

# A GUIDE TO BECOMING A BOARD DIRECTOR

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**August 2020**

This guide is an open invitation with an explanation.

The invitation is, by becoming a Board Director, to play a valuable role in how people and the natural environment in the GCBR domain improve each other's well-being.

The explanation is about what such a role looks like in practice.

## **Q. What is the GCBR?**

The organisation is recognised by the United Nations Education, Social and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and South African government and province as a managing entity for a physical area designated as a Biosphere Reserve. Legally, the GCBR is a Non Profit Company (NPC) with members who are the 'owners', equivalent to shareholders.

## **Q. Who is the GCBR for?**

The GCBR is for everyone living within the biophysical domain. Major stakeholders are land users, the rural unemployed, learners and educators, local government and like-minded organisations be they public and private.

## **Q. What does the GCBR do?**

An integrated programme of on-the-ground [projects](#) are designed to make a positive, enduring difference in the local ecology as well as in people's lives, particularly in terms of eco-incomes and behaviour change. The programme is continually under review for relevance, results and effective contribution to the domain's improvement.

## **Q. How is the GCBR governed?**

The GCBR is governed by a Board of Directors, elected by members. The current complement is for a maximum of seven Directors. They are collectively accountable for translating the GCBR's Constitution and Memorandum of Incorporation into practical action for public benefit. Directors serve a term of three years, with no limits to how often they can be re-elected. The Board's Chairperson is directly elected by other Directors.

## **Q. What does the GCBR board do?**

The Board serves the organisation on the one hand while ensuring accountability to society on the other. It does not manage or implement activities. This function and responsibility is delegated to a Chief Executive. The Board's major tasks are to:

- (i) provide strategic guidance and, when requested, give operational advice;
- (ii) ensure compliance with legislation;
- (iii) employ staff;
- (iv) support fund-raising;
- (v) establish policies;
- (vi) fulfil a duty of care; and
- (vii) monitor performance.

## **Q. What does being a Board Director ask of you?**

The most important asks of Board Directors are for their passion, time, knowledge and networks. In terms of time, presently, the board meets six times a year. Until the arrival of Covid-19, meetings were face to face, usually in George. Attending a meeting, reading related documents takes about a day. Between meetings come requests for approvals, advice and comments that draw on Directors' experience, ideas and opinions. Directors' networks are relied on to expand 'intelligence' gathering, bring in valuable relations and promote the organisation's work.

## **Q. Want to know more or make yourself available for election?**

We hope that this brief explanation stimulates your curiosity to find out more or to apply to join the Board when a vacancy arises. Simply send a message with your contact details to [admin@gouritz.com](mailto:admin@gouritz.com) and we will get in touch.