

Hillside Festival
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Dear Hillside Board candidate,

If you love community and music and are interested in becoming part of one of the best festivals around, please take some time to read through this recruitment package.

This package outlines what it means to be a member of the Hillside Festival Board of Directors; it contains general information about the organization, including logistics and human resources. If you have any questions, please contact the Hillside Nominating Committee via the Executive Director (executivedirector@hillsidefestival.ca). We welcome your questions!

Sincerely,

The Hillside Festival Nominating Committee

Reflections from Past Hillside Board Members

At the close of my first year sitting on the board of directors for Hillside I can reflect back and see that this experience has provided me with a great deal of personal satisfaction and pride. Having already experienced a wide range of connections to Hillside, (such as being a patron, a volunteer, a kin, and a coordinator) I wanted to increase my involvement to a new level. Being on the board of directors has allowed me to fully appreciate the details of the organizations and understand the level of effort and skill required to run a successful yearly event. Meeting regularly for the past year has kept the fervour of the festival alive and kept me connected to the community, reminding me what matters most in life. I count this as an experience that enriches my view of Hillside.

~ Jon Beharry

Serving on the Hillside Board provides a whole new way to appreciate this amazing festival. It's given me a keen awareness of the many ways Hillside gives back to the community, and a solid understanding of the work done by our great staff and volunteers all year round. It turns out the special Hillside feeling that keeps people coming back is the result of a huge conscious effort year after year. I'm grateful for the opportunity to help guide the process along with the rest of the dynamic group of directors.

~ Carol-Ann Betz

Board membership means commitment—measured not just by time, but also through Hillside's vision and values. It involves decision-making, consensus-building and collaborative effort—with the recognition that Hillside doesn't just happen. It is a group effort with contributions, roles and responsibilities shared by many.

Being a board member is a merger of work and fun and your opportunity to contribute to Hillside in a significantly meaningful way.

~ Karen Calzonetti

Each new Board member arrives at this exciting leadership role with different expectations and departs with a wonderful understanding of Hillside, yet all have one common goal: to enhance both our Hillside community and our community at large. We hope this interests you and you will consider running for the Hillside Board of Directors.

ABOUT THE HILLSIDE FESTIVAL

Mission Statement

The Hillside Community Festival is a not-for-profit music festival that celebrates creativity through artistic expression, community engagement, and environmental leadership.

Vision Statement

Hillside will create a more vibrant and caring world by promoting altruism, equality, environmentalism and peacemaking in every aspect of its work.

What we do:

- Hold two major events per year, one each in summer (July) and winter (January/February).
- Hold off-season concerts, workshops, and educational opportunities at other times of the year, and co-present similar activities with other partner organizations (such as Guelph Dance Festival, Guelph Jazz Festival, Guelph Film Festival, Eden Mills Writers' Festival, University of Guelph CSA and UC Programming).

How do we do it:

- ~\$1.6 million dollar annual budget.
- 1300 volunteers.
- 4 full-time staff; 4 part-time staff/contractors; 3 seasonal staff.
- Up to twelve-member volunteer **governance** board with diverse ages, backgrounds & expertise.

Awards we've won:

- 2024 "Best Accessible Tourism Event Award" - Tourism Industry Association of Ontario
- 2024 "Best Small Festival in Canada" - Canada Live Music Industry Awards
- 2023 - Sustainability in Tourism Award - Tourism Industry Association of Ontario
- 2023 - "Festival of the Year, Green Operations" - Canadian Music Week
- 2019 Clearwater Award from *Folk Alliance International* for environmental stewardship and public leadership in sustainable event production
- 2018 - 2019 Best Greening of a Festival Award from *Festivals & Events Ontario*
- 2018 Best Fundraising Idea from *Festivals & Events Ontario*
- 2017 Volunteer Program of the Year Award from *Festivals & Events Ontario*
- 2017 Ontario Volunteer Service Awards were awarded to six of our volunteers
- 2017 Ontario Youth Volunteer Service Awards were awarded to three of our volunteers
- 2016 Best Green Operations Festival Award from *Canadian Music Week*
- 2008 - 2016 Best Greening of a Festival Award from *Festival & Events Ontario*
- 2015 Family Volunteering Award from *Festivals & Events Ontario* awarded to the Perissinotto family
- 2015 Frank Valeriot's Volunteer of the Month Award awarded to Bree Woods
- 2014 Honour Roll Award from *The Grand River Conservation Authority* for "a sustained record of achievement over an extended period of time."
- 2013 Volunteer of the Month from *Festivals & Events Ontario* awarded to Justin Peterson, Coordinator of the celebrated Dishwashing Crew

Hillside is consistently lauded for being a standout in Canada's festival scene, both in our outstanding and diverse lineups, and our commitment to environment and community.

