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# Position Description - National Policy Council Representative (voluntary)

## About BCA

Blind Citizens Australia (BCA) is the national representative organisation of people who are blind or vision impaired in Australia. Our purpose is to inform, connect and empower people who are blind or vision impaired and the wider community. BCA is governed by a board of directors and a Constitution.

## About the National Policy Council (NPC)

BCA's Constitution requires the board to maintain a committee to guide BCA's public policy work. This is called the National Policy Council (NPC).

BCA's work is directed by our Strategic Plan 2022-25. Goal 1 states:

“BCA will continue to deliver quality targeted individual and systemic advocacy and campaigns, including advocating for services that meet our needs, based on consultation with our diverse community, data and research."

BCA's public policies, developed by the NPC, clarify how the needs, rights and expectations of people who are blind or vision impaired can be met.

The NPC is an internal advisory body to the board, responsible for developing and reviewing BCA's public policies. Issues are referred to the NPC by the board or the Chief Executive Officer. NPC members can suggest issues to the board for the NPC's attention. The NPC then researches, investigates, consults broadly, and develops and agrees policies. Policies are written by BCA staff and approved by the board. Policies are then launched to BCA members and other relevant parties. NPC members do not represent BCA externally.

The NPC is made up of up to three directors, including the chair, and ideally, one representative from each State and the ACT. Members from any State or Territory can also be appointed to the NPC, to represent the diversity of BCA’s membership. State and ACT representatives are selected by expression of interest from full BCA members of each State and the ACT every two years, with positions in half the states becoming vacant one year and members in the other states and the ACT in the next year. Terms are for two years.

## About You

As a member of the NPC, you are motivated to work with the board, staff and members of BCA to develop policy that will benefit of people who are blind or vision impaired. You have a strong commitment to BCA's vision, purpose and values of transparency; empathy, compassion and kindness; diversity and inclusion; continuous learning, ingenuity and innovation; collaboration and teamwork. As a member of the NPC, you will be required to comply with BCA's Constitution and by-laws, Code of Conduct, policies and procedures. You will work with us to implement our Strategic Plan 2022-25.

You are interested in policy and in bringing about systemic change to improve the world for people who are blind or vision impaired. You are comfortable using email lists, reading electronic documents and meeting virtually.

## What you need to know

The NPC meets virtually every two months. Between meetings, work is carried on via an email list and occasional additional meetings, with input required to drafts and discussions, so that the work can continue efficiently. You are also expected to explore the opinions of your local members and stakeholders and other people who are blind or vision impaired by attending BCA events, meetings and forums, discussion groups and direct consultation.

This is a voluntary position.

## Duties of NPC members

NPC members are required to:

* Lead the development, monitoring and implementation of BCA's Public Policies.
* Attend and actively participate in at least 80% of all NPC meetings, held virtually.
* Read, become familiar with and respond to electronic communications and documents relating to the NPC's work on a regular and timely basis.
* Complete and report on assigned tasks within agreed timeframes, including through sub-committees.
* Actively participate in BCA's activities and events, nationally and in their home State or Territory.
* Develop and use mechanisms to keep themselves informed about the issues that matter to people who are blind or vision impaired and the diverse responses to them.

## Expectations of NPC members

* Satisfy all requirements of BCA's Constitution, NPC By-Laws and Code Of Conduct.
* Ensure that all Public Policies developed and advocated by BCA reflect BCA's vision, purpose and values.
* Nurture BCA's reputation and relationships.
* Promote the work, role and policies of the NPC.
* Promote the benefits of BCA membership to people who are blind or vision impaired.

## Working relationships

NPC Members are accountable to the NPC Chair and to the BCA Board.

NPC Members who are State and ACT representatives are accountable to BCA members in their State or Territory.

The NPC's work is assisted by staff from BCA's Policy and Advocacy Team. Their work, time and availability are determined and supervised by the CEO or their delegate.

## Skills and experience

If you are interested in policy and are passionate about empowering people who are blind or vision impaired, consider a role with the NPC. You will need:

* Experience or interest in developing policy.
* Interest in issues relevant to people who are blind or vision impaired, and in finding solutions to accessibility and discrimination concerns.
* Good communication skills.
* Competence in using email and other electronic communication.
* Ability to access and actively participate in electronic conferences.
* Experience or interest in belonging to a voluntary committee.
* Willingness to work as part of a team.
* Willingness to provide both written and verbal feedback in a constructive manner.

Note: BCA will support individuals to gain necessary skills and access to facilities in order to develop the above skills.

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