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| **DOCUMENT TITLE** | Director Interview Guide |
| **LAST UPDATED** | October 2022 |
| **PURPOSE** | This Director interview guide is designed to help boards and/or nominations committees structure interviews with board candidates. |
| **HOW TO USE** | Use this interview guide to prepare for and support the interview process. |
| **ADDITIONAL NOTES / CONSIDERATIONS**  This document has been designed as a support tool for interviewing potential directors. Any variety of questions can be added or removed from this guide. This interview guide is also intended to help create structure and consistency for an interview.  Other supporting documentation will be required to complete the recruitment and nomination process for new board members. Several supporting tools can be found as part of the viaSport Governance Toolkit.  This document does not constitute legal advice and should not be relied upon as such. Expert counsel is recommended if there are any issues requiring clarification. | |

# Board director interview guide

When interviewing for potential board members, the following should be given due consideration:

* Why is the candidate interested in this role?
* How committed are they to the work required to be a successful board member?
* What can they bring to the board?
* Will they ‘fit’ within the board?
* Will this individual act as a positive role model and representative within our sport community?

Where there is a passion for sport, this is a good place to start, provided it is balanced with the objectivity and integrity that is needed. Interview preparation is a key indicator of just how interested someone is in the role they have applied for. Good candidates will have done some research ahead of time, read information that is available to the public, and talked to people who know something about the organization. During an interview, their questions will clearly indicate their level of preparation.

The viaSport Governance Toolkit recommends using a Board Skills Matrix to identify organization priorities and sought-after knowledge, skills and experience. Part of the Board Skills Matrix focuses on diversity within the board, including gender, professional and lived experience, the balance between sport knowledge and the ability to bring an independent perspective. In addition, it’s important to probe their understanding of the governance role and seek specific experiences that demonstrate both the level and potential of their governance skills. The key is to identify candidates who can contribute to a strategic discussion, support oversight of the organization, respond with integrity and in the best interest of the organization when challenges arise, and work well as part of a team.

## Sample interview questions

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| **Intent** | **Considerations** | **Question** |
| Knowledge of the organization and their strategic goals | Assess how much effort has the candidate put into finding out about the organization and its mission and how the candidate sees themselves contributing to the organization. | * What skills would you bring to the organization to help enact our strategic plan? |
| Understanding the role | Look for an understanding of directors’ duties and the legal framework in which the organization exists. | * What do you perceive the role of the Board of Directors for this organization to be? * Do you believe the current board of directors has successfully fulfilled its role? Please describe. * What are the top three skills you believe a board member needs to bring to this role? * How would you go about establishing your credibility as a new member of the board? |
| Financial and risk management | Assess the candidate’s level of financial literacy and understanding of how risk can be managed without undermining the Executive Director’s accountabilities. | * Given that **<insert individual’s or team’s name>** carry out the day-to-day financial management of the organization, what do you consider to be the role of the other board members in relation to financial management of this organization? * What do you currently perceive as the greatest risks to the long-term sustainability of the organization and how would you propose to mitigate them? |
| Strategic thinking | Assess how strategic the candidate is in their thinking. Can they contribute to the Board’s understanding of the big picture? | * What do you think would be the types of strategic issues that should be the focus of the board’s attention from meeting to meeting? |
| The organization’s operating environment and context | Assess how well the candidate understands the specific challenges facing the organization and the Board. | * From what you know about the organization and the sport sector more generally, what would you say would be the most important issues facing this organization? * How would you approach some of these issues? Anything you think the organization should be doing differently? * Who do you understand to be the primary stakeholders of the organization? Which relationships would you like to see strengthened? * Given the importance of safe sport, how would you propose we continue to improve our practices to make this organization as safe and inclusive for all members (and potential members) as possible? |

## Additional Topics to Explore

* The time they have available to give to the organization
* What their expectations are of the organization in order to perform best as a director
* Willingness to undergo background and reference checks
* Willingness to participate in on-going board evaluation
* Any issues they perceive with the position description
* Level of comfort with the commitment letter/code of conduct
* Their understanding of what might constitute a conflict of interest related to this position
* Potential conflicts of interest
* Some specific situations they have been successful in that provide further evidence of the skills they offer. Be sure to ascertain the exact role played in each case.
* Use a structured probe approach to identify demonstrated strengths or experience:
  + What was the situation?
  + How did you approach it?
  + Please explain your thinking.
  + What was the outcome / impact?
  + What did you learn from that?
  + What would you do differently next time?