



The following candidate biographies have been adapted for public release to provide an overview of the candidates' experience and the perspective they would bring to the Board of Directors.

Bernd Christmas

A senior legal and governance leader with extensive executive and board experience across complex organizations, Bernd brings a deep understanding of regulatory environments, stakeholder relations, and strategic oversight. He has held multiple chief executive roles and has served on numerous national and international boards and commissions, contributing to policy development, governance frameworks, and large-scale organizational strategy.

With a distinguished career in law and public service, he has advised on major commercial agreements, governance structures, and economic development initiatives. His experience includes working closely with Indigenous communities, where he has contributed to advancing economic participation, partnership development, and long-term sustainability.

Bernd offers a thoughtful and collaborative governance approach, grounded in accountability, inclusion, and long-term impact. He brings a strong perspective on accessibility and representation, with a particular interest in supporting broader participation and diversity within sport. At the board level, he contributes seasoned judgment, governance discipline, and a strategic lens shaped by complex national and cross-sector leadership experience.

Crystal Kissel

Crystal brings significant governance and community leadership experience, with a strong background in public sector oversight, strategic planning, and stakeholder collaboration. She has served in senior elected leadership roles, where she was responsible for guiding complex decision-making, advancing long-term planning initiatives, and fostering transparent and accountable governance practices.

Her experience includes working across multiple levels of government and committees, with a focus on environmental stewardship, community engagement, and inclusive leadership. She is recognized for her ability to build consensus and navigate diverse stakeholder perspectives.

A lifelong equestrian, Crystal combines her governance expertise with more than three decades of involvement in the sport as a competitor, coach, and active participant. She brings a practical understanding of athlete development, coaching standards, and the day-to-day realities of the equestrian community. She would bring to the Board a grounded, community-informed perspective, with strength in consensus-building, policy oversight, and aligning strategic decisions with participant needs.



Gilles Levasseur

Gilles is a governance expert, legal professional, and academic with over 25 years of experience in regulatory oversight, board governance, and public sector leadership. He has served in senior leadership roles across national organizations, requiring strong accountability, strategic alignment, and policy oversight in complex, multi-stakeholder environments.

His extensive board experience spans accreditation, regulatory, and professional standards organizations, where he has contributed to governance modernization, risk management, and performance evaluation frameworks. He has also held senior roles within government, overseeing regulatory compliance and contributing to legislative development.

As an educator in governance and law, Gilles brings a strong analytical and evidence-based approach to decision-making. His expertise includes governance structures, risk oversight, financial accountability, and stakeholder engagement, supporting effective and sustainable organizational leadership. He brings to the Board a strong governance lens, with particular strength in risk oversight, regulatory alignment, and ensuring robust, transparent decision-making frameworks.

Victoria McDonald

Victoria is an experienced executive and long-standing leader within the equestrian community, bringing over 40 years of involvement in the sport alongside a distinguished career in human resources leadership. She has held senior executive roles responsible for large-scale workforce strategy, organizational leadership, and stakeholder engagement.

Her governance experience includes board service and executive leadership within the equestrian sector, where she has contributed to strategic planning, program development, and strengthening organizational effectiveness. She is recognized for her collaborative leadership style and commitment to transparency and accountability.

As an active participant in the sport across multiple roles, Victoria offers a comprehensive understanding of the participant experience, from grassroots to high-performance levels. She is passionate about advancing accessibility, supporting future generations, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of equestrian sport in Canada. She brings to the Board a strong people and culture lens, with an emphasis on leadership, engagement, and building a sustainable and inclusive future for the sport.

Diane Ratigan

Diane is an accomplished executive leader with nearly two decades of experience driving growth, performance, and operational excellence within global organizations. She specializes in strategic planning, revenue leadership, customer experience, and building high-performing teams, with a strong focus on data-driven decision-making and scalable systems.

In parallel with her professional career, Diane has contributed extensively to governance within the equestrian community, including senior leadership roles at the provincial level. Her work has focused on modernization, member engagement, and strengthening organizational effectiveness through improved transparency and collaboration.



As both an active competitor and certified official, Diane brings a well-rounded perspective grounded in lived experience across all levels of the sport. She offers valuable insight into participant needs, operational realities, and the balance between grassroots development and high-performance pathways. At the Board table, she brings a results-oriented mindset, with a focus on accountability, modernization, and strengthening the overall member experience.

Sergio Rodriguez

Sergio is a seasoned executive and certified board director with over 25 years of international leadership experience across finance, agriculture, and higher education. He has led complex organizations through strategic transformation, operational growth, and governance strengthening, with a focus on long-term sustainability and performance.

His experience includes senior leadership roles with full responsibility for financial oversight, regulatory compliance, risk management, and stakeholder engagement across multiple jurisdictions. He has also served within board-governed environments, contributing to finance, audit, governance, and investment oversight functions.

Sergio brings a disciplined, risk-aware approach to governance, grounded in fiduciary responsibility, transparency, and strategic alignment. His background also includes significant experience in fundraising, partnership development, and cross-cultural leadership, supporting organizations in building credibility and long-term impact. He would contribute strong financial and risk oversight, along with a structured, governance-first approach to decision-making at the Board level.

Marcia Thompson

Marcia is a senior leader in recruitment, talent strategy, and organizational advisory, with extensive experience working alongside executive teams to build strong partnerships and support sustainable growth. Her career has focused on aligning stakeholders, developing talent strategies, and helping organizations navigate change with clarity and purpose.

She brings deep expertise in communications, brand positioning, and stakeholder engagement, with a strong understanding of how transparency and messaging influence trust and organizational reputation. Her work has also included advising on inclusive leadership and organizational culture, supporting the development of high-performing and accountable teams.

An active member of the equestrian community, Marcia offers a perspective shaped by both personal involvement and professional experience. She is committed to supporting the long-term growth, accessibility, and sustainability of the sport through thoughtful governance and strong collaboration. At the Board level, she contributes strength in stakeholder alignment, communications strategy, and building trust through clear, values-driven leadership.