



Call for Board of Directors

10,000 Degrees seeks mission-aligned, strategic, and community-connected volunteer leaders to serve on its Board of Directors and Regional Advisory Boards. Join us as we grow and scale our ability to support and expand college opportunities for thousands of students each year.



10,000 Degrees aims to achieve educational equity and support students from low-income backgrounds to and through college—and beyond.



10,000 Degrees was founded on a bold belief: that helping 10,000 students in a community earn college degrees could spark lasting, generational change. That goal has been met—and exceeded many times over.

With more than 45 years of proven impact, 10,000 Degrees works to unlock student success at scale, helping thousands of students annually overcome systemic barriers, persist in college, and enter meaningful careers. The organization has grown to become California’s leading equity-focused scholarship and college success organization, dedicated to serving students who are historically underrepresented in higher education. The value of education is indisputable. But today, students from low-income backgrounds are half as likely to enroll in college compared to their higher-income peers, and if they do enroll, only 11% of students from low-income backgrounds will graduate with a bachelor’s degree compared to 79% of their more affluent peers.

10,000 Degrees is changing that trajectory—solving this Education Opportunity Divide not by focusing on the select few, but by providing a wider range of students expansive opportunities at every stage of their college journey. 10,000 Degrees provides holistic support, from early preparation to college success to career navigation, recognizing that real impact requires wraparound support, community connection, and long-term investment in students’ futures.

Through this comprehensive approach, more than 80,000 students and alumni have broken cycles of generational poverty, strengthening communities for generations to come. [Learn more about how 10,000 Degrees closes the educational opportunity divide.](#)

Our Core Values

We believe

In the **potential** of every student

Educating all students to achieve their full potential is an urgent moral, social, and economic imperative

Education is the foundation of a just and equitable society

Every student should have **equitable opportunities** for a quality education and a chance to graduate from college

Students and their families, schools, and communities each play a critical role in educating our youth and strengthening our communities’ economic and social health

10,000 Degrees by the Numbers

Organizational



10,000 Degrees employs **approximately 100 full-time staff members** and supports **~700 volunteers**



Its annual **operating budget** totals over **\$22 million**



Support from the public, including contributions from individuals, corporations, foundations, and institutional sponsors, **makes up ~90% of 10,000 Degrees' overall budget**

Reach and Impact



16,000+ students and alumni reached



80% of 10,000 Degrees' college students graduate—double the rate of their national peers

Source: Pell Institute's Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the US, 2022

~\$9-10M in 10,000 Degrees scholarships awarded annually



~4,000-5,000 college students receive scholarships and support annually



90% of our students graduate debt-free, compared to **31%** nationally

Source: Urban Institute



\$73M in additional free federal financial aid leveraged

A JOURNEY OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND IMPACT

Counties Launch Dates

Marin (1981)	Napa (2018)
Sonoma (2009)	Santa Clara (2018)
Contra Costa (2017)	San Mateo (2018)
San Francisco (2017)	Lake (2022)

1981–2001



From Founding to Growth

Built the foundation for long-term impact—transforming from a local scholarship provider into a mission-driven education equity organization.

Founded as Marin Education Foundation to expand access to higher education.

Awarded first \$400K in scholarships (1982).

Secured annual investments from Buck Family Fund & Marin Community Foundation.

Appointed Kim Mazzuca as President & CEO, shifting focus to equity (1999).

Launched the College Access Program to guide students to and through college admissions (2000).

2002–2006



Advancing Equity and Access

Reimagined the mission to serve 100% low-income students and deepened commitment to equity.

Introduced first five-year Strategic Plan (2002).

Transitioned to serve only students from low-income backgrounds (2004).

Increased scholarship demand by 40% through expanded outreach.

Hosted Senator Barack Obama for *The Audacity of Hope* (2006).

2007–2011



Expanding Reach and Recognition

Guided by the second Strategic Plan, extended regional reach, strengthened alumni leadership, and achieved national recognition.

Expanded to Sonoma County (2009).

Elevated Saul Peña as first alumnus Board Chair (2009).

Rebranded as 10,000 Degrees (2010).

Honored by NSPA as *Scholarship Provider of the Year* (2011).

2012–2016



Deepening Impact and Student Success

Advanced the third Strategic Plan, launching an innovative student support program and strengthening college persistence and completion.

Created the Fellowship Program: near-peer mentors—often alumni—guiding students through a strengths-based model (2012)

Implemented renewable scholarships for consistent, multi-year funding.

