

[00:00:00] Welcome to the Inclusive Governance Podcast. I'm Dr. Bernadette Currier. I've been leading a research project exploring the inclusion of people with intellectual disability in decision-making. In our previous two episodes, we discussed the importance of inclusive governance, the research that we did, and the principles of inclusive governance that we developed.

In this episode, we'll talk about what people with disability need to think about if they would like to become involved in the decision-making and governance of an organization. Our guests today are going to share their insights as board members with lived experience of intellectual disability. And I'm joined again by Katrina Sneath, our co-researcher on this project.

Hi, everyone. Katrina, as a person with lived experience of intellectual disability, do you have any advice for anyone who's thinking about getting involved in an organization at a governance level? [00:01:00] Yes. I would like people to remember, you have a valuable contribution to make. There are skills and experiences that will help you in governance roles.

You can ask for meetings to be run in an accessible way, and to get information in a way that you understand. You can get support in these roles. Being involved in governance is important work, and it needs you to make a commitment to do what you have agreed to do. Thanks, Katrina. We're lucky to have Sua Chan joining us today.

Sua has lived experience with disability and is going to tell us about her experience of being involved in governance. Hello, Sua. Hello, everyone. Sua, can you [00:02:00] tell me a little bit about yourself? I'm a person with intellectual disability. I come from Hong Kong when I was 13 years old. I went to Laurence Hargrave Special School to learn living skills, maths, reading, and writing.

I have studied at TAFE, I have work experience, and I have worked at Multicultural Disability Advocates Association for last 20 years as admin assistant. I enjoy live in Australia. Wow, that's a lot of things you've done there, Sua. When did you first become involved in governance? When I first become involved in government, I become interested in Intellectual Disability Council for many years ago.

I first become an ordinary member, then I become involved in the Speak Out ReachOut program. After a while, I was elected to the board. I have been [00:03:00] a board member for many years. Okay, so while you've been on the

board of CID, Sua, what roles have you held? I have been an ordinary board member. I was also the chairperson for a couple of terms.

As chairperson, I make sure reports are sent out on time. I make sure we have a quorum. I make sure everyone understand the reports and everyone gets a chance to speak. If the topic is one where people have different views, I make sure everyone has a chance to have their say. At other time, I had meetings at New South Wales Parliament and New South Wales Health.

I also spoke at New South Wales University. I'm still on the board as an ordinary member. I like being on the CID board. [00:04:00] Well, that's certainly a lot of responsibility there, Suaa. What has helped you, um, in your role on the board? Uh, it helped me... I feel included at Intellectual Disability Council as a person with intellectual disability.

Intellectual Disability Council has a board participation officer. She explains to me what I need to do, why we are meeting, and helps me prepare the meetings notes. Each meeting we talk about different topics, so we go through the minutes and reports together. Mm-hmm. She ask me if I understood the reports.

She make it clear what I had to talk about. I could ask her questions. In between meetings, we talked about what happened during the meeting and what things we need to do. If [00:05:00] new things come up, she help me to understand. She help me practice my presentation and meeting skill so I could communicate well.

That's great, Suaa. Do you have any message for people who- with disability who might be thinking about becoming a board member? Be confident. Speak up. If you don't understand, ask questions, ask for help, read the reports and other papers so you are prepared. Being on a board is fun. You learn a lot about how to be a board member, how to be a chairperson.

It helps you to not be nervous. Thanks, Suaa. It's very interesting to hear about your experience of, of being on a board and what it was like for you. If you have found our Inclusive Governance podcast interesting, please visit the Side by Side Advocacy website and look at the section about the Inclusive Governance [00:06:00] Project.

There are videos and easy-read information to help you learn more. The website is www.sidebysideadvocacy.org.au/inclusive-governance.

If you have any questions or need help to access this information, please call the Side by Side Advocacy office on 0298085500.

In our next episode, we will be discussing what organizations need to do to be more inclusive, and we've linked more information about our research project in the show notes. Thank you to Katrina and Suwa for joining me today. Our conversation was recorded on the land of the Burramattagal Clan of the Darug Nation.

We pay our respect to elders past and present. The research project was funded by the National Disability Insurance Agency and the Commonwealth [00:07:00] Department of Social Services. The Inclusive Governance Podcast is produced by Dani Stewart. I'm Bernadette Currier. Thanks for listening