**Guide Dogs NSW/ACT**

**Role Description**

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| Role | Non-executive Director  |
| Reports to | Members |
| Location | St. Leonards (Head office) – can be located anywhere in NSW/ACT |
| Direct Reports | Company SecretaryCEO |
| Date revised | August 2022 |

**The GDN Way of Working**

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT (GDN) is the leading provider of Guide Dogs and orientation and mobility services that enable people with low vision or blindness to get around their communities safely and independently. It also delivers early detection services through its subsidiary company the Centre for Eye Health.

Each year our highly trained team including Orientation and Mobility (O&M), Occupational Therapists (OT) and Assistive Technology (AT) specialists work with around 4,000 people of all ages to help them achieve their mobility goals. GDN have approximately 12 different regional locations and employees based throughout NSW and ACT.

GDN are in the early stages of an ambitious growth phase involving significant investment that will expand our services to assist people with early stage and moderate vision impairment.

There is heavy reliance on generous donations from the people of NSW and the ACT to fund our services as less than 10% of our income comes from government funding, including the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and Medicare.

We are passionate about improving the lives of our clients and creating a sustainable future for Guide Dogs NSW/ACT by shaping an innovative, world-leading service for people with vision loss.

Our Values guide us through every decision we make and the actions we take. They ensure we put our customers at the centre and our people at the heart of everything we do.

**Purpose of the role**

The Board is responsible for the development of our organisational strategic directions, monitoring organisational performance, and overseeing organisational governance and risk requirements.

The Board has established the following sub-committees (**Committees**) which report to the full Board:

1. Finance, Audit and Risk Management

2. Nomination, Remuneration and Culture

3. Corporate Governance

In addition to the Guide Dogs Board and Committees we have a Board representative on the Customer Advisory Panel, which is supported by Guide Dogs with volunteer client members and Chair. The Voice of the Client is import to us to inform our service delivery and strategic approach.

Committee membership is reviewed annually, and Directors are selected to act as members or as the Chair of the committees based on their skills and experience.

Your experience will influence the culture of customer-centricity, transparency, and personal accountability.

**Key accountabilities**

The duties, responsibilities and expectations placed on Directors are as follows:

• The Board is simultaneously entrepreneurial, driving the business forward, while ensuring the Company maintains sound compliance and risk management processes.

• The Board must be sufficiently knowledgeable about the workings of the Company to be answerable for its actions yet be able to stand back from the day-to-day management of the Company and retain an objective, long-term view.

• The Board must be sensitive to the pressures of short-term issues and be informed about broader, long-term trends.

• The Board should be focused upon the needs of the Company’s clients and customers, as well as the sustainability of the business, while acting responsibly towards its employees, suppliers, business partners and the wider community.

In doing the above, the Directors:

• must comply with the law, the Company’s Constitution, applicable Company policies and their duties under the Corporations Act and Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (**ACNC**) Act (in particular, the ACNC’s Governance Standards).

• should adhere to the highest standards of corporate governance and business ethics; and

• should keep their knowledge and skills current and keep abreast of legal, regulatory and market changes by undertaking relevant continuing professional development (see further below).

**Key relationships**

* Chief Executive Officer GDN
* GDN Executive Leadership Team
* Chief Executive office
* Head of Legal and Governance/Company Secretary

**Key knowledge and experience that you bring to the team**

* strong public communicator
* advocates for people with disabilities
* close personal experience of vision loss
* understanding and experience of NDIS and disability sector skilled educator and presenter
* understanding of the role of guide dogs and the life of a working dog
* Knowledge of the issues relevant to people living with vision loss and the support systems designed to address these needs.
* Demonstrated commitment to the rights and empowerment of people with a disability.
* Well-developed communication and people skills
* Understanding of NFP governance

**Personal Attributes**

* enthusiastic about possibilities for people with vision loss
* understanding of complexity of living with vision loss
* teamwork

**Meeting cycle, attendance, and time commitment**

The Board meets approximately 9 times a year, with a mix of online or virtual attendance. There are two strategy and planning sessions per year (either half or full day each).

Directors may also be required to attend other ad-hoc meetings or strategy sessions if the need arises from time-to-time.

The cycle and duration of Committee meetings varies depending on the Committee.

In addition to the above Directors are encouraged to attend donor/fundraising and graduation events for our dogs.

Overall, the time commitment required for Directors is the equivalent of around 15 full days per year for Directors who are also members of one Committee. That amount may increase if Directors are members of more than one Committee and/or act as chair of any Committee.

**Director Expenses**

While the Company does not currently remunerate Directors for their services as a director, reimbursement for expenses incurred on company business may be claimed. Expense reimbursement is subject to approval by the Chair, in accordance with relevant Company policies.

**GDN Corporate structure**

GDN is an independent entity that operates in NSW and the ACT.

GDN is a company limited by Guarantee. Members have limited liability. Each new Director is also invited to apply for membership. More details about membership are available on the website.

GDN has three two operational areas Fundraising and Insights and Client Services. There are also four support areas People & Culture, Finance, Technology, Marketing and Communications and the CEO office.

Center for Eye Health Limited (CFEH) is a wholly owned subsidiary of GDN that provides advanced diagnostic and disease management services at no cost to patients in New South Wales. The primary goal for CFEH is to reduce preventable blindness in the community and to support clients with low vision. Advanced imaging enables earlier detection and diagnosis of eye disease, facilitating better management.

Along with other state-based organisations we sit in a Federated structure called Guide Dogs Australia (GDA). Whilst most activity is state based and independently controlled within a separate corporate structure, certain activity is positioned in a broader, country-wide context such as a shared Brand and Corporate Sponsorships that are managed collaboratively by GDA aligned with participating state-based organisations. The CEO, Chair, and other Directors of GDN work collaboratively with GDA and the Chair is also a Board member of GDA along with Chairs of other Guide Dogs states.

**Application process**

Please reach out directly to Company.secretary@guidedogs.com.au for more information.

Please note we are conducting an Executive Search process alongside our public outreach.