

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT TO MEMBERS 2026 ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

May 21, 2026

Dear members of the Council of Canadians,

We are pleased to present this report to members from the Nominating Committee.

There are 6 Director-at-large positions to be elected for two-year terms in 2026. Nominations were opened on April 16, 2026 and closed on May 15, 2026. We received nomination forms from 6 candidates.

Based on an assessment, we confirm 6 candidates meet the eligibility requirements for a Director-at-large position on the Board of Directors.

ELIGIBLE CANDIDATES

David Condon

Personal Statement: I sat on the Board as a Chapter Representative for the Prairies/NWT for 2 terms from 2020 to 2024. Currently I sit on the Governance Committee. I am offering for a Board position to be part of the renewal process of the CoC. My background as a union activist and educator (CUPW) would, I believe, offer a progressive perspective that will hopefully assist the Board and staff in the important work ahead.

Anne Legace Dawson

Personal Statement: Greetings et bonjour J'habite Montréal, bien que je sois Franco-Ontarienne d'origine, et collabore avec Nik Barry Shaw sur les dossiers reliés à la protection et à l'avancement de l'assurance-maladie publique et universelle, dans mon emploi avec la Coalition canadienne de la santé. I am a journalist by training, with an MA in Canadian Studies from Carleton, and worked at the CBC, Radio-Canada, as well as Global and BellMedia for 25 years or so. I am a lover of nature as well, with two daughters who are acutely politically aware. I admire the Council staff and membership, and would like to help advance the work they are doing. With the Carney government in power, we are going to have to mobilize in a new way. I would like to be part of the solution.

Corey Grist

Personal Statement: I am seeking election to the Board of Directors of the Council of Canadians because I believe strongly in the organization's commitment to protecting public services, strengthening democracy, and advancing social justice in Canada. I would be honoured to contribute my experience in governance, operations, and advocacy to support this important work.

I currently serve in a leadership role at a national labour union, where I oversee finance and organizational operations. Through this role, I work closely with elected leaders, committees, and staff to support accountable decision-making, long-term sustainability, and effective member-driven governance.

My experience has provided me with a strong understanding of national organizations, board governance, policy development, strategic planning, and financial oversight - including my time at the Council in 2023. I would bring a collaborative, solutions-focused approach to the Board, grounded in transparency, accountability, and respect.

I am especially drawn to the Council's advocacy on public health care, affordability, climate justice, and democratic participation. At a time of growing inequality and pressure on public services, I believe organizations like the Council of Canadians are more important than ever. I would welcome the opportunity to contribute to its continued leadership and impact across the country.

Safia (Saf) Haq

Personal Statement: I currently live in Kijipuktuk, Mi'kma'ki, also known as Halifax, Nova Scotia, where we have just seen massive slashes in funding to the very things that fill our province with life — arts and culture organizations, Indigenous sovereignty, African Nova Scotian rights, programming for youth and students. I think the best way to mobilize people is to help them see the common thread between their struggles and see how all of the issues we are facing globally and locally are interconnected. As a poet and community organizer, I help weave those connections.

My interest in becoming a member of the Board of the Council of Canadians stems from the idea that we have to fight for a country that we want – for ourselves and for each other – and not sit back and watch governments and corporations destroy it til there is nothing left. But in order to fight, we have to do it together – the people, united, will never be defeated.

My work in social justice organizing began as part of Palestine Solidarity Halifax, and now, as a member of the core team, I oversee communications and assist with strategic planning for the organization and have also been part of the on-the-ground campaigns and protests. I am often heard shouting poetry into a microphone at protests. I think any social justice movements that leave Palestine out of their organizing are missing a huge piece of the puzzle.

During the budget protests here in Nova Scotia, I also helped summarize and disseminate information about legislative procedures, reached a wide audience with some humorous and relevant poetry, and encouraged folks to participate in small acts of resistance.

As a queer Muslim of South Asian descent, my intersectional identity offers a unique perspective. My communication skills and my creativity allow me to pass on information in a new and interesting way. My poetry has allowed people to see issues in a new light. I am a trusted community member because I show up as much as possible. People often ask me what they can do in response to various issues. I would love to have better answers to these questions.

