



**Halton Nonprofit Network
Network and Coordinating Committee
Terms of Reference**

The role of the Halton Nonprofit Network's Coordinating Committee must be seen in the larger context of the vision and founding principles of the Network itself. The first sections of this document, therefore, set out key elements of the Network as a whole.

Vision of the Halton Nonprofit Network

The **vision** of the Halton Nonprofit Network (HNN) is a vibrant, respected and sustainable nonprofit sector working for the public benefit in Halton characterized by effective coordination and impact.

Mission of the Halton Nonprofit Network

The **mission** of the Halton Nonprofit Network is facilitating communication, coordination, collaboration, sharing and the coming together of the nonprofit sector in Halton around issues of mutual interest.

In carrying out its work, HNN:

1. Facilitates communication across the sector, building and supporting processes that lead to improved cross-sectoral communication.
2. Provides opportunities for sector engagement by facilitating identification of issues of shared concern, supporting emergent leadership and developing processes and opportunities to work together to address these issues.
3. Encourages sector relationships through such things as the hosting of sector events and peer learning opportunities.
4. Builds on and enhances the capacity of the sector by fostering and supporting action groups whose members are encouraged to lead, drive and initiate efforts that serve their own organizations and the greater good of the sector.
5. Coordinates and promotes sector involvement in cross cutting issues to enhance the work of the nonprofit sector by preparing briefs for educational purposes and helping to promote dialogue with local and regional government, the business community and community funders.
6. Builds relationships with the broader nonprofit sector in Ontario through participations in the Ontario Nonprofit Network.

Key Principles of the Halton Nonprofit Network

The Network works as a collaborative of organizations that is characterized by shared interest and leadership and that operates with the following principles:

- Work should be relevant to the needs of the community and responsive and relevant to the vast and diverse nonprofit sector in Halton.
- Leadership in the Network is determined on the basis of who has the energy, fit and initiative to take on the work. The Network is not so much worried about who is NOT around the table as it is in supporting the work of those who CHOOSE to be at the table, knowing that involvement will vary from issue to issue and activity to activity. The Network provides a permeable way for groups to engage and disengage based on their interests, availability, and needs. So, while the Network wishes to see broad engagement, it is not so interested in ensuring traditional “representation.”
- With its commitment to interest-based involvement, the Network will ensure there are opportunities for members to “opt out” when they feel it is necessary.
- The Network has an activity-led approach where work is 'action-focused'. If there is no energy to work on a project, the project and its viability should be re-assessed.
- Work load amongst the partners aims to be balanced so that no one group does it all or dominates.
- Relevance is ensured based on the fact that 'coordinated mutual self-interest' is seen as the best way to secure resources and goals.
- Network activity will be built on the competencies and assets of its members, thus curbing mission entropy and further enhancing the capacity of the members.
- The Network benefits from the strength of the 'shared voice' of the collective membership.

Membership in the Halton Nonprofit Network

Membership in the Network is open to all community-based nonprofit agencies and nonprofit organizations operating within the Regional Municipality of Halton who have agreed to participate in the Network and have signed off on this Terms of Reference. Members may designate one or more people to participate on the various committees and action groups of the Network. In situations where consensus-building has not been effective in resolving an issue, members are each entitled to only one vote on a matter.

It is important for nonprofit agencies and organizations to meet together to explore issues and to work collaboratively to find solutions. At least in its formative stages the Network will not include funders (that is, organizations whose primary mandate is to provide funding to other organizations.)

Collaborating Individuals: Consistent with its commitment to collaboration, the Network and its committees and action groups can include individuals with expertise to participate in

Network activities, will be included in Network communications and can be involved in Network activities. Individuals who have become involved on this basis cannot be **members** of the Network or the Coordinating Committee and therefore have no vote when decision-making at the Network level requires a voting procedure. However, if a voting procedure becomes necessary within the Action Group in which they are active, collaborating individuals may exercise a vote.

Decision Making Processes

- Partners in the Halton Nonprofit Network share a set of principles that include:
 - Honouring and respecting the diversity reflected in each other's programs;
 - Operating in a trusting non- bureaucratic manner;
 - Dealing openly and creatively with conflicts and avoid personalizing any of these conflicts;
 - Striving to make quality team decisions that honour the need to build consensus (decisions that all are prepared to support, with an opting out provision when needed);
 - Keeping the well being of the nonprofit sector as the key driver for their efforts; and
 - Having some fun together while creating and implementing this collaborative effort.
- Network governance issues will continue to be determined by the collaborative, with input from knowledgeable sector leaders as appropriate.

Role of the Coordinating Committee

While the Coordinating Committee of the Halton Nonprofit Network is responsible for effective coordination and management of the activities of the Network, it is operating as part of a collaborative driven by shared interest among Network members. Decision-making is on a consensus basis.

As a collaborative, Network members understand that they collectively are working towards a common vision. In working to achieve this vision, the Network's principles shape and inform the role of the Coordinating Committee and any Action Groups that emerge.

Accountability of the Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee, while self-selecting, is accountable to the members of the Network.

Role and Responsibilities of the Coordinating Committee

The Coordinating Committee is responsible for:

- a) Coordination of activities across the Network.

- b) Ensuring effective processes for the identification of and work on issues of shared interest across or among Network members. Specific issues and initiatives may be identified by the Coordinating Committee or Network members and developed through Action Groups that communicate through the Coordinating Committee. Action Groups will send a representative to meetings of the Coordinating Committee for the purposes of communication and coordination.
- c) Effective communication among and across Network members and Action Groups.
- d) Developing effective processes to support consensus-based collaboration across the Network resulting in all members of the Network having the opportunity to engage in significant conversations and decisions.
- e) Along with Action Groups, identifying and nurturing relationships with other organizations and individuals of strategic importance to the Network.
- f) Effective oversight of staff activities.
- g) Effective oversight of grants and funds entrusted to the Network, including ensuring that accountability requirements and reporting for funds received are completed in a timely fashion.
- h) Evaluation of the Network, its activities and its impacts.

Normally, the Coordinating Committee will meet on an at least bi-monthly basis.

Composition:

The Coordinating Committee of the Halton Nonprofit Network will, by virtue of its commitment to interest-based engagement, have some fluidity. Having noted this, participants on the Coordinating Committee are nevertheless expected to commit to regular attendance so as to ensure continuity and sustained momentum and to engage so as to ensure shared leadership.

Participants will come from the membership of the Network, will self-select and will have a strong commitment to the Network's Mission and Vision.

It is expected that members of the Coordinating Committee will operate in ways consistent with the principles that inform the day-to-day work of the Network, including offering in-kind supports as they are able, so that there is an equitable distribution of work across the Coordinating Committee.

Chair:

Selection and Role of the Chairs:

The Coordinating Committee will be chaired by representatives selected by the Committee from among its membership and this responsibility may be structured in a fluid way, reflecting interest-based engagement. From time to time, there may be Co-Chairs, a Chair or a rotating Chair. In each case, the Chair, however this selection has been structured, will serve as Chair of the Network.

Where there is a Chair or Co-Chairs, the term of office shall be for one year although a Chair or Co-Chair may be re-elected to the position for a second consecutive term after which she/he shall step aside. The Chair or Co-Chairs shall be responsible for chairing all meetings, acting principally in the role of facilitators, establishing agendas (consulting with members of the Coordinating Committee as needed regarding agenda development), representing the Network publicly and communicating with the media.

The Coordinating Committee may delegate authority for communication to another individual as it deems appropriate.

The Terms of Reference is a living document and will be reviewed every 2 years to ensure its continued appropriateness.