



SUBJECT	Professional Development for Governors
SUBMITTED TO	Governance Committee
MEETING DATE	November 21, 2023
SESSION CLASSIFICATION	Recommended session criteria from Board Meetings Policy: OPEN
REQUEST	For input only - No action requested
LEAD	Byron Thom, Committee Chair
SUPPORTED BY	Karen Hakkarainen, Board Secretary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In September 2021, the Board of Governors agreed to provide each serving Governor with \$1500 per annum for professional development for the purpose of supporting Governors to enhance their skills in service to UBC and the Board. In September 2023, the Governance Committee discussed the current status of the Board's professional development program and draft guidelines to guide governors in their usage of professional development funding. The Committee provided feedback on the draft guidelines and requested that updated guidelines incorporating the feedback are brought back to the Committee for review and approval. Revised guidelines are attached to this briefing as Appendix 1. The Governance Committee is asked to provide feedback on this version of the guidelines or, if satisfied that they provide sufficient direction with respect to professional development, recommend their approval to the Board of Governors.

ISSUE

In September 2021, the UBC Board of Governors agreed to provide each Governor, excluding the President, with \$1500 per year for professional development. The Board intends that Governors will use the funds for training and development activities that support and advance Governors to fulfil their responsibilities as Governors. These activities may include, for example, conference attendance, leadership coaching, courses offered through the Institute of Corporate Directors or similar organizations, or reference materials on governance. Activities taken for health and wellness, general interest, or recreational purposes, as well as technology, equipment and supplies, are generally excluded from professional development funds at UBC.

Since 2021, the uptake by Governors of these funds has been limited and the Board Chair and Governance Committee Chair have been responsible for reviewing and approving governors' requests for funding. However, it has been recognized that governors are best positioned to identify their individual professional development needs and should have latitude to determine activities appropriate those needs within guidelines established by the Governance Committee. The intent is to create a program that encourages governors to commit to professional development, provides governors with relatively easy access to funds to do so and, is relatively easy for the Board Secretariat to administer.

At its meeting of September 2023, the Governance Committee reviewed draft guidelines for the use of professional development funds and provided the following input to inform the further development of the Board's professional development program:

- The Secretariat Office was directed to budget \$30K per year to support governor professional development (\$1500 per governor per year).
- Governors will be asked to identify at the start of the fiscal year their professional development plans for the year.
- A small portion of the \$30K budgeted funds (\$5K was suggested) is to be held for professional development opportunities that might arise during the year and that were not identified by governors in their initial identification of professional development plans, as requested of each governor at the start of the fiscal year.
- The Secretariat Office will research and provide information on relevant professional development opportunities for Board members.
- The annual \$1500 per Governor allocation is a contribution toward the cost of professional development; the cost of some professional development, including travel expenses to attend conferences or other professional development activities, may exceed \$1500 and may not be fully covered by the annual professional development allocation.

Since the Board's 2021 approval of \$1500 per Governor per year for professional development, the Secretariat Office budget has included \$15K per year in the annual budget for this purpose. To date, this allocation has been sufficient as not all Governors have taken advantage of this opportunity. The Board Secretary will need to undertake an exercise to analyze spending and identify opportunities to reallocate funds in the existing Secretariat Office budget to increase the budget for professional development to \$30K per year.

It should be noted that the Board Secretariat budget includes separate funds to support external experts and facilitators for Board retreats.

NEXT STEPS

- Committee to provide feedback on the revised guidelines for professional development or recommend them to the Board of Governors for approval.
- Board Secretary to develop a reference resource of available professional development opportunities and update on an ongoing basis.
- Board Secretary to explore the potential for leveraging UBC extended learning programming as part of the professional development opportunities for governors.

Appendix 1: Board of Governors Guidelines for Professional Development Funds

UBC Board of Governors Guidelines for Professional Development Funds

In support of its commitment to continuous improvement in its governance practice, the Board of Governors has established a professional development program to encourage Governors to commit to professional development and provide Governors with access to funds to do so. A Governor may access up to \$1500 per year for the purpose of professional development that supports the Governor's service on the Board.

The fund will be established on a fiscal year basis; the availability of funds will be subject to the overall financial health of the University and the University's ability to support Governors' professional development.

Governors must serve at least six months of any fiscal year (April 01 to March 31) to qualify for the funds.

Funds must be used in the fiscal year in which the entitlement occurs. Governors may not "carry over" entitlements from one fiscal year to the next.

Governors are asked to consider their professional development needs at the start of each fiscal year and provide the plan and associated costs to the Board Secretary. The Board Secretary will prepare a summary report for information for the Governance Committee on Governors' professional development plans.

Additional funding may be available at later stages of the fiscal year, should professional development opportunities arise that were not identified by Governors when they developed their annual professional development plans.

Governors may determine the development activity most appropriate to their needs. Examples of activities include but are not limited to:

- Registration fees and related travel expenses for conferences on topics related to Governors' fulfilling their fiduciary and oversight responsibilities as Governors;
- leadership coaching;
- governance courses offered through the Institute of Corporate Directors or similar organizations; and,
- reference materials on governance.

In keeping with UBC's policy on professional development, activities taken for health and wellness, general interest, or recreational purposes, as well as technology, equipment and supplies, are excluded from the professional development funds.

Depending on the professional development opportunity pursued, Governors may be asked to share their learnings with Board colleagues. For example, a Governor who attends a conference may be asked to share key takeaways with the Board.

Receipts for expenses that align to the purpose of the fund may be submitted to the Board Secretariat Office Administrative Coordinator for processing for reimbursement. Governors are encouraged to submit their expense receipts within 2 weeks of incurring the expense.

Inquiries about access to the fund, advice on relevant training, or whether a professional development activity aligns to the intended purpose of the funds may be directed to the Board Secretary.

Approved: **DATE**