

# EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNANCE

## NETWORK MEMBER APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Class of 2020 Application

DUE October 1, 2018

NeighborWorks America will select up to 12 NeighborWorks network organizations to participate in the Excellence in Governance - Class of 2020 to help “responsible” boards become “exceptional.” Find full details, video, and timeline at <http://neighborworks.org/excellenceingov>.

Network organizations of any size that meet the criteria listed below are encouraged to apply until the stated deadline.

### NeighborWorks Network Participant Selection Criteria

- Board is characterized as “responsible” (defined as competent in carrying out the *Ten Basic Responsibilities* outlined by BoardSource – available at link above) with motivation to become “exceptional” (defined as embracing the NeighborWorks Excellence in Governance principles – available at link above).
- Board plays a significant and meaningful role in leading the organization.
- Board is currently focused on board development or has identified this as a new priority.
- Board completed a board self-assessment during FY2017 or FY2018.
- Board demonstrates a commitment to the values of inclusion by ensuring the selected Leadership Team is diverse based on age, gender, ethnicity, ability, race, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, national origin, and reflects the community(ies) served.
- Board and/or organization is not currently experiencing a crisis.
- NeighborWorks America’s PROMPT standard for Organizational Management rating of meets or exceeds.
- NeighborWorks America’s OHTS rating of Exemplary, Strong, or Satisfactory.
- All board members and Executive Director/CEO are willing to commit time and effort to the process and board performance focus over an 18-month period and to achieving measurable outcomes.
- Leadership team members (Executive Director/CEO, board officer, and three current or emerging board leaders) commit to attend three in-person trainings and to consistently work with their coach to incorporate enhanced governance principles in their deliberations, direction, and decisions.

### Involvement of the Full Board and Executive Director/CEO

The full board is strongly encouraged to review the *Ten Basic Responsibilities* and The Excellence in Governance Principles, and discuss the questions found in Sections II and III when determining whether or not to apply.

Because participation will require a commitment of time and resources from the organization as well as a full board retreat, a letter of acknowledgement and support that represents a vote of the full board and the Executive Director/CEO must accompany this application to ensure all members support participation, agree to a full board retreat and acknowledge the full board’s participation in and/or review of this application prior to submission.

### Identifying the Leadership Team

The Leadership Team shall consist of at least one board officer, up to three current or emerging board leaders, and the Executive Director/CEO – for a total of five Leadership Team members – plus 1-2 alternates. The current term limit of each Leadership Team member should *not expire during or within a year* after the program ends. At least one board officer is required to participate. The organization is encouraged to select additional members who will assume or be elected to a board leadership role in the next 4-5 years. Organizations should select a diverse Leadership Team that reflects the constituency the organization serves, considering age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, religious beliefs, and national origin.

The most effective Leadership Team members are likely to be individuals who:

1. Are sincerely enthusiastic about the opportunity to maximize the effectiveness of your board;
2. Are catalysts for change;

3. Are willing and prepared to take responsibility for bringing the tools, concepts, and learnings from the program back to the full board on a regular basis;
4. Are attentive and active listeners; and
5. Are willing to be continuous learners on topics of race, equity, diversity, and inclusion and the role they play in board governance.

### **Application Process**

Organizations must submit a written application with attachments via email by **October 1, 2018** to [exingov@nw.org](mailto:exingov@nw.org). Input from the organization's Relationship Manager, Region staff, National Initiatives (Homeownership, Real Estate, Community Initiatives, etc.) staff, and most recent OAD reviews will be considered with the application.

Phone interviews with the Board President and Executive Director/CEO will be requested in order to make the final selection. Final selection will be made by NeighborWorks America. All applicants will be notified of their application status no later than February 15, 2019 and all decisions are subject to Congressional appropriation funding.

NeighborWorks America strongly encourages interested board members and Executive Directors/CEOs to attend an informational call for additional details and to ask questions. Content on each call will be the same. The first and last calls will be recorded and posted on <http://neighborworks.org/excellenceingov> for 30 days.

