# **Blind Citizens Australia**

# **Call for Expressions of Interest**

# **National Convention Contributors**

## **About the Blind Citizens Australia National Convention**

Blind Citizens Australia (BCA) is the united voice of Australians who are blind or vision impaired. Our mission is to achieve equity and equality by our empowerment, by promoting positive community attitudes, and by striving for high quality and accessible services which meet our needs. We provide information, peer support, individual and systemic advocacy, and consultancy services. Our 3,000 members come from a range of diverse backgrounds, but you don’t need to be a member to get involved or access our services.

The BCA national convention is our organisation’s flagship event and is held every second year in a different state. The convention provides opportunities for people who are blind or vision impaired to socialise with and learn from others who are blind or vision impaired, learn about the latest blindness products and services and to contribute to the future direction of our organisation.

The 2019 national convention will be held at the Woolstore Apartment Hotel in Hobart from 29 March to 1 April. The convention theme is “you can do it your way”. The program will include a series of workshops with a focus on students and young people, but open to all on the Friday afternoon, a keynote address and a mix of plenary and concurrent sessions on the Saturday and Sunday. The Monday will be devoted to sight-seeing to take advantage of Hobart’s many tourist attractions.

## **Call for Expressions of Interest**

BCA is seeking expressions of interest from individuals and organisations with an interest in contributing to our national convention program as presenters, session coordinators or access technology exhibitors.

Who should express interest?:

* People who are blind or vision impaired
* BCA branches wishing to convene a session
* Blindness service providers
* Providers of blindness technology or equipment
* Government departments and research organisations
* Other individuals and organisations working in the field of blindness and vision impairment

Before submitting an expression of interest, please consider the following guidelines:

1. As space in the program is limited, first preference will be given to people who are blind or vision impaired.
2. If you are a person who is blind or vision impaired with a great idea for a session, we encourage you to share it with us, whether you are a BCA member or not, and whether or not you have previously been involved in BCA, or attended a convention.
3. Your session needs to be informative, interactive and accessible to a broad audience and your expression of interest should outline how you will make it accessible to people who are blind or vision impaired (note that inaccessible PowerPoint presentations are discouraged).
4. Our convention is built on a strong tradition of peer support and as such, we do not offer speaking fees. Our members see the opportunity to share information and personal stories with one another as a mutually beneficial learning and development experience. However, we do provide financial assistance towards travel and accommodation costs to assist people who are blind or vision impaired (including speakers) to attend the convention. You can apply for financial assistance when you register to attend the convention.
5. You must ensure your session relates to one or more of the following topics, as voted for by BCA members and that it aligns with the convention theme, “you can do it your way”:

## **Topics:**

* Access to entertainment and the arts: this topic could include sessions on innovative ways to gain access to books, movies, podcasts, live entertainment and more and could also focus on practical applications of the Marrakesh Treaty.
* Travel and Tourism: this could include unusual travel experiences as a person who is blind or vision impaired, dealing with unexpected situations while travelling, holiday options which work well from a blindness perspective and how technology is changing the travel experience.
* Emerging technology and services: this topic could include new and innovative technology or services (blindness or mainstream), with the potential to impact either positively or negatively on the lives of people who are blind or vision impaired.
* Navigating the NDIS and My Aged Care from a blindness perspective: this topic could include personal experiences of the NDIS or My Aged Care systems and advice to others on how to navigate them, tools to assist people who are blind or vision impaired to get the most out of individualised funding and more.
* Tips, tricks and life hacks: this topic could include presentations on general tips and tricks for life, or demonstrations of specific tips, tricks and life hacks.
* Maintaining and improving emotional well-being: topics could include practical exercises to reduce stress and anxiety, research into the connection between blindness and emotional well-being, personal experiences of improving well-being which could be of use to others.
* Accessing sporting, recreational and community activities: topics could include workshops to enable people to experience a new activity, personal experiences of accessing sporting, recreation and community activities or technological innovations which enhance access to the community.
* Recognising and addressing the challenges we experience as blind or vision impaired people: this topic could include exploring or debating our individual definition of independence, discussion of blindness and self-esteem, how we can turn challenges into opportunities and more.
* Technology and healthcare: topics could include, how technology impacts our access to pregnancy testing and bowel cancer screening kits, how technology can enhance our access to prescription medication or first aid kits, how technology can improve hospital stays and more.
* Technology Expo: open to access technology suppliers and blindness service providers to showcase the technology, equipment and services they can offer to people who are blind or vision impaired.

## **How to Express Interest**

To express your interest in contributing to our national convention, please complete the attached expression of interest form and E-mail it to [bca@bca.org.au](mailto:bca@bca.org.au) with “Expression of interest for national convention” in the subject line.

The closing date for expressions of interest is Thursday 13 December.

Expressions of interest will be reviewed by the Convention Program Reference Group against the expression of interest guidelines. You will be notified by mid January as to whether your expression of interest was successful. If successful, BCA will provide you with support and guidance to ensure your presentation runs as smoothly as possible.

If you have questions or require further information about the process, please contact BCA on 1800 033 660 or E-mail [bca@bca.org.au](mailto:bca@bca.org.au).

# **Blind citizens Australia**

# **Contributor Expression of Interest Application**

# **National Convention**

**Closing Date: Thursday 13 December 2018**

## **Personal Details:**

Name:

Phone:

E-mail:

Organisation (if applicable):

Position title (if applicable):

Do you identify as a person who is blind or vision impaired? Yes/No

## **Your Contribution to the Convention:**

How would you like to contribute? (please place an asterisk next to all that apply:

* Presenter/speaker
* Coordinator of a session
* Exhibitor in the adaptive technology expo

## **About your Presentation:**

Suggested presentation Title: (if applicable)

Presentation Outline: (provide a brief outline of your session in 500 words or less)

Presenters: (Please list the names and positions, (if applicable), of all speakers who would be involved in your session)

How will you ensure your session is accessible to people who are blind or vision impaired?

What will you do to make your session stand out? How will you make sure it is engaging and interactive?

## Support Requirements:

What audio visual and other equipment do you require?

Do you have any access requirements?

## **How to submit**

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