



# 2026 Call for Board of Directors

Applicant FAQs

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# Board of Directors Service Terms and Elections

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## **How long do board members serve?**

Board members serve three-year terms and may serve up to three terms, for a total of nine years.

## **What is the average tenure of board members?**

Most board members serve all three consecutive terms. We ask board members to plan to serve at least two three-year terms.

# Board Composition

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## **What is the overarching governance structure for 10,00 Degrees? What is the current composition of the Board of Directors, and how does it fit into the broader governance structure?**

The 10,000 Degrees Board of Directors is composed of up to 35 voting members who provide strategic oversight and fiduciary governance for the organization. Board members bring a wide range of expertise across higher education, community colleges, K-12 systems, finance and investment management, philanthropy, law, corporate leadership, technology, and community-based organizations. The board also includes individuals who were the first in their families to attend college, and alumni of 10,000 Degrees' programs.

Geographically, members live and work across Marin, Sonoma, San Francisco, the East Bay, the Peninsula, the South Bay, and Napa County, with some bringing broader statewide and national perspectives. This regional representation helps the organization stay closely connected to local contexts, students, partners, and educational ecosystems.

In addition to the voting Board of Directors, 10,000 Degrees also recognizes a group of Honorary Board Members (24 individuals). Honorary members are celebrated for their longstanding contributions; they do not serve as part of the governing board.

The organization's governance structure also includes six Regional Advisory Boards (Marin, Sonoma, San Francisco, Contra Costa, Napa, and Peninsula & South

Bay), which serve as standing committees of the Board of Directors and help advance regional visibility, partnerships, and community-based engagement.

### **What perspectives, backgrounds, or experiences are priorities to add to the board through this search?**

10,000 Degrees seeks 3–5 strategic, values-driven leaders who bring strong networks, regional influence, and governance maturity to support the organization’s continued growth and student impact. Priority is placed on leaders who can strengthen philanthropic capacity, provide thoughtful board-level oversight, and help guide the organization through periods of growth and resource stewardship. The board is particularly interested in leaders with deep ties to key Bay Area communities, senior leadership experience in higher education or education policy, and perspectives grounded in the experiences of the students it serves. Across all backgrounds, ideal candidates bring a collaborative, low-ego leadership style, sound strategic judgment, and a deep commitment to advancing educational equity.

### **How large is the board currently, and what is the anticipated size after the 2026 search?**

Currently, the 10,000 Degrees Board of Directors consists of 26 voting board members. Through this search, 10,000 Degrees seeks to add 3–5 board members to help strengthen and expand its leadership.

### **Does the board include opportunities for young professionals?**

While there is no separate young professionals board, 10,000 Degrees encourages early and mid-career leaders to apply for its Board of Directors and Regional Advisory Boards. 10,000 Degrees aims to build a Board of Directors and Regional Advisory Boards that reflect many life and career experiences, and welcomes emerging generational voices that bring fresh perspectives, new ideas, and important insights into the future of college success to apply.

# Board Meetings, Time Commitment, and Logistics

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The Board of Directors meets bi-monthly, barring summer months, in a hybrid format, with members joining either virtually or in person in San Francisco, CA. In-person attendance is encouraged whenever possible.

In addition to these meetings, board members are expected to attend an annual in-person board retreat hosted in the fall.

## **What is the board committee schedule and location?**

Board committees meet regularly throughout the year, barring summer months, with most meetings held virtually to accommodate members across the Bay Area and beyond. Committee schedules vary by function—some meet monthly, others quarterly or annually—depending on their responsibilities. Meeting dates are set in advance on an annual master calendar, allowing members to plan accordingly.

While most committee meetings occur via Zoom, occasional in-person gatherings may be scheduled when beneficial for discussion or planning.

## **What is the expected annual time commitment for serving on the board?**

Board members can expect to contribute approximately 40–50 hours per year through quarterly board meetings, committee participation, and organizational events. Additional time is spent reviewing materials in advance to ensure productive and well-informed discussions. 10,000 Degrees also encourages board members to attend community events to experience the mission in action. Committee chairs and other board leaders may have additional time commitments depending on their roles.

## **How much of the board's work is done through committees?**

The President and senior leadership will work closely with each new board member to determine one or two committees suited to their expertise. Committees dive more deeply into issues or recommendations before bringing them to the full board. Committees are well supported by 10,000 Degrees staff leadership.

**Are most board members based in the San Francisco Bay Area, or are board members located nationwide?**

Most 10,000 Degrees board members live and work in the Bay Area, reflecting the communities where the organization's students live and where its programs are rooted.

