

Accountability Team

The idea for an Accountability Team comes from a recommendation in **Widening the Circle of Concern: Report of the UUA Commission on Institutional Change**:

The UUA should establish an ongoing independent body to identify systemic changes and monitor accountability on work toward equity, inclusion, and diversity. This body should be based on representatives of groups of oppressed people and should have direct representation on the Association Board.

Beginning in June 2020, the UUA Board appointed a design team to craft a charter and structure to fit the recommendation. After years of work by committed people, it became apparent that this body could not be created as described. It was also clear that the Board's accountability cannot be outsourced to an independent body.

The UUA Board has reconsidered the question of accountability, focusing on questions like:

- To whom is the Board accountable?
- What could help us be more accountable?
- How could an independent accountability team be most helpful to us?

The UUA Board is accountable to:

- Our member congregations and those who elected us to serve
- Our spiritual ancestors and descendants
- Our inherited theological tradition
- The threads of decisions made in the past, actions of the General Assembly, actions of the UUA Board, and agreements made between the Board and others
- Our values
- People on the margins and those who struggle to be in our faith
- The gift of being in this faith
- The future of Unitarian Universalism

The UUA Board is made more accountable with:

- Building accountability into our plans, including accountability checkpoints
- Mindfulness around who is impacted by our decisions
- Process observers
- Taking time to hear from people and groups that our not regularly "in the room"

Accountability depends on relationship, and the Board needs a group to be an accountability partner to them. With this understanding of accountability, the UUA Board establishes an Accountability Team (AT).

The AT shall consist of 5-6 members appointed by the UUA Board of Trustees.

Members will serve 2-year terms and may be re-appointed to serve a total of 3 terms or 6 years.

Appointments will be staggered so that every year, 2-3 members are appointed.

The AT shall identify a primary contact to serve as a point of connection ,coordinating with UUA staff and the UUA Board liaison(s).

In consultation with the UUA staff and UUA Board, the AT will select areas for engagement such as but not limited to Governance, Widening the Pathway to Ministry, General Assembly, and Regionalization.

Within the chosen areas of engagement, the AT members are empowered to do the following:

- Participating as thought partners and advisors, paying attention to equity issues, raising questions in real time, and making recommendations
- Operating like internal consultants or process observers, specifically tasked with helping organizations and processes stay consistent with UUA Shared Values and Covenant.
- Work relationally with the Board to offer observations and recommendations
- Generate questions and talk to stakeholders to get perspectives or expertise

The AT members will not do the following:

- Hold accountability for the whole faith
- Work that overlaps with the Commission on Appraisal
- Serve as external auditors, reviewing data and reports, and issuing opinions.
- Work directly with congregations

The initial area of engagement for the AT will be UUA Governance. The AT will have access to all meetings and reports, including public and closed sessions.