



2024-2027 Candidate Package

Dear Prospective Board Member,

Thank you for your interest in serving on the Mississippi Market Board of Directors! The board determines the long-range vision for the co-op, provides financial oversight and sets policies to guide the CEO in achieving our strategic priorities. Our board members are leaders, servants, stewards, and visionaries. This is a position with a monthly stipend (\$160) in the form of store credit and a 10% discount for all Mississippi Market locations. We welcome you to contact us at board@msmarket.coop with questions, or to be put in contact with a current board member to discuss this exciting opportunity. We ask that you carefully read the enclosed information before filling out the application.

In this packet, you will find:

- An overview of cooperatives
- A description of our business, goals, and values
- An overview of the board of directors' function, responsibilities, and eligibility requirements
- A summary of the election process and important dates
- The candidate application

In addition to the responsibilities and eligibility requirements described below, we have certain expectations of our board members to consider and understand. Directors should expect to spend an average of 10-12 hours per month on board-related activities, some of which would be time spent at retreats and special events throughout the year.

Our expectations for board members include:

- Participate fully in board meetings. Attend all monthly meetings of the board (typically the 4th Tuesday) and one standing committee, as well as meetings of any other committees on which you may serve. Special projects may require more time commitment.
- Prepare in advance of every board meeting by reviewing the agenda, reading the packet, and compiling your feedback/questions.
- Attend the mandatory orientation for new board members.
- Actively participate in board discussion via e-mail or phone between meetings as necessary.
- Attend other events, such as annual member meetings and in-store meet and greet activities.
- Have access to a computer; internet; email.
- Check board email account regularly (at least 3x per week).

For the 2024 election, we anticipate two vacancies on the board all for three-year terms. Please feel free to contact us with any questions that you may have.

We look forward to meeting you!

Sincerely,
Mississippi Market's Board of Directors

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Wednesday, July 31, 2024

OVERVIEW

WHAT IS A CO-OP?

A cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

Fast facts:

- A co-op is a legal entity owned and democratically controlled by its members.
- Co-ops can be either nonprofit organizations or for-profits that operate as a form of social enterprise.
- Co-ops operate under a common set of ideals, originally developed in 1844 and adopted by the International Cooperative Alliance in 1937. These ideals (listed below) – seven cooperative principles and ten cooperative values – have been updated throughout the years.
- Every cooperatively formed business, whether grocery stores, utilities, housing, credit unions or other types of co-ops, all operate under this set of ideals.

LOCAL CO-OP HISTORY: The Credjafawn Co-op Store was located in St Paul's Rondo neighborhood near Mississippi Market's present-day Selby-Dale store. Credjafawn was one of five African American co-ops in the Twin Cities and part of the first wave of cooperative grocery stores. Sadly, Credjafawn closed in the mid-1950s followed by many local businesses when Interstate 94 was constructed through the heart of the Rondo neighborhood. Mississippi Market is proud to be a successor of Credjafawn Co-op in the Rondo neighborhood.

INTERNATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION

1. Voluntary and Open Membership

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all people able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2. Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members—those who buy the goods or use the services of the cooperative—who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions.

3. Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equally to, and democratically control, the capital of the cooperative. This benefits members in proportion to the business they conduct with the cooperative rather than on the capital invested.

4. Autonomy and Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members. If the co-op enters into agreements with other organizations or raises capital from external sources, it is done so based on terms that ensure democratic control by the members and maintains the cooperative's autonomy.

5. Education, Training and Information

Cooperatives provide education and training for members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperative. Members also inform the general public about the nature and benefits of cooperatives.

6. Cooperation among Cooperatives

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7. Concern for Community

While focusing on member needs, cooperatives work for the sustainable development of communities through policies and programs accepted by the members.

COOPERATIVE VALUES

Basic cooperative values are general norms that board members, cooperative leaders and cooperative staff should share; the values should determine their way of thinking and acting.