Sarah Maceda-Maciel

Personal Statement: I am honored to put my name forward as a candidate for the Council of Canadians Board of Directors. I would bring to this position nearly fifteen years' of experience working in the labor movement, where I served first as a strategic researcher for an international union engaged in a multinational campaign, before transitioning to my current role as a senior organizer for a public transit union. Before working on staff in the trade union movement, I cut my teeth at a workers' center in Vermont that fought to expand healthcare and protect the rights of undocumented and temporary foreign agricultural workers.

My experiences leading tough campaigns in the US and Canada have taught me vivid lessons on the importance of deep community organizing and coalition-building: only by finding common cause across social divides can the left build majorities with true emancipatory power. For instance, when acting as the lead organizer on a 600-member strike among paratransit workers in Vancouver, we conducted a series of town halls and listening sessions with seniors' organizations and disability groups (including but not limited to the Council of Senior Citizens Organizations of BC, the BC Federation of Retired Union Members, the HandyDART Riders' Alliance, and the Disability Alliance of BC) that eventually coalesced into a coalition that achieved anti-privatization resolutions from the mayors and city councils of nine of the largest municipalities in the Metro Vancouver Regional District. Similarly, when I was the lead organizer on the 2022 GO Transit strike in Ontario—the largest transit strike in Canada since 2009—we worked closely with student groups and rider organizations in the GTA to build popular support for public transit and awareness of the pitfalls of P3s. I also have experience on the community-side of labor-community coalitions: while living in Washington, DC, I was elected co-chair of the Labor Working Group of the Democratic Socialists of America's Metro DC chapter, which conducted know-your-rights legal trainings for restaurant workers who were experiencing wage theft. I was also extremely active in DSA's tenant organizing work: I helped to organize a 400-unit tenant association in one of DC's poorest neighborhoods, and assisted that association in a campaign that eventually won a \$3.5 million lawsuit against their slumlord for unsafe living conditions.

My socialist political commitments have been shaped by my background as a Manila-born, Filipina-Canadian-American. I am dedicated to building a working class movement that is feminist and anti-racist, and have been a member of the Asian Canadian Labor Alliance and the Asian Pacific

American Labor Alliance for a number of years. These values have given shape to initiatives I've led within my own union: for instance, I have designed and delivered trainings to more than 60 local unions on organizing equity caucuses and building campaigns around gendered workplace issues.

I am eager to bring my organizing background and my unwavering commitment to building an intersectional, working-class, socialist movement to the Council of Canadians' Board of Directors. I first encountered the CoC when I was the co-chair of the national Keep Transit Moving Coalition from 2022-2024, of which the Council was a close affiliate. Together with Council representatives, we worked with numerous climate organizations, disability advocates, and transit rider groups to write and garner support for pro-transit federal budget recommendations; and also supported local initiatives across the country. The Council's breadth of know-how and dedication to that coalition work was part of what first motivated me to become a member.

There has never been a more pivotal time to engage in the progressive campaigning that the Council has long championed. The Council of Canadians' admirable history in the struggle against free trade has never been more relevant, now as geopolitical tensions with the US escalate. The Canadian left must navigate this terrain by fiercely defending public sovereignty and anchoring our response in working-class solidarity; and I believe that my skills at building membership majorities, developing strategic campaign plans, and designing political education curricula would well serve the Council in this cause. I would be privileged to join the Board and help lead the Council in the difficult fights ahead.

Malcolm Lewis-Richmond

Personal Statement: Thank you for considering re-election to the Board of Directors of the Council of Canadians. As a trade unionist, organizer, and researcher with a strong background in linguistics, political advocacy, and community leadership, I want to help the Council continue to be a credible, grassroots voice for climate action that resists greenwashing and speaks boldly about the changes we need in our communities.

Environmental and democratic protection and preservation are not abstract to me. As someone committed to using transit and cycling to reduce car dependency, and as a former advisor to a Member of Parliament, I have seen firsthand how small everyday decisions can make a big difference for the world we live in, and how the state plays a central role in making those decisions possible.

