



BCM Board of Directors Role Description

(Updated: March, 2023)

Thank you for your interest in supporting Big City Mountaineers!

We are so excited that you are interested in joining the Board of Directors at our organization. Below you'll find an overview of Big City Mountaineers (BCM), a description of the Board of Directors role and responsibilities, and the Board terms and participation requirements.

The Organization

At Big City Mountaineers, we work alongside the transformative powers of Mother Nature to create a lasting impact in the lives of youth from disinvested communities. By providing free, fully-outfitted, and professionally-led backcountry trips, BCM provides young people ages 12-18 the opportunity to connect with nature and further develop their personal strengths and life skills. Big City Mountaineers engages youth in seven metropolitan areas across the country including Boston MA, Denver CO, Miami FL, Minneapolis MN, Portland OR, Seattle WA, and the San Francisco Bay Area (CA). We partner with [community-based youth organizations and schools](#) who work in traditionally disinvested communities. BCM's programming includes a cohort of carefully selected and trained caring adult volunteers who act as mentors in the field to help young people embrace their self-potential. BCM's curriculum supports youth to improve their self-esteem, self-efficacy, empathy, and sense of belonging, which has wide-ranging effects both on and off the trail.

Over thirty years young, the BCM idea and organization has shown staying power beyond the norm, and has a stable operating budget to match. Founded by Jim Kern in 1990 with initial funding from Jansport, BCM is seen and supported as a leader in providing outdoor experiences and nature-based programming for youth around the country. The organization is well-known and highly regarded within the outdoor industry, and has received several awards, including the Inspiration Award for nonprofits at the Winter 2016 Outdoor Retailer show.

Headquartered in metro Denver, CO, Big City Mountaineers is an organization made up of a dedicated team of full-time staff, seasonal trip instructors, and volunteers.

Coming out of the many challenges of 2020, BCM begins a new chapter under new leadership. Guided by a recently approved three year strategic plan, we intend to expand BCM's reach in the communities we are working in - both in terms of depth of experience and number of youth served. We also plan to expand our work beyond the outdoor industry, and speak to our mission and work in supporting positive health outcomes, social-emotional capacity building, youth development, and even workforce development. To accomplish this, BCM will raise funds from a wider array of foundations, corporate entities, and other stakeholders than ever before.

In 2022, BCM emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic with a full season of program activities in each of our regions of service. We are proud to have returned to pre-COVID levels of activity across the country.

- 225 Unique Youth served (same as 2021)
- 237 Program Days Provided (68.1% increase from 2021)
- 22,746 hours Youth spent in the field (54.4% increase from 2021)
- 23 Youth Agency Partners (9.5% increase from 2021)
- 73 total trips (40.3% increase from 2021), including 28 day trips, 16 overnights and 29 expeditions

"The trip for me was life changing, I enjoyed making closer friendships and learning more about camping. I feel really good about it."

-Andrea, BCM youth participant

Looking ahead to 2023, BCM is poised to significantly increase the number of youth served and trail hours delivered, pilot an innovative [Leaders-in-training program](#) for trip alumni who want to take the next step in their outdoor journey, and engage community supporters and donors in new and innovative ways.

The Mission

Big City Mountaineers is committed to providing transformative experiences through connections to nature that strengthen life skills and build community for youth from disinvested communities.

Board of Directors: Roles and Responsibilities

BCM is a working Board; we need our Board members to make their expertise available for the organization on a regular basis.

The Board of Directors of Big City Mountaineers is charged with governance of the organization. The Board's principal responsibility is to ensure the long-term

continuity and success of BCM. To accomplish this, the Board will maintain BCM's leadership among similar and related institutions, maintain BCM's credibility among program partners and communities served, and maintain its reputation and standing among the organization's private and public funders.

Governance can be further defined to encompass three areas: Leadership, Fiscal Responsibility, and Fundraising.

Leadership

Board members will:

- Be passionate about the intersections of outdoor access, youth development, the benefits of time spent in nature, increasing diversity and representation in the outdoors, and social equity.
- Commit to taking an active leadership role in the ongoing development of BCM's programs, assessing its mission, shaping its strategic direction and creating policies to ensure the quality of its programs and further its mission and success.
- Participate in a collaborative process with BCM's Executive Director and staff for ongoing development and execution of strategic and operational plans.
- Be accessible to the Executive Director, staff, and other Board members. Collaboration with staff and each other is key: board members are important ambassadors for BCM, and it is expected that Board members work together to open doors and identify potential areas of growth for BCM.
- Model leadership that advocates for and generates specific support toward eliminating the social conditions that keep race, socio-economic status, and other differences as barriers to outdoor participation and predictors of success.
- Actively help cultivate an inclusive culture where all board members, staff, and youth participants are encouraged to bring their perspectives, identity, and life experience to the organization.
- Commit to viewing and making strategic and organizational decisions through a [DEI](#) lens.
- Attract, recommend and elect individuals to the Board who expand the diversity of the board, both in terms of demographics, geography, and skill base profile.

Fiscal Responsibility

Board members will:

- Oversee the financial operations of BCM by approving and monitoring annual budgets, ensuring that BCM operates on a fiscally responsible basis.
- Maintain a fiduciary responsibility to BCM. This means not only making sure BCM is spending the right amount, but spending correctly to meet its organizational mission and the goals.

- Establish the policies for and monitor BCM's short- and long-term investments.

Outreach / Fundraising

Board members will:

- Personally, contribute to Big City Mountaineers annually at a level that represents significant personal commitment to the organization. It's important that 100% of the board gives each year. *While there is no required set dollar contribution for BCM, each Board member should establish their own personal "give or get" number annually.. This does include a meaningful personal contribution from every Board member.*
- Exhibit leadership in fundraising through personal gifts and promotion of fundraising events and projects through social networks. This includes the identification, cultivation and solicitation of other contributions from individuals, corporations, foundations, organizations and government constituencies.
- Share resources and talents with BCM including expertise, guidance, contacts for financial support and contacts for in-kind contributions.
- *Participate in one BCM overnight trip, expedition or adventure fundraising experience over the course of a three-year board term.*

Board Terms & Participation Expectations

Board members are expected to:

- Serve one three-year term, renewable for one additional three-year term.
- Prepare for and attend four meetings annually; two in-person and two virtual, (and on an as-needed basis). The in-person meetings are generally in the fall and spring
- Actively serve on one or two Board Committee(s) (approximately 2-4 hours per month); participating on committee calls and possible work outside the call may be necessary. (Board committees are: HR, Finance, Development, Marketing & Communications, Risk & Safety, and Nominations.)
- Engage and respond promptly to discussions and requests from other Board members and the Executive Director.

Interested?

Please complete this Google Form to apply:

<https://forms.gle/uWFM92yjSLcmDpkv8>

BCM receives more applications for Board seats than we are ultimately able to accommodate. To both honor our organization's needs and to commit to an equitable and transparent selection process, BCM employs the following process:

We set aside an application window of 1-2 months where we review each application received. After this time period expires, our Nominations committee will reach out to individuals whose candidacy we are interested in pursuing.

Candidates can expect to participate in two structured interviews. The first interview is with members of the Nominations committee, and the second interview is with BCM's Executive Director and a member of the Board's Executive Committee. Following these two interviews, candidates who we wish to advance will be recommended to the full Board for a vote. This process can take between 1-3 months.

Candidates who are selected to join the Board of Directors will be onboarded and invited to attend the next scheduled Board meeting.