

Organisational Action Plan Template – Inclusive Governance

The following template can be used as a guide to help your organisation move towards a more inclusive governance model.

The ‘Principles of Inclusive Governance’ were drawn from the themes identified in the Inclusive Governance Research Project. The Principles and relevant research findings are used as a framework for developing an action plan.

As each organisation is unique, any planning requires a broad understanding of the organisation and its current constitution, policies and procedures. It is recommended that this task be carried out as a group activity – include Board members, senior management staff and stakeholder representatives.

This template encourages participants to consider current practices, identify gaps or barriers, and plan specific actions to increase inclusion in the decision-making and governance of the organisation.

Steps to take


- 1** Start the conversation about Inclusive Governance between Board, staff and key stakeholders. Include people with disability who are involved or interested in your organisation.
- 2** Set aside time to go through the template. This can be done in different ways, possibilities include a day-long workshop, 2 half-days, or even 5 weekly meetings focussing on one principle per meeting.
- 3** Think about the questions, identify current practice, consider gaps and barriers and what could be done to overcome these. Identify agreed actions, assign a person/s responsible, with a clear timeframe.
- 4** Revisit regularly, add to agenda of Board and relevant staff meetings until actions are completed.
- 5** Evaluate on a regular basis, at least annually.

Principles of Inclusive Governance


Effective inclusive governance requires an organisational-wide approach to inclusion of people with intellectual disability. This means that people with intellectual disability are involved in many different roles through-out the organisation. Some examples of roles include as members of the organisation, organisational representatives at events, co-designers of programs, co-presenters of information sessions, members of advisory groups or committees and reviewers of services.

	<p>1. Inclusion of people with intellectual disability in the decision-making and governance of community organisations is valued.</p>
	<p>2. There are clear pathways to Board membership for people with intellectual disability.</p>
	<p>3. Board meetings and activities are accessible, meeting the inclusion needs of people with intellectual disability.</p>
	<p>4. Individualised, skilled support is provided.</p>
	<p>5. There is a commitment to making inclusive governance work.</p>


Inclusive Governance – Action Plan Template

<p>Principle 1 of Inclusive Governance</p>	 <p>Inclusion of people with intellectual disability in the decision-making and governance of community organisations is valued.</p>
<p>Relevant research findings</p>	<p>Inclusion at a governance level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - allows lived experience to be heard and considered - provides increased understanding of intellectual disability - is accompanied by a cultural shift towards inclusion throughout the organisation - provides a positive example of people with intellectual disability as contributors to their community
<p>Questions to consider</p>	<p>How do we show that we value the perspective and views of people with intellectual disability? How can we better recognise lived experience as a source of information and knowledge? How could the inclusivity of the Board be communicated to the rest of the organisation? How could the involvement of people with intellectual disability in your organisation help promote a positive view of disability in the community?</p>
<p>Current situation – what do we already do?</p>	

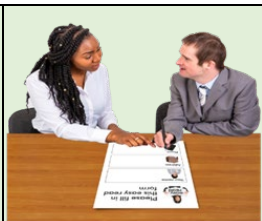
Options to consider (brainstorm)	
Agreed actions	
Person/s responsible and timeframe	

<p>Principle 2 of Inclusive Governance</p>	<p>There are clear pathways to Board membership for people with intellectual disability.</p> 
<p>Relevant research findings</p>	<p>Pathways to Board membership are supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an inclusive culture throughout the organisation - opportunities to be involved in, and learn about, the organisation in different ways (as members, co-designers, in advisory groups, as a committee member etc) - being able to access training, and other skill development opportunities (such as meeting skills, decision-making skills, governance, observation of Boards in action) - board recruitment and election strategies that support the involvement of people with intellectual disability
<p>Questions to consider</p>	<p>Is our culture inclusive? How is this demonstrated?</p> <p>How do we hear the views and experiences of people with intellectual disability?</p> <p>How can people with intellectual disability be more involved in this organisation and have a say in the decisions being made? (not just in a Board role but throughout the organisation, think about options such as active association members, organisational representatives at events, co-designers of programs, co-presenters of information sessions, members of advisory groups or committees, service reviewer or auditor...etc)</p> <p>Do we offer opportunities/activities for people with intellectual disability to develop skills related to Board membership e.g. meetings skills?</p> <p>What opportunities do we give people with intellectual disability to explore a governance role?</p> <p>How do we recruit new Board members? Are people with disability included? Is our election process accessible?</p>


