# BCA Inform October: Standing For Election

Ahead of BCA’S 2021 AGM on 4th December this event provided an opportunity to gain information on BCA’s governance and ask questions of current board, National Policy Council members and NSW/ACT State Division Committee members about their roles and responsibilities.

Current BCA Director Prue Watt gives a run down on the Director position(s):
Prue got into the BCA board following a casual vacancy that occurred in 2017 and was subsequently re-elected since. Prue wanted to represent younger blind and vision impaired members and recognised a learning curve in the initial stages of the role. Each member undergoes an induction where members learn financial literacy, governance principles, strategic planning and decision making. This induction helped prepare Prue for what was to come. In relation to board meetings, Prue advised potential directors to allow adequate time to prepare for meetings and there is quite a bit of reading to do for this as these documents can be long and complex. She also advised to make notes and comments in advance, so you are prepared when attending. Prue also emphasised the opportunity for leadership development that came with being on the BCA board.

BCA President John Simpson gives insight into the role of the president:
The president is one of the directors and is bound by the BCA service charter. The president acts as the leader of the board, chairs board meetings and has conversations with the CEO to determine the boards agenda. The president is in close contact with the CEO to ensure the boards strategic plans are carried out. The president has power to instruct the CEO, which individual directors do not.

## Sean Tyrells who is currently on the National Policy Council gives an insight into contributing to the NPC:

Sean states that being on the NPC gives you a clear line of sight to contribute to giving blind or vision impaired Australians and looking really clearly at the changes we’d like to see. The NPC works with government departments and most recently has been working with health departments to make their processes more accessible. The NPC also assists with peer support for members. NPC meets about six times a year and is less of a time commitment than appearing on the board. NPC can often be seen as the bridge between BCA’s members and the board.

Paul Christ from the NPC also adds his perspective:
For anyone thinking of running for a board or NPC position and still deciding, an NPC position gives a great insight on how the organisation works at a higher level and gives you an idea of the strategic direction that the board wants to take.

Helen Ferries also from the NPC gives her insight into the position:
Her favourite part of the position has been learning about the experiences of others and deliberating on how we can assist individuals but the blindness community as a whole and then putting this in practice.

All interested members are encouraged to read the position descriptions on the BCA website to see if they are suitable for the roles. Previous governance experience is highly regarded but not essential, good communication skills, computer literacy and some level of assistive technology skills as well as problem solving skills.