



## Urban Conservancy Board Service FAQs

### What is the mission of the Urban Conservancy?

***Mission:***

Urban Conservancy's mission is to lead and collaborate to strengthen our urban environment and local economy through equitable practices, policies and programs.

***Vision:***

A thriving region and city sustained by informed, engaged residents.

### How does the Urban Conservancy fulfill its mission and purpose?

We engage in strategies of **practices, policies and programs** delivered via:

#### **Programs**

- **Front Yard Initiative (FYI)**, which provides reimbursements to homeowners who hire local green sector professionals to remove concrete from their properties and replace it with infrastructure that manages stormwater. As a result, the program prevents flooding and increases the amount of water managed on residential properties, resident's knowledge of stormwater management best practices, etc.
- **StayLocal**, a membership program that enables local businesses to participate in, and benefit from, efforts to increase spending in our local economy. The program aims to create a self-sustaining local economy where the majority of dollars spent in the region stay in the region.
- **Building Active Stewardship in New Orleans (BASIN)**, a summer program for school-aged youth to understand the impact of environmental stewardship and gain a hands-on introduction to future enrichment and career opportunities in the local green sector.

#### **Activities**

- **Collaborative partnerships** to launch initiatives that fall under the umbrella of our vision.
- **Research and reports** in matters directly related to the success of our local environment and economy.
- **Convenings and dialogues** with local policymakers and key partners to keep them informed of public needs for a thriving local environment and economy.

**How much time is expected of board members?**

Ninety-minute board meetings are convened bi-monthly (Jan-Mar-May-July-Sept and Nov).

In addition to full board meetings, all board members are asked to commit about 4-6 hours per month for:

- participating in a board committee or task force
- completing committee tasks between meetings
- assisting in board recruitment
- performing other supportive activities as needed
- attending organizational events

**Is there a minimal financial commitment?**

No, however we expect each of our board members to make an annual financial contribution that is meaningful to him or her and to participate in the board fundraising activities, which are scheduled throughout the year. Often this annual gift is the largest size gift that board members make compared to other organizations they support. The fundraising effort is shared among all board members based on what they can do, and are best suited to do.

**What is the structure of the board?**

Board officer terms are one-year. The board officers are President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. Additionally, there are several board standing committees:

- Governance
- Urban Conservancy
- Stay Local

Task forces and ad hoc committees are delegated as needed.

**What is the board's culture?**

The Urban Conservancy board is an active/working board. We strive to create a frank, respectful, and open environment. We are committed to a diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment where all board members, staff, volunteers, and members feel respected and valued regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation or identity, disability, education, or any other bias. We respect the value that diverse life experiences bring to our board and leadership and we strive to listen to their views and give them value.

We are relaxed but not casual, striving to provide the professional leadership and support that the Urban Conservancy's excellent staff deserves. We want to give the ED and his or her staff clear direction on how to interpret and implement our mission and goals, and then we endeavor to get out of the way and let him or her manage the organization. We also take our fiduciary responsibility seriously, spending significant time on budgeting, resource allocation, and fundraising. Though we ensure that our work is done, we also immensely value and enjoy engaging with staff and hearing updates on the Urban Conservancy's efforts.

**If I were to join your board today, what would be the top issues that the board would be discussing?**

- Board governance and leadership development, particularly as it relates to creating a culture of belongingness;
- Ensuring quality and accessibility of services by addressing inequities in our policies, programs, and services through program design; and
- Organizational (and programmatic) growth and sustainability.

**How many board members are there?**

There are 9 members.

**What are the terms of board members?**

The board term is for three years, with a recommended two-term limit.

**How is the Urban Conservancy supported?**

The Urban Conservancy is supported by a mix of funding both contributed and earned. Currently, about 50% of annual funding comes from restricted grant income and 50% from unrestricted contributions.

**What does the organization need from me in particular?**

- Your enthusiasm for our mission.
- Regular and engaged attendance at Board meetings, committee meetings and organizational events.
- Your creative thinking, experiences, skills, backgrounds and interests that you will contribute to the organization.
- Your interest in introducing the Urban Conservancy to new networks and individuals interested in our work thereby helping us expand our community of supporters.

**What is the budget size and financial health of the Urban Conservancy currently?**

The Urban Conservancy's operating budget is approximately \$500,000, with steady increases from \$80,000 in 2006. Its fiscal health is sound.

**Does the Urban Conservancy carry Director & Officer liability insurance?**

Yes, board members are covered by the Urban Conservancy's D&O liability, which has a \$1M limit.

**Who is on staff at the Urban Conservancy?**

There are four full time and four part-time staff members. You can meet our current board and staff at: <https://www.urbanconservancy.org/meet-the-board-and-staff/>

*If you have any questions please send an email with "Board Service Question" in the subject line to [dana@urbanconservancy.org](mailto:dana@urbanconservancy.org) or call 504.717.6187.*