



# Get Engaged

## The Process of Volunteering for CFAW

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## **Introduction**

Welcome to the CFA Society Washington, DC (CFAW). We are so glad that you are thinking about getting more engaged with CFAW. Whether you choose to get involved to gain leadership opportunities, build your resume, increase your exposure to the local financial services industry, or give back to the profession, you'll find a meaningful way to participate in the CFAW community.

Volunteers are the fuel that power associations. CFAW offers a variety of ways for our members to get involved, from short-term volunteer projects to committee or Board service. With every new volunteer, CFAW grows more energized, more diverse and inclusive, and better equipped to reach our common goals. We encourage you to deepen your engagement with CFAW and your industry peers. Volunteer today!

This document is designed to provide you with an overview of volunteering at CFAW. There are additional resources available on the CFAW website at [www.cfawashington.org](http://www.cfawashington.org).

## **About CFAW**

The CFA Society Washington, DC is the leading association of investment professionals in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. The Society links its members with each other, those interested in joining the profession, and the community through many activities including professional development and networking events. The Society also sponsors local classes to prepare candidates for the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) exam, a prerequisite to earning the CFA designation, which is awarded by CFA Institute and has been attained by most Society members.

Founded in 1953, the Society consists of over 2,000 financial professionals in a variety of positions including portfolio managers, analysts, trust officers, and consultants, as well as pension, endowment and foundation fund executives. Reflecting the diverse nature of the investment professions in the Washington, DC area, members are employed by major corporations, associations, unions, national, state and local government agencies, financial regulators, academic institutions, investment managers, insurance companies, broker/dealers and consultants, among others.

## **Why We Have Volunteers**

The Society needs volunteers to create positive change in the world of finance for the DC metro area. We need your help, your passion, and your ideas. Serving as a volunteer is one of the best and most impactful ways to contribute to our combined success. Thousands of CFA Institute members have been doing so since 1953, and we hope you'll consider applying your particular talents and expertise as a CFAW volunteer.

There are three main reasons that CFAW incorporates volunteers into our operational activities.

1. Volunteers help to build our organizational strength. This strength comes not only from growing and retaining members and enhancing the value of the CFA charter, but also in the sense of pride that volunteers gain when they become visible advocates for CFAW.
2. Member volunteers have proven over time to add significant value to CFAW. We understand that volunteering is a personal choice, not your job. We at CFAW never underestimate the power of volunteerism and the power of increased peer-to-peer networking.
3. By utilizing our volunteers, we extend the resources of CFAW. Volunteers provide extra hands that enable CFAW to do the tasks and activities that might not otherwise get done. Volunteers also provide valuable input to CFAW leadership and staff.

## **What do Volunteers receive?**

Volunteers gain from their experience in many ways, including:

- Growing your network and enhancing your career by building relationships with new contacts and old friends,
- Increasing your professional knowledge and developing new skills gained from knowledgeable peers,
- Enhancing the value of the CFA Charter by participating in projects and programs,
- Expressing your values through serving CFAW in numerous activities that are important to the future success of our society, and
- Contributing to the local Financial Services Community by fostering the interaction of leading members of the capital markets with issues and programs of interest to them and the public good.

## What makes an effective CFAW volunteer?

- Demonstrated interest in the financial industry and CFAW
- Willingness to serve – commitment to giving back
- Ability to serve – time available to volunteer
- Reliability – will assume necessary responsibilities
- Something of value to contribute – professional knowledge and skill
- Professional reputation – ethical and team-player
- Effective leadership and communication skills – will step forward and lead

## Short-term Commitments

If you want to experience what it's like to volunteer for CFAW before making a longer-term commitment to a leadership group, you can start by volunteering for individual projects. Throughout the year, CFAW posts current volunteer opportunities in the Volunteer section of the CFAW website. This is a great way to find volunteer opportunities that fit your interests and the time you have available.

- **Short-term Projects** – are opportunities to get involved in a specific program. These involve more commitment than a specific event, but less than serving on a volunteer committee. Volunteers who wish to volunteer for a short-term project – for just a few hours – might spend time in the Society office reviewing scholarship applications or grading student Investment Research Challenge papers.
- **Event Operations** – is a volunteer community of current members who have expressed an interest in helping to support CFAW's programs and events. These volunteer opportunities are specific to an individual program or event, so the time commitment is typically an hour or two. Examples of activities include greeting and/or directing attendees, staffing the registration table, bag stuffing, etc. These opportunities will be outlined and emailed to all members of this group as they arise throughout the program year, with volunteers being accepted on a first come, first served basis.

## Volunteer Committees

CFAW has three primary committees that you may volunteer to participate on. These are referred to as Committees of the Society. These committees may, from time to time, recommend strategic initiatives or policies to the CFAW Board of Directors, but they are primarily focused on assisting the CEO and staff in the implementation of the organization's strategic priorities. These committees are as follows:

- **Member Engagement Committee** – focuses on member recruitment, engagement, and retention and evaluates the overall member experience. The committee uses social media to communicate about CFAW, and to organize networking events and informal member-organized events.
- **External Relations Committee** – performs outreach to the community, employers, regulators, nonprofits and universities to raise awareness of the substance and value of the CFA Charter. It supports CFA Institute advocacy efforts locally and assists with other external focused activities such as media.
- **Programs & Education Committee** – helps members enhance their investment knowledge, professional practices, career development and professional networks. The committee plans and executes approximately 3-4 programs per month that provide opportunities for networking, professional education, career development and/or technical training. Committee members recruit thought leaders and prominent practitioners as speakers, and create and deliver events of interest to members. The committee also organizes CFA exam prep resources for local candidates and oversees the awarding of scholarships.

