



NEW ENGLAND FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS

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Board Member Position Description

The board will guide and support the work of the New England Foundation for the Arts and provide mission-based leadership and strategic governance. While day-to-day operations are led by NEFA's Executive Director (ED), the strategic oversight of the Board is both critical and expected.

Specific Board Member responsibilities include:

Leadership, governance and oversight

- Review and approve mission and plan and ensure the organization adheres to those guidelines in all of its work
- Appoint an Executive Director (ED) who will steer the organization according to its mission and identify new opportunities for growth and development
- Work with the ED to develop a leadership agenda regarding organizational growth, programs, and strategies
- Perform an annual evaluation of the ED assuring her/his work aligns with the direction of the organization as set by the board
- Guide and support the ED as s/he implements NEFA's strategic plan
- Review outcomes and metrics created by NEFA for evaluating its impact in building a healthy infrastructure for the arts in New England, and regularly measuring NEFA's performance and effectiveness using those metrics
- Review outcomes, metrics, and performance of NEFA's portfolio of national and international programs.
- Identify and develop opportunities and resources that will maintain and grow the organization and its programs
- Approve NEFA's annual budget, audit reports, and material business decisions
- Develop and approve policies related to fiduciary, legal and mission responsibilities
- Assist the ED, Board Chair and Trustees Committee in identifying and recruiting new board members
- Partner with the ED and fellow board members to ensure board resolutions are carried out
- Serve on one or more board committees or task forces (described below)
- Represent NEFA to stakeholders; acting as an ambassador for the organization

Structure

The Board of Directors is led by four officers; chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer. Board members are nominated for these positions at the annual summer meeting, where they must be approved by the full board. These four officers and up to two at-large members form the Executive Committee which governs the board.

Six (6) seats on the board are held by the Executive Directors of the New England State Arts Agencies (SAA). They serve as ex-officio members by virtue of their state positions. The remaining members of the board are placed in nomination by the Trustees Committee and elected to the board at the annual meeting.

Board terms/participation

Elected directors serve a term of three (3) years and are limited to serving three consecutive terms, unless otherwise designated by the Board of Directors and until his or her successor is elected and qualified.

The full year calendar for board and committee meetings is presented at the annual summer retreat. The board will meet 3-4 times per fiscal year (June 1-May 31). The annual meeting is held in the summer in locations throughout the six New England states on a rotating basis. Unless otherwise noted, all other meetings of the board and committees will be held at the NEFA offices at 145 Tremont Street, Boston, MA.

Members will be apprised of the location and logistical details for the summer retreat by early spring to accommodate travel planning. Notice of any change in schedule shall be given to all members at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting date.

Members are expected to attend (in person) a minimum of 2 board meetings per year. Members should contact the Executive Director or Board Chair when not able to attend a meeting. If a board member's attendance falls below 50%, the member, Executive Director and Board Chair should meet to discuss the conflict and determine the member's ongoing commitment to the board.

In the first two years of participation, members will be asked to attend one of NEFA's flagship events, Idea Swap or the Creative Communities Exchange (CCX), or a NEFA grants panel meeting. Members are encouraged and expected to attend NEFA sponsored events and supported performances/events throughout the calendar year. NEFA staff will regularly invite board members to events and NEFA supported work that will be of special interest to the member or organization.

Committee Membership

Service on the NEFA Board of Directors includes full participation on one or more of the following committees.

- Executive Committee consisting of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and up to two at-large members. The Executive Committee sets the priorities for the board and committees and reviews all motions prior to presentation to the full Board of Directors. The executive committee is responsible for ensuring NEFA and its Board of Directors are performing in alignment with the organization's bylaws.
- Trustees Committee which is charged with researching, vetting and nominating new candidates for the Board of Directors. The Trustees Committee is also responsible for overseeing membership and board transition matters.
- Finance & Audit Committee evaluates and maintains the annual budget of the organization and the performance of NEFA's audit.
- Investment Committee oversees the investment strategies for the organization and advises the Executive Director and Executive Committee on new opportunities.
- Development and Communications Committee will advise NEFA on developing concise and effective messages as part of NEFA's brand. The committee will encourage board participation in supported events, and facilitate conversations around annual giving and broader resource development.

It is the purview of the Executive Committee to convene ad hoc committees around special programs or projects.

Annual Giving and Fundraising

Elected Board Members should include NEFA among their philanthropic priorities and make annual gifts that reflect their significant commitment. So NEFA can credibly solicit contributions from foundations, organizations, and individuals, NEFA expects to have 100% of Board Members make an annual contribution at a personally significant level.

Members will be asked to act as ambassadors and connectors for NEFA in the advancement of program specific and unrestricted fundraising. Board members should make introductions or provide connections to individuals, corporations, foundations and other philanthropic institutions and may be asked to generate resources beyond current NEFA fundraising relationships in order to strengthen the arts in New England and beyond

Qualifications

Directors shall be persons esteemed for their beneficial influence in one or more of the states served, for their knowledge of or active concern for the arts, or for their administrative, managerial or other expertise.

Ideal candidates will have the following qualifications:

- Extensive experience and leadership accomplishments in the arts, creative economy, business, government, philanthropy, media, or nonprofit sectors
- A commitment to and understanding of NEFA's constituencies, preferably based on experience
- Savvy diplomatic skills and a natural affinity for cultivating relationships and persuading, convening, facilitating, and building consensus among diverse individuals
- Personal qualities of integrity, credibility, and a passion for supporting the work of NEFA.

Compensation

Service on NEFA's Board of Directors is without remuneration. If a board member is asked to represent NEFA at an event or meeting, beyond normal board service as outlined above, NEFA may pay or provide a stipend to cover reasonable travel costs.

Board members should contact the Executive Director and Board Chair in the event of a change in financial security or other extenuating circumstances which would prohibit full participation. Special accommodations may be made on a case by case basis.

Mission Statement

NEFA's mission is to build connections among artists, arts organizations, and funders, powering the arts to energize communities in New England, the nation, and the world.

Founded in 1976, NEFA is one of [six regional arts organizations](#) established with funding from the [National Endowment for the Arts](#) to strengthen the national arts infrastructure by cultivating the arts on a regional level. Today, NEFA's programs are regional, national, and international in scope, and support artists and communities through grants and other opportunities in dance, music, theater, and public art. All aim to provide access to high quality arts experiences for the underserved, including projects that feature artistic expressions from diverse cultures and geographies.

Each program and project that is brought to life at NEFA is created with the underlying goal of building a stronger and more dynamic infrastructure for the arts. Convenings, network building, online tools, and a 30+ year history of data-driven research on the economic impact of the arts are essential complements to NEFA's grantmaking.

NEFA is a grantmaker, program initiator, aggregator of resources, and builder of creative partnerships among artists, arts organizations and funders. Our work is generously supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, the New England state arts agencies, foundations, corporations, and individual donors.

For more information, please visit NEFA's website at www.nefa.org.