The next Board needs to solidify the organization as a principled, evidence-based advocacy voice on issues like trade, public services, and environmental protection. We have to identify priority areas so that our message can be targeted, focused, and impactful. Any of us who step forward today are standing on the shoulders of the giants who preceded us, and we have a responsibility to honour their work by keeping the Council bold, democratic, and rooted in the everyday struggles of members.

Water is a thread that runs through much of that legacy. The Council's leadership, and Maude Barlow's work in particular, helped push the recognition of water and sanitation as human rights. I am committed to ensuring the Council builds honest, accessible water campaigns that are grounded in evidence. The fact that many communities still face boil-water advisories or crumbling water infrastructure gives us an opportunity to advocate for strong public policy and public education around water sovereignty, not privatization.

The Council also has to ask the federal government hard questions when it comes to funding public services. Taxing the wealthiest individuals and corporations would address many of our public finance woes and would allow us to continue investing in pharmacare, public health, and more.

With regards to internal governance, I believe we need to do more to support Chapters as they tackle local initiatives that resonate with the Council's national mandate. Chapters have a central role to play in calling out corporations or governments when they rebrand status quo projects as "green", and in ensuring public, democratically controlled solutions are implemented in their communities. Chapters also can keep an ear to the ground for what is really happening in local community spaces. After all, campaigning for resilient infrastructure that serves people, not corporate profits, will start in town halls, cafés, and on local streets.

I also bring a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion that aligns with the Council's values. I identify as LGBTQ2S+ and racialized, and live in Québec. My intersectional approach to advocacy has allowed me to understand how class, "race", gender identity, ability, and geography intersect in shaping who is heard in public issue debates. On the Board, I would use my seat to amplify voices that are too often sidelined—we can think of low-income seniors, racialized communities, and rural residents for instance—because our campaigns must truly reflect the breadth of our membership.

Finally, I acknowledge that this role is one of stewardship and accountability to members who have built and sustained the Council over decades. If elected, I will work to ensure that the priorities of the AMM are carried out and that the Council builds and develops its capacity for organizing, educating, and mobilizing around concrete issues like water, climate, trade, and public services. Together, we can ensure the Council remains a principled, independent voice for environmental justice and democracy for years to come.

DIVERSITY

Consistent with the Council's commitment to diversity and inclusion, the nominating committee endeavours to ensure that the final list of candidates assessed to stand for election to the board shall be diverse and reflect the vision, mission and values of the Council.

Based on information provided by candidates and their self-identification, we can confirm that this final list of candidates is diverse and reflects the vision, mission and values of the Council.

We assess diversity based on five criteria: region, gender, age, Indigeneity, and equity-seeking group.

Regions:

Region – ON-QC-NU = 3

Region – Prairies-NT = 1

Region – Atlantic = 1

Region – Pacific-YT = 1

Gender:

Female = 3

Male = 3

Non-binary = 0

Prefer not to answer = 0

Age:

18 – 29 = 0

30 – 49 = 4

50 – 69 = 2

70 + = 0

Prefer not to answer = 0

Indigenous person = 0

Member of an equity-seeking group = 3

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

In addition to the Members-at-large, there are four Regional Representatives to the Board, representing chapters in the Atlantic, Ontario-Quebec-Nunavut, Prairies-NWT, and British Columbia regions. The two-year terms of the Atlantic and Prairies-NWT representatives will end in June, so the chapters in those regions were invited to nominate candidates for those two positions. One candidate

was nominated in each region, so they are acclaimed. Jerry MacKinlay will return as the Regional Representative for Atlantic Region, and Rod Olstad will be the new Regional Representative for Prairies-NWT.

Jerry MacKinlay

Personal Statement: My name is Jerry MacKinlay. I am a member and Co-Chair of the HRM Chapter (Halifax). I work for the Nova Scotia government. I have served as Atlantic Regional Representative on the Board for two years. If they'll have me, I'd like to serve again in that capacity.

I spent 3 years backpacking in Central and South America. I was in Central America during Reagan's wars and did some volunteer work in El Salvador and Nicaragua. I served in role of the Atlantic Regional Development Director for Greenpeace Canada for 5 years. I also worked for 2 ½ years at the Ecology Action Centre in Halifax. I still support Greenpeace and the EAC. I also support the CCPA and, of course, the Council. I was a member of the former Halifax Chapter of the Council before it dissolved. I was overjoyed to discover a new chapter was being set up in HRM and joined in the first batch of active members.

