

Who is Accountable for a Diverse Board?

The easy answer of who is accountable for a diverse board is every director sitting on the board. But so far, that isn't working. If we do what we measure, then it is time to make someone accountable. The Governance Committee is a great starting ground.

Essentially, the Governance Committee is charged with the care and feeding of the board. In addition to [many other responsibilities](#), it is key for helping to drive and sustain a more diverse board through membership, onboarding, and self- assessments.

This means the Governance Committee must be well versed in and driven to recruit a more diverse board, one that is representative of its stakeholders and community. By using a gap analysis tool, this committee can identify current and projected gaps in competencies or demographics and help find and recruit potential board members.

Though every board handles onboarding its new members differently, new members, especially if they are a minority member, must be told the formal and informal rules of the board in order for them to be most effective. These new board members not only need to know about the association and its programs, finances, and plans for the future, but they also must know how the board itself operates, how the staff and board interact, and what to expect from the Chair.

Another major responsibility that is often under the purview of the Governance Committee is managing the board's self-assessments. By creating an anonymous survey, all board members can comment on their satisfaction with their personal performance and that of the board as a whole. This allows all voices to be heard.

Though not used often, a mentoring program can also be part of the Governance Committee's responsibilities. In a mentoring program, new board members are assigned a more experienced mentor on the board who is familiar with the organization. Their mentor can help the new board member adjust to the board, provide advice when asked, and can act as a sounding board.

Thank you to the [Center for Association Leadership](#) for such a straightforward look at the Governance Committee.