However, candidates located outside California are welcome to apply if they bring meaningful ties to the state and/or a working understanding of California's education landscape, along with a clear connection to 10,000 Degrees' mission. Nationally based leaders who can support the organization's strategic, philanthropic, or community goals are encouraged to express interest.

**How often does 10,000 Degrees engage with its Board of Directors between formal meetings? Are board members primarily participating in board and committee meetings, or are they also available as ongoing strategic partners and sounding boards for leadership?**

While most work is handled by committee, there are instances where board members may be requested to give input into matters on special circumstances. Additionally, there are year-round donor events and volunteer opportunities in which board members are always encouraged to participate to dig deeper into the work of the organization.

# Organizational Strategy

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## **What are the key strategic priorities or initiatives that new board members will be supporting?**

Board members will help guide 10,000 Degrees through its next phase of strategic growth, ensuring the organization can expand responsibly while maintaining exceptional outcomes for students. This includes providing guidance on organizational priorities, strengthening regional community ties and educational partnerships in key geographies, advancing philanthropic growth, and helping leadership make disciplined, mission-aligned decisions about how resources are invested for long-term impact.

## **Is this search tied to any major new initiatives or upcoming organizational shifts?**

This search is not tied to a single initiative. Rather, it reflects 10,000 Degrees' commitment to building a strong, diverse, and equity-centered governance structure that can guide the organization through its next chapter. As 10,000 Degrees expands its reach, new trustees will help ensure the organization is well positioned to navigate opportunity, steward resources responsibly, and make thoughtful decisions in a changing educational and philanthropic landscape. The focus of this search is on investing in governance leadership that can support 10,000 Degrees' long-term strength and success.

# Financial Contributions and Fundraising Expectations

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## What are the expected annual philanthropic contributions and fundraising expectations for board members?

10,000 Degrees asks all board members to make the organization one of their top three philanthropic commitments each year. While giving levels vary, 100% board participation in annual giving is essential to sustaining 10,000 Degrees' mission. Board members are asked to:

- Make a personally meaningful annual financial contribution
- Participate in key fundraising initiatives, for example, by sponsoring one of the major events
- Invite guests to one of the sponsored events
- Support donor engagement and stewardship, including making introductions when appropriate and helping cultivate relationships that advance philanthropic growth
- Attend fundraising events and invite prospective supporters to broaden community connection
- Include 10,000 Degrees in their estate plan as a beneficiary

To support transparency and shared accountability, all trustees complete an annual Board Giving Pledge that outlines their intended contribution and participation in fundraising activities.

## Is there a required minimum for personal giving or a formal “give/get” policy?

10,000 Degrees does not set a required minimum gift or a formal give/get amount. Board members are expected to make an annual financial contribution that is personally meaningful by making 10,000 Degrees one of their top three philanthropic priorities and to participate actively in the organization's broader fundraising efforts.

While annual giving is an important part of board service, 10,000 Degrees highly values trustees who bring exceptional strategic insight, deep community relationships, diverse networks, and the ability to champion the organization's mission and long-term growth.

### **What percentage of board trustees participate in annual giving?**

10,000 Degrees achieves 100% participation among board members in giving each year.

## **Advisory Member Roles, Responsibilities, and Expectations**

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### **How many Regional Advisory Boards does 10,000 Degrees have?**

10,000 Degrees has six Regional Advisory Boards, representing:

- Contra Costa
- Marin
- Napa
- San Francisco
- Sonoma
- Peninsula & South Bay

### **What is the purpose of the Regional Advisory Boards?**

Regional Advisory Boards serve as standing committees of the Board of Directors and play an essential role in advancing 10,000 Degrees' mission at the local level. Their purpose is to:

- Support development and donor engagement within the region
- Strengthen community and government relations
- Advance advocacy and regional visibility
- Serve as ambassadors, connectors, and trusted informants to help build awareness, trust, and support for 10,000 Degrees

These boards offer meaningful opportunities for community members to deepen regional impact and contribute locally to the organization's success.

### **How many members typically serve on a Regional Advisory Board?**

Membership varies by region, but most Regional Advisory Boards include approximately 15–25 members, consisting of community leaders, educators, professionals, and volunteers with strong ties to the region. Each board has a Chair or Co-Chair who also serves on the 10,000 Degrees Board of Directors.

