

# **Community Radio Fund of Canada (CRFC)**

## **CRFC Guidelines for Conducting Business Online**

The Community Radio Fund of Canada (CRFC) exists to provide support to campus and community radio stations in Canada and to foster a well-resourced, dynamic, and accessible sector. It is a not-for-profit funding organization that distributes funds geared toward the development and sustainability of local community radio broadcasting.

The concept of the CRFC began in 2004 and was fostered by Canada's three largest community radio associations. We became incorporated in 2007 and opened our office in the spring of 2008. The first board of directors was elected that fall. In February 2009, we launched our first call for applications. Three months later, the CRFC awarded nearly

\$160,000 in contributions to the campus and community radio sector.

The CRFC Board of Directors is made up of volunteers spread out across a country with six time zones, so it is not always possible to have everyone present at board conference calls. As well, there are times when a quick decision needs to be made by the board concerning working with a potential funder. To facilitate a quick decision process, the board adopted guidelines for how to conduct business and facilitate discussions online. We have also found these guidelines useful to approve more detail-oriented decisions, such as approving financial and spending policies.

*A quick note: the CRFC Board Website referred to below is a private online collaborative space for the CRFC Board. We used Google Sites as it allows for Gmail and non-Gmail users alike to access and participate in the site through amending pages, making comments, and posting documents. As well, the CRFC Board uses a private dedicated email list (like Majordomo, Yahoo-groups, etc.). The emails sent through the list are archived and searchable by subject line and key words.*

### **CRFC Guidelines for Conducting Business Online**

There are two types of work we do online: general discussions of issues and approving official business. Sometimes general discussion relates or leads to a motion. The following guidelines should be followed when working with motions. Directors are expected to read and respond to related email messages as well as refer to the "Current Motions and Discussions" page on the CRFC Board Website.

#### **Moving a Motion**

- Discussion can precede or follow a motion.
- A director needs to make an actual motion; the motion should include a suggestion for discussion time.
- The Secretary (or relevant board member) will post the motion on the CRFC Board Website.
- All discussion must follow the same email thread; other emails should not follow this thread.

- Before discussion and voting, the motion needs to be seconded by a director.

#### Discussion

- There should be a minimum of five days for discussion unless all agree to a shorter timeframe in writing.
- Since we are not all online every day, we need to allow reasonable time for people to discuss the issue/motion.
- The president or mover of the motion should send a summary of points and reminder that the motion is on the table after three days. This should be done again after six days if the discussion period is longer.
- Discussion time can be extended by simple majority of all board members.

#### Making Amendments to a Motion

- If amendments are deemed friendly by the mover, discussion then moves to the amended motion.
- If amendments are not friendly, then the proposed amendment will be discussed and voted on.

#### Voting

- The CRFC always strives for consensus. However, if after discussion we cannot achieve it, then we will vote.
- In the case of a vote, the president or mover of the motion circulates a new email with a new subject. The subject should say "MOTION: [topic]." Directors vote by directly responding to the message indicating "Yes," "No," or "Abstain." Directors are not encouraged to abstain from voting and will be asked to explain the abstention.
- All motions will be noted at the next board meeting.

#### Suggestions

- Discussions need to follow the same thread/subject line. So always respond to the latest email in a given thread and Keep the Subject Line the Same.
- We all read a lot of email, so keep it concise and clear.
- Short emails; use bullet points.
- Indicate at the start what the email is about: a title, a summary, etc.
- Always include your name on the email; if is long, put your name at the top.

For more information, please contact:

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*We are grateful to Melissa and the Community Radio Fund of Canada for so generously sharing this useful document with Blue Avocado readers. This document accompanied the article, "Can Nonprofit Boards Vote By Email?" which can be found at <http://www.blueavocado.org/content/can-nonprofit-boards-vote-email> .*