



Australian Government

Department of Communications and the Arts



# Appointment to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) Board

Position description—Chairperson

January 2017

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## Contents

<b>Disclaimer .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Copyright .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Attribution .....	2
Using the Commonwealth Coat of Arms .....	2
<b>Position description—Chairperson of the ABC Board.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Selection Criteria .....	4
Merit-based selection process.....	4
Categories of persons not eligible for appointment.....	4
The ABC Board—composition and duties.....	5
Responsibilities of the Chairperson of the ABC Board .....	6
Duration of appointment.....	6
Time commitment .....	6
Remuneration and expenses .....	6
Conflict of interest .....	7
Equal employment opportunity and diversity.....	7
Application process.....	7
Closing date .....	7
Privacy.....	8
Further information.....	8

## Position description—Chairperson of the ABC Board

### Selection Criteria

1. **Candidates must demonstrate substantial experience or knowledge in at least one of the following fields:**
  - a) the media industry, including broadcasting, digital media and/or digital technologies
  - b) business or financial management
  - c) corporate governance, including managing large and/or complex operations in the private, public or not-for-profit sectors
  - d) cultural industry and/or cultural policy, including its administration.
2. **Candidates will possess:**
  - a) demonstrated high level leadership and vision, and the ability to articulate a clear direction for an organisation
  - b) a commitment to high standards of governance
  - c) high-level judgement
  - d) the highest standards of professional and personal integrity
  - e) an understanding of the media environment, in particular the ABC, its Charter and its place within the Australian community.

### Merit-based selection process

Under the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation Act 1983* (ABC Act), a merit-based process must be followed before the appointment of a non-executive Director, including the Chairperson, to the ABC Board by the Governor-General. A Nomination Panel (the Panel) established under the ABC Act is responsible for conducting the selection process for the appointment of the ABC Chairperson and assisting the Prime Minister in identifying suitably qualified candidates to be recommended to the Governor-General for appointment.

Following a request by the Minister for the Panel to conduct a merit-based selection process, the Panel will place advertisements inviting written applications by persons seeking to be appointed to the advertised positions.

The Panel must assess all applicants against the relevant selection criteria (see above) and on the basis of merit. The usual approach is for the Panel to make an initial assessment based on consideration of the written applications, leading to interviews, referee and probity checks for those selected for further consideration. Following its assessment, the Panel will produce a written report on the outcome of the selection process. The report will contain a shortlist of at least three candidates nominated for the vacancy. The Panel will provide this report to the Prime Minister.

### Categories of persons not eligible for appointment

Current and former members of Parliament and senior political staff members are not eligible for appointment as the ABC Chairperson while engaged in such positions, or for a period of 12 months beginning on the day the person ceases to hold one of these positions.

The Minister has specified by legislative instrument the classes of persons falling within the definition of 'senior political staff member':

Class A—Federal

- a) A person employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (Cth) and who occupies a position in the 'senior staff' classification as defined by the Commonwealth Members of Parliament Staff Enterprise Agreement 2012-2015 made under the *Fair Work Act 2009*.

Class B—state or territory

- a) A person employed in a senior position by or on behalf of a member of a state parliament or a legislature of a territory to primarily provide advice about policy matters, the communication of policy matters to the public, and/or parliamentary matters.
- b) Without limiting paragraph (a), a person is deemed to be employed in a senior position if the position is known by one of the following designations:
  - i) Chief of Staff
  - ii) Deputy Chief of Staff
  - iii) Principal Adviser (however described)
  - iv) Senior Adviser (however described)
  - v) Senior Media Adviser (however described)
  - vi) Specialist Adviser (however described).
- c) For the purpose of paragraphs (a) and (b), examples of advice about policy matters include:
  - i) developing policy proposals for the consideration of the member
  - ii) analysing policy proposals and making recommendations to the member
  - iii) participating in policy discussions with or on behalf of the member
  - iv) where the member is a Minister, working with public sector employees to implement policies.

## The ABC Board—composition and duties

The ABC Board is responsible for overseeing the operations of the ABC. The ABC board consists of:

- the Managing Director
- the Chairperson
- the staff-elected Director
- not fewer than four nor more than six other non-executive Directors.

The duties of the Board, as set out in the ABC Act, include ensuring that the functions of the ABC are performed efficiently with the maximum benefit to the people of Australia, and to maintain the independence and integrity of the ABC. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that the gathering and presentation of news and information is accurate and impartial, in accordance with recognised standards of journalism, and that the ABC complies with all legislative and legal requirements. Finally, the Board is responsible for developing codes of practice relating to programming matters and any datacasting services the ABC has the function of providing, and notifying these codes to the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

## Responsibilities of the Chairperson of the ABC Board

The Chairperson of the ABC Board is expected to make a full contribution to the Board's work and operate as part of a team.

The Chairperson has a duty to exercise care and diligence and to ensure that the ABC meets its financial, legal, contractual and reporting obligations. Board members must act in good faith at all times and in the best interests of the ABC.

