

Purpose Qualifications for Board Director Recruitment

For organizations with a social purpose, director recruitment should consider whether candidates bring the commitment, knowledge, experience and judgement needed to help the board effectively govern and steward the organization's purpose. Not every director needs to bring every qualification. The goal is to ensure the board collectively has the purpose competencies needed to provide effective oversight and leadership.

Purpose Qualifications

Purpose Alignment

Demonstrates personal alignment with and commitment to the organization's purpose and values. Is prepared to uphold the purpose when difficult decisions, tensions and trade-offs arise.

Purpose Governance Competency

Understands the board's role in governing and stewarding purpose, including oversight of how purpose is embedded in strategy, risk, performance, culture and decision-making.

Purpose Subject-Matter Competency

Brings knowledge, experience or insight relevant to the societal issues the organization's purpose addresses. Understands the broader context surrounding these issues and can contribute informed perspectives to board discussions and decisions.

Purpose Stewardship

Has the passion, knowledge and aptitude to steward the organization's purpose over the long term. Understands the importance of protecting the integrity and ambition of the purpose as the organization and its operating environment evolve.

Constructive Challenge

Is willing to question assumptions, decisions, practices or behaviours that could undermine the organization's purpose. Welcomes different perspectives and brings independent judgement to assessing whether the organization's actions are consistent with its purpose.

Purpose Leadership

Models the organization's purpose and values through their own conduct and decision-making. Contributes to a board culture in which purpose is routinely considered, discussed and used to guide decisions.

Using the Qualifications

These qualifications can be used to inform director position profiles, board competency matrices, recruitment criteria, candidate assessment and interviews. They can also help boards identify gaps in their collective purpose competency as part of board succession planning.

Reference: Canadian Purpose Economy Project, [Purpose Governance Guidelines for Boards and Governance Professionals](#), 2024.

About the Canadian Purpose Economy Project

The Canadian Purpose Economy Project exists to accelerate the transition to the purpose economy. It engages national ecosystem actors to create an enabling environment for social purpose businesses to start, transition, thrive and grow. We are grateful to Coast Capital, our Founding Purpose Champion, for their support. The Canadian Purpose Economy Project is a program of Canadian Business for Social Responsibility Education Foundation. Subscribe for updates at: <http://www.purposeeconomy.ca> and sign our [Call to Purpose](#) to help advance social purpose in business.