

Board orientation policy

First developed	Quarter 1, 2024
Last review date	Quarter 3, 2024
Scheduled review date	Quarter 3, 2026
Purpose	<p>The purpose of this policy is to provide a structured orientation process for new members of the Board of Directors. This orientation will familiarize new board members with the organization’s mission, values, governance structures, strategic objectives, and their specific responsibilities. It ensures that they are well-equipped to perform their duties effectively and in accordance with the organization’s goals and legal requirements.</p> <p>This policy applies to all newly appointed or elected members of the Board of Directors. It may also apply to returning members who require a refresher on certain aspects of the organization. The orientation is designed to be a comprehensive program that introduces the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational structure • Governance policies • Financial performance • Strategic plans • Legal and ethical responsibilities <p>The objectives of the board orientation process are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure new members are aware of their legal, ethical, and fiduciary responsibilities. • Provide an understanding of the organization’s mission, vision, and values. • Familiarize new members with the governance structure, including the roles of committees. • Introduce key policies, procedures, and strategic plans. • Offer insights into the organization’s financial health and risk management processes. • Establish effective working relationships with other board members, the executive team, and key stakeholders.
Policy	<p>The following template is used to prepare a brief for new Executive Committee/Board members</p> <p>CCDR Structure Staff and volunteers Statutes Executive Committee. President Treasurer Secretary</p> <p>Presiding Members Regular Members Honorary Members</p> <p>Meetings Financial management Payment delegations Insurance</p>

	<p>Programs (aligned with statutes) Current budget Risks and issues brief Compliance brief and checklist Accountability to members Notification of significant changes Removal of responsible people Duty to notify and reporting of breaches</p>
<p>Policy Implementation and assignment of responsibility</p>	<p>The Chief Executive is responsible for preparing the onboarding brief for Executive Committee/Board members in advance of their first committee meeting</p>



CENTRE FOR COMMUNITY-DRIVEN RESEARCH

Australian charity: Compliance requirements

The Centre for Community-Driven Research is governed under the (Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (ACNC)).

The ACNC Governance Standards are a set of core, minimum standards relating to charity governance and how a charity is run – including its processes, activities and relationships.

Organisations must meet the ACNC Governance Standards in order to be registered as charities with the ACNC. Then, once an organisation is registered as a charity, it must continue to comply with the standards in order to retain its registration.

A charity does not need to submit anything to the ACNC to show that it meets the Governance Standards. However, it must be able to provide evidence of meeting the standards if requested.

What the Governance Standards require

The ACNC Governance Standards require a charity to remain charitable, operate lawfully, and be run in an accountable and responsible way. Through these requirements, the standards help maintain public trust in charities, and help charities continue to do their charitable work.

Because the Governance Standards are a set of high-level principles rather than precise rules, each charity must decide how it will comply with them.

A charity must be able to demonstrate that the steps it has taken to comply with the Governance Standards are appropriate, considering factors such as its size, purposes and activities.

For example, a larger charity or one with vulnerable beneficiaries may need to take extra steps to comply with the standards.

Standard 1: Purposes and not-for-profit nature

A charity must be not-for-profit and work towards its charitable purpose. It must be able to demonstrate this and provide information about its purposes to the public.

[Governance Standard 1: Not-for-profit and working towards charitable purpose](#)

Governance Standard 1 requires charities to demonstrate that they are set up as a not-for-profit with a charitable purpose, and run as a not-for-profit and work towards that charitable purpose. It also requires charities to demonstrate that they can provide information to the public about their charitable purpose.

Standard 2: Accountability to members

A charity that has members must take reasonable steps to be accountable to its members and provide them with adequate opportunity to raise concerns about how the charity is governed.

[Governance Standard 2: Accountability to members](#)

Governance Standard 2 requires charities to take reasonable steps to be accountable to their members, and allow their members adequate opportunities to raise concerns about how the charity is run.

Standard 3: Compliance with Australian laws

A charity must not commit a serious offence (such as fraud) under any Australian law or breach a law that may result in a penalty of 60 [penalty units](#) or more.

Governance Standard 3: Compliance with Australian laws

Governance Standard 3 requires charities to act in a lawful way, and comply with Australian laws.

Standard 4: Suitability of Responsible People

A charity must take reasonable steps to:

- be satisfied that its Responsible People (such as board or committee members or trustees) are not disqualified from managing a corporation under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth) or disqualified from being a Responsible Person of a registered charity by the ACNC Commissioner, and
- remove any Responsible Person who does not meet these requirements.

