



## Prospective Board Member Information Guide

Are you the next visionary leader to join Slow Food Minnesota's great mission for GOOD, CLEAN and FAIR FOOD?

***The Slow Food Minnesota chapter of Slow Food USA seeks visionary leaders to work in collaboration with other inspired food leaders to serve as a member of the Slow Food Minnesota Board of Directors. Board members are expected to champion the principles of good, clean and fair food for all, building on the seventeen-year history of Slow Food Minnesota's partnership with the local food community and Slow Food's global network of food activists and leaders.***

If you are interested in good, clean and fair food, and you are looking for a leadership opportunity to make certain it is available for everyone, then we invite you to consider serving on the board for Slow Food Minnesota.

In this guide, you will find the following:

- About Slow Food Minnesota (SFMN)
- Slow Food Minnesota Board Duties and Positions
- Background on Slow Food USA
- Background on Slow Food International

### **About Slow Food Minnesota**

Slow Food Minnesota is a chapter of Slow Food USA (SFUSA), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization International (SFI), is a membership organization with more than 150 chapters and 6,000 members across America. Slow Food chapters are organized using a representative leadership, volunteer-led model.

Founded in 1999, Slow Food Minnesota organizes farm-to-consumer activities through a "Chapter Board." The new SFMN board is nominated by the current board and approved by chapter members, and is responsible for both governance and programs. Working with a broad array of partners, it will achieve its goals by:

- Representing the membership in developing mission-focused policies and priorities
- Building a sustainable volunteer support structure to implement its plans
- Creating diverse programming that engages members and introduces Slow Food to prospective members.

Membership currently fluctuates between 100 – 300 members; and another 2,000 non-members engage with SFMN through its web site, FB page, and special events. While membership growth is a focus for the chapter, a high priority is being placed on creating more meaningful and diverse experiences for members and friends that reflect the cultural and producer diversity in the region.

## **Slow Food Minnesota Mission and Focus**

Slow Food envisions a world in which all people can access and enjoy food that is good for them, good for those who grow it and good for the planet. In Minnesota, that translates to activities and events focused on educating about locally grown and indigenous foods that have been produced by sustainable and organic methods.

Our chapter strives to be a resource for food producers – most importantly, small-scale farmers throughout the state of Minnesota and contiguous states. Slow Food Minnesota, as stated in the bylaws, desires to create informed consumers who will purchase the products of local farmers to ensure the survival of the small family farm.

## **Representative Local Activities and Collaborations**

- **Wild Things** – Spring Foraged Foods Rotating Farm Dinner
- **Terra Madre** – State delegate support and representation at SFI’s world food gathering from September 22 – September 26 in Turin Italy
- **Snail in the Park** – casual summer taste education picnics and talks
- **Convivial Dinners** – special member dinners introducing local chefs committed to food sustainability
- **Harvest Benefit Farm Dinner** – a collaboration with MFA’s Big River Farm, supporting indigenous and culturally significant foods grown by immigrant and refugee farmers
- **Convivial Gatherings** – seasonal or cultural small food tours, demonstrations and tastings organized through the MFA/SFMN Harvest Dinner
- **Ark of Taste foods** – encouraging farmers, gardeners, chefs and food purveyors to grow and cook with these culturally and biologically significant foods (Terra Waconia, Terra Truck; Loon Organics, Urban Roots, Big River Farms, Broders’ and Great Ciao)
- **Youth internship donor partner** for Urban Roots Market Garden Program
- **Specialty taste education events** – coffee, bread, chocolate, cheese (artisanal, fair-trade, singlesource, or farmstead production)
- **Other education events** – local, regional and national food films and author nights
- **Outreach events** – farmers’ markets, food festivals and fairs, education events
- **Web site** - curated list of local food producers

## Slow Food Minnesota Chapter Duties

The purpose of a local chapter is to:

- Inspire people to practice Slow Food values and invite them into the Slow Food community;
- Organize local projects to make food and farming in their area good, clean, and fair; and
- Serve as a local anchor and organizer for regional, national and global Slow Food initiatives and alliances.

## Slow Food Minnesota Board of Director Duties

*excerpted from Slow Food USA Chapter Handbook*

The basic unit of leadership for a local Slow Food chapter is the Chapter Board (or “Core Leadership Team”). As written in the [National Statute](#), the duties of leaders serving on a Chapter Board are to:

- Implement the mission of Slow Food at the local level, in accordance with and guided by the Slow Food mission and vision as expressed in our National Programs.
- Adhere to regulations in the [National Statute](#), International Statute, and Code of Use for Slow Food Logos.
- Adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws, including IRS nonprofit regulations, as outlined in Section 6: Chapter IRS Filing and State Requirements.
- Follow best practices as found in the Slow Food USA Chapter Handbook.
- Convene an annual members’ meeting to conduct elections and other business.
- Convene regular meetings of the Chapter Board to plan chapter activity.
- Implement at least three chapter events per year.
- Serve as effective membership recruiters locally.
- Manage chapter finances and submit an annual report to the national office.
- Be active, dues-paid members of Slow Food USA and encourage active chapter participation by fellow members.

