

Images Festival

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

NORTHERN VISIONS INDEPENDENT VIDEO AND FILM ASSOCIATION ("IMAGES FESTIVAL")

Draft: November 2020

Approved: February 15 2021

GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

The Northern Visions Independent Video and Film Association (conducting business as Images Festival, and hereinafter referred to as "Images") Employee Handbook is designed to give both the staff and the Board of Directors a helpful, concise, and clear description of the working relationship within which both parties operate. All personnel matters are to be dealt with in accordance with those set out in this document. The Board of Directors must first approve any approach or agreement made outside of this policy, or to amend this policy.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY STATEMENT

Images is an equal opportunity employer and as such is committed to the following:

- All employees receive fair treatment and equal opportunity in all aspects of employment. See [Images Festival Equal Opportunity Statement](#);
- Equal opportunity is consistent with the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#);
- Equal opportunity is incorporated into all aspects of human resources management;
- For more information, please see Images Festival's [Discrimination, Harassment, and Human Rights Policy and Procedures](#).

EMPLOYEES

Images currently employs three types of employees:

1. Permanent or fixed-term employees
 - a. This includes full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees who are paid wages and are:
 - i. Eligible for vacation time (or vacation pay)
 - ii. Eligible for benefits at the discretion of the Executive Director and Board of Directors
 - b. Full-time permanent or fixed-term employees receive bi-annual performance reviews. Part-time permanent or fixed-term employees receive annual performance reviews
 - c. Contracts for permanent employees are auto-renewed annually from the original contract date
2. Independent contractors
 - a. Are paid by invoice
 - b. Ineligible for vacation time (or vacation pay)
 - c. Ineligible for benefits
 - d. Performance is subject to annual performance review
3. Project employees
 - a. Supported by project grants, one-time funding opportunities, short-term projects, etc.

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GOVERNANCE

The governance of Images starts with its Board of Directors (“the Board”), which has overall responsibility for managing or supervising the management of the activities and affairs of Images. The Board is an all-volunteer group composed of interested members of the arts community and other individuals who bring a diversity of experiences with them that contribute to the success of Images.

The Board has broad decision-making powers within the organization, which are outlined in [Images Festival’s By-Laws](#). In making decisions, each Board member is required to act honestly and in good faith with a view to the best interests of Images Festival, and exercise the care, diligence, and skill that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in comparable circumstances.

BOARD CONTACT

Every member of the leadership team will be invited to request a direct Board contact. The purpose of the Board Contact is to provide guidance and support to the employee, and to serve as a mediator to whom the employee can express, either formally or informally, a dispute, conflict, or grievance, including those that might require further mediation or escalation to the Board level. See the Conflict Resolution Policy for more details on this process.

The Board Contact is not the employee’s supervisor. They do not have the power to make decisions about an employee’s standing, employment status, performance, etc. outside of the decision-making powers outlined in Images’ Governance Handbook.

To request a Board contact, [please visit this link](#). Add your name in one of the available slots, and let the Executive Director know that you have submitted a request.

Employees who do not wish to have a Board contact may contact either of the Board of Directors’ Co-Chairs (currently Mani Mazinani and Julieta Maria) if they wish to raise any concerns or escalate grievances to the Board level. See the [Conflict Resolution Policy](#) for more details on this process.

LEADERSHIP

The Executive Director (ED) of Images Festival provides and executes the vision of the overall organization. The ED provides leadership to all staff in managing the organization’s operations and affairs and in fulfilling its mandate. The ED administers the general operations of the organization under the direction of the Board of Directors in a way that is consistent with approved goals, objectives and policies via:

- Operational Planning and Management
- Staffing Leadership and Human Resources
- Financial Management
- Development and Sponsorship
- Grant Writing and Public Funding

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- Festival Profile and Community Relationships
- Public Relations and Marketing

The ED reports to the Board.

The Operations Manager (OM) manages the day-to-day and logistical operations of the organisation, and oversees its communications. They oversee a number of internal positions, including the Festival Coordinator, Technical Coordinator, and the majority of festival contracts. The OM reports to the ED. The OM position will be revisited following the 2021 Images Festival.

TRAINING ON HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES

The purpose of this training is to ensure that all Images Festival permanent and fixed-term employees have a comprehensive understanding of the organization's HR policies and procedures. The training is intended to help employees uphold the organization's values and expectations around professional conduct, and to ensure that employees are aware of the resources available to them if they witness or experience harm, harassment, and/or discrimination within the workplace.

