

Ownership as Defined by John Carver

Boards do not possess their authority by virtue of themselves. The source of their authority comes from their initial base of legitimacy. The board governs on behalf of persons who are not seated at the board table. Board members stand in for the ownership, operating on its behalf. While a board is accountable to the law, to community standards, etc., its accountability to its ownership has a more focused meaning.

1. Legal Owners

The source of ownership for a membership organization is its members. The legal owners of ILCWR, therefore, are its members. According to our by-laws, the ILCWR Board of Directors is selected from the membership base and is elected by members at the AGM.

2. Moral Owners

As a member of IL Canada, we are a consumer-controlled¹ and community-based² organization. While we have no legal obligation to consumers, we do, through this IL Canada mandate, have a moral one. The consumers who sit on our board however, represent only the consumers who are members of the organization, and not the disabled population at large. The legal and moral ownership could be tied more closely together by increasing the percentage of consumers in our membership base.

3. Stakeholders

Stakeholders include any group or individual who is affected by or who can affect the future of the organization. All owners are stakeholders, but not all stakeholders are owners. The following groups have been identified as ILCWR stakeholders: members, consumers, employees and volunteers, government funders and other donors, other organizations (similar, complementary and competitive). Other groups could be considered: general public (taxpayers), consultants, suppliers, regulators, neighbours, researchers, professional societies.

¹At least 51% of the governing Board of Directors are persons with disabilities.

²The ILC is supported by a broad membership base among consumers in the local community.