

Board of Directors Nomination Package

Mission Statement

OPIRG Peterborough works to create and sustain student and community-based engagement through research, education and action on social justice and environmental issues; challenging oppression in all its forms; and using consensus-based decision making in a non-hierarchical and accessible setting.

Diversity & Access is a Priority at OPIRG Peterborough

OPIRG is working towards diversifying its membership at all levels particularly the Board. We encourage people from under-represented groups, as well as people with a strong anti-oppression analysis, to put forth a nomination. These include, but are not limited to, those who are racialized, people with disabilities, queer and trans folk, and others who face systemic barriers to full participation.

Some OPIRG Peterborough History

Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs) were initiated by American consumer activist Ralph Nader during the early seventies, as he encouraged students on university campuses in the United States and Canada to create campus-based organizations that could facilitate the teaching and use of activist skills by students. Currently, there are PIRGs at university campuses in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Alberta and British Columbia. The PIRG in Peterborough was created by students in 1976 through a campus-wide referendum.

Over the years, OPIRG Peterborough has provided students with a dynamic place to apply their knowledge, passions and energy to address issues of public concern, while benefiting from training, support, and opportunities that build leadership skills and empower students to become active citizens.

What We Offer

- Student jobs
- Volunteer and Board member opportunities
- Class placements, for high school, undergraduate, or graduate programs
- Free Market and Green Dishes programs
- Events and Workshops (Vegan BBQ, Winter Clothing Drive, Disorientation Week)
- Professional development training in anti-oppression and consensus-based decision-making
- Funding for community initiatives
- A space and resources for working groups

For more details on OPIRG's work, check our website at opirgptbo.ca.

OPIRG Peterborough Membership

OPIRG Peterborough is a campus-based, community-oriented incorporated non-profit organization that receives its core funding from a refundable levy that is paid by all full time Trent undergraduate students. After paying their student levy fees, all full time students are members of OPIRG Peterborough. People who did not pay the levy fee (part-time students, graduate students and community members) can also become (associate) members of OPIRG Peterborough by paying the fee equal to the OPIRG levy. We realize that not everyone believes in the goals of OPIRG Peterborough so we do allow students the ability to request a levy refund.

What Does the OPIRG Board Do?

The OPIRG Board of Directors is comprised of 7 individuals. Most often, Board Members are Trent students, but faculty, community members, and former staff/interns/volunteers/researchers, as well as those with no previous OPIRG experience are also encouraged to apply. A maximum of 3 members of the Board can be non-students. OPIRG Peterborough works as a non-hierarchical organization.

The role of the OPIRG Board is to:

- Support OPIRG's projects and support the work of the Working Groups, and Committees;
- Be part of the planning, visioning and setting of priorities for the organization;
- Be responsible for the organization as defined by the Corporations Act, OPIRG bylaws and policies, and

the Board Contract;

- Be the employer as defined by the Collective Agreement with CUPE 1281;
- Be responsible for the financials of the organization;
- Work collectively with the staff to oversee the work of the organization.

Board Members cannot receive any remuneration for their work with OPIRG.

No experience is necessary to join the Board of Directors, but some skills and experiences are an asset:

- Ability to work well and communicate within a volunteer based, grassroots, non-profit setting;
- Experience with consensus decision-making;
- Experience with drafting policy;
- Conflict resolution skills;
- Experience working with students and/or community groups.

You Can Gain Skills!

Many skills can be gained or improved through your participation on the Board. These include:

- Consensus decision-making skills;
- Successful meeting facilitation skills;
- Administrative and computer skills;
- Education on various social and environmental justice issues;
- Non-profit organizational skills;
- Financial management skills;
- Anti-Oppression skills;
- Leadership skills;
- Program coordination skills and project development skills.

How Much Time is Required?

The Board of Directors requires a time commitment that varies weekly, which must fulfill:

- Minimum of 2 hours a week in service of the organization to take place in the OPIRG office;
- At least 1 year on the Board, normal commitment is 2 years;
- One 2-hour meeting or training every other week (must be able to stick to a meeting schedule that will change at the beginning of every semester);
- Participation in committees and take up Board Portfolios.

Committee Work

Committees are part of the ongoing work of each Board Member. Some examples of committees are: budget, hiring, specific events, policy review, volunteer coordination, outreach, etc.

