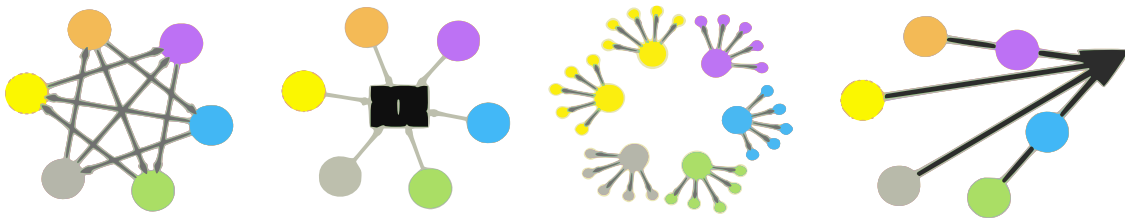


Data Commons Cooperative



Election 2014

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Section 1

About the election

On June 20th 2014 the co-op will be electing its board of directors. The voting mechanism will be posted prominently on <http://datacommons.coop>, and emailed in advance to all members.

As always, this election is an important step in the formation of the Data Commons Co-op. Since its incorporation in July 2012, the co-op has been bootstrapping itself into a properly member-controlled form. Following the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the initial members of the co-op were seven individuals¹ living in that state. They elected an initial board of directors drawn from the steering committee of the Data Commons Project, an informal precursor to the co-op, and then withdrew. Next, the board proceeded to accept members along the lines envisaged in the co-op's bylaws, of all organizational types (not limited to individuals). Once a broad enough membership was in place, the board took steps to put that membership firmly in charge of the co-op as follows:

- ▷ A vote was scheduled for electing directors (for June 14th 2013).
- ▷ All existing directors agreed to yield their seats.
- ▷ All members of the co-op were given the opportunity to nominate up to two individuals to run for election.

Following the 2013 elections and in accordance with the rules established by our bylaws, it is time for this year's elections. Two board members are rotating off, Jim Johnson and Paul Fitzpatrick, while five others are staying on. Two new candidates have stepped forward for 2014. The names and biographies of all candidates are given in Section 3. Some considerations when voting:

- ▷ You will be asked, for each candidate, whether you wish that candidate to serve on the board or not. You can answer positively for as many or as few candidates as you wish.
- ▷ Our bylaws require the co-op to have no fewer than 5 directors (see [Article VI Section 1](#)).

¹Micha Josephy (of the [Cooperative Fund of New England](#)), Andrew Danforth (of the [Cooperative Development Institute](#)), Kathleen Fekete Bauerlein (likewise), Jeremiah Ward (likewise), Brian Van Slyke (of [Cultivate.Coop](#) and [TESA](#)), Ben Mauer (of [Quilted](#)), and Steve Backman (of [Database Designs](#)). Thank you all!

Section 2

The importance of your vote

Before you even vote, you have shaped the pool of candidates who have stepped forward. The Data Commons Co-op is in the happy position of having savvy, politically-engaged organizations as its members, so it would be unreasonable for a candidate who couldn't stand up to their scrutiny to put themselves forward.

When you vote, you act as a safeguard on the co-op's values and direction. The safeguard lies both in the vote you cast, and the signal you send when you take the time to scrutinize the candidates.

The co-op as conceived by its founders has a broad vision of an "ethical" economy, so broad that it will inevitably include contradictory forces and radical differences of priorities. Again, your vote helps draw the line here. We hope that members will be broad-minded but vigilant when considering candidates representing parts of the economy outside of their main interest.

Section 3

The candidates

This year there are two candidates running for the board, and two seats available. They are:

- Noémi Giszpenc
- Mira Luna

3.1 Noémi Giszpenc

Noémi Giszpenc is the Executive Director of the Cooperative Development Institute. She began her career as an economics researcher at the World Bank, worked as an editor at the Nonprofit Quarterly, a magazine for nonprofit managers, and became a principal at Ownership Associates, Inc., a consulting firm in Cambridge, MA specializing in developing an ownership culture at employee-owned firms. As part of earning a Master's in Community Economic Development from Southern New Hampshire University, she did a thesis on the creation of a cooperative economy in the Northeast, including the practical development of an interactive cooperative directory, which was one of the precursors of the Data Commons Cooperative. She has served on the Operations Team of the Data Commons for several years and helped host two Data Commons retreats at her home in NJ.

Nominated by: Self-nominated, CDI

Current role in co-op: Operations Team member

Disclosures: Noémi is married to Paul Fitzpatrick, outgoing board member.

3.2 Mira Luna

Mira Luna is the Organizing Director of the international Sharing Cities Network, a project of Shareable. She is a long time social and environmental justice activist, journalist and community organizer working to develop a grassroots, cooperative economy. She founded and coordinated Bay Area Community Exchange (a collectively run, regional, open source timebank) the San Francisco Really Really Free Market and JASecon (a regional solidarity economy network), and has served on the boards of the Board of the San Francisco Community Land Trust (affordable coop housing) and the US Solidarity Economy Network (current). She coordinated several keystone local events: the Bay Area Participatory Budgeting Tour (which led to the start of several PB projects in the Bay

Area), the first Homestead Skillshare Festival in San Francisco, the Festival of Grassroots Economics in Oakland and two training workshops for the Network of Bay Area Worker Cooperatives. She was program coordinator and adjunct faculty for New College's Activism and Social Change program after graduating from its Culture, Ecology and Sustainable Community program with an emphasis in Activism and Social Change. She also completed a BA in Environmental Studies from the University of Oregon and programs in Permaculture and Ecological Agriculture. In a previous life, Mira successfully fought a national nuclear waste dump in West Texas as a state legislative analyst and helped pass legislation in San Francisco to implement the Precautionary Principle and Sweatfree purchasing, as well as working with community gardening organizations in CA and Mexico. She now believes change starts in your community and grows from the bottom up, in collaboration.

Nominated by: Self-nominated, Shareable