

# imagiNorthern Governance Framework (2025–2026)

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## 1. Introduction

The *imagiNorthern Governance Framework* guides the network's operations during the 2025–2026 funding cycle. It serves as a model for incorporation and financial independence from the Flin Flon Arts Council (FFAC), anticipated by late 2026. During this interim period, FFAC will appoint one board member with veto authority over financial decisions, ensuring financial accountability and alignment with grant obligations.

This framework was created in response to the priorities identified in the 2025 Network Development Consultation, led by Darcy Penner Consulting. The final framework was completed by imagiNorthern staff Fiona Rettie (Project Manager) and Roy Mexted (Champion Coordinator), with oversight from founding board members Crystal Kolt (former President, FFAC), Thom Sparling (Creative Manitoba), and Andria Stephens (Mall of the Arts, Thompson).

This document outlines:

- Governance structure
- Membership terms
- Decision-making processes
- Operational responsibilities

It reflects recommendations from the consultation, emphasizing regional representation, membership clarity, and a strong shared value proposition.

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## 2. Vision and Mission

**Vision:** A culturally rich and economically vibrant northern Manitoba where artists, makers, and cultural leaders drive local development, connect communities, and share their voices with the world.

**Mission:** To build and sustain a northern-led creative network that equips artists with the tools, spaces, and support they need to thrive—while growing local economies, strengthening cultural infrastructure, and amplifying northern stories across Canada and beyond.

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### 3. Who We Are

imagiNorthern is a northern-led creative network rooted in the values, voices, and leadership of northern Manitoba communities. While initially coordinated by FFAC, we are transitioning toward independence, guided by regional Champions, core organizations, and cross-sector partners. Our network includes artists, cultural workers, and food innovators committed to revitalizing community life through creativity, entrepreneurship, and collaboration.

Grounded in a holistic Indigenous worldview and community insight, our structure is responsive, place-based, and shaped by those who live and create here.

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### 4. What We Do

- Develop community-based creative spaces
  - Expand digital commerce platforms
  - Support strong local leadership
  - Host regional workshops and professional development
  - Facilitate cultural exchange and connection
  - Grow visibility through outreach
  - Support initiatives aligned with community goals
  - Conduct data collection and shared governance
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### 5. Network Structure

#### Stakeholder Roles

**Individual Artists:** End users and beneficiaries of the network; gain access to infrastructure, training, and opportunities.

**Core Members:** Arts and food organizations north of the 53rd parallel who nominate board members and Champions, provide continuity, and offer regional insight.

**Board Members:** Appointed by Core Members for two-year terms; vote on strategic decisions and participate in meetings.

**Champions:** Nominated by Core Members and contracted by imagiNorthern to support local programming and lead Creative Pulse data collection.

**Staff:** Project Manager and Champion Coordinator oversee operations, strategy execution, budgeting, and support Champions and board administration.

**Partners:** Organizations with shared values; work collaboratively with imagiNorthern via MOU or equivalent agreement.

**Advisors:** Individuals with regional or thematic expertise; provide insight and attend meetings as needed (non-voting).

**Associates:** Informal contributors such as tourism companies or marketing agencies.

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## 6. Stakeholder Responsibilities

### Individual Artists

- Benefit from access to infrastructure and resources
- Provide input via Champions

### Core Members

- Nominate up to three Champion candidates
- Optionally appoint a board member
- Support Champions operationally and logistically
- Participate in Creative Pulse data collection

### Board Members

- Vote on grants, hiring, and expansion
- Chair meetings on a rotating basis
- Attend biannual meetings
- Provide staff and Champions with support

### Champions

- Complete monthly Creative Pulse reports
- Lead community outreach and collaboration
- Liaise between imagiNorthern and regional arts and food makers

- Meet monthly with staff

### **Staff**

- Execute strategic goals and manage grants
- Support Champions and assess feasibility of new regions
- Sit on Champion hiring committees
- Maintain administrative duties for the board
- Collate and analyze Creative Pulse data

### **Partners**

- Fulfill MOU commitments, such as co-hosting events and sharing data

### **Advisors**

- Attend meetings based on expertise or availability
- Provide guidance and mentorship

### **Associates**

- No formal responsibilities
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## **7. Governance and Decision-Making**

### **Board Meetings**

- Held twice annually: April and September
- Timed to allow Champion/Staff hiring for January 1 or June 1 starts

### **Agenda Includes:**

- Minutes and budget approvals
- Grant submission reviews
- Hiring committee formation
- Reports from staff (expansion, nominations)
- Assigning meeting Chair and confirming next meeting details

### **Facilitation & Voting**

- Chairs rotate each meeting

- Staff co-develop agenda and distribute materials in advance
- Each board member has one vote
- Motions must be proposed, seconded, and passed
- Quorum = half the board + 1
- Members may abstain from voting

### **Urgent Decisions**

- Interim meetings may be called for time-sensitive votes
- Post-incorporation: Executive Committee may be formed

### **Staff Authority**

- May interpret grant obligations and adjust budget/programs if aligned with strategy
- Major changes needing funder approval require board vote

### **Hiring & Termination**

- **Champions:** Hired by a committee of the PM, Champion Coordinator, and a non-regional board member
- **Staff:** Hired by interested board members with input from Advisors
- Termination requires committee consensus

### **Conflict of Interest**

- Board members cannot participate in hiring in their own region
- No overlap allowed between Board, Staff, and Champion roles

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## **8. Membership Terms and Participation**

### **Core Member Eligibility**

- Arts, food, or Indigenous organizations in Northern Manitoba
- Must demonstrate capacity to participate and support responsibilities

### **Champion Nomination**

- Up to three individuals may be nominated per hiring cycle
- Encouraged to nominate three to preserve committee selection autonomy

## Departures

- Core Members must provide two weeks' notice signed by two executives
  - Ideally timed with Champion contract end
  - Urgent board vote may fast-track a replacement core member in the same region
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## 9. Creative Pulse Reporting & Assessment

**Monthly Reports:** Submitted by Champions with asset maps, outreach logs, events, and key recommendations. Required for payment.

**Annual Pulse Report:** Co-produced with regional organizations to summarize programming and participation.

**Community Pulse Consultations:** In-person public feedback during network tours (surveys, discussions, impact assessment).

### Data Sharing:

- Raw data stored internally
  - Members receive summaries
  - Public data anonymized and aggregated
  - Consent required for media use
  - Privacy policy in development
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## 10. Value Proposition and Benefits

### Stakeholder Benefits

- Access to training, data, honorariums, and visibility

### Community Impact

- Stronger arts infrastructure
- Collaborative programming
- Regional representation and advocacy

Stakeholder roles are clearly defined with benefits and responsibilities detailed for each group.

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## 11. Honorariums and Expenses

- **Board Members:** \$250 per meeting, max \$1,000 annually
- **Champions:** Paid monthly upon report and invoice submission
- Travel and admin costs reimbursed as per contracts and grant conditions

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## 12. Partnerships and Growth

- Expansion occurs as capacity allows
- Target underserved communities with interested anchor organizations
- Reviewed semi-annually at board meetings

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## 13. Conflict of Interest

- Board members may not participate in hiring/dismissal decisions involving their region
- No cross-appointments allowed between board, staff, and Champion positions

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*Prepared by imagiNorthern Staff: Fiona Rettie (PM) and Roy Mexted (CC) — July 2025*