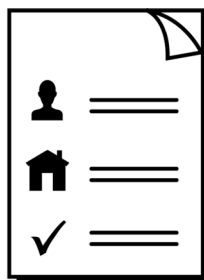


Director Pathways Project

Research summary



Easy Read

About this booklet



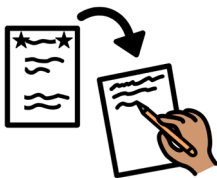
This booklet is from Purpose at Work and La Trobe University.



This booklet is written in a way that is easy to understand.



You can read the original information on our websites purposeatwork.com.au latrobe.edu.au/lids



We add a star before and after *hard words*. Then we explain what the words mean.

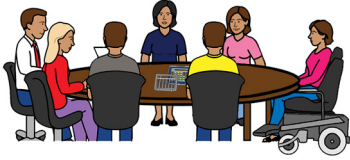


You can ask someone to help you read and understand this booklet.

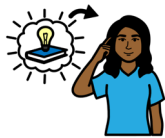


Contact information is at the end of this booklet.

About the Director Pathways Project



The Director Pathways Project is a *research* project about how more people with disability can be *directors on boards*.



Research means we learn more about something.



Directors on boards are people who work together to lead an organisation.



We wanted to know how people with disability become directors.



We read information about people with disability on boards.



Then we *interviewed* 47 people with disability who were on boards.



Interviewed means we asked people some questions and listened to their answers.

About boards and directors

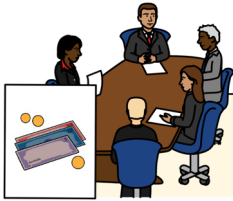


Many organisations have boards and directors.

There are different types of organisations.

For example

- *for-profit organisations*
 - these organisations aim to make money
- *non-profit organisations*
 - these organisations aim to help the community
- government organisations.



Organisations can be big or small.

Boards of organisations can be big or small.

For example, there could be 1 director or more than 20 directors.

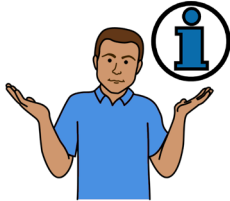


All organisations **must** follow laws about how they run.



What we learned from reading information about directors with disability

Directors with disability in Australia



There is **not** much information about directors with disability in Australia.



In the year 2000 about 1 in 4 community organisations in Australia had a director with disability.



The number of directors with disability in Australia may be going down.



There are **not** many directors with disability in disability provider organisations.



Advocacy for directors with disability has **not** worked well in the past.



Advocacy means people and groups

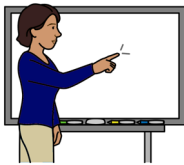
- speak for people who need support



- try to get things to change.

Advocacy projects have tried different ways to get more directors with disability in Australia.

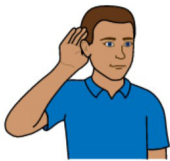
For example



- training programs for people with disability and organisations



- giving people with disability the chance to watch how boards work



- learning from directors with disability



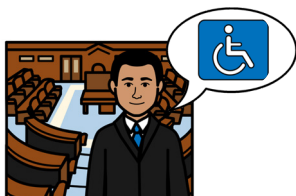
- supporting directors with disability.



It is hard to know if these projects worked.



In 2022 more people advocated for directors with disability.



The Royal Commission on Disability helped to get more people advocating for directors with disability.

Directors with disability in other countries

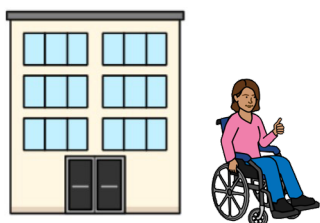


Governments in other countries have tried to get more directors with disability in organisations.



In Canada, boards aim to have one third of directors from *minority groups*.

Minority groups means small groups in society, including people with disability.



Organisations called Disability:IN and The Valuable 500 advocate for businesses around the world to have more directors with disability.

What supports directors with disability?



There is **not** much information about what supports directors with disability.

Some books and articles have information about what might help directors with disability.

For example



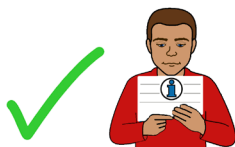
- meeting places that everyone can go to



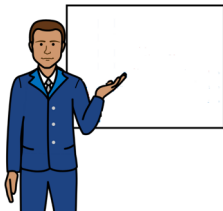
- help with transport and other costs



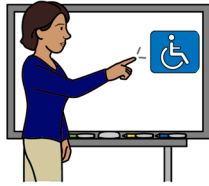
- meetings that everyone can understand



- information that everyone can understand



- training and support for new directors.



