



## 2026 Board of Directors Recruitment Board Expectations and Candidate Profiles

**Overview:** The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is the leading not-for-profit organization dedicated to building strong, vibrant and resilient communities through the power of parks and recreation. NRPA advances this vision by investing in and championing the work of park and recreation professionals as a catalyst for positive change in service of [equity](#), [environmental resilience](#), and overall [health and well-being](#).

NRPA's network of more than 60,000 park and recreation professionals and advocates represents public spaces in urban communities, rural settings and everything in between. NRPA champions and supports the field of parks and recreation through professional development, advocacy, grants and programs, research, publications and more.

Every day, in communities across the country, the people of parks and recreation are providing essential services and confronting the most pressing issues of our time — advancing mental and physical health, creating climate-ready parks, supporting equity and inclusion, and so much more. We know we cannot solve these challenges alone. By partnering with like-minded organizations — including non-profits, government agencies, academics and corporate leaders — we bring strength to our programs and mission.

NRPA is led by President and CEO Kristine Stratton and is governed by a 15 to 30 member Board of Directors, comprised of advocates and professionals who leverage their expertise, networks, and influence to further NRPA's mission, reach and impact.

**Recruitment:** The NRPA Board of Directors Governance Committee is seeking qualified applicants to fill up to five (5) anticipated board member seats serving a term from 2026-2029 (with potential to renew for a maximum of three terms). Successful candidates' terms will begin at the NRPA Annual Conference September 2026 in Philadelphia, PA.

**Board of Directors Volunteer Description:** The Board will support the work of NRPA and provide mission-based leadership, strategic governance and fiduciary oversight. While day-to-day operations are led by NRPA's President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the Board-CEO relationship is a partnership, and the appropriate involvement of the Board is both critical and expected. Board member responsibilities include:

- Support and advance NRPA's charitable mission and purpose and guide the development of the NRPA's strategic plan.
- Build NRPA's resources by making a personally meaningful charitable contribution and supporting NRPA's fundraising efforts, including earned income (i.e. conference, membership, credentialing) and philanthropic funding (i.e. corporate, foundation and individual).
- Raise NRPA's profile and strengthen NRPA's reputation among park and recreation and adjacent industry professionals and the wider public (our ultimate beneficiary) by contributing to and sharing NRPA content and communications.

- Grow NRPA's influence by making the voices of park and recreation professionals, industry partners, and allies heard in the political process.
- Assess NRPA's performance, using agreed upon dashboards and metrics, and participate in CEO and Board evaluation processes.
- Review financial statements and ensure NRPA's financial health and adherence to NRPA's tax-exempt status.
- Review and approve the annual budget and audit, ensuring that NRPA has adequate resources to implement the strategic plan and fulfill its mission and purpose.
- Prepare for and attend no less than two Board meetings each year, actively participate in discussions, and join and participate in the work of at least one committee.
- Understand and adhere to the bylaws to maintain legal and ethical requirements.
- Support Board decisions and speak with one voice.
- Help identify national issues of significant interest and concern to NRPA and recommend appropriate actions.
- Advise on and support NRPA's positions on critical issues and national legislation when appropriate.
- Support the governance committee's efforts in strategically recruiting new Board members that will help further the NRPA's mission and strategic plan.

**Candidate Profile(s):** The NRPA Governance Committee holds an annual open call for board nominations of high-quality professionals and advocates to advance the work of the organization. While we invite all interested parties to apply, each year we assess the strategic needs of the Board and define a set of priority profiles. For this year's recruitment cycle, priority will be given to candidates that best match the following profiles:

- **Profile 1: Park and Recreation Professional** – NRPA seek an enthusiastic and dynamic park and recreation professional who demonstrates strong engagement with NRPA programs and offerings. The ideal candidate is a credentialed professional (CPRP/CPRE) and/or works at a currently CAPRA-accredited agency. Young professionals (defined as 35 years or younger) are encouraged to apply. Park and recreation professionals on the NRPA board are actively committed to growing NRPA's membership reach and engagement.
- **Profile 2: Strategic Resource Partner** – We seeks board members who recognize that mission impact and financial strength go hand in hand. Ideal candidates may be high-capacity donors, foundation executives, or individuals connected to philanthropic networks who are excited to leverage their influence on behalf of the organization. Strategic resource partners are proactive in identifying opportunities, cultivating relationships, and advancing conversations that expand our funding base and strategic partnerships. They approach board service with heart, intention and action and are committed to helping the organization grow its impact through thoughtful resource stewardship and acquisition.
- **Profile 3: Strategic Financial Steward** – We seek a board candidate with strong financial acumen and a commitment to fiduciary excellence. This may include investment professionals, senior finance leaders or individuals with experience in audit, capital markets, or endowment oversight. The ideal candidate brings disciplined judgment, a long-term perspective and thoughtful oversight, ensuring sound stewardship of assets and alignment between strategy, risk and financial sustainability.

- **Profile 4: Public Health Strategy Leader** – We seek a board member with senior-level expertise in public or population health. This leader provides strategic guidance on how our mission advances community wellbeing, strengthens the rigor and credibility of our public health positioning, and advises on emerging trends in health equity and prevention. The ideal candidate brings high-level relationships across public health institutions and helps expand our influence within broader health systems conversations.
- **Profile 5: Strategic Influence & Narrative Leader** – We seek a board member with expertise in behavior change, brand strategy, or large-scale audience engagement. This leader brings insight into how narratives shape systems and how trusted voices drive mindset and behavior shift. They provide strategic guidance on positioning, relevance, and reach, and help to amplify our stories, advocacy, and philanthropic appeals within today’s evolving social landscape.

For more information on the Board of Directors please visit: [NRPA Board of Directors, Leading the Association | National Recreation and Park Association](#) or contact Board Liaison Brittany Brown at [bbrown@nrpa.org](mailto:bbrown@nrpa.org).