



**Squeakland Inc.**

[www.squeakland.org](http://www.squeakland.org)

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## Squeakland People

### Criteria

In assembling a team to help birth Squeakland, we need to balance a few criteria. First, *the team should represent the worldwide Etoys community.* Specifically, this means the *regions* and *languages* with the most Etoys activity. I'd like to see representation for six languages, particularly: English, German, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish, and French. Group communication will be conducted primarily in English, at least to start.

Second, *the team should equally represent the business, education, and software mindsets.* Roughly a third of us need to be thinking "how can we make money?", a third of us need to ask "how does this help teachers?," while a third ponders "what's the best software solution?" While many will have skills in more than one area, each of us will have a "dominant hat" we can wear to better represent a point of view to the group.

Last, *the core team should all like each other.* While friendship is often thought of as unnecessary in business, with what we're trying to do, I think enthusiasm begets enthusiasm. We should want to keep talking to each other after the Squeakland talk is through. We should look forward to our talks, not tolerate them.

### Officers

Ultimately Squeakland will have at least three salaried positions, each representing one of the mindsets: *executive director, education director, and software director.* To keep things simple, these positions will double for corporate officer positions. The executive

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director will be the corporate president. The education director will be the corporate vice president and treasurer. The software director will be the corporate secretary. Someday we may hire an administrative assistant, in which case that person can take on the role of secretary and the software director becomes vice president. The corporate roles are largely ceremonial, with certain legal exceptions such as that for secretary. We will use our director titles publicly and our corporate titles on legal documentation. There will be no "chief whatever officers" unless they're lighthearted and fun.

Rita Freudenberg will serve as the first education director. For most of 2009, Tim Falconer will serve as both executive director and software director. Before October, we'll bring on a new software director, probably whomever emerges as most qualified from the new team of software volunteers. Our goal is to raise enough funds to pay the salaries of these three positions starting October 1st.

Should funds fall short, the priority will be education director first, then executive director, then software director. If we don't have enough money, the education director will do all three jobs. If we don't have enough money for the education director, Squeakland stops happening. While we can likely continue as a volunteer-only organization, we shouldn't rely on this. As someone I know once put it, "Unless someone wakes every day with your mission in mind, nothing will happen." Also, the threat of shutting down is a powerful incentive to finding money.

The officers are responsible for the day-to-day business of Squeakland, dividing tasks between them as appropriate and speaking together regularly to discuss all aspects of the organization. The officers should seek consensus in their decision making. Should there be disagreement or concern over controversy, officers should table the topic until the next board meeting when it can be brought up to the larger group. Should the need be more immediate, the officers should email the board, asking for advice. A simple majority of responders should be sufficient for most purposes unless law dictates otherwise, in which case a vote must wait until a full meeting of the board.

## **Board of Directors**

To keep things simple, Squeakland will have nine members on its board of directors, with three from each of the "mindsets" listed above. Initially, these will include the three directors listed above, along with six others. Board members will vote on any topics that are legally required, such as electing officers and deciding whether Squeakland takes on loans. The board will vote on Squeakland's annual budget, within which the officers must operate throughout the year, along with any changes to the budget. The board will also vote on topics that may prove controversial to the larger community, such as whether to take on particular corporate sponsors or sizable contributions. The board will also decide on which top-level features and improvements to prioritize for a given Etoys release, choosing from a broad list submitted by the three officers.

Board meetings will occur through some sort of real-time Internet conferencing tool such as Qwaq, Skype, or IRC. All board meetings will be recorded and made available to board members. Meetings will likely be held quarterly to keep everyone connected.

## **Committees**

Each "mindset" will have its own committee of volunteers, led by the appropriate director. The executive director will manage a team of "evangelists" ... people who find funds, attend conferences, publicize successes, and make phone calls to communicate our message. The education director will manage a team of "ambassadors" ... people who represent Etoys in their local region, encourage content creation, and promote training workshops. The software director will manage a team of "coders" ... people who design and develop new features and improvements, while providing technical support to the community. These committees can meet as frequently as the given director sees fit, depending on the amount of work needed at a given time.

Membership in a committee is at the discretion of the director, though additions and removals should be brought up with the other directors to achieve consensus.

## **Advisory Panel**

Advisors are people we put on our website for publicity purposes, to impress outsiders and to craft an indirect sense of our mission from their accomplishments. The advisory panel will have no required responsibilities other than giving us permission to use their photo and biography blurb. They will be included in general mailings so that they have the opportunity to advise us, though usually individual opinions will not be actively sought unless they are particularly relevant to their field of endeavor.

While largely ceremonial, being on the advisory panel should still be considered a position of honor. Changes should be voted on by the board of directors.

## **Community**

The larger Squeakland community will manifest itself in three explicit ways. First, participation in the Squeakland forums. People will be able to sign up for an account on the website and discuss Etoys and Squeakland directly. Second, as contributors of projects to our showcase. Such projects will be categorized and ranked by the officers. Third, as "friends" of Squeakland in the many social networking sites such as Facebook, YouTube, and MySpace. Fourth, as writers for our newsletter and blog. The officers will invite members of the community to write of their experiences on a regular basis. By encouraging the larger community in this way, we'll be better able to recruit future committee members and keep a healthy interest in Etoys alive throughout the world.