



**Ontario Independent Facilitation Network
(OIFN)**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

March 2015

ONTARIO INDEPENDENT FACILITATION NETWORK

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Preamble

The Ontario Independent Facilitation Network uses a self-governing model of governance to oversee the activities and work of the Network.

The OIFN is a self-governing model, with a Stewards Group that acts as the governance leader. In practice, the OIFN Stewards Group will determine who sits on this group, terms of office, how people are to be replaced, and provides mechanisms for involvement of partners and accountability of members and partners.

The OIFN has chosen a constellation model to guide its work. The constellation model supports partnership and collaboration that is action focused, embodies shared leadership and acknowledges that a self-organizing principle in the formation of constellation working groups. This model builds on gifts inherent in the Network, generates creative ways to secure and share resources, and meets the purpose of the OIFN to strengthen independent facilitation through network activities, community development, shared learning, mentoring and provincial advocacy. Self-organizing means constellation members come together driven by their own interests and assets. The recognition of the self-organizing principle ensures a high level of contribution and engagement by partners, and is designed to harness the energy of partners/ allies.

Vision:

The vision of the Ontario Independent Facilitation Network (OIFN) is to strengthen the capacity of people who have a disability along with their families and networks, to direct their own lives and live as active, participating, contributing citizens.

Mission:

It is the Ontario Independent Facilitation Network's mission to support, nurture, and preserve independent facilitation and planning through our efforts as a provincial Community of Practice and by linking with others across Ontario.

The OIFN is an affiliation of independent facilitators, people who have a disability/self-advocates, families, independent facilitation organizations, supportive community members with a demonstrated commitment to independent facilitation, and agency representatives. The OIFN comes together regularly as a community of practice to learn and grow, valuing our collective knowledge and competence.

In its efforts to co-create a future where all belong, OIFN has established clarity of purpose, beliefs and principles for working together, and linkages with others. Committed to collective learning, co-creation of resources, and developmental evaluation, OIFN will play key roles in the development and implementation of independent facilitation in Ontario.

1.0 Governance:

- 1.1 The affairs of the OIFN will be governed by a Stewards Group.
- 1.2 The Stewards Group is dedicated to the growth and sustainability of independent facilitation as a viable option across Ontario, with fair and equitable access for anyone who would choose independent facilitation. (*See Stated Values and Principles of OIFN*).
- 1.3 It is the belief of the Stewards Group that local communities will benefit: from the provision of independent facilitation and planning supports, and that this will be enhanced by increasing awareness and education about the real and potential impact of these supports. These benefits include:

- 1.3.1 more vibrant local communities where there are richer more meaningful opportunities for social inclusion and enhanced well-being;
- 1.3.2 broader opportunities for people to develop new skills, experiences and relationships;
- 1.3.3 increased possibilities for broader and deeper partnerships within local communities.

2.0 Stewards Group Responsibilities

- 2.1 The Stewards Group of The Ontario Independent Facilitation Network is responsible for ensuring that collaborative efforts are directed towards the provision and viability of independent facilitation across Ontario.
- 2.2 The Stewards Group will be responsible for the overall direction of all activities and projects that it agrees to undertake that support the work of its vision and mission.
- 2.3 It will recruit and contract for the necessary paid positions according to Network requirements, activities and project proposals. It will oversee all activities and projects and ensure that the work is conducted within the identified and agreed upon values, principles, goals, and accountability mechanisms of the OIFN.
- 2.4 The Stewards Group is responsible for managing all the funds associated with day to day operations and projects. To ensure fiscal responsibility, OIFN will establish sound accountability mechanisms that are aligned with agreed upon values, are well understood and transparent.
- 2.5 The Stewards Group will ensure that any learnings from its ongoing endeavours and projects are documented and used to guide the work and development of independent facilitation and person directed-planning across Ontario.

- 2.6 The Stewards Group is responsible for initiating and approving the mandate of each of the self-organizing constellation groups, including Terms of Reference, timelines, partnership agreements, etc. It will do so collaboratively with identified partners for each project.
- 2.7 The Stewards Group will ensure that the governance structure for the OIFN and the mandate of the Stewards Group meet the evolving needs of the OIFN.

3.0 Stewards Group Composition

- 3.1 The Stewards Group will be comprised of a minimum of eight and maximum of 12 members.
- 3.2 The Stewards Group composition will aim to reflect the following stakeholders:
 - 3.2.1 Independent facilitators
 - 3.2.2 Family members who have experience with independent facilitation
 - 3.2.3 People who have a disability/self advocates who have experience with independent facilitation
 - 3.2.4 Representatives of Independent Facilitation Organizations
 - 3.2.5 Representatives from all geographic regions of Ontario
 - 3.2.6 People with expertise that address the current, strategic, ongoing or project-specific needs of the OIFN

4.0 Stewards Group Terms of Office

- 4.1 The term of office shall be two years for all members. Terms will be staggered to ensure effective organizational continuity.
- 4.2 Members of the Stewards Group are eligible for reappointment to a second consecutive term for a maximum of four consecutive years save and except a member who becomes the Chair.
- 4.3 Exceptions to 4.2 would apply if a member is selected as Chair in their 3rd or 4th year as a member of the Stewards Group. No individual shall exceed 6 consecutive years as a member of the Stewards Group.
- 4.4 Steward Group members will be eligible for reappointment to the Stewards Group after a two year absence.

