Water Environment Federation®
the water quality people®

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

As of July 2025

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WEF Leadership

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is the governing body of WEF and holds legal authority and fiduciary responsibility on behalf of WEF and its membership. The Board is responsible for oversight, control, and direction of WEF under such rules as the Board may determine and is subject to applicable laws and regulations, WEF's Articles of Incorporation and WEF Bylaws. The Board of Trustees is responsible for establishing the WEF strategic direction and strategic plan, establishing and overseeing implementation of policies, approving a budget to support implementation of the Strategic Plan, and providing direction to WEF Communities.

House of Delegates

The House of Delegates (HOD) is comprised of representatives of each WEF Member Association, and Delegates representing other WEF member constituencies. The HOD is the deliberative and representational body of WEF. It advises the Board on matters of strategic direction and public policy development and has authority to confirm and remove Trustees to the extent provided for in the Bylaws.

Communities

WEF Communities develop programs and activities to support implementation of the WEF strategic plan and provide recommendations to the Board of Trustees on programs and services to achieve the WEF vision and mission. WEF communities are responsible to, and receive direction from, the WEF Board of Trustees.

Community Leadership Council (CLC)

The Community Leadership Council (CLC) consists of the Chair and Vice-Chairs of all WEF standing Communities and all members of the CLC Steering Committee. The CLC serves as a communication link between the communities and the Board, fosters communications between the communities and the Board, and provides a community-based voice to the Board. The CLC was created by the Board of Trustees (Board) to provide a mechanism for WEF communities to share ideas; improve communications within WEF; and serve as a communication link between communities, councils, House of Delegates (HOD) and the Board. The CLC Steering Committee Chair serves as a liaison to the Board. WEF provides support for the CLC Steering Committee Chair to travel/attend open Board meetings as an invited, non-voting guest.

CLC Steering Committee (CLC SC)

The CLC is led by a CLC Steering (leadership) Committee which is comprised of the CLC SC Chair, CLC SC Vice-Chair, Community of Practice (CoP) CLC Directors, HOD representative and a Board representative. The Steering Committee will organize the activities of the CLC,

establish goals and objectives and provide leadership to the CLC. The Steering Committee shall consist of appointed members and be populated in the following manner:

- CLC Steering Committee Chair (appointed by the Board for a 2-year term)
- CLC Steering Committee Vice-Chair (appointed by the Board for a 2-year term)
- CLC Directors, number to be defined as needed to meet the needs of the CLC with approximately ½ rotating off each year. The CLC Director shall serve a two (2) year term with the option of adding a one-time, one-year term extension. If the CLC Director is seeking the extension, they shall notify CLC SC leadership at least three months before rolling off at WEFTEC. Term extension requires notification by email but not reapplication. Granting an extension is evaluated by CLC SC Nominating Committee and is not guaranteed. The CLC Directors shall be appointed by the CLC Steering Committee.
- Board representative, appointed by the Board for a 1-year term
- HOD Speaker-elect for a 1-year term

WEF Staff

WEF staff shall serve to support the technical, administrative, and logistical duties of WEF activities through the execution of said functions and shall support community activities as staff managers and through the community administrator.

Volunteer Responsibility and WEF Policy

Responsibility and Authority

WEF volunteers are responsible to be knowledgeable of processes and procedures governing community activity and operations. Authority of volunteers is limited to specific work activities of the volunteer group or community. **Specific and written authorization of the Board of Trustees is required for:**

- Committing WEF to an expenditure of funds.
- Conduct business transactions or represent WEF in official dealings.
- Representing WEF or expressing positions or opinions on behalf of WEF.
- Continuation, consolidation, subdivision, or sunset of communities.
- Entering into liaisons with other organizations.
- Representing WEF at public or private hearings.
- Changes to the community charge.

