



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Girls on Boards?

Girls on Boards, a new initiative of G(irls)20, is placing community minded, motivated and trained young women between the ages of 18 and 25 on social profit/not for profit volunteer boards across the country. These young women will complete the *DiverseCity onBoard* program at Ryerson University's G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education, then be assessed and placed on Boards across Canada for a term of at least one year. Each participant will be assigned a coach who has Board experience to help her through her training, and then a mentor who is currently on the Board she will join.

Why is this program important?

Girls on Boards addresses the need to position young female leadership as 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 many reasons, it is unreasonable to expect young people to participate on corporate boards or secure elected government positions, eliminating those kinds of leadership opportunities. However, young people can serve on volunteer community boards.

Volunteer boards are an ideal training ground for leadership. These young Canadian women 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.

What are the criteria for participants?

- Canadian female between the ages of 18-25;
- Eagerness to contribute to their community and country;
- Agree to complete the *DiverseCity onBoard* program at Ryerson University's G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education (costs covered by G(irls)20); and,
- Agree to complete Gender Based Analysis Training (costs to be covered by G(irls)20).

What are the criteria for coaches?

- Canadians with at least 2 years of Board experience;
- Able to dedicate 2 years (1st year intensive, providing 5 hours of coaching per month; 2nd year on an ad hoc basis);
- Enroll in and assist their participant through completion of the *DiverseCity onBoard* training program at a cost of \$250 (as a graduate, coaches will have the opportunity to be matched to a Board by *DiverseCity onBoard* at no cost); and,
- Participate in a 3-hour Gender Based Analysis Training (provided by G(irls)20).

What are the criteria for Boards?

- Social profit / not for profit and/or volunteer board based in Canada (can operate internationally);



- Ability to welcome a young woman to serve for a term of at least 1 year;
- Agree to designate a member of your Board (male or female) to serve as a mentor to the incoming young woman to help with her onboarding and pre and post Board meetings; and,
- Committed to inclusion and diversity and as such, agree to participate in a 3 hour Gender Based Analysis Training (provided by G(irls)20).

How long is the commitment for Boards/Coaches/Participants?

- **Participants:** Training (about 12 hours to complete the on line course between June and August); Board involvement (a minimum one year); working with a coach (up to 2 years).
- **Coaches:** 2 years; year one will require a commitment of approximately 5 hours per month. In the second year, we request availability for ad hoc check-ins with the participant. A coaching program will be provided for your ease.
- **Boards:** 1 year term (i.e. September 2017 – September 2018, depending on when your board sits).

Does the Board have to be a registered charity?

No, the Board does not have to be a registered charity but it does need to be incorporated and have a functioning Board of Directors.

Will G(irls)20 cover all fees for the young women?

G(irls)20 will cover all fees associated with training, matching and coaching. Once the participant is on the Board costs associated with Board inclusion will follow the policies of the Board in terms of per diem, travel, training etc.

Why is Gender Based Analysis Training a part of the Girls on Board program?

Gender Based Analysis Training (GBAT) is a development opportunity and we are pleased to offer this training and investment in those who wish to be a part of the program. GBAT ensures that all participants, coaches and mentors are on “equal footing” with respect to the principles (and benefits) of gender equality in the workplace and community.

How is the program being funded?

As a charitable organization, G(irls)20 works in partnership with several partners to secure funding and content. Girls on Boards is funded by The Government of Canada (Status of Women), 2Social, Ardene, Avana, Bain & Company, D2L, Edelman, Norton Rose Fulbright, and Sakto Corporation.

Where are Future Board Members located in proximity to their coaches and the Boards they will join?

Future Board Members are based all over the country. The coaches and their participants do not have to be in the same place as they can work with one another via phone, Skype,



email etc. The participant and their Board will be in close proximity, so that the participant may attend all Board meetings in person.

What is the DiverseCity onBoard program?

DiverseCity onBoard is an online governance training program. It is created to provide participants with the appropriate skills, knowledge and resources to make an effective contribution on governance boards, while building their own leadership skills. The program consists of 7 courses with 3-4 modules in each. The subject matter ranges from Board Essentials to Legal Roles and Responsibilities to Strategic Planning.¹

How are participants assessed in order to match them with a Board?

The young women will go through this program with their coaches, and after completion of both the program and a separate working schedule with their coaches, the coaches and the Girls on Boards staff determine whether this young woman is ready to be placed on a Board, and subsequently which Board she will be placed on.

Future Board Members as well as Boards fill out an in-depth application, and we use this information as well as knowledge from the coaches and our staff to match Boards with the young woman who is best suited for them.

What are the responsibilities of a coach?

The coach participates in an intensive 5-week program with the young women which includes the DiverseCity onBoard training, as well as a series of exercises that focus on skills development and leadership. After this program, the role of the coach becomes one of support for the young women as they move onto their Boards. This relationship remains in place for the duration of the time each woman is on her respective Board.

What are the responsibilities of a mentor?

The mentor's role is to assist with on-boarding these women - providing them with knowledge of the other board members, the way their particular board functions, how their meetings are run etc. The mentor should sit with the young women at the meetings, and debrief with them afterwards. They will participate in quarterly online forums with G(irls)20 staff, as well as assist the young women in looking at an issue the Board has, through a gender lens.

Does the board need to advertise a specific position, or can this be left open until the young woman joins the Board?

The participant must be given a seat on the Board, but her specific task can be decided upon between your Board and the participant.

¹ DiverseCity onBoard program. Girls on Boards: Governance Training Sign-Up Guide. 2017.



Do the Boards get input in the selection process?

This can be discussed on an individual basis. Girls on Boards is open to including Boards in the selection process if they wish, but only once our staff have chosen the young women we think would be the best fit for your Board.

Are there assurances that the young woman will complete the Board term?

All participants will sign a contract stating that they will participate in the full program. This will ensure that the participants remain in their positions until the year is up.

What happens if the young woman decides to leave the program mid term?

Girls on Boards is an ongoing program, if your participant must vacate her seat during the term on her own accord, for some extenuating circumstance, and your Board would like to continue with the program, we can work with you to bring a new young woman in to fill the seat.

What if the Board is unhappy with the performance of their participant?

If the participant is not meeting the expectations of the Board, Girls on Boards will work with participants and their mentors to create an action plan for deliverables and expectations from the Board. Participants will be responsible for reporting their contributions to their mentors, and will be subject to evaluation as per the Board mandate.

The Board application indicates that the Board must nominate the participant – what happens if the Board does not accept her?

If your Board is agreeing to be part of the program, then the young woman must be accepted. Please ensure that all members of your Board agree to participate in this program before submitting an application.