I am excited at the direction the Council has been going in the past two years. There is an increased emphasis on activist campaigns aimed at affecting government policies. My goal as Atlantic Regional Rep would be to enhance those initiatives by identifying and encouraging (with the collaboration of the regional organizer) activism amongst the ranks of the members in chapters in the Atlantic Region. For example, in the HRM chapter I want to support an activist cadre ready to participate and lead in initiatives directed by the Council.

Rod Olstad

Personal Statement: Rod Olstad is a long-term, active member of the Edmonton Chapter-Council of Canadians. While maintaining a 40 year career in music education and performance, Rod concurrently worked to be a well-informed, effective, politically engaged citizen:

1983-93

- *Board and Executive member, Assiniboia Housing Co-op, Edmonton, AB. Held most of the Executive positions over the years. Also was, at various times, the Co-op's representative with:*
 - *NASCO, the North American Students of Co-operation and*
 - *CHF-Canada (Co-operative Housing Federation-Canada) and*
 - *NACHA (the Northern Alberta Co-op Housing Association)*

1988-89

- *Co-host of "Terradox", the University of Alberta Campus radio station CJSR's weekly Environmental program. Interviewed CofC co-founder Mel Hurtig during the Free Trade Election of 1988.*

Late 1980s-early 90s

- *Board Member, LETS (Local Exchange and Trading System), Edmonton Chapter.*

Early to mid 1990s

- *Treasurer, Alberta Society of Fiddlers.*

2000-2009

- *Co-chair of the Environment Caucus of an Alberta provincial political party.*

2008

- *Candidate for an Alberta provincial political party in the provincial election of 2008.*

2008-11

- *Member of the Democratic Renewal Project of Alberta.*

Early 2000s - mid 2010s

- *Member of SAPAA (Stewards of Alberta Protected Areas Association).*

2012-present

- *Active member of the Edmonton Chapter of the Council of Canadians, including co-chair for about the last 10 years.*

2016-present

- *Active member of Pesticide Free Edmonton. Chairperson since ~2019.*

2017-25

- *Producer, the Commons Edmonton Podcast, 5 episodes.*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors comprises 16 positions, 12 being Directors-at-large selected by the members at the AMM or other means, and 4 regional representative directors chosen by chapter members.

Consistent with the elimination of slates of candidates as recommended by the Good Governance Task Force, the Nominating Committee is mandated to ensure each candidate for director-at-large positions on the Board of Directors has an equal opportunity to be known to potential voters.

QUALIFICATIONS

To qualify to serve on the Board of Directors as a Director-at-large, candidates need to be a member of the Council of Canadians in good standing and have the endorsement of five other members.

Membership is available only to Canadians and those who reside in Canada who support the vision, purpose, mission and principles of the Council. In addition, the Board requires a \$1 annual financial and/or in-kind contribution by each member.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE MANDATE

The mandate of the Nominating Committee is described in the By-laws of June 2020. The committee undertakes three important activities: it promotes, receives, and assesses nominations for and from members to stand for election to director-at-large positions on the Board.

It then provides members with a report with a list of eligible candidates to be circulated at least 21 days in advance of the election. The report includes the Nominating Committee's confirmation of eligibility and assessment of each candidate.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2026/27

Wayne Adams (Staff)
Norah Fraser
Jerry MacKinlay
Drena McCormack

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Canada Council for the Arts. (n.d). *Equity-seeking groups* [Web page].
<https://canadacouncil.ca/glossary/equity-seeking-groups>

The Council of Canadians. (2020) *By-Law No. 1*.
<https://canadians.org/sites/default/files/governance/bylaws-councilofcanadians.pdf>

The Council of Canadians. (2020, February). *The good governance task force: Report and Recommendations*.
<https://canadians.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/GoodGovernanceTaskForce-Feb182020-v2.1.pdf>

The Council of Canadians. (n.d.) *About us* [Web page]. <https://canadians.org/about>