WEF Policy

WEF volunteers must adhere to the WEF Code of Conduct which includes being knowledgeable and adhering to WEF Policies including, but not limited to those available at the following links:

Antitrust Policy
Code of Conduct
Confidentiality Policy

Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy
Member Discipline Policy
Member in Good Standing Policy
Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy
Volunteer Responsibilities and Indemnification Guidelines
Whistleblower Policy

Sunset and Community Review Guidelines

As specified in WEF Bylaws, the duties of the Water Environment Federation's Board of Trustees (Board) include the responsibility to create and dissolve WEF communities, task forces, and standing Programs and to approve the appointment of the Community Leadership Council (CLC) Chair and Vice Chair. These guidelines are to be used by staff, the Board and the CLC Steering Committee to accomplish this responsibility.

WEF Sunset and Community Review Procedures

- Each standing or special communities charge and need for continuation shall be critically reviewed by the WEF CLC Steering Committee no less frequently than once every four years. No standing or special community shall be continued for more than four years without affirmative action by the CLC Steering Committee.
- WEF staff with responsibility for community management shall select approximately one-quarter of communities each year for review. This selection shall occur on a regular schedule so that each community receives a review no less frequently than once every four years. The Board, the WEF President, the CLC Steering Committee and community chairs can request community sunset review outside of the regular schedule.
- The CLC Chair, based on input from the CLC Steering Committee, will decide whether to require each community scheduled for review to continue the community without modifications, with modifications, or to perform a detailed sunset review.
- If a detailed sunset review is required, the CLC Chair will lead a review of input from community chairs, community staff managers and the CLC Steering Committee.
- The CLC Chair, with support from the CLC Staff manager, will prepare a consolidated Community Sunset Review Report with recommendations for consideration by the Board.
- Following action by the Board, the CLC staff manager will notify the community chairs and community staff managers of the Board's action.

WEF Community Guidelines

Types of Communities

Community

Communities are charged with achieving the long-term strategic goals of WEF through the development of products and services. The technical knowledge and delivery communities

are referred to as “Standing Communities” in the WEF Bylaws and are established by the Board of Trustees (Board). Community activities may span multiple years as community charges are reviewed every four years until the community is sunset by the Board. Community members must be members of WEF.

Board Committees

Board Committees are established by the Bylaws and have specific membership, responsibilities, and continuing assignments from year to year. Currently, the Board Committees include the Audit, Bylaws, Ethics, Finance, Governance, and Nominating Committees. Termination and changes to these committees can be affected only by amendment of the WEF Bylaws. Additional Board Committees may be established, as needed, to carry out the duties of the Board. At the time of this publication update, additional Board Committees include the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee; the Strategic Advisory Committee; and the WEFTEC Advisory Committee.

Subcommittees and Focus Groups

Due to size and scope, Subcommittees and Focus Groups may be established to perform specific duties. Subcommittees are formed as part of the community with a specific task or activity in mind. Focus Groups are formed to do a task within a community and established to perform a specified duty.

Task Force

A Task Force is created with a specific charge to accomplish short-term objectives within a deadline and goes across communities/committees.

Community Size and Organization

Communities may vary in size. Each community will consist of a minimum of not less than ten WEF members. The minimum ten-member requirement is an element of consideration during the Community Sunset Review.

Community Membership

Members interested in applying to WEF community can request to join the community on WEFUnity or submit an email to committees@wef.org and include the following information:

- Name
- WEF Member ID Number
- Community(s) of Interest
- One to two sentences explaining interest in joining the community(s)

Applications for community membership are reviewed and approved by the community chair. Community membership is limited to WEF members. Non-members may not be

appointed as community, subcommittee, or task force leaders.

Continuing service to a community is dependent upon an annual review (immediately preceding WEFTEC,) and recommendation of the chair. The community chair is required to annually review the community roster and make recommendations to WEF for retaining or removing members. Community members who do not participate in community activities may be subject to removal from the community.

Community Leadership

Each community includes, at a minimum, a chair, and a vice-chair. Each Community should also have a Nominating Committee made up of current and past leadership members and a Steering Committee which includes the chair, vice-chair, and several subcommittee chairs or vice-chairs. These positions, together with the leaders of any appropriate subcommittees, workgroups, and task forces leadership, comprise the community leadership. The role of community leaders is to collectively implement the goals and objectives of the community.

