



ORGANIZING FOR SUCCESS BOARD LEADERSHIP AND OVERSIGHT

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Bait and switch

From “You love the arts, come help out, it’s easy and fun, we have great people, we only meet a couple of hours each month”

... to “We need the board (= you) to raise funds, solicit for donations, open doors with sponsors”



Why do so many arts organizations have a board of directors?



Structure	Incorporation		
	Yes	Maybe	No
Business	✓		
Partnership			✓
Sole proprietorship			✓
Not-for-profit	✓		
Charity		✓	
Collective	✓		
Collaborative / Joint Venture			✓
A “project” housed by another org			✓



Not-for-profit ≠ charity

- **Incorporation filling**
- **Minimum 1 board member**
 - If public funds > \$10k = 3
- **No automatic tax exemption**
- **Can fundraise, but no receipts**
- **Can access public arts funding, but not grants via foundations**
- **Exists for many purposes (society, associations, clubs, sports, arts, civic improvement)**
- **Constitution and Bylaws or Incorporation**
 - Incorporation creates a separate legal entity from individuals involved
- **Minimum 3 board members**
 - Minimum 50% arms length
- **Tax exempt**
- **Income tax receipt**
- **Qualified donee status enables foundation grants**
- **Exists for specific purpose (poverty, education, religion, specially defined)**

GST/HST and Charities: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/forms-publications/publications/rc4082/gst-hst-information-charities.html#P263364028>

Board governance

Volunteers only

- **Hands on**
 - Designs and runs programs to meet mandate
 - Recruits and supports volunteers
 - Financing

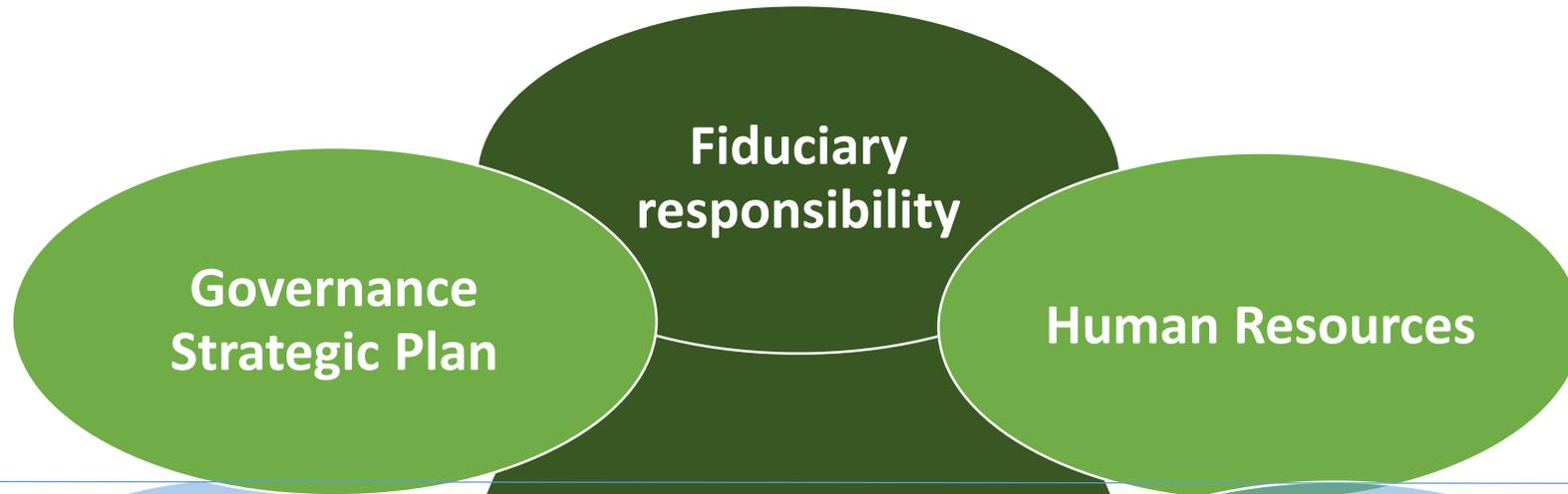
With paid staff

- **Hands off, Nose in**
 - Oversight and strategic direction to meet mandate
 - Recruits Executive Director and delegates authority