Launched College Success Program to support college persistence and degree completion (2014).

Presented first Summer Bridge with College of Marin (2015).

2017–2021



Building a New Generation of Leaders

Launched the fourth Strategic Plan, expanding regionally, strengthening postsecondary and career pathways, and unifying community partnerships.

Expanded to Contra Costa and San Francisco Counties (2017).

Launched Community College Success Program to guide students through transfer pathways to four-year institutions (2017)

Scaled Community College Success Program outside of Marin and Sonoma Counties (2017)

Introduced Career Success Program to connect students with internships, jobs, and career support (2017).

Merged Marin County School Volunteers into 10,000 Degrees as the Academic Support Program.

Integrated Meritus College Fund to extend reach in San Francisco and South Bay (2018).

Expanded to Napa, Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties (2018) and Lake County (2022).

Pivoted to virtual programming during COVID while maintaining 80%+ graduation rates.

Received a \$6 million anonymous gift to expand our programs and reach (2021).

Launched Alumni Changemakers event (2021).

2022–2026



More College Graduates Changing the World

Driving the fifth Strategic Plan forward by scaling statewide impact, advancing equity innovation, and setting national standards for college success.

Launched Black Student Engagement Program with NBA Foundation support (2023).

Scaled community-college partnerships to seven campuses.

Celebrated record-breaking impact: 440 graduates and 4,375 students supported (2025).

Received \$42M gift from MacKenzie Scott via Yield Giving (2025).

TODAY
A National Model for Equity

10000
degrees



\$113M+ in scholarships awarded.



80,000+ students served.



Still growing—and still transforming lives.

What Sets 10,000 Degrees Apart

Who We Serve

- 100% of students are from low-income backgrounds
- 93% identify as Black, Indigenous, Latine, and/or People of Color
- 92% are first in their family to attend college
- 8 Bay Area Counties: Marin, Sonoma, San Francisco, Santa Clara, San Mateo, Contra Costa, Napa, and Lake County, as well as Utah

What We Do – Our Model

- Eliminate traditional disqualifiers such as GPA cutoffs and test scores
- Meet students where they are, expanding multiple pathways, including community college
- Demystify financial aid so students can pursue degrees with little to no debt
- Pair scholarships with intensive advising and one-to-one support
- Walk with students to, through, and beyond college, with career success embedded as a core pillar
- Deliver outcomes that consistently outperform national peers in transfer, graduation, debt, and early career success

How We Do It – Our Differentiators

- Embed near-peer Fellows directly on high school and college campuses for consistent, trusted support
- Inspire belief in students' unlimited potential through shared experience and credibility
- Design systems specifically for first-generation, low-income students and students of color
- Support students within their full ecosystem—families, schools, and communities
- Activate alumni as Fellows, mentors, ambassadors, and leaders to compound impact over time
- Scale a proven national model while maintaining deep local trust and cultural competence



Outstanding Results

10,000 Degrees has a consistent track record of steady growth over the past 45 years in students served, college graduates, communities impacted, scholarship output, and financial aid support and revenue generation, while maintaining outstanding graduation rates.

“10,000 Degrees is transforming lives at a remarkable scale, and our impact continues to grow each year. The board and senior leadership are grounded in a shared commitment to helping students thrive and work closely together to support more students across more communities.”

Guy Lampard, Board of Directors Chair

In the coming years, board leaders at 10,000 Degrees will guide the organization through its next phase of strategic growth and investment, ensuring that students continue to succeed at scale.

10,000 Degrees is strategically expanding by growing the number of students and regions it serves while maintaining exceptional graduation outcomes and deep community partnerships. This expansion is supported by increased investment, creating both opportunity and complexity, and underscoring the importance of strong governance and thoughtful stewardship. [Learn more about 10,000 Degrees' strategy.](#)

To support this work, the organization relies on a governance structure that brings deep insight, community perspective, and philanthropic leadership to its mission. The Board of Directors and Regional Advisory Board members serve as trusted thought partners to the CEO and leadership team. Board members are expected to bring a high level of governance maturity—thinking strategically, offering guidance without stepping into operations, and supporting staff through thoughtful, big-picture decision making.

How 10,000 Degrees' Governance Bodies Advance the Work



“This board succeeds because it blends passion and strategic thinking with real kindness and respect. We have a wide range of nonprofit and corporate experiences, but we meet each other with empathy, trust, and active participation.”