Hillsiding in winter: Hillside Inside

Hillside Inside began in 2008 as a single-day music event in the Sleeman Centre arena. In 2011, it was moved to several smaller downtown venues, becoming a longer and more varied celebration of music and culture through performances, workshops, films, and family-friendly activities. In 2012, it

moved to a two-and-a-half-day festival, encompassing music, dance, drumming, storytelling, workshops, and a variety of winter activities.

VOLUNTEER STRUCTURE

Board

- Includes three Executive positions or officers of the board: Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- Has an Executive Committee that includes the officers and a member-at-large.
- Each Director is normally elected for a term that is three years. Board members may stand for re-election once their term is complete. No director may serve on the Board for more than nine years consecutively.
- Decides policies and plans high-level strategy and future planning.
- The Hillside Board is considered a **governance** board rather than an operational board, ensuring clear roles as responsibilities for the boards, the staff and committees.
- Makes decisions based on majority vote.

Current Board Members:

Mandy Schnurr (Chair)	Hazel Wheeler
Nicola Inglefield (Treasurer)	John Leacock
Erin Harvey (Secretary)	Kristen Bowman
Brett Friesen	Liv Cazzola
Brittney Blackman	Luke Weiler
Carmen Chui	Robert Leader

Committees

- **Hillside Board Committees** recommend and institute Hillside Festival policies with Board approval. Board Committees are comprised of members of the Board, chaired by a Board member, and may also include staff or other volunteers with relevant expertise. Standing Board Committees include Executive, Finance, HR, Nominating, and By-Laws. Each Board member is expected to sit on at least one Board Committee in addition to the Board itself.
- **Hillside Operational Committees** support and enhance the capacity of staff in doing the work of the organization. Board members do not typically sit on Operational Committees, unless one has specific expertise or interest: at the discretion of staff, a Board member may sit on an Operational Committee in their capacity as a volunteer and community member, not as a Board member. Operational Committees include Volunteer, Fundraising, Risk Management, and Sustainability, and other working groups such as Site, Artwork Selection, Alcohol Logistics, Craft and Food Vendor Selection, and Workshops Selection.

Coordinators

- Plan, implement and evaluate activity in a specific area of festival operations.
- With the assistance of crew leads, they train, schedule, and oversee area volunteers.
- Over 60 coordinated areas comprise festival operations.

General Volunteers

- The summer festival has ~1300 volunteers
- Hillside Inside has a roster of ~60 volunteers

STAFF STRUCTURE

The Hillside Festival has four full-time, permanent year-round staff. They have job descriptions, a clear reporting structure, regular reviews, and a lively work culture.

Executive Director - Kate Johnston

- Manages big picture timeline of the festival's administration and operations.
- Responsible for financial management, grant writing and development.
- Arranges for sponsorship.
- Responsible for human resources; manages the staff.
- Responsible for risk management.
- Reports to the Board of Directors.

Artistic Director - Samir Baijal

- Arranges festival music programming, including bookings and scheduling.
- Arranges for artists' needs on site.
- Manages festival operations as they relate to artistic and technical concerns.
- Takes lead on festival promotions.
- Reports to the Executive Director.

Operations Manager - Madison Hill

- Manages day-to-day operations of the Festival's office.
- Manages ticket distribution and sales tracking.
- Manages festival operations through support of many areas of the festival, including Site, Gate, Calm Zone, Parking, Merchandise, Bars, etc.
- Manages customer relations.
- Reports to the Executive Director.

