Resource #6

# Increasing participation of people with disability on boards and committees

This resource provides advice on attracting people with disability to boards and committees.

Research suggests that less than one percent of people serving on public entity boards or committees identify as having a disability.¹ People with disability have valuable, first-hand knowledge and experience that could assist in making services, organisations, and communities accessible to everyone.

## Increasing diversity on boards and committees

A diversity of representation on boards and committees ensures Queensland does not miss out on the wealth of experience, knowledge, and innovative ideas that people with disability can contribute across the broad range of leadership and civic participation opportunities.

People with disability who serve on Queensland boards and committees can strengthen ideas put forward by bringing the board or committee closer to accurately representing the Queensland community.

Here are some suggestions for increasing the number of people with disability on boards and committees:

* In any advertising material for your board or committee, include statements about your commitment to reflecting the diversity of the community. This statement could include that various applications are welcome, including those from women; Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people; people of all ages; people with disability; people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender-diverse and intersex people.
* When advertising the position online, ensure the advertisement is available in accessible formats, such as Word or RTF in addition to PDF versions, so people using text to-audio software (also known as screen reader software) can access it.
* Use a variety of recruitment methods to be inclusive of people with disability, including the option to provide an application in an audio format rather than a written format.
* Ask the person with disability what they need to participate on your board or committee. Many adjustments are simple and inexpensive to make.
* Encourage your board to become disability aware. Awareness promotes internal support for people with disability to participate in the activities of the board or committee. Online awareness training is available at [www.disabilityawareness.com.au](http://www.disabilityawareness.com.au)
* Consider organisational membership with the Australian Network on Disability (AND) and adopt their Employment Charter for the Employment of People with Disability. AND is a not-for-profit organisation resourced by its members to advance the inclusion of people with disability in all aspects of business. AND helps its members and clients to welcome people with disability as employees, customers, and suppliers. For more info, visit: [www.and.org.au](http://www.and.org.au)

For a toolkit guide on how to increase diversity and inclusion on Queensland Government boards and other bodies visit:
<https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/resources/dcsyw/multicultural-affairs/policy-governance/diversity-inclusion-toolkit.pdf>

### Queensland register of nominees to government bodies

The Queensland Government has a register of nominees for a range of government boards and committees. All Queenslanders can join the register. While being on the register does not guarantee an appointment, it provides a way for the government to ensure diversity in the memberships of its boards and committees. For more information and to join the register visit: [www.qld.gov.au/about/join-a-board](http://www.qld.gov.au/about/join-a-board)

## Reference

1. State Government of Victoria (2019). Becoming a board director: <https://getonboard.vic.gov.au/becoming-a-director/>

## For further information

For more information and resources, visit: [www.qld.gov.au/qld-disability-plan](http://www.qld.gov.au/qld-disability-plan)

**Resources in this series include:**

1. Creating inclusive and accessible events
2. Accessible and inclusive communication
3. Employing people with disability
4. Increasing disability awareness
5. Disability action plans and legislation
6. Increasing participation of people with disability on boards and committees
7. Accessible places and spaces