



Handout for Exponent Philanthropy Session: “Community-Based Boards as a Tool for Greater Equity”

Below are examples from the [Tzedek Social Justice Fund](#) for Board of Trustees Position Description and Recruitment Conversation Format.

Board of Trustees Position Description

Board Overview

The Tzedek Social Justice Fund redistributes money, resources, and power to support systems change and community healing in Asheville, North Carolina. Through adaptive, trust-based philanthropy, we resist oppressive systems and work to transform our collective home into a place where everyone flourishes.

In alignment with our mission and organizational [values and practices](#), our Board of Trustees includes community leaders in Asheville with significant experience in social change movements in our focal areas (LGBTQ Justice, Racial Justice and Combating Antisemitism).

Prior to 2020, the power to determine Tzedek’s overall strategy lay in the hands of Amy Mandel, our Funder and Founder, with advice from Tzedek staff. Including community members on our board is one way to redistribute the power within our organization, learn from the expertise in our community, and be held accountable for our actions.

To do our work, we need to have a gauge on the pulse of what is happening in our area politically, economically, culturally, and historically. We understand that everyone from the most vulnerable members of our community to those with institutional power have important information for us.

The board’s overall role is to provide advice to the Tzedek Social Justice Fund (Tzedek) and hold us accountable to our mission, vision and organizational practices. While the board does hold [fiduciary responsibility](#), Tzedek’s board is not responsible for governance, visioning, policy-making, management, fundraising or grantmaking. Some aspects of the Tzedek Board may follow conventional practices, however we are dedicated to making the board a transformational experience for its members and Tzedek staff.

Board Composition

The Board of Trustees consists of five Asheville community leaders with expertise in local social justice efforts in our focal areas (LGBTQ Justice, Racial Justice, and Combating antisemitism).

Board Member Responsibilities

- Evaluate the performance of Tzedek's Executive Director/Director of Organizational Strategy (including hiring and termination when necessary)
- Review Tzedek's strategic plan and become familiar with Tzedek's mission, vision, organizational values and practices, goals, and overall strategies.
- Review and provide input to the overall outcomes portion of the strategic plan as requested
- Participate in evaluations of the organization to ensure that outcomes listed in the strategic plan are met.
- Serve a two-year term and remain actively engaged in board meetings. Board members can serve a maximum of two terms.
- Become familiar with the organization's governing documents and assure that Tzedek operates within the law.
- Act in Tzedek's best interest by avoiding conflicts of interest and maintaining confidentiality
- Become familiar with Tzedek's budget and confirm that we are legally complying with federal, state, and local regulations.
- Become familiar with the relationship between Tzedek and the Mandel Foundation, particularly the limits placed on Tzedek's grantmaking

Board Member Roles

- Board Chair - The Board Chair co-leads board meetings and develops meeting agendas with the Tzedek Executive Director.
- Board Secretary - The Board Secretary ensures that notes are taken at each meeting, shared with each board member, and are archived
- 3 Members-at-large

Board member roles are selected by board members during Board Member Orientation.

Eligibility for the Board

Individuals are invited to join the board if they:

- Have significant experience leading Asheville-based community work in one of Tzedek's focal areas (LGBTQ Justice, Racial Justice and Combating Antisemitism).
- Have lived experience navigating oppression related to one or more of Tzedek's focal areas (LGBTQ Justice, Racial Justice and Combating Antisemitism)
- Demonstrate an understanding of how various movements in Asheville might work together to have a broader impact in our community
- Can adhere to Tzedek's organizational values and practices

Yearly Time Commitment

- One 8 - hour board retreat
- 3 - 4 board meetings; 2 hours each
- Up to 15 hours of board business to be completed outside of board meetings
- Additional ad-hoc meetings as needed

Board Compensation

Board members will receive a \$3500 stipend per year in acknowledgement of the time and expertise they are bringing to the organization. The stipend will be disbursed in quarterly payments.

Recruitment Conversation Format

Below is a sample guide of questions that the Tzedek Social Justice Fund used in conversation with those who were interested in joining our new board. Funders can tailor questions to their specific areas of impact and interest.

“The goal of these calls is to learn more about your interest in joining the Board, share anything about where we are and where we’re going that would help you make a decision, and gauge our alignment in analysis and values.

1. What identities do you lead with? (What is important for people to know about how your lived experience impacts your work in the world?)
2. We’re thrilled that you are open to being in conversation with us about joining the Board. Can you share why this invitation felt like a yes for you?
3. Tzedek has a new mission! “The Tzedek Social Justice Fund redistributes money, resources, and power to support systems change and community healing in Asheville, North Carolina. Through adaptive, trust-based philanthropy, we resist oppressive systems and work to transform our collective home into a place where everyone flourishes.” Based on your deep experience in this community and all you know about Tzedek's current work, what are some things you imagine that we need to prioritize over the next 5 years to achieve our mission?
4. Where do you see natural connections for Jewish people, LGBTQ+ people and People of Color to work together for liberation in Asheville?
5. Asheville is experiencing a powerful moment in terms of racial justice--from the City and County’s commitment to reparations to the emerging Black AVL Demands collective to the on the streets protests that have included violent encounters with APD. What’s been your reaction to all that’s unfolding here?

In terms of next steps, Tzedek staff will be having conversations with other trusted advisors and will be working on some specific outreach to ensure that the Board represents the wide ranging

communities we work alongside. We will follow-up in the next few weeks about next steps, but our goal is to host the Board for an initial retreat in (specific month).”