

# Increasing participation of people with disability on boards and committees

## Refer to this resource:

- ▶ when seeking to attract people with disability to boards and committees.

Research suggests that less than one per cent of people serving on public entity boards or committees identify as having a disability<sup>1</sup>. People with disability bring knowledge and experience about how to make 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 add strength to ideas put forward and bring 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, include statements about your commitment to ensuring boards and committees reflect the diversity of the community. This statement could include that you welcome applications 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 and gender diverse, and intersex people.
- ▶ When advertising the board 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. This will assist in supporting 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. Visit: [www.and.org.au](http://www.and.org.au)

## 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, including people with disability. 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

*All Abilities Queensland: Opportunities for all*, is the state disability plan for a welcoming and inclusive Queensland. A state where people with disability are respected for their abilities and have equal access to opportunities and to contribute and participate in all that Queensland has to offer.

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

### 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