Deborah Freed Goldman, Board Member

To advance 10,000 Degrees’ mission and strategic priorities, board members serve not only as fiduciaries but also as active partners in expanding the organization’s visibility, reach, and impact. In addition to traditional oversight, members contribute in four key ways:

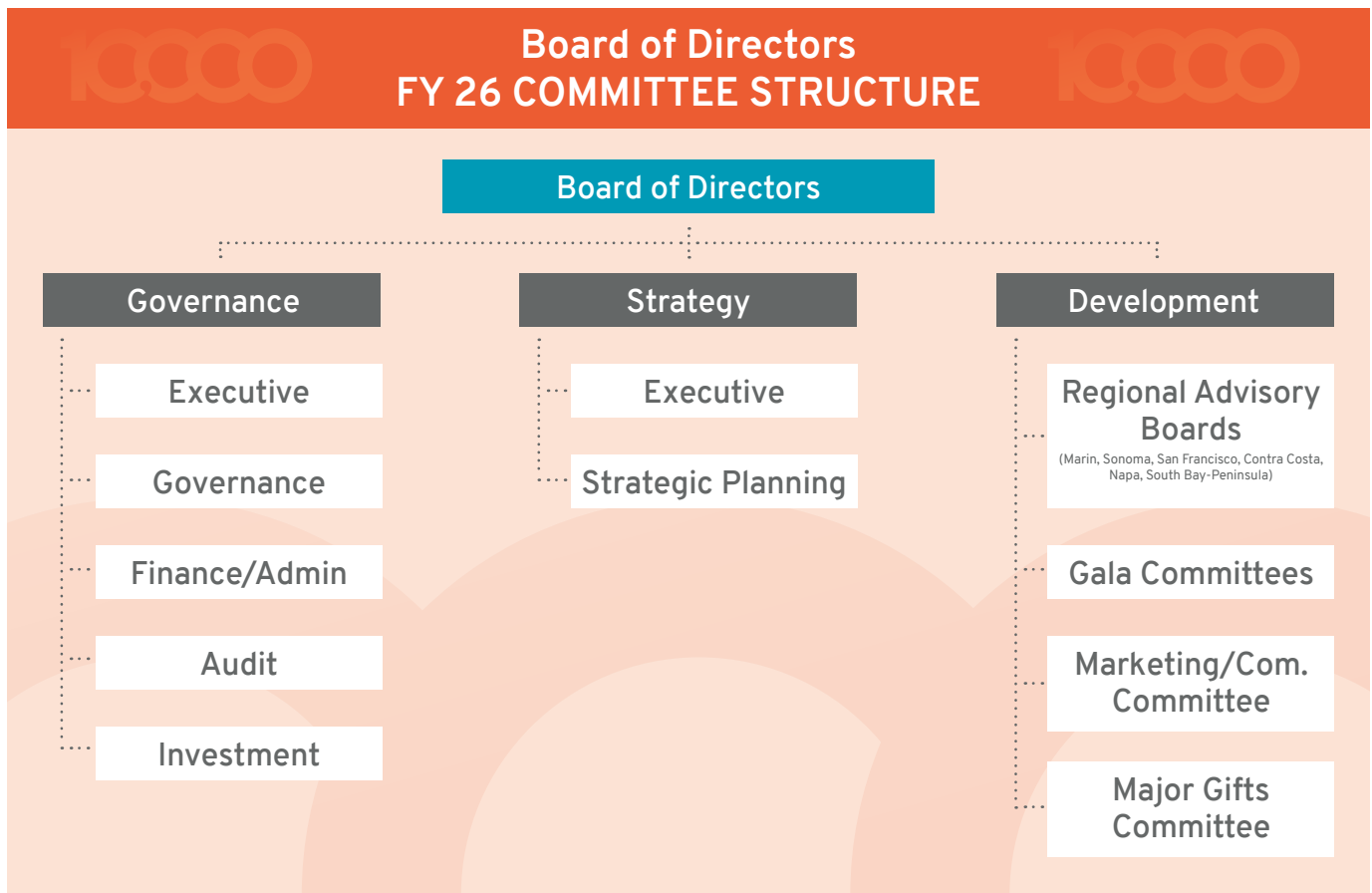
Brand Ambassadorship – Represent 10,000 Degrees with clarity and integrity, sharing its story and elevating its presence in the community.

Network Building – Open doors and broker introductions that expand philanthropic, community, educational, and institutional relationships.

Field Influence – Use voice, credibility, and positional authority to advance policy, awareness, and support for students and educational equity.