- Self-help
- Self-responsibility
- Democracy
- Equality
- Equity
- Solidarity
- Honesty
- Openness
- Social responsibility
- Caring for others

ABOUT US

YOUR COOPERATIVE

Mississippi Market Co-op was started in 1979 by a community of people working towards a common goal – creating access to natural, organic, locally grown, fairly-traded, and sustainably produced products. A co-op is a result of what can happen when people pool their energy and resources together to achieve a common goal. Co-ops are voluntarily owned and controlled by community members. More than 18,000 people have invested in Mississippi Market Co-op by becoming [member-owners](#). In return, Mississippi Market employs more than 180 people, operates for the benefit of our member-owners, and is guided by the articles and bylaws they approve.

At Mississippi Market, we exist to serve our members – it's what sets us apart. We care deeply about our community, and each day we work together through the co-op model to help build a sustainable community of farmers, workers and shoppers, that benefits us all. Mississippi Market couldn't do this work without our member-owners and community members!

ENDS: WHY WE EXIST

Mississippi Market Co-op is a welcoming cooperative that:

- Champions a just and inclusive local economy
- Promotes a healthy, sustainable environment and food system
- Innovates to serve the needs of its diverse communities
- Fosters strong, equitable community relationships

Strategic Drivers – In pursuit of our mission we will:

- 1) Deliver great customer service to everyone who comes through our doors.
- 2) Support and develop a dedicated and engaged staff.
- 3) Be a source of local, sustainable products and education about food-related issues.
- 4) Strengthen our local food system and our network of local farmers and producers.
- 5) Create a financially sound co-op that reinvests in its community.

MISSISSIPPI MARKET'S VALUES: WHAT GUIDES US

INTEGRITY: We value honesty, openness and respect; we operate with transparency, consistency and courage as a trusted, expert advisor and are accountable to all our stakeholders for delivering quality in goods and services.

PEOPLE: We value, respect and recognize our diverse staff as they turn ideas into actions and goals into reality.

MEMBER OWNERSHIP: We come together as a cooperative business to use our economic power to meet the needs of our member-owners and affect positive change in our community and our local food economy.

CUSTOMER COMMITMENT: We will meet our customers' needs and exceed their expectations.

LEADERSHIP: We will be a trusted advisor improving customers' lives by creating, implementing and championing innovative and socially responsible ideas that lead the food industry.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP: We set a high standard for actively promoting and participating in environmentally sustainable business practices and projects.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: FUNCTION & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Mississippi Market Board of Directors is a policy governance board that is legally responsible for the overall direction and performance of the co-op. The board carries out this responsibility by establishing broad policy guidelines and by monitoring the CEO within that framework. The CEO's function is to implement the policies established by the board and carry out day-to-day operations.

Eligibility Requirements

- Prospective candidates **must be willing to become a member-owner** of Mississippi Market or **be a current member-owner** in good standing. You can find more information about becoming a member-owner on our website at msmarket.coop/membership.
- Each prospective candidate **must attend at least one regular board meeting, which are held in person or virtually the fourth Tuesday of each month.** Opportunities include the following dates:
 - Tuesday, April 23, 6:30-8:30
 - Tuesday, June 25, 6:30-8:30
 - Tuesday, July 23, 6:30-8:30
 - Tuesday, August 27, 6:30-8:30
- To register for a meeting, visit msmarket.coop/event/.

Prospective candidates should be willing to learn about and commit to cooperative principles and serve the co-op's member-owners by fulfilling the responsibilities of the board of directors as stated below.

Responsibilities of the Board of Directors

In general, members of a co-op board of directors have the same duties as the directors of any business. In addition, members of a co-op board of directors must act on behalf of our member-owners and balance business interests, along with member-owners' individual interests, when making decisions.

The Mississippi Market board of directors is a policy governance board; the board does not engage in operational decisions at the store level but is legally responsible for the overall direction and performance of the co-op.

Primary board responsibilities are:

- Provide fiduciary oversight on behalf of Mississippi Market's member-owners.
- Hire, compensate, delegate responsibility to, and hold accountable a CEO.