It may also help to

- train other directors about *inclusion*



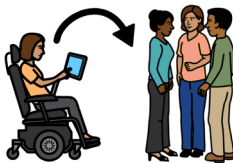
- have more than 1 director with disability



- make sure everyone is *respected*



- make sure everyone is *confident*.



Inclusion means everyone can join in.



Respect means everyone is important.



Confident means everyone feels safe to share their ideas.

What makes it hard for people with disability to be directors?



It can be harder for people with disability to be directors because they

- may **not** get support to do new tasks



- may **not** feel confident to apply for management jobs.



Also, some workers may **not** like the idea of people with disability working in management jobs.



Some directors with disability run their own businesses, which can be hard.

What can make it easier for people with disability to be directors?

It can be easier for people with disability to be directors if they



- connect with organisations that want directors



- connect with other directors and people who look for directors.

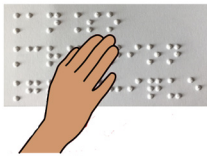
How we did our research



We interviewed 47 directors with disability.



Most people we interviewed had physical disability or *sensory disability*.



Sensory disability means people find it hard to hear or see or both.



Only 4 people had intellectual disability.



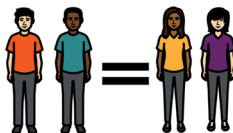
Everyone had worked in non-profit organisations.



Only 10 people had worked in government organisations.



Only 7 people had worked in for-profit organisations.



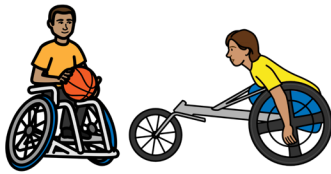
We interviewed the same number of men and women.



What we learned from directors with disability

People with disability became directors in different ways.

They were



- well-known sports people



- senior people in organisations



- managers in organisations



- people from small businesses



- people invited to be on the board in small organisations.

What made it hard to be a director?



We learned that

- it is hard for people with disability to get the experience of being a director



- some boards do **not** change things to include people with disability



- some people with disability do **not** have confidence to apply to be a director



- some people with disability find it hard to connect with other people



- some people find it hard to be a director.

What is it like to be a director with disability?



We learned that

- most people liked being on a board
- some people had bad experiences being on boards
 - for example, they did **not** get any support.



Ideas about how to get more directors with disability

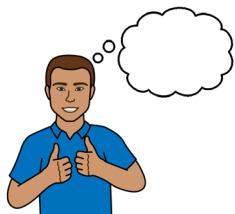


Some people said

- government should have more directors with disability
- boards should train members about disability.

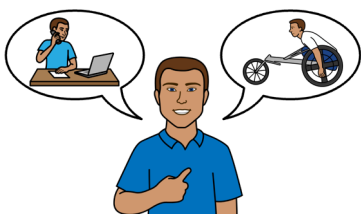


Why should there be more directors with disability?



Some people said directors with disability

- bring good skills and ideas to organisations



- bring different experiences to organisations



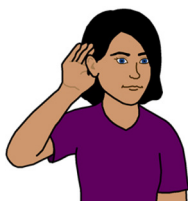
- promote inclusion

- can be role models for other people with disability.

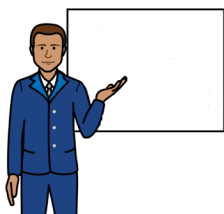
What can people on boards do to help?

We learned that people on boards can do many things to support directors with disability.

For example



- listen to all ideas



- help people to learn new skills



- make changes if needed.

Our summary



Our research report said

- there should be more directors with disability



- people with intellectual disability may need different projects.



More information

For more information contact Purpose at Work and talk to Alan Hough.



Call 0407 132 848



Email alan@purposeatwork.com.au



Websites purposeatwork.com.au
latrobe.edu.au/lids



If you need help to hear or speak contact the National Relay Service.



Call 1300 555 727



Website
communications.gov.au/accesshub/nrs

Easy Read Australia created this Easy Read document in February 2023 using Picture Communication Symbols (PCS). PCS and Boardmaker are trademarks of Tobii Dynavox LLC. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

You must ask for permission to use the images in this document.

For more information, please visit easyreadaust.com.au