5.0 Chair:

- 5.1 The Stewards Group of the OIFN will include a Chair and a Vice Chair to facilitate succession planning.
- 5.2 The term of office for each shall be two years.
- 5.3 The Chair must have been a member of the Stewards Group for a minimum of two years immediately preceding appointment as Chair.
- 5.4 The Chair will ensure the work of the OIFN is overseen and coordinated by the Steward's Group. The Vice-Chair will assume the responsibilities of the Chair in their absence.
- 5.5 The Chair and Vice Chair will be selected by the members of the Stewards Group.
- 5.6 The Vice Chair will assume the position of Chair provided that their term of office will respect item 4.3.

6.0 Stewards Group Executive:

- 6.1 There will be a Stewards Executive that will act on behalf of the Stewards to respond to time sensitive-decisions between meetings, and will report such decisions to the Stewards.
- 6.2 Executive responsibilities include, but are not limited to:
 - 6.2.1 Financial oversight, reporting and tracking
 - 6.2.2 Contracting of services for the OIFN as required, mentoring and oversight to the OIFN paid positions
 - 6.2.3 Receiving reports from paid positions. Such reports and any issues will be taken forward to the Stewards by the Executive, as required.

7.0 Procedure for Appointment as a Steward

- 7.1 As the OIFN is a self-governing body, in January of each year, the Stewards Group will appoint a Nominations Committee to determine its requirements for new members as per item 3.2.
- 7.2 The Nominations Subgroup will recommend candidates who have expressed interest in serving for appointment to the group, to be approved by the Stewards.
- 7.3 Candidates for nomination as Stewards Group must have been an active participant of in the OIFN for a minimum of 2 years.

8.0 Procedure for the Removal of a Steward

- 8.1 In the event that a member of the Stewards Group is absent from 3 consecutive meetings without reason, is considered to be acting in bad faith, or to be acting in opposition to the agreed upon best interests of the OIFN, they may be removed from membership as a Steward.

- 8.2 A motion to remove a member may be proposed at any Stewards meeting to be voted on at the next meeting.
- 8.3 The member in question shall receive notice of this motion in writing and be allowed to speak on his or her behalf before the motion is voted on.
- 8.4 The motion shall require a two-thirds majority to be carried.

9.0 Meeting Protocols:

- 9.1 The Stewards Group will meet monthly either in person or via teleconference, or by some other appropriate electronic means.
- 9.2 A quorum shall exist with 50% of the appointed members in attendance.
- 9.3 The Stewards will seek consensus before taking action. When a decision is time-sensitive, or if consensus cannot be achieved, matters will be decided by a simple majority vote. In the case of a tie, the Chairperson shall cast a second, deciding vote.
- 9.4 A record of all decisions and actions of meetings will be kept.

10.0 Conflict of Interest

- 10.1 The OIFN will have mechanisms in place so that potential conflict of interest is identified or declared as early as possible before any conflict of interest actually takes place.
- 10.2 Members of the Stewards Group will be personally and collectively responsible for identifying potential conflict of interest.

11.0 Stated Values and Principles of the OIFN:

- 11.1 **Community is seen ‘as a first resource’** – so that people see the community as a place to start in becoming participating, valued, contributing citizens;
- 11.2 **The expertise of people with disabilities and their families, friends, and allies is acknowledged** – so that people with disabilities and their families, friends, and allies define what they want and what works best for them;
- 11.3 **People have control over their lives** – so that people are able to choose what ‘a good life’ means to them, and have control over the supports that enable them to live that life;
- 11.4 **Supports are individualized and portable** – so that the supports available to people with disabilities are tailored to their needs and move with them as they grow and change;
- 11.5 **Community solutions are innovative and creative**– so that like the rest of us, people with disabilities can forge their own path in the community, rather than being ‘plugged into’ what already exists.
- 11.6 **Vested interests are minimized** - in a transformed system, providing individualized support dollars and separating the functions of independent facilitation and planning; service delivery; and autonomous People First and family groups, vested interests are minimized.
- 11.7 **Strong provincial presence** – the OIFN continues to support and join with the work of Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario (IFCO) in helping people with disabilities to have adequate levels of individualized funding in order that it become a viable support option.