Resource Generation – Help attract financial support by connecting 10,000 Degrees to donors, corporations, foundations, public partners, and other revenue pathways.

The Board of Directors operates through a set of standing committees that oversee core areas of governance, strategy, and development. The organization also engages community leaders through its Regional Advisory Boards, which offer an additional pathway for meaningful volunteer leadership and local partnership (see page 12).



“Board members are highly committed to ensuring that all students have access to higher education. That commitment is demonstrated through meaningful engagement, sponsorship, fundraising, and a sustained focus on long-term strategic impact.”

Angela Mira, Board Member

10,000 Degrees seeks collaborative connectors and strategic leaders committed to advancing student success.



10,000 Degrees welcomes values-driven leaders who bring entrepreneurial perspectives and meaningful networks to help propel its mission forward. While board members come from diverse professional paths, the following qualities are the consistent hallmarks of strong leadership on the board:

- **Deeply mission-aligned.** Demonstrates a genuine commitment to educational equity and enthusiasm for 10,000 Degrees' mission, students, and impact.
- **Humble, values-driven, and collaborative.** Respects others, listens well, communicates constructively, and prioritizes team success over individual spotlight within a low-ego board culture.
- **Engaged, reliable, and committed to board service.** Understands the responsibilities of board leadership; comes prepared, participates actively, and is willing to roll up their sleeves between meetings and in committee work.
- **Strong network connector.** Brings meaningful relationships and is willing to leverage them to support fundraising, partnerships, and organizational reach.
- **Strategic thinker who challenges constructively.** Curious and thoughtful; offers healthy challenges that help the organization weigh priorities, navigate trade-offs, and make sound decisions during periods of rapid change or growth.
- **Authentic connection to 10,000 Degrees' work and student communities.** Understands and values the lived experiences of first-generation and low-income students. May bring personal, professional, or relational ties to these communities and is committed to engaging meaningfully with the populations 10,000 Degrees serves.

You don't need to have...

- **A California address.** While board members do not need to reside in California, our work is grounded in California's communities and education systems. Nationwide candidates are encouraged 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.
- **Prior nonprofit board experience.** While governance is an important part of this role, candidates do not need prior board service. 10,000 Degrees welcomes leaders who bring strategic judgment, clarity of thought, and the ability to contribute to strong governance—whether developed through previous board work or other forms of community, professional, or organizational leadership.

10,000 Degrees seeks 3–5 strategic leaders with strong networks and regional influence to join its Board of Directors.



10,000 Degrees is looking for leaders who can help the organization grow its regional impact, strengthen its philanthropic capacity, and deepen its connection to the students and communities it serves. Ideal board members will bring one or more high-impact skills, networks, or experiences:

- **Regional Influence and Community Reach.** Individuals who can strengthen leadership across 10,000 Degrees' current Bay Area footprint—including Contra Costa, Lake, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Sonoma Counties—and help elevate the organization's presence and deepen relationships with local institutions, civic leaders, and philanthropic communities.
- **Philanthropic Reach and Strategic Relationship Building.** Individuals with broad philanthropic networks and credibility among high-capacity donors, foundations, corporate partners, or institutional funders.
- **Governance Leadership.** Values-driven leaders with mature governance judgment who understand the role of a high-functioning board. Brings experience with board service or board-level decision making, contributes strategic oversight rather than operational involvement, applies sound financial judgment at the governance level, and helps maintain a constructive, trust-based partnership with staff leadership.
- **Experience Guiding Organizations through Scale and Stewardship of Significant Resources.** Has

led or supported organizational growth, capital allocation, or significant investment decisions; comfortable evaluating opportunity costs, supporting leadership through complexity, and applying entrepreneurial yet disciplined thinking to drive long-term impact.

- **Education Leadership.** Senior leaders in higher education, such as community college or university presidents, chancellors, provosts, or leaders of education policy and research organizations, who bring strategic perspective, sector credibility, and deep knowledge of postsecondary student pathways.
- **Experience Aligned with 10,000 Degrees Students.** Leaders with first-generation college experience, low-income backgrounds, and/or strong connections to the Black, Indigenous, Latine, and/or People of Color communities that make up the majority of 10,000 Degrees students.



10,000 Degrees aims to build a Board of Directors and Regional Advisory boards that reflect many life and career experiences. Emerging generational voices offer fresh perspectives, new ideas, and important insights into the future of college success. 10,000 Degrees encourages early-career leaders to consider applying for its volunteer leadership opportunities.