## **Committee Structure**

Each committee has a common organizational structure, regardless of how many volunteers there may be serving on the committee. One member of the Board of Directors will serve as a liaison to the committee. A non-Board member will serve as Committee Chair and is appointed by the Board of Directors. The Committee Members will be comprised of volunteers. The full listing of committee positions includes the following:

- Committee Chair
- Sub-Committee Chair (as appropriate)
- Board Liaison
- Committee Members
- Staff Liaison

## **Term**

Committee Members and the Committee Chair will serve a term of one year. There are no limits on the number of terms a Chair or member may serve. Terms commence at the beginning of the fiscal year on July 1 and end June 30.

## **Meetings**

The committees meet, either in-person or by conference call, at least quarterly and usually meet more frequently as circumstances dictate.

## **Time Commitment**

Our volunteer program offers a variety of options for service, depending on the amount of time you are able to commit. Volunteers can commit to working on a small project just once for a few hours, or can volunteer to serve on one of CFAW's committees. The choice is yours.

The Society often needs help staffing events. The time commitment for this level of volunteering is limited to the length of the event, typically 2 – 3 hours.

Most committees usually meet every other month for 2 hours. Meetings are in-person but dialing in is an option if need be. Outside of the scheduled meetings, the time commitment varies based on the projects the committee is working on.

## **Call for Volunteer Process**

When you are ready to take your participation to the next level, consider volunteering for one of CFAW's volunteer committees. Committee volunteers are appointed to one-year terms that are renewable, contingent on your participation in the committee. The committees do require attendance at the meetings. Expression of Volunteer Interest forms are taken annually through a Call for Volunteers, which is publicly announced and posted in the Volunteers section of the CFAW website. Once you select an opportunity and submit your Expression of Volunteer Interest form, it will be reviewed by CFAW volunteer leadership. You will be notified of the outcome within a few weeks. The annual Call for Volunteers opens April 1<sup>st</sup> and closes May 31<sup>st</sup> each year, with notification of volunteers in June.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

This guide is meant to provide an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the committee chair, Board Liaison, Committee members, and staff. For committee work to be accomplished, the individuals in these positions need to form a partnership, with each fulfilling their perspective roles.

### ***Role of a Committee Chair***

- Facilitates the meeting or conference call
- Encourages committee members to provide their thoughts

- Provides leadership to assure that the committee charge is met
- Collaborates with staff to develop and monitor the goals of the committee
- Provides input for setting meeting and conference call agendas
- Communicates with other committee chairs, Board Liaison, and CEO regarding committee issues
- Mentors the Sub-Committee Chairs to ensure continuity to the next program year

### ***Role of a Board Liaison***

- Assist the Committee Chair in interpreting any direction and feedback from the Board of Directors
- Monitor the progress of the committee towards its goals

### ***Role of Committee Members***

- Participate actively in all meetings and conference calls, but do not monopolize the discussion
- Respect different points of view
- Consider what Society members would think
- Respect time limits – they are necessary to achieve what the committee needs to accomplish
- Ask for clarification when needed
- Provide written or verbal feedback on issues or documents under discussion by the committee
- Serve as a spokesperson for issues related to the work of the committee and assist members in understanding committee decisions

### ***Role of Staff***

- Provides support services and resources (i.e., reports, research, etc.)
- Implements committee decisions
- Provides clarification on issues and provides historical information on projects/issues
- Provides input from a staff perspective on issues under discussion

## **Volunteer Job Descriptions**

### ***Committee Chair***

- Prepares to chair the committee by reading available resources on managing committees and reviewing the committee files
- Confers with preceding Committee Chair and staff, and participates in the committee orientation

- Develops a draft annual plan for the next program year and communicates the plan to the members of the committee
- Plans the work of the committee to maintain fiscal responsibility
- Works within the framework of the CFAW strategic plan, budget, and calendar of events
- Call and presides over meetings of the committee in person or by conference call
- Records the minutes of the committee meetings and distributes them to committee members
- Collaborates with committee to ensure completion of activities
- Writes reports of committee activities and relevant issues for distribution to the Board of Directors and CEO on a quarterly basis. Prepares the year-end report for the Board of Directors and CEO
- Maintains committee files of materials, providing information about past activities, reports, etc., as relevant to committee function, and assures that they are transferred to the new Committee Chair
- Ensures continuity in conducting committee business through orderly transfer of records and materials, orients the incoming committee chair, and encourages attendance at committee meetings

#### ***Committee Member***

- Participates in committee orientation
- Works with the Committee Chair to meet the committee charge and achieve the plans within time and fiscal parameters
- Participates in committee meetings, conference calls, and correspondence
- Assists in implementing the committee projects
- Assists in preparing committee reports
- Contributes to the development of annual goals

Contact [info@cfawashington.org](mailto:info@cfawashington.org) for more information on committees or other volunteer opportunities.