The Chairperson is guided by, and must comply with obligations under the following legislation:

- the ABC Act
- the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act).

In accordance with section 22 of the ABC Act, the Chairperson of the ABC Board has responsibility to convene meetings of the Board as he or she considers necessary for the efficient performance and its functions. The Chairperson determines the locations of the meetings and presides at all meetings of the Board at which he or she is present.

Board members are expected to familiarise themselves with the organisation as well as their legal and statutory obligations. For example, board members as officials of a Commonwealth entity are required to exercise their powers, perform functions and discharge duties with a reasonable degree of care and diligence.

## Duration of appointment

The Chairperson and the other non-executive Directors (but not the staff-elected Director) are appointed by the Governor-General and hold office on a part-time basis for a period of up to five years, as specified in the instrument of appointment, and are eligible for reappointment. The sum of the periods for which a person holds office as either Chairperson or non-executive Director, or both, must not exceed 10 years.

Board members may resign in writing to the Governor-General and the Governor-General may remove a member of the Board in accordance with section 18 of the ABC Act.

## Time commitment

The Chairperson of the ABC Board holds office on a part-time basis. The ABC Board meets approximately six times per year in various capital city and regional locations.

Applicants should also take into account the time required to prepare for Board meetings and to participate in Board committee meetings as required.

## Remuneration and expenses

The Chairperson will receive remuneration and expenses for their service on the ABC Board. Rates are set by the Remuneration Tribunal and reviewed each year. The current remuneration for the Chairperson is \$167,900 per annum (as per Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2016/18, Remuneration and Allowances for Holders of Part-Time Public Office). Allowances for travel are as per Remuneration Tribunal Determination 2016/07, Official Travel by Office Holders.

## Conflict of interest

The PGPA Act requires that Directors of a Commonwealth Entity, such as the ABC, declare material personal interests in a matter that relates to the affairs of the entity subject to certain exceptions. Directors must not be present while a matter in which they have a material personal interest is being considered at a meeting of the Board and must not vote on the matter, except in certain circumstances.

Short-listed candidates will be required to complete a Private Interests Declaration form. In addition, the Panel will undertake probity checks via organisations such as the Australian Securities and Investment Commission and Australian Financial Security Authority.

## Equal employment opportunity and diversity

The principles of equal opportunity will be used in the selection process to ensure that fair, equitable and non-discriminatory consideration is given to all applicants within the limits of the selection criteria. The selection process will consider formal experience and qualifications as well as non-traditional career patterns such as community involvement and/or voluntary work that contribute to the ability of a candidate to perform as the Chairperson on the ABC Board.

## Application process

The Nomination Panel is calling for expressions of interest for the Chairperson position on the ABC Board. The Department of Communications and the Arts (the Department) has engaged Challis & Company Pty Limited to assist the Panel with the selection process.

It is noted that the ABC Chairperson position will become vacant after 31 March 2017. It is expected the appointee's term will commence from the date specified in the instrument of appointment, but will not be earlier than 1 April 2017.

An Expression of Interest must include the following documents:

- an Expression of Interest cover sheet
- a statement addressing your suitability for appointment (max. three pages in length)
- your current curriculum vitae (max. three pages in length).

Expressions of Interest should be sent, preferably by email, to [ABCChair@challis.co](mailto:ABCChair@challis.co) or by post to:

Challis & Company Pty Ltd  
Level 12, Chifley Tower  
2 Chifley Square  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

All applications will be acknowledged. If you have not received an acknowledgement within five days of submitting an application, please contact Helen Johnson of Challis & Company Pty Limited on 02 8039 2223.

## Closing date

Expressions of Interest must be submitted by **5.00 pm (AEDT) on Friday 27 January 2017**.

Late applications will only be accepted at the discretion of the Panel.

## Privacy

On behalf of the Department, Challis & Company Pty Limited will collect information for the purpose of determining a person's eligibility and suitability for appointment to the position of Chairperson on the ABC Board.

Personal information, including documents containing personal information, will be handled and protected in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) (Privacy Act) which sets standards for the collection, storage, use and disclosure of personal information.

Information collected by Challis & Company Pty Limited on behalf of the Department may be disclosed to the Panel and the Minister for the sole purpose of completing this appointment process. Except where it is necessary for the performance of these functions, and/or is authorised or required by law or with the person's consent, we will not use personal information for any other purpose or disclose it to any other person.

Under the Privacy Act, a person has the right to access and correct any personal information held about them by Challis & Company Pty Limited or the Department. Any requests to access the personal information held by Challis & Company Pty Limited or the Department, or to discuss any of the issues raised in this privacy statement, should be directed to the Department's Freedom of Information officer on 02 6271 1000.

## Further information

For queries about submitting an expression of interest please contact Helen Johnson of Challis & Company Pty Limited on 02 8039 2223.

Visit <http://about.abc.net.au/who-we-are/the-abc-board> for further information on the ABC Board.