Revised January 29, 2016; March 23, 2018; November 23, 2022 (housekeeping); December 6, 2024

Policy Statement:

As an organization in a diverse and multi-cultural country, Trent University embraces equity, diversity and inclusion and seeks to reduce traditional or systemic barriers to the appointment of individuals to serve on the Board of Governors and Board Committees. Among those who may face such barriers to serving as governors of major public institutions are members of Ethnic, Racial, Linguistic and Religious minorities, Indigenous persons, persons with disabilities, women, members of the Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer (2SLGBTQ+) communities and youth.

The Board is of the view that equity, diversity and inclusion of membership enhances the ability of a governing body to be responsive to the communities it serves, and to make balanced, creative decisions. As Trent University strives for excellence as an organization, it will promote equity, diversity and inclusion to fully utilize differences in backgrounds and perspectives in its governance structures.

While maintaining the primary objective of ensuring that members of the Board of Governors and its external committee members, on the whole, represent the necessary range of skills and experience required to lead a significant public sector institution, the Board is committed to working towards more equity, diversity and inclusion within its membership. Trent University aims to maintain diverse gender balance on the Board and to promote the participation of groups who are underrepresented on the Board and its committees. In this way, the Board will be more reflective of the membership of Canadian society and of the University itself. Trent University will work towards the removal or reduction of systemic barriers that may prevent the full participation of equity deserving groups in university governance.

1.0 Member Appointments:

Pursuant to Special Resolution II.1, the Nominating and Governance Committee directly oversees the nominations process for the at-large seats on the Board and Board committees. Nominations for the balance of the Board seats, save for the seats held by the President and the Chancellor, are generated by democratic elections

processes within the University Community.

2.0 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Goals

The Board sets for itself the goal of bringing a wider range of backgrounds, perspectives and information to the Board table by increasing opportunities for women, youth, Indigenous persons, persons with a disability, visible and non-visible minorities and members of the Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer communities to be represented on the Board and its committees. This will be achieved through the removal of traditional barriers to participation in university governance and finding ways to encourage participation from within these underrepresented groups.

3.0 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives

With respect to those seats for which nominations are directly managed by the Nominating and Governance Committee, the Nominating and Governance Committee will have, as its foremost aim, the nomination of persons who meet the skills requirements of the Board in a given year based on the Vacancy Profiles and Skills Matrix but, where attainable within the Matrix, the Committee will strive to achieve the following objectives:

- i. The Board will mindfully consider representation and inclusion of diverse genders with the goal of ensuring equitable representation including women, two-spirit, trans and non-binary community members;
- ii. As the governing body of an institution with a commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, the Board will have as its objective the appointment and maintenance of more than one governor who is an Indigenous person. Substantiation of Indigenous identity will follow other parallel Trent University policies;
- iii. As a university with a diverse student population and a thriving international student program, the Board will have as its objective the appointment and maintenance of multiple governors who identify as racialized;
- iv. To properly understand the needs of students who have a disability and enhance the educational opportunities for disabled persons, the Board will make an active effort to recruit persons with disabilities with the goal of the appointment and maintenance of multiple governors who have a disability;
- v. Founded on the ideals of equality and respect for the individual person, Trent University welcomes and supports members of the Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Queer communities (2SLGBTQ+). The Board will take positive steps to review the manner in which it seeks Board and committee members to accept that opportunities to serve on the Board of Governors come to the attention of members of the 2SLGBTQ+ communities;
- vi. Created by and for the communities in central Ontario, Trent University has long maintained a strong place economically, culturally and socially within this region. To ensure these strong linkages remain and to drive success for the University and the communities it supports, the Board will have as its goal to have representation of members from Central Ontario;
- vii. The Board will welcome nominations of candidates from “non-visible” underrepresented groups including Ethnic, Cultural, Linguistic and Religious minorities.

4.0 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategies

The Board will take the following steps toward achieving its diversity objectives:

- i. The Nominating and Governance Committee will undertake an annual survey of the composition of the entire Board, to achieve an annual 'snapshot' of the Board and to measure progress toward achieving the equity, diversity and inclusion objectives established within this policy;
- ii. The Nominating and Governance Committee will request that Board and Committee candidates complete the equity, diversity and inclusion survey upon application to the Board;
- iii. The Nominating and Governance Committee will review the existing and traditional strategies utilized by the Committee for Board recruitment to identify and begin to remove systemic barriers to the participation of underrepresented groups;
- iv. The Committee will actively seek nominations from within the communities that are under-represented on the Board. In doing so, the Committee will consider advertising Board vacancies to organizations who represent or advocate for these groups. The Committee may also consider inviting members of underrepresented groups to help the University identify strategies to bring about increased participation in governance;
- v. The Secretariat will aim to identify systemic and other barriers to participation by underrepresented groups in the election processes for internal appointments and, where necessary, revise these processes to encourage candidacies from members of these groups.

5.0 Board and Vacancy Profiles

Selection criteria for board and committee positions should be clear and publicly available through board and vacancy profiles. Board profiles identify the competencies needed by the board as a whole to achieve its mandate and strategies. Vacancy profiles set out the specific skills and qualifications needed by candidates to be considered and selected for an available position.

Profiles increase transparency by demonstrating that all candidates will be evaluated against the same criteria. The primary criterion is skill; the selection of board and committee members is first and foremost based on merit. Equity, diversity and inclusion is taken into consideration as a required element in the board profiles.

These profiles must be communicated to all applicants, and to staff, volunteers and board members involved in recruitment, screening, and selection of candidates. To reduce barriers to participation, board and vacancy profiles should be assessed in a way that is flexible enough to allow applicants to demonstrate the required skills through a range of experience and formal qualifications.

The Nominating and Governance Committee will identify the number of vacancies available in any given year in or about January and will be responsible for generating Vacancy Profiles based on the skills required by the Board and the equity, diversity and inclusion goals set within this policy.

Vacancy Profiles will, at a minimum, be announced and promulgated on the University's website and formal dates will be established for the receipt of nominations by the Committee for current vacancies.

Contact Officer:
University Secretary

Date for Next Review:
December 2027