- Have expectations in the form of written governing policies that realistically address the broadest levels of all organizational decisions and situations.
- Monitor operational performance by the CEO and board performance in the areas of board process and board-management relationship.
- Exercise due diligence in monitoring the co-op's financial condition.
- Perpetuate the board's leadership capacity using ongoing education, training and recruitment.
- Maintain confidentiality as required.
- Faithfully honor all legal obligations that come with directorship, which include the:
 - Duty of care (make informed decisions in good faith; act as a prudent person; use a good process for decision making; be honest; ensure adequate record keeping).
 - Duty of loyalty (always act in the best interest of the cooperative; disclose and avoid conflicts of interest; engage in no self-dealing; maintain confidentiality).
 - Duty of Attention/Diligence (attend meetings; participate in discussions; be prepared; review materials; ask questions; know and adhere to state laws and co-op bylaws; support Board decisions and policies; honor contracts; ensure payment of all tax obligations).

Board Election Process Overview

You may submit your application online or in-store. Please note that **a resume or summary of experience is required along with your application.** It is in your best interest for this resume or summary of experience to address one or more of the current recruitment priorities (outlined below). Throughout the application and election process, correspondence will primarily take place via email; the board requires you to have access to a personal email account. You will receive an email confirmation once the board receives your application. This confirmation serves as a record that we received your application, and it will detail the next steps and discuss eligibility requirements. **If you do not receive confirmation within three days of submitting your application, please email board@msmarket.coop.**

Once the application deadline has passed, the board will use a slating matrix to perform the initial screening of candidates' skills and strengths. Slating allows the Recruitment Committee to seek out the top candidates based on current board priorities. In your board candidate application, you should expand on at least one of the following areas you feel you might add particular value to the board: **Board Governance, Long-term and Strategic Planning, Leadership or Supervisory experience, Diversity and Inclusivity, Creativity and Imaginative Thinking, and Financial Experience.**

The Recruitment Committee will present the slate of candidates to the full board of directors for approval. Once the slate is approved, the committee will contact all applicants to notify them of whether they were chosen for the slate or not. **Applicants who are chosen to be slated need to apply for co-op membership if not already a member;** please note, Mississippi Market offers payment plan options and a limited income membership entry (LIME) program.

If chosen for the final slate, all of your answers to the candidate application will be included on the co-op's website and on the digital election voting website. All applicants chosen for the final slate are highly encouraged to attend Mississippi Market's Annual Meeting on 10/20/21. Newly elected board directors are announced and welcomed at the annual meeting.

If you have any questions as you proceed through the application process, please contact us via email at board@msmarket.coop.

2024 Board Election Timeline

- 07/31/24 - Applications due- Slated candidates will be informed approximately one month before the Annual Meeting and voting period begins.
- 08/07/24-08/11/24 - Once slated, candidates can meet with our Marketing department to have your headshot taken in-store (for use on website and in election materials)
- Late October, date TBA – Annual Meeting, new directors announced (attendance highly encouraged but not required)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPLICATION, 2024-2027

Note: Your responses to the questions below will appear on our website and in election-related materials. These responses will be the primary basis by which the board will evaluate candidates to place them on the election ballot. Due to space limitations, your character count is limited for each question. Applications are available online at msmarket.coop/board-of-directors-application/

The board would like to gather basic information about your skills, expertise and background. We invite you to share what you believe you can offer Mississippi Market Natural Foods Co-op, and what interests you about serving on the board.

In addition to completing this application, **you must submit a resume or summary of experiences with your completed application**. If submitting your application online, please email your additional documents to board@msmarket.coop.

Name

Address

Member Number (optional)

Phone

Email

1. Can you commit to meeting the term and expected workload required by this role? (3- character limit)
2. Why are you interested in running for this board? (750-character limit)
- 1.—
3. Please describe your experience in one or more of these areas: Board Governance, Long-term and Strategic Planning, Leadership or Supervisory experience, Diversity and Inclusivity, Creativity and Imaginative Thinking, and Financial Experience. (1500-character limit)
4. Please describe how you would contribute to the diversity, equity, and inclusivity of the board. (500 characters)
5. In your opinion, what is the role of the co-op in the community? (750-character limit)
6. **Please also send a resume or summary of your experiences to board@msmarket.coop.**

Applications are not considered complete without a resume or summary of experiences. If you do not receive confirmation that your application has been received within three days of submitting it, email us at board@msmarket.coop.