Community Leaders (Chair and Vice Chair)

Community chairs and community vice chairs and 2nd vice chairs may be appointed for a two or a three-year term of service. A community leader's term of service may be extended upon recommendation and approval of the CLC Chair. A minimum of one year of service in the community is required before being appointed as a community leader. Communities vary in the way they consider and select community leaders, based on the needs of the communities.

Member Participation

Community leaders determine the level of participation needed by community members and are responsible for monitoring the level of participation in community work. Community members who do not participate may be subject to removal from the community.

Removal of Community Member of Chair

The CLC Steering Committee Chairs has the authority to remove a community chair or member at any time. A community chair can remove a community member for non-participation or non-contribution to community work during the annual community membership review process.

Community Management

The WEF Vision and Strategic Plan (Appendix A) and the community charge provide the framework for WEF community activities. These resources serve as guides for evaluating and developing community activities and as a benchmarking tool for evaluating ongoing and future community activities.

Community leaders, in collaboration with the staff manager, are responsible for managing programmatic and administrative activities of the community.

Community Charge

The charge provides focus for the community and ensures that community activities are consistent with the WEF Vision and Strategic Plan. A community's charge is adopted when the community is formed, and is reviewed every four years, during the Community Sunset Review. The community charge can be modified upon approval of the CLC Steering Committee and the WEF Board.

Subcommittees/Focus Groups and Task Forces

The chair of a standing community may establish subcommittees/focus groups and task forces and is responsible for 1) informing the staff manager and the community administrator of the formation and termination of subcommittees/focus groups and task forces and their memberships; 2) appointing members of the standing community to a subcommittee/focus group or task force, and 3) evaluating the effectiveness of each subcommittee/focus group or task force.

Community Work Plan

Community leaders are expected to develop and maintain a work plan that identifies the community's charge, goals, mission, and strategies over a three-year period. Work plans must align with the WEF Strategic Plan and be realistic, achievable, and measurable.

The work plan should include information on the community plans for the coming year and projections of community activities for the next three years. Communities should review the work plan annually to review and revise goals for the current year, and to establish new goals for the subsequent three-year period.

Budget

The WEF budget is approved by the Board in July for the fiscal year beginning September 1. Communities requesting budget commitment for specific programs and/or activities must submit their requests, in collaboration with the community staff manager, by **March 1** to be considered in development of the budget for the following fiscal year.

Community/Committee budgets may include two components: administrative and special projects. *The community/committee staff manager will advise community/committee leaders on budget items included in the budget, and those that would require special budget approval*.

General Budget Guidelines
Administrative Expenses – Automatically included in the budget. Office supplies, postage, conference calls, staff support.

Special Projects - Activities that would require resources not currently included in the budget. (See proposal process below.)

Special Project Proposals - Community leaders may submit proposals for special projects for consideration by the Board. Such projects include activities that require significant staff or financial resources, and/or that may be beyond the scope of current community activities. Proposals should be developed and submitted in collaboration with the community staff manager. The process is outlined below:

Discuss and coordinate the proposed activity with the community staff manager. Submit the proposed action item for the Board meeting agenda, through the community staff manager, to the WEF Executive Director.

Prepare supporting materials for the proposed action to include:

- Cover Sheet (Appendix B)
- Board resolution for requested action (Appendix C)
- Proposal details

Community Reports

Community leaders are responsible to provide an annual report on community actions and timelines.

The Community report (Appendix D) provides a summary of the activities and plans of each community and serves as a communication among Community Leaders, the Board, the House of Delegates, and staff. Community reports are distributed to community leaders and posted to WEFUnity.

Subcommittee and task force leaders are responsible for reporting the progress or status of activities to the chair of the standing committee on a regular basis, to be reflected in the annual community report.

Report Schedule

- March 15 Post Midyear

Report Instructions

- WEF Strategic Plan Alignment – Provide specific goals of the strategic plan that are being addressed by the community.
- Projects, Activities and Accomplishments for Report Period – Include tasks

and deliverables with timelines. Examples: Specialty Conference, WEFTEC Workshop, WE&T Article, etc. Ongoing or regular events (e.g., "Hold a community meeting at WEFTEC") need not be reported.

