

# City of London - Application for Appointment to a City of London Board or Commission

## Application

Please choose the Board or Commission you are interested in serving on: **London Public Library Board**

## Contact Information

Name: **George Goodall**

City: **London**

Province: **ON**

Postal Code: **N6G 2K7**

## Experience and Qualifications

If you have experience on a London Board or Commission, please provide dates and details. (max. 3000 characters):

**I have never served on a London Board or Commission.**

What do you hope to contribute or learn as part of a Board or Commission? (max. 3000 characters):

**I'm a strong believer in the Library's mission and its value to the community. In my professional role with the Info-Tech Research Group, I spend my days helping leaders with strategy formation, working with their senior leadership teams and boards, and addressing emerging risks in their operations. I hope that these skills will be of some value to an organization that I wholeheartedly support. Please see further discussion in both the next question and in my attached statement of intention. In terms of my overall contributions to the board, I hope I can advise and direct the leadership of the Library in support of its charter and strategic goals. While I believe strongly in the social mission of the institution, I also represent the business- and technology-focused constituency within the City of London and the downtown core. I also hope to learn from an experience with the board. As COVID started to abate, my partner and I looked to find opportunities to contribute to, and learn from, our broader community. The Library immediately emerged as an institution that is near and dear to my heart. My hope is through service I can get behind a bit of the opacity of municipal governance and understand more about the needs within our community.**

How will you support the work of a Board or Commission? (max. 3000 characters):

**I hope that my professional experience will of help to the Library:**

**Technology. My professional life is assisting technology leaders in making appropriate decisions about the technologies they buy and use. I've helped hundreds of different organizations create and document effective technology strategies that communicate costs and risks to senior leadership teams and, where required for funding/risk, the board.**

**Law. I regularly talk to my clients about legal issues, while clearly stating that I'm not a lawyer. I mostly assist people in building effective technology-based controls for compliance, privacy, and litigation defense. Part of that work is creating effective risk management practices and ensuring an appropriate level of data collection and management within the organization.**

**Data analysis. I'm a data guy and I love slick technology. But I regularly advise my clients that, when it comes to data, "answers are easy; questions are hard." In my experience, existing data models rarely have sufficient granularity or quality to answer the important questions that need to be answered. I have experience in asking hard questions that analysts don't like to answer (e.g., "What's the \_expected\_ number? How confident are we in the number? How much variance can we really control for?") and in building**

decision-making models, often using approaches intended for sports analytics. My work with clients generally addresses how to create a culture that yields similar approaches. Finance. My background is not in finance but I do have a background in ERP technology and spend a great deal of time working with clients on how they structure their GL and manage their data to support appropriate reporting and analysis. My concern is more about the use of data (e.g., Master Data Management, etc.) than it is about accounting standards.

**Marketing.** My work necessarily requires me to stay up to date on modern approaches and technologies for marketing, including effective use and governance of social media. And I can write pretty decent marketing copy!

**Fund development.** My experience with fund development is primarily related to the business processes and technologies required to support the development/donor practices of various educational and non-profit institutions. My general advice is to ensure that processes are vetted and effective before major investments in technologies like BlackBaud or Salesforce for Nonprofits.

**Education.** Ultimately, employee development is a key goal for all of my clients. That said, few of them, or their HR departments, have developed effective competence models or professional development practices to ensure their people get better. I help my clients using a DACUM-based model for competence identification and then ensure that managers use key moments like Performance Appraisals to support skill development.

Please describe additional experience, training, or community involvement that will help you in your role as a Board or Commission Member. (max. 3000 characters):

I currently have a small role on the board of the Forest City Diving Club. The mandate of the organization is very different from that of the library but we do adhere to general standards of practice and decorum for boards. The roles and responsibilities of board members are clear to me.

Attach resume or other document here, if needed: **Goodall -- library board statement of intention -- 2022 10 19.pdf**

Attach more files here, if needed:

## Confirmations

I declare the following: **I am a resident of London. ; I am at least 18 years old.; I am not a City employee or Council member.; I understand that my application and any attachments will be included on a public agenda that is published on the City website.**

To help inform our outreach activities, please tell us how you heard about this opportunity: (optional): **Social media**

If you selected 'Other', please specify:

Submitted on: **10/19/2022 12:45:48 PM**

**Statement of Intention for George Goodall, in regard to City of London Library Board  
2022.10.19**

As COVID wound down, my partner and I looked at each other and said: "Well, that sucked." We made a point of writing down the things that we had missed and the things that we wanted to do. We had learned about the importance of community and how tenuous relations can be. We both felt that we wanted to give back to the community, like we did in those years before kids, when we ran groups at Changing Ways on Tuesday nights. We drew up lists of organizations that represented our core values and beliefs. The library was at the top of mine. She said: "Perfect choice... for you."