Board Member Responsibilities and Expectations



The Board of Directors plays a vital role in guiding strategy and organizational direction while serving as powerful ambassadors for educational equity and student success.

Individual Responsibilities

As part of their service, each board member is asked to:

- **Fulfill the legal Duties of Care, Loyalty, and Responsibility** by acting in the best interest of the organization, maintaining confidentiality, and stewarding the mission with integrity
- **Participate actively** by rigorously preparing for and attending quarterly board meetings (held in a hybrid virtual/in-person format) and the annual in-person board retreat, joining at least one committee, and engaging in respectful, open dialogue
- **Serve as a community ambassador**, sharing 10,000 Degrees' mission, impact, and story across your networks
- **Open doors to people, businesses, and institutions**, brokering introductions that expand philanthropic, community, and strategic partnerships
- **Cultivate and steward a personal portfolio of donors**, and help identify future board candidates who can contribute meaningfully
- **Attend and host events**, including [One Amazing Community](#), the organization's annual gala, and other mission-driven convenings

Philanthropic Commitment

Board members are expected to make 10,000 Degrees one of their top charitable commitments. Each board member is asked to:

- **Make a personally meaningful annual financial contribution**
- **Participate in major fundraising initiatives**, such as sponsoring or filling a table at fundraising events, and joining their [monthly giving program](#)
- **Demonstrate leadership in fundraising**, including making introductions when appropriate and supporting donor stewardship efforts
- **Champion 10,000 Degrees within their circles of influence** to broaden awareness and philanthropic engagement



10,000 Degrees values board members who bring strategic leadership and move the organization forward. While financial contributions are an important component of service, they are not the only consideration. Individuals who bring exceptional expertise, perspective, or networks are strongly encouraged to apply.

Collective Responsibilities

As a governing body, the Board of Directors works together to uphold the mission and ensure organizational excellence. Key responsibilities include:

- **Affirming the mission and purpose** of 10,000 Degrees
- **Selecting, supporting, and evaluating the President & CEO**
- **Maintaining strong governance**, including recruitment, orientation, and annual evaluation of board performance
- **Ensuring financial sustainability** and fulfilling all legal and fiduciary responsibilities
- **Setting strategic priorities** and adopting governance policies that guide organizational direction and oversight
- **Providing strategic advice** on long-term planning, business development, and growth
- **Leveraging political, financial, and social capital** to secure resources
- **Serving as brand ambassadors**, enhancing the organization's visibility and public trust
- **Shaping policy and advocacy priorities**, identifying and working with partners and coalitions that strengthen the organization's work



Board Policies

Board Size. The 10,000 Degrees Board of Directors may include up to 35 members.

Term Limits. Board members serve three-year terms, renewable for up to two additional terms, for a maximum of nine years of service.



“Our board is collaborative and collegial; we like each other and respect each other. The trust we have with senior leadership and the thoughtful, interactive nature of our meetings make our work both effective and meaningful.”

Mary Wolfe, Governance Committee Chair

Regional Advisory Boards offer a distinct and meaningful pathway for volunteer leadership.



10,000 Degrees maintains six Regional Advisory Boards in Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, Sonoma, and Peninsula & South Bay. These boards are an integral part of the organization's volunteer leadership structure and offer community-connected opportunities to support the mission and deepen regional impact.

While all applicants are welcome to express interest in serving on the Board of Directors, candidates may also be invited to join a Regional Advisory Board. These boards offer meaningful ways to contribute locally, build relationships, and help advance 10,000 Degrees' work, and often serve as a valuable entry point to future governance opportunities.

Purpose of the Regional Advisory Boards

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

- Support fundraising, community partnerships, and donor cultivation in the region
- Strengthen community and government relations
- Advance advocacy efforts and regional visibility
- Serve as ambassadors, connectors, and key informants who help build awareness, trust, and support for 10,000 Degrees in their communities

"I'm the first one in my family to go to and graduate from college. Education is a foundation and an experience you can always cherish. I want to continue to be a champion for more people to support 10,000 Degrees and for more students to get involved. We're doing extremely important work, and I truly believe in this mission."

