

Steering Committee Planning Tool

for fiscally sponsored group in ‘Model A’ Relationship

What follows is a “do it yourself” tool a steering committee (sometimes called an advisory boards and leadership of a fiscally sponsored project under a ‘Model A’ relationship can use to develop a governance document to assist in managing their affairs. Blue areas are for the users of this tool to review and replace with information specific to their intended structure. Each situation is unique and this document will look very different depending on the circumstances. If you have any questions or suggestions, please reach out to [info@socialimpactcommons.org](mailto:info@socialimpactcommons.org).

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Steering Committee (SC) Charter

for fiscally sponsored group in ‘Model A’ Relationship with FISCAL SPONSOR NAME

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| **Name of Project** | PROJECT NAME (the “Project”) |
| **Project Director(s)** | NAME OF DIRECTOR(S) |
| **Purpose of Project** | Describe why the project exists and what it does |
| **Fiscal Sponsor’s Name** | Name of Fiscal Sponsor (“Sponsor Acronym”) |
| **Description of fiscal sponsorship relationship** | Sponsor Acronym provides a compliant 501(c)(3) home for the Project along with back office infrastructure and capacity building support. As Sponsor Acronym holds all Project assets and assumes full legal responsibility for the Project, it has final say regarding decisions that may subject it to risk. In turn, the Steering Committee provides strategic direction and oversight for the Project. This relationship is memorialized in a fiscal sponsorship agreement entered into between Sponsor Acronym and the Steering Committee or Project Leader. A current copy of the agreement is found LINK |
| **Responsibilities of Project Director(s)** | The Project Director manages the day-to-day activities of the Project. They work closely with Sponsor Acronym to manage the fiscal sponsorship relationship and support Project staff and activities. This role may be volunteer or compensated, and could be served by a member of the SC or the senior leader of the Project. They work closely with the SC to advance the purposes of the Project. As relates to the SC, they . . . add anything specific to the Project Director’s role as relates to the SC. For example, do they create the agenda, take minutes, vote? |
| **Responsibilities of SC** | What are the key responsibilities of the SC? For example. . .   * Do they act as a sounding board and help the Project Director problem solve? * What decisions do they make for the Project vs. what decisions do they help the Project Director make? * Can the SC decide to terminate the fiscal sponsorship relationship without the consent of the Project Director? * Do they provide periodic evaluations of the Project Director? * Are they expected to give or volunteer a certain number of hours annually? |
| **Number of Members** | How many SC Members should there be? Typically this is a range (e.g. 3-5 or 7-11) |
| **How SC Members are added and removed** | How do individuals join the SC? How long are they expected to stay on for? How can the SC remove a particular individual before they have served a full term? |
| **Orientation** | How are new SC Members oriented to the work of the Project and their respective roles as SC Members? Often this entails sharing background information on the Project and the Project Director and/or one or more existing SC Members making themselves available to discuss what being on the SC is like |
| **Special Positions on SC** | Are there any special roles for individuals that would be similar to officers of a conventional nonprofit? If so, what are the specific responsibilities associated with those roles? Examples include President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. |
| **Subcommittees** | Are there any subcommittees? If so, what do they do? Can stakeholders that are not on the SC serve on these bodies or does everyone also have to be on the SC? These may be temporary and permanent in nature. Examples of permanent subcommittees include fundraising, finance, & executive. Examples of temporary subcommittees include ones for capital campaigns, strategic planning, and executive transitions. |
| **Meetings** | How often are meetings held? Is there a regular schedule? Can special meetings be called? Are meetings in person or can they be remote? How are decisions made at meetings - majority vote, super majority (two-thirds), unanimous, other? What percentage of SC Members must join the meeting to make a decision binding? |
| **Working Relationship between Sponsor Acronym and the SC** | Per the Fiscal Sponsorship Agreement, Sponsor Acronym and SC representatives will meet annually on or around DATE to discuss the relationship and upcoming plans for the Project.  To support informed decision making, Sponsor Acronym will provide periodic financial information about the Project.  Sponsor Acronym will reach out to a designated SC representative regarding material issues affecting the fiscal sponsorship relationship. Likewise, a designated representative of the SC will reach out to Sponsor Acronym regarding decisions or changes that may impact the fiscal sponsorship relationship. |
| **Ethics** | SC Members will always act in the best interests of the Project. If a potential conflict arises between your personal interests and those of the Project, you will disclose the potential conflict and use Sponsor Acronym’s Conflict of Interest Policy to resolve it. |
| **Confidentiality** | SC Members will gain access to sensitive and confidential information. They agree to hold this information in confidence and not use it for any reason other than to benefit the Project. |
| **Evaluation** | How will the SC know if we’re meeting our goals and helping the Project? |
| **Links to related documents** | * Current Steering Committee list and terms * Copies of meeting agendas and minutes * Current Fiscal Sponsorship Agreement * Sponsor Acronym Conflict of Interest Policy * Any Project-specific materials SC should have access to |