But that's not the only reason why I want to join the library board.

I'm a civil engineer by training. I started my career working with young kids in rural Nicaragua. I then practiced as an engineer, before hearing the siren song of technology and jumping into the dot-com boom, soon to become the dot-com bust. I spent some time in graduate school before joining a young London-based technology firm called the Info-Tech Research Group. I remember when we all sat around a board-room table, and now we have over 1000 employees around the world. Our head office, however, is on Ridout St.

So, I'm now a recovering engineer, with an ambiguous job title that's difficult to explain to my mother-in-law. Basically, my job is to help my clients, who are primarily technology executives in small and mid-sized organizations. In my time at Info-Tech, I've managed our research practices for information governance, financial systems, and data management. Now, I'm specifically focused on supporting my clients in their efforts to build strategy, overcome challenges within their organizations, build better budgets, and engage with senior leadership teams and board members on both strategic priorities and risk, particularly cyber-security. In my time at Info-Tech, I've worked with leaders at several libraries within North America and, before the COVID shutdown, even delivered a presentation for the BC Libraries Association.

But that's not why I want to join the board.

I do have an MLIS and made a decent dent on my PhD before family commitments reprioritized my time. The dot-com era was glorious: cool technology, lots of data, easy money, go go go. We all, however, struggled with a key issue -- managing information. This was, after all, the heyday of "knowledge management." I talked to the folks at Ivey (I am, at core, an engineer). They said: "we don't do that. Go down the hill and talk to the library folks." And so, I went to library school where I learned all about cataloging and classification, ontology development, and reference architectures. The stuff I needed when I worked in tech.

And then my education began.

On a whim, I took a storytelling course with Mary Neill (I think of her every time I see the Sam Neill meeting room at Masonville). We had a practicum and had to tell stories to little kids. I could pitch tech deals to executives, but children terrified me. I finally started to see the public library. I started my PhD and took an ethnography course with Lynne McKechnie. We had to do observation work in the library to better understand how the space was used. Downtown, I watched a man who slept rough come in every day and, perhaps not gifted with literacy, pore over the maps and elaborate plates in the great tomes of ready reference. At Cherryhill I saw seniors who came in three times a week, groceries in hand, converse

with the public health nurse; Pond Mills and Sherwood Park were hubs for new Canadians; Masonville a place for aspiring scholars and their tutors, perhaps desperate to improve their calculus marks before report cards went home; and Landon, where every day the hip moms and their tots were joined by some guy who came in, slammed a six pack of yogurt with the Globe and Mail, and left. We wrote a pretty good paper: "Covered Beverages Now Allowed." It's old, but it stands up.

But that's not why I want to join the board.

I'm a big fan of library services. My Libby wait list is always maxed out (across multiple libraries now) and I almost always have both books on reserve and books overdue. When my colleagues become overwhelmed trying to find information on the web, I direct them back to the library: EBSCO, ProQuest, LinkedIn Learning, Hoopla. Start there. I've even weaponized ILL to get access to obscure technical guidelines and standards. Did you know, you can even prise books out of the Toronto Reference Library?!? With great power, comes...

Today, my eldest daughter is my favorite child (it changes every day). She's 16 and has caught the reading bug from me. She just passed 100 books in her 2022 reading journal (!) and regularly laments the tough tradeoff of starting a new book vs. continuing a series. Earlier this month she challenged me: "Dad, what are you reading for banned books week?" I revisited Maus. She went with Fun Home.

I love books (and their digital cousins). But that's not why I want to join the board.

COVID controls lifted, and the library reopened. I brought my youngest daughter downtown. At one point she said: "It smells funny in here." The library was a shock to her carefully curated Masonville life. Oh, she has friends of all colours and creeds, rejoices in religious holidays large and small, and knows kids from around the world, all of whose parents are lawyers, physicians, and professors. She knows great cultural diversity, but none of the socio-economic kind. The world we've built for our kids is all efficiencies and clean straight lines, but that's not the way the real world works. The lack of different smells is a testament to a built-world that leaves too many people behind and puts too many barriers between us. The agora has been sanitized. When I look at London, the public library is one of the last public institutions we have where people can just be, and be together, whether that's out of a joy of learning and literature, to get access to public services, or simply to get out of the wet and cold, regardless of how they look or smell.

That's why I offer my time, skills, and experience to the library. I believe in institutions that have an inclusive mandate and am happy to give what I can.