- Plans for Next Reporting Period – Provide the planned activities and timelines.

Meetings

WEF does not provide financial support for travel to and participation in community meetings; therefore, in person community meeting requirements are kept to a minimum. Conference calls, virtual meetings, and e-mail are widely used to accomplish community activities.

Scheduling

A meeting of WEF communities is typically held during WEFTEC. Meeting rooms and materials needed are scheduled through the community staff manager. **No community meetings can be scheduled during the WEFTEC Opening General Session.**

Some communities schedule additional meetings, either in conjunction with the WEF midyear meeting or with a specialty conference or other WEF event. Requests for meeting space at WEFTEC and at the midyear meeting are coordinated through the staff manager.

Agenda

The agenda should be prepared by the chair and/or vice-chair, in collaboration with the staff manager, to include relevant discussion/action topics, the amount of time allocated to each discussion, and the identity of the person leading each discussion. The agenda and supporting materials should be provided to community members before the meeting.

Conducting Meetings

WEF community meetings are open to members and non-members. **Only WEF members holding full community membership have the right to vote**. WEF recommends that all meetings be conducted using Roberts Rules of Order parliamentary procedures.

Community meetings must be conducted so that discussions 1) do not result in antitrust liability for the participants or for WEF, and 2) that the meeting is in compliance with WEF's Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Policy and any other applicable policies. The community chair will open each meeting with a reminder of applicable policies and responsibility to adhere to them. If a potential antitrust issue or a conflict of interest arises during a meeting, the discussion must be stopped immediately and the advice of the community chair and/or senior WEF staff obtained. If needed, the issue should also be brought to the attention of WEF legal counsel.

Minutes

The community is required to record the minutes of each meeting in writing and to provide

the community staff manager with a copy of the approved minutes. It is the responsibility of the community staff manager and chair to ensure that written minutes are recorded.

Minutes must include:

- Date, time, place of meeting, and presider name
- Participants
- Meeting agenda
- Decisions reached with follow-up actions and deadlines; Formal motions and outcomes – passage/defeat
- Summary of discussion to justify decisions

Minutes must not include:

- Transcripts of discussions
- Statements attributed to specific individuals

Establishing New Communities

The WEF Bylaws provide for the establishment of standing or special communities or councils as deemed necessary by the Board of Trustees. New communities generally arise from the work of a task force or subcommittee on a topic of interest to the profession that is not included in any existing standing communities' charge, and that volunteers and staff believe support the WEF mission. Proposals for new areas of community work may also come from within an existing community, any leadership group, or WEF member.

The procedures for proposing a new WEF standing community to be considered by the Board involve submitting a written proposal in collaboration with the appropriate staff and must include the following:

- Purpose and need for the community.
- Relate the objectives of the community to the WEF Vision and Strategic Plan.
- Discuss how the work of the proposed community will assist WEF in achieving its goals.
- Demonstrate that the proposed work does not overlap with an existing community.
- Community Charge - describe the scope of the work to be done by the proposed community, including details of areas on which the community will focus, specific duties and/or goals necessary to support the mission, and liaisons with other groups.
- Three-year plan Community Work Plan - Provide specific projects for the community to undertake in the near future. Include future projections for the direction of the community, (i.e., possible new areas of interest for the community, future collaboration with other groups or organizations, international endeavors, plans for growth, etc.).
- Proposed Community Membership – Include chair, vice-chair, and interested members.

- Proposed Budget – Provide an estimate of project-related expenses and staff resources.

Proposals should be submitted to the CLC Steering Committee which will provide recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

WEF Staff Responsibilities

Community Manager

- In collaboration with the chair, ensure that community initiatives support WEF's Vision and Strategic Plan
- Work with community members to plan and implement community projects
- Advise the community regarding WEF policies and procedures and ensure that community projects are within WEF guidelines.
- Ensure that community-developed publications, products, and actions do not set standards, inhibit trade, or pose other liability issues.
- Ensure that community leaders and members do not participate in antitrust violations at meetings and other functions.
- Budget for community activities.
- Advise community leaders and members regarding community guidelines, including application and administrative procedures.
- Work with community leaders on assigning who will take meeting minutes, post agenda/minutes and other meet logistics.

