



EFL Associates

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Board of Directors Frequently Asked Questions

What skills are you looking for in an ideal board candidate?

Each year, the board considers the skills, experiences and backgrounds of current board members and reflects upon the strategic direction of the organization. Priorities for board member recruitment are then developed, so the skills of an “ideal candidate” can shift from one year to the next. Regardless of specific skills, all board members are expected to fully engage at the governance level, support the [vision and mission](#) of the organization and align with the Foundation’s [core values](#).

What is my primary role as a board member, and what is the role of the MHF board in grantmaking decisions?

The board of directors is responsible for the overall governance of the Foundation. This includes approving strategic direction and fulfilling fiduciary obligations typical of a board. On occasion, the board will approve an investment because of its complexity or significance, to be compliant with our conflicts of interest policy, or because it is outside of the CEO's delegated authority.

What is the role of the board in defining funding strategies?

Missouri Foundation for Health has a full-time professional staff led by a CEO who develops and proposes strategic recommendations to the board. It is not the responsibility of the board to develop strategy; rather the board provides oversight and guidance in the strategy development process and ultimately has the responsibility to approve the organization's changemaking strategies.

What does a typical board meeting entail?

The board meets seven times each year. While the set of topics covered in each board meeting varies, the typical meeting follows a familiar format: an update from the CEO, reports on the financial health of the organization and progress against annual grantmaking goals and targets, and then discussion of some set of strategic issues or decisions the board must make. These could range from learning together about a strategically important topic like the state of Medicaid expansion within Missouri or it could be a discussion about a new strategic priority such as creating a new 10-year maternal health program, etc.

What are the current board committees?

Executive Committee, Finance Committee, Investment Committee, Programmatic Strategy Committee, Community Engagement Committee, Nominating Committee and Bylaws Committee.

How much time is required to become an effective board member and are board members compensated?

Although some months require more time than others, an effective board member will devote an average of 12 hours per month to board related activities. While directors serve without pay, they will be reimbursed for reasonable travel expenses associated with attendance at MFH meetings and events.

I don't live in St. Louis. How much travel is required for board members?

Although the MFH board meeting schedule is currently being reviewed, there have historically been six to seven board meetings each year held in St. Louis. While directors have the option of attending virtually, in-person attendance is preferred to enhance the board experience and build strong relationships among directors. In addition, board members are expected to travel to a two-day retreat that often occurs in St. Louis but in future years may also be held elsewhere in the state or the country.

Can I become a board member and still receive funding at my organization?

While being a grantee does not disqualify an individual from board service, the board takes great care to identify and manage conflicts of interest. A board member who is also a grantee would have clear conflicts of interest with respect to any MFH decision that would impact, favorably or unfavorably, the organization in which they are involved. Those conflicts must be disclosed and board members with conflicts are unable to participate in decision-making related to those conflicts.

How long is a board term?

Directors serve for terms of three years and can reapply for a second three-year term.

What should I expect during the board selection process?

Missouri Foundation for Health works with a professional search firm, EFL Associates, to assist in the board recruitment process.

- **Immediately:** Interested candidates should submit a resume and brief statement of interest to EFL Associates as soon as possible. All candidate material received before the application deadline will be reviewed by the search firm, and those who appear to closely align to the current recruitment priorities will be asked to complete a formal application.
- **August/September:** A subset of candidates will be interviewed by the Nominating Committee members in a 30-minute videoconference session.
- **October:** The Nominating Committee will submit a slate of candidates to the full board.
- **November:** Board members are elected.
- **January 2023:** New directors will start their first term.

What type of onboarding does a new board member receive?

The Foundation staff and current board members work together to provide an onboarding program for new members. Staff will organize learning sessions to orient new members to Foundation policies, procedures, current investment strategies, and the context in which the work unfolds. Board members are expected to help connect new colleagues within the committee structure and during board meetings.

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