Sonu Chandi,
Board Member and Chair of the Sonoma Regional Advisory Board

Primary Responsibilities of Regional Advisory Board Members

Regional Advisory Board members help advance 10,000 Degrees' mission in their communities through:

- **Brand Ambassadorship:** Representing 10,000 Degrees in the community and sharing its mission, impact, and values
- **Visibility and Community Engagement:** Promoting regional awareness, strengthening community relations, and supporting fundraising, events, and other donor cultivation efforts
- **Strategic Connections:** Identifying and engaging local influencers to leverage community, philanthropic, business, and government resources
- **Public Awareness and Ambassadorship:** Supporting public relations efforts and advancing local outreach aligned with the annual advancement plan
- **Regional Insight:** Informing the Board of Directors about regional needs, opportunities, community dynamics, and ways the Board of Directors can support the work locally

Membership and Structure

Regional Advisory Boards are composed of individuals who bring a diverse range of skills, perspectives, and experiences across the community, public, and private sectors, as well as education and philanthropy.

- A current 10,000 Degrees Board of Directors member chairs each Regional Advisory Board
- Members serve renewable three-year terms



Interested in serving on a Regional Advisory Board?

If your **primary** interest is in a Regional Advisory Board rather than the Board of Directors, you can select that option in the application.



Ways to Engage with 10,000 Degrees

10,000 Degrees anticipates strong interest from candidates who are deeply committed to educational equity and student success. While not all applicants will move forward into governance roles, there are many impactful ways to stay connected, support the mission, and engage with the community. We invite all applicants to step into the heart of our work—whether by volunteering, partnering with us, or supporting our efforts.

Become a donor and encourage others to give. 10,000 Degrees relies on community generosity to provide sustained support to students. There are many ways to give, including:

- Make a one-time or recurring donation
- Become a Changemaker Monthly Donor
- Participate in workplace giving or matching gift programs
- Give through donor-advised funds, stock gifts, estate planning, or corporate giving programs

Partner with 10,000 Degrees. 10,000 Degrees collaborates with schools, corporations, foundations, scholarships, and community partners that share a commitment to educational equity to help expand access to college success resources and strengthen pathways from classroom to career.

Join our team. Explore career opportunities at 10,000 Degrees. Team members thrive in a supportive, equity-driven culture with clear pathways for growth and the opportunity to make a direct and lasting impact on thousands of students each year.

Volunteer with students and programs. Volunteers play a vital role in helping students reach and thrive in college. Opportunities include:

- Academic Success Volunteers supporting homework centers and tutoring in TK - 12 schools in Marin County
- Money Matters Workshop Volunteers teaching financial literacy
- Career Mentors guiding students and alums toward career pathways
- Corporate Volunteers engaging teams in meaningful service that expands opportunity

Join our community. Stay connected by subscribing to email updates, attending events, and joining gatherings where supporters, alums, and partners come together to celebrate progress and deepen engagement.

Learn More About 10,000 Degrees

On On June 9, 2026, 10,000 Degrees will host a virtual informational webinar open to applicants and community members who are interested in learning more about the organization's mission, student impact, and the many ways to engage with 10,000 Degrees beyond the board search—including volunteering, partnership, and philanthropic support.

Participation in the webinar is optional and not part of the application or interview process.

Register for the webinar [here](#).



Apply



10,000 Degrees welcomes your perspective, no matter your prior connection to the organization. Based in Northern California, 10,000 Degrees encourages applications from regional and national candidates who have strong ties to its work. Please consider discovering, learning, and growing with 10,000 Degrees.



Please visit potrerogroup.com/10000degrees and select “Apply Here.”

We encourage all interested individuals to submit their applications by April 10, 2026.

Board candidates can expect the following timeline for the selection process:

- **Mid-May 2026:**
Candidates will be notified regarding first-round interview selections.
- **Late May 2026:**
First-round interviews will be held via video conference with Potrero Group, 10,000 Degrees’ search partner.
- **June 9, 2026:**
10,000 Degrees will host an optional virtual informational webinar open to applicants and community members interested in learning more about the organization’s mission, impact, and ways to engage. Register [here](#).
- **August 2026:**
The final round of interviews will take place in person in the San Francisco Bay Area with 10,000 Degrees board and staff leadership.
- **August 2026:**
Final decisions will be made.
- **September 2026:**
New board trustees are expected to be confirmed and begin service.



For more information on 10,000 Degrees, visit 10000degrees.org.

For questions about this opportunity, contact:

Daniel Student
Managing Director
dstudent@potrerogroup.com



Potrero Group is honored to coordinate this search on behalf of 10,000 Degrees. We support innovative leaders and organizations making a difference in the world with strategic planning, facilitation, organizational development, and board and executive search services. We are committed to equitable and inclusive practices in all of our work.

To join our mailing list or for more information, please visit PotreroGroup.com.