Training on Images Festival's Human Resources policies and procedures will begin no later than 30 days after an employee's contract has been signed. The components of the training are outlined in Images' Onboarding Checklist.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

The probationary period for permanent (full-time and seasonal) and project employees will be three (3) months and they will receive an evaluation at that time.

Evaluations will be conducted by the employee's immediate supervisor and reviewed by the Board. The Board will conduct evaluations for the ED position. Findings/recommendations will be submitted to the Board for further discussion.

At the end of the probationary period one of three options may be exercised:

- i) The probationary period concludes and the contract continues.
- ii) The probationary period may be extended by three (3) months, with notice to the employee.
- iii) The employee may be dismissed.

The probationary period may only be extended once through a written notification to the employee, which includes the reason(s) for the extension of the probationary period, an outline for areas of improvement, and support offered to help the employee improve. This notification will be filed in the employee's records. The employee may be dismissed if they show insufficient progress in their performance during the second probationary period.

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WORKING HOURS AND OVERTIME

STANDARD HOURS OF WORK WEEK

The standard workweek is 35 hours per week. This often changes, depending on each employee's contract and the time of year. Each workday is eight (8) hours, including an unpaid one (1) hour break.

OFFICE HOURS

The Images office is open 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday to Friday. Office closures are approved by the ED. Currently, the office is closed Mondays between May and December.

FLEXIBLE WORK HOURS

Images will work with employees to select their daily schedule to ensure office coverage and sustainable communication. Supervisors approve all employee schedules.

Due to the nature of the work at Images, work-at-home arrangements are considered temporary unless otherwise negotiated within a specific contract or occur under extraordinary external circumstances. Temporary working-at-home arrangements are

possible in consultation with the employee's supervisor and the ED. The suitable arrangement should take into account coverage in the office and other impacts on Image's operations. For example, the arranged schedule should sustain or enable all other employees with executing their tasks, and allow the employee to participate in meetings that may occur during office hours etc., however remotely. The supervisor and ED reserve the right to revisit flexible work hours and work-at-home arrangements to ensure that they do not negatively impact Images' operations. Supervisors must make all efforts to enable schedules necessary for different employees.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodation is a fundamental and integral part of the right to equal treatment in the workplace (*OHRC Code 8.b*). It ensures that all employees have equal opportunity to perform their role and excel in their position. Images welcomes requests for accommodation from its employees, and recognizes the need for dignity, individualization, and inclusion in considering these requests.¹

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- 1• **Dignity:** Persons must be accommodated in a way that most respects their dignity, including their privacy, confidentiality, comfort and autonomy.
 - **Individualization:** There is no set formula for accommodation. Each person's needs are unique and must be considered afresh when an accommodation request is made. A solution may meet one person's requirements but not another's, although many accommodations will benefit many other people with similar needs.
 - **Inclusion:** Achieving integration and full participation requires barrier-free and inclusive design and removing existing barriers. Preventing and removing barriers means all persons should have access to their environment and face the same duties and requirements with dignity and without impediment. See also Section IV-1a(i) – "Preventing, reviewing and removing barriers."

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Each employee should make accommodation requests in writing, and be prepared to take part in discussions with their supervisor, the ED, or a member of the HR Committee, to evaluate their needs and possible accommodation solutions.

Images will review and discuss accommodation requests in good faith, maintain confidentiality, and remain open to finding practical accommodation solutions.

If an accommodation request is not feasible as a result of undue hardship to Images (i.e. quantifiable evidence that accommodation costs cannot be met or sustained, or that accommodation would bring about health/safety risks to the organization and its staff), other solutions will be proposed.

OVERTIME

Given the seasonal nature of Images Festival, a range of activities and meetings occur outside regular working hours including early mornings, evenings, and weekends. In order to meet operational requirements, Images staff may therefore be required to work additional hours to the standard workweek.

Overtime is calculated weekly and represents any time worked beyond 44 hours per week.

With prior approval of their supervisor working hours can include time an employee spends on planning, preparation, travel (but not between residence and place of work), attendance at meetings, events, and training sessions.

“Overtime” is accrued only on a full hourly basis.

Approved overtime hours of more than the standard workweek and up to 44 hours per week will be compensated as “time-in-lieu”, on a straight-time basis.

