

The Big House Project

Document: Membership Process

Version: 1.0—17/04/2022

This document forms part of a package of ratified policy documents, that are intended to be read in conjunction with the "Associate Membership Agreement". The documents may be updated from time to time by the project's Decision Making Process. The full set of supporting documents includes, but is not limited to: the "Membership Process", "Decision Making Process", "Meeting Procedure", "Minutes Template" and the "Spending Policy". We wish to credit Earthsong Eco-Neighbourhood for the basis of these documents, adapted under Creative Commons 4.0 BY NC SA, and these documents are released on the same terms.

MEMBERSHIP PROCESS

Explanation

The project considers that a clearly defined membership process is important for decision making integrity, social cohesion, and to reduce the opportunity for misunderstandings among members joining the Project.

Types of member

Membership has three phases, Novitiate, Associate, and Full Membership. This graduated process allows members to ease into the Project at a pace that they are comfortable with, but to be able to participate sufficiently in order to decide upon going further. It also allows the group to get to know members. Note that the numbered joining steps are to be completed sequentially.

Steps for interested person to become a Novitiate Member

1. Read and digest the Vision Booklet.
2. Attend an Orientation (in person or via video conferencing).
3. Register for the Collaboration Skills Course, and pay a non-refundable fee of \$175.
4. Be assigned a liaison Member / buddy
5. Read and digest the policy document package.
6. Report to liaison Member, that you are ready to start attending meetings.

Steps for Novitiate to become an Associate Member

1. Complete all of the following in no particular order:
 - Read the past minutes (or summaries if available) of previous Full Circle meetings.
 - Complete all 6 sessions of the Collaboration Skills Course
 - Attend a minimum of six Full Circle meetings (in person or via video conferencing)
 - Join a sub-circle and participate in the project work
 - Complete the Big House Project Questionnaire, and the Financial Questionnaire
2. Apply for Associate Membership.
3. Achieve approval of Associate Member application via the Decision Making Process.
4. Sign the Associate Member Agreement.

Steps for Associate to become a Full Member

1. Complete all of the following in no particular order:
 - Maintain a minimum period of 6 months (and a maximum of 12 months) as an associate member (for the Founding Group**, such period as is practicable).
 - Regularly attend Full Circle meetings.
 - Participate in a sub-circle of the Members choice
 - Engage with the other Members of the Project
 - Participate actively in daily chores, shared meals and other project initiatives
2. Apply for Full Membership.
3. Achieve approval of Full Member application via the Decision Making Process
4. Purchase the minimum, or greater, shareholding.

Rights and Responsibilities

The rights of Novitiates are to speak at meetings, to attend sub-circle meetings, access to group email and the Members area of the website.

Associate Members are able to participate in decision making, and enter into an occupancy agreement. Full Members have fallback voting rights, and are eligible to purchase shares in the project.

The full rights and responsibilities of Members are outlined in the Associate Membership Agreement, the Occupancy Agreement, and/or the Constitution of the Co-operative.

** The "Founding Group", comprises the Members who are Associates at the time of purchasing the Big House Project property