

# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY RESEARCH ETHICS BOARDS

## COMMUNITY MEMBERS NEEDED

Are you interested in a volunteer opportunity? Dalhousie University's Research Ethics Boards are accepting expressions of interest for positions as Community Members.

## WHAT IS THE RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD?

Dalhousie University has two research ethics boards: health sciences and social sciences & humanities. Both consist of faculty members with expertise in the relevant research disciplines and methodologies, community members with no affiliation with the university, and members knowledgeable in ethics and the law. The mandate of the boards is to review the ethical acceptability of research involving humans conducted by university faculty and students.

## WHAT IS A COMMUNITY MEMBER?

A community member is someone who is not currently affiliated with Dalhousie University and is therefore arms-length from the university. The primary role of the community member is to reflect the perspective of the research participant during the ethical review process.

## WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO?

You will be expected to complete an orientation program that includes completing a 4-hour online tutorial and reading the [Tri-council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans](#).

Every month, you will read research projects (usually 3-4) from faculty and student researchers, making notes about any ethical concerns. You will attend monthly meetings at which you will share your review and contribute to the ethical deliberations of the board.

## WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT?

The time commitment is normally 4-10 hours in the first half of each month. The monthly meeting can take up to 3 hours; preparing for the meeting takes another 2-7 hours in the 10 days before the scheduled meeting. The meeting times are scheduled

up to a year in advance and the meeting dates and times are firm. However, the preparatory work can be completed at your convenience in the 10 days prior to the meeting.

Meeting times are either:

- Friday afternoons (12:30 – 3:30 PM) (health sciences); or
- Wednesday mornings (9:00 – 11:30 AM) (social sciences & humanities)

There are no meetings in August.

Normally, board members are appointed to serve 3-year terms.

## WHAT QUALIFICATIONS DO I NEED?

- You should be comfortable reading, writing and speaking English
- You must be willing to become knowledgeable about research ethics standards and to apply them to the ethical review of research projects
- You must be willing to contribute collegially at meetings
- You must have access to a computer and internet and be able to read and communicate through online platforms
- You must be willing to attend monthly meetings
  
- Past experience as a research participant is an asset
- You must not be currently affiliated with Dalhousie University
- You should not be engaged in research or legal work as your principal occupation

## HOW DO I VOLUNTEER?

Please include a **resume** and **cover letter** that describe your interest, motivation and qualifications. Please indicate which research ethics board you are interested in – health sciences or social sciences and humanities. Expressions of interest should be made in writing to:

Catherine Connors  
Director, Research Ethics  
Dalhousie University  
[catherine.connors@dal.ca](mailto:catherine.connors@dal.ca)