Overtime hours worked beyond 44 hours, to a maximum of 60 hours per week will be compensated as “time-in-lieu” at time and one-half basis.

In peak periods of the festival, employees should not accumulate over 120 hours or 15 days of “time-in-lieu.” If this happens it should be brought to their supervisor’s attention and together they should develop a plan to reduce this amount. Please refer to the [Peak Period Calendar](#).

The employee’s supervisor must approve the scheduling and length of consecutive days taken for “time-in-lieu” before an employee takes the time away from work. “Time-in-lieu” hours should be taken within the six (6) month period in which they are accrued, except during peak work periods.

There will be times of the year where employees will be expected to work overtime or have flexibility in their schedules.

STATUTORY HOLIDAYS AND CLOSURES

The Images offices will be closed for a two (2) week period over December holidays. The exact dates will be established by the ED annually.

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The Images offices will be closed for a two (2) week period ahead of the Labour Day long-weekend. The exact dates will be established by the ED annually.

Images recognizes the following statutory holidays: Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, July 1st, August Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Boxing Day, and New Years Day.

Employees are entitled to the paid day off if they were normally scheduled to work that day and they have worked their regular day before or after the holiday.

If an employee was not scheduled to work that day, they will take a scheduled day off with pay during the week immediately following the holiday. If an employee has received prior approval by the ED to work on a statutory holiday they will receive twice the time worked as “time-in-lieu.”

TOTAL COMPENSATION

VACATION

Permanent full-time employees are entitled to two (2) weeks paid vacation per year starting in their first year of employment. After completing three (3) continuous years of employment with Images this increases to three (3) weeks paid vacation.

As per the Employment Standards Act, permanent or fixed-term employees who work part time or part of a year are entitled to receive 4% of their gross pay payable with their regular paycheque. After completing three (3) years of employment with Images, this increases to 6% of their gross pay payable with their regular pay cheque.

Salaried project staff (such as Canada Summer Jobs) will receive vacation pay as outlined in the related grant agreement, but it will be no less than 4% of their gross pay.

Up to 4 weeks of vacation time may roll over for a maximum of one (1) year only.

All vacation must be scheduled in advance with the employee’s supervisor.

All employees are able to cash in unused vacation credits (and any maximum one year rollover, if any) when their contract is terminated.

PERSONAL DAYS AND LEAVE

PERSONAL DAYS

All Images employees are entitled to an unlimited number of Personal Days, to be used at their discretion. Personal Days can be used for any reason, including illness, recuperation, child care, religious observances, etc.

Employees must notify their supervisor if they plan to use a Personal Day. They are not required to disclose why they need to take a Personal Day. However, absences longer than three (3) working days need to be approved by the employee’s supervisor, and may require disclosure of the need for the extended absence. Examples of acceptable

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extended absences include but are not limited to Jury Duty or bereavement in the case of a death in the family or of a relative, important person, partner, or close friend.

Project staff eligibility for Personal Days will be determined in accordance with the related grant agreement.

PREGNANCY AND PARENTAL LEAVE

Pregnancy leave and parental leave are provided in accordance with the Ontario Employment Standards Act.

Images will provide employees who are expecting parents up to 17 weeks of unpaid pregnancy leave on request. Employees must have been hired at least 13 weeks before the baby's expected birth date to be entitled to pregnancy leave.

Images will provide unpaid parental leave on request to employees who are new parents when a child is born, or first comes into their care. Employees who are birth parents who take pregnancy leave are entitled up to 35 weeks of parental leave. Employees who are birth parents who do not take pregnancy leave, and all other employees who are new parents, are entitled to 37 weeks of parental leave. Employees must have been hired at least 13 weeks to be eligible for parental leave.

Employees must inform Images of their decision to take pregnancy leave and/or parental leave with a minimum of two weeks written notice, stating the start date for pregnancy leave and/or parental leave. We encourage the employee to provide as much notice as possible to facilitate the transition. Additional pregnancy/ parental leave conditions may be granted at the discretion of the BOD.

All employees will be granted leave without pay for the period they are approved for Employment Insurance Benefits. They will continue to accumulate vacation and sick credits during this period.