Standard 5: Duties of Responsible People

A charity must take reasonable steps to make sure that its Responsible People are subject to, understand, and carry out the duties set out in Governance Standard 5. These duties include:

- to act with reasonable care and diligence
- to act honestly and fairly in the best interests of the charity and for its charitable purposes
- not to misuse their position or information they gain as a Responsible Person
- to disclose conflicts of interest
- to ensure that the financial affairs of the charity are managed responsibly, and
- not to allow the charity to operate while it is insolvent.

Standard 6: Maintaining and enhancing public trust and confidence in the Australian not-for-profit sector

A charity must take reasonable steps to become a participating non-government institution of the National Redress Scheme if the charity is, or is likely to be, identified as being involved in the abuse of a person either:

- in an application for redress made under section 19 of the *National Redress Scheme for Institutional Child Sexual Abuse Act 2018* (Cth) (Redress Act), or
- in information given in response to a request from the National Redress Scheme Operator (Secretary of the Department of Social Services) under section 24 or 25 of the Redress Act.

Compliance with the Governance Standards is a condition of registration as a charity.

Failure to comply with one or more of the Governance Standards may result in:

- the use of the Commissioner's enforcement powers, including warnings or directions being issued to the charity
- revocation of charity registration, resulting in the charity losing access to certain government funding, exemptions, concessions and benefits.
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The ACNC expects that most charities will comply with the Governance Standards. Therefore, we focus on those charities that have seriously or deliberately breached the Governance Standards.

This might be, for example, by:

- diverting money to non-charitable purposes
- not disclosing serious conflicts of interest, or
- being grossly negligent with their finances.
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We will act on breaches according to our [regulatory approach](#) if we have information that indicates that there may be serious risks involved.

General governance checklist

Does the association have the following?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity's governing document reflect your charity's current purposes?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Can the public find and view information about your charity's purposes?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity ensure its funds and assets are used solely for its charitable purposes and not for the benefit of particular people?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity consider how its activities help it pursue its charitable purposes?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity comply with the rules in its governing document that deal with accountability to members?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity tell its members about its activities, financial circumstances and any significant changes that may occur?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity allow its members to ask questions, vote on resolutions and raise concerns?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity make it clear to members how they can participate in its governance?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity know how it deals with complaints from members?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity know and keep up to date with its regulatory obligations?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity know if it is complying with its regulatory obligations?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Has your charity searched the Register of banned and disqualified persons for each of its Responsible People, and has it kept a record of this search?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity take other steps to ensure its Responsible People are suitable prior to their appointment?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity take steps to remove a Responsible Person when they are found to be not suitable?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do your charity's Responsible People understand their obligations to the charity?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do your charity's Responsible People understand the charity's charitable purposes?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do your charity's Responsible People have the right skills and knowledge for their role?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Are your charity's Responsible People familiar with the charity's activities and financial position?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do your Responsible People monitor the charity's governance arrangements, including policies and procedures, to ensure they remain fit for purpose?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity take steps to ensure responsible decision-making?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity have a process for disclosing and managing conflicts of interest?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity have a process for identifying and managing related party transactions?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity take measures to ensure its funds and assets are managed responsibly?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity manage its risks?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Has your charity been, or is your charity likely to be, identified as being involved in the abuse of a person by being subject to a redress application, or been identified in a response to a request for information under the Redress Act? (Australian jurisdiction)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is your charity a participating member of Redress Scheme, or taking reasonable steps to join the Redress Scheme? (Australian jurisdiction)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity keep records that show its income, expenses, assets, liabilities and financial transactions for seven years (Australian jurisdiction)/ten years (Headquarters)?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity keep records that show its activities and operations for seven years?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity keep a record of its assets?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity have a system or process to ensure that it meets its record-keeping obligations?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Did your charity submit its annual report on time for the last reporting period?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity need to submit a reviewed or audited financial report?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity ensure there are no errors in its financial report? (Reporting obligation)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Are your charity's Responsible People and other details up to date?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Are your charity's Responsible People aware of the charity's obligations to notify? (Duty to notify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity report all significant breaches of its obligations ? (Duty to notify)



CENTRE FOR COMMUNITY-DRIVEN RESEARCH

Swiss association: Compliance requirements

In Switzerland, the two forms of legal entities that are commonly used for charitable purposes are foundations and associations.

According to the Swiss Civil Code, there are two non-corporate legal entities that can be registered in Switzerland:

- foundations
- associations

The Centre for Community-Driven Research is an association. The main difference between a Swiss foundation and association resides in that the latter is made of members. It is required for an association to have at least 2 members for it to be created.