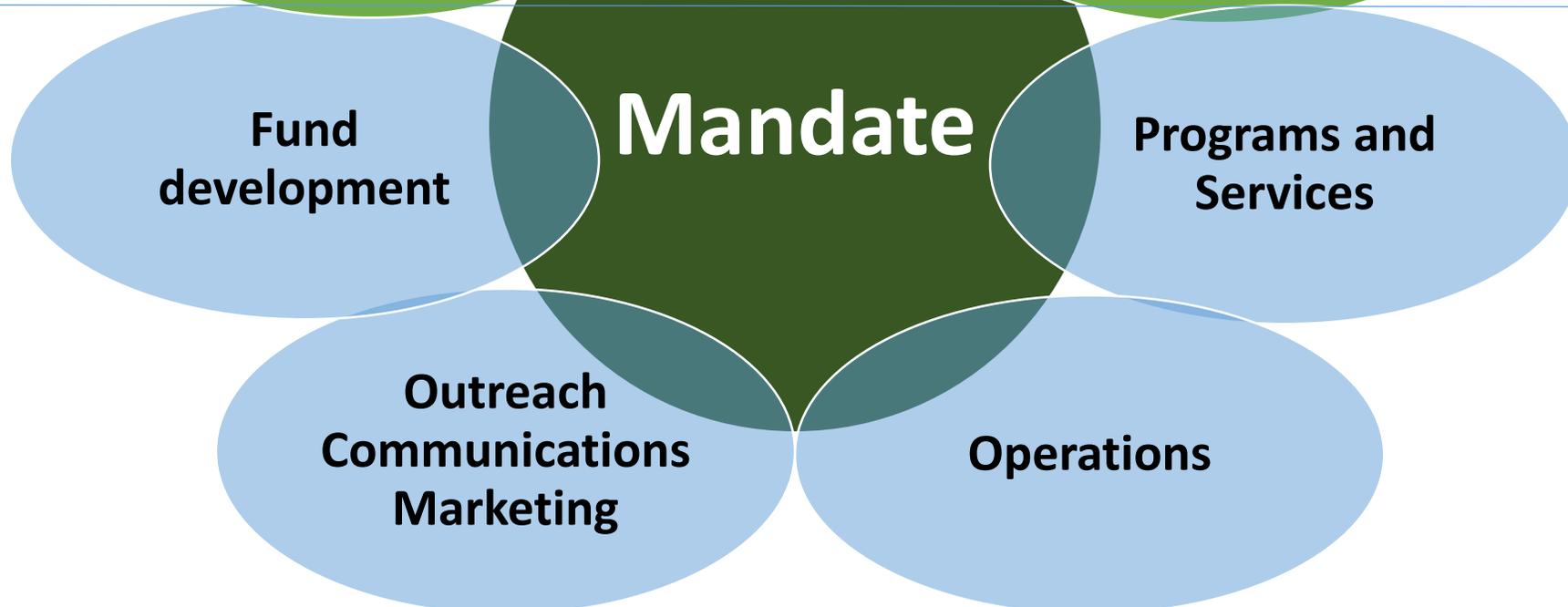


Roles

Board



Staff



What kind of board do you want to be on?

- Working board (volunteer only)
- Working board (paid staff)
- Fundraising board
- Governance board

Effective arts leadership

Purpose-driven: make peoples lives better in tangible ways

- **Bold visions**
- **Cooperative communities**
- **Collaborative mindset**
 - **Inventive and innovative**
 - **Pragmatic and persistent**
 - **Community relevant**



Human nature or Canadian cultural trait?

- **Dissent is hard, Conflict is harder**
- **Beware the yeah-sayers and habitual devil's advocates – both can get in the way of functioning well, and exercising critical and analytical thought**
- **How you run meetings is important**
 - Time for conversation
 - Time for accountability reporting
 - Time for progress on plans and priorities



Leadership and Values

- **Leadership**
 - From the top, from behind, from out of left field
- **Skills and expertise**
- **Values**
 - E.g. Respect, inclusivity, reciprocity, generosity



What about HR?

- **Structure**
 - Two-headed (Often problematic)
 - Arts-led (Intuitive choice for small & medium orgs)
 - Manager-led (Beneficial in very large orgs)
- **Staff roles, responsibilities and authorities, accountability**
- **Volunteer recruitment and retention**



Improv rules (in reflection mode)

1. **Agree (Accept the words others say)**
2. **Don't only say "YES" but "Yes, AND ..." (Never say No and instead expand on the conversation and shape, reshape, build on points being made)**
3. **Make statements (Own it! Say: I think, I feel, I want)**
4. **There are no mistakes only opportunities (That is for reflection mode, not decision mode)**

= Your formula for active listening





Applying this way of working
can have unexpected results 😊

Reflection = Active Listening

- **Everyone speaks once before anyone speaks a second time.**
- **You can pass.**
- **Before anyone speaks a third time, everyone has spoken at least once.**
- **Ask questions about what someone else says, rather than asserting your point of view in response.**
- **Stay on topic.**



Need an agreed-on process for decision-making

Policy framework

**Strategic Plan / Strategic planning and
evaluation process**

Community need vs personal pet project





Let's stay in touch

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