

BOARD RECRUITMENT OVERVIEW

Candidate Brief

Founded in 1998, Furniture Bank's mission is to break the cycle of furniture poverty. We transfer unwanted furniture and household goods donated by the community to people who are coming out of crisis. Our program works in partnership with 155 community agencies and shelters to assist people who are economically vulnerable including women and children leaving shelters, the formerly homeless, Indigenous, those struggling with mental health, LGBTQ+, BIPOC, newcomers and refugees who require furniture and household goods for their homes, a service that enhances both psychological and financial stability.

Our trucking social enterprise provides professional removal and transportation of furniture donations from donors to the homes of formerly displaced individuals and families. All items selected by our clients are provided to them free of charge. We collect 70,000 furniture items and serve over 5,500 individuals and 2,500 families annually. Since our inception, we have given over 127,147 individuals and their families a new start on life through fully furnishing their homes.

Our social employment Leg Up Program employs and trains individuals who face barriers to employment across the organization. We train 35-40 participants annually, fostering personal and professional growth through job skills, emotional intelligence training, and financial literacy, providing skills and knowledge to achieve greater financial independence, and retain secure employment. Over the last decade we have provided meaningful employment and skills development for over 250 employees, many of whom transition successfully to jobs in Furniture Bank, and in other industries and organizations including Telus, Metropolitan University, Daily Bread Food Bank, and Bombardier.

Our Indigenous-led Workshop trains participants in furniture repair, upholstery and woodworking. The mandate of Furniture Bank's Workshop is to eliminate barriers in the attainment of meaningful work for Indigenous people by providing trade training, and creating long-term, living wage social employment opportunities, and providing sustainable careers in the refurbishing and

reupholstering field. This in turn results in more quality furnishings for the beneficiary clients. Since its inception in 2015, we have provided over 20 participants with opportunities to learn employable skills, and repaired and salvaged 13,560 items, ensuring furniture stays out of our landfills, and working towards The City of Toronto's goal of zero waste.

During the pandemic, the Workshop responded to community need and initiated a pilot program, creating bedding kits to respond to the individuals and families in the GTA who are living without mattresses and proper bedding.

In response to needs expressed by furniture poverty-focused charities across the country, in 2015, Furniture Bank created a national Support Services (FBSS). Through FBSS, we provide national assistance to ensure that the operations, expansion, and longevity of furniture poverty-based organizations can support their respective communities. By using Furniture Bank's existing and proven technology and digital innovation, we have developed a cost-effective impact platform for other reuse charities to leverage. FBSS allows us to provide the established infrastructure from our Toronto-based Furniture Bank and support local community needs throughout Canada, supporting three furniture banks to date. Through FBSS, we are able to connect community agencies with an online platform with poverty reduction initiatives, corporate reuse projects, a Toronto-based sales centre to handle customer inquiries, along with access to IT CRM software for inventory management, case management, reporting, and donation collection. Through FBSS, Furniture Bank is devoted to delivering integrated services that are economically feasible, reduce the costs associated with administration, and offer a national impact measurement model for member charities.



Joining 50-30 Challenge

Furniture Bank values the principle of "nothing about us without us" and applies an equity lens in all aspects of our work. Currently, 60% and 80% of our management team and Board identify as women, respectively, and 40% also identify as belonging to other equity-deserving groups with intersectional identities, including women, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, people living with disabilities, first-generation immigrants, and Indigenous peoples.

Furniture Bank is aligned with the Canadian Government's 50-30 program in order to achieve greater diversity and equity on our Board of Directors. We believe that by diversifying our Board, we can offer a broader range of experiences, perspectives, and ideas to the organisation that will have a meaningful impact both within our organization, and for the clients we serve.

The [50-30 Challenge](#) is a commitment to recruiting 50% of our new Board members who self-identity as being members of underrepresented and minority communities, including women, Indigenous peoples, racialized individuals (BIPOC), people with disabilities (physical and/or cognitive/episodic disabilities), 2SLGBTQIA+ and/or gender and sexually diverse individuals.

Furniture Bank uses a Board Skills Matrix to ensure that our governance leadership has the appropriate mix of characteristics, competencies and experience. Candidates with a range of skills are encouraged to apply.



We are recruiting volunteer board members who have experience in the following areas:

- Leadership and governance experience with strong communication, team and collaboration skills.
- Corporate fundraising
- Financial management
- Human resource and change management
- Legal
- Logistics and furniture and home goods related industry expertise

A lived experience with furniture poverty & homelessness, and/or understanding of the sector's policy and advocacy landscape would be considered definite assets.

Board Member commitments

- Attend quarterly Board meetings, Annual General Meeting and periodic strategic planning sessions.
- Review and approve the organisation's strategic plan, financial statements, budgets, policies and other important documents
- Serve on at least one Board Committee and/or a Working Group
- Provide leadership, strategic thinking and creative input on various matters.
- Serve as an ambassador for the organization and periodically attend special events on behalf of Furniture Bank
- Provide strategic fundraising support
- Make connections with potential donors
- Participate in ongoing training and education
- Commit to being an active, engaged Board Member and support the Executive Director by providing guidance and feedback on strategic decisions

Meetings are typically held virtually via Zoom and occasionally at Furniture Bank's offices in Etobicoke, ON.

We ask for a minimum commitment of 2 years. (Note: We understand that circumstances can change during this tenure and we will work with each Board Member to ensure a seamless transition).

We expect all Board Members to be present, engaged, and committed to making a positive difference in the lives of those who rely on Furniture Bank for support. We believe that each individual brings unique experiences and perspectives to the table, and we value diversity among our Board Members.

Application process

After filling out the form below, you can expect to hear from our Board Recruitment team shortly to explore your interests and fit with this ongoing recruiting. This may include but not limited to Zoom or phone calls, in-person meetings at Furniture Bank for a tour, meeting with the Executive Director and staff, and/or volunteering at the charity to see the work underway.

Benefits of being a Furniture Bank Board Member

Being a Board Member of Furniture Bank is an incredibly rewarding experience, as you get to witness and create the strategy for eradicating furniture poverty, and having a direct impact on people's lives every day. As a Board Member, you will focus on governance, strategic plans, and strategic opportunities as Furniture Bank scales and partners its way to solving furniture poverty across Canada.

We look forward to having you join us in making an impact for Furniture Bank and raising awareness of furniture poverty in Canada. Thank you for your interest!