***NOTE: Refer to the attached Slow Food Minnesota (Twin Cities) Bylaws for a full outline of duties.***

## Board Positions

The National Statute requires that each Chapter Board consist of at least five people filling the *general* positions of Chair (or Co-Chairs), Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and Membership Chair. Typically,

- The **Chair** liaises with the Regional Governor, National Staff and with other Chapter Chairs in the region. The Chair sets the agenda, runs meetings, acts as one of two signing authorities for the chapter bank account, acts as primary contact for the group, oversees the activities of the chapter, and ensures that the chapter is meeting all annual requirements. Co-Chairs may share the above duties.
- The **Vice Chair** supports the Chair and acts in the Chair’s stead when the Chair is

unavailable, and oversees the sub-committees.

- The **Treasurer** tracks the income and expenditures of the chapter, manages the chapter's annual tax filing requirements, acts as one of two signing authorities for the Chapter bank account,
- prepares an annual budget for the chapter, and sets fundraising goals and activities for the chapter.
- The **Secretary** produces agendas and minutes for Chapter Board meetings and the Annual Membership meeting.
- The **Membership Chair** maintains and updates the chapter membership list each month. The membership chair coordinates communication with members and seeks ways to recruit and retain members.
- **Slow Food Minnesota Board Member Term Commitment and Meeting Schedule**
- Board members serve staggered 2-year terms, with up to 8 consecutive years of service. Minimum commitment is a one 2- year term, with more than one term preferable for board continuity.
- Board members convene a minimum of 4 times per year per the chapter's bylaws. Historically, the board meets 8-10 times a year to convene regular business and 1-2 times a year for special meetings (strategic planning, board development).
- Board members are required to attend MAP's Board Boot Camp (half day) and a new member board retreat (three quarters day) within the first 45 days of office and a facilitated chapter strategy review and planning session (one day) within 90 days of the new board convening.

### **Slow Food Minnesota Board Member Qualifications**

1. Passionate about the mission of Slow Food.
2. Desire to lead the chapter forward in partnership with the local food community.
3. Strong team collaborator with appreciation of a volunteer-led organizational model.
4. Experience in at least one of these areas desirable: non-profit governance, strategy development and implementation, volunteer development and management, community and member engagement, community partnerships; financial accountability, event or program planning and implementation; marketing communications, youth engagement.
5. Active, dues-paid member of SFUSA.

### **Additional Qualifications for Board Co-Chairs**

1. Non-profit board experience; having chaired or served on an executive committee desirable.

### **Slow Food Minnesota Board Candidate Nomination and Election Timeline**

June 1 – September 15: Open Board Nomination and Recruitment

September 15 – September 30: Board Candidate Selection

October 1 – October 15: Board Candidate Slate and Election Date Announcement

November 6: Election and Fall Harvest Food Celebration

**To apply please complete the SFMN Board Candidate Questionnaire and submit to our Chapter Leadership Team:**

Tamara Downs Schwei, [tamaradowns.schwei@gmail.com](mailto:tamaradowns.schwei@gmail.com)

Mary Beeson, [marybeeson@gmail.com](mailto:marybeeson@gmail.com)

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## **Background on Slow Food USA**

### **Vision – Slow Food USA National Statute**

Food represents a common language and universal right. Slow Food USA envisions a world in which all people can eat food that is good for them, good for the people who grow it and good for the planet. In essence, food that is good, clean and fair.

**Good** – Good food is wholesome, seasonal, local, fresh and delicious.

**Clean** – Clean food preserves biodiversity, sustains the environment, and nourishes a healthy lifestyle for both humans and animals.

**Fair** – Fair food honors the dignity of labor from field to fork, and the diversity of cultures and traditions

in the United States. Good, clean and fair food is accessible for everyone to enjoy.

### **Mission – Slow Food USA National Statute**

Seeking to create dramatic and lasting change in the food system, SFUSA reconnects Americans with the people, traditions, plants, animals, fertile soils and waters that produce our food. We work to inspire a transformation in food policy, production practices and market forces so that they ensure equity, sustainability and pleasure in the food we eat.

### **National Campaign Programs**

- **School Gardens:** We educate and grow the next generation of food-aware individuals.
- **Slow Meat:** We work to improve animal welfare and reduce the impact of eating meat on the environment.
- **Biodiversity:** We promote sustainable agriculture, support small-scale food producers, and preserve traditional foods and knowledge, through our [Ark of Taste](#) and [Presidia](#) (groups of artisan producers).

### **National Partnerships**

- **Chefs Alliance**
- **Slow Food Youth Network**

## **Background on Slow Food International**

### **Slow Food International Statute I Definition and Aims, Article 3**

Slow Food is a democratic and cultural international association to promote the formation of individual and social aims. Thus it resolves to create a network of local communities.

A Slow Food local community is a group of individuals who share its philosophy and who plan to cultivate common cultural interests in the field of food.

