



Inclusive Governance Project

Easy Read Report



This report tells you about the **Inclusive Governance** Project. It tells you what the project is about, what it has done, and what it found out.



For this project, Inclusive Governance means that people with intellectual disability are included in the decision-making of community organisations. This might be by becoming a **Board** member.



A Board is a group of people who make important decisions about the way an organisation works.



The Inclusive Governance Project was run by Side By Side Advocacy.



The project was funded by the Australian government.



We wanted to understand what it is like to be a Board member and have an intellectual disability.



We wanted to know how to support people with intellectual disability to be included on Boards.

What did we do?



We did some research.



We interviewed 27 people

- Some were Board members with intellectual or other disability
- Some were Board members without disability
- Some were senior managers
- Some were Board support people.



We asked them about their experience and what helped to include people with intellectual disability on a Board.



We thought about what they told us.

What did we learn?



5 themes came from the research.

Themes are main ideas.



We can use these themes to help organisations include people with intellectual disability on Boards.



Theme 1 – Impact of inclusion in governance

This theme is about what happens when people with intellectual disability are included on Boards.



When people with intellectual disability are on Boards

- they feel good



- organisations hear their voice



- the community sees what people with intellectual disability can do.



Theme 2 - Pathways to Board membership

This theme is about learning the skills and having experiences that help you to be a good Board member.



To become a good Board member, people need to learn

- the role and responsibilities of being a Board member
- how to speak up
- how to make decisions for organisations.



You can learn skills and be involved in the decisions organisations make by

- becoming a member of an organisation
- taking part in co-designing groups
- joining advisory committees
- joining Board sub-committees.





Theme 3 – Experiences impacting inclusion within boards

This theme is about things that help people with intellectual disability feel included on a Board.

Boards need to make their meetings and other activities accessible for people with intellectual disability.



This means that

- information is given in a way you understand



- meetings are held in a place and at a time that you can get to



- there is enough time during the meeting for you to speak and ask questions



- you understand how decisions are being made



- the Board is supportive, respectful, and encouraging.



Theme 4: Support provision

This theme is about how people with intellectual disability can be supported on a Board.



Support

You can have a person to help you.



They should give you the support that you need.



The person who supports you should be trained to know how to support you in a Board role.

This person should help you



- prepare before meetings by going through each report so you understand the information and any decisions that you need to make



- during meetings to keep up with the meeting, and make sure people listen to you



- keep in contact between meetings and making sure you know any new information or changes.

Theme 5 - Concerns become barriers to inclusion

This theme is about the worries some people have about including people with intellectual disability as Board members.



These worries can stop people being included.



Some people were worried that their organisation did not know how to include and support people with intellectual disability on their Board.



Some people were worried that people with intellectual disability did not have the skills to be good Board members.



We need to work out ways to overcome these worries so that they do not stop people with intellectual disability being included on Boards.

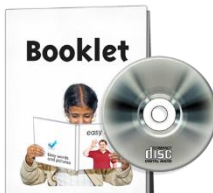
How did we share what we learnt?



We wrote about our research.



We went to **conferences** and told people about our findings. Conferences are where lots of people get together to talk about issues.



We made **resources**. Resources help people to understand the information and findings from the project. Some of these resources are videos.



The resources were made together with people with intellectual disability as co-designers.



These resources, videos, and other information are on the Side By Side Advocacy website:

www.sidebysideadvocacy.org.au/inclusive-governance



For more information, call Side By Side Advocacy on 98085500.