



The Kalapa Court

Role and Appointment of the Director of a Shambhala Centre

Background

It is helpful to read these guidelines in conjunction with the Kalapa Governance document: *Steps toward the Kalapa Governance structure at Shambhala Centres*. You can find it on the Kalapa Governance Resource webpage:

<http://shambhala.org/members/shambhala-governance/leadership-resources/>

It is also important to consider these guidelines in light of the conditions at your own Shambhala Centre. The size, composition and circumstances of our centres vary widely. It is not possible to create a one-size-fits-all description of the role and responsibilities of a centre director. However, it is helpful to use the **principles** outlined in detail in this document as a basis for seeking and supporting a director who can help lead and develop your community on behalf of our lineage.

Appointment

All directors of Shambhala Centres are appointed by the Sakyong, who received nominations from the local centres and considers who best to appoint.

The procedure is that the Governing Council of each local Shambhala Centre nominates one or more appropriate candidates for the position of Centre Director to the Kalapa Court. The nomination is sent to the Office of Centre and Group Support who will liaise on behalf of the centre with the Kalapa Court. The email address is: Anna Weinstein <aweinstein.shambhala@gmail.com>

Please send your nomination with a supporting by a letter of reference outlining the attributes and experience of the candidate and stating the grounds on which the Governing Council is putting forward this nomination to the Sakyong.

Wherever there is a Kalapa Envoy – a senior representative of the Sakyong appointed to act as his representative in a region -- or a regional governing structure, the nomination requires the written support of the Kalapa Envoy or regional director.

The nomination is presented to the Sakyong who has the final authority to appoint the Director.

It is the Sakyong's wish that the role of Centre Director be more empowered within the local centre, in line with the role played by the Head of the Government Pillar in the Kalapa Council. As an expression of this, he has asked that we work towards having the Centre Director, as head of the Government Pillar, both Chair the Governing Council and act as the Chief Executive.

Where this represents a change from existing practice, it should be undertaken with the following principles (which are explained in *Steps toward the Kalapa Governance structure at Shambhala Centres*).

First, local leaders should understand and discuss the roles of Executive Director and Council Chair. This exploration should be in some detail and depth, and the Centre Director should have the confidence of self and others that she can manage the separate functions of both chairing the Governing Council and acting as the Chief Executive of the centre.

Second, this change should be implemented over a period of time, in a way that does not undermine the momentum and progress of the current leadership. It is hoped that the contributions and service of the current governance chair or board chair can be appreciated and involved in moving towards the next iterations of local leadership.

As this model evolves, and depending on the human resources available at each centre, the Centre Director may choose to Chair the Governance Council and have a Coordinator (by whatever title) chair the Executive Committee and manage the day-to-day activities of the centre.

In the long-range view of the Sakyong, the Centre Director will fill the role of Council Chair. This is already the case in a number of centres. In other centres a separately appointed Chair of the Council currently fills this role. In those centres where the Centre Director plays the role of Council Chair, it is always important to distinguish between the role the Centre Director is playing in that capacity and the role s/he plays as Chief Executive. This distinction is explained below.

The role of the Centre Director – a single director integrating a leadership mandala around the three pillars

Over the last few years as the Sakyong has developed the governance model he wishes to see throughout the mandala, he has spoken of his wish that the position of Centre Director be held by one individual and not shared by co-directors. His conversations about this have been mainly with the President who has been principally responsible for leading the introduction of the Kalapa Governance Structure, which includes the sole director model.

The Sakyong wishes to see one person clearly empowered by him as director, who feels this sense of direct connection with the lineage holder, and that this empowerment be clearly felt and appreciated by the local community. This is part of the Sakyong's wish to strengthen the energetic bonds between our many, geographically diverse centres and the lineage at the centre of the mandala.

