



becoming a board member of a non-for-profit organisation

Many people keep in touch with the business world and community by joining a board.

You may be donating your time for free but as a board director you have legislative and financial responsibilities that are just as onerous as your fellow remunerated board members. Volunteer Australia provides the following checklist for anyone considering becoming a board member.

	Yes	No
Is the organisation a registered not-for-profit organisation, i.e. an Incorporated Association or a Company Limited by Guarantee?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is the organisation able to provide you with the most recent copy of the annual report, audited accounts, mission statement and other relevant documentation?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does the organisation have professional indemnity and insurance which covers board members when discharging their duty?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is there a written position description for you as a board member and does it explain your role as a board member?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have you been fully briefed on the governance role of the board and the legal liabilities and requirements of a board member?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is the philosophy of the organisation compatible with your own values and beliefs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is the time commitment required of you achievable?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is a board or committee position a possibility within your own company?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

finding a board position

Board member positions can be very competitive particularly for high-profile charities. If you want to contribute your skills and experience at this senior level further down the track, many experts recommend you start building the necessary skills and experience now.

Approach your chosen organisation directly or check out listed positions at The Australian Giving Centre's website at www.ourcommunity.com.au.

It has a Board, Committees and Governance Centre, which lists available positions. You can also search for board positions on SEEKvolunteer. It doesn't list board positions separately from other roles but they do display board positions – you can check through the listing or do a search on the word board.

When it comes to searching for a position some tips are:

1. Think about the skills or benefits you can offer – some boards want specific skills and others will be interested in your network of contacts.
2. Do you have any contacts within an organisation that can help you?
3. If a board position is not an option at this time, can you start off in another volunteer capacity as an act of goodwill?
4. Join professional organisations such as the Institute of Company Directors to help you make contacts.

Visit www.ipac.com.au/lifedirections and go to the resources section where you'll find useful links to community organisations.