



# EMCN

supporting  
newcomers  
to thrive

# EMCN Board of Directors Recruitment Information Package

## 2021 - 2022

# EMCN Board Director

## Role Description and Responsibilities

The Edmonton Centre for Newcomers (EMCN) is seeking members for its Board of Directors.

### ***Am I the right person to join EMCN's Board?***

Are you passionate about the role of immigrants and newcomers and their contribution to the social and economic fabric of Edmonton? Do you get excited by helping connect people with the services and training and programs that support their success? Do you want to help some of Edmonton's newest community members thrive in their new hometown? If so, please read our mission and vision, which guide the work of the organization.

### ***What does a Board member do?***

**A Board member needs to have time to devote to their involvement.** As a Board member, you may contribute 4-10 hours a month, depending on the meetings scheduled and the roles you take on. This includes, but is not limited to, attending board meetings (every second month), actively participating on committees, attending special events or EMCN programs, taking part in educational workshops, and attending the annual Board Strategic Retreat in October and the Annual General Meeting in June.

The Board develops and implements policies and strategies that will drive the operations of EMCN. The Board of Directors is the legal authority for EMCN. As a member of the Board, a Director acts in a position of trust for the community and is responsible for the effective governance of the organization. Board members also contribute some specialized skills, such as knowledge of finance, fundraising, legal matters, facilities management, and human resources.

### ***What does this look like in practice?***

You might join the Governance Committee that oversees the recruitment and make-up of the EMCN Board and ensures the board's policies and bylaws are up to date and being followed. In this Committee, you can **offer your creative ideas about how to attract and recruit diverse board members** that fulfill the needs of the agency. You may also be interested in policy writing and implementation, which is another core responsibility of the Governance Committee. Or you might **attend a Language Instruction for New Canadians (LINC) class at our newly renovated 82<sup>nd</sup> Street location** to understand a major piece of programming that EMCN offers and what that means for its long-term planning and financial needs. At board meetings, **you might have the position of Secretary and work with management** to create inclusive agendas that help the board to stay on track and work together in an equitable manner.

### ***What's in it for me?***

By serving on a board, you meet other like-minded people in the community who are devoted to the support of newcomers to Edmonton. This is an opportunity to grow and engage your existing networks around issues of immigration and newcomer settlement and integration. You also gain skills in policy-making, governance, leadership, and community accountability.

### ***Still interested?***

Read on to learn more about the day-to-day work of EMCN and our Board.

## ABOUT EMCN

The Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers (EMCN) is a non-profit charitable organization serving newcomers and all Canadians in Edmonton.

EMCN was founded 40 years ago by members of the Mennonite church to help Vietnamese refugees settle in Edmonton. Today EMCN is one of the largest newcomer-serving agencies in Alberta, providing non-denominational holistic support for up to 17,000 newcomers per year as they embark on their settlement journeys. EMCN provides language classes and childcare for newcomers learning English, employment training and transition supports, settlement services and counselling for families and in-school support for newcomer students, and many community development programs. EMCN is part of the C5 partnership, a collaborative of five social profit agencies working together to serve the community.

### *Mission*

To enhance the quality of life for Newcomers and all Canadians.

### *Vision*

We see a future where many citizens walk with newcomers to bridge their transition into the community. To achieve this vision, we will serve as a key catalyst and leading collaborator in positively shaping the attitudes, behaviours and practices of organizations and individuals to value the diversity that newcomers bring to the community.

### *Values*

Our goal is to create a society that is based on the dignity of every human being. We do this through our values:

- Social Justice
- Diversity
- Compassion
- Responsibility

Our goal is to create a high functioning and diverse board that is representative and inclusive of the community members we serve.

Individuals with lived experience as newcomers or refugees to Canada are highly encouraged to apply.

## POSITION OVERVIEW

As a part of EMCN's volunteer board, Directors are pivotal in helping steer the organization toward achieving its strategic goals. We would expect to see a Finance specialist support the work of the Audit and Finance Committee, with the option to also support the Human Resources and Governance committee.