This empowerment of the centre director is part of the same process of binding the leaders of the three pillars and several other key positions in the centres' new governing councils to the leadership at the centre of the mandala. Thus, new procedures have been introduced for the appointment of the Director of Practice and Education, the Chagdzö, the Representatives of the Shambhala Offices of Culture and Decorum, and of Societal Health and Well-Being who will now, in addition to the Rusung or Chain of Command Designate of the Dorje Kasung, be nominated by the local centre, but appointed by the centre of the mandala. All these steps are designed to manifest more fully the Sakyong's wish that that mandala be governed in accordance with Mandala Principle, according to which there is, in his words, "no separation from the centre and any point on the mandala".

It is also clear from the Sakyong that he wishes the Centre Director, as head of the government at the local level, to chair the governing council, thus holding the responsibility of "integrating the three pillars" which is the role of the government pillar throughout the mandala. Thus, the role of the Centre Director needs also to be seen in the context of the role and composition of the governing council spelled out in the document titled "Steps toward the Kalapa Governance structure at Shambhala Centres".

On two occasions, when asked about whether it would be possible or preferable to apply the same approach with co-directors, the Sakyong was clear that he did not wish to see the co-director model used. He had two principle reasons for this. First, the full leadership role could, in his view, only be held with consistency by a sole director as in virtually all other leadership positions throughout the mandala. Second, a sole director need not "feel alone in their position", the Sakyong said. Rather, "she or he should feel much more supported than in the past, by the strong team of people on the governing council, directly empowered by the centre of the mandala."

A question that sometimes arises is where a centre should devote its resources in employing personnel, if it chooses to do so. This depends to some extent on local conditions and the way in which the centre has decided to implement the Kalapa Governance Structure. Some centres see that the majority of the "hands on work" is at the executive level and thus choose to fund a part-time or full-time administrative officer to handle mailing lists, correspondence and the office work associated with running programs and so on. This can then ensure that the Centre Director and other senior leaders are free to concentrate on their leadership roles in a more limited period of time, which can often be done by people able to offer their leadership on a volunteer basis, often concentrating on the policy-making meetings of the governing council. Some centres may choose to fund a part-time or full time director if that kind of high-level leadership can only be provided by someone who is paid in part or in full for their time.

Naturally there are many centres who have no paid positions at all; and a few who are in a position to fund several positions. In each case, there is still great value in basing any decisions about roles and support structures on the functions laid out in the Kalapa Governance Structure, knowing that this will bring centres increasingly in line with the Sakyong's vision of the governance of the mandala.

If a centre wishes to propose a temporary co-directorship, it should explain to him why their circumstances make this necessary and how they aim to transition to a single

director model. This explanation can be included in the formal nomination sent to the Office of the Kalapa Court through the process described below.

The Centre Director as Chair of the Governing Council

In this role, the Director is responsible for leading meetings of the council. This is done with a view to reaching “broad agreement” as set out in the decision-making principles established by the governing bodies of the mandala. Where it is not possible to find “broad agreement” on any matter, the view of the Director prevails. This is explained in detail in the document: *Steps toward the Kalapa Governance structure at Shambhala Centres*.

As chair of the Governing Council, the Director is responsible for spearheading policies that put into practice the lineage view of Shambhala as a training ground for the development of enlightened society. S/he ensures that the centre’s activities are in accordance with mandala principle and the values inherent in Shambhala Vision.

In playing this role, it is the responsibility of the director to lead the Governing Council and community in developing long-range plans in accordance with the vision of the Sakyong, and making sure that the centre is governed in accordance with the mandala-wide policies. This includes compliance with the laws of the applicable jurisdictions in which the Shambhala Centre functions.

S/he sends nominations for members of the Governing Council to the Kalapa Court for appointment, following consultation with the existing council members.

The Centre Director as chief executive

In this capacity, the Centre Director leads the local Shambhala community and disseminates the vision of the Sakyong. As the chief executive of the Shambhala Centre, s/he propagates the vision and manifestation of Shambhala society, and cultivates a culture of profound kindness and generosity in the community. S/he represents the Shambhala community to the municipality, region and the broader Shambhala mandala.