- **Thursday, August 2, 2:00pm – 3:00pm ET**  
Computer: <https://zoom.us/j/3553273454>  
OR  
Phone: 1 646 876 9923; Meeting ID: 355 327 3454#
- **Wednesday, August 15, 2:00pm – 3:00pm ET**  
Computer: <https://zoom.us/j/3553273454>  
OR  
Phone: 1 646 876 9923; Meeting ID: 355 327 3454#
- **Tuesday, September 11, 2:30pm – 3:30pm ET**  
Computer: <https://zoom.us/j/3553273454>  
OR  
Phone: 1 646 876 9923; Meeting ID: 355 327 3454#

Following an information call – if your board should wish to have an additional call with the program manager that can be arranged.

Contact [exingov@nw.org](mailto:exingov@nw.org) with any questions.

## NETWORK MEMBER APPLICATION

**I. BASIC INFORMATION:** Please provide organization name, contact person, title, and email.

**Ia. Board Information:** Please provide the number of board members allowed by by-laws, number of board seats currently filled, and a list of active board committees. How often does the board meet and for how long? Over the last year, how often did the board meetings make quorum?

**II. LEADERSHIP TEAM:** Please provide a list of the (tentative) Leadership Team members (Executive Director/CEO, at least one board officer, and three current or emerging board leaders – for a total of five members), role with the organization and for board members – remaining time in current term. Identify at least one alternate board member. Please provide a description of the role the board played in selecting this team.

**III. NARRATIVE: In a narrative of no more than five pages, please respond to the following:**

- What, if any, insights did the board and Executive Director/CEO get when reviewing the *Ten Basic Responsibilities* and The Excellence in Governance Principles together?
- What does the board hope to accomplish by participating in this program? What does the Executive Director/CEO hope to accomplish?
- How many board members participated in the most recent (not older than FY2017) board self-assessment? How did the most recent (not older than FY2017) board self-assessment results resonate with the board? What, if any, actions were prioritized by the board? Which, if any, have been acted upon by the board?
- What has the board identified as the top two or three challenges or opportunities facing the board in the coming two-four years?
- Please complete the following two-part statements:
  - In terms of succession planning for the ED/CEO and Board President/Chair, our board has:
    - Our goal is to:
  - In terms of the board's role in resource development, our board has:
    - Our goal is to:
  - In terms of board member recruitment and orientation/on-boarding, our board has:
    - Our goal is to:
  - In terms of achieving diversity, equity, and inclusion on the board that represents the constituency we serve, our board has:
    - Our goal is to:
  - In terms of being playing a significant and meaningful role in leading the organization, our board has:
    - Our goal is to:

## IV. REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

1. **Letter of Acknowledgement and Support from the Board** – as participation in the program will require a commitment of time and resources from the organization in addition to a full board retreat, a letter of acknowledgement and support from the full board and Executive Director/CEO must accompany this application to ensure the members and Executive Director/CEO understand and support participation and all have reviewed this application prior to submission.
2. **Minutes from the last three board meetings.** (If committee minutes would be relevant, feel free to include.)
3. **Current strategic plan** of the organization.
4. A copy of the **most recent** (not older than FY2017) **completed board self-assessment report.**  
Network organization can access the complementary BoardSource board self-assessment by contacting their Relationship Manager. Additional self-assessment tools are available [here](#).
5. A **dashboard or scorecard tool** the board uses to track progress against goals. (Or state “No dashboard/scorecard tools are used by the board.”)  
Dashboards or scorecards are examples of tools that an organization would use to track quarterly or annual performance measures.

**V. PAIRING APPLICATION WITH DATA ON FILE:** This application will be paired with governance related data collected thru the most recent on-site & off-site reviews by OAD as well as the NeighborWorks Annual Survey.

**APPLICATIONS ARE DUE TO NEIGHBORWORKS AMERICA not later than October 1, 2018.**

Email application and attachments directly to [exingov@nw.org](mailto:exingov@nw.org).

**\*\*Due to potential email issues with large file sizes, please contact [exingov@nw.org](mailto:exingov@nw.org) once you have submitted to ensure receipt.\*\***

Decisions will be announced no later than February 15, 2019 and all decisions are subject to Congressional appropriation funding.