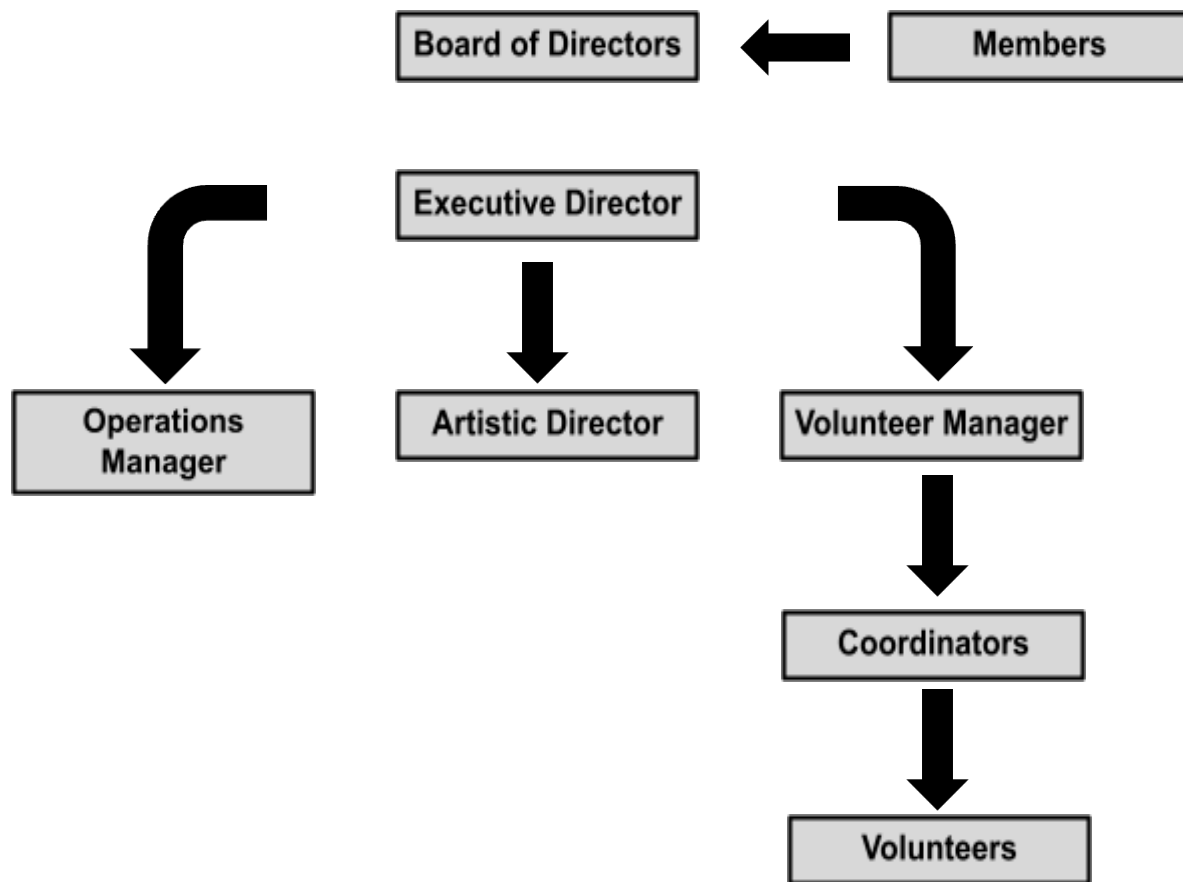
Volunteer Program Manager -

- Manages festival coordinators for both events.
- Evaluates and reports on volunteer policy, procedures and issues.
- Helps to manage festival operations through support of coordinators.
- Reports to the Executive Director.
- Manages and maintains the database.

Summer Students

- The festival customarily receives funding to hire summer students to assist with festival operations. These positions are typically 8-14 weeks, full-time, and always dependent on the availability of funding.

OVERALL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE:



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director requirements:

- To have been elected to the Board of Directors at the Annual General Meeting or to have been appointed by the Board in the case of a vacancy;
- To maintain a current Hillside Festival membership in good standing;
- To maintain a commitment to the mission, purposes, and objectives of the Hillside Festival.