Employees of Images will exercise their best efforts to ensure sufficient notice is given to the ED/BOD in order to minimize disruption to the operations of the organization during peak work periods

GENDER AFFIRMATION/TRANSITION ACCOMMODATION AND LEAVE

This procedure outlines the process and support available to you when seeking to affirm or transition your gender. The gender affirmation or transition process is different for everyone but it may involve you changing your name, title, appearance, dress, use of pronouns and other aspects of yourself to align with your affirmed gender.

Images encourages a culture that is supportive of all gender expressions and identities, and supports you to affirm your gender identity in a fair, respectful and inclusive workplace, free from discrimination and harm.

There is no legal requirement for you to inform your supervisor, the Executive Director, the Board of Directors, or anyone else in the workplace of your intention to affirm or transition. However, you are welcome to disclose and discuss your intention to affirm or transition your gender with assistance from anyone at Images Festival.

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Should you require leave or accommodation as a result of your desire to affirm or transition, we invite you to outline your needs with your supervisor, the Executive Director, or a member of the Board of Directors, in order for us to work with you to determine details that may include (but are not limited to): timelines for your affirmation or transition; any workplace flexibility or leave that you may require; updates to your personal information and/or pronoun use; and/or a plan to communicate these details to our colleagues at Images, if necessary. Please refer to the accommodations policy for more information.

LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

Application for discretionary leave without pay shall be made in writing to the ED, who will review the request and submit a recommendation to the Board Chair/Co-Chair approval.

SELF FUNDED LEAVE

The Images Festival recognizes the potential of self-funded leave to help achieve long-term career and personal goals of employees. As such, there is a program in place that permits permanent employees a self-funded leave for six to twelve months pending approval from the Executive Director and the Board of Directors. Employees must have worked at Images Festival for a minimum of two years to apply to the program. Any employee who wishes to participate in the self-funded leave must give no less than one (1) year notice and follow the guidelines, policies, and procedures outlined by Images' Self-Funded Leaves Policy.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Images will provide a supplementary mid-range benefits plan for eligible employees through GreenShield Canada.

PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

The purpose of the performance review is to assess each employee's aptitudes, skills, and performance in relation to their stated job description. The performance review also allows the employee and their supervisors to determine the extent to which the employee is receiving the support and structure they require to perform their tasks effectively.

The performance review also provides employees with an opportunity to raise concerns or identify barriers that they have faced with regards to their work at Images Festival. Employees are encouraged to communicate concerns to their supervisors or the Board at any point throughout the year (see [Conflict Resolution Policy](#)), but may choose to wait until their performance review to identify these issues.

Each supervisor at Images Festival is expected to document their staff members' progress in writing throughout the year in order to support their evaluation at the performance review. This can and should include successes, areas of improvement, or challenges the employee may be facing. These progress notes are meant to provide concrete examples to support feedback provided in the performance review, and will not be included in the employee's confidential record.

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The performance review is an evaluation of an employee's skills development and performance in areas of responsibility. It may include establishing appropriate directions, methods, and timelines for improving performance that are beneficial to both the employee and the employer.

Recommendations from either the ED, staff supervisors, or the Personnel Committee can be submitted to the Board for action. A copy of the recommendations will concurrently be provided to the staff member in question.

The staff member under review has the opportunity to make a written response to the evaluation. These responses will be included in the employee's confidential record.

PROGRESS ASSESSMENT

In addition to the annual review, each permanent and fixed-term employee will participate in a progress assessment, scheduled around December (for permanent employees) or the mid-point of their contract (for fixed-term employees). This review will be included in the employee's confidential record.

Employee performance may be addressed at any time at the discretion of supervisors.

FREQUENCY OF REVIEWS

The ED's review will be conducted by at least two (2) members of the Board, including a member of the Personnel Committee, once per year. Permanent employee reviews will be conducted by the ED and a member of the Personnel Committee once per year. Fixed-term employee reviews will be conducted by their direct supervisor, and the ED if requested, once per year. The reviews and any response the employee may wish to make to the report will become part of the employee's confidential record.

All other staff will be reviewed annually by the ED (their supervisor) with a member of the Personnel Committee present (if requested by the ED). This review will be included in the employee's confidential record.

RENEWAL OF CONTRACT

A permanent employee's employment contract will be reviewed annually and will be auto-renewed, which may include contractual amendments, or terminated subject to performance review by recommendation of the ED and approval from the Board.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Images expects that an employee will agree to provide two (2) weeks written notice of resignation to the ED or the BOD.