Current situation – what do we already do?	
Options to consider (brainstorm)	
Agreed actions	
Person/s responsible and timeframe	

<p>Principle 3 of Inclusive Governance</p>	 <p>Board meetings and activities are accessible, meeting the inclusion needs of people with intellectual disability</p>
<p>Relevant research findings</p>	<p>Inclusion is impacted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board culture - Board structure - Communication practices - Meeting processes - Decision-making processes
<p>Questions to consider</p>	<p>How is a commitment to inclusion shown within Board culture and activities? How do we know that all Board members are feeling included?</p> <p>Does our Board structure support inclusion? Think about size, number of people with disability, Board terms, use of sub-committee etc.</p> <p>How does the Board communicate? Are these practices accessible for all Board members? Are our reports in plain English? What training or support is given to ensure Board members can use our technology?</p> <p>Think about your meetings – length, location, time of day, content and pace? How could these be more accessible and inclusive?</p> <p>What is the decision-making process in Board meetings? Do we encourage, and give time, for each Board member to express their views?</p> <p>Think about other organisational activities – are these accessible to people with intellectual disability?</p>

Current situation – what do we already do?	
Options to consider (brainstorm)	
Agreed actions	
Person/s responsible and timeframe	

<p>Principle 4 of Inclusive Governance</p>	 <p>Individualised, skilled support is provided.</p>
<p>Relevant research findings</p>	<p>Board support works best when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - individualised planning is undertaken through identification of support needs - the complexity of the support role is recognised, and a trusted, and independent relationship is developed - the support person is skilled in supporting decision-making without influence - support is provided before, during and between meetings
<p>Questions to consider</p>	<p>How will we identify the individual support needs of Board members?</p> <p>What do we understand is the role of a Board support person? How could a positive relationship be developed?</p> <p>What skills should we look for in a Board support person? How will training be provided?</p> <p>How is support organised and resourced?</p>
<p>Current situation – what do we already do?</p>	

Options to consider (brainstorm)	
Agreed actions	
Person/s responsible and timeframe	

<p>Principle 5 of Inclusive Governance</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">There is a commitment to making inclusive governance work</p> 
<p>Relevant research findings</p>	<p>Concerns may become barriers to inclusion. Concerns need to be discussed openly and solutions to barriers identified.</p> <p>Concerns may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the complexity of the Board role - fear of potential liability - challenge of meeting support needs - conflict of interest - current Board culture - fear of tokenism
<p>Questions to consider</p>	<p>Have you ever talked about inclusive Governance? Who has been involved in these discussions?</p> <p>Do we practice good governance? How is this demonstrated?</p> <p>How do we ensure an appropriate skill mix? Do we access expert advice as needed?</p> <p>What training is given to Board members?</p> <p>What processes support the governance activities of the Board (e.g., sub-committees, expert advisors)</p> <p>How will we provide the support and resources required for inclusive governance?</p> <p>What are some signs of effective support?</p>

	<p>How can we monitor the effectiveness of the support we provide? How do we manage real or perceived conflicts of interest?</p> <p>What is the current commitment to inclusion from Board members? Are they open to the changes required to make inclusive governance work?</p> <p>What are the signs of tokenistic inclusion that we should be looking for?</p>
<p>Current situation – what do we already do?</p>	
<p>Options to consider (brainstorm)</p>	
<p>Agreed actions</p>	
<p>Person/s responsible and timeframe</p>	