Community member Directors are elected for a term of three (3) years with an option to renew for one additional term (maximum of 6 years on the Board).

Directors must hold an individual EMCN membership throughout the duration of their term. (Membership is free and you can apply at any time.) Membership is provided for free upon interest and support of the work of EMCN.

Board Directors adhere to policies and bylaws in coordinating sound ethical and legal governance and financial management practices for the organization, including approving the annual budget and ensuring the organization has sufficient resources to achieve its mission.

The mandate of the EMCN Board of Directors is to:

- (a) Safeguard and enhance the interests of EMCN and its members by:
  - (i) Recruiting the Executive Director
  - (ii) Monitoring the performance of the Executive Director
  - iii) Setting governance policies
  - (iv) Performing succession planning for directors and key executive positions
  - (v) Monitoring the financial performance of the organization, including internal controls
  - (vi) Setting and adhering to ethical standards for the organization, including when the standards apply directly to the conduct of the board itself
  - (vii) Reporting periodically to the members regarding EMCN's activities
- (b) Ensure the organization adheres to all laws, regulations, and the articles of incorporation.
- (c) Advise and assist the Executive Director in the direction of EMCN including:
  - (i) Develop and approve the organization's vision, mission, and values
  - (ii) Develop and approve the organization's long-term goals and objectives
  - (iii) Periodic risk assessment
  - (iv) Approve the organization's business plans.
- (d) Advise and assist the Executive Director in other areas as requested by the Chair or Executive Director.

## **SKILLS & EXPERIENCE**

Directors must demonstrate understanding of board governance roles and responsibilities, interest in advocating for newcomers, and willingness to use current and new networks to support newcomers and the strategic goals of EMCN.

We are a diverse staff and board, and we work with clients and students from varied races, cultures and religions. What we have in common is a passion for social justice and intercultural understanding. EMCN actively seeks to promote diversity on our Board of Directors and to be inclusive of multiple perspectives.

## **WHAT DOES A BOARD MEMBER DO AT EMCN?**

Members of the board commit to attend bimonthly board meetings (in-person and/or virtual) from September to June, with meetings generally occurring in September, November, January, March, and May. Directors are expected to attend the yearly Annual General Meeting held in June and the annual Strategic Retreat in October.

Directors contribute by serving on standing committees: Governance, Audit and Finance, and Human Resources. While we do sometimes require specific skill sets to support the agency in these areas, most often the best board members are those who are new to an area and willing to ask curious questions!

Board Directors are also invited to represent EMCN at other functions or events throughout the year. For example, in the 2021-2022 year, you may be invited to meet with an elected official to tour one of EMCN's sites, attend a collective Board meeting with C5 partner board directors, participate in a special planning committee for EMCN's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, or present a staff member with a long-service award at the annual holiday celebration.

Being a Board member is a great way to develop new skills and build your knowledge. You will be given the opportunity to learn about and attend some of EMCN's programs, events, seminars, or other trainings throughout your time on the board.

## TIMELINE

Deadline to apply is January 31, 2021.

We are accepting applications for volunteers looking to join the Board in June 2021. Interviews will be conducted in February-March 2021.

All shortlisted candidates will be invited to join a Board meeting in April 2021 as a non-voting member and will then be presented for election at the AGM in June 2021.

## MORE INFORMATION

For more information, please contact Leah Cavanagh (she/her), Executive Coordinator at [lcavanagh@emcn.ab.ca](mailto:lcavanagh@emcn.ab.ca) or 780-977-3029. We will send you a full board member job description.

If you would like to learn more about what it is like to be an EMCN Board Director before choosing to submit an application, please join us for an Information Session where we will share the current work of the board with you and you will have the chance to ask your own questions. Let us know if you want to attend an info session and we will send you the details.

We are also happy to arrange a phone call or in-person/virtual meeting (depending on your preference and the public health recommendations in place). You can talk directly with a current Board member to better understand the role of the Board. This is a chance for you to learn about what Board members do and how your experiences can contribute to the Board's work.