



The *Girls on Boards* initiative will change the leadership of community and volunteer boards by placing community minded, motivated and trained young women between the ages of 18 and 25 on Boards across the country.

To ensure success for both the young women and the Boards, participants will be coached via special access to the *DiverseCity onBoard program* at *Ryerson University's G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education*. They will then be assessed and placed on social profit/not-for-profit volunteer boards across Canada for a term of at least one year and have a mentor on that Board to help her navigate her way through.

Together, the participant, coach and mentor will receive a professional development opportunity courtesy of G(irls)20; Gender Based Training (3 hour course).

#### **Who and what are we looking for?**

1. Young Canadian women who demonstrate an eagerness to contribute to their community and country, but are lacking the necessary skills and/or access to opportunities to do so on their own;
2. Coaches with at least 2 years of Board experience, who will dedicate 2 years (1<sup>st</sup> year intensive, 2<sup>nd</sup> year on an ad hoc basis) to advising one participant in terms of being on a Board; and,
3. Social profit and not-for-profit community and volunteer boards across Canada in a variety of disciplines, who believe in empowering women through inclusion and access. These Boards are asked to welcome a young woman to serve for a term of at least 1 year.

#### **Why is this important?**

*Girls on Boards* addresses the need to position leadership at a young age as something that is attainable and beneficial and not as an exception. Outside of school, there is little opportunity for young women to join recognized and sanctioned leadership roles.

For a variety of reasons, it is unreasonable to expect young people to participate on corporate boards or secure elected government positions, eliminating those kids of leadership opportunities. However, young people can serve on community boards. Volunteer boards are an ideal training ground for leadership. The program participants will learn about civic duty, governance, fiduciary responsibility, and the power of social change. Sitting on a volunteer board will also build foundational leadership skills like consensus building, impact and influence, and so much more.



The lack of access to meaningful leadership opportunities impacts both young women and community boards. *Girls on Boards* will address the issue from both perspectives.

**Objectives:**

1. To reduce the barriers for young women to access and participate in meaningful community leadership roles; and,
2. To increase the capacity of community and volunteer boards to be more inclusive and effective.

**Outcomes:**

1. Enhanced skills, knowledge, confidence and community networks of young women;
2. Establish and maintain a pipeline of:
  - 1) Board leadership positions; and,
  - 2) Eligible and prepared young women.
3. Placement of young women to appropriate Boards with a view of impacting the way that Board operates internally and externally (recruitment, governance, policy making and granting);
4. Amendments/improvements to Board policy or practice to include young women;
5. Raise the profile of the advantage of including young women on Boards; and,
6. Offer Gender-Based-Analysis training to Boards, coaches and participating young women.

**If you are interested in becoming a coach or recruiting a board member please apply online at <http://www.girls20.org/programs/girls-on-boards/>. Additionally, please email your questions to Alexa Feldberg at [girlsonboardscanada@gmail.com](mailto:girlsonboardscanada@gmail.com).**