As chief executive of the centre, the Director is responsible for ensuring that Shambhala Vision radiates throughout all the practices, activities and community life of the centre. Thus s/he fosters a harmonious, sane and compassionate society, leading by example in the practice and study of the Shambhala dharma.

As Chief Executive, the Director is responsible for integrating the work of the three pillars, respecting the diverse lines of command and accountability, so that all the various aspects of the life of the centre function coherently. S/he guides the implementation of the policies, plans and decisions of the centre’s Governing Council in a way that helps bind the community together in all its activities.

This role is then reflected in a number of responsibilities that would also be included in a job description:

The Director works collaboratively with the Director of Practice and Education, (who may frequently be advised by a local shastri and/or acharya) to cultivate the practice and education mandala within the centre. Thus, s/he helps to ensure high

quality program planning consistent with Shambhala vision. The aspiration is to ensure that all individuals, at all stages of the path, are receiving guidance, inspiration and support in their practice and study.

S/he works closely with the senior member of the Dorje Kasung assigned to represent the Pillar of Protection at the local centre to support fully the essential role of the Dorje Kasung and the practice of protector principle in the life of the centre.

S/he is the principal spokesperson of the centre to program participants, other community members, and to residents and officials from the local government and community.

S/he leads and supports the rest of the leadership, staff and volunteers of the centre, is responsible for appointments to positions in the centre (apart from those, such as those within the Dorje Kasung, the Director of Practice and Education, the Chagdzo, the Representative of the Office of Culture and Decorum, and the Representative of the Office of Societal Health and Well-Being, for which there are specific procedures) and establishes and maintains an effective management structure and procedure.

S/he works closely with the Chagdzo (appointed by the Chagdzo Kyi Khyap) and others in the finance sphere to ensure the financial well-being of the centre, and promote fiscal clarity regarding the flow of financial resources, within a view of abundance and generosity. S/he ensures that there is a properly monitored annual budget and that the financial management of the centre is in accordance with the principles and policies set forth by the governing bodies of the mandala.

S/he has particular responsibility for the cultivation of community life at the Shambhala centre. Communication in such a large community is vital, as is continual involvement of the membership in the activities and vision of the center, through community meetings, social gatherings, nyida day celebrations and Shambhala holidays. Community leadership includes cultivation of volunteers as well as developing leaders now and for the future. In fulfilling this responsibility, the Director works closely with other key leaders in the centre including the Representatives of the Office of Culture and Decorum and the Office of Societal Health and Well-being.

S/he supervises those responsible for the maintenance of the Shambhala Center property, and supports the Dorje Kasung in ensuring that the physical structure and sacredness of the environment is well protected.

S/he encourages the community to bring Shambhala Vision into society at large, in whatever ways are appropriate in the local environment. Where possible s/he develops and maintains constructive relationships with governmental, non-governmental, and other spiritual and social service organizations in the surrounding society.

In fulfilling these executive functions, the Director may establish an Executive Committee or other similar team, or groupings, and consult professional or other advisors who can assist or assume delegated responsibilities for specific executive functions under the supervision of the Director.

Relationship to the centre of the mandala

To further strengthen the sense of global alignment, the Director, as head of the Pillar of Government, is responsible for presenting reports and inquiries to the Sakyong and the Kalapa Council on behalf of the centre and providing the Governing Council and community with the views and advice of the Sakyong and Kalapa Council. In this way the Director serves as the principal link between the centre and the higher governing bodies of the mandala.

The Director represents the centre on the Mandala Council, and together with any other representatives of the centre, attends the Shambhala Congress.

Relationship to Kalapa Envoys or regional structures

Wherever there is a Kalapa Envoy or regional governing structure, the Director is the principal link, on behalf of the centre, with the envoy or regional director. The envoy or regional director may act on behalf of the Kalapa Court from time to time to provide direct instructions, supervision or guidance to the Centre Director, and act on behalf of the court in ensuring regular assessment of the work of the Director and Shambhala Centre.