An employee may be terminated with due cause by Images Festival without written notice. Failure to meet the obligations outlined in this contract of employment will constitute due cause. The employee may be terminated without due cause by the Images Festival with 2 (two) weeks written notice.

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Immediately upon termination of employment for any reason, an employee will return all property of Images as outlined in the section “Ownership of Work Products” to the BOD.

ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

All employees are expected to represent Images with integrity while carrying out their responsibilities, and to work within the spirit and mandate of the Images Festival. All employees are expected to review and understand Images Festival’s values and Employee Handbook. Should anything interfere with an employee’s ability to meet this obligation or to carry out their duties as outlined in their contract of employment, the employee will notify and seek assistance from the ED and/or the BOD immediately.

OWNERSHIP OF WORK PRODUCTS

All written materials, works, designs, computer programs and other documents and data developed or worked with by an employee explicitly for Images in the course of employment with Images are and shall remain the exclusive property of Images. In the case of materials, which are the proper subject matter of copyright in Canada, Images shall in all instances be deemed the owner and author of such materials.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information pertaining to Images and its operations is confidential. Both during and after the terms of employment, an employee shall not disclose such information to a third party, except on a need-to-know basis for third parties working with Images as approved from time-to-time by the BOD. An employee shall not at any time use such information for his/her own benefit, as opposed to the benefit of Images. Employees shall make themselves familiar with [Images’ Confidentiality Policy](#) and provide a signed copy to the ED.

REPRESENTATION OF IMAGES FESTIVAL

No employee may formally represent her/himself as a spokesperson for Images without the prior approval of her/his supervisor. A spokesperson is someone who speaks on behalf of the organization and or formally represents the organization.

While we encourage one-on-one and community dialogue, no Images employees or Board members will engage with digital critiques of the organization via social media. This includes Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. We encourage employees to bring these critiques to the attention of their supervisor or the Executive Director, who will endeavour to engage directly or support employees in engaging in dialogue with the parties involved.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

We recognize that many of our employees, Board members, and contractors are actively involved in working in different capacities across our community and sector. Many of us have relationships, both personal and professional, with individuals across our community. We recognize the benefit of these relationships and connections, and

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the important role they play in creating and sustaining our community. These relationships do not necessarily represent a conflict of interest, and we expect all

Images employees and Board members to maintain appropriate boundaries. This relates specifically to power dynamics that can exist with regards to professional standing, seniority in community, and personal/professional reputation.

In principle, no member of the Board of Directors of the Festival, nor any employee or person working under a contract for services for the Festival (a “Connected Person”), shall submit work under the Festival’s general annual call for submissions. Further, no Connected Person’s work shall be accepted for exhibition at the Festival.

On a case-by-case basis, the Board of Directors and the employees or contractors of the Festival may request that a Connected Person become involved in the Festival, in roles including but not limited to submitting or creating work, curating, acting on special juries or participating in a retrospective of work.

In circumstances described in paragraph 3, above, the Board of Directors of the Festival shall be informed of the Connected Person’s role and shall approve of such role by resolution in the minutes of the meeting in which the disclosure is made, prior to the involvement commencing. The Connected Person will derive no benefits and will not gain materially as a result of the inclusion of their work or their extended involvement, as described above.

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that I have read and will adhere to the policies outlined in this copy of Image’s Employee Handbook Guidelines.

Employee signature _____ Date _____

REVIEW

In compliance with current legislation, this policy document will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The document is scheduled for review by January 1, 2022.

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APPENDIX A: Images Festival Human Resources Policies

[Images Festival - Discrimination, Harassment, and Human Rights Policy and Procedures](#)

[Images Festival - Conflict Resolution Policy](#)

[Images Festival - Incident Report Form](#)

APPENDIX B: Resources Referenced in Images Employee Handbook

Ontario Human Rights Code (2020)

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90h19>

MANO Best Practices Guide for Conflict Resolution (2015)

https://mano-ramo.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Guide-1-Conflict-Resolution_0229.pdf

Human Rights 101, Part A

<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/learning/human-rights-101-2014-ed/human-rights-101-part-about-human-rights>

OHRC: A Policy Primer

https://imaa.ca/source/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/A-policy-primer_EN.pdf

Accessibility for Ontario Disability Act Guidelines

<https://www.aoda.ca/guide-to-the-act/>