**Slow Food works for the protection of the right to pleasure; for respect of the natural rhythms of life; for a harmonious relationship with nature; for the pursuit of food quality, which is good, clean and fair; for the safeguarding of traditional knowledge; for the creation of local economic models and for functional sustainable development to further these aims.**

#### **Slow Food (SFI) intends to:**

- a) endow with cultural dignity issues connected to food, beverages, diet and gastronomic sciences as a whole;
- b) identify food products and production methods linked to a geographic area to safeguard biodiversity, and promote them as part of our cultural heritage;
- c) improve public knowledge of food, particularly for young people, with the aim of increasing awareness of our right to pleasure and taste and the ability to make responsible food choices;
- d) promote a different quality of life, one which entails respect for natural rhythms, the environment and the health of consumers, encouraging the consumption and enjoyment of food of the highest possible quality;
- e) favor food quality, intended in the broadest sense, which respects three absolutely fundamental elements: sensory goodness; ecological sustainability of the production, distribution and consumption processes; respect for social justice and dignity for all the people involved in the food production chain;
- f) promote respect for the world's cultural diversity through exchange and comparison without any prejudice;
- g) achieve and increase the value of local economic models of food production;
- h) retrieve, document and repropose the local memory and particularly the traditional knowledge linked to the food world;
- i) contribute to the development of the Association's international network;
- j) realize projects of international cooperation aimed at the protection of food biodiversity and the support of food communities, particularly in developing countries; and traditions. Slow Food Minnesota

k) encourage public dialogue of environmental themes, particularly the protection of food biodiversity and the preservation of culinary culture.

### **Some examples of how Slow Food (SFI) will achieve these aims:**

- a) coordinate and implement projects of research, cataloguing and promoting in order to safeguard food biodiversity, countering the increasing standardization of food, and promoting, organizing and/or participating in projects for the development of ecological forms of agriculture;
- b) promote and/or support initiatives that aim to preserve and add value to the historical and cultural identity of a specific geographical area, linked to a specific food, particularly through the creation of Presidia for the defense of biodiversity;
- c) develop a network of relationships, activities and initiatives at a local and international level with and amongst food communities, formed of all the people and entities working in the sector of food production and processing;
- d) encourage knowledge about and use of local products through initiatives which favour the shortening of the distribution chain, a direct rapport between producer and co-producer and the organization of food and wine tourism initiatives;
- e) promote, organize, manage and participate in educational activities, including within schools and universities, through research projects, coordination, training and refresher courses, aimed at a comprehensive application of the right to study, to health education, to sensory and taste education and to the development of a appropriate food culture;
- f) promote and organize programs of food culture and sensory awareness to be offered to Slow Food members, the general public and those employed in the food and beverage sector, in order to raise awareness about the historical roots and production processes involved in all the production sectors;
- g) encourage and undertake initiatives to improve everyday food consumption, also with respect to the forms of food service; and
- h) promote the work of people inside or outside of the Association who have contributed to the furthering of these aims, by awarding prizes, supplying grants, disseminating and publicizing their achievements and other appropriate means.

### **Slow Food International Programs**

- **Presidia** – Working with groups of small-scale producers to sustain quality food productions at risk of extinction in over 400 projects...
- **The Ark of Taste** -Cataloging endangered traditional foods: an extraordinary heritage of fruits, vegetables, animal breeds, cheeses, breads, sweets and cured meats...
- **Earth Markets** – Building an international network of farmers' markets that promote good, clean and fair food...
- **The Alliance of Chefs** – Uniting over 300 chefs with local small-scale producers...

- **10,000 Gardens in Africa** – Our plan to create 10,000 food gardens across the continent; in schools, villages and the outskirts of cities...
- **Narrative labels** – Going beyond legal labeling requirements to provide the whole story of a product...
- **University of Gastronomic Sciences** -- Launched by Slow Food International in 2004 to offer a holistic approach to food academia.
- **Cheese** – dedicated to milk in all its shapes and forms, held every two years in Bra, Italy
- **Indigenous Terra Madre** – a meeting of representatives of indigenous communities and food producers from around the world. First held in Sweden in 2011, the next meeting will be held in India in November 2015
- **Terra Madre and Salone del Gusto** – the global meeting of the Slow Food and Terra Madre network held on even years in Turin, Italy.

**For more information about Slow Food:**

- <https://www.slowfoodusa.org/contents/sdownload/2759/file/SlowFoodUSANationalStatute.pdf>
- [http://slowfood.com/filemanager/official\\_docs/SLOW\\_FOOD\\_STATUTE\\_2012.pdf](http://slowfood.com/filemanager/official_docs/SLOW_FOOD_STATUTE_2012.pdf)
- [http://slowfood.com/filemanager/official\\_docs/SFCONGRESS2012\\_\\_Central\\_role\\_of\\_food.pdf](http://slowfood.com/filemanager/official_docs/SFCONGRESS2012__Central_role_of_food.pdf)
- Slow Food MN Chapter Bylaws available as an electronic attachment