OPIRG Board Members are expected to communicate respectfully with each other, staff members, volunteers, OPIRG general members and the greater community. They are expected to represent OPIRG Peterborough in a fair and accurate manner at all times, and clearly distinguish their own opinions from those of OPIRG. Board Members are not to express opinions on behalf of the organization unless specifically given leave to do so.

Once you become a Board Member, you are also responsible for the following:

- Abiding by OPIRG constitution and bylaws, policies and the collective agreement;
- Fulfilling your portfolio and/or committee responsibilities;
- Preparing for meetings, which involves being aware of the agenda, as well as reading and responding to correspondence in a timely fashion;
- Communicating reasons for meeting absence(s) and giving adequate notice (a Board Member who is absent from three sequential Board of Directors' meetings at which they were scheduled to attend *without* one day prior notice will be removed from the Board as per OPIRG Peterborough's bylaws);
- Acting in accordance with the principles of consensus decision-making;
- Acting in accordance with anti-oppression principles (working against such things as racism, homophobia, sexism, classism, ableism, transphobia, colonialism, etc.)

You are also required to be familiar with OPIRG Peterborough's:

- Working Groups, Projects and Committees;
- Mission Statement;
- Collective Agreement;
- Bylaws;
- Budget and Financial Statements;
- Policy Package.

Nomination & Election of OPIRG Board of Directors

Overview:

If you are interested in being on the OPIRG Board, you will need to fill out a nomination form and submit a copy to OPIRG staff in person or at opirg@trentu.ca.

If you would like to be appointed to the board before our Annual General Meeting there is no timeline to submit your application, but if appointed you will still need to be voted in by our membership at the next Annual General Meeting.

Nomination Eligibility

- In order to be eligible to be an OPIRG Peterborough Board Member, nominees must be current members in good standing of the Ontario Public Interest Research Group, Peterborough.
- Members in good standing fall into two categories:
 - Student members: full time, undergraduate Trent students who has paid the OPIRG Peterborough levy fee and who has not requested a levy refund. Student members also include part-time and graduate students who pay the OPIRG Peterborough fee equal to the levy;
 - Community members: anyone who is not a Trent student, but has paid the OPIRG Peterborough fee equal to the levy.
- Any person who is a member of another chapter of the Ontario Public Interest Research Group is not eligible for membership in OPIRG Peterborough.
- There are seven positions on the Board. A maximum of three positions are available to community members on the OPIRG Peterborough Board.
- You will need to get signatures of 5 members (levy-paying students or associate members) and answer some questions about why you want to be on the board. Your nomination form must be signed by you.
- An electronic copy or hard copy of the nomination package must be submitted to OPIRG staff in person or at opirg@trentu.ca by the deadline. Upon receiving the completed form, a receipt will be issued to you.

Nomination Interview with 2 current Board members

Meetings times and locations will vary according to the availability of existing Board Members. During this meeting the current Board Members will clarify election procedures and requirements, discuss OPIRG Board responsibilities and time commitment, and other information. To set up this meeting, email opirg@trentu.ca.

- If you are interested in being on the Board, you need to set up a meeting with one or two existing members of OPIRG Peterborough Board of Directors. **This meeting is mandatory for all candidates.**
- The existing Board Members shall interview applicants and choose appointees based on:
 - Parity of the Board (OPIRG Peterborough strives to ensure broad and adequate representation of historically marginalized groups on the Board);
 - Demonstrated commitment to the mission of the organization;
 - Whether minimum requirements for student membership on the Board has been reached.

Leaves, Nominations & Appointments of OPIRG Directors Between Annual Elections

Board Leave of Absence (i.e.: if you must leave OPIRG temporarily over the summer)

As per OPIRG's Bylaws:

- Board Members may receive, at the discretion of the Board, up to 4 consecutive months' leave of absence from the Board. A Board Member may not receive leave for consecutive terms, and may not receive more than 2 leaves in a 2 year period;
- In practice, Board Members may request a leave of absence if they are unable to fulfil their commitment to be on the Board during the summer months.

Interim Board of Directors (i.e.: if you would like to join the Board over the summer)

As per OPIRG's Bylaws:

- Board Members may appoint interim Board Members in order to fill vacancies made by Board Members' leaves of absence. The term of interim Board Members shall not exceed 4 consecutive months unless specified by the Board of Directors;
- Interim Board Members shall fill in the attached nomination document, which includes the mission statement of OPIRG Peterborough, signatures of 5 members of OPIRG, and the signature of the person so nominated;
- Two existing Board Members shall interview applicants and choose appointees based on the following qualifications:
 - Parity of the Board (OPIRG Peterborough strives to ensure broad and adequate representation on the Board of historically marginalized groups);
 - Demonstrated commitment to the mission of the organization;
 - Whether minimum requirements for student membership on the Board have been reached.
- The Board of Directors shall make the final decision to appoint interim Board Member(s) during a Board Meeting.