Community Administrator

- Process community applications and provide weekly notifications to staff manager
- Maintain WEF community membership database and records for all standing communities
- Coordinate annual community report submission
- Organize and execute the annual sunset review process
- Work with CLC leadership on annual succession planning
- Coordinate annual CLC Director nomination/application recruitment process
- Help plan and coordinate CLC WEFTEC and Midyear events with CLC SC leadership
- Participate in the CLC Steering Committee monthly calls

Community Admin
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Appendix A – WEF Strategic Plan

WEF Strategic Plan

Appendix B – Board of Trustees Cover Sheet

COVER SHEET		**WEF BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEM**	
MEETING DATE: ***(MONTH DD, YYYY)***	Click/Enter date(s): Month DD, YYYY.	**ACTION:**	Click/Select One.
SPONSOR:	Click/Select One.	**SUBMITTED BY:**	Click/Enter text.
AGENDA ITEM:	Click/Enter text.		

TEXT OF MOTION OR BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM:
CLICK/ENTER TEXT.

ATTACHMENT(S) INCLUDED: CLICK/SELECT YES OR NO. *(Attach all supporting documentation for motion, discussion or other impacts on WEF).*

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

To be Completed by Sponsor:			**To be Completed by CFO or Treasurer if Financial Impact Estimate Is Greater than Zero**		
Financial Impact Estimate: ***(Enter dollar amount; $0 for no impact; or unknown)***		**Frequency of Impact:**	**Budgeted?** ***(Y/N/Partial)***	**Estimate Reasonable?** ***(Y or N-$Amt)***	**Reviewed by** *(Signature)*:
Expense	$ CLICK/ENTER TEXT.	CLICK/SELECT ONE			
Revenue	$ CLICK/ENTER TEXT.	CLICK/SELECT ONE			
Staff Time	$ CLICK/ENTER TEXT.	CLICK/SELECT ONE			
			Comments: *(Attach sheets if needed)*		

IMPACT ON WEF: *(WEF Staff, Member Associations, or Volunteers; if needed provide attachments)*
CLICK/ENTER TEXT.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT – *Check the parts of the strategic plan this item supports*.

☐ GOAL 1: Attract and develop a diverse and passionate water workforce
☐ GOAL 2: Cultivate a purpose-driven community to sustainably solve water challenges for all
☐ GOAL 3: Lead the transformation to the Circular Water Economy

WEF trade secrets, methods, product information, business and strategy plans, potential partners and strategic partners, financial information, sales information, promotional and marketing information, technical information, and all personally identifiable information, and all other business information relating to WEF, is confidential information. Individuals serving on the WEF Board of Trustees shall never disclose, or ever use, any confidential information except as necessary to discharge his or her obligations as fiduciaries of WEF. ***Form revised 2023.12.18.***

Appendix C – Sample Board Resolution Format

This sample of a Board Resolution is provided for your use in formatting resolutions for your committee.

Water for People
A Charity of Choice for the
Water Environment Federation

***Whereas*: The Water Environment Federation's Vision is to be recognized as a leader dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of the global water environment; and,**

***Whereas:* WEF recognizes that many people in the world do not have access to safe drinking water or adequate sanitation; and,**

***Whereas:* Water for People is a charitable organization dedicated to assisting those in developing nations to develop systems for safe drinking water and adequate sanitation; and,**

***Whereas:* WEF has chosen to advocate for and contribute financially to the good work of Water For People. Therefore,**

***Be It Resolved,* that the Board of Trustees of the Water Environment Federation hereby designates Water For People as a Charity of Choice.**

***Be it resolved further,* that Water for People is authorized to refer to the Water Environment Federation as having designated Water For People as a Charity of Choice and is authorized to use the Water Environment Federation logo in brochures related to Water For People programs.**

Approved
Water Environment Federation Board of Trustees
October 28, 2005

Appendix D – Committee Report Template

Start Date	Due Date	Initiative/Project	Project Manager(s)	WEF Critical Objective & Strategic Goal	Deliverables	Current Status	Metrics	Budget