

Green Communities Canada membership policy

Updated March 2019

Green Communities Canada is a membership organization. Green Communities Canada is the Canadian umbrella group for non-profit community-based organizations that deliver environmental programs and services. Legally, GCC is structured as a membership organization: members elect the Board of Directors at the Annual General Meeting (usually online in June). Members also sit on the Board of directors, which comprises 50 per cent member representatives and 50 per cent 'at large.'

General definition of a GCC member. GCC membership is subject to acceptance by the GCC Board, and members are subject to ejection as provided in Article 40 of By-law 1. Members must meet the following criteria:

- **non-profit**
- **accordance with existing GCC policies** – formal endorsement, including GCC mission, values, and position statement (we will provide to applicants)
- **community-based** – based within the community served by the member, serving a defined territory, with a community board of directors, and local partnerships
- **environmental** – primary function is to deliver environmental programs and services, broadly defined, to individuals, households and the community
- **results-oriented** – focused on action and measurable results
- **demonstrated organizational capacity** – minimum standards include:
 - **incorporation**
 - **permanent paid staff and management**
 - an established **board of directors** – board is independent of paid staff
- a broad and substantial **community-base**, as demonstrated by partnerships, board membership, endorsements, track record, profile, and reputation
- appropriate **programming**, as evidenced based on past, current, and planned future activities
- **references**

Responsibilities of GCC. GCC will endeavour to ensure the success of its members within their respective territories, to achieve the ends defined by GCC Board policies. GCC support includes joint programming with members, capacity development, and relations with governments and senior partners.

Membership development. GCC seeks to grow its membership throughout Canada, consistent with GCC membership policies, available resources, and other GCC priorities. GCC will provide limited support, orientation, and guidance to newly forming Green Communities and existing qualified organizations that wish to join.

Responsibilities of the GCC member. The GCC member will:

- uphold policies adopted by the GCC Board of Directors
- uphold the interests of GCC and its member organizations
- inform the GCC office of local activities and significant developments
- share information and resources of value to other members and/or GCC
- identify and pursue opportunities for program replication, joint programs, and other shared initiatives with the GCC office and/or other GCC members
- participate in governance in accordance with GCC by-laws and policies
- provide input to the GCC office for planning, policy, and decision-making purposes
- pay annual membership dues in accordance with GCC policies

Promotion and use of the GCC name. The GCC member will:

- publicize its membership whenever feasible, with the words: “A member of Green Communities Canada” (GCC website URL and logo optional)
- establish a link to the GCC website from the GCC member website
- support and participate as appropriate in GCC communications initiatives
- issue statements in the name of GCC and/or other members and in accordance with established GCC policies or programs, or where requested or authorized

Senior partnerships. GCC and its members will work together to develop and maintain positive relations with senior partners, including utilities, governments, businesses, agencies, and other organizations that have or may establish relationships with a significant proportion of GCC members. Except as otherwise agreed, GCC will coordinate senior partner relations.

Programming. GCC and its member organizations support the objective of full scope environmental programming in all communities, including GCC joint programs as locally appropriate, and will cooperate with efforts to ensure their successful delivery.

As a general principle, members may deliver joint programs in their territory, subject to funding, capacity, and criteria. However, by mutual agreement, where an existing member does not wish to deliver a joint program in its territory, GCC may enter into delivery agreements with suitable non-member organizations.

In a territory where no local GCC member exists, GCC may enter into joint program delivery agreements with non-members. In this case, non-members that meet membership criteria will be encouraged to join.