The Director is responsible for fostering strong, collaborative relationships with other centres, groups and entities in the region. In order to ensure maximum cohesion of the different aspects of the mandala, s/he works closely with the Kalapa Envoy or Regional Director (where these are in place) on matters that include visits of important teachers and other dignitaries, major financial initiatives, the planning of large-scale, major programs or other initiatives to be hosted by the centre or held in the region.

Skills and abilities

It is important that the Centre Director have a dedicated and regular personal practice, as well as commitment to community practice. S/he will be called upon to manifest the inseparability of the openness and gentleness of the mother lineage and the fearlessness and skillful means of the father lineage.

In considering possible people to nominate or consideration as Centre Director, it is important to remember that not everyone (in fact, almost no one!) has all the skills and abilities listed below. Listing them and considering them is helpful for three reasons:

1. It is extremely helpful to potential candidates to have a clear idea of what is involved in being a Centre Director, and to see that these skills and abilities will be cultivated and honed by playing this role.
2. It is very helpful for the Governing Council to discuss what relative importance to assign to these skills when looking for a new director. These priorities will change as the centre develops. If the centre is going through a

period of growth or facing local challenges, some skills and abilities will seem more important in leading the community.

3. It is important for the Governing Council, in considering possible candidates, to see which skills and abilities the applicants already have, and which need to be cultivated through planned training and mentoring. This reminds everyone that we are all on a path of personal development and that the goal is to support everyone in their personal growth.

Applicants will benefit from having:

- an understanding of what it means to act in accordance with the principles of Shambhala governance and, in particular, undertake the practice of the Six Ways of Ruling
- a minimum of four years' experience as a practitioner on the Shambhala path, have attended Shambhala programs such as Warriors Assembly, and if possible, Vajrayana Seminary and the Rigden Abhisheka (or be committed to that) and be familiar with the cultural forms held in the Shambhala tradition
- the ability to translate Shambhala vision into actions and practices that support the workings of the Governance Council and community
- a strong background in leadership, including excellent group work and decision-making skills, well-developed interpersonal skills with a demonstrated ability to work with conflict in ways that inspire others
- the ability to motivate others, seek and welcome their suggestions and advice, work well with diverse team members and make decisions that take into account the wealth of other's views and experience, while remaining true to the lineage vision and governance of the mandala as a whole.
- high quality written and spoken communication skills, including the ability to use electronic media effectively
- the capacity to lead and manage projects, organize people, events and programs
- the ability to set goals, establish priorities and achieve outcomes within a designated timeframe
- a background in working with finances and adhering to budgets (this includes the ability to read and understand financial statements, and to use them in planning and making decisions for community and programming needs)
- experience with any aspects of publicity, marketing, fund-raising and development (optional but preferred)

Availability

- Flexible work hours

- Requires both daytime and evening participation
- Participate in teachings and gatherings specific to governance as path.
- Requires travel to events, regional centre or activities (where appropriate) and to international meetings such as the Shambhala Congress and Mandala Council meetings.
- Requires attendance of special occasions when appropriate (teacher visits, ceremonies, teacher greetings etc.)

Salary and benefits

It is good to be clear about these in a letter of appointment. These should be very clearly articulated and included in the letter of agreement, according what the centre is able to offer the director. Benefits may include a stipend, honorarium or salary and/or various benefits, such as

- Free or financially supported participation in programs at the Centre and within the region. Any stipulation of support around attendance at regional or land centre programs should be agreed in advance with the regional leadership and/or land centre in advance of being included in the letter of agreement.
- Support for attendance at programs and practice periods (including retreat).
- Financial assistance in paying for travel expenses to Mandala Council meetings, Shambhala Governance or Leadership gatherings or training, or other programs mandated or recommended for centre directors to attend.

Assessment

We are now encouraging regular processes of assessment to assist Directors and Governing Councils in establishing goals and getting a range of responses to their performance. The process can be established locally through consultation with the Director, Governing Council and the Kalapa Envoy or Regional Director (where these exist).

Term Limit

The initial contract is for three years with the possibility of extension for one term by mutual agreement.