Filling Vacant positions on Board of Directors

As per OPIRG's Bylaws

- Except for the yearly Election of Board members, qualified OPIRG members who have been appointed by the Board of Directors may fill vacancies on the Board, so long as more than half of the Board remains in office.
- If there are fewer than half of the Board left, the remaining Board Members need to call an election to fill the vacancies (see OPIRG Bylaws for details).
- Candidates wishing to fill vacancies on the Board of Directors shall fill in the attached nomination document, which includes the mission statement of OPIRG Peterborough, signatures of 5 members of OPIRG, and the signature of the person so nominated.
- Two* existing Board Members shall interview applicants and choose appointees based on the following qualifications:
 - Parity of the Board (OPIRG Peterborough strives to ensure broad and adequate representation on the Board of historically marginalized groups);
 - Demonstrated commitment to the mission of the organization;
 - Whether minimum requirements for student membership on the Board have been reached.
- The Board of Directors shall make the final decision to appoint Board Member(s) to fill vacancies on the Board during a Board Meeting.

* If two Board Members are not available, a special resolution may be passed for the Board to appoint only one Board Member to conduct the interviews.



OPIRG Peterborough Board of Directors Nomination Form

Should you require any help or accommodation in filling out the forms or typing up the answers to the following pages, please contact OPIRG Peterborough's Coordinator at opirg@trentu.ca We will be glad to help.

For details regarding the nomination process or the eligibility criteria, please refer to OPIRG Peterborough's Nomination Package.

Date: _____

Name: _____

Student number (if applicable): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Membership:

- Full time undergraduate Trent student who has paid the OPIRG Peterborough levy and not received a refund
- Part time or graduate Trent student who has paid a fee equal to the OPIRG Peterborough levy
- Community member who has paid a fee equal to the OPIRG Peterborough levy

I have read and understand OPIRG Peterborough's mission, values and the responsibilities of being a Board Member.

I agree to abide by these and wish to put myself forth as a nominee for the Board.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Have you read OPIRG's nomination package in its entirety?

Yes No

Do you agree with and commit to abiding by OPIRG's values, policies and mission statement?

Yes No

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please submit the below information with your name and contact information to opirg@trentu.ca and submit a printed and signed copy to the OPIRG office. Should you require any help or accommodation in filling out the forms or typing up the answers, please contact OPIRG Peterborough's Coordinator at opirg@trentu.ca We will be glad to help.

A few sentences or a paragraph or two will suffice for the answer to each question.):

Why do you want to be a Board Member of OPIRG Peterborough?

What plans do you have for your term on the OPIRG Board?

What do you understand social and environmental justice to be? What social and environmental justice issues are you passionate about?

Which of the following governance skills do you possess that would help with the board:

- a) financial skills;
- b) reporting activities and accountability to membership;
- c) creation of policies;
- d) representing membership;
- e) activities in the Provincial network of which OPIRG Peterborough is a part;
- f) being an employer – hiring and setting wages for workers
- g) visioning and strategic planning;
- h) organizational skills such as project management;
- i) volunteer management and programming

Which of those skills would you have the capacity to develop in the next two to three months with the mentorship of an outgoing board member?

What life experiences do you have that will contribute to your work as a Board Member of OPIRG and the diversity of the organization?

Please also submit a candidate statement for use in election materials:

Nomination Signatures

Nominees must submit to OPIRG the name, student number (where applicable) and signatures of 5 members in good standing approving their nomination.

With my signature below, I declare my nomination for OPIRG Peterborough Board of Director

[candidate name] _____

[candidate signature] _____

I further certify that my membership in OPIRG is in good standing. For more information on what it means to be in good standing please see the **Nomination Eligibility** section of the **OPIRG Nomination Package**.

Name

Student Number

Signature

Must be a full time undergraduate Trent student who has NOT received a levy refund, OR a part time or graduate Trent student or community member who has paid the equivalent (indicate "CM" for Community Member, "PT" for part time or "GS" for grad student)

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____