## What are the expectations for Regional Advisory Board members?

Members are expected to support 10,000 Degrees' work in their region through:

- **Brand Ambassadorship:** Representing 10,000 Degrees in the community and sharing its mission, values, and impact
- **Visibility and Engagement:** Promoting local awareness and supporting donor cultivation efforts
- **Strategic Connections:** Identifying and engaging local influencers and partners to leverage community resources
- **Advocacy and Public Education:** Supporting public relations and outreach aligned with annual organizational priorities
- **Regional Insight:** Providing local perspectives, needs, and opportunities to the Board of Directors

Members attend regular advisory meetings and participate in regional development activities and events.

## What are the terms for Regional Advisory Board service?

Regional Advisory Board members serve renewable three-year terms. Members are nominated by the Advisory Board Chair, reviewed by the Governance Committee, and approved by the Board of Directors.

## Do Regional Advisory Board members need to live in the region they serve?

Because these boards focus on local community relationships, visibility, and partnership-building, members typically live or work in and have strong ties to the region they represent.

# Application Process

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## What is the timeline for the selection process of the Board of Directors and Regional Advisory Boards?

### Board of Directors Selection Process

- **April 10, 2026:** Deadline to submit applications.
- **Mid-May 2026:** Candidates will be notified regarding first-round interview selections.
- **Late May 2026:** First-round interviews will be conducted via video conference with Potrero Group, 10,000 Degrees' search partner. These interviews will be approximately 60 minutes.
- **August 2026:** Final-round interviews will be held in person in the San Francisco Bay Area. Final interviews will be approximately 75–90 minutes and may include additional opportunities for in-person engagement. Candidates may request travel reimbursement if needed.
- **August/September 2026:** Final Board of Directors selections will be made.
- **September 2026:** New board members are expected to be confirmed and begin their service.

### Regional Advisory Board Selection Process

Candidates for Regional Advisory Boards may be contacted at any point during the application process through the end of September 2026. If candidates are not interviewed for a board position, they still may be considered for a Regional Advisory Board role included in this search.

Potrero Group is initially coordinating communications for all applicants. However, communication may shift to Regional Advisory Board leadership as the process continues. Since each regional leadership has its own timeline and approach for reviewing and selecting members, candidates may hear from Potrero Group—or from Regional Advisory Board leaders—at different points in the process.

### **What does the interview process entail?**

The first-round interview will be a 60-minute video conversation with Potrero Group, 10,000 Degrees' search partner. This conversation is an opportunity to get to know you better, follow up on your application responses, and gain a deeper understanding of how you envision contributing to board service. It's also a chance for you to ask questions and learn more about the opportunity.

Final-round interviews will take place in person at College of Marin, Kentfield, CA with members of 10,000 Degrees' board and staff leadership. These conversations are designed to allow both you and 10,000 Degrees to get to know each other better, explore alignment, and discuss how your background, interests, and experiences might best fit with the organization's needs and future direction.

### **Are applicants considered for both Board of Directors and Regional Advisory Board roles?**

The application will ask you to indicate your preferences by selecting the Board of Directors and/or Regional Advisory Board roles you feel most aligned with or would like to be considered for. This helps us take your self-selection into account as we move through the process. That said, we are looking for the best alignment and fit across all leadership opportunities. For example, if you indicate interest in Board of Directors service but there is a strong fit for a Regional Advisory Board position, we may follow up with you to explore that opportunity and confirm your interest.

## Eligibility and Prior Experience

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### **Is prior nonprofit board service required?**

No, prior nonprofit board experience is not required. 10,000 Degrees welcomes applicants who bring unique skills and strategic perspectives, regardless of whether they have previously served on a board.

### **Are individuals who live outside of California eligible to serve on the Board of Directors or Regional Advisory Board?**

Individuals who live outside of California are eligible to serve on the Board of Directors. While most board members reside in the Bay Area and bring deep connections to the communities 10,000 Degrees serves, nationwide candidates are welcome to apply if they have meaningful ties to California and/or a working understanding of the state's educational landscape, along with a clear connection to 10,000 Degrees' mission. 10,000 Degrees recognizes that national perspectives can broaden the organization's thinking and reach, provided candidates can actively participate and contribute to California-based priorities.

Regional Advisory Boards are local leadership bodies designed to strengthen community relationships, regional visibility, and donor and partner engagement. Because these boards serve as standing committees of the Board of Directors and focus on local community partnerships, advocacy, and regional insight, members are generally expected to live in or have strong day-to-day involvement within the region they represent. These roles are best suited for individuals who can regularly participate in local engagement and serve as visible ambassadors in their communities.



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