

Library Board of Trustees Frequently Asked Questions

What is the North Vancouver City Library Board and what do they do?

The purpose of the Library Board is to manage, regulate and control the library service, and carry out responsibilities associated with maintaining and supporting the library. The Library Board is responsible to Council to ensure the delivery of high quality library services that meet the needs of the community. The Library Board prepares and upholds the mission, vision and values of the library through a strategic plan. The Library Board represents the citizens' interests, advocates for the library and upholds the Canadian Library Association's Statement of Intellectual Freedom. Members of the Library Board, called trustees, serve two-year terms, to a maximum of four terms.

What are some reasons that I might want to become a trustee?

As a trustee, you are able to give your time and talent to the library because you want to help us make a positive difference in our community. People join our board because they personally believe in and feel committed to the library, and because our mission and vision resonates with them. Serving on our board offers an opportunity to meet interesting people, work as a part of a dedicated team united with a sense of common purpose, and gain experience in public sector governance.

What qualifications do I need to become a trustee?

We expect our trustees to be team players, excellent communicators, and conscientious and reliable attendees. Strong connections in our community are a great asset. Specific skills (e.g. financial knowledge, policy development, strategic planning, human resource management) are also very helpful, but are not a requirement. You do not need to have advanced levels of education to be an effective trustee – just the dedication, energy and willingness to donate your time!

How much time will I need to commit to being an effective trustee?

The Library Board has monthly meetings that trustees are required to prepare for and attend (except August and December). Trustees are also encouraged to serve on one or more committees which may meet between scheduled board meetings. These activities are mutually agreed upon between you and the board leadership. Additionally, trustees usually attend significant program and fundraising events.

On average, a board member can expect to give at least 10 hours of their time per month, although this can vary depending on the activities of the Board and the commitments you make. In addition, new trustees may need extra time to familiarize themselves with Board policies, library activities and foundational documents. We want prospective trustees to think realistically about how much time they will have to fulfill the expectations of our board.

If I am a trustee, will I be required to make a monetary donation to the library?

We do not require you to make a personal monetary donation if you are a trustee; however, we do expect participation in other personally meaningful ways if not financial. If you are unable to make a personal monetary donation, your time and energy to assist in fundraising is still always needed.

As a trustee, will I be expected to help fundraise and cultivate potential donors?

Every trustee acts as an ambassador of information and good will in the community, which builds the library's reputation and motivates people to support the library. We may have some trustees directly approach potential donors, and others will be involved in the library's fundraising events. Some trustees may contribute expertise to grant applications, for example, or co-present to community groups.

Do trustees get paid?

No, this is an unpaid volunteer position. Compensation for costs associated with your duties as a trustee, such as childcare costs, can be arranged if required. Training and development opportunities are fully funded within an annual budget.

If I am appointed to the Library Board, what kind of training will I get in order to learn how to be a good trustee?

As a member of BC Library Trustees Association, we will support your initial training through a Trustee Orientation Program (TOP), taking a comprehensive look at the roles and responsibilities of library trustees in BC. In addition, there is a general orientation with the Chief Librarian and the Board Chair, a Board manual to refer to and ongoing learning opportunities throughout your term.