General Roles and Responsibilities:

- **To establish the organization's mission, vision and direction**
 - Vision and values
 - Mission and philosophy
 - Strategic planning
 - Programs and services
 - Evaluations
- **To ensure the financial health of the organization**
 - Responsible for ensuring there are adequate financial resources for the work of the organization
 - Responsible to review recommendations from the Finance Committee, approve the annual Hillside Festival budgets, and assure rigorous stewardship of Hillside assets;
- **To ensure the organization has sufficient and appropriate human resources**
 - Responsible for the working conditions in the organization
 - Responsible for hiring, giving direction to and evaluating the senior staff person
 - Responsible for ensuring the existence of a Nominating Committee
- **To direct organizational operations**
 - Responsible for ensuring that the organization and its directors are in compliance with its legal requirements
 - Responsible for ensuring that the board works effectively
 - Oversees organization structure and agency administration
- **To ensure effective community relations**
 - Respond to the changing needs/pressures in the community
 - Find new ways to meet the needs
 - Use marketing and public relations

But what does it really mean to be on the Hillside Board?

- The Board of Directors meets year round, the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm for approximately two to three hours at the Hillside office, 341 Woolwich St. Guelph. At the time of preparing this package, we typically meet in-person however a virtual attendance option is always available.
- Directors are to attend all Board meetings or give reasonable due notice to the Board Secretary when unable to attend meetings. Dismissal may result (per the Hillside bylaws) if Board members are absent from three consecutive Board meetings;
- Each Board member must be on a minimum of one Board Committee;
- Each Board member must attend the Hillside Summer Festival at Guelph Lake Island, and Hillside Inside in downtown Guelph.
- The officers of the board are nominated and elected at the first board meeting after the AGM;
- Each Board member is expected to attend leadership meetings (i.e., Coordinator meetings);
- Each Board member must attend any Board governance training meetings and/or retreats;
- Board members act as ambassadors of the festival, drumming up both support and enthusiasm for the festival among community members, patrons, and potential sponsors.

Benefits to the Hillside Board of Directors include but are not limited to:

- Providing strategic direction to the organization;
- Contributing to big-picture planning and strategic visioning;
- Supporting a professional staff;
- Giving back to your community;
- Making great connections;
- Attending the Hillside Festival in July with an all-access pass, gratis volunteer food, a leadership volunteer t-shirt.
- Attending Hillside Inside concerts/events for free (board member ticket). Hillside Inside is a young festival that struggles to balance its budget, so board member contributions through ticket purchases are highly valued.
- Getting to know and work with lots of wonderful people!
- Seasonal celebratory board and staff meetings;
- Attending other Canadian festivals via the exchange of passes between festivals at no cost for the passes (subject to approval and availability)

I want to be on the Board! What do I do now?!

- Please submit an application by emailing executivedirector@hillsidefestival.ca with your name and a 100-200 word bio and/or statement on your suitability for and interest in standing for the Hillside Festival Board of Directors. **The deadline for submissions is October 23, 2026, for your application to be circulated among the membership in advance.**
- You may also have someone nominate you in person at the AGM, when the open call for nominations is announced.
- If you accept your nomination, your name will appear on the election ballot at our next Annual General Meeting held on **Wednesday November 25, 2026.**
- Each candidate will have 2 minutes to introduce themselves to the membership, who will elect the next Hillside Festival Board of Directors.
- The Board Executive (Secretary, Treasurer, and Chair) will be elected by the new Board at the first board meeting following the AGM.

What are those dates again?

- **Wed Oct 14, 2026** - 7 pm, via Zoom; information session for interested prospective candidates. Contact the Executive Director to receive the Zoom invitation.
- **Fri Oct 23, 2026** - Deadline for submissions of interest from candidates whose profiles will be circulated among the membership in advance of the AGM.
- **Wed Nov 11, 2026** - deadline for the purchase of a 2026/2027 membership in order to stand as a candidate for the Board (Membership is \$25, or \$5 if you have participated as a volunteer at the prior summer festival. Purchase memberships here: <https://store.hillsidefestival.ca/product/membership/>)
- **Wed Nov 25, 2026** - Hillside Festival Annual General Meeting. Details and meeting timing and location TBA.

For more information or to confirm your membership and volunteer fee payment status, contact the Executive Director at executivedirector@hillsidefestival.ca