Switzerland recognises three main categories of foundations including family foundations and private foundations, foundations operating as pension funds or foundations set up for the benefit of the general public. The Federal Supervisory Authority for Foundations sits under the Federal Department of the Interior and is responsible for overseeing foundations operating at the national and/or international levels.

The Swiss law on associations is governed by articles [60 to 79 of the Swiss Civil Code](#). When establishing a non-profit association there is no obligation to register with the commercial registry, unless the association conducts a commercial operation in pursuit of its objectives or is subject to an audit requirement.

An association must have at least the following:

- Members
- Statutes
- A General Assembly
- A Committee (i.e. Board or Executive Committee)

Unless the statutes provide otherwise, solely the association is liable for its obligations, which are guaranteed by its assets - Members are not liable.

Members

Members can be admitted into the association at any time. The statutes can provide for certain categories of members who can have different voting rights.

All members can resign from the association provided they give notice of their resignation six months' prior to the end of the calendar year or of the administrative period. Members have a duty to pay subscriptions, however only if the statutes so provide and it is not mandatory to have paid subscriptions.

The statutes can specify the grounds on which a member may be excluded. If they don't, the exclusion requires a resolution from the association and good cause.

Statutes

The statutes must be in writing and should at least contain the following provisions:

- The name and the headquarters location of the association;
- The objectives of the association;
- How resources are acquired for the association;
- The structure of the association;
 - General Assembly
 - Committee
 - Members
 - Bookkeeping arrangements
 - Representation and signatory powers

Note: External auditing is not mandatory unless stated in the statutes.

General Assembly

The General Assembly is the governing body of the association. It is a meeting between all of the members of the association and the chair and minute taker are decided at the start of each meeting. The General Assembly has the following powers:

- Elect the President and the members of the Committee;
- Exclude a member of the Committee or dismiss the Committee in its entirety;
- Admit or exclude members of the association;
- Approve the report and the accounts and adopt the budget;
- Discharge the Committee;
- Fix the amount of the subscriptions, decide to modify the statutes or to dissolve the association.

Resolutions passed by the General Assembly are included in the minutes of the meeting (resolutions may also be passed by written consent of all the members to a proposal).

The statutes can determine the type of majority required to pass resolutions during the General Assembly.

Committee (Often referred to as an Executive Committee or Board)

The Committee manages and represents the association and has the following powers and obligations:

- Implements the resolutions taken by the General Assembly, plan, organise, decide, delegate and control the activities of the association;
- Reviews the record of profits and losses of the association prepared by the organisation's accountant;
- Represents the association;
- Calls the ordinary and extraordinary general meetings and prepares the agenda (generally it is the President who does this in coordination with the association's Chief Executive Officer);
- At the end of the calendar year, establishes an annual report of the association's activities summarising the main events that occurred during the year. This is then presented to the General Assembly during the ordinary general meeting. In practice, this is done by the association's Chief Executive Officer.

Accounting

Associations have the obligation to keep proper financial accounts and can choose to freely organise its accounting. An external audit of accounts is not mandatory. Most commonly, small associations will have an accountant that independently manages and prepares financial reports. The Committee is provided with a record of the association's financial accounts. These are then presented to the General Assembly by the Treasurer (this is usually delegated to the Chief Executive as a delegate of the treasurer) to approve.

Compliance checklist (Specific to Headquarters)

Does the association have the following?

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Statutes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | An annual General Assembly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | A Committee (i.e. Board or Executive Committee) |

Do the statutes have the following?

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The name and the headquarters location of the association |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The name and the headquarters location of the association |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The objectives of the association |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | How resources are acquired for the association |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The structure of the association <ul style="list-style-type: none">• General Assembly• Committee• Members• Bookkeeping arrangements• Representation and signatory powers |

Does the General Assembly work within its remit?

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Elect the President and the members of the Committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Exclude a member of the Committee or dismiss the Committee in its entirety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Admit or exclude members of the association |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Approve the report and the accounts and adopt the budget |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Discharge the Committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Fix the amount of the subscriptions, decide to modify the statutes or to dissolve the association |

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- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Implements the resolutions taken by the General Assembly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Reviews the record of profits and losses of the association prepared by the organisation's accountant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Represents the association |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Calls the ordinary and extraordinary general meetings and prepares the agenda |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ensures an annual report of the association's activities is presented to the General Assembly |

General governance checklist

Does the association have the following